

RESEARCH CLINIC

General information

Supervisor:	Judi Mesman
Title of clinic:	Local government's narratives about youth and diversity
Number of students:	Max 4
Major (if applicable and approved by the Major Convener):	Tagged to GED (approved by major convener)
(Pre)requisites (if applicable):	Fluent in Dutch

Research context

In the Netherlands, local elections took place in 2018 in each of ca 300 municipalities. These elections led to the formation of party coalitions that will determine local politics and policies until 2022. Each of these coalitions has written a plan for their term, describing what they have agreed to do while in power. See for example the one from The Hague:

<https://denhaag.raadsinformatie.nl/document/6514256/2/RIS299794%20Coalitieakkoord%202018%20022>

Almost all of these plans include specific sections on the topic of youth (families, children), and most of them also include sections on diversity and inclusion, either in relation to youth or in an entirely separate paragraph. The goal of the research project is to closely analyze these texts to examine the main narratives about youth and diversity in these coalition plans, and to see whether the nature of these texts (e.g., do they focus on problems, on resilience, on independence, on integration, or..?) is related to the political 'color' of the coalition, and whether it relates to the demographic makeup of the municipality.

Students' tasks and activities

LEARNING AIMS

- Acquire skills in systematic coding of written materials
- Understand the different ways of describing the same topics, and the relevance and significance of subtle differences in wording of policy documents

ACTIVITIES:

- background reading and discussion
- setting up analysis/coding plan
- training in systematic coding of the coalition plans
- analyzing the documents, and writing a report on the findings