

Public services in two cities in the Dutch Republic, 1612-1669

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Introduction¹

On the 23rd of January 1579, in the great chapter house of the cathedral in Utrecht, the treaty of the Union of Utrecht was signed. This treaty would come to provide the basis for the Republic of the Seven United Provinces of the Netherlands (hereafter: the Dutch Republic). The new state consisted of the provinces that had formally united themselves in the war against Spain. One of the key features of the Dutch Republic was the relatively small number of public duties that was assigned to the central government.² Provinces and cities had fiercely defended their privileges in the Revolt and the continuation of relatively high levels of urban autonomy in the Republic reflect a successful outcome. In retrospective, it would take the newfound Republic only a few years to embark on a ride of success that would later be called the Dutch Golden Age. This short century of impressive economic and demographic growth brought the Dutch Republic worldwide fame. In this paper the question is raised how this demographic growth influenced the provision of urban public services.³

¹ A previous version of this article was presented at the conference “Civil Society and Public Services in Early Modern Europe”, Leiden, 30 November & 1 December 2007. The paper is an excerpt of C. Rasterhoff. *Res Publica. A comparison of public services in two cities in the Dutch Republic, 1612-1669* (University Utrecht: master thesis, June, 2007).

² J.H. Israel. *The Dutch Republic. Its Rise, Greatness and Fall* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995): 276-7. Israel states that, although the central government was weak in comparison with other early modern European states, the States General were involved in more than international relations and defense, namely also in shipping regulation, church affairs and colonial expansion.

³ By public services we mean services that are available to all who wish to use it. We include all public services that were available in the early modern city, regardless of the nature of the provider. The reason for this is that is hard, if not impossible, to draw boundaries between private and public involvement in early modern society. Theory on public services is not discussed here, but for further inquiries see for example: P.A. Samuelson. “The pure theory of public expenditures” *The Review of Economic and Statistics* 36 (1954); M. Olson. *The logic of collective action* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 1971); S. Pinch. *Cities and services: the geography of collective consumption* (Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1985).

Developments in specific types of services, like poor relief and infrastructure, have been studied extensively, but studies on public services as a whole are few. Furthermore, when public tasks are studied it is more often than not in the light of state formation, bureaucratization, and concepts of citizenship or religious reformation.⁴ It is undeniable that these approaches bear crucial fruits, but they also tend to be rather deterministic. By using a variable that is less loaded with deterministic connotations and by only looking at expenditure levels, we aim to look at public tasks as a subject in itself. This is not to say that the questions in this study cannot be related to a broader context or larger questions. In fact, the question of what determines the size of demand for, and the size of supply of public services in a certain place at a certain time, is what inspired this study.. A better understanding of the historical developments in the field of public services can help to address the role of public services in the total economy, the role of the state and to identify determining factors in service provision.

Economic historian Peter H. Lindert has addressed the causes and effects of the nineteenth and twentieth century rises in social spending through econometric analysis of per capita expenditure.⁵ In his argument, the main determinants of the rise in social spending turn out to be factors that influence the size of supply. Motivations of those who are able to speak up politically, shape policymaking and determine governmental expenditure levels. Accordingly, the extension of voting rights caused changes in the size of social spending. His conclusions raise new questions about the role of demand-related and supply-related variables and about the relation between supply and demand. Before we can start to consider multivariate models to answer the larger question formulated above, we need to take a the individual causal workings of

⁴ See on the influence of the Reformation for example: O.P. Grell and A. Cunningham. *Health Care and Poor Relief in Protestant Europe, 1500-1700* (New York: Routledge, 1997); and by the same authors, *Health Care and Poor Relief in Counter Reformation Europe* (New York: Routledge, 1999); T. Fehler. *Poor relief and protestantism: the evolution of welfare in sixteenth-century Emden* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1999); R. Jutte. *Poverty and deviance in Early Modern Europe*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994). For more on the process on bureaucratization in the Netherlands see: J.C.N. Raadschelders. *Plaatselijke bestuurlijke ontwikkelingen 1600-1980. Een historisch-bestuurlijke onderzoek in vier Noord-Hollandse gemeenten* (Den Haag: VGN-Uitgeverij, 1990); P. Wagenaar. 'Dat de regering niet en bestaat by het corpus van de magistrate van Den Haag alleen'. *De sociëteit van 's Gravenhage (1587-1802). Een onderzoek naar bureaucratisering* (Hilversum: Verloren, 1999); A. van Braam. "Bureaucratiseringsgraad van de plaatselijke bestuursorganisatie van Westzaandam ten tijde van de Republiek" *Tijdschrift voor Geschiedenis* 90 (1977), 457-484.

⁵ P.H. Lindert. *Growing public: social spending and economic growth since the eighteenth century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

different variables. Therefore we limit ourselves here to one explanatory variable: population growth.

We will look at two Dutch cities, Utrecht and Leiden, between 1612 and 1669. In this period Leiden grew rapidly and Utrecht moderately. To assess developments in the provision and organization of services we look at quantitative data: population sizes and expenditure levels. We compare urban expenditure levels in two years for both cities. These years are chosen on the basis of two criteria: they indicate a specific stage in population growth, and there are no major disruptions in city life, such as epidemics or political problems. The last year reflects the zenith of economic and demographic growth in the Republic.

Early modern urban accounts offer a wide range of expenses, often categorized into different subjects. These early modern categories do not always serve the purposes of present day historians. In this study the categorization of urban expenditure of Dutch historian A. van Braam proved useful.⁶ Van Braam used the categories to study expenditure on public servants, rather than to study all public expenses. He did not include urban expenditure on services that were provided by individuals who were not, by his definitions, public servants. It can be argued, however, that early modern cities on many occasions financially supported other institutions that provided public services. An example of this is the governmental funding of the civic militia. By adding two categories: enforcement of law and order and a 'rest' category, we arrive at nine categories in which annual governmental expenditure can be subdivided.⁷

The urban government was not the only provider of public services. Church, corporations and private individuals played their parts too. This study into public services attempts to investigate developments of different actors in the domain of public services. They are divided into three categories: the city, semi-governmental institutions and non-governmental institutions. Because most of these institutions had their own specific functions, the the abovementioned categorization is not used to break down their annual expenditure. For semi-governmental and non-governmental institutions we use an over-time comparison of total expenditure levels. This part of

⁶ Van Braam, 457-484.

⁷ The nine categories are: 1. General administration, justice and finance, 2. Enforcement law and order, 3. Infrastructure, 4. Garbage, sewage, fire-safety, public lightning, 5. Supervision of market goods and trading, 6. Social care, 7. Public worship, 8. Education, 9. Other (In the last category all payments that were unspecified or did not fit into the above categories, are included).

the study helps to gain insight in the share and function of the different institutional categories in the total urban domain of services.

Before we look at the data, we will shortly discuss the development of public services before the seventeenth century in the light of population growth and urbanization. As urbanization progressed from the twelfth century, cities took up more responsibilities and more urban public institutions developed. The range of public services was extended under pressure of population growth and consequent urbanization. In the late Middle Ages cities grew larger and services came to be provided on a larger scale.⁸ Shifts in the allocation of provision of services occurred, often, but not by definition, between local governments and churches. The sixteenth century brought about changes in the allocation of public responsibilities. Public debate reflects the reevaluation of public responsibilities. The trend towards more local government responsibility is clearly discernable even in the decades before the Reformation.⁹ Below we will see how demographic developments in the seventeenth century in Leiden and Utrecht influenced the development of public services in terms of *scale* (did existing services expand?), *scope* (were new types of services installed?) and *supervision* (did the allocation of responsibilities change?).

Leiden and Utrecht

Let us first look at the larger urban context of both cities. Leiden was blessed and scarred by industry as early as the fourteenth century. Especially in the fifteenth century, textile industry flourished. Both in quality and quantity Leiden's draperies were a success, its fame reaching far beyond the city's borders. In the sixteenth century production stabilized and diminished and the Spanish siege made matters worse. The end of the Spanish siege heralded an impressive comeback. While industrial centers in the south were struggling, Leiden got back on its feet, not in the

⁸ See for descriptions analyses of public services in medieval and early modern Belgium the contributions in: *Het openbaar initiatief van België. Historische grondslagen (Ancien Regime)*. Handelingen van het 11e internationaal Colloquium van het Gemeentekrediet van België, Spa, 1984.

⁹ M. van der Heijden. "Early modern concepts of citizenship and public services", *unpublished paper* (Leiden University 2007), 4-5.

least by attracting fleeing wool-producers, who were offered free citizenships and favourable competition legislation.¹⁰

Although historians tend to disagree on the exact growth rates in the seventeenth century, it is safe to say that Leiden grew explosively.¹¹ After the siege, in 1574, around 12,000 people lived in the city. By 1600 the number of people had reached 22,000 and only ten years later the city held between 30,000 and 35,000 inhabitants. In 1675 Leiden counted (at least) some 55,000 inhabitants.¹² Not surprisingly, many practical problems accompanied the impressive economic and demographic growth. Housing shortage, pollution and social tensions were among the most pressing. Afraid that industrial growth would slow down, the urban government tried to keep producers and labourers coming, while contemplating solutions to the deteriorating living standards. Expansion of city grounds proved the only option.¹³

In the seventeenth century, Leiden expanded considerably on three occasions. New housing facilities were built on the north and south-eastside and polluting industries were transferred to the outskirts of the city. The cityscape changed considerably between 1581 and 1660. All open spots disappeared, as did the brick wall around the city. Population density went up dramatically: the streets became smaller and came to hold many more, generally smaller, houses, and canals became fewer.¹⁴ Besides these obvious physical implications, the rapid urban growth led to changing social stratification. Tax reports show that the number of poor did not only increase in absolute terms, but also relative to the number of wealthy citizens.¹⁵ In

¹⁰ B. de Vries, J. Lucassen, P. Lourens and H. Nijboer in: *Leiden: de geschiedenis van een Hollandse stad, deel 2: 1574-1795*, (eds.) R.C.J. van Maanen and S. Groenveld, (Leiden: Stichting Geschiedschrijving Leiden, 2003), 85.

¹¹ For a discussion of the different estimates see: D.J. Noordam. "Demographische ontwikkelingen" in: *Leiden: de geschiedenis van een Hollandse stad, deel 2: 1574-1795*, (eds.) R.C.J. van Maanen and S. Groenveld (Leiden: Stichting Geschiedschrijving Leiden, 2003) 43-4. In our study Noordam's estimates are used. For different estimates see: P. Lourens and J. Lucassen. *Inwoneraantallen van Nederlandse steden, ca. 1300-1800* (Amsterdam: NEHA, 1997), 112-114; N. W. Posthumus. *Geschiedenis van de Leidsche lakenindustrie. Deel 3: De nieuwe tijd*. (Den Haag: Nijhoff, 1939), 153; Israel, 271.

¹² Noordam, "Demographische ontwikkelingen", 43-4.

¹³ R.C.J. van Maanen. "Stadsbeeld and ruimtelijke ordening" in: *Leiden: de geschiedenis van een Hollandse stad, deel 2: 1574-1795*, (eds.) R.C.J. van Maanen and S. Groenveld (Leiden: Stichting Geschiedschrijving Leiden, 2003), 17-19.

¹⁴ H.A. van Oerle. *Leiden, binnen en buiten de stadsvesten, beschrijvingen*, (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1975), 431.

¹⁵ R. Sluijter and A. Schmidt, "Sociale verhoudingen en maatschappelijke zorg" in: *Leiden: de geschiedenis van een Hollandse stad, deel 2: 1574-1795*, (eds.) R.C.J. van Maanen and S. Groenveld (Leiden: Stichting Geschiedschrijving Leiden, 2003), 110. See for the eighteenth century: (eds.) H.A. Diederiks, D.J. Noordam and H.D. Tsjalsma. *Armoede en sociale spanning. Sociaal-historische studies over Leiden in de achttiende eeuw* (Hilversum: Verloren, Hollands Studiën, 1985), 17.

comparison with other fast growing cities, like The Hague or Amsterdam, Leiden was a poor city.

Utrecht had been the largest city and the catholic capital in the north of the Netherlands until the 16th century. However, by the time Holland embarked on its ride of success, Utrecht started to lag behind in terms of economic and demographic growth.¹⁶ Historians agree on continuous demographic growth between 1580 and 1630, bringing the number of inhabitants to somewhere between 25,000 and 30,000. Historian Ronald Rommes, estimates Utrecht's population size by 1670 at around 33,500.¹⁷ Utrecht's economy was shaped neither by industrial specialization nor by trade and may be best characterized by its regional market function, small-scale crafts and industries and the presence of a relatively large group of wealthy citizens.¹⁸ Being the capital of the States of Utrecht, the city was home to many members of the provincial elite and other provincial government officials. During the seventeenth century the regional market function was strengthened. While cities in Holland profited from their geographical positions in international trade systems, Utrecht's position made for higher transport costs. Industries developed, but never on a large scale, which meant that there was no development of a labor force in the form of a proletariat, as occurred in Leiden. The share of wealthy citizens in the total population remained much the same and the social middle classes were relatively large and strong. The economic variety and local orientation made workers less vulnerable to economic conjuncture and international competition. By any means, Utrecht was not considered a poor city.

Utrecht used citizenship as a socio-economic and political means to implement urban policy. Lucrative immigrants were lured to the city with favourable conditions, while for others citizenships were expensive and hard to obtain.¹⁹ Without citizenship one had no access to urban facilities. The twelve percent population growth did not result in expansion of city grounds, mainly because the Reformation

¹⁶ A.H.M. van Schaik. "Een nieuwe heer en een andere leer, 1528-1816" in: *'Een paradijs vol weelde'* *Geschiedenis van de stad Utrecht* (ed.) R.E. de Bruin (Utrecht/Nijmegen, Het Utrechts Archief: Matrijs, 2000), 192.

¹⁷ R. Rommes. *Oost west Utrecht best? Driehonderd jaar migratie en migranten in de stad Utrecht (begin 16e – begin 19e eeuw)* (Amsterdam: Stichting Amsterdamse Historische Reeks, 1998) 21-25.

¹⁸ Ibid, 133-5.

¹⁹ Ibid, 49.

had opened up spaces that used to be under the authority of the Catholic Church.²⁰ Between 1621 and 1669 alleys were widened, new streets were laid and public works were renovated and expanded. The question that now needs answering is how these different growth patterns influenced the provision of public services in the two cities.

Urban government expenditure

Table 1. Total annual expenditure by category, Leiden and Utrecht

Categories/ absolute annual expenditure in guilders	1612 Leiden	1666 Leiden		1621 Utrecht	1669 Utrecht
1. General administration	219,036	248,354		64,054	82,612
a. Interests, repayments, rents, leases	156,043	63,475		21,230	48,604
b. Personnel	8,139	24,738		6,805	13,877
c. City government	10,075	7,599		3,627	11,185
d. Quota to States of Holland	37,699	138,215		24,364	1,061
e. Rest	8,889	14,327		8,028	9,800
2. Law and order	5,810	27,526		554	5,732
3. Infrastructure	94,768	91,302		9,827	36,843
4. Garbage, sewage etc.	952	n.d.		n.d.	620
5. Supervision of market goods and trading	616	1,941		n.d.	2,500
6. Social care	4,434	9,585		380	2,511
7. Public worship	n.d.	4,800		9,518	22,202
8. Education	10,450	9,570		4,552	5,960
9 Other	13,348	6,505		n.d.	n.d.
Total expenditure	349,414	399,133		88,885	158,980

Source: RAL, *Stadsarchief van Leiden, 1574-1816*; GAU, *Stadsarchief II*. (n.d. refers to no or insufficient data)

In table 1 we see the total annual budget of the two cities. With regards to our research questions, we notice two interesting features. First, when we compare the annual budget of Leiden in 1612 with the budget of Utrecht in 1621, the difference is striking. One would expect relatively similar budgets in towns of comparable size, but whereas Utrecht spent a small 90,000 guilders, the government of Leiden spent almost four times as much. While Utrecht's population grew by a rough ten percent, urban expenditure almost doubled. But even here the 160,000 guilders of Utrecht in

²⁰ D.E.A. Faber and R.N.J. Rommes. "Op weg naar stabiliteit, 1618-1747", in: *'Een paradijs vol weelde', geschiedenis van de stad Utrecht*, (eds.) R.E. de Bruin et al. (Utrecht/Antwerpen, Utrechts Archief: Matrijs, 2000), 287-289.

1666 pale in comparison with the 349,414 guilders Leiden spent in 1612. Table 2 shows us what these figures mean in terms of per capita expenditure. In 1612 per capita expenditure was 10.91 guilders in Leiden as opposed to 2.96 guilders in Utrecht. The people of Leiden paid more than three and a half times as much through their government as their counterparts in Utrecht did! We can think of four possible explanations for this. First, in Utrecht people paid less, because fewer types of services were supplied. Or they paid less, because the scale of supply was smaller. The third option is that they paid less for the same (or even larger) range because quality was lower or efficiency was greater. The final scenario is that the levels of spending were in fact comparable, but that in Utrecht a larger share of the total sum spent on services, was paid through other institutions than the city government.

Table 2. Per capita expenditure by category, Leiden and Utrecht

Categories/ per capita annual expenditure in guilders	1612	1666	<i>Increase/ decrease</i>	1621	1669	<i>Increase/ decrease</i>
1. General administration.	6.74	4.97	- 26 %	2.14	2.47	+ 15%
a. Interests etc.	4.88	1.27	- 74 %	0.71	1.45	+ 104 %
b. Personnel	0.25	0.49	+ 96 %	0.23	0.41	+ 80 %
c. City government	0.31	0.15	- 51 %	0,12	0,33	+ 178 %
d. Quota to States of Holland	1.18	2.76	+ 133 %	0.81	0.03	- 96 %
e. Rest	0.42	0.39	- 7 %	0.27	0,29	+ 8 %
2. Law and order	0.16	0.55	+ 243 %	0.02	0.17	+ 756 %
3. Infrastructure	2.92	1.83	- 38 %	0.33	1.07	+ 224 %
4. Garbage, sewage etc.	0.03	n.d.	-	n.d.	0.02	-
5. Supervision of market goods and trading	0.02	0.04	+ 100 %	n.d.	0.07	-
6. Social care	0.14	0.19	+ 36 %	0.01	0.07	+ 600 %
7. Public worship	n.d.	0.01	-	0.32	0.66	+ 106 %
8. Education	0.32	0.19	- 40 %	0.15	0.18	+ 18 %
9 Other	0.41	0.13	- 68 %	0	0	0
Total expenditure	10.91	7.98	- 27 %	2.96	4.75	+ 60 %

Source: Table 2. (n.d. refers to no data). Leiden: in 1612, 32,500, and 1666, 50,000 inhabitants. Utrecht: in 1621, 30,000, and in 1669, 33,500 inhabitants.

The second striking feature shows when we assess over-time developments. We see that Utrecht increased its expenditures by 90,000 guilders, while Leiden spent only 50,000 guilders more in 1666 than it did in 1612. Table 2 tells us that per capita expenditure in Utrecht grew by sixty percent, while the inhabitants of Leiden came to pay twenty-seven percent less. Knowing that the demographic growth rate was fifty-four percent in Leiden and twelve percent in Utrecht, we would have expected quite the opposite. This meant that Leiden managed to increase its population, while at the same time lowering per capita pressure on its inhabitants. The same four scenarios we discussed above can be used to explain the decrease in per capita expenditure in Leiden. The scale or the scope of services could have declined, which means that respectively the scale or the range of services offered by the government was narrowed down. The government may have pushed off financial responsibilities to other institutions or fourth, people paid less for the same range and scale of services. In the latter case, efficiency must have improved, resulting in lower costs. For Utrecht the same range of explanations can be used to explore the rise in per capita expenditure. The government could have increased its responsibilities in terms of scale and/or scope. The city could have taken up responsibilities that used to lie with other types of institutions or people came to pay more for the same, due to efficiency problems. We will come back to the possible explanations after we have taken a closer look at individual expenditure patterns.

Leiden

Leiden spent most of its annual budget on expenses in the category 'general administration, justice and finance'. The categorical decrease of twenty-seven percent is mainly explained by the decrease in scale of expenditure on interests and loans. The already relatively large payments to the States of Holland more than tripled as did general personnel expenses. In 1612, almost half of Leiden's annual expenditure was spent on interest and rents on loans. In 1666, this was only fifteen percent. While in 1612 more than 50,000 guilders were paid as compensation for the expropriating of land, in 1666, this amount was only 1,188 guilders. The city had bought land to expand city boundaries. Apparently bonds had been issued the year before to obtain money to buy off landowners in the area in question. In addition, Leiden had borrowed money over which it needed to pay interest. In 1612, more than 65,000

guilders were spent on amortizations of this loan. In 1666, Leiden spent only a little over 7,000 guilders on interest.²¹ In short, this category gives us a fair idea of how expensive the expansion of the city was.

The relatively highest increase took place in category two: law and order. The home guard had to protect the city from internal and external threats during the daytime, a task that the civil militia took over by night. The former were professional soldiers, while the militia was made up from burghers united in a corporation.²² In 1612, Leiden spent 4,420 guilders on the militia and in 1666, 12,934 guilders: an increase of almost three hundred percent. Per capita expenditure almost doubled to 0.26 cents per person. The immense increase in expenses on artillery is mainly caused by the 9,000 guilders that were spent on the fabrication of two canons. This category shows large increases in scale rather than in scope. This suggests that population growth and increased population density led to more investments in the preservation of public order.

Category three, infrastructure, shows surprisingly high amounts, considering that maintenance of infrastructure was for the largest part the responsibility of the people themselves.²³ It may be argued that the expenses on infrastructure were high in 1612, because they included expenses on the newly built neighbourhoods, but by 1666 the last expansion had long been realized and expenses on infrastructure were still around 90,000 guilders. Another possibility is that by 1612 the city was already performing the same tasks as it was in 1666.²⁴ Although in the course of the seventeenth century maintenance of bridges, canals and quaysides became the exclusive responsibility of the city, per capita expenditure decreased considerably from almost 3 to 1.82 guilders. The decrease is even stronger when we take into consideration that in total of 13,450 guilders were spent in 1666 on the towing path between Utrecht and Leiden. The rest was spent on streets, bridges, canals and buildings.

²¹ In the rest-category we find, for example, payments on fuel, ex-monks and paper. In 1612, 1,735 guilders were spent on fuel and candles. By 1666, this amount had increased to almost 6,000 guilders.

²² M. R. Prak, *Gezeten burgers: de elite in een Hollandse stad: Leiden 1700-1780*, (Amsterdam: De Bataafsche Leeuw, 1985), 57.

²³ C. Smit, *Leiden met een luchtje. Straten, water, groen en afval in een Hollandse stad, 1200-2000* (Leiden, Historische Reeks 14: Leiden, Primavera Pers, 2001), 57.

²⁴ See *ibid.* A charter of 1583 stated that everyone was responsible for his or her own streets, but by 1589 it had been decided that the city would be responsible for maintenance of the bridges. From 1586 the city was active in the paving of streets. In 1658, a similar charter stated that streets were only to be paved by order of the city and by professional men in service of the city.

Leiden did not take over personal responsibility regarding sewage, garbage, fire safety and public lighting. It did play a role in this category, but not in terms of financing: the city told the inhabitants what their individual obligations and duties were. In addition, the city played a role by leasing contracts to empty slurry pits and pick up garbage. Excrements and garbage were valuable economic products and competition for leases on the collection of these products was fierce. From the seventeenth century onwards the city acted more strongly in dictating how the services should be provided.²⁵ Sewage and garbage control remained commercial tasks. Public lighting was still largely an individual task and responsibility. In accounts of 1669, there are expenses on fire-hoses (1,050 guilders). In addition to prohibitions to build roofs from straw, the accounts show that the city actively encouraged people to replace their straw roofs by stone roofs. To relieve the financial consequences, in 1612 the city subsidized those who were forced to replace their roofs with 952 guilders in total. No increase in terms of scale or scope can be discerned in this category.

Direct financial involvement in economic matters in 1612 can be seen in the 252 guilders spent on a new drapery and the 364 guilders on the buying of grain. In 1666, the city spent 1,080 guilders on grain and paid 861 guilders to the superintendents of the industry. Per capita, expenses doubled from 0.20 to 0.40 guilders. The city had set up an integrated system to supervise the industries. The textile industry was not divided into guilds, but into specialized textile businesses: *neringen*.²⁶ These were urban organizations that were established on the basis of textile type. The city government had initiated the establishment of *neringen* at the end of the sixteenth century. They were purely economic organizations and they had no social functions. We can see that, although the amounts were still relatively small, the city increased its scale of operation in this category.

Per capita expenditure on social care increased by 9 cents, which comes down to sixty-five percent. Various types of social schemes existed in the Dutch Republic, but they shared some of the same features.²⁷ Poor relief was organized locally and the

²⁵ Ibid, 87.

²⁶ S. Bos, "Uyt liefde tot malcander". *Onderlinge hulpverlening binnen de Noord-Nederlandse gilden in internationaal perspectief (1570-1820)* (Amsterdam: Stichting Beheer IISG, 1998), 200; De Vries et al., "Het economische leven", 99.

²⁷ J. Spaans. *Armenzorg in Friesland 1500-1800, Publieke zorg en particuliere liefdadigheid in zes Friese steden: Leeuwarden, Bolsward, Franeker, Sneek, Dokkum en Harlingen*, (Hilversum: Verloren, 1998), 17; M.R. Prak. "Armenzorg 1500-1800" in: *Studies over zekerheidsarrangementen. Risico's*,

provision was a collective objective. The same actors operated in the field of social care, but in different constitutions: city government, churches, guilds, hospitals, orphanages and private foundations. Leiden had reformed its social care system and the city came to supervise all forms of relief. Following proposals by the famous secretary of the city, Jan van Hout, urban government had set up an integrated relief system at the end of the sixteenth century.²⁸ The parish' poor-tables were combined into one table: the Almoners' Chamber. The city and the reformed church both appointed four regents to govern the Chamber. The Chamber of Orphans was installed to supervise possessions of orphans. This institution took care of the poor and directed those in need of specialized care to the appropriate institutions. In 1612, the city paid 834 guilders to the Almoner's Chamber, and in 1666, this amount was 1,572 guilders: per capita little changed. Furthermore the city appointed doctors and midwives for the poor. Expenses on midwives almost doubled to 1,080 guilders in 1666. The total increase is for a large part explained by the 9,585 guilders that the city paid to the Chamber of Orphans in 1666, compared to 3,000 guilders in 1612. We find no payments to hospitals in the city.

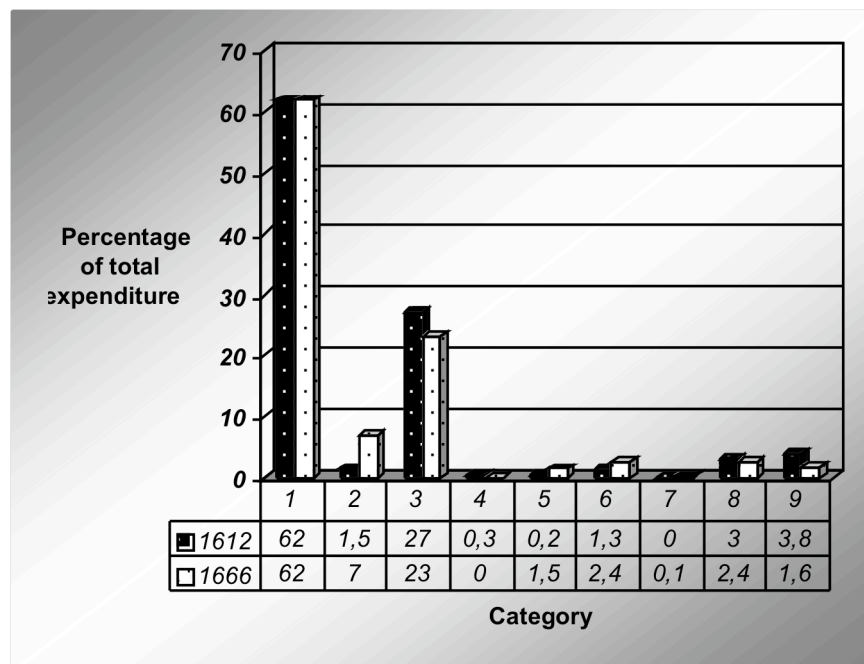
The city had a large say in the appointment of churchmen, but this is not reflected in the accounts. The accounts of 1612 show one payment of 300 guilders to the church organist. In 1666 the 4,800 guilders accounted for were not handed to the urban reformed church, but to the Walloon Reformed Congregation. The city's involvement in education is more specific in the accounts. Leiden annually paid set amounts to the Faculty of Theology. In 1612 and 1621, it was 8,000 guilders and in 1666 and 1669, it was 5,120 guilders. Second, the city not only appointed teachers for the city-school, it also paid them.²⁹ Per capita, the decrease in government expenditure was strong: forty percent.

risicobestrijding en verzekeringen in Nederland, vanaf de Middeleeuwen (eds.) J. van Gerwen, M.H.D. van Leeuwen (Amsterdam: Verbond van Verzekeraars/NEHA, 1998), 61. A summary in English: M.R. Prak. "The Carrot and the Stick: Social Control and Poor Relief in the Dutch Republic, Sixteenth to Eighteenth Centuries" in: *Institutionen, Instrumente und Akteure sozialer Kontrolle und Disziplinierung im frühneuzeitlichen Europa* (ed.) H. Schilling (Frankfurt/Main, Sonderheft 127: Ius Commune, 1999), 149-66.

²⁸ Sluijter and Schmidt, 'Sociale verhoudingen en maatschappelijke zorg'.

²⁹ The principal of the school received 1,000 guilders and the vice principal 700 guilders: a lot of money. Teachers earned either 500 or 600 guilders per year. The rest of the money was mainly spent on books, pens and paper. At the end of the century, the city-government became more concerned with public education and in 1703 the first public school for the poor was established. Thirty years later number two and three would follow. Ibid. 193.

Figure 1. *Categorical developments in total per capita expenditure Leiden, 1612 and 1666*



Let us now go back to how we can explain the total per capita decline in Leiden. Figure 1 shows few developments in terms of scope. In 1666 infrastructure and general administration are still, by far, the largest categories. Expenditure on law and order increased significantly, probably because more effort was necessary to maintain order in the growing city. The increases in social care and education can also be directly related to the growing number of people, poor and children. The government did not take up new responsibilities, nor did it push off older ones. When we keep in mind that there were many more people in need of services and that the city actively tried to keep them from leaving the city, it is highly unlikely that the decrease was caused by decreases in the scale on which services were provided. Lowering service-levels would not have served the city's interests well. If we assume that the relative level on which services were provided remained more or less the same, we can conclude that the scale increased. This would imply that public services were provided with greater efficiency. This greater efficiency may be explained from the high expenditure levels in 1612: government control was already extensive and the (institutional) infrastructure was in place. This meant that increases in the scale of services could occur in efficiently. Before we can test this hypothesis through the comparison with Utrecht, we need to look at one other possibility. Per capita decline of government expenditure can also have occurred if other institutions than the city

increased their scale and/or scope of operation. To see if this was the case, we will discuss the financial situations of the semi-governmental Almoners' Chamber and two hospitals; and the finances of three types of non-governmental institutions: guilds, neighbourhoods and courts of almshouses (*hoffes*).

The Almoners' Chamber derived its income from governmental subsidies, church- and door-to-door collections, inheritances, gifts and possessions. After 1675, it came to receive a share of the profit of the urban pawnshop, which had come under municipal control that same year. Dutch historian G.P.M. Pot describes continuous financial troubles of the Chamber in the eighteenth century.³⁰ For the seventeenth century few accounts have survived. In 1612, total expenditure came down to 36,000 guilders, while the fixed annual income was around 8,000 guilders. Although this income was supplemented by subsidies, gifts etc. expenses were not fully covered. In 1612, permission was asked for two extra door-to-door collections and both collected around 3,800 guilders.³¹

The three parish hospitals were not united until far into the eighteenth century, but around the turn of the seventeenth century some reforms took place. These reforms were financed through a huge lottery in 1596. Two hospitals merged and a specialized pestilence- and mental institution was connected to the hospitals. Outside the city a hospital for plague victims was built. Both hospitals, the Lady Elisabeth hospital and the St. Catharine hospital, were under control of the city. Accounts of the two hospitals show similar patterns. Most income came from charitable gifts and rents from land in and around Leiden.³² For both churches we see an increase in expenditure that is caused by higher expenditures on food, maintenance and wages.³³ Leiden's magistrate controlled the provision of all public relief, whether it was poor relief, orphan care, health care or care for the elderly. Demographic growth probably led to more activity in the semi-public institutions, but no institutional changes or drastically increasing expenses can be discerned. The existing framework remained in

³⁰ G.P.M. Pot. *Arm Leiden, Levensstandaard, bedeling en bedeelden, 1750-1854*, (Hollandse Studiën 31, Hilversum: Verloren, 1994), 164-170.

³¹ RAL, Stadsarchief van Leiden 1574-1816.

³² A. Schmidt. *Overleven na de dood, weduwen in Leiden in de Gouden Eeuw*, (Amsterdam, Prometheus/Bert Bakker, 2001), 180-6.

³³ The Lady Elisabeth hospital's income was around 11,000 guilders both in 1612 and in 1666. In 1612, a little over 7,000 guilders were derived from rents and interest and in 1666, this type of income was even higher: almost 9,000 guilders. In 1612, the Lady Elisabeth spent 9,910 guilders; in 1666, 13,274. The capacity, income and expenditure of the Catherine hospital were about twice as high as the Lady Elisabeth's. RAL, Archieven van de gasthuizen.

place and the institutions, one way or another, coped with the increasing number of people in need. We will now see whether non-governmental institutions took up more responsibilities.

In several Dutch cities, guilds served as frameworks in which mutual support was organized. Special funds were established through the guilds to support sick members and widows, and to fund funerals of their members. The establishment of these funds was not common in Leiden.³⁴ We will have a look at the financial situation of two guilds. The *Lakenbereiders*-guild spent 1,079 guilders in 1666 and always held 5,000 in the cash register. Not one guilder of this was spent on forms of mutual support. In 1612, the goldsmiths spent 58 guilders and received 86 guilders. The 56 guilders were spent on their jack-of-all-trades and on coals, beer and dinners. In 1666, they received 220 guilders of which they spent 216, mostly on beer, coals and dinners.³⁵ It is clear that the financial structure of the guilds was by no means capable of financially facilitating social care.

From the early seventeenth century, a new initiative for mutual support came from servants in crafts and in industries in the form of special funds: *bussen* and *beurzen*.³⁶ Very few of these were organized through guilds. Between 1621 and 1670, 34 funds were established on the basis of a profession. A little later in the early and mid eighteenth century, general funds, available to all who could afford it, were created. There were funds that were based on religion or origin and funds that were installed for widows, funerals and sickness. Funds were small and care was only provided for short periods of time. *Beurzen* were installed on private initiative, but permission of the city was required. In summary, mutual social security in Leiden was not organized through the horizontal guilds, as it was in Amsterdam or the vertical *neringen*, but through collective initiatives of employees. Not the craft, but the need for social security was the basis of the collective organization. This collective risk sharing could prevent members from falling just a little deeper. The real poor, however, had no access to these organizations.

The impact of family and illegal activities is hard to measure and will not be discussed here but a quick word on the institution of neighbourhoods is inevitable in

³⁴ For a survey of the position of guilds in Leiden, see: De Vries et al., "Het economische leven", 101-3.

³⁵ RAL, Archieven van de gilden, de beurzen en de rederijderskamers.

³⁶ See: Bos, "Uyt liefde tot malcander".

this survey.³⁷ Their responsibilities, although not always financial, should not be underestimated. It was very difficult to escape from the organizations and people were heavily fined, if they did not participate in the obligatory activities.³⁸ A quick look at the accounts of the neighbourhoods shows that their functions were largely practical, not financial. Most neighbourhoods had only a few hundred guilders in their accounts, derived from fines and gifts, and spent on servants and dinners.³⁹

A typical Dutch private initiative was the establishment of the courts-of-almshouses. Private persons - inspired by religious motivations, founded these small groups of small houses as early as the Middle Ages. Accommodation was free as long as the inhabitants behaved as they were expected to. The purpose of these houses was to accommodate poor, older women, but family members of the founder(s) often had first choice and in some courts men were allowed too. After the Reformation all courts of almshouses came under supervision of the Reformed church or the city. In practice, even when the church was in control, the city always had final supervising authorities. We will view accounts of two courts-of-almshouses: the St. Annahofje on the Hooigracht and the Jeruzalemshofje. The accounts of the latter show that expenses doubled between 1612 and 1666 from 1,243 to 2,450 guilders. Most money was derived from rents and interest and spent on food, fuel and drinks for the inhabitants. The average annual income of the St. Annahof was 2,442 guilders between 1664 and 1668, mostly derived from annuities. Again, most was spent on distribution of food, fuel and drinks.⁴⁰

We see that even non-governmental institutions found themselves under the control of the urban government. Between 1612 and 1666, we do not see the emergence of new urban services or new types of providers, except for the servants' *beurzen*. In short, it seems as if very little changed in terms of allocation. The institutional framework and the range of public services remained in place, while both the volume and efficiency increased under the pressure of population growth. The high expenditure levels of 1612 are indications of a relatively developed urban 'infrastructure'. This enabled the city to take in many new inhabitants, keep up existing service levels and to lower per capita expenditure.

³⁷ See for a discussion on different types of (social) security arrangements: Van Gerwen and van Leeuwen, *Studies over zekerheidsarrangementen*.

³⁸ Based on K. Walle. *Burengebruiken en buurtorganisaties in Leiden (14e-19e eeuw)* (Leiden: Ginkgo, 2005).

³⁹ RAL, Stadsarchief van Leiden 1574-1816.

⁴⁰ RAL, Archieven van de hofjes.

Utrecht

In Utrecht, per capita expenditure increased in total and in all categories. As was the case in Leiden, most money was spent in category one. In 1621, it was more than two-third and in 1669, more than half of the total amount. Per capita, fifteen percent more was spent on general administration, justice and finance. Repayments, interest and rents accounted for most of this increase. In 1621, almost all of the 21,230 guilders spent in this subcategory came from unspecified annuities (17,604). In 1669, 12,878 guilders were spent on the repayment of a loan for the financing of a new clock on the Dom tower; almost 7,000 guilders were spent on interest on unspecified annuities; and a little over 10,000 guilders spent on interest, came from capital that had been borrowed to buy lands west of the city and to build the barge-canal between Leiden and Utrecht.⁴¹ The second figure that stands out in this category is the immense decline in payment of taxes to the States in 1669. This subcategory is almost certainly incomplete. Utrecht was not free from tax obligations in 1669, nor did taxes decline according to the surveys in *Gewestelijke Financien ten tijde van de Republiek*.⁴² According to the figures in there, taxes even rose. We have not found an explanation for the low expenditure on provincial taxes. If higher tax obligations were included in the accounts, per capita expenditure would go up even more and accordingly the differences between the cities would be even bigger. If we leave out this subcategory for both cities, the per capita developments would be: - 46 percent for Leiden and + 119 percent for Utrecht.

Category two is marked by a large per capita increase: expenses on law and order increased by 756 percent from 0.02 guilders to 0.17 guilders. In 1621, it was spent on guards at the city-gates. In 1669, when there were more guards and more gates, expenditure increased with fifty percent to 0.03 guilders. Although the civic militia had been in place from the Middle Ages and was an important group in the city, no payment can be found in the accounts of 1621. In 1669, 4,702 guilders were provided by the city for the militia. The people in Utrecht came to pay much more per capita on infrastructure in 1669 (1.07 guilders against 0.33 in 1621). As mentioned before, economic growth enabled the city to upgrade its appearance by renovating,

⁴¹ The largest amount of interest, 13,532 guilders, was paid to bailiffs of convents, hospitals, churches, the Almoners' Chamber, the Crafts' Chamber and several individuals.

⁴² S.W. Verstegen et al. *Gewestelijke financiën ten tijde van de Republiek der Verenigde Nederlanden (Deel 5, Utrecht (1579-1798))*, (Instituut voor Nederlandse Geschiedenis, Kleine Serie 105, 2006).

building and embellishing the city. We see that more wood, stones, glass, tin, oil, rope, iron and other materials were bought; and against 5,213 in 1621, 10,025 guilders were spent in 1669 on wages of workmen. The scale of operation in this category was clearly higher in 1669.

No expenses are found in the accounts of 1621, regarding urban expenses on fire safety, public lighting, garbage and sewage. From 1573, the city was divided in seven or eight neighbourhoods with sheriffs at the head of the neighbourhood. The inhabitants carried the financial burden of the maintenance of canals, wells, pumps and sewage.⁴³ The sheriffs were responsible for water supply and draining, maintenance, fire escapes, lighting. Inhabitants of these quarters paid for the services in this category, directly or indirectly, through the sheriffs. Like in Leiden, the only expense in this category that was related to firefighting was the maintenance of leather water buckets.⁴⁴ We see no direct government contribution to the services related to supervision of market goods and trading for 1621. For 1669, we found one expense that can be related to involvement in economic affairs. Utrecht's government paid the relatively large sum of 2,500 guilders to an official in the textile-industry, who was responsible for supervision of workings of the industry.

In 1621, Utrecht spent 300 guilders on surgeons for the poor (an additional 100 guilders were paid to the surgeons by the Leewenberghgasthuis). The city did not provide for poor relief directly. The accounts of the Almoners' Chamber show that the city partly paid for the relief the Chamber offered, but no traces of this can be located in the accounts of 1669. The year before, 2,250 guilders were paid to the administrator of the Almoners' Chamber.⁴⁵ In that same year, the amount of 4,000 guilders was spent on the Crafts' Chamber and 1,300 guilders on the House of Correction. A small amount was paid to the bookkeeper of the Guardians' Chamber. The Guardians' Chamber was set up in 1623, to keep control of the inheritances of orphans in the Civic Orphanage. In 1669, 2,120 guilders were paid to the administrator of the House of Correction. The rest was paid to the *Cellebroeders*, a

⁴³ N. van der Monde. *Geschied- en oudheidkundige beschrijving van de Pleinen, Straten, Stegen, Waterleidingen, Wedden, Putten en Pompen, de Stad Utrecht*, deel 1-3. (Utrecht, 1844)

⁴⁴ In December 1666, Utrecht followed cities like London and Amsterdam with formal ordinances on public street lighting. From October 1st to February 1st, all lanterns in the city had to be lit by night.⁴⁴ The organization of public lighting was in the hands of the city council. Although she ordered lanterns, oil, candles and servants to maintain and fill the lamps, the city did not pay for it. People, on whose houses a lantern was put, were obliged to pay the costs. The house owners paid four guilders per year for the buying, installing, lighting, filling and maintenance of the lanterns.

⁴⁵ RAL, Stadsarchief van Leiden 1574-1816.

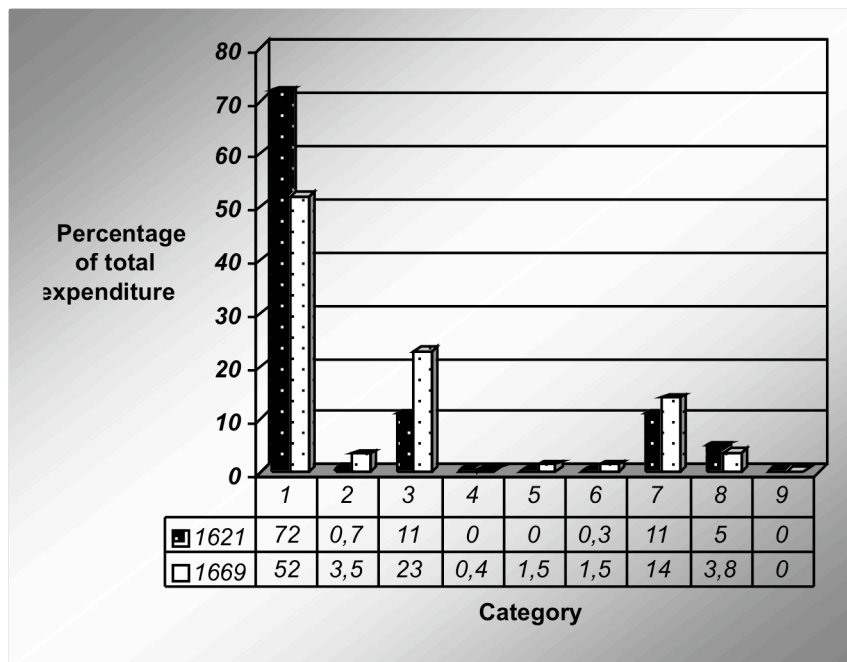
medieval religious order with nursing functions and doctors. The increase is very large, both in total and per capita, but it does not tell us much about increases or decreases in scale or scope for public relief. Obviously, the city's involvement in controlling relief, had increased after 1621.

On public worship, Utrecht already spent a relatively large amount in 1621: almost 10,000 guilders. This more than doubled in 1669, to 22,202 guilders, a per capita increase of one hundred and six percent. Most of this money was spent on salaries and house rental for preachers. In the 1640's and 1650's, more positions were created for preachers and this meant a serious financial burden for the city. On several occasions Utrecht asked financial support from the States General in paying the preachers.⁴⁶ As in most cities, there was only one public school: the Latin school. The government of Utrecht paid the schoolteachers of this school and paid for housing and maintenance of the houses. These expenses increased by eighteen percent per capita in 1669, to 0.18 guilders. No new expenditure categories are found, which indicates that this increase was one in terms of scale, rather than scope. In the *Collegium Willibrordus*, a non-governmental institution for poor young men, education was given for free and the city contributed a few guilders, both in 1621 and in 1669. As mentioned earlier, the University was installed and almost entirely financed by the city of Utrecht in 1636, through the confiscated properties of former catholic convents and fraternities. No expenses on the University were found in the accounts of 1668 or 1669.

Per capita expenditure grew by sixty percent between 1621 and 1669, clearly due to overall expansion in scale and new expenditure (sub) categories (see figure 2). These increases in both scale and scope are indications of increased government organization.

Figure 2. *Categorical developments in total per capita expenditure Utrecht, 1621 and 1669*

⁴⁶ Faber and Rommes, 254.



The costs of realizing this increase were apparently high, contributing to relatively high per capita costs for the people of Utrecht. The government must have felt forced to, or desired to, increase municipal service levels. This increase was very costly, which leads to believe that Utrecht lacked the institutional framework necessary for higher service levels or the development thereof. Before we refine this conclusion, we will have a look at what happened in the semi-governmental and non-governmental spheres.

By 1621, the only semi-governmental institution was the House of Correction. This institute was set up in the former St. Nicholasconvent in 1615. The selling of confiscated property of catholic fraternities funded the establishment. The budget of the House in 1669 was around 4,000 guilders.⁴⁷ City government contributed 2,225 guilders and almost the same amount was spent on costs directly related to boarding the detained. In 1623, the Crafts' Chamber was established. Its purpose was to provide for orphans who could not get into the Civic Orphanage. In practice, they boarded children out to individuals, who used (and often abused) them as servants. Its budget in 1669 was 17,785 guilders and most was derived from inheritances and gifts, the sinking and transporting of the dead and donations of the Reformed deacons.⁴⁸ The Almoners' Chamber was established in 1628, and unlike its counterpart in

⁴⁷ GAU, Stadsarchief II.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

Leiden, it was just one of the providers of poor relief. Its budget was around 40,000 guilders in 1669. Most income was derived from urban and provincial governments, collections and income related to the task of burying and transporting the dead. Of the 38,702 guilders spent in 1669, 33,599 guilders were spent on endowments and alms. The rest was mainly spent on rents, surgeons and pharmacists.⁴⁹ The accounts of the semi-governmental institutions show that the government was active in funding. We clearly see how government control was expanded after 1621 through the establishment of new institutions. There was, however, no integrated relief system like there was in Leiden; hospitals, foundations, guilds and churches played vital roles in providing social care. Perhaps, developments in the sphere of non-governmental institutions can explain the developments in the city's expenditure. We will now look at the finances of some of these non-governmental organizations.

Utrecht was home to many guilds from as early as the thirteenth century. The twenty-one 'old guilds' had held political power for over two centuries.⁵⁰ When Charles V took over power in 1528, the guilds lost their political power, but kept their social economic function. Guilds and city council together, tried to control economic activities and stimulate Utrecht's economic position. Between 1570 and 1688, the number of guilds grew from twenty-two to forty. The social function was hardly ever formalized in rules regarding mutual support, except for the arrangement of funerals. Some guilds handed out alms in church on Sundays, but this was informal and only possible when members had left their inheritance to the guild. The guilds did not offer support from the funds of the guilds. One look at the accounts of most guilds, shows that this would have been difficult indeed, since the general funds were surprisingly small. The guild of cloth weavers, spent 225 guilders in 1621 and 58 in 1670; the antique-cutters spent 16 guilders in 1621 and only 10 guilders in 1670 (their income was 9 guilders). Almost all income was spent on salaries, dinners and turf.⁵¹ Most guilds did not collect membership fees.

Within most guilds, special funds were established for structural support in case of death or illness. These funds were on a voluntary basis and a contribution was required. Most of these special funds were installed after 1650. Pensions were hardly ever handed out, but short-term support during illness and the payment of funeral

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Van Schaik, 192.

⁵¹ GAU, Bij het stadsarchief bewaarde archieven: Archieven der gilden.

costs were common. Compared to Amsterdam, the financial means of these funds were small. Although budgets were small and mutual aid was not formalized, the guilds had more social tasks than in many other cities: they were supposed to contribute to the infrastructure of the city and the wellbeing of all deserving poor in the city.⁵² Guilds were expected to aid the semi-governmental institutions described above, to aid the neighbourhoods and to hand out alms in the churches.

The Buurkerk and the St. Nicolaaskerk were both parish churches. The Buurkerk stood in the middle of town, and its budget was more than three times as high as the budget of the St. Nicolaaskerk. The Buurkerk spent around 4,500 guilders in 1621 and in 1666, of which 648 guilders were spent on non-monetary alms (*preuves*) in 1621 and 846 in 1669. The St. Nicolaaskerk was located in the southeast part of town and spent only 603 guilders on other expenses than poor relief in 1621 and 842 guilders in 1669. Expenditure on poor relief increased little over the years: 630 guilders in 1621 and 651 guilders in 1669. The support offered by churches, consisted almost exclusively of alms of butter and bread.⁵³

Little had changed after the Reformation for foundations such as the courts of almshouses. They functioned as before and the deaconate or wealthy individuals established some new foundations. Many old foundations kept their catholic character. Some of these foundations offered free housing while others only provided alms. In 1621, the St. Margaretenhof spent 1,900 guilders and in 1669, 3,672 guilders, of which the sum of 1,900 guilders was a loan to the city. The Margaretenhof could accommodate about twenty-six elderly. Most income was derived from rents and interest. Annual budgets of former catholic relief institutions were used to finance the expenses on the University. The Begijnhof spent almost 3,000 guilders more in 1669 than in 1621 (6,251). This increase was mainly caused by payments on salaries and wine for professors at the University: 3,240 guilders. The rest of the budget was spent on alms, maintenance, salary and rents. The budget of the former St. Nicolaasconvent also held payments to the University: 2,080 guilders in 1669. The Heilige Geesthuis remained in function as a foundation and spent a little over 4,000 guilders in 1621 and

⁵² Bos, 243-250.

⁵³ GAU, Archieven der Kerken.

almost 5,000 in 1669. About half of this was spent on alms for the poor; the rest was mainly spent on loans and salaries.⁵⁴

The hospitals were, almost without exception, transformed into homes for the elderly. They were meant for a couple of dozen elderly: people who lived there for free and *proveniers* who had their own rooms.⁵⁵ The Heilige Kruis Gasthuis accommodated between twenty and forty women in the seventeenth and eighteenth century. Between 1621 and 1669, the annual expenses more than doubled to 11,000 guilders. Almost 7,000 of these 11,000 guilders were loaned by the city. Other expenses were, for example, 1,400 guilders on food and drinks and a few hundred guilders on maintenance and salaries. The St. Maartengasthuis had a smaller budget: around 2,000 guilders in 1622 and 3,400 in 1669. It held only eight people in 1603. The St. Catherijnegasthuis came to be an academic hospital and the Leeuwenberghgasthuis a hospital for victims of the plague. Two special hospitals were the Dolhuis, a house for the insane, and the *Armennoodhulp*. The former spent most of its budget on food and fuel and the rest on rent and interest.⁵⁶ The *Armennoodhulp* was no hospital, but a poor relief institution under control of three hospitals. It handed out peat every fourteen days to the sheriffs of the neighbourhoods and gave bread and clothes to other hospitals to hand out to the poor.⁵⁷

Between 1621 and 1669, some new foundations and new guilds were established and hospitals more and more developed into homes for the elderly. The range and scale of services and providers in the non-governmental sector remained relatively stable, while new semi-governmental institutions developed. This indicates that the expansion of government responsibility did not develop at the expense of existing institutions. These smaller institutions continued to serve their purposes after the establishment of semi-governmental institutions. This can be partly explained by the different tasks of the two types of institutions. New semi-governmental organizations were set up for relieving and disciplining of the poor, whereas several non-governmental institutions, like guilds, aimed at prevention of poverty for the

⁵⁴ GAU, Bij het stadsarchief bewaarde archieven: Archieven der kloosters; Archieven der godshuizen en fundatien.

⁵⁵ Ibid, 275.

⁵⁶ In 1621 the total expenditure was 4,044 guilders and in 1669 5,416 guilders.

⁵⁷ In 1621 it spent 10,860 guilders, of which 2,657 on peat, 1,502 guilders on food and 1,888 guilders on other alms. The rest was spent on rents and interest. By 1669, the *Armennoodhulp* paid almost 2,500 guilders on clothes for the poor, almost 3,000 on peat and 1,500 on food (in total 8,447 guilders were spent in 1669). GAU, Bij het stadsarchief bewaarde archieven: Archieven der gasthuizen.

middle classes. The provision and organization of public services was fragmented in 1621. In 1669, the provision of public services was still fragmented, but in terms of organization, the city government had taken up more responsibilities. We have observed that this was translated into the establishment of new institutions by urban government initiative and in higher municipal expenditures. The establishment of the new institutions by the government confirms the idea that low per capita levels in 1621 and fast growing per capita expenditure levels were caused by the relatively low levels of government control and low service levels in 1621.

Conclusions

Let us now come back to the initial differences in budgets between Leiden and Utrecht. We sketched four possible explanations for the differences in budget size. The first scenario was that in Utrecht people paid less, because fewer types of services were supplied. Another possibility was that they paid less, because the scale of supply was smaller. The third option was that they paid less for the same (or even larger) range because quality was lower or efficiency was greater (services would have been cheaper). The final scenario was that perhaps the levels of spending were in fact comparable, but that in Utrecht little of the total sum spent on services was paid through municipal institutions. If the latter were true, we should have seen relatively high levels of non-municipal expenditure in 1621 in Utrecht. This was not the case. The provision of services in Utrecht was more fragmented, but budgets of the different non-governmental institutions, like churches, guilds and almshouses do not add up to the difference in budget size we see in table 1. There were no institutions that could have taken up the same level of financial responsibility for services in Utrecht. Furthermore, we would have seen a decrease in budgets of non-governmental institutions in 1669, when the government was taking up more public tasks and this was also not the case. The institutions existed and developed side by side.

The third option suggested greater levels of efficiency in Utrecht. We have seen that in Leiden rapid population growth did not result in a wider range of services, but rather an increase in scale. At the same time, total per capita expenditure declined considerably, leading us to believe that the enlargement of the volume of services stimulated greater efficiency. There is no reason to believe that the government of Utrecht was able to offer the same range of services more cheaply (thus more

efficiently) than Leiden's government in 1621. If efficiency levels were already that high in 1621, the growth of per capita expenditure in the following years makes no sense. This growth suggests rather the opposite: the municipal framework in 1621 was insufficiently developed to cope with the twelve percent population growth, which occurred between 1621 and 1669. We have now taken the edge of scenario three and four, which leaves us with the issues of the scale and scope of government responsibilities.

If we look at the scope of government expenditure, we quickly see that Leiden's city authorities were active in more types of services. Second, in terms of scale, they spent more in each category, except in the domain of public worship. We have observed that expanding the city was expensive, but this category cannot exclusively explain the relatively large total and per capita expenditure in 1612. In all categories, expenditure was considerably higher than it was in Utrecht. In some categories, Leiden spent more than Utrecht, because its scale of operation was bigger and in other categories the local government had already taken up responsibilities the government of Utrecht had not yet taken up. The municipal institutional frameworks in Leiden and Utrecht were significantly different in respectively 1612 and 1621.

In Leiden, the combination of a relatively high level of established government responsibility and rapid population growth, led to lower per capita expenditure. This indicates that Leiden was ready for the economic and demographic expansion it desired. By 1612, the city was able to make large investments and apparently there was no direct need to change the range of services provided *by* the city, nor the range offered *in* the city. In Utrecht, demographic developments led to increased population density, but the abolishment of Catholic property opened up the city and left empty buildings and areas to the city. Economic growth enabled the city to invest in public services. The range of services offered in the city remained much the same, but the government took up control, both in terms of scale and scope. Perhaps we can even hypothesize that Utrecht was catching up with governmental service levels in Holland (assuming that Leiden is representative for cities in Holland). Utrecht established several municipal institutions between 1621 and 1669. That this was costly, can be deduced from the rise in per capita expenditure.

What do these observations tell us about the role of population growth? The economic and institutional history of both cities shaped their response to the demographic growth. The impact of population growth cannot be assessed without

recognizing the institutional frameworks in which services were administered. We have seen that the developments in municipal per capita expenditure can be explained by institutional systems and population growth. The high level of government control in Leiden, meant that expenditure levels were relatively high in 1612 and that population growth could be realized, in relatively effective ways, bringing down per capita expenditure. Again, if we may consider Leiden typical for Holland, the implication of this study is, that the high levels of government control enabled cities in Holland to cope with the seventeenth century economic and demographic growth more adequately than other cities and even enlarging possibilities for economic growth. This may have forced other cities to catch up with cities in Holland through increasing government control and rising per capita costs.

A new question then arises: why was government control so much more developed in Leiden than in Utrecht? In his study on sixteenth century tax systems in Holland, J.D. Tracy has observed changes in the area of public finances in Holland.⁵⁸ Through funded debts, future revenues could be mobilized. He considers the changes so influential that he speaks of a financial revolution. His focus is on provincial finances, but urban centers were the backbone of the provincial tax systems. Further comparative inquiries are necessary to answer the question above, but the combination of findings in this study and Tracy's arguments invites us to pose a hypothesis. As financial systems in Holland evolved, urban governments became more effective. By achieving higher levels of government control, public services became integrated in a municipal system of financing and administration. Municipal financing and organization held distributional advantages and opportunities for efficiency improvements that were not possible in a system in which private initiative marked service provision. If we are right in assuming that financial systems in Holland were more developed than in the rest of the Republic, we can explain local differences in service levels, and perhaps even the spectacular economic growth in cities in Holland, more accurately.

⁵⁸ J.D. Tracy. *A financial revolution in the Habsburg Netherlands. Renten and renteniers in the county of Holland, 1515-1565* (Berkeley/Los Angeles/London: University of California Press, 198.

Sources and literature

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Stadsarchief Leiden 1574-1816 (SAII)

Archieven van de gasthuizen

Archieven van de Gilden, de Beurzen en de Rederijderskamers

Archieven van de hofjes

Archief van de Leidse Schutterij

Archief der Nederlands Hervormde diakonie te Leiden, waarin opgenomen de archieven van de Huiszittenmeesteren

GAU - Gemeentearchief Utrecht

Stadsarchief II

Archieven der Kerken

Bij het stadsarchief bewaarde archieven: Archieven der gilden, archieven der godshuizen en fundaties, archieven der gasthuizen, archieven der kloosters.

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