

# Ghent's Responses to Irregular Migrants

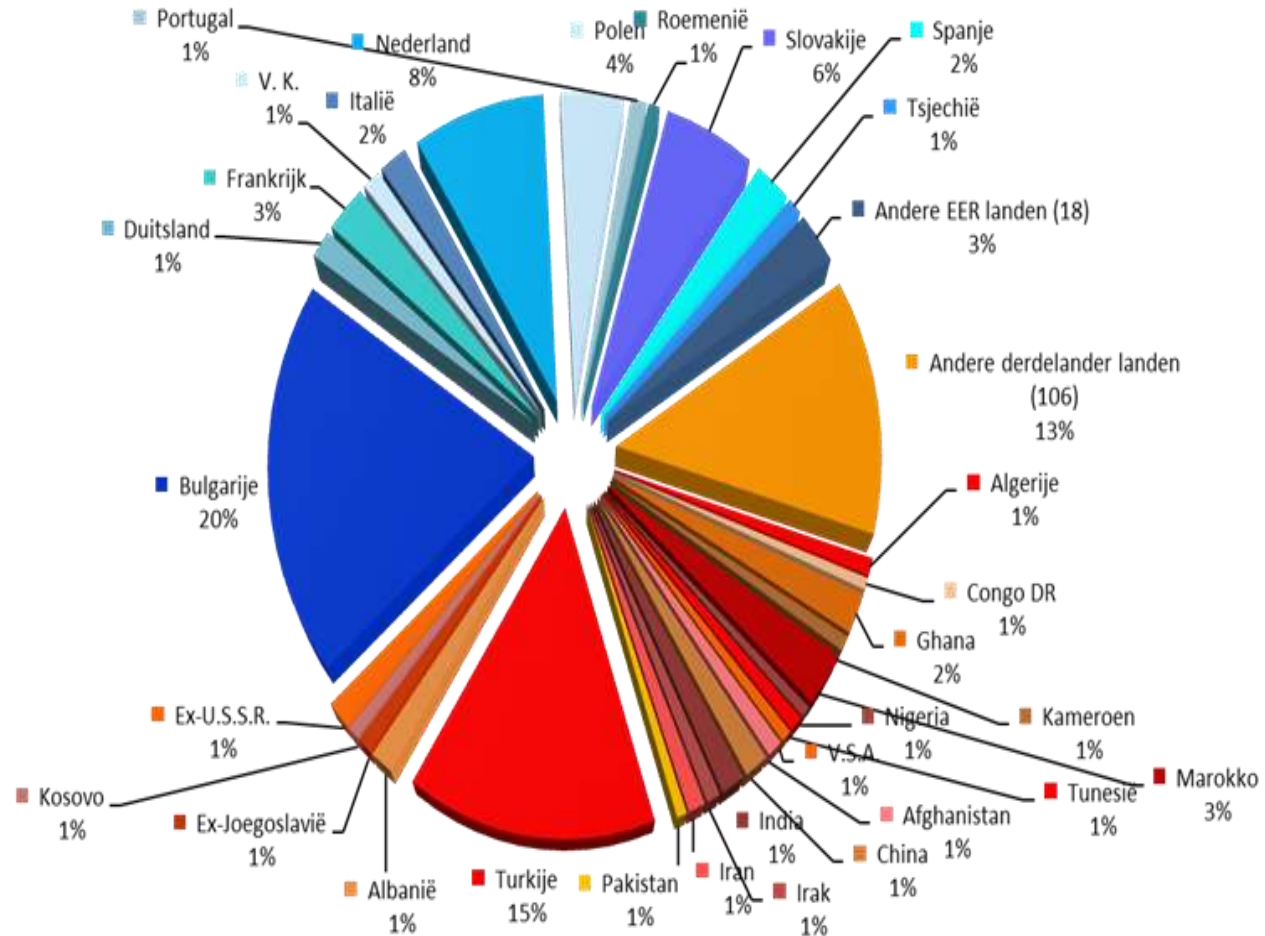
Barcelona, 16-17 October 2014

# Ghent and its citizens

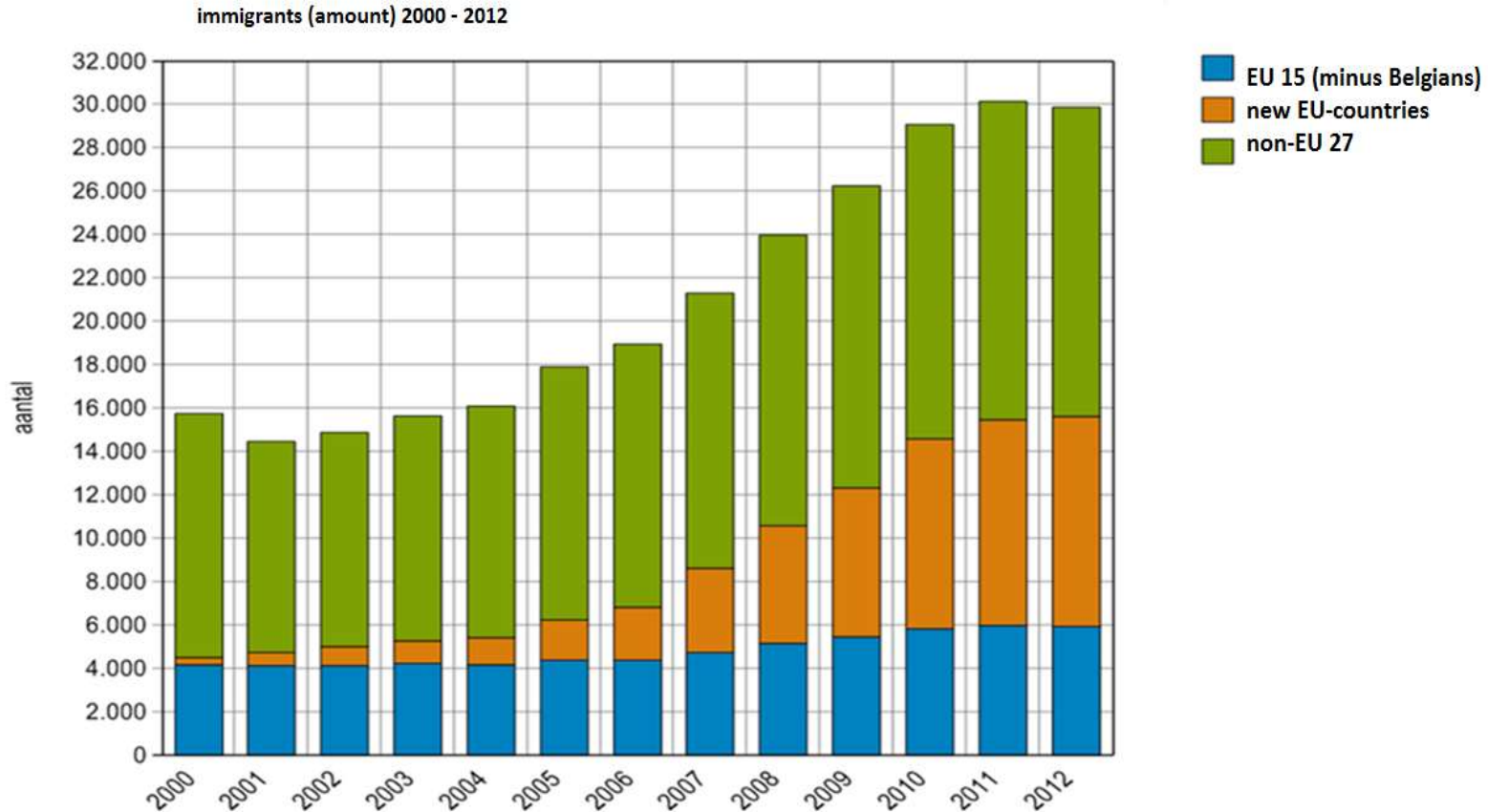
Population: 250.284 (2014)

- 31.675 immigrants (12,7%) from 159 countries
- 16.991 EU-citizens (6,8%)
- 57.161 ethnic-cultural minorities (22,8%)
- Slight female predominance (50,7%)

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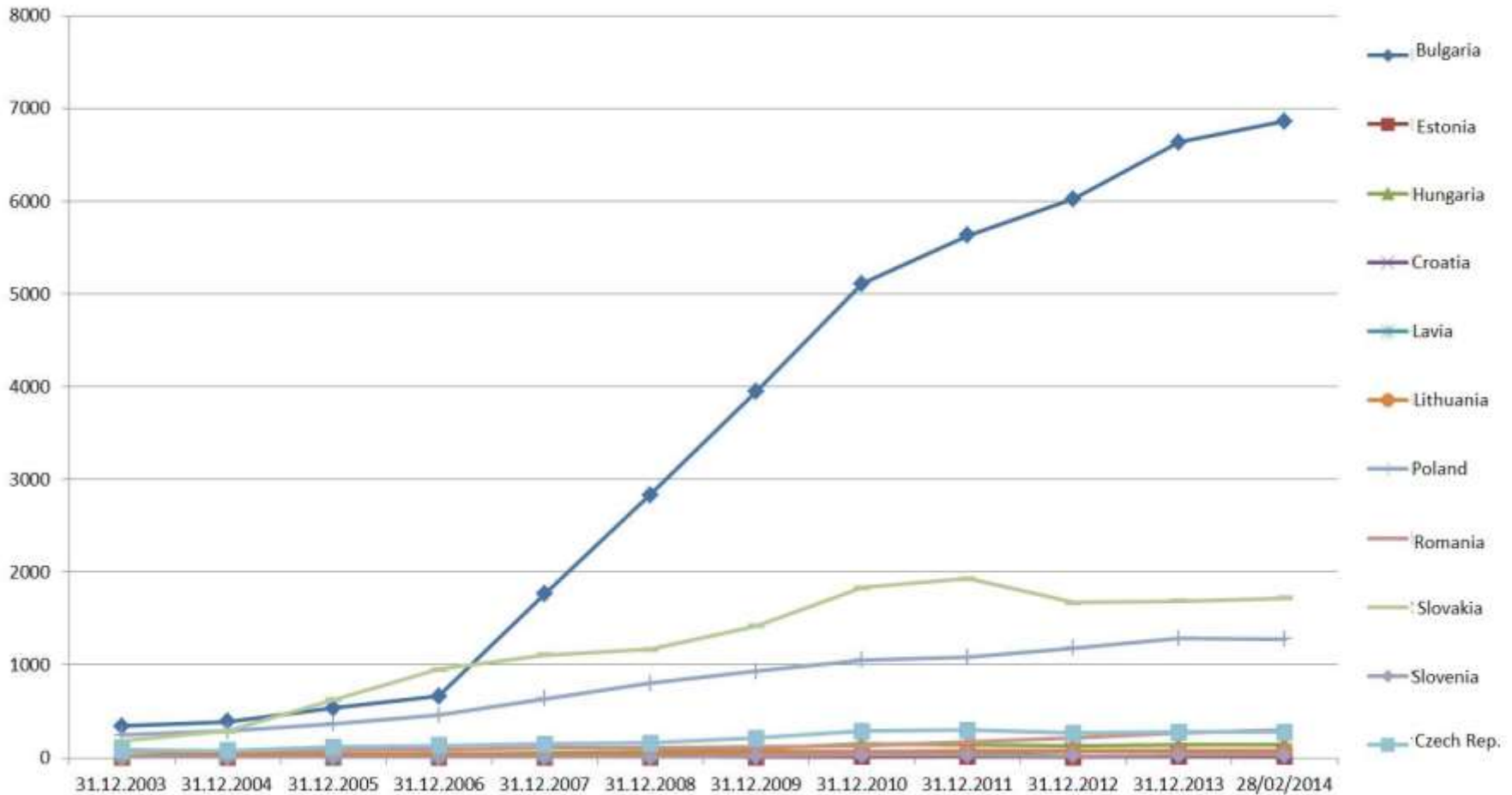


# Ghent and its citizens



Bron: Bevolkingsregister Stad Gent (bevolkings- en vreemdelingenregister)

# Ghent and its Citizens: Intra European Migrants (IEM)



# Ghent and its Citizens: Irregular Migrants

- Counting 'the uncountable'
- December 2013: 2.443 medical cards from Public Social Welfare organization (OCMW)
- Very divers group
- Union citizens: fading notion of irregular residency

# Local Policy Vision

- “Ghent is an **solidary and open society**”
- Two track policy
  - Solidarity → integration
  - ‘Enforcement’ → tackling abuse
- Various statements by the mayor about Irregular Migrants

# Local Policy Vision



**Kritiek Termont: 'Criminelen worden wel uitgezet'**  
(De Block) 19/08/2013 om 17:07

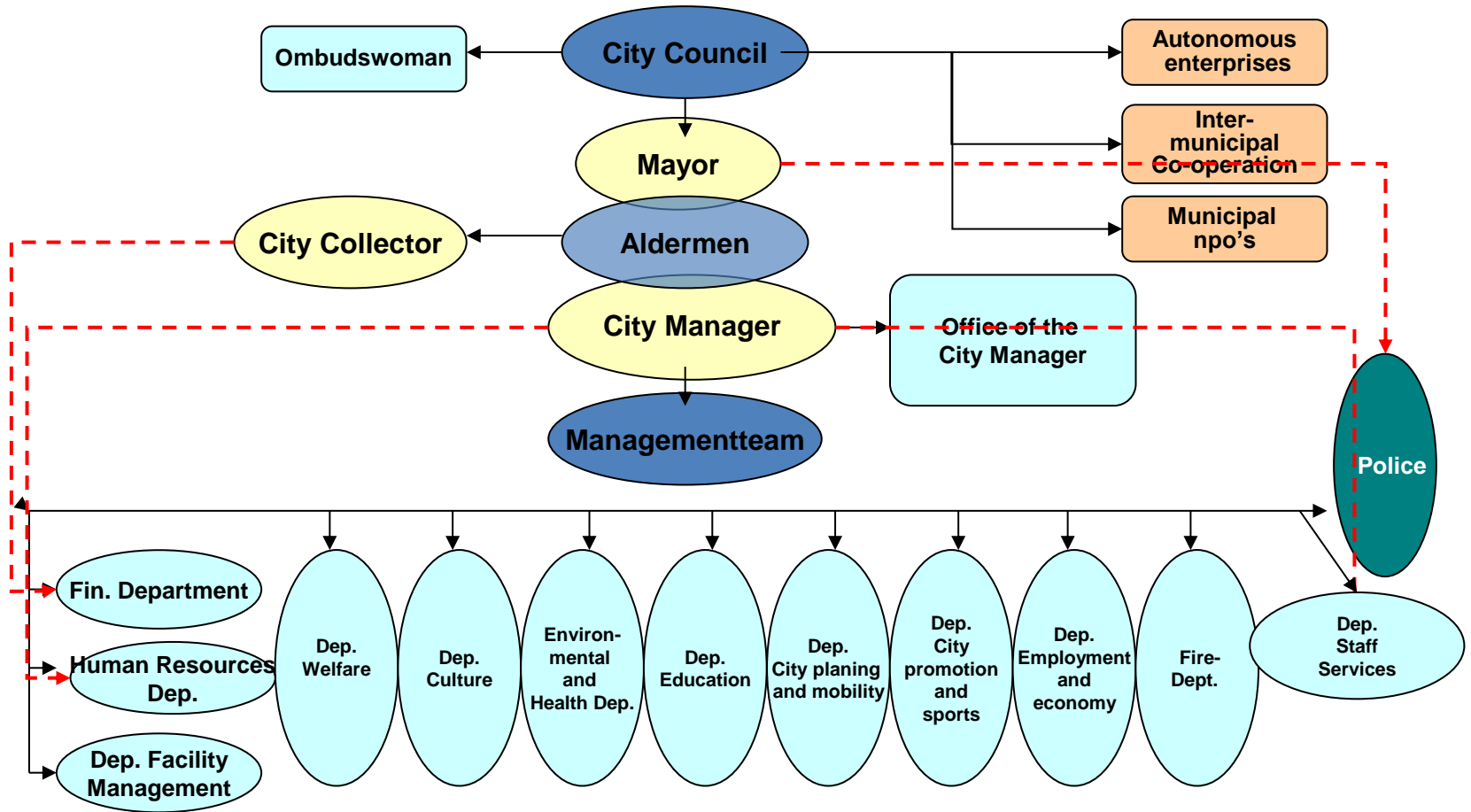
*Daniël Termont haalde hard uit naar het beleid van Maggie De Block. 'Kinderen zonder papieren worden van de schoolbanken geplukt en op het vliegtuig gezet, maar gangsters blijven vrij rondlopen'*

“Plucking children from school?  
Termonts’ outrage”

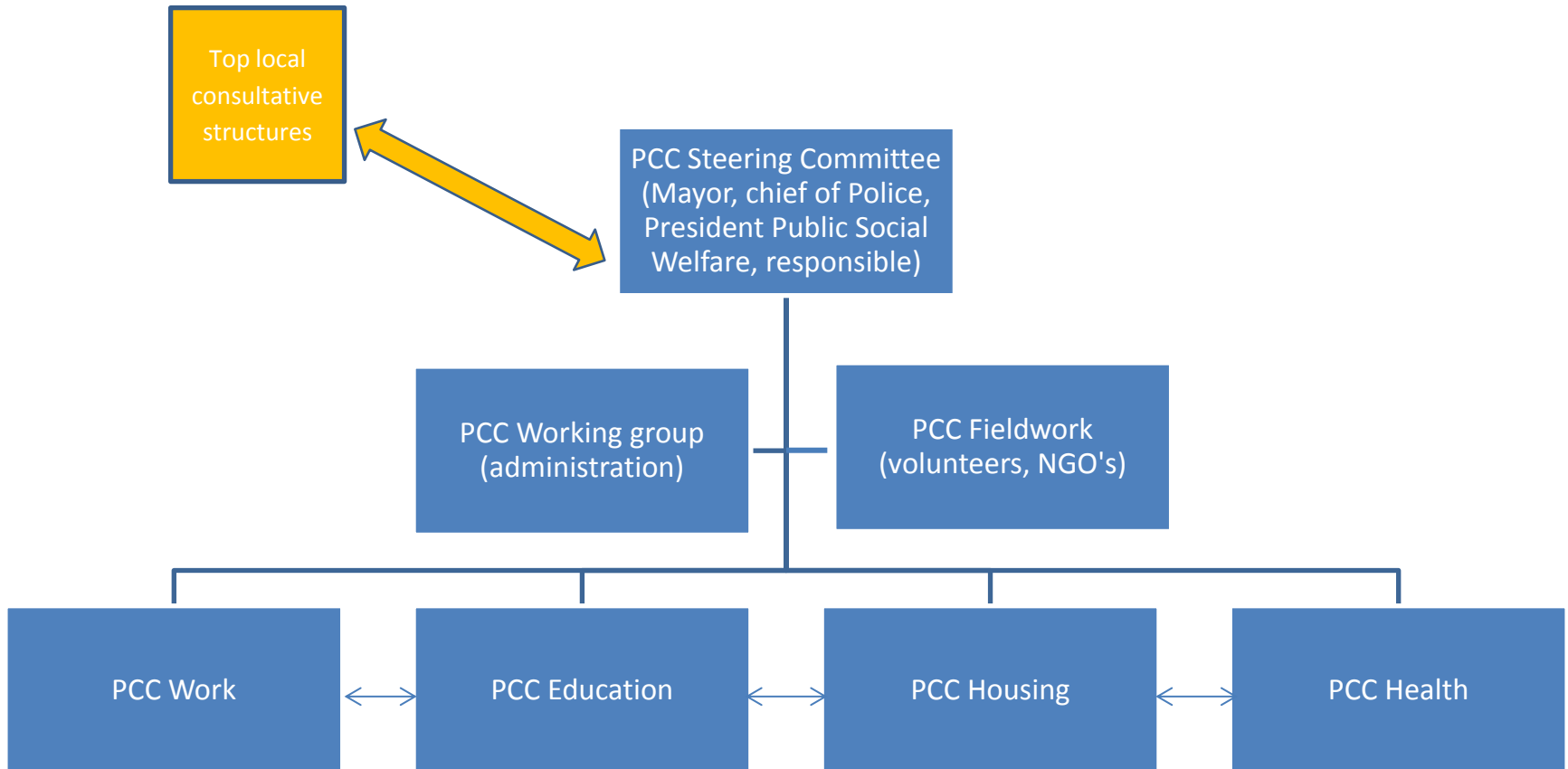
“Secretary of State for Asylum and Migration targets families rather than criminals”



# From Policy to Administration



# From Policy to Administration: Permanent Consultation Committee (PCC) on IEM



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- Horizontal and vertical coordination
- City-wide consultation structure:
  - PCC Steering group: political
  - PCC Workgroup: administration
  - PCC Fieldwork: NGO's, volunteers, self-organisations
  - Thematic working groups: housing, work, education and health: professionals
- Higher authorities:
  - Flanders, Federal, Benelux, EU, Council of Europe, EuroCities
- Countries of origin – liability of authorities

# From Policy to Administration: Integration Service



# From Policy to Administration: Info Point Migration

## Two pillars

### (1) administrative legal pillar

Informing citizens, intermediates and organizations about administrative juridical aspects of migration.

### (2) Translations

Organising a focal point for translating official documents in Dutch (costless).



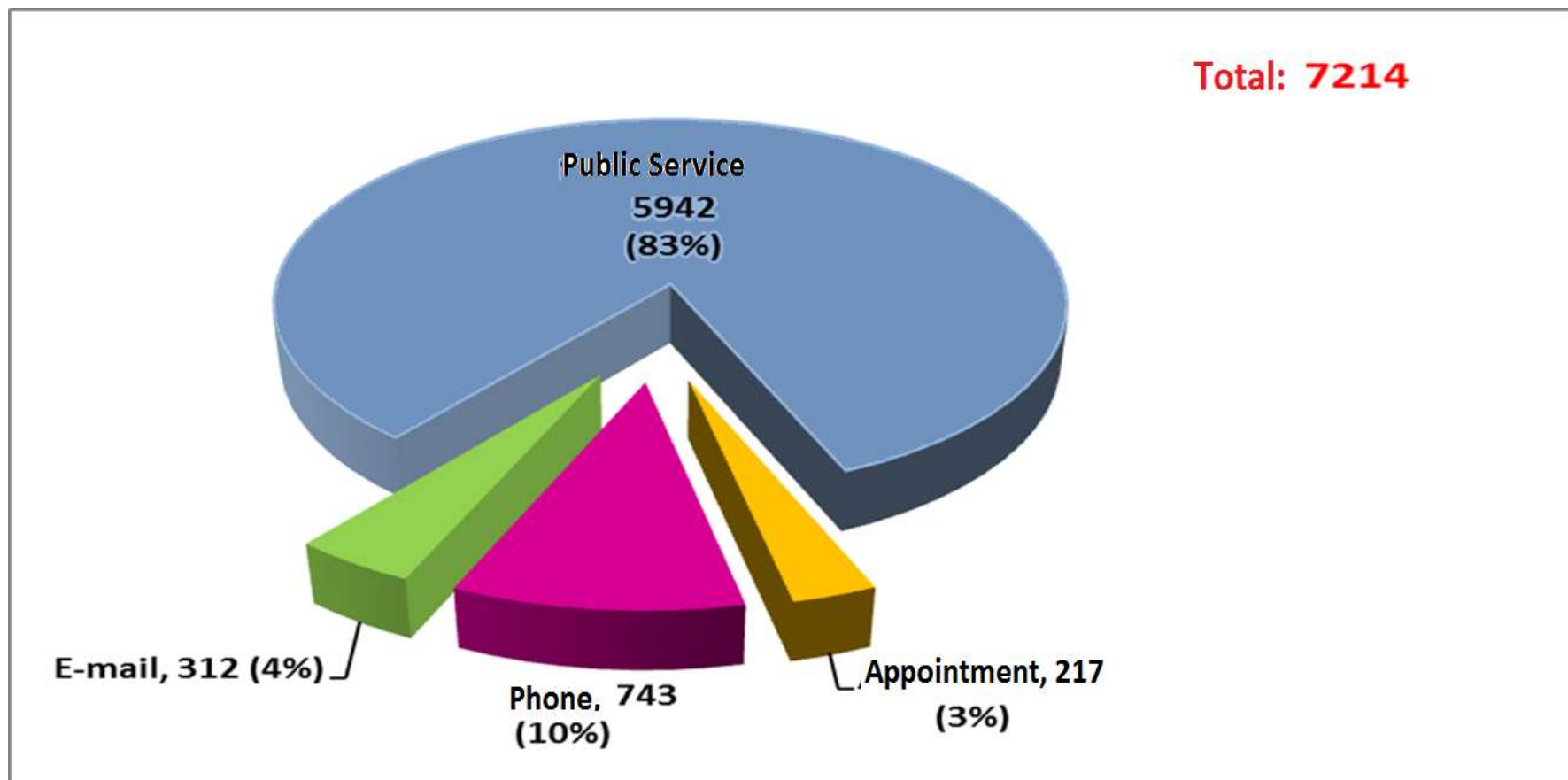
# From Policy to Administration: Info Point Migration

## Administrative legal pillar:

- Residence Law and Nationality Law
- Immigration Law (effects of Residence and Nationality Law in other areas of general law)
- The application of Foreign Law & recognition of foreign documents in Belgium (IPR-codex)

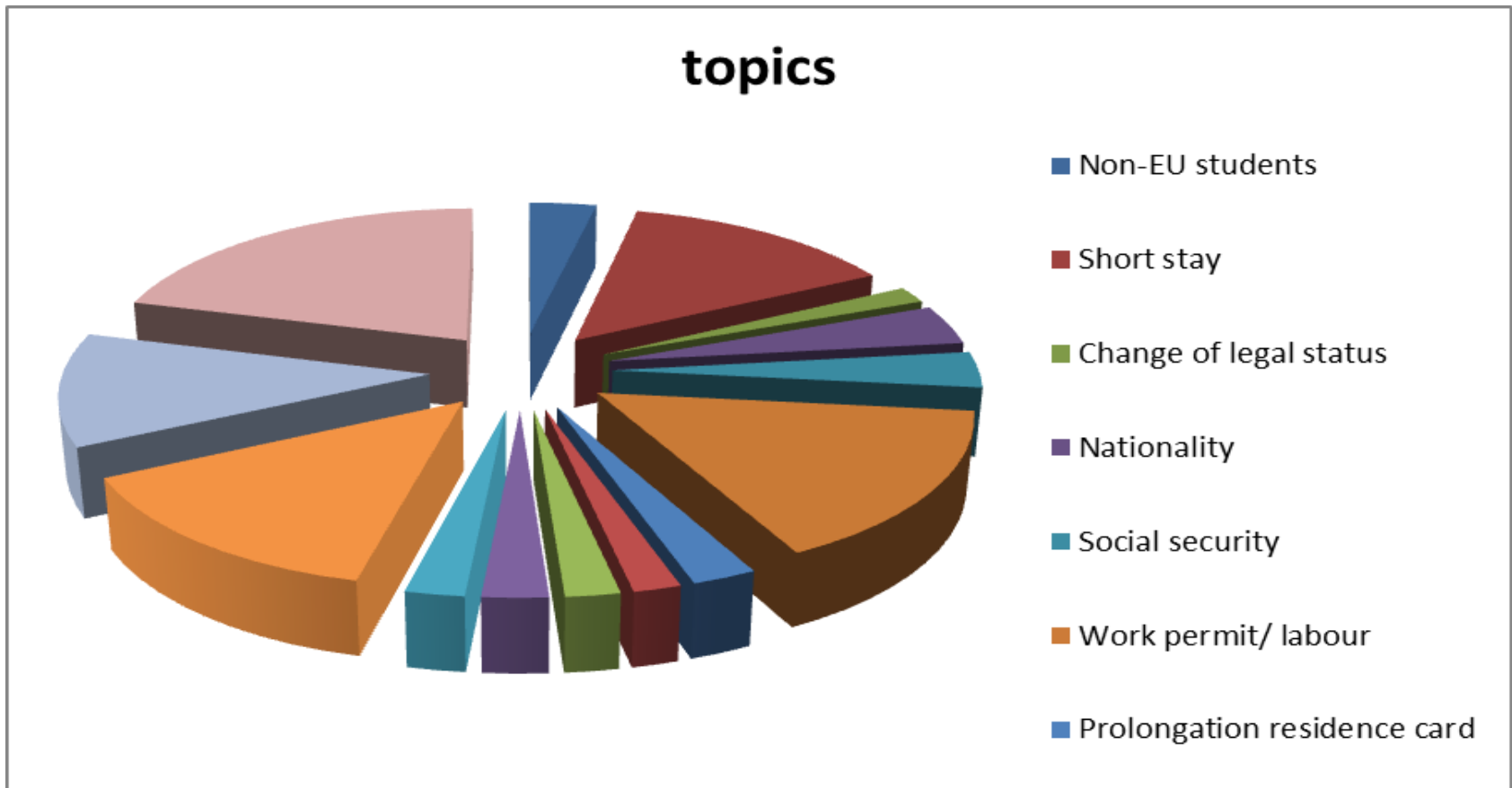
# From Policy to Administration: Info Point Migration

7.214 Q&A in 2013 (140 different nationalities)



# From Policy to Administration: Info Point Migration

Q&A about 8.684 topics (2013)





# From Policy to Administration: neighbourhood stewards

Three main tasks:

- Complaints handling: investigating and solving nuisance complaints through home visits together with relevant departments;
- Bridging: providing support to agencies and organisations in their mission to new EU-citizens and vice versa;
- Experimenting with methods/ approaches: case management, client consultation, counselling, chain management,... e.g. housing first projects