

Table 5.5: Custom self-declarations at airports: total cash amounts brought into the Netherlands by natural persons coming from third countries

Source country as country of origin	Number of travellers	Average per traveller	Total
United Arab Emirates	67	€27,045	€1,703,849
Kuwait	16	€45,594	€729,510
Morocco	4	€20,116	€80,467
Qatar	10	€52,988	€529,889
Saudi Arabia	7	€24,416	€146,501
Turkey	110	€33,164	€3,581,746
Nationals from source countries	Number of travellers	Average per traveller	Total
United Arab Emirates	30	€21,781	€87,125
Kuwait	14	€46,866	€515,536
Morocco	1	€19,075	€76,302
Qatar	5	€24,035	€72,106
Saudi Arabia	5	€24,619	€147,719
Turkey	58	€24,702	€1,556,256

Source: email correspondence customs representative (2014)

When cash is declared at airports a cash declaration form has to be completed which asks for the amount, the origin and the purpose for the cash. On the basis of the information provided, Customs occasionally start inquiries if there is a suspicion of money laundering. In the vast majority of cases however, the origin and purpose stated are not verified, nor can they easily be verified. The truth value of the declarations is thereby hard to establish. It is nevertheless unlikely that controversial origins and purposes of cash would be declared. A scan through the declarations for the subsamples of the table above shows that the origin mentioned is often a bank or 'my company', whereas a commonly mentioned purpose is to buy cars, trucks or building materials.

With regard to the possible funding of religious institutions therefore, it is difficult to derive any reliable information from the customs data. If foreign financing did occur through air travel, it would be hard to identify. Moreover, because of the internal market's free movement principle, amounts carried from other EU Member States are not monitored.

5.3.3. Information from diplomatic sources: embassies and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

The Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) may have access to information that concerns the funding provided by source countries to institutions in the Netherlands. During one of our interviews with a key informant, it was suggested that the MoFA has an understanding with diplomatic corps of certain source countries that the MoFA would be notified in case funding from that country were to be provided to Islamic institutions. A MoFA representative confirmed that certain countries indeed do provide information related to their funding activities. However, it is worth noting that based on our conversation

with the MoFA representative, this practice does not appear to be widespread or common to all countries whose diplomatic corps are present in the Netherlands. The MoFA representative did acknowledge that 'one or two' source countries from this study have provided the MoFA with information related to their funding activities in the Netherlands, but this information is not public.

Based on confidential information we were given access to, such data also appear to be limited. Although it contains names of institutions to which the funding has been provided and the dates when it was provided, amounts are not necessarily, or as a rule, included. In instances where there might be an agreement between the MoFA and one or more embassies of potential source countries, it would be possible to track foreign funding from these countries. Not only would this transparency help target intelligence agencies' efforts to monitor only those institutions where funding is actually reported, it would also improve trust between source country government and Dutch authorities and provide some assurance that the funding provided is used for the intended purpose. Such reporting would however always be dependent on the willingness of source countries to be transparent about their international funding activities. Equally, the sustainability of these arrangements would also depend on the willingness of the Dutch authorities not to violate this trust.

According to our sources, the MoFA agreed with diplomats from individual source countries that it is compliant with national legislation. In return, we were told, the MoFA requested that it would be informed about any recent or prospective financial transactions by the source country embassy in the Netherlands. These 'requests' would be reported to the national intelligence agency (AIVD), which in turn would investigate any potential threats to national security or the democratic rule of law.

5.4. Proxies for (sources of) funding

Some sources of information may not provide direct information about the size of foreign funding, but rather provide an indication of the existence or the origin of such funding. In this section, we discuss some of these sources.

5.4.1. Construction permits

Information in construction permit applications can provide background information about institutions that required such a permit for any construction or reconstruction. As construction permits fall under local responsibility, the information requested in such applications may differ between municipalities. As part of this feasibility study, we only requested access to permit applications in the two cities with the highest number of institutions, five and four respectively. Hence, our observations are limited to those two cities.

In City A, we were asked to visit the municipal archives and were allowed access to all records for those addresses. These records included all completed permit applications forms, correspondence between the applicant and the municipality, technical reports, technical drawings, visit reports, etc. However, the municipal administrators were unable to fulfil this request for integrated physical environment permits (since 2010).