Urban Europe

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Part 6
Cities in administrative and policy networks
The sixth topic focuses on the role of the city in administrative and policy networks. In other words, it is about municipal authorities and their relationship to other administrative levels. Martijn van der Burg and Anne van Wageningen discuss how the city was used under Napoleon’s policy as a tool for European integration. P.W. Zuidhof makes a case for cities as sites of resistance against the neoliberal policies of national, European and international governments. Lia Versteegh shows how Dutch local governments are using the so-called ‘bed, bath and bread’ arrangement to address the issue of asylum seekers whose application has been dismissed and no longer have permission to remain in the country, but who are staying nonetheless. Monica den Boer examines the potential of cooperation between local governments, and between local governments and the European authorities, in the area of security.

The other contributions focus on European urban policy. Thea Dukes looks back on the political battle surrounding the URBAN Bijlmermeer programme, when funding awarded by the European Commission led to conflict in Amsterdam Southeast that exacerbated racial tensions, but ultimately resulted in increased civic participation. Federico Savini discusses the lack of attention given to the peripheral areas: in his view, there is no such thing as ‘the city’, and many suburban and peri-urban areas need to be involved more in the European Union’s urban policies. Wouter van der Heijde contrasts two interpretations of the Urban Agenda for the EU: does it constitute an attempt to create more policy about cities or more policy generated by working with cities? Whether these two processes can mutually reinforce each other and how the adoption of the Pact of Amsterdam during the Dutch Presidency of the European Council in 2016 will impact the relations between cities and states is difficult to predict, but in the final contribution, Anne van Wageningen looks ahead to the next fifteen years and envisions an urban secession.