Diversity and the European public sphere: the case of the Netherlands

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Diversity and the European Public Sphere
The Case of the Netherlands

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Suzanne van Hees

under the supervision of
Veit Bader

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Foreword

Hakan G. Sicakkan

The present report is one of the sixteen country studies that have been produced by the EUROSPHERE Consortium. EUROSPHERE is an integrated project which is funded by the European Commission within the EU’s 6th Framework Programme. The EUROSPHERE Consortium comprises seventeen European universities and research institutes and approximately 100 researchers work in the project’s different parts and phases. Two of our partners have now left the Consortium after having successfully completed their tasks in the project. The project is coordinated by this author on behalf of the University of Bergen. EUROSPHERE was launched in February 2007 and will go on until March 2012.

The main objective of EUROSPHERE is to create innovative perspectives on the European public spheres and to identify the conditions that enable or undermine the articulation of democratic and inclusive European public spheres. The focus is on how participation of different kinds of social and political actors in the public debates – political parties, social movement and non-governmental organizations, think tanks and research institutes, and newspapers and TV broadcasters – shape the articulation and structuring of the emerging public European public sphere. The research plan of the project comprises synchronized data collection and analysis activities in sixteen countries as well as creation of a EUROSPHERE Knowledgebase on the European organizations that are participating in public debates at local, national and European levels. In addition to regular research and academic dissemination activities, EUROSPHERE organizes four large-scale international conferences, two European Forums, and four researcher training and PhD courses.

The EUROSPHERE Country Reports Series represents the finalization of the very first step of a comprehensive comparative research programme. The aim of this series is to provide a brief summary of a huge data material collected by the project researchers. Along with the EUROSPHERE Knowledgebase that we created, these reports will be a basis and data search guide for the forthcoming comparative studies of sixteen countries. Therefore, the primary readership target of these reports is the EUROSPHERE researchers who are to conduct twelve inter-related comparative studies of different aspects of the European public spheres. This primary function of the report series necessitated prioritization of a descriptive approach at this stage of our research. Explanations of the findings and applications of theory are identified in our plans as the task of the work groups who will do the comparative analyses, as we believe cross-contextual comparisons and understanding of the particularities of specific contexts should go together in order to obtain a more enhanced picture of reality.

More information about EUROSPHERE can be found in our frequently visited webpage. My task in this foreword is to give the background of the EUROSPHERE Country Report Series. In the following, I will briefly present the logic behind the project and the methodological approaches in selection of the cases – that is, organizations and respondents.
EUROSPHERE in a Nutshell

Earlier research on the European Public Sphere (EPS) has made crucial contributions to our understanding of the making of today’s Europe. It has shown us that, under current conditions, it is difficult to realize a common EPS in the foreseeable future, but that there are traces of a EPS in the making on some policy issues. Most importantly, it has drawn our attention to the integrative, democratizing, legitimizing, and meaning-creating roles of the public sphere. The focus on EPS as a means of achieving democratic legitimacy at the European level can easily be justified normatively, but, has not been substantiated empirically, and earlier research teaches us little about how public sphere can be inclusive in the European context of deep and complex diversities. Existence of a near-perfect procedural or deliberative democracy, including a public sphere where citizens freely exercise their rights of free speech, assembly, critique, deliberation, opposition, etc in order to form the public will is a necessary but not sufficient condition for democracy. If we accept that any notion of state legitimacy produces a corresponding notion of legitimacy of individuals, it is important to inquire into what forms of public sphere include/exclude which groups, to what degree, and on which matters.

In this sense, the EUROSPHERE project takes a complementary normative starting point with a focus on inclusion/exclusion in and at the boundaries of public spheres. It is urgent to investigate whether the existing focus on democratic legitimacy in EPS studies has inadvertently led to emergence of new criteria for defining who the legitimate participants of the public sphere are or should be. Indeed, it has been empirically shown in numerous sociological and social anthropological studies of national public spaces that, in contexts of diversity, such standards can be discriminatory, marginalizing, and excluding. As a supplement to the contributions made by the democratic legitimacy debate in empirical EPS studies, EUROSPHERE conceptualizes the European Public Sphere as a means of inclusion for democracy. Thereby, the project both contests and complements the existing academic work on the EPS with the following overall research question:

Are inclusive European public spheres (EPS) possible under conditions of complex diversity; national path dependencies of polity forms, institutions and policies; multilevel governance; and shifting boundaries within and of the EU?

The word “inclusive”, combined with the project’s sub-title “towards a citizens’ Europe” is a manifestation of our overall normative orientation towards inclusion and accommodation of diversity in the public spheres of liberal democracies. At the same time, this is also an empirical research orientation posited against the tendency of earlier European research to focus primarily on the procedures, mechanisms, and legitimizing and democratizing functions of public spheres. This focus has left the substantial question of “what kind of diversity and openness are allowed in public spheres” – i.e., the main normative question posed to earlier public sphere research by many diversity, gender, minority, race, sexuality, disability, and marginalization researchers – mostly unanswered in the existing research on a EPS. EUROSPHERE is thus an attempt to remedy this.

This overall research question brings into focus the different approaches to inclusion and diversity, which also impinge upon how one envisions public sphere, politics, society, and the state. Specifically, it is possible to view inclusion as assimilation, integration, institutional segregation in a shared polity, or simply as co-existence under a minimal state. Likewise, it is possible to view diversity in terms of collective or individual identities and belongings; essentialized collective identities like ethnicity, race, sex, religion, nation; or in terms of constructed group or individual identities. This all depends on the ontological beliefs of the viewer, and not necessarily on reality. Needless to say, each of these ontological priorities includes certain groups and individuals as the prime and relevant components of society, on which public sphere and political institutions are to be based, and, also, which policymaking should address. While determining the relevancy or primacy of groups, individuals, and issues/problems, each of these approaches consequently excludes certain groups, individuals, and themes based on their ontological priorities.2

Ontologies and normative visions derived thereof have – through their exclusions and inclusions – direct consequences for, among other things, notions of politics, society, polity, and citizenship.3 These different ontological points of departure and their normative exhortations have serious consequences for the definition of the European public sphere, European diversity, European Polity, and designs of empirical research on these phenomena. After choosing any one of these approaches, the resulting research design will undoubtedly reinforce certain visions of society, polity, and public sphere, and reproduce and justify certain inclusions/ exclusions from the public sphere. If research ought to be committed to nourishing our restless wonder about how society and politics is possible (as opposed to how a certain vision of society and politics can be realized), it is of utmost importance to assess which models of a EPS are more inclusive than others in a given context.

Although mainstream approaches state that the public sphere is a space located between the state and civil society, they hold that public spheres are not limited to countries’ borders. Participation in the public sphere is not membership based, and everybody can freely take part in it. However, if the public sphere is a space between the state and civil society, between citizens and political institutions, its external boundaries are drawn by its very definition: it must have external boundaries in terms of who inhabits it and who speaks in it. In reality, “outsiders” are not expected to take party or “intervene” in “our own” matters; it is the right of those who are directly affected by state actions to speak in the public sphere. Earlier research on EPS shows that there is little “foreign” appearance in national public spheres on themes of internal relevance compared to the appearances of national actors.4 External boundaries of the public spheres must, then, be expected to follow polities’ borders, expansions of states’ territories (unifications, secessions, enlargements, invasions), and the movements of people (transnational and global politics emerging from migration and other sorts of mobility) – because it is these phenomena that affect the composition of the participants in a public sphere. Therefore, polity borders have to be taken as a relevant dimension of the public sphere’s external boundaries. However, by polity borders, one should understand the zone of a state’s power and influence in and beyond physical borders. Indeed, this is presently taking place in the European Union: boundaries of national public spheres are gradually changing, as the EU’s political institutions become relevant as a new political center

2 I do not have enough space here to give an overview of the details of relevant ontological approaches, nor to list what each ontology excludes. However, I did this in my earlier work (cf. Sicakkan 2004, 2005, 2006, 2008).
3 It is also a fact that some “rival” normative theories have ended up with similar policy proposals concerning e.g. citizenship, migration and asylum policy, etc. Although this is true at the policy level, the disagreements about models remain strong and still have consequences for which trade-offs are possible.
4 Peters 2006
and increase their influence on citizens’ lives. Earlier findings indicating the EPS’ presence on certain themes, and not on others, can be explained by EU’s differing influence on the respective themes. Therefore, one should expect to observe a more clearly present EPS on, say, enlargement and EU constitution issues than on policy issues concerning citizenship and internal diversity – because the EU has attempted to exert central influence concerning the former.

Secondly, if the public sphere is a space inhabited by state institutions, individuals, groups, civil society organizations, etc, then, processes of internal inclusion, marginalization and exclusion that are in place in all human interactions must be expected to be in full force also in the public sphere. Issues of inclusion, marginalization, and exclusion are about internal power relations between the groups constituting the citizen body in a state, and they shape the social and political cleavage structures on which the political system and politics in a country is based. These power relations have historical roots in the initial geopolitical conditions at the onset of a country’s state formation and nation building process. Indeed, state forms and regimes are based on such initial conditions prior to state formation processes. It is largely these cleavage structures entrenched in diversity and power (defined in different ways in different historical contexts) that determine which inclusions/ exclusions and which notions of diversity are legitimate and relevant in the public sphere and in policymaking. Union states (e.g., UK), federal/confederal states (e.g., Germany, Switzerland), and unitary states (e.g., France, the Scandinavian countries) in Europe came into being as a result of the power relations between the groups in the diverse societies inhabiting the territory and public sphere of a political center that attempted to consolidate that territory.

This historical fact about the variation in the formation of the European states and their politics is the biggest challenge awaiting the Europeanists longing for a common EPS. If polity boundaries are relevant for the boundaries of a public sphere, then internal territorial power structures of a state should be expected to be reflected on the structure of its public sphere: in federal state forms with strong local governments, for example, the public sphere should be expected to be more segmented than in unitary states with a strong degree of centralization. If a public sphere is about politics between the rulers and the ruled, then a segmented political rule will simply result in a segmented public sphere. Indeed, observed rhetoric about, and practice regarding diversity in the European Union implies that national diversity is the only form of relevant diversity at European level politics. European level politics simply does not relate to member states’ internal diversity beyond passively accepting the normative approaches about the minority definition and minority rights developed by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). When it comes to diversity issues, the balance of power between member states and European level institutions favors the member states, and if there is a European public sphere, it should be expected to be segmented along national boundaries with trans-Europeanization tendencies on certain themes. However, the variety of approaches to internal diversity in member states and the emerging complex trans-European multilevel governance system in Europe, which makes some decision-making levels redundant on certain policy issues, should be expected to make this depiction foggier than what the previous statement suggests. The question of which diversities are legitimate in the public sphere and considered relevant for policymaking in national and European public debates is, therefore, a key indicator of the prospects for a

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5 Latzer and Saurwein 2006  
7 This does not mean that the EU ignores the internal diversity in its member states. However, the fact that the EU does not have a common definition of a national minority, leaves this question to its member states, and moreover bases its decision making systems primarily on nation states, justifies this view.
common European public sphere. EUROSPHERE thus aims to identify the variations, as well as alignments and misalignments, between European and national level public debates, concerning which diversities are relevant for policymaking. Such a research effort also serves as an inquiry into the initial conditions of the EU-polity formation processes.

This (dangerously) brief discussion aimed to show the importance of identifying how polity, diversity, and public sphere constitute each other differently in different contexts. These three political phenomena subsist in each other and exist in symbiosis. This symbiotic co-existence is the biggest challenge for research attempting to identify the presence of an EPS in the present context of unpredictability about the direction of political development in the EU. In such attempts, it is thus reasonable to base research on multiple scenarios of political change.

The empirical research programme of EUROSPHERE aims to explore whether it is possible to develop an inclusive public sphere in the European Union. Based on different scenarios and alternative combinations of different approaches to diversity, polity, and the public sphere, EUROSPHERE aims to identify the notions, discourses, and objectives that are in the process of becoming dominant in key European actors and political spaces, how these notions and objectives are spread and made relevant in different political contexts as well as in the context of the European Union politics, and what contestations and conflicts they create in policymaking. Therefore, the overall research question will be answered with a focus on the impact of two specific building blocks of European society, which are seen to be amongst the crucial factors impinging upon the shaping of a public sphere:

- **The roles of different types of social and political actors** in the articulation of an inclusive **EPS** – whether or how different types of social and political actors contribute to or impede the formation of a certain model of an EPS?
  - Individual citizens
  - Policy research institutes and think tanks
  - Political parties
  - Social movement / non-governmental organizations – SMOs/NGOs
  - Print and broadcast media

- **The impacts of different social and political communicative spaces** on the articulation of an inclusive **EPS** – whether or how different types of social and political spaces facilitate or impede the emergence of a certain model of an EPS?
  - Essentializing (ethnic/minority) spaces
  - Nationalizing spaces
  - Transnationalizing spaces
  - Eurospaces
  - Gendering spaces

These choices are not arbitrary: A focus on public sphere has to include citizens’, institutional civil society actors’, and mass media’s framings of issues. Concerning institutions, one has to focus on key civil society actors operating and maneuvering in the public sphere. Furthermore, both citizens and civil society organizations still relate to and operate within the different types of public spaces that developed historically as components of the existing national public spheres, which will also have to remain as components of an emerging European public sphere for a long time and constitute the contexts in which a European public sphere can develop. It is therefore crucial to assess the impacts of different actors and public spaces and inquire into how they relate to the emergence of different types of European public sphere.

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8 For more information about the scenarios being deployed in EUROSPHERE, see the project webpage.
EUROSPHERE’s Approach to European Public Spheres

As illustrated in the above figure, the European public sphere is inhabited by:

- a set of historically-developed and already existing communicative public spaces (essentializing/minority, nationalizing, transnationalizing, Europeanizing and gendering spaces)
- a set of trans-European networks of organizations (we chose to look at party federations, networks of nongovernmental and social movement organizations, networks of think tanks)
- a set of national and sub-national level social and political actors (we chose to look at political parties, SMOs/NGOs, think tanks, media actors) that operate within, from and across the above mentioned communicative public spaces and trans-European networks of organizations
- individual citizens that operate within, from and across the above mentioned communicative public spaces and trans-European networks of organizations

For purposes of empirical research, the European public sphere is conceptualized in four different ways:
as a set of already existing communicative / discursive public spaces that are increasingly more interconnected and overlapping with each other (horizontal and vertical interconnectedness between sub-national, national and transnational communicative public spaces)

as a separate, emerging trans-European communicative / discursive space that comes in addition to, and complements and/or competes with, the historically developed existing communicative public spaces

as a set of collective social and political actors (organizations) that are increasingly more interlinked and collaborate with each other beyond the existing national boundaries

as a separate set of social and political actors that create European-level networks that come in addition to, and compete with, the already existing trans-European networks

In the current chaotic picture of citizens, organizations, communicative public spaces, and political institutions that interact, interconnect, and interlink with each other, social and political actors are facilitating or inhibiting the emergence of an inclusive European public sphere in different ways. In EUROSPHERE, citizens and organizations’ roles in and contributions to the formation of a European public sphere are understood in terms of:

- the inter-linkages, inter-connectedness, and overlaps that they create or deter between the existing Europeanized and non-Europeanized communicative / discursive public spaces (essentializing/minority, nationalizing, transnationalizing, Europeanizing and gendering spaces)
- the new trans-European communicative / discursive spaces that they create or participate in or work against
- the vertical and horizontal trans-European networks of organizations that they create or participate in or work against
- the discourses about the European polity, diversity (including exclusion and inclusion, citizenship, minorities, mobility, migration, asylum, gender, etc) and the European public sphere that they bring into these networks and interconnected spaces

Indeed, all of the above processes of inter-connections, inter-linkages, and overlaps between communicative spaces and networks of organizations as well as a variety of discourses about Europe, the EU polity, and diversity are in place in today’s Europe to some degree. Interconnectedness of existing communicative public spaces and inter-linkages between organizations (collective actors) beyond a variety of borders and boundaries constitute each other. It is the social and political actors’ transgression of boundaries that create interconnectedness between Europe’s communicative public spaces. On the other hand, it is the different degrees of openness / closure of the existing communicative public spaces that facilitate or obstruct such transgression. Hence, to understand the European public sphere, interconnectedness of spaces and networks of organizations are analyzed in one common research frame. One research challenge is thus to assess whether these can be viewed as parts and parcels of a European public sphere in the making. If so, how are these processes structuring the emerging European public sphere? Which types of inclusions and exclusions will a resulting public sphere form and what dominant discourses may it result in? Most importantly, in the normative framework of EUROSPHERE, which notions of a European public sphere are more democratic and inclusive than others?

Our interview questions and the format of the sixteen reports have been devised as a step towards answering these bigger questions. The readers of these reports will notice that each country report has three main sections addressing: (1) notions of diversity and ethno-national diversity policies, including also the themes of citizenship, international migration and political asylum, (2) visions about the political development of the EU and European integration, and (3) data about and views about the extent to which the selected organizations take part in the national and European level public debates.
EUROSPHERE Data

EUROSPHERE collects/deploys relevant data about the features of communicative public spaces, of social/political actors, and of individuals, whose effects on the articulation of a European public sphere are to be assessed at a later stage in the project. The scope and depth of data collection has naturally been determined by our research question and the available resources. Concerning data-collection about social/political actors, at least three social/political actors were selected in each category (i.e., 3 think tanks, 3 political parties, 3 social movements, 3 newspapers and 2 TV channels) in each country according to standard selection criteria. Leaders of these organizations as well as their other important members were interviewed.

Concerning data collection about communicative public spaces, also here the units of observation are social/political actors; however, this time they are treated as sub-spaces of the communicative public spaces. Here, the key data collection activity focuses on the interrelationships and patterns/substance of interactions between the different types of social/political actors claiming to belong to or to be speaking on behalf of the same communicative public space (e.g., the substance/patterns of interaction between a political party, a social movement, a media actor, and a think tank). We also collect data about the discourses of public spheres, citizenship, involvement, etc. of which social/political actors are a part of as well as data about the features of openness/closure in these communicative public spaces.

Further, existing survey data about the features of individuals who are associated with the five types of communicative public spaces through their engagement/involvement with different social/political actors are being taken from previous European surveys such as ESS, EVS, and Eurobarometer as well as other international sources like IPSS. The survey data, which will not be presented in these reports, concerns individuals’ involvement in political processes, their levels of co-otherness, patterns of multiple belonging, mobility patterns, patterns of multiple orientations to public spaces as well as the individuals’ relevant background.

At the national level, we are analyzing how and why political parties, social movement and non-governmental organizations, think tanks, and media actors (newspapers and TV-channels) are forming or joining networks and channels for influencing the public debates at sub-national, national, and European levels. At the trans-European level, we are focusing on several European party federations, several trans-European networks of movements and NGOs, and several trans-European networks of think tanks, and how and why different organizations operate in these trans-European networks and channels. Further, we are investigating the modes, methods, and issues of collaboration between the national and trans-national levels. On both levels, we are collecting data about the institutional features of these organizations as well as data from interviews with their formal, informal, and oppositional leaders in order to understand how, and on which policy issues, they contribute to public debates at which levels (national or European); which arenas, networks, channels, and resources they are using to influence the public debates; and their political objectives concerning diversity, EU-polity, and the articulation of public spheres in Europe.

Criteria for Selection of Organizations

Interviews and institutional data collection was conducted in the period between February 2008 and July 2009. More than 70 researchers were involved in data collection. EUROSPHERE’s data collection activities have been divided into four components with
respect to the types of social political actors. In the forthcoming 18 months, we will collect 100% of the data needed.

The selection of the organizations to be interviewed was largely completed by the end of February 2008. The procedure for selection of social/political actors is outlined below. As stated earlier, EUROSPHERE focuses on political parties, think tanks, social movements and media actors. The idea is to map how these actors represent and confront different visions of polity, diversity, and public sphere and why they do so as well as their ways of participating in national and European public spaces. We selected only relevant organizations and their organizational and opinion leaders as well as important opposition leaders in these organizations. Social and political actors in each country were selected with respect to the concern that the broad spectrum of the variation in actors’ approaches to diversity should be represented.

The following procedure was followed while selecting actors to be focused on in EUROSPHERE:

1- The aim is to include and represent in our sample all the different views and visions in a country about diversity, EU polity and public sphere.

2- At least 3 political parties, 3 social movements or non-governmental organization, 3 think tanks, and 5 media actors (3 daily newspapers and 2 TV-news programmes) in each country.

3- However, some exemptions from the above rule were allowed, in following ways: Each partner had to select 14 organizations at minimum for data collection. Based on the contextual particularities in the countries that they collected data in, the partners could choose 2 think tanks instead of three and/or 4 media actors (2 newspapers and 2 broadcast media) instead of 5. Such a procedure was followed by some partners when they found that the proposed division of actor types would prevent them from including some important approaches to the phenomena we are researching. In such cases, these partners increased either the number of political parties or social movement organizations from 3 to 4, or both. This choice was justified with reference to the particular situation in the respective country (e.g., the impact of the pillars as in Netherlands, the importance of the regional level in certain countries which may require more SMOs and/or political parties, etc).

4- Each project partner proposed a larger number of actors in each category – at least 5 political parties, 7 social movements, 8 think tanks, and 9 media actors/channels from the country where their institutions are based.

5- From the proposed actors, the EUROSPHERE Steering Committee prepared a proposal for the final list of actors to be focused on.

6- Partners justified each of their suggestions, added brief information about the actors’ views on diversity and the EU, and specified and their own priorities concerning the selection of actors. For this purpose, the guide given in subsequent tables below for each type of actor was used.
**Political parties**

The project focuses on the two largest political parties plus the largest Maverick party in each country. Partners were requested to propose at least 3 large political parties and 2 Maverick parties amongst the total of three parties that were selected for analysis in each country. The final selection was based on a concern for representing the largest possible variation of political party approaches to the EU-polity and diversity at the European level as well as representation in the European Parliament. The partners were advised to base their proposals on party manifestos, party web sites, and literature on political parties.

### Political Party selection guide

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<th>Party names</th>
<th>Short information about the political party</th>
<th>Justification</th>
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<tr>
<td>Mainstream Parties</td>
<td>* Representing the national mainstream views/ideologies&lt;br&gt;</td>
<td>The first largest government party (in terms of vote percentage)</td>
<td>Please mention briefly the following:&lt;br&gt; * place on the right/left spectrum if applicable&lt;br&gt; * views on the EU-polity&lt;br&gt; * views about diversity&lt;br&gt; * the two most important views/issues that each party otherwise advocates</td>
<td>Partners’ shortly-stated opinions about why and how the selection of each party should enrich our project?</td>
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<td>(mass/catch-all parties)</td>
<td>* The largest government party&lt;br&gt;</td>
<td>The first largest opposition party (in terms of vote percentage)</td>
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<td>* The two largest opposition parties</td>
<td>The second largest opposition party (in terms of vote percentage)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maverick Parties</td>
<td>* Sharply different views on the EU and diversity from the mainstream&lt;br&gt;</td>
<td>Two Maverick Parties – semi-system loyal</td>
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<td></td>
<td>* Can be outside the parliament&lt;br&gt;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>* System-critical, semi-system loyal</td>
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<td></td>
<td>* The two largest amongst those that satisfy the above criteria</td>
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</table>

**Social Movements/Citizens’ Initiatives (SMOs/NGOs)**

The project focuses on three social movement organizations (SMO) in each country. One focusing on the tension between the national and the European & the global, one focusing on the tension between the national and the minority rights, and one focusing on transnational minority collaboration in Europe were to be selected in the end of the process. Each partner was requested to propose at least 3 nationally oriented and 4 transnationally/globally oriented social movement organizations. At least two of the transnationally oriented organizations in this category would be selected from amongst the member organizations of the Platform of European Social NGOs. Concerning SMOs and NGO’s, it was important to represent in our selection of organizations that are constituted and run by (1) majority population members, (2) national minorities/national minorities in border regions, (3) indigenous populations, (4) immigrant groups. This was determined by each partner with respect to relevance and importance of these categories in each country.
### Social movement / NGO selection guide

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Movement Type</th>
<th>Specifications</th>
<th>Movement names</th>
<th>Short Information about the movement                                                                duc鹂</th>
<th>Justification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nationally-oriented SMOs/NGOs</td>
<td>*Focusing on nationwide issues</td>
<td>The three citizens’ initiatives/SMOs that are known to have high publicity.</td>
<td>Please mention briefly the following:</td>
<td>Partners’ shortly-stated opinions about why and how the selection of each social movement should enrich our project?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*national-oriented ideology/world view/horizon of action</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*The three most visible/public in the country</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*Issues of focus are context-dependent</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*Ethnic&amp;religious organizations can be included if applicable and justifiable</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*Totally three nationally oriented SMOs are to be nominated</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*The three citizens’ initiatives/SMOs that are known to have high publicity.</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*place on the right/left spectrum if applicable</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*views on the EU-polity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*views about diversity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*the two most important views/issues that each movement otherwise advocates</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transnationally/globally-oriented movements</td>
<td>*Focusing on transnational/global issues or having a horizon of action beyond the nation state</td>
<td>1. One main initiative with pro-European views (this doesn’t need to be the main focus of the organization) 2. One main initiative with anti-European views (this doesn’t need to be the main focus of the organization)</td>
<td>1. The main pro-migration organization 2. The main anti-migration organization</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*At least two SMOs that are members of the European Social Platform will be suggested.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*The two most visible/public movements in each category specified on the right</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*totally four transnationally oriented movements to be nominated</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*Main focus of these organizations may be on ethnicity, migration, human rights.</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The final selection was based on a concern for representing the largest possible variation of social movement/NGO approaches to the EU-polity and diversity at the European level as well as transnational collaboration in the European Public Sphere (here, at least one SMO that is a member of the European Social Platform of NGOs was included in the project). The partners were advised to base their proposals on organizational manifestos, web sites, and literature on social movements and NGOs.
Think Tanks

The project focuses on three think tanks in each country. Each partner was requested to nominate 8 think tanks, at least two of which have done projects about the European Union if such exists. The think tank categories in the below table were used as a rough, flexible guide, as not all European countries have all sorts of think tanks. Partners were requested to propose at least 2 or 3 “advocacy think tanks”, 2 “Universities without students” and 2 or 3 contract research institutes. At least one of the proposed think tanks should be a member organization of TEPSA (The Trans-European Policy Studies Association). The Consortium’s final selection of three think tanks in each country was based on a concern for representing the largest possible variation of think tank types and their approaches to the EU-polity/diversity at the European level as well as transnational collaboration in the European public sphere. Partners were advised to base their proposals on think tank manifestos, organizational objectives, web sites, and literature on think tanks.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Think Tank Type</th>
<th>Specifications</th>
<th>Think tank names</th>
<th>Short Information about the think tank</th>
<th>Justification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advocacy think tanks (ATT)</td>
<td>Think tanks advocating certain views on issues relevant to the EU-polity and social diversity.</td>
<td>2 ATT based in the respective country</td>
<td>Please mention briefly the following:</td>
<td>Partners’ shortly-stated opinions about why and how the selection of each think tank should enrich our project?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1 ATT that is member of TEPSA (if applicable)</td>
<td>* Proposed think tanks should have previously conducted projects related with European issues</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>* place on the national–global ideology continuum if applicable</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>* work on the EU-polity</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>* work about diversity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>* the two most important views/issues that each think tanks otherwise specialize on.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Universities without students (UTT)</td>
<td>Think tanks claiming to conduct independent research</td>
<td>1 UTT based in the respective country</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1 UTT that is member of TEPSA (if applicable)</td>
<td>* Proposed think tanks should have previously conducted projects related with European issues</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>* place on the national–global ideology continuum if applicable</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>* work on the EU-polity</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>* work about diversity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>* the two most important views/issues that each think tanks otherwise specialize on.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contract research organizations (CTT)</td>
<td>Think tanks doing research based on contracts with political institutions and organizations</td>
<td>2 CTT based in the respective country</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1 CTT that is member of TEPSA (if applicable)</td>
<td>* Proposed think tanks should have previously conducted projects related with European issues</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>* place on the national–global ideology continuum if applicable</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>* work on the EU-polity</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>* work about diversity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>* the two most important views/issues that each think tanks otherwise specialize on.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Media Actors**

Five media actors are researched on in each country – 3 print media actors and 2 broadcast media actors. Each partner was expected to identify and nominate the three main players in print media in their respective countries and two (small) print media actors representing/voicing the colours. Concerning broadcast media, each partner will nominate two public service news programmes and two commercial news programmes. That is, a total of 9 media actors are to be nominated/selected in each country. For each country, we will finally choose 5 media actors. The General Assembly’s selection will be based on a concern for representing the largest possible variation of media types and their approaches to the EU-polity/diversity at the European level as well as transnational collaboration in the European Public Sphere. We advise our partners to base their nominations on media web sites and secondary literature on media’s framing of diversity and EU-polity.

**Media actor selection guide**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Media Type</th>
<th>Specifications</th>
<th>Media actor names</th>
<th>Short Information about the media actor</th>
<th>Justification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Print media (PM)     | *Daily press/newspapers  
*The print versions will be used in the data collection | Three main player print media actors   | Please mention briefly the following:  
* place on the national–global ideology continuum if applicable  
* framing of the EU-polity  
* framing of diversity  
* the two most important views/issues that each media actor otherwise likes to focus specifically on in the recent years.  
*please indicate the programme of interest in connection with each broadcast media actor | Partners’ shortly-stated opinions about why and how the selection of each media actor should enrich our project? |
|                      | Two small print media actors voicing colours                                   |                                        |                                                                                                          |                                                                                |
| Broadcast media (BM) | *TV-broadcast channels  
*Requires recording of news/programmes on tape for analysis.  
*requires recording of news/programmes on tape for analysis. | Two main player public service broadcast media actors (only one programme to be selected for analysis) |                                                                                                          |                                                                                |
|                      | Two commercially driven broadcast media actors (only one programme to be selected for analysis) |                                        |                                                                                                          |                                                                                |

Based on these general guidelines, each partner team sent their justified proposals to the Steering Committee, the Steering Committee made a long list of the proposed organizations, and chose the organizations that were seen as the most relevant for answering EUROSPHERE’s research questions. The Steering Committee’s selections of actors were approved by each partner university with minor changes.

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Institutional Data and Sources

The data collection activity started with the gathering of detailed information about the selected social and political actors’ general features through web-surfing of their internet pages, preliminary analyses of their publications/reports, programme declarations, public debates, daily press/broadcast news, secondary academic literature, and other printed and electronically published material. The dimensions of data collection about actors’ general features are:

1. officially stated norms, principles, and objectives
2. the means of dissemination they use to influence
3. the strategies for promoting their preferences
4. the channels of influence they use
5. profile of membership, membership policy
6. financial resources and priorities
7. organizational structure and names of leaders
8. other organizations they prefer to collaborate with
9. channels, forms, discourses, and levels of involvement that they make available for their members as well as other citizens/residents
10. main topic of interest in the last 3 years

Concerning the last point the following topics were of particular interest in a EUROSPHERE context: (a) the European polity and its institutions and policies, (b) the European public spheres, (c) diversity – as this unfolds along the dimensions of European enlargement, citizenship, and mobility/migration/asylum. The University of Bergen and the Norwegian Social Science Data Services devised an online data register system for this type of data. This preliminary data collection about the organizations was completed before we interviewed the elites in the organizations.

Criteria for Selection of Respondents

In the second stage, we identified and selected leaders or elites of these social/political actors as our potential interviewees. These individuals are representative of the institutions that they belong to – that is, organizational, opinion, and internal group leaders were selected. We selected leaders from different categories in each type of social political actor. The following considerations were relevant for our research while selecting the respondents:

i) For each type of social and political actor, it was an important aim to represent both the dominant group and the internal opposition and dissenters.

ii) For political parties and SMO/NGO, it was one of our most important targets to represent also the minorities within minorities in our analyses; e.g. for ethnic, religious, and national minorities: class- and elite-positions and usually also along sex/gender lines and age lines: vulnerable minorities such as women, minors

iii) The gender balance concern determined by our gender action plan was applied when selecting respondents.

The following operative categories were advised to partners when selecting the interviewees from each organization type:
Respondents from Political Parties

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Organizational Leader</th>
<th>Opinion Leader</th>
<th>Internal Opposition Leader</th>
<th>Internal “group” Leader</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Political party</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Organizational leader: The formally/officially appointed leader with full mandate to speak and act on behalf of a political party. This may include also the individuals who are members of the central steering committee of a political party.

Opinion leader: Individuals who may or may not have formal/official leadership position, but who are known to be the ideologues and opinion-leaders in a political party.

Internal opposition leader: Potential interviewees who have views on diversity or EU-related issues that are distinct from the present formal/opinion leadership.

Internal group leader: This category includes (a) the leader of organized women’s factions (if such exists, at least 1 woman leader should be selected) and (b) leading representatives of ‘ethnic, national, immigrant minorities’ within parties (if such exists, at least 1 ethno-national minority group leader and 1 immigrant minority group leader should be selected).

Respondents from SMOs/NGOs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Organizational Leader</th>
<th>Opinion Leader</th>
<th>Internal Opposition Leader</th>
<th>Internal “minority” Leader</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SMO/NGO</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Organizational leader: The formally/officially appointed leaders with full mandate to speak and act on behalf of a SMO/NGO. This may include also individuals who are members of the central steering committee.

Opinion leader: Individuals who may or may not have formal/official leadership position, but who are known to be the ideologues and opinion-leaders in a political party.

Internal opposition leader: Potential interviewees who have views on diversity or EU-related issues that are distinct from the present formal/opinion leadership.

Internal “minority” leader: This category includes (a) the leaders of organized women’s faction inside organizations (if such exists, at least 1 (female) leader should be selected) and (b.1) for SMOs/NGOs primarily constituted and run by members of the majority population: leading representatives of ‘ethnic, national, immigrant minorities’ within organizations (if such exists, at least 1 ethno-national minority group leader and/or 1 immigrant minority group leader should be selected – according to relevance in different country contexts); (b.2) for organizations constituted and run by members of national/indigenous/immigrant minority populations:

Respondents from Think Tanks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Organizational Leader</th>
<th>Research Leader</th>
<th>Prominent Researcher</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Think tank</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Organizational leader: The formally/officially appointed leaders with full mandate to speak and act on behalf of a SMO/NGO. This may include also individuals who are members of the central steering committee.
Research leader: Individuals who are known to be leading the organizations’ research policy and thematic priorities, especially in the area of ethno-national diversity and EU-research.

Prominent researcher: Researchers/authors in the organization who have done the most relevant research on the themes in which EUROSPHERE is specifically interested (ethno-national diversity and EU).

Respondents from Print Media

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Editor General’s Office</th>
<th>News Section Editor</th>
<th>News Section Journalist</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Print media</td>
<td>1 (or 0)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1 (or 2)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Editor General’s office: If possible, the newspaper’s editor general should be interviewed. If not, people closely working with the editor general who daily interact with him in the daily work of determining the editorial policy (e.g., member of editorial board).

News section editor: Where possible, the news editor of each selected newspaper should be interviewed. If not, a journalist collaborating closely with the news editor on selection of news items should be selected.

News section journalist: A journalist/reporter who is specializing in or who has proven to have an interest in making news about ethno-national diversity and/or relevant EU-policies and institutions.

EUROSPHERE Knowledgebase

The aforementioned institutional and interview data were registered by the data collectors into a central database that was designed and set up by the Norwegian Social Science Data Services and the University of Bergen. Data registration was done according to standard coding rules. In this database, we have organized the institutional and interview data in a format that summarizes each interview by variables. Therefore, the project researchers also have the option of quantifying the interview data. In addition to the institutional and interview databases, EUROSPHERE also collected media content data in order to observe the extent to which what we observe at the organization and elite levels are reflected in the media space. It is also worth noting that some of our interview questions correspond to some items used in Eurobarometer and European Social Survey. Thus, at later stages of our research, the EUROSPHERE researchers will be able to compare views and approaches at individual, elite, organizational, and media space levels in order to see a more complete picture of the European public sphere.

The majority of the EUROSPHERE partners were able to follow these guidelines. When they could not, this was due to the inaccessibility of either the interviewees or the organizations. However, except for the University of Amsterdam, which selected far too many organizations because they saw it as necessary to represent the broader diversity of views, deviations from case and respondent selection rules are minor. The partners who had to deviate from the general guidelines explicitly state this in their reports.

Finally, on behalf of the EUROSPHERE Consortium, I would like thank to Aurora Alvarez-Veinguer and Martina Klicperova-Baker for coordinating the writing of the EUROSPHERE Country Reports Series. The EUROSPHERE Country Report Series is the result of the enormous synchronized data collection and systematization efforts of more than 100 European researchers in sixteen countries. Despite some weaknesses that arise from the collaborative nature of comparative international projects, I have great hopes for its contribution of new knowledge to the already rich body of literature about the European public sphere.
Preface

Aurora Alvarez and Martina Klicperova-Baker

EUROSPHERE, Diversity and the European Public Sphere. Towards a citizen’s Europe, is a EU funded project in which sixteen European countries\textsuperscript{9} collaborate. As they investigate the different perspectives on (ethno-national) diversity, migration, citizenship, enlargement, gender policy and European integration, they look for signs of existence of the European public sphere, and conditions that enable or undermine the articulation of inclusive European Public Sphere(s) (EPS). Towards these objectives the project focuses on the role played by certain social and political actors in the formation of EPS and the features of existing communicative public spaces which affect the formation of EPS.\textsuperscript{10}

This Country Report is the result of Workpackage 3, the largest of all EUROSPHERE activities. All the 16 partners have carried out single case studies that date back to May 2008. They performed media content analysis, institutional data collection and interviews), data documentation and summary. Although the report does form the basis for further analyses during a later stage of the EUROSPHERE-project, it is also intended as a publication that can be read independently. In it we attempt to answer the following questions:

- What is the meaning of diversity for the interviewees and their organizations?
- Do social and political actors (organizations) engage in sub-national, national, and/or trans-European collaboration and communication?
- Do some interviewees believe it is important to have a more or less fragmented / segmented European Polity and European Public Sphere and why?
- Do the interviewees’ and their organizations’ notions of public sphere, the European Polity, and Diversity differ from the general public opinion in their countries and why?
- Are these variables or opinions related?

\textsuperscript{9} Coordinating, University of Bergen, Norway; Partners: Austrian Academy of Science, Austria; University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands; Sabanci University, Turkey; Aalborg University, Denmark; University of Helsinki, Finland; Institute of Psychology of Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic, Czech Republic; University of Osnabueck, Germany; Tallinn University, Estonia; Université Libre de Bruxelles, Belgium; Granada University, Spain; Institute of Psychology, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Bulgaria; Trento University, Italy; Central European University, Hungary; online databases and programming by the Norwegian Social Science Data Services, Norway; Fondation Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, France; Cardiff University, United Kingdom

\textsuperscript{10} We have a point of departure in an analytical distinction between communicative public spaces and public spheres. The former is a space of interaction and deliberation that is relatively separate from the state. It is a social and political space in which individuals, groups, and other social/political actors with a certain level of in-group feeling form and formulate interests and views to be explicated outwards. These public spaces are also arenas where persons’ belongings and identities are mediated, confirmed, shaped, and re-shaped. The public sphere, on the other hand, is an arena where views articulated in communicative public spaces confront and are confronted by state actors. Seen from the side of the citizens, the challenge is to make citizens’ views, concerns, and interests relevant for the politics and institutions at the European level.
Some theoretical approaches have been included but will be developed in a greater depth in the subsequent comparative analyses in WP4, 5, 6 and 7. Instead, the reports will focus on the explanations/reasons found or given in the mentioned collected institutional, interview, and media data material.

EUROSPHERE will assess the possibility of increasing interaction between and across various communicative public spaces on selected European policy issues. It will inquire into how citizens’ involvement in European issues can happen at multiple levels across various types of communicative public spaces.

This report constitutes a basis for comparative studies to be conducted by research topic groups in future stages. That is, in a later phase of the project, EUROSPHERE research teams will use these data for comparative analyses that encompass different approaches and/or fields:

- WP4 examines the Impact of Citizens on the Articulation of EPS;
- WP5 the Role of Social and Political Actors on the Articulation of EPS;
- WP6 the Impact of Communicative Public Spaces on the Articulation of EPS;
- WP7 studies Gender, Intersectionality and the Public Sphere.

All partners of the EUROSPHERE project have started their empirical data collection using the same topics and questionnaire as starting points, according to the guidelines that were provided by the EUROSPHERE-Consortium. This specific document is based on (1) data collection activities (teams have gathered relevant data about the characteristics of communicative public spaces and the official discourses of social/political organizations regarding the EU and the public sphere)\textsuperscript{11}; and (2) the opinions of prominent people within political parties, think tanks, social movement and media organizations on EUROSPHERE themes\textsuperscript{12} - in doing so, the report is intended to recall whether there are differences between the official standpoints, rivaling strands and prominent individuals of each organization.

The information expressed during the interviews can only be thoroughly understood if presented in the specific contexts. Therefore, country reports provide a general introduction to the policy fields relevant to EUROSPHERE and short introductions about the organizations; followed by the body of the document which describes and to some extent analyses, the opinions of these organisation members regarding diversity, the EU, citizenship and the European public sphere.

\textsuperscript{11} Secondary data includes: information on websites, (party) constitutions, manifestos, (election) programs, reports, press releases, newspaper articles, and other sources that are of relevance. In addition we used secondary (scientific) literature. The amount of data collected differs per organization and country: there are respondents who tend to be more open about their standpoints, whereas others are more reluctant to participate or do not have so much secondary data available. When possible, researchers were not meant to rely on the official position of the organizations exclusively, but also searched for diversity within the organization.

\textsuperscript{12} Concerning data-collection about social/political actors, at least three social/political actors were selected in each category (i.e., 3 think tanks, 3 political parties, 3 social movements, 3 media actors) in each of the sixteen countries. These social/political actors were selected with respect to their orientations to different types of public spaces—i.e., each of the three selected social movements, for example, must be known to be part of a specific communicative public space type. Each country was meant to carry out a total of at least 54 interviews; however interviewees’ busy agendas, lack of collaboration and other technical difficulties, as well as the need to include more relevant organizations, have made this number vary from country to country.
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Abbreviations

ACB  Amsterdam Centre Foreigners (Amsterdams Centrum Buitenlanders)
ACVZ  Advisory Committee on Foreigners Affairs (Adviescommissie voor Vreemdelingenzaken)
AEL  Arabic-European League (Arabisch Europese Liga)
ALDE  Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
ARP  Anti Revolutionary Party (Anti-Revolutionaire Partij)
AZ  (Ministry of) General Affairs (Algemene Zaken)
BBC  British Broadcasting Corporation
BVD  National Security Service (Binnenlandse Veiligheidsdienst)
BZ  (Ministry of) the Interior (Binnenlandse Zaken)
CBS  Statistics Netherlands (Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek)
CD  Centre Democrats (Centrumdemocraten)
CDA  Christian Democratic Appeal (Christen Democratisch Appèl)
CDJA  Christian Democratic Youth Appeal (Christen Democratisch Jongeren Appèl)
CDU  Christian Democratic Union (Christelijke-Democratische Unie)
CEJI  European Jewish Information Centre (Centre Européen Juif d’Information)
CGI  CGI, Contact Group Islam (Contact Groep Islam)
CHU  Christian Historic Union (Christenlijk-Historische Unie)
CIDI  Centre Information and Documentation on Israel (Centrum Informatie en Documentatie Israël)
CMO  Contact Body Muslims Government (Contactorgaan Moslims Overheid)
COC  Dutch Organisation for the Integration of Homosexuality (Nederlandse Vereniging tot Integratie van Homoseksualiteit COC (Cultuur- en Ontspanningscentrum))
CP  Centre Party (Centrum Partij)
CPN  Communist Party of the Netherlands (Communistische Partij Nederland)
CU  Christian Union (ChristenUnie)
D66  Democrats ’66 (Democraten ’66)
DCM  Directorate Coordination Minorities Policy (Directoraat Coördinatie Minderhedenbeleid)
DNPP  Documentation Centre Dutch Political Parties (Documentatiecentrum Nederlandse Politieke Partijen)
EAJG  Another Jewish Voice (Een Ander Joods Geluid)
EC  European Commission
ECOSY  European Community Organisation of Socialist Youth
ECRE  European Council on Refugees and Exiles
EEAG  European Economic Advisory Group
EEC  European Economic Community
EJJP  European Jews for a Just Peace
ELDR  European Liberals, Democrats and Reformists
ELF  European Liberal Forum
EMU  European Monetary Union
ENAR  European Network Against Racism
EP  European Parliament
EPP  European People’s Party (Europese Volkspartij)
EPS  European Public Sphere
EUA  European Union of Alevites
EVP  Evangelical Peoples Party (Evangelische Volkspartij)
EZ  Ministry of Economic Affairs (Economische Zaken)
FGJ  Federation of PvdA’s Youth groups (Federatie van Jongeren van de PvdA)
FIOE  Federation of Islamic Organisations Europe
FION  Federation of Islamic Organizations in the Netherlands (Federatie Islamitische Organisaties Nederland)
FNP  Frisian National Party (Fryske Nasjonale Partij)
FYEG  Federation of Young European Greens
GL  GreenLeft (GroenLinks)
GSI  (Ministry of) Big Cities and Integration Policy (Grote Steden en Integratiebeleid)
HFE  Hindu Forum Europe
HRN  Hindu Council of the Netherlands (Hindoe Raad Nederland)
IFLRY  International Federation of Liberal and Radical Youth
IGMG  Islamische Gemeinschaft Milli Görüş
IKON  Interdenominational Broadcasting Organisation of the Netherlands
IOT  Participation Body of Turks (Inspraak Orgaan Turken)
ISBO  Muslim School Board Organisation (Islamitische Scholen Besturen Organisatie)
ISN  Islamic Foundation in the Netherlands (Islamitische Stichting Nederland)
IT  Information Technology
IUSY  International Union of Socialist Youth
JOVD  Youth Organisation for Freedom and Democracy (Jongeren Organisatie Vrijheid en Democratie)
JS  Young Socialist (Jonge Socialisten)
KNIL  Royal Dutch-Indies Army (Koninklijk Nederlandsch-Indisch Leger)
KVP  Catholic Peoples Party (Katholieke Volkspartij)
LAO  National Advisory and Consultation Body on Minorities Policies (Landelijke Advies- en Overlegstructuur minderhedenbeleid)
LOM  National Body on Minorities Consultation (Landelijk Overleg Minderheden)
LPF  List Pim Fortuyn (Lijst Pim Fortuyn)
LVN  Liberal Women Network (Liberaal Vrouwen Netwerk)
LYME C  Liberal and Radical Youth Movement of the European Communities
MEP  Member of European Parliament
MGNN  Milli Görüş Northern Netherlands (Milli Görüş Noord-Nederland)
MP  Member of Parliament
NCB  Dutch Centre for Foreigners (Nederlands Centrum Buitenlanders)
NEMS  Dutch Expertise Centre for the Multicultural Society (Nederlands Expertisecentrum voor de Multiculturele Samenleving)
NGO  Non-governmental organisation
NIF  Dutch Islamic Federation (Nederlandse Islamitische Federatie)
NMO  Dutch Muslim Broadcast (Nederlands Moslim Omroep)
NMR  Dutch Muslim Council (Nederlands Moslim Raad)
NNP  New National Party (Nieuwe Nationale Partij)
NOS  Dutch Broadcasting Foundation (Nederlandse Omroep Stichting)
NPS  Dutch Programme Foundation (Nederlandse Programma Stichting)
NRC  Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant
NTS  Dutch Television Foundation (Nederlandse Televisie Stichting)
NVU  Dutch Peoples Union (Nederlandse Volksunie)
OETC  Education in Native Language & Culture (Onderwijs in Eigen Taal & Cultuur)
OHM  Organisation Hindu Media
OPTIN  Organisation for the Promotion of Trade Israel-Netherlands
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Full Name</th>
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<tr>
<td>OSF</td>
<td>Independent Senate Faction (Onafhankelijke Senaatsfractie)</td>
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<tr>
<td>PES</td>
<td>Party of European Socialists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PJO</td>
<td>Political Youth Organisations (Politieke Jongeren Organisaties)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PKN</td>
<td>Protestant Church of the Netherlands (Protestantse Kerk Nederland)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PM</td>
<td>Prime Minister</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPR</td>
<td>Political Party Radicals (Politieke Partij Radica len)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSO</td>
<td>Program for Cooperation with Central and Eastern Europe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSP</td>
<td>Pacifist Socialist Party (Pacifistische Socialistische Partij)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PVV</td>
<td>Party for Freedom (Partij voor de Vrijheid)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RMMN</td>
<td>Moroccan Mosque Council in the Netherlands (Raad voor Marokkaanse Moskeeën in Nederland)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RMO</td>
<td>Council of Social Development (Raad voor Maatschappelijke Ontwikkeling)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RMS</td>
<td>Republic of the South Moluccas (Republik Maluku Selatan)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCP</td>
<td>The Netherlands Institute for Social Research (Sociaal Cultureel Planbureau)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDAP</td>
<td>Social Democratic Labour Party (Sociaal-democratische Arbeiders Partij)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SJA</td>
<td>Urban Youth Work Amsterdam (Stedelijk Jongerenwerk Amsterdam)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMO</td>
<td>Social Movement Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SP</td>
<td>Socialist Party (Socialistische Partij)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SZ</td>
<td>(Ministry of) Social Affairs (Sociale Zaken)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TICF</td>
<td>Turkish Muslim Cultural Federation (Turks Islamitische Culturele Federatie)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TK</td>
<td>House of Representatives (Tweede Kamer)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UEA</td>
<td>European Union of Alevites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UMMAO</td>
<td>Union of Moroccan Mosque Organisations in Amsterdam and its Surroundings (Unie van Marokkaanse Moskeeorganisaties Amsterdam en Omstreken)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UMMON</td>
<td>Union of Moroccan Mosque Organisations in the Netherlands (Unie van Marokkaanse Moskeeorganisaties in Nederland)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNHCR</td>
<td>United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US</td>
<td>Unites States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VARA</td>
<td>Association of Worker Radio Amateurs (Vereeniging van Arbeiders Radio Amateurs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VDB</td>
<td>Liberal Democratic League (Vrijzinnige Democratische Bond)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VOC</td>
<td>United (Dutch) East India Company (Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VON</td>
<td>Refugee Organisations in The Netherlands (Vluchtelingenorganisaties Nederland)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VPRO</td>
<td>Freethinking Protestant Radio Broadcast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VVD</td>
<td>People’s Party for Freedom and Democracy (Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VWN</td>
<td>Dutch Council for Refugees (VluchtelingenWerk Nederland)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VWS</td>
<td>(Ministry of) Health, Welfare &amp; Sport (Volksgezondheid, Welzijn en Sport)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WBS</td>
<td>Wiardi Beckman Foundation (Wiardi Beckman Stichting)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WI</td>
<td>Scientific Institute for the CDA (Wetenschappelijk Instituut voor het CDA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WRR</td>
<td>Scientific Council for Government Policy (Wetenschappelijke Raad voor het Regeringsbeleid)</td>
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</table>
1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Eurosphere project
This country report is part of the Eurosphere project. Eurosphere is an EU funded project in which sixteen European countries are involved, coordinated by the University of Bergen, Norway. Aim of the project is to investigate opinions within the European public sphere on (ethno-national) diversity, migration, citizenship, and European integration. More information about the research project and partners involved can be found on the project’s website: www.eurosphere.uib.no.

This report is a description of the Dutch situation concerning the above mentioned themes. It encompasses what Dutch political parties, think tanks, social movement and media organisations, and prominent persons within these organisations, think about the Eurosphere themes. The report evaluates if and how these organisations contribute to the existence of a European public sphere. Although the report does form the basis for further analyses during a later stage of the Eurosphere-project, it is also intended as a publication that can be read independently.

1.2 Methodology
In our research of the chosen subjects we used different methods. First, we used documents to collect information about the selected organisations and persons, i.e. sources published by the organisations and persons such as information on websites, (party) constitutions, manifestos, (election) programs, reports, press releases, newspaper articles, and other sources that are of relevance. In addition we used secondary (scientific) literature. The documental information has been complemented by in-depth elite interviews. In total we have conducted 48 interviews with representatives of 26 organisations in the Netherlands. The document collection phase started in May 2008. The interviews were conducted between September 2008 and March 2009. We collected information about our actors until the first of April 2009, though we also added relevant information related to the European Parliamentary Elections on the fourth of June 2009.

All partners of the Eurosphere project have started their empirical data collection using the same topics and questionnaire as points of reference. The questionnaire and its translation can be found in the appendices. Empirical information from the interviews and information about the organisations has been entered in a database of the Norwegian Social Science Data Services (NSD). In a later phase of the project, Eurosphere researchers will use these data for their comparative analyses. Apart from this, the information also forms the basis for this country report. In most cases the data used for the database and those used for the report overlap.

The amount of data collected differs per organisation. Political parties are in general more open about their standpoints, though some are more transparent in this regard than others. In the case of some migrant organisations only very little information was available online or in other form. In these cases we added information from other sources such as secondary literature or newspaper articles. Other organisations were very open about their positions and views in publications and in those cases less other sources were needed. If possible and applicable we not only relied on the official position of the organisations, but also searched for diversity within the organisation. In doing so, we hoped to discover whether
there are differences between the official standpoints, rivalling strands and prominent individuals of this organisation.

Because the Eurosphere project is characterized by a very broad research design in which many topics are addressed, we had some difficulties in selecting people who were familiar with all topics. Not everyone can be expected to be an expert on all of these. In some cases we found it necessary to delimit the interview topics more than in other cases. We interviewed persons about their field of expertise, although we also tried to cover as many topics as possible within one interview. In the case of a political party this would for example result in a spokesperson on Europe being interviewed about European topics and to a lesser extent about his or her ideas on citizenship. Our interviewees represent a very diverse range of persons. Therefore, in some cases we found it necessary to deviate from the standard questionnaire in order to be able to focus on the field of expertise of our interviewees.

The information expressed during the interviews can be better understood if presented in the specific context of the Dutch situation. Therefore, we provide the reader with a general introduction to the policy fields relevant to Eurosphere. In chapter 2 these policy fields are dealt with. First, migrant admission and integration policies are described, followed by the most important developments in the field of citizenship and Dutch nationality, and, finally, Dutch Europe policy. In chapter 3 to chapter 6 our empirical findings are presented. Chapter 3 deals with political parties and starts with an introduction to the Dutch political party landscape. Chapter 4 deals with think tanks and gives an introduction to Dutch think tanks. Chapter 5 is about social movement organisations and starts with a general introduction to social organisations in the Netherlands. Chapter 6 deals with media. The chapters 3 to chapter 6 further provide short introductions to the organisations and interviewees, and present the positions within the organisations towards the Eurosphere topics. Information from the interviews is used in the form of direct quotations and is preceded by underlining the name of the respondent. New topics are marked by italics. Finally, in chapter 7 our conclusions will be presented.

1.3 Actor selection

Like all country teams we used the central guideline of the Eurosphere project for how to select political parties, social movements, think tanks and media organisations. Although we tried as much as we could to work within the frame of this guideline, we deviated from it on several points in order to give an adequate sketch of the Dutch situation and cover a broad spectrum of opinions.

Compared to other European countries, the Dutch party landscape is diverse with many political parties. To cover the broad spectrum of opinions we included more parties than the central guideline of the Eurosphere project prescribed (see Table 1.1). On the basis of the comparatively huge variety within the Dutch party landscape and especially the explicit standpoints on Europe and diversity (either pro or contra) we included the Christen Democratisch Appèl (CDA, Christian Democratic Appeal), Partij van de Arbeid (PvdA, Labour Party), Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie (VVD, People’s Party for Freedom and Democracy), Trots op Nederland (Proud of the Netherlands, ToN), Socialistische Partij (SP, Socialist Party), and GroenLinks (GreenLeft) for the national level, and the Frysk Eistaatskundige Partij (FNP, Frisian National Party) for the regional level. Because ToN and Wilders’ Partij voor de Vrijheid (PVV, Party for Freedom) seceded from the VVD due to
strongly differing opinions on diversity and Europe, we explicitly tried to include both in our actor selection. Only Verdonk (ToN) was willing to participate.\footnote{The Eurosphere project is not the only scientific initiative that the PVV refused to participate in. The Anne Frank Stichting found that Wilders and the PVV systematically refuse to participate in scientific studies or to include scientists in the party. (Davidović et al. 2008: 179)}

The size of the party, measured by the number of seats in Parliament, determined how many persons we were to interview per party. For larger parties we interviewed more respondents than for smaller ones. Availability and willingness to participate were other determining factors for how many persons and whom to include in our selection. We tried to include the official spokespersons on Eurosphere topics. In practice this meant spokespersons on Europe, immigration and integration and justice. Since diversity is one of the main topics of Eurosphere, we found involving Members of Parliament with a non-Dutch background an advantage. We included them whenever possible. Since Eurosphere’s aims are to conduct elite interviews we tried to include as many persons as possible who were well-known in their field of expertise. Furthermore, we also wanted to include the perspective of the younger generation. Therefore we included representatives of the youth organisations of the national political parties. Only the youth organisation Rood (SP) is absent in our selection, because they did not consider it their priority to take part in our research.
Table 1.1: Actor selection: Political Parties

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Function</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CDA</td>
<td>Mr Wim van de Camp</td>
<td>MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mr Coskun Çörüz</td>
<td>MP</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mr Harry van der Molen</td>
<td>Chairman youth organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mrs Neda Naderi</td>
<td>Staff scientific bureau</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mrs Ria Oomen-Ruijten</td>
<td>MEP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PvdA</td>
<td>Mr Luuk Blom</td>
<td>MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mrs Emine Bozkurt</td>
<td>MEP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mr Jeroen Dijssebloem</td>
<td>MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mr Ahmed Marcouch</td>
<td>Head of Amsterdam Borough</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mr Nick Ritzen</td>
<td>Vice-chairman youth organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mrs Monika Sie Dhian Ho</td>
<td>Director scientific bureau</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mrs Ella Vogelaar</td>
<td>Former Minister</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SP</td>
<td>Mr Harry van Bommel</td>
<td>MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mr Erik Meijer</td>
<td>MEP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mr Jan de Wit</td>
<td>MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GroenLinks</td>
<td>Mrs Naima Azough</td>
<td>MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mrs Kathalijne Buitenweg</td>
<td>MEP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mr Diederik ten Cate</td>
<td>Vice-chairman youth organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VVD</td>
<td>Mr Han ten Broeke</td>
<td>MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mr Jeroen Diepemaat</td>
<td>Chairman youth organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mr Hans Dijkstra</td>
<td>Former Minister, MP and party leader</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mr Jan Fransen</td>
<td>Queen’s Commissioner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mrs Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert</td>
<td>Member European Parliament</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mr Henk Kamp</td>
<td>Former Minister and MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mr Patrick van Schie</td>
<td>Director scientific bureau</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ToN</td>
<td>Mrs Rita Verdonk</td>
<td>Former Minister and MP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FNP</td>
<td>Mr Johannes Kramer</td>
<td>Leader FNP-faction Provinci al States</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Dutch situation concerning think tanks is somewhat special. There are no politically important, privately-funded think tanks driven by a certain ideology that produce ideas or contribute otherwise to public debates and policymaking. There are, however, scientific institutes that contribute to thinking in the political and social field. We have chosen to include these institutions (see Table 2.1). A prominent think tank is the Wetenschappelijke Raad voor het Regeringsbeleid (WRR, Scientific Council for Government Policy). This Council is directly linked to and funded by the Dutch government, but is generally considered relatively autonomous and not operating from or driven by a certain political position. Apart from the WRR we included Forum and the Verwey-Jonker Instituut because they contribute to the scientific, political and social debates on diversity within the Netherlands. Furthermore, many political parties have a scientific bureau, which can be considered think tanks. These institutions provide their parties and in some cases also broader society with ideology-based ideas and proposals. Therefore, for the larger parties (CDA, PvdA and VVD) we have included their scientific institutions in the actor selection for parties.
Table 1.2  Actor selection: Think tanks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Function</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WRR</td>
<td>Mr Dennis Broeders</td>
<td>Scientific staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mr Han Entzinger</td>
<td>Former scientific staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mr Jan Schoonenboom</td>
<td>Former council member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mrs Monika Sie Dhian Ho</td>
<td>Former scientific staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verwey-Jonker Instituut</td>
<td>Mr Jan Willem Duyvendak</td>
<td>Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forum</td>
<td>Mr Sadik Harchaoui</td>
<td>Chairman of the board</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the case of the *social movements* (see Table 1.3) we also covered a broad spectrum of organisations. The Netherlands has all kinds of minority groups, e.g. post-colonial migrants, guest workers, national minorities, ethno-religious minorities. We included organisations representing these groups. Other criteria that determined our selection were that organisations must have national relevance and preferably focus on transnational issues, and they must represent the positions and rights of their members and supporters. Finally, we focussed on organisations that are active in the public sphere. Therefore, we did not involve organisations that merely seem to exist just on paper.

Table 1.3  Actor selection: Social Movement Organisations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Function</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Turks-Islamitische Culturele Federatie</td>
<td>Mr Ayhan Tonca</td>
<td>Chairman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milli Görüş Noord-Nederland</td>
<td>Mr Yusuf Altuntas</td>
<td>Chairman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hak.der</td>
<td>Mr Adnan Yilmez</td>
<td>Board member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argan</td>
<td>Mr Mohamed Azahaf</td>
<td>Spokesman, project manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UMMAO</td>
<td>Mr Ahmed Marcouch</td>
<td>Former chairman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federatie Islamische Organisaties Nederland</td>
<td>Mr Yahia Bouyafa</td>
<td>Chairman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landelijke Roma Stichting “Roma Emancipatie”</td>
<td>Mr Gjouler Abdula</td>
<td>Chairman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VluchtelingenWerk Nederland</td>
<td>Mr Edwin Huizing</td>
<td>Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vluchtelingen-Organisaties Nederland</td>
<td>Mr Dzsingsiz Gabor</td>
<td>Chairman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Museum Maluku</td>
<td>Mr Wim Manuhutu</td>
<td>Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindoe Raad Nederland</td>
<td>Mr Tjandersekar Bissessur</td>
<td>Vice-chairman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CIDI</td>
<td>Mr Ronny Naftaniel</td>
<td>Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Een Ander Joods Geluid</td>
<td>Mr Alfred Feberwee</td>
<td>Secretary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voorpost</td>
<td>Rob</td>
<td>Leading figure</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To represent the diversity of migrants in the Netherlands we included old groups of migrants such as Jews (ethno-religious minorities) and Roma, and more recent ones such as Moluccans and Surinamese (post-colonial migrants). From these we selected the most prominent groups in terms of numbers and importance in Dutch history. Although people from the Dutch East Indies form a large group, we decided not to include them, because they are generally considered to be well integrated and do not form a strong community. They lack advocating
organisations at the national level and most of their organisations are culturally oriented. We
did include organisations represented in the LOM-structure (National Body on Minority
Consultation) and important refugee organisations. Per migrant group we selected one or
more organisations. How many depended on the degree of organisation of the group, the
number of migrants in the Netherlands and the prominence of the group in the Dutch
integration debate. Since many of the Moroccan and Turkish organisations (guest workers)
were Muslim organisations, we focused on Hindu organisations in the case of Surinamese
migrant organisations. In the case of the Turkish migrants we covered the broad spectrum of
organisations and included organisations of various ideologies.

In the case of media (Table 1.4) we tried to include the same organisations as for the
Europshere media content analysis (more information on this part of the project can be found
on the Eurosphere website). For this content analysis we selected two national newspapers, 
_NRC Handelsblad_ and _De Telegraaf_. Thus, we approached both newspapers: _NRC
Handelsblad_ participated in our interview; _De Telegraaf_ did not want to participate.
Furthermore, we should select two current affairs programmes: one from the public channel
and one commercial. However, besides the news, commercial channels in the Netherlands do
not broadcast current affairs programmes that pay attention to the Eurosphere topics. Therefore, the only programme we included is _Nova_.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1.4 Actor selection: Media</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Medium</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NRC Handelsblad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nova</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2 OUTLINE OF RELEVANT POLICY FIELDS

2.1 Introduction

This chapter contains an overview of Dutch policies in those policy fields that are relevant to
the Eurosphere research. Because the research focuses on opinions on ethno-national
diversity, immigration, citizenship and European integration we sketch Dutch policies
regarding immigration and integration (§2.2), citizenship (§2.3), national minorities (§2.4)
and the European Union (§2.5). This serves as background information and helps to prevent
overlap and repetition in the empirical chapters on political parties, think tanks, SMO’s and
NGO’s and the media.

2.2 Immigration to the Netherlands and Dutch admission and integration
policies

2.2.1 Introduction

In this paragraph we will give an overview of processes of immigration to the Netherlands
and Dutch policies on admission and integration of immigrants since the Second World War.
In this introduction we sketch post-war immigration in general. Furthermore we will give an
overview of the most important minority groups living in the Netherlands (§2.2.2). In the
subsequent subparagraphs we will describe immigration and admission and integration
policies for six sub-periods.
Figure 2.1  

Immigration to the Netherlands and the US and net-migration in the Netherlands as percentage of the total population, 1945-2008.

The Netherlands have been a country of immigration since the sixties, at least if we take net-migration as the criterion (see Figure 2.1). The level of immigration has been considerable during the post-war period, which is illustrated by the fact that during this period the number of immigrants as a percentage of the total population was on average 2.8 times higher than in a ‘classical immigration country’ like the US (compare Figure 2.1). As we will see, the Dutch government was very reluctant to recognize the fact that the Netherlands by the early sixties had become a country of immigration; official recognition came as late as 1998.
The composition of post-war immigrant flows is illustrated by Figure 2.2. Until the early sixties, the former Dutch colony of Indonesia was the main source country. This was an effect of a decolonisation process that took more than fifteen years. The sixties and seventies were the era of the so-called ‘guest-worker policy’ that lead to immigration from Mediterranean countries of which Turkey and Morocco became the most important source countries. At the same time, net migration from the European Economic Community grew more important. During the seventies there was considerable net migration from the former Dutch colony of Surinam, as a result of its independence in 1975. In the early eighties, immigration was low due to stricter admission policies and a severe economic crisis. However, for (at least) three reasons the level of net migration rose sharply in the second half of the eighties. Firstly, there was considerable immigration from the Dutch Antilles. Secondly, chain migration (family reunification and especially family formation) from former source countries like Indonesia, Turkey and Morocco gained importance. Thirdly and most importantly, the number of asylum applicants rose sharply from 1987 onward, which explains the growth of net migration in the category ‘other’ in Figure 2.2. Between 2001 and 2005, there is a sharp decrease of migration in general, for a large part as an effect of a much stricter admission policy laid down in the so-called ‘new’ Aliens Act (Vreemdelingenwet 2000). However, from 2006 onward, migration levels rose again, mainly due to an increase of immigration from the (enlarged) EU. Another reason can be found in the so-called ‘General Pardon of 2007’ which granted access to the Netherlands to many refugees who applied for asylum under the ‘old’ Aliens Act (Min. Justitie 2009).

2.2.2 Immigrant groups in the Netherlands

In this subparagraph we will take a quick look at the most important immigrant groups living in the Netherlands in 2008. Before we do so, we must explain the meaning of the term *allochtoon* which is a very important statistical category related to immigration policy. The
Dutch word *allochtoon* (plural: *allochtonen*) cannot be translated into English without loss of meaning, so we give the official definition. An *allochtoon* is a person with at least one parent born abroad. A distinction is made between first and second generation *allochtoon*; a ‘first generation *allochtoon*’ is a person who is born abroad and has at least one parent born abroad, a ‘second generation *allochtoon*’ is a person born in the Netherlands with at least one parent born abroad.¹⁴

**Figure 2.3 Immigrant communities (*Allochtonen*) in the Netherlands, 1972-2008.**
(Source: CBS-Statline 2009)

Furthermore a distinction is made between western and non-western *allochtonen*. Non-western *allochtonen* are people from Africa, Asia and Latin-America, and western *allochtonen* are people from the rest of the world (‘countries predominantly inhabited by Europeans or descendants of Europeans’). However, there are some important exceptions. Turkey, which from a geographical viewpoint is partly European is categorized as non-western. Also the Dutch Antilles are defined as non-western, even though they are part of the (predominantly European) Kingdom of the Netherlands. On the other hand, persons from Japan and Indonesia are defined as western *allochtonen* because of their ‘cultural and socio-economic position in the Netherlands’ (CBS-Statline 2009). Despite the fact that until the turn of the century non-western *allochtonen* where outnumbered by western *allochtonen* (see Figure 2.3), policymakers and opinion leaders almost exclusively pay attention to the non-western *allochtonen*. Besides ‘cultural distinctiveness’ this might be explained by the much faster ‘growth rate’ of the latter and their relatively weak socio-economic position; after all, that’s why the relative successful Indonesians and Japanese were defined as western *allochtonen*.

Post-war immigration created many different immigrant communities in the Netherlands. In 2008 there were 3.22 million (19.6% of the total population) *allochtonen*

¹⁴ There is also an ‘semi-official’ definition of ‘third generation *allochtoon*’, consisting of individuals of which the grandparents are born abroad (FORUM 2009a).
living in the country on a total population of 16.4 million, of which 1.45 million (8.8% of the total population) are western *allochtonen* and 1.77 million (10.8% of the total population) are non-western *allochtonen* (CBS-Statline 2009). We will now describe the largest groups of western and non-western *allochtonen* living in the Netherlands.

Indonesians (387,000 persons) form the largest group of ‘western’ *allochtonen*, though they are not often distinguished as a group, because they are quite generally regarded as ‘fully integrated’ in Dutch society (Cf. De Vries 2009). Other large immigrant communities are formed by people from ‘neighbouring countries’ like Germany (380,000 persons), Belgium (112,000 persons), the UK (76,000 persons) and France (35,000 persons). Besides that, there are several large communities from those European countries that where once source countries for guest-workers, like Yugoslavia (77,000 persons, including many refugees from the war in former Yugoslavia), Italy (37,000 persons) and Spain (31,000 persons). A recent source country for European labour migrants is Poland (59,000 persons). The largest community of non-Europeans is formed by people from the US (31,000 persons) (CBS-Statline 2009).

People from Turkey (373,000 persons), Surinam (336,000 persons), Morocco (335,000 persons) and the Dutch Antilles (132,000 persons) currently (2008) form the largest groups of non-western *allochtonen*. For a long time, those four groups together with the Chinese (47,000 persons) formed the majority of non-western *allochtonen*. However, a considerable influx of Asian and African asylum migrants led to a diversification of source countries from the late eighties onward. The three largest communities that mainly consist of asylum migrants are from Iraq (45,000 persons), Afghanistan (37,000 persons) and Iran (30,000 persons). Currently (2008), *allochtonen* from virtually every independent state (218 out of 231 states) are living in the Netherlands and there are 42 minority groups consisting of ten thousand persons or more (CBS-Statline 2009).

### 2.2.3 1945-1959: Emigration Policy

In the fifties, the Netherlands considered itself as a country of emigration rather than a country of immigration. The government regarded the country as ‘overpopulated’ (Lakeman 1999; Lucassen & Penninx 1994; Entzinger 1990: 252). Land was seen as the scarce factor of production and labour as the abundant factor (Berg 1967). With fertility rates difficult to control, the solution was two-fold: land reclamation and emigration policy. Between 1950 and 1960 approximately half a million Dutch citizens (5% of the total population in 1950) were stimulated to emigrate to classical ‘immigration countries’ like Canada, Australia and the US (CBS-Statline 2009).\(^{15}\)

Despite the emigration policy, there was a considerable influx of immigrants; between 1945 and 1965 roughly 300,000 so-called ‘Repatriates’ immigrated from the former Dutch colony of Indonesia, most of them during the late forties (Lucassen & Penninx 1994: 40). However, due to the official emigration policy, immigration was a political taboo, and for some time, the government framed the Repatriates as ‘temporary immigrants’. Because of their strong legal position – many of them were Dutch nationals (!) – the Repatriates successfully lobbied for an integration policy which was well-funded (Entzinger 1990: 251) and strongly assimilationist in character. More importantly, the policy was very successful; it was ended within ten years because of fulfilment of the main policy goal – prevention of minority formation through ‘complete integration’ (Lucassen & Penninx 1994: 139-140).

\(^{15}\) Many re-migrated and the total net migration to those five countries during this decade was approximately 300,000 persons, i.e. 3% of the total Dutch population in 1950 (10.0 million persons) (CBS-Statline 2009).
However, this integration policy did not apply to all immigrants from Indonesia. A relative small group of Moluccan soldiers (roughly 12,000 men and their families) from the former Dutch Colonial Army (KNIL) kept a dream alive to liberate their homeland – the South Moluccas – from what they saw as Indonesian occupation (Entzinger 1990: 250-251; for an excellent recent study on the Moluccan minority in the Netherlands see: Van Amersfoort 2004). Because of their orientation towards remigration, they did not want to integrate in Dutch society and were treated as a separate group by the government.

2.2.4 1960-1969: Recruitment Policy

From 1960 onwards emigration (policy) makes place for immigration, mainly from so-called guest workers. The sixties are the decade of the so-called ‘Recruitment Policy’ (Wervingsbeleid) in which the Dutch government concluded ‘Recruitment Treaties’ with the governments of Mediterranean countries to recruit workers in Italy (1960), Spain (1961), Portugal (1963), Turkey (1964), Greece (1966), Morocco (1969), Yugoslavia (1970) and Tunisia (1970) (Penninx 1979: 99; for an excellent recent study on the Turkish case see: Akgündüz 2008).

This policy was the answer to severe labour shortages that developed around 1960 (Wentholt 1967). For a large part, these shortages were the result of a post-war policy of strict wage moderation, which was meant to boost Dutch industry and increase international competitiveness. This policy was successful, but it also made low skilled labour cheap for employers, creating an incentive for labour intensive production (Berg 1967). It also made low skilled jobs unattractive for an increasingly well-trained indigenous work force. Thus, a ‘qualitative gap’ existed on the labour market which was to be filled in with guest workers (Van de Beek forthcoming).

In spite of the Recruitment Policy, immigration still was a political taboo in the Netherlands. Therefore, foreign workers were portrayed as ‘temporary immigrants’ and called ‘guest workers’ or ‘international commuters’ (Wentholt 1967). The assumption was, that even in case foreign labour as a phenomenon was to stay, the individual guest workers were ‘rotated’, i.e. replaced by another guest worker after a few years of work in the Netherlands (Entzinger 1990: 252). Government policy was aimed at ameliorating their often poor working and housing conditions and not geared towards their integration, which was even seen as undesired.

2.2.5 1970-1979: Policy changes

In the seventies there were two main groups of immigrants. First of all, many of the ‘temporary’ Mediterranean guest workers – often married men who had left wife and children in their home countries – decided to stay en set in motion a process of family reunification (Penninx & Van Velzen 1976: 19-21). Especially the number of Turkish and Moroccan immigrants rose sharply. The independence of the Dutch colony of Surinam in 1975 caused another substantial influx of immigrants; during the seventies approximately 120,000 Surinamese citizens (roughly one-third of the total population) came to the Netherlands (Algemeen Bureau voor de Statistiek Suriname 2000; CBS-Statline 2009).

Regarding migration policy, the seventies are characterized by gradual policy changes and a lack of clear vision. In 1970, in a key policy document (Min. SZ&V 1970) the government made a strong case for temporary guest workers, but at the same time hinted at family reunification and stated that in the long run the Recruitment Policy could frustrate a beneficial restructuring of the economy. During the early seventies there was growing societal (Velu 1971: 29-30, 35) and political (TK 1970) resistance against the Recruitment Policy, which was more and more seen as economic exploitation or even ‘modern slavery’. A new,
rather leftwing government that came into power in 1973 distanced itself from the Recruitment Policy (Min. SZ 1973: 3), but as late as 1978 the number of new work permits was still nine thousand (Penninx 1979: 93).

Because the government was very reluctant to acknowledge that most immigrants were to stay, there was no clear policy vision on the integration of immigrants either (Hoppe 1987). Policies, as far as they existed, were based on the rather vague notion of ‘integration with preservation of own culture’ (integratie met behoud van eigen cultuur). However, in the late seventies several terrorist actions by militant members of the Moluccan minority – which was by that time living ‘temporarily’ in the Netherlands for almost thirty years – created a sense of urgency among policymakers, that eventually lead to the so-called ‘Minorities Policy’ of the eighties (Hoppe 1987). In the development of the Minorities Policy the Scientific Council for Government Policy (WRR) played a crucial role (see §4.3.1).

2.2.6 1980-1989: Minorities Policy

The early eighties showed a very sharp decrease in immigration rates (see Figure 2.2). One of the causes was a stricter admission policy with, among other things, visa regulations for important source countries like Turkey and Surinam (Van Wissen & De Beer 2000: 150-151; Cornelis 1990: 19) and a stricter law on labour-migration (Ten Doesschate 1993: 31-32). More importantly, the Netherlands were struck by the most severe economic crisis since the Great Depression, caused by the second oil crisis, very high wage costs and an extensive and easily accessible welfare state (Boeschoten 1992). This economic crisis had another, rather dramatic effect: it made visible how vulnerable the socio-economic position of many immigrants actually was (Van Zanden & Griffiths 1989: 105-107). The high wage costs and international economic malaise, speeded up the process of economic restructuring that was postponed by the earlier policies of wage moderation and the import of cheap foreign labour (Heijke 1979). This process resulted in a more knowledge based and capital intensive economy and a decreasing demand for low-skilled labour. Hence, many low-skilled immigrants became dependent on welfare.

Against this background, the ‘Minorities Policy’ was developed. The main policy goal was to give immigrants equal access to core institutions of society, like labour and education (Min. BZ 1983; Min. BZ 1981). In this respect, it was a generic policy aimed at improving the bad socio-economic position of the individual immigrant. At the same time, the policy aimed at socio-cultural emancipation at group level, a dimension added under the influence of pressure groups (Hoppe 1987: 17). Sometimes, those goals were downright contradictory: for example, one-fifth of regular primary school time was used to give migrant children lessons in their own language, which was probably not helping to improve their socio-economic position (Lucassen & Köbben 1992).

A characteristic of migration policy in the eighties was depoliticisation. Partly because of the severe economic crisis (Choenni 2000: 135), anti-immigrant parties had won support among working class Dutch, who had to compete with immigrants for the same low-skilled jobs, benefits and housing programs. The largest political parties decided from the beginning (Scholten 2007a: 125-126) that a cordon sanitaire (containment policy) was needed to minimize the electoral success of those anti-immigrant parties (see §3.1.2). As a result of that, the issue of immigration was banned from the political arena (Hoppe 1987; Penninx et al. 2005; Scholten & Timmermans 2004; compare: Vermolen 1996: 312; Vuijsje 1986; Vuijsje

16The majority of guest workers from Turkey were Kurds, and the majority of guest workers from Morocco were Berbers, hence their children were offered lessons in the official language of their home countries, but not in their mother tongue.
1997; Schoo 2000). Instead, the conceptual development and practical implementation of the Minorities Policy was left to scientific experts (the so-called ‘technocratic compromise’, Rath 1991; Van Amersfoort 1983) which gave minorities researchers a dominant position in Minorities Policy. In fact, the Minorities Policy was largely based on an advise of the (government) think tank Scientific Council for Government Policy (WRR, see §4.2.1). Another effect of the *cordon sanitaire* was a national preoccupation with racism and discrimination, which even further smothered public and political debate about immigration and integration (Rijkschroeff et al. 2004: 29).

The Minorities Policy lacked an ‘immigration perspective’ (Penninx 1988b: 18): important immigrant groups like the Chinese were excluded, while the autochthonous ‘caravan dwellers’ (trailer dwellers, mobile home dwellers, *woonwagenbewoners*) were included. The basic underlying assumption was that the labour migration and the colonial immigration that had created the existing minorities, had been unique phenomena and that future immigration could be avoided (Van de Beek forthcoming). This explains the focus on integration and emancipation.

### 2.2.7 1990-1999: Integration Policy

Already by the late eighties, it became clear that immigration was difficult to control without radically changing (the interpretation of) the international treaties that secure the right of asylum and of family life. The number of asylum applications began to rise sharply – from 10.000 in 1987, via 20.000 in 1990, to 50.000 in 1994 – and totalled 366.000 in the period 1990-2000 (CBS-Statline 2009). Besides family reunification, family formation became an important motive for immigration. In the years 1995-1999 (data are lacking for the years before 1995) 45% of the immigration was family related and 25% was asylum migration (CBS-Statline 2009). Because of the increase in asylum migration, the number of source countries multiplied, creating many new substantial immigrant communities (see §2.2.2). This revealed the static nature of the group-based Minorities Policy which only applied to six specific target groups.

By the late eighties, there was a general dissatisfaction about the results of the Minorities Policy, especially about the limited progress in key areas like work and education. A poor labour market performance and low educational attainment turned out to be a persistent problem among many non-western *allochtonen*. The government decided that there was a need for a fundamental policy change. Again, a report of the government think tank Scientific Council for Government Policy played a pivotal role (for details see §4.2.2). During the nineties, there was a gradual shift towards an immigrant Integration Policy, in which obligatory ‘integration courses’ (citizenship courses, *inburgeringscursussen*) played a central role. The Integration Policy initially mainly stressed the socio-economic aspects of immigration and integration. However, under the influence of Frits Bolkestein (1991) – the leader of the liberal VVD-party (see §3.1.2 and §3.6) – the cultural aspects of immigration were problematised as well, especially the alleged irreconcilability of western and Islamic values. This, together with the fact that the high influx of immigrants strained the absorption capacity of the Netherlands, caused a gradual re-politisisation of the immigration issue.

### 2.2.8 2000-2009: Assimilation Policy?

From the turn of the century onward, both immigration and the number of asylum applicants were curbed by a new, much stricter Aliens Act (*Vreemdelingenwet* 2000). At the same time, the government tried to stimulate the immigration of so-called *kenniswerkers*, high-skilled immigrants, but also foreign students who wanted to stay after their graduation (Marey et al. 2002). This renewed interest in immigration for economic purposes relates to the growing
awareness of the ageing problem (Klaver & Odé 2002), and the Lisboa Agenda which set out to make Europe (and hence the Netherlands) the ‘most dynamic knowledge economy in the world’ (Min. EZ et al. 2003). This policy shift changed the composition of immigration; where the number of asylum applicants dwindled from 27,000 persons in 2000 to a mere three thousand persons in 2004, in the same year the number of foreign students for the first time exceeded 10,000 persons (CBS-Statline 2009). In that sense admission policy became somewhat more selective with regard to the human capital of immigrants, though in practice, gaining access to the Dutch labour market still is not easy for high-skilled workers (Berkhout & Hartog 2007). More recently (2006-2008) the level of immigration rose again due to the so-called General Pardon to asylum applicants, and an increased immigration from new EU-members like Poland, Bulgaria and Romania (see §2.2.1).

The new century also brought a change in the political climate towards immigration. Especially after 9/11, the public opinion on immigration, and more specifically the Islam, became quite negative. This enhanced electoral opportunities for (populist) parties who wanted to introduce stricter admission and immigrant integration policies. This was one of the reasons of the sudden popularity of Pim Fortuyn and his political party LPF in 2002 (see §3.1.2). Several coalitions after 2002 understood the (electoral) necessity to introduce much stricter integration policies. For example, Minister Rita Verdonk of Alien Affairs and Integration Policy (Vreemdelingenzaken en Integratie) introduced an obligatory ‘integration course’ in the home country of would-be immigrants, which then could only immigrate to the Netherlands after they passed the exam. Besides that, a parliamentary inquiry was started into the effects of ‘thirty years of integration policy’ (see §4.3). Even before publication, the results of this report were already discarded as ‘too soft’ and ‘politically correct on immigration’. Generally speaking, it seems that, since the turn of the century, Dutch Integration Policy is becoming more assimilationist and is putting the emphasis more on the socio-cultural aspects of immigration and integration (comp. Gijsberts & Dagevos 2005: 9; Scholten & Timmermans 2004).

2.3 Citizenship and nationality (SvH)

Nationality legislation used to be a domain reserved for legal and juridical practitioners and scholars, but has become more and more the subject of interest for social and political scientists, philosophers and the like. Heijs points out that nationality is of major importance because of its direct consequences for a person’s legal status. It means that a country national has access to the national territory, including the right to reside there and access to certain basic rights such as education, health care, a minimum income and the right to vote. These basic rights, and in particular those concerning the social security system, are increasingly perceived to be scarce in western societies. That is one of the reasons why nationality is not easily given to a foreigner and that it has become more and more the subject of social and political debates (Heijs 1995: 1-2).

Nationality, and in particular the issue of dual nationality, has become a prominent issue on the Dutch political agenda. International treaties and European arrangements on the one hand play a role in discussions about nationality and in its legislation. But, on the other hand there is a tendency to emphasize nationality law as a national competence. This has increasingly led to a field of tension between international agreements and national debates on nationality. In order to understand the discussions about nationality law in the Netherlands, the section below addresses its most important features. Firstly, a brief introduction in

17 These courses include basic Dutch language skills and social skills and came in addition to the already existing obligatory courses for immigrants that must be followed in the Netherlands.
nationality law in general is provided, followed by a specification of nationality within the Dutch context. To conclude, the Dutch debate on multiple nationalities and the suggested link with integration are discussed.

2.3.1 Nationality in general

Nationality expresses a legal bond between a person and a state. The actual meaning of this bond has fluctuated over time and place. In the process of nation building in the 19th century concepts such as ‘a people’ and ‘citizenship’ played an important role in defining nationality. Apart from that, nationalist feelings were also connected to the concept, often in a romantic way of seeing the people and the nation. By the 20th century, most nations had defined their own particular nationality legislation, which strongly differed per country (Adviescommissie voor Vreemdelingenzaken 2008: 12). Some provided nationality on the basis of being born on the national territory, or *ius soli*, while others provided nationality on the basis of being born from a parent (father) with a specific nationality, *ius sanguini*, or a combination of the two. Various countries also had their specific rules of how to provide nationality to foreigners (naturalisation).

With the provision of the legal relationship with the state, a person is also linked to international law. Within the EU this means that a member state nationality automatically generates a Union citizenship (Bauböck et al. 2006: 15). It is clearly stated in article 17 of the treaty establishing the European Community that Union citizenship supplements national citizenship without replacing it (European Commission 2006). The main features of EU citizenship are freedom of movement and residence between member states without being treated as second-class citizens while executing this right (Bauböck et al. 2006: 457-459; European Commission 2004). Direct access to Union citizenship is not possible, but has to be established through a member state nationality. Since there is a large variety in nationality legislation among EU member states, it strongly depends on the member state who becomes an EU citizen or not. Although international law recognizes nationality law as the exclusive domain of a sovereign state, within the EU a need has been recognized to exchange information on the subject of nationality in order to establish more international standards on nationality legislation (Bauböck et al. 2006: 16-17).

Since the Second World War several attempts on harmonisation in nationality law have been made. The existing convergence between EU member states has not been realized by enforcement or coordination (because the EU does no have the right nor means to do so), but rather by normative pressure and imitation. Particularly countries with comparable politically oriented governments may solve immigration issues in a similar way (Bauböck et al. 2006: 19-21; Perchinig & Bauböck 2006: 14-17). Apart from tendencies to harmonise nationality legislation at a European level, also bilateral conventions between some European countries existed. These addressed key notions such as the individual right to a nationality (which stems from the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, adopted in 1948), the avoidance of statelessness and multiple nationality, the unity of family, the elimination of discrimination, especially if based on gender, and the need for a genuine link between the individual and the state. In 1997 the European Convention on Nationality was adopted, which formed a contemporary solution to nationality related issues, suitable for all member states. It mainly covered the aforementioned bilateral themes. However, by 2006 the convention was only ratified by Belgium, Ireland, Luxembourg, Spain and the UK; Austria, Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands, Portugal and Sweden gave their consent to ratify the convention in the future (Bauböck et al. 2006: 22-23).
2.3.2 Nationality Law in the Netherlands

The First Dutch Nationality Act stems from 1892. It was based on the concept of *iure sanguini*, which meant that Dutch nationality was obtained through birth from a Dutch father. This act replaced acquisition of Dutch nationality *iure soli*, meaning obtaining Dutch nationality by being born on Dutch territory. After the Nationality Act came into effect the number of naturalisations of foreigners was extremely low: e.g. in 1915 only 23 persons obtained nationality through naturalisation. Nevertheless, already by then, political questions rose about the motives for naturalisation. Several politicians stressed that applicants needed to have an emotional tie with the Netherlands and tried to define that tie (without clear outcomes). In 1953 the concept of nationality *iure soli* was partly reintroduced: from then on, third generation immigrants automatically obtained Dutch nationality at birth. They were seen as ‘belonging to the Dutch community’ and were expected to be ‘fully integrated’. The adjustment in law mainly aimed at Germans living in the Netherlands, but applied to all third generation immigrants. The following three decades were characterised by relative liberal naturalisation policies and practices (Van Oers et al. 2006: 391-399; Heijs 1995: 232).

As a direct result of the 1979 WRR report ‘Ethnic minorities’ (see §4.2.1), nationality legislation – among many other policy measures – was readjusted in order to diminish the differences in legal status between Dutch nationals and immigrants. One way to do so was by stimulating naturalisation; a second way was by improving the legal position of immigrants, e.g. by giving them voting rights on the local (and European) level. Therefore, in the new Dutch Nationality Act enforced in January 1985, the new minorities in the Netherlands took an important place. In this new law, also second generation immigrants were given the right to opt for Dutch nationality. The procedure of opting was less complicated and time consuming than naturalisation, and foremost did not imply integration requirements or renunciation of the original nationality. At the same time it became harder for first generation immigrants to acquire Dutch nationality, because of an *integration requirement*. This requirement was compulsory for persons who wanted to obtain Dutch nationality, but was very vaguely defined. To overcome vagueness, in 1984 Dutch legislators had tried to define it as “having a reasonable knowledge of the Dutch language and having been accepted in Dutch Society” (Van Oers et al. 2006: 143), but in practice the language test proved more important than having been accepted in Dutch society. Moreover, the integration requirement was applied flexibly, especially when dealing with illiterates, elderly people and those with limited education (Van Oers et al. 2006: 410-413).

In 1998 a political proposal suggested a more restrictive attitude towards naturalisation, including a less flexible application of the *renunciation requirement*. The 2003 adjustment of the Nationality Act was – in line with the 1998 proposal –much more restrictive than its predecessor: both opting and naturalisation had become more difficult. The minority policies of the Dutch government by then had been replaced by integration policies, which had a much more assimilatory character (see §2.2.8). The integration policies had a clear influence on nationality legislation, which also adopted an assimilatory style. Where once the starting point had been that naturalisation would improve the legal status of immigrants, which would speed up integration, the policy on immigration had reversed by now: nationality was seen as a ‘crown’ to integration and could only be achieved by being successfully integrated into Dutch society (Van Oers et al. 2006: 402-424).

However, the stricter measures in nationality law have shown more and more dissonance with international law. Even according to Dutch law certain measures as described above seem juridically not justifiable. E.g. in July 2008 two policy measures taken to reduce the number of immigrants, i.e. the Civic Integration Abroad Act and the raising of the minimum income requirement for Dutch persons who want to bring in their non-Dutch
spouse, were declared not to be conform Dutch law. A third law raising the minimum age of a non-Dutch spouse, is also expected to be declared illegal in the very near future (Van der Laan 2008). Furthermore, Dutch integration policy has been criticized by several international human rights organizations for violating human rights. Especially the detention of illegal immigrants and the expulsion of foreigners are heavily criticised. Besides, it was suggested that the tone of the public and political debate on integration in the Netherlands has become too narrow and deteriorated severely in recent years (Van der Hoeven 2008).

2.3.3 Multiple nationalities

With a stricter naturalisation legislation, debates on the requirements for Dutch nationality applicants have increased. A key issue in this respect is the concept of multiple nationalities, which is more and more seen as impeding integration, at least where it concerns the integration of allochtonen. Although there are many Dutch nationals with an additional nationality of a ‘western’ country (such as the United States, Japan, Australia or the EU member states), these seem not to be the focal points in the social and political debates on multiple, or dual nationality.

The Dutch Nationality Act formally avoids multiple nationalities, but daily practice shows many exceptions to that rule: since 1998 the number of Dutch nationals with multiple nationalities has risen by 72% (Adviescommissie voor Vreemdelingenzaken 2008: 53); in January 2009 over one million Dutch nationals held an additional nationality. The largest second nationality was the Turkish (282,000), followed by the Moroccan (260,000). It needs to be mentioned that also a large number of Dutch hold an additional nationality of another EU member state (237,000) (CBS 2009). To create a better understanding of the interpretation of these numbers, the history of multiple nationalities is briefly addressed below.

In January 1985, the current Dutch Nationality Act became effective. An important change in this law was that it provided Dutch nationals with both their father’s and mother’s nationality (until then they only obtained nationality from their father), which would lead to the rise of multiple (double) nationalities. On the same day the Council of Europe ratified the Convention on the Reduction of Cases of Multiple Nationalities, which aimed at reducing problems related to having multiple nationalities. Apart from the aforementioned situation which leads to an increase in the number of dual nationals, in general the Dutch government tries to reduce cases of multiple nationalities. A major theme in this respect is the renunciation of the original nationality (the renunciation requirement) when acquiring Dutch nationality. This concept was introduced in the 1984 Act (enforced in 1985), in line with the European Convention. It meant that persons who wanted to acquire Dutch nationality had to renounce their original nationality. The requirement did not apply to the option rule and neither to situations in which the laws of the country of origin would not allow to give up nationality, e.g. Morocco, Greece, Iran and most Eastern European countries (Van Oers et al. 2006: 404-405).

The renunciation requirement was abolished in 1992, which had direct consequences for the number of Turks that requested the Dutch nationality. Beforehand, they considered acquisition of the Dutch nationality as a betrayal of their home country because of the required renunciation of the Turkish nationality. But now they were able to become Dutch citizens without the emotional objections (Heijs 1995: 232-233). Since Moroccan law did not allow Moroccan citizens to give up their nationality, already many Moroccan-Dutch nationals existed. The dropping of the renunciation requirement resulted in a substantial portion of new Dutch nationals taking part in national and provincial elections (Adviescommissie voor Vreemdelingenzaken 2008: 55). In 1997, the renunciation requirement was reintroduced, in line with the predominant political views at that time (Van Oers et al. 2006: 408-409).
Following these views, conservative and liberal politicians suggested that most applicants for Dutch nationality did so out of pragmatic reasons, instead of doing it out of loyalty to the Netherlands. This lack of loyalty was seen as a hindrance to integration. In addition, in 2004 it was proposed to withdraw Dutch nationality from dual nationals who were convicted of terrorist acts (Van Oers et al. 2006: 409).

In line with the suggestions that dual nationality would impede integration, the Social and Cultural Planning Office (SCP) investigated the relation between dual nationality and integration. It did not find such a relation whatsoever, since existing differences between holders of multiple nationalities and single Dutch nationals could be fully explained by education level and command of Dutch. However, the SCP did find that people with a single Dutch nationality or with a Dutch and an additional nationality, showed a stronger identification with the Netherlands than those with only the nationality of their country of origin (Dagevos 2008: 26-30), and therefore, they were seen as better integrated. As a follow-up of the SCP research, the Adviescommissie voor Vreemdelingenzaken (ACVZ, Advisory Committee on Foreigners Affairs) wrote an advice to the Dutch government on the matter. Its main advice to the Dutch government was to adopt an attitude in which it would not matter whether a naturalisation would lead to multiple nationalities or not. Thereby the Netherlands would harmonise with the vast majority of EU member states’ positions. The committee also underlined the findings of the SCP report, that Dutch nationals in general are better integrated than non-Dutch (Adviescommissie voor Vreemdelingenzaken 2008: 55). But, the Dutch government did not follow the committee’s advice: in 2008 it changed the Dutch Nationality Act by accentuating the renunciation requirement. From now on, also second generation immigrants needed to give up their original nationality in the case that it did not play a legal role anymore in their daily life. Moreover, it was made possible to deprive persons of their Dutch nationality if proven guilty of a felony against the state (Tweede Kamer 2008).

In conclusion it can be stated that the Dutch debates on (double) nationality and consequently on nationality legislation, show an increased focus on Dutch nationality. Simultaneously, international and European agreements point towards more harmonisation and less nationalisation of the matter. This results in an increased dissonance between Dutch policies and European or international agreements. Throughout Dutch history, many attempts have been made to describe the requirements for (new) Dutch nationals and what their integration should consist of. However, integration seems difficult to define in a precise way, which leaves room for suggestions and obscurity. Nevertheless, a common requirement in this respect is an emotional tie with the Netherlands, but even that seems hard to define. In addition, there are attempts to exclude people, who are seen as not integrated or forming a hindrance to integration in general, from the Dutch nationality. Despite the fact that both SCP and the ACVZ concluded that dual nationality does not form a threat to integration, the Dutch government holds onto its original position that a renunciation of the old nationality is required.

2.4 Dutch policies regarding national minorities

The term ‘national minority’ is a rather vague term. The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights speaks of “ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities” without further specification. Also the European Convention on Human Rights uses the term ‘national

18 (Art. 27) “In those States in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities exist, persons belonging to such minorities shall not be denied the right, in community with the other members of their group, to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practise their own religion, or to use their own language.”
minority’ without specifying it. More importantly, even the Framework Convention for the protection of national minorities does not define the term ‘national minority’; this is left to participating states. To make things a bit clearer, we make the following distinction between ‘national minority’ and ‘ethnic minority’: (1) national minority refers to a group that obtained its minority position through the process of state formation and (2) ethnic minority refers to a group of people that obtained its minority position through immigration (Compare Kymlicka 1995: 10-11). Obviously, there is a grey area here, because some groups – like the Jews – arrived in the Netherlands during the process of state formation.

Dutch policies regarding national minorities have a somewhat confusing history. When the Dutch government in the early eighties developed the so-called Minorities Policy (see §2.2.6) it explicitly defined six ethnic groups this policy pertained to. One of those groups were the woonwagenbewoners (caravan dwellers) which are ethnically Dutch and in that sense they can be regarded as the first national minority with a legal status. However, we take the Framework Convention for the protection of national minorities as a starting point for our discussion of Dutch policies towards national minorities. The Netherlands took a long time to ratify the Framework. Initially, the government intended to acknowledge the Frisians and all the target groups of the Integration Policy as national minorities (Min. VWS et al. 1999). However, there were objections from several politicians and a State Committee on Juridical Issues, the Meijer-Committee (2001). After many deliberations, the Minister of Alien Affairs and Integration Policy Verdonk decided to acknowledge the Frisians as the only national minority (Min. V&I 2003). This is the current (2008) state of affairs. The Frisians ‘have’ a political party – the Fryske Nasjonale Party (see §3.8) – which operates at a local and provincial level, and is represented indirectly at a national and EU-level as well. The Frisian language is also the only territorial language recognized by the Netherlands with the ratification (1998) of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages. With the ratification also four so-called non-territorial languages were recognized, namely Yiddish (Jiddisch), Limburgish (Limburgs), Low Saxon (Nedersaksisch) and Romani.

2.5 Dutch Europe policy

This section offers a brief introduction to how the Netherlands have acted in the field of European cooperation. First, the Dutch approach towards European integration (further referred to as Dutch Europe policy) in general is briefly outlined. After that, more specifically the Dutch position towards the latest rounds of enlargements and towards institutional reforms is explored.

The foreign policy of the Netherlands after the Second World War is characterized by a strong focus and reliance upon the United States and NATO for (military) security. Due to the open character of the Dutch economy, its foreign economic interests were best served through international cooperation, especially on the European level (Meyes et al. 1995: 11). These two focal points, trans-Atlantic for security issues and European for economic affairs, have shaped the outline for Dutch policy towards the European Community and European Union.

After 1945 the Netherlands were among the initiators of European integration. Together with Belgium and Luxemburg the Benelux was formed and soon after, the Netherlands joined the German-Franco initiative for the European Coal and Steel Community. Important incentives were recovery of German trade and entrance to the German market. For many years, the Netherlands proved itself a proponent of further European economic integration.

19 (Art 14) “The enjoyment of the rights and freedoms set forth in this Convention shall be secured without discrimination on any ground such as sex, race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, property, birth or other status”.

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Due to its geographical position, the Netherlands always had to navigate between the interests of Germany, France and the United Kingdom. To prevent those large countries from taking the lead and overriding Dutch interests in European integration, successive Dutch governments took a supranational approach. In practice this meant a strong focus on the development of communal institutions. Thereby, the influence of the larger countries could be reduced and the emphasis would be on common goals. For many years the Netherlands considered itself as ‘big one amongst the smaller ones’ and tried to use this position to influence European policy. Of course, self interest was never lacking (Van Keulen 2006: 96-97).

Until far into the nineties, the Netherlands took a pragmatic approach towards European integration. Economic cooperation was favoured over political cooperation, since economic integration was the primary Dutch interest. Political cooperation was considered much more sensitive and difficult to agree upon and more important, it was not a direct interest. In its foreign and security policy the Netherlands heavily relied on its trans-Atlantic partnership and this could clash with more French and continental oriented political cooperation (Van Keulen 2006: 242-243).

As long as it was in its interest, and that was often the case, the Netherlands were active in European integration, but in a very pragmatic way. (Economic) Integration became an aim in itself and not a means to come to a higher form of governance. Dutch foreign policy has always had an elite character and was highly technocratic. The Dutch approach towards Europe was never much debated and there was hardly any political or public debate on the Europe policy. An idea of what the final aim of European integration should be or what a united Europe should look like was lacking. It was not until the 1990s that this started to change. The costs of European cooperation were rising and by the end of the 1990s the Netherlands would be the biggest net contributor per capita to the European budget. The most important Dutch goal, establishment of the internal market, was (almost) achieved. With the realization of the internal market, other, politically more sensitive areas became part of European policy and this resulted in more discussion. Furthermore, the growing number of member states led to a decrease in Dutch influence on EU policies and made building coalitions much more important and difficult (Van Keulen 2006: 242-243). The result of this was that further European integration was no longer automatically supported and that the European Union was looked upon with more suspicion.

2.5.1 (Eastern) enlargement of the EU

Successful Dutch cabinets have always supported EU enlargement, at least in words. Government publications mentioned the historical importance of ending the divide of Europe after the fall of the communist regimes and that accession of the former communist states would enhance stability and security (Regeringsnota 1994: 2-3; Regeringsnotitie 2000: 4-5; Regeringsnotitie 2001: 2-3). To underline their good intentions bilateral relations with the Central and Eastern European states were intensified and the transformation process of the countries was supported through programs such as Matra (Program for Social Transformation) and PSO (Program for Cooperation with Central and Eastern Europe).

In the process of accession of the Central and Eastern European states several aspects were important for the Netherlands. Deriving from the idea that Europe should not be divided again, an exclusion of some states beforehand was not supported. At the same time, the Dutch government wanted to keep the option of judging every country individually on its
performance in meeting the Copenhagen-criteria. This meant that accession of groups of countries was not supported. Furthermore, the Dutch governments did not want to loose progress made in integration and even wanted it to continue. So, during the whole process of enlargement they kept stressing the importance of the realization of the internal market, the adoption of the complete acquis communautaire by the candidate countries and the need for institutional reforms of the EU. However, conditioning enlargement to institutional reform as some countries did, was a step too far (Regeringsnota 1994; Regeringsnotitie 2001; Regeringsnotitie 2000).

From this it can be concluded that the Dutch governments were not too occupied with the future accession of the Central and Eastern European states. The economic aspects of the EU, further integration, the internal market, and the Dutch contribution were deemed much more important. The Dutch, keeping in mind the net-contribution, also urged to revise the Common Agricultural Policy and the Structural Funds, and to allocate these funds only to the candidate countries. Furthermore, the Dutch cabinets kept underlining that mentioning a date for accession of the Central and Eastern European states should be avoided. This would either arouse expectations or cause countries to slacken their efforts to reform.

By the end of 2002, a politically turbulent year for the Netherlands, decision-making about accession of the ten candidate countries was on the EU agenda. Government parties VVD and LPF took a strong position and did not support accession. In their view several candidate countries did not meet the Copenhagen-criteria and therefore the group as a whole could not accede. Furthermore, they stipulated that the condition of reform of the Common Agricultural Policy was not fulfilled. Due to internal struggles the cabinet had already resigned. Although the majority of the coalition parties was against enlargement, a majority of the parties in the House of Representatives supported accession (Van Straaten 2004: 3; Heldring 2002: 6). So, at the following EU summit the Dutch prime minister, finding himself without support from other EU members, gave up his opposition to enlargement, backed by the House of Representatives (Ludlow 2004: 164-169). After this, the Dutch cabinet mainly followed the reports of the European Commission (Regeringsnotitie 2003). Accession of the ten candidate countries was no longer an issue.

Romania and Bulgaria

Accession of Romania and Bulgaria was much more troublesome and could not count on as much support in the Netherlands as the other ten countries had. Especially the case of Romania raised concerns in the Netherlands. Since the decision on accession of the ten candidate countries in 2004, the effects of their accession on the other member states had become clear. Furthermore, Euroscepticism in general and scepticism about the success of the enlargement in Dutch society was growing. During the debates in the House of Representatives in 2006, the CDA voted against ratification of the accession treaty. Reason was that accession of both countries was linked, whereas the CDA mainly objected to the accession of Romania. The party also objected to making a decision based on an old Progress Report. The SP voted against ratification because the party feared that progress in Bulgaria was overestimated and much EU legislation still needed to be implemented. Other parties expressed their worries about corruption, the position of Roma and organized crime (Europa NU 2009a; Europa NU 2009b). Still, there was a majority in Parliament, so the accession

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20 To join the EU a new member state must meet three criteria: political (stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities), economic (existence of a functioning market economy and the capacity to cope with the competitive pressure and market forces within the EU) and acceptance of the acquis communautaire, the total body of EU law.
The treaty was ratified. However, since the accession Parliament and Cabinet have been expressing their concerns about the situation in Romania and Bulgaria, resulting in official requests to the European Commission to impose sanctions on both countries (2009).

Until 2004 the Dutch government supported granting freedom of movement to citizens of the new member states. At the same time it agreed upon keeping open the option for transitional arrangements. These implied that member states could close their borders for migrant workers from new member states. The Netherlands, however, did not use this option in the case of the enlargement with the ten new member states. After the enlargement the influx of, especially, Polish workers was much larger than expected and protest in society grew. This was one of the reasons why the Netherlands did use the option to exclude Romanian and Bulgarian workers.

**Turkey**

During the 1990s the Dutch governments expressed their support for future Turkish accession to the EU. On several occasions Ministers of Foreign Affairs Van Mierlo (1994-1998, D66) and Van Aartsen (1998-2002, VVD) stated that relations between the EU and Turkey should be strengthened. In their argumentation they stipulated that offering a trustworthy prospect for accession would have a positive effect on developments in Turkey (Regeringsreactie 1999; Regeringsnota 1994: 10). To underline the benevolent Dutch position towards Turkey, Van Aartsen emphasized that the Netherlands were the first to offer Turkey bilateral pre-accession support. Notwithstanding this positive attitude, the government acknowledged that the Turkish accession would not be easy: Turkey did not meet the Copenhagen criteria, many obstacles remained and ongoing progress was not assured (Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken 2001: 4,10). Although the successive cabinets were positive about strengthening relations with Turkey, there was no explicit support for offering Turkey the candidate status, for this would mean that there would be no room for rejection anymore. Besides, political parties in the House of Representatives would never have supported this position.  

Turkish accession became a more prominent issue in 2002 and the divisions within the political parties and the government became clearer. By that time the government was formed by the CDA, VVD and LPF. The LPF was vehemently against Turkey joining the EU, the CDA was also no proponent of rapid progress in this field, and the VVD was internally divided. Thus, in the run-up to the Copenhagen Summit in 2002, the Dutch government was not eager for setting a date offering candidate status and opening negotiations with Turkey (Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken 2002). However, the European Council decided otherwise and a decision about starting accession negotiations would have to be taken by the end of 2004. At that time, the Netherlands would hold the EU-presidency. Minister of Foreign Affairs, Bot (2003-2007, CDA) and his State Secretary Nicolaï (2002-2006, VVD) were in favour of Turkish accession, but their respective political parties and the cabinet were strongly divided. Main objections were that Turkey was an Islamic country which conflicted with European Christian values, high economic costs and doubts about progress in meeting the political criteria of Copenhagen. Within the VVD the issue of Turkish accession eventually resulted in the departure of Wilders, who started his own political party (see §3.6).

In the middle of the discussions the WRR published a report that concluded that the fact that the majority of the Turkish population is Muslim is not an obstacle to EU membership (see §4.2.6). Subsequently, the government used its power to get some of the Dutch reserves included in the Progress Report of the European Commission and managed to build consensus

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21 See for example (Verslag van een algemeen overleg 1999) in which the main political parties express their concerns about offering Turkey the candidate status.
on the topic (Hollander 2007: 54). The final result of the Dutch EU-presidency was that negotiations with Turkey would start. However, they can be broken off whenever there is a backlash and the option of long transition periods remains open.

Although negotiations have been opened, Dutch political parties kept expressing doubts about Turkish accession. This may have been encouraged by the “no” against the European Constitution and the lack of support among the Dutch population. Minister of Foreign Affairs Verhagen (2007-current, CDA) is not as supportive of Turkish accession as his predecessor Bot (2007; Hoedeman 2007: 2) and several Dutch parties have requested in Parliament to stop negotiations (Motie van het lid Van Schijndel 2006; Motie van het lid Herben 2005). So far they have not gained a majority.

2.5.2 Institutional reforms of the EU
With the EU growing larger it became obvious that the institutional structures of the Union also needed reform. As already mentioned before, traditionally the Netherlands gave preference to economic over political cooperation and Integration and reforms in the economic field could in most cases count on its support. Successive governments preferred the Community method of decision-making to intergovernmental methods. In their views this would be the best guarantee for protecting the interests of the smaller states against the bigger ones.

During the Convention on the Future of Europe, starting in 2002, the Dutch effort was aimed at maintaining balance between EU institutions and ensuring equality between member states. The Dutch government hoped to strengthen the position of the European Commission and opposed a more important role for the (intergovernmental) European Council, qualified majority voting in this council and a permanent presidency. Furthermore, proportionality, subsidiarity and transparency were important key concepts. Above all, the EU should keep its flexibility with respect to the principle of subsidiarity. Therefore, there was no support for the idea of a Kompetenz Katalog which describes in detail the competences of the EU and national states (Pelkmans et al. 2003: 198,204; Wolinetz 2008: 184).

The eventual result of the Convention laid down in the European Constitution could count on support of the cabinet and a majority of Dutch parliamentarians. However, after an initiative of GroenLinks, PvdA and D66, it was decided to consult the Dutch citizens via a referendum. On 1st June 2005 the European Constitution was rejected by 61.6 percent of the voters. Cabinet and Parliament respected this outcome and stopped the ratification procedure. There were many, very diverse reasons why the Constitution was rejected by the Dutch, who after the referendum still support EU membership above average. They included the feeling of a loss of control over political issues and decision-making in Brussels, the costs of the Union and the Dutch contribution, and a lack of information about the EU and the EU Constitution (Besselink 2006: 346; Van Grinsven et al. 2006: 6). For a part of the electorate their vote was a protest vote against ‘neo-liberal’ EU economic and social policies. In the background Turkish accession also played a role.

Although the Constitution had been renounced, it was acknowledged that treaty reform was eventually needed. However, no one in the Netherlands was interested in having a discussion about a federalist Union (Wolinetz 2008: 187). The House of Representatives decided to organise a Nationaal Europa Debat (National Europe Debate), but this initiative

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22 The Community method is based on the idea that the general interest of EU citizens is best defended when community institutions play their full role in the decision-making process. This includes a monopoly for the right of initiative for the European Commission, an active European Parliament and a uniform interpretation of Community law by the European Court of Justice. Intergovernmental methods work with unanimity in the European Council and the role of Commission, Court and Parliament is much more limited.
stranded within three months. At the European level the Dutch government lobbied for adjustments to the Constitution and, among other things, to remove symbols, such as the anthem and flag that referred to a European state. After a period of reflection the European leaders came up with a ‘reform treaty’, the Treaty of Lisbon.

The revised Treaty was supported by the Dutch cabinet. It stated that the Treaty of Lisbon did not have a constitutional character and therefore no new referendum was required. For coalition members CDA and ChristenUnie (ChristianUnion) this did not pose a problem since in 2005 they were already against having a referendum on the Constitution. The PvdA, however, had to change its official position. Eventually, a majority of the parties voted in favour of ratification of the Treaty. Only the SP, the PVV and two small parties voted against (2008: 6; Kranenburg 2008: 2).

3 POLITICAL PARTIES IN THE NETHERLANDS

3.1 Introduction

This chapter is about the empirical findings on political parties. It includes the CDA, PvdA, SP, GroenLinks, VVD and ToN for the national level, and the FNP for the regional level. First, a brief outline is presented of the Dutch political party landscape. This outline is followed by the empirical findings on the parties. Each paragraph describes the respective political party, the official position of the party and the views of its respondents on the Eurosphere topics: immigration and integration, citizenship, the EU and European public sphere(s). The conclusion of each paragraph gives a brief summary of positions with attention for striking changes in views and dissenting opinions. If a respondent has explicitly expressed a view on a personal account, this is also mentioned in the conclusion.
3.1.1 Dutch party landscape

For many years Dutch society and the Dutch party landscape have been shaped by *verzuiling* (pillarisation). The first steps towards this system were taken by the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century in order to mitigate social conflicts. Around the same time the first modern political parties were founded. Over the years Protestants, Roman-Catholics and Socialists each developed their institutions which, besides political parties, included churches, broadcasting corporations, newspapers, trade unions, housing corporations, schools, universities, etcetera. Thus, the respective *zuilen* (pillars) were created. The institutions strengthened the bonds within the pillar and the pillar offered a means for emancipation of the group as a whole. Politics became a field for elites who negotiated and made compromises on behalf of the pillars. Pillarisation reached its height during the first half of the twentieth century. After the Second World War the pillars slowly disintegrated, although traces of them can still be found today.

The Dutch Parliament consists of the *Eerste Kamer* (Senate) and the *Tweede Kamer* (House of Representatives), the latter being politically more powerful and important. Members of the House of Representatives are elected for four years through direct elections and via a system of proportional representation. Members of the Senate are indirectly elected. The right to vote at the national level is reserved for Dutch nationals only. For elections at the municipal level also EU-citizens and non-Dutch who have legally lived in the Netherlands for at least five years have the right to vote. European Parliament is elected by both Dutch nationals and EU-citizens living in the Netherlands. There is no compulsory voting.

The Dutch *electoral system* does not have an electoral threshold. Therefore, it is relatively easy for newly-founded political parties to win seats in Parliament. The effect is a high turnover of new political parties entering the political system and leaving again. Some
examples are the parties for the elderly in the 1990s and the LPF, the party of Pim Fortuyn. Another characteristic of the Dutch party spectrum is its fragmentation with no single party forming a majority. A cabinet (government) is dependent on support of a majority in both the House and the Senate. This means that in practice at least two, but more often three parties are necessary for the formation of a cabinet. Although many parties are represented in the House of Representatives, there is not much variation in the parties involved in government formation (see Figure 3.1). In alternating combinations CDA, PvdA and VVD are always involved. They represent the stable, centre of the political spectrum. In order to keep this centre position, parties tend to take moderate positions and incorporate diverse and broad interests.

**Figure 3.2** Parties represented in the Second Chamber since 1977

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>CDA</th>
<th>PvdA</th>
<th>VVD</th>
<th>Groep-Wilders/PVV</th>
<th>D66</th>
<th>GroenLinks**</th>
<th>SP</th>
<th>Orthodox Christian*</th>
<th>LPF</th>
<th>others</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td></td>
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<td>2002</td>
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<td>1998</td>
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<td>1989</td>
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<td>1981</td>
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<td>1977</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The number of floating voters is increasing and party electorates are less stable than they were in the past. Traditionally, the CDA, PvdA and VVD are the largest parties competing in the centre of the spectrum, but they are losing votes to the more extreme parties at the right and the left. Recent elections show large swings in electorates from one party to another (see Figure 3.2). In the turbulent 2002 elections after the murder of Pim Fortuyn newcomer LPF and the CDA won 26 and 14 seats respectively. The PvdA was halved from 45 to 23 seats and the VVD lost 14 seats. In 2003 the LPF lost 18 of their newly won seats due to their bad government performance and the PvdA gained 19. In 2006 newcomer PVV won 9 seats and the SP almost tripled from 9 to 25 seats. The PvdA and VVD lost 9 and 6 seats respectively (Website Parlement & Politiek 2009). The CDA is the only party that more or less succeeded in consolidating its position and currently forms the government in coalition with the PvdA and ChristenUnie (Christian Union, CU), an orthodox protestant party. The increased competition in attracting votes puts centre parties in a more difficult position. On the one hand

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23 Since the Second World War the minimum amount of parties represented in the House of Representatives in each term was seven; the maximum was fourteen. The current House of Representatives holds ten parties.
they want to distinguish themselves more clearly from other parties in order to attract votes. At the same time they will have to form a coalition after the elections with (some of) their former competitors and they cannot bring conflicts to a heat. For parties left and right of the centre it is easier to be openly critical towards other parties and take stronger positions.

**Figure 3.3 Membership figures of political parties, 1998-2008**

Dutch political parties receive *funding* in several ways. For the majority of the political parties the most important source of income is membership contributions. These form roughly half of the incomes of the parties. Contributions from salaries of representatives are another source, although in general they are more important for leftist parties. For the SP it is the most important source of income. Other sources of party income that are legally allowed are fundraising (practised mainly by VVD and ToN), revenues from party reserves (CDA and PvdA), gifts and sponsoring (CDA and VVD). There is a general decline in party membership, although some parties are on the rise (see Figure 3.3). The result -fewer revenues from membership contributions- was one of the reasons for changing the subsidy scheme for political activities. Since 1999 political parties are directly subsidized. The total of these subsidies is now about 15 million Euros per year. Subsidies are based on both the number of seats in Parliament and membership figures. If a party has a youth organisation and/ or a scientific bureau, the party has to spend a minimum amount of its subsidy on these organisations (Website Ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken 2009; Website Parlement & Politiek 2009). ToN is not a political party, but a movement, and does not have members. Therefore, it is not eligible to subsidies and highly dependent on gifts and sponsoring.

Not all parties competing at the national level participate in the *European Parliament* elections (see Figure 3.4). Due to the limited amount of seats (25 since 1979, 31 since 1994, 27 since 2004, and 25/26 after 2009) smaller parties do not win enough votes to obtain a seat. A solution for these parties is to conclude electoral alliances as the orthodox Christian parties have done successfully. The Dutch delegation in the EP consists mainly of established parties.
The elections of 2009 showed a novelty with a newcomer, Wilders’ PVV, winning an astonishing amount of four, and possibly five seats.24

**Figure 3.4 Percentage of seats in the European Parliament, 1979-2009**

In the early 1990s PvdA and GroenLinks wished to extend voting rights for migrants. However, CDA and VVD opposed this. They reached a compromise, by which it became easier for migrants to acquire the Dutch nationality, and thus voting rights, while the right to vote for non-nationals would remain restricted to the municipal level (Groenendijk et al. forthcoming: 7). In the 2002 elections about 725,000 Dutch citizens of foreign descent had the right to vote at the national level, more or less 6% of the total electorate (Michon & Tillie 2003: 128). In 2006 2,290,000 western and non-western allochtonen had the right to vote (Dekker 2006), approximately 18.4 percent of the voters. Research on party preferences of minorities at the national level is limited. Most of the research focuses on municipal politics. The studies on national elections that have been done are very recent (since 2002), use different methods that are not comparable, and focus on the biggest cities. Nevertheless, research shows that party preference differs between migrant groups and that migrants appear to have a preference for left-wing parties (Groenendijk et al. forthcoming: 14-16). The first party to have a representative with a migrant minority background was the PvdA in 1986. Today, much more parties have migrant representatives (see Table 3.1). There have been attempts to found migrant minority parties on the local level. The AEL (Arab European League), founded in Belgium, took an initiative in 2005 to found a national Muslim party, but gave up. In 2007 the Nederlandse Moslim Partij (Dutch Muslim Party) was founded but so far this party has not participated in national elections.

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24 When the Treaty of Lisbon comes into force The Netherlands will receive an additional seat in the EP. This seat will probably go to the PVV.
Table 3.1  Migrant representation in political parties, 1986-now
Source: (Groenendijk et al. forthcoming; Website Parlement & Politiek 2009)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Turkey</th>
<th>Morocco</th>
<th>Surinam</th>
<th>Antilles</th>
<th>Moluccas</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>03-06-1986</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>PvdA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14-09-1989</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>PvdA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17-05-1994</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>GL, PvdA</td>
<td>D66</td>
<td>PvdA</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-11-2006</td>
<td>CDA, D66, PvdA</td>
<td>GL (2), PvdA (2)</td>
<td>GL, PvdA</td>
<td>PvdA</td>
<td>SP</td>
<td>SP</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.1.2 Rightwing and nationalist parties

Until the seventies, the extreme right did not play a significant role in Dutch politics and society. Several reasons can be identified. Firstly, at that time immigration, and everything related to immigration, was depoliticised (see §2.2.3-§2.2.4). Furthermore, there was little willingness to acknowledge racism and discrimination, which did not fit well in the existing strong national self-image of hospitality and tolerance. Finally, also the specific structure of Dutch society – in particular the so-called ‘pillarisation’ (verzuiling) – played a role; influential opinion leaders within the different ‘pillars’ were willing and able to suppress racism and discrimination whenever it popped up (Verwey-Jonker 1973: 16-17; Ellemers 1979: 16; Van Ginkel 1992; 1993; Elbers & Fennema 1993: 100; Fermin 1997a: 250).

This all changed during the seventies. In 1972, and again in 1976, there were race riots in the city of Rotterdam and neighbouring Schiedam (Penninx 1988a: 173). An important reason was a large influx of immigrants in the poorer working-class quarters of the larger cities, mainly due to family reunion of guest workers. In 1974, the rightwing politician Joop Glimmerveen of the Dutch People’s Union (Nederlandse Volks-Unie, NVU) participated in the municipal elections in The Hague. However, the impact of this movement was limited and he proved unable to obtain a seat. One reason for this limited success was that Glimmerveen brought back memories of the Second World War, a very traumatic experience in the Dutch collective memory. For example, Glimmerveen openly glorified Adolf Hitler (Elbers & Fennema 1993: 101-102).26

In the early eighties the extreme right gained popularity. One reason was the fact that the Netherlands went through a severe economic crisis. This increased competition between immigrants and the indigenous population, in particular in the ‘old working class quarters’ of the larger cities where many immigrants had settled (Ellemers 1979: 16-17; Choenni 2000:

25 Pillarisation can be seen as a two-dimensional social structure in which the horizontal class stratification is combined with a vertical division in so-called pillars, which were organized around ideologies (socialism, Catholicism, several protestant denominations) and were very inclusive: sports, schools, social housing, etc were all organized within and by the several pillars. The opinion leaders (voormannen, literally ‘foremen’) within each pillar had enormous influence on their ‘herd’, also see §3.1.1.

More important, a new political entrepreneur entered the political arena; Hans Janmaat, who held a master degree in political science from the University of Amsterdam. Unlike Glimmerveen, Janmaat tried to avoid any reference to (neo)Nazi’s. In 1982 he became a MP for the Centre Party (Centrum Partij, CP, founded in 1980, and renamed CP’86 after a restart in 1986). However, in 1984 Janmaat was evicted from the CP who deemed him too moderate. Janmaat founded his own party, the Centre Democrats (Centrum Democraten, CD). With the CD he obtained one seat in Parliament in 1989. Initially, the core of the CD ideology consisted of economic arguments: immigrants displaced Dutch workers and used and abused social security making the system unaffordable for the Dutch tax payer. Later, also cultural arguments, especially against the Islam became important (Elbers & Fennema 1993: 101-107; Fermin 1997a: 140, 145-146).

The fact that rightwing parties were able to obtain seats in Parliament came as a shock to the political establishment. The large political parties decided to isolate extreme right parties with a so-called cordon sanitaire (comp. Timmermans & Scholten 2006; Hoppe 1987):

“The essential point is that immigration and integration was not politicised at that time. On the contrary, it was kept deliberately off the agenda in political campaigns. As Rob Hoppe analysed in 1987, ethnicity (specifically the growing multi-ethnicity of the state through migration) was systematically depoliticised by removing it from the political agenda and defining it as a (pseudo-) scientific or administrative problem (Hoppe 1987). During the 1980s that same political consensus also led to a more or less explicit agreement not to allow (local and national) extreme rightist and racist parties ‘to play the migration card’. The cordon sanitaire that was built in 1983, after local elections in the municipality of Almere where such a party gained 13 per cent of all votes, persisted successfully throughout the 1980s” (Penninx 2005: 39).

This caused ‘political correctness’ regarding immigration and the multicultural society (Schoo 2000; Vuijsje 1986; 1997). There was a general fear for racism and discrimination, and a fear to be accused of racism and discrimination (Rijkschroeff et al. 2004: 29).

During the early nineties this political correctness eased a bit, partly because Frits Bolkestein, the leader of the liberal VVD-party, in 1991 broke the cordon sanitaire with an influential speech for the Liberal International. In this speech Bolkestein (1991) suggested that the fact that in large parts of the Islamic world some – in his eyes nonnegotiable – (western) principles are not recognized, forms a complicating factor in the integration of Muslims in the West. Specifically, he mentioned the separation between church and state, freedom of expression, tolerance and non-discrimination. During the 1994 election campaign, Janmaat and his CD did very well in the polls with his tautological slogan vol=vol (full=full27), but eventually he ‘only’ managed to get three seats in the Parliament.

During the late nineties, the extreme right more or less dissolved as a political factor in Dutch politics. In the 1998 elections, the CD proved unable to obtain a seat in Parliament. The party was dissolved in 2002, weeks before the death of its leader, Hans Janmaat, who had been the personification of the party. This left the extreme right agenda in the Netherlands to smaller organisations (such as Voorpost Nederland, see §5.9.1), who often do not even have the ambition to play a role in representative bodies like the Parliament. It also created a vacuum and gave room to a new political entrepreneur, Pim Fortuyn. Pim Fortuyn was not a

27 Full here refers to the ‘fullness’ of the Netherlands, leaving no room for new immigrants.
classical extreme right politician, because his political agenda was much broader and also included the refurbishment of the Dutch welfare state which was — in his view — in an deplorable state (Fortuyn 2002). But he certainly held islamophobic and anti-immigrant views, promising “to close the borders”, and stating that “the Islam is a backward culture” and that he “if juridically feasible, would never let a Muslim enter the country again” (Poorthuis & Wansink 2002). Helped by 9/11, his party Lijst Pim Fortuyn (List Pim Fortuyn, LPF) was very successful in the 2002 elections and – posthumously, days after Fortuyn was murdered on the 6th of May — debuted with 26 seats in the House of Representatives. The LPF took part in the new formed government, which was dissolved within three month because of internal turmoil within the LPF.

However, this short and intensive episode in Dutch political history had changed a lot, especially in the realm of immigrant admission and integration policy. Being ‘politically correct’ on immigration became the ‘new taboo’, so to speak, and immigration became intensively politicised. For example, until 2002 media attention for immigration always declined in the run-up to the elections, but in the 2002 and 2003 election campaigns immigration was a central theme (Scholten & Timmermans 2004). It also led to a more ‘assimilationistic’ integration policy (see §2.2.8).

The murder of Fortuyn and the subsequent decline of the LPF — which was dissolved in 2008 — created a new political vacuum. This time, the vacuum was rapidly filled in. Many politicians deemed it an electoral necessity to be strict or even harsh on immigration or immigrants. Within parties like the VVD and the PvdA, this led to a lot of tension between hardliners and more moderate politicians. Recently, PvdA Minister Ella Vogelaar was forced to resign because she was seen as ‘too soft’ on immigration (see §3.3). Within the VVD those tensions even twice caused a split of the party. Rita Verdonk, a former VVD Minister in the field of admission and integration policy, was forced to leave the party in 2007 and started a political movement, Trots op Nederland (Proud of the Netherlands, ToN, see §3.7). A few years earlier Geert Wilders, another MP of the VVD had shared the same fate and founded the Partij voor de Vrijheid (Party for Freedom, PVV). This party is seen by many as rightwing, because of its harsh vision on immigration and immigrant integration.28 In 2008 Geert Wilders — renown for his Islam-critical film Fitna — has been legally charged with discrimination and racism. The PVV has been quite successful in the last elections (9 seats) and is very successful in the polls (up to 26 seats, 17.1%) (Synovate 2009). The developments since the Fortuyn-era left little room for classical right wing parties like the CP’86 and the CD, partly because parties and movements like LPF, PVV and ToN have taken their place, and partly because the problems that fuelled the electoral unrest are — more than before — addressed by other parties like the VVD and the PvdA.

3.2 CDA

The Christen Democratisch Appèl (CDA, Christian Democratic Appeal) is the largest political party in the Netherlands. The CDA is a conservative party that operates in the centre of the political spectrum. Due to its almost constant participation in government the party has an important influence on policy making and implementation. This section deals with the party, its views on migration, integration, citizenship, and European cooperation and the views on these topics of our interviewees. We included a youth representative, a representative with a minority background and a representative working at the European level.

28 Unfortunately, the PVV refused to cooperate with the Eurosphere research.
3.2.1 Organisation

In Dutch politics confessional parties always played an important role. The political spectrum is divided in such a way that support of at least one of the confessional parties has always been essential in the formation of a government (except for the period 1994-2002). Although confessional parties have been very influential, at the end of the sixties they suffered from a series of electoral losses, especially the Katholieke Volkspartij (KVP, Catholic People’s Party) and the Christelijk-Historische Unie (CHU, Christian Historical Union).

Depillarisation and secularization led to a situation in which people would no longer automatically vote according to their religious beliefs. During the seventies this resulted in local experiments with electoral alliances between confessional parties. In 1977 a combined list of candidates for the KVP, the CHU and the Anti-Revolutionaire Partij (ARP, Anti-Revolutionary Party) was presented for the parliamentary elections. Among the party leadership, especially that of the ARP, there was no unconditional support for a merger of the three parties (Kroeger & Stam 1998: 50,53). Internal disagreement on the foundations of the new party prohibited it from being founded. The main question was whether the gospel should be seen as starting point or as guideline for political action, and derived from this, whether one had to be a Christian to be a member of the CDA. However, the electoral success of the combined list and the strong pressure from local members were too much to ignore. In 1980 the three parties formally merged and the CDA was founded.

The distinguishing characteristic of the political beliefs of the CDA is its testing of programs and policies against the Bible. Nevertheless, the party aims at the total Dutch population, without making any distinction. The gospel is a guideline, not a starting point, and everyone who shares the same political beliefs, is free to join. Core values are shared responsibility, stewardship, solidarity and justice (CDA 1993). The CDA is an ‘open’ party and has e.g. representatives from diverse religious denominations, including Muslims, and representatives who are open about their (homo) sexual orientation.

After the 1981 elections the CDA became the largest political party and could take the lead in the formation of several governments under the leadership of Ruud Lubbers. The CDA was successful in its role of a broad, centre party and also capable of attracting non-religious voters (Aerts et al. 1999: 315). This period of success ended in 1994, when the party suffered an unprecedented loss, partly due to a crisis over the succession of Lubbers and alienation from its voters about the old age pensions. The party ended up in opposition and had to sit by while a government was formed without any confessional party. The CDA was not successful in its role of opposition party and its loss was repeated in 1998. People even started to think that the idea of confessional parties had become superseded. This all changed after the turbulence of 9/11 and the elections of 2002 just after the murder of Pim Fortuyn. The CDA succeeded in portraying itself as a reliable, stable centre party. Since then, it has held a steady position in government again.

Besides having seats in the House of Representatives and the Senate, the CDA is active in almost all municipalities and in regional politics. Its highest decision-making body is the party conference. A daily board and a party board are responsible for organisational affairs. The national bureau supports the local and regional organisations. In the European Parliament the CDA delegates are part of the European People’s Party (EPP). The CDA has several sub organisations; independent, but closely linked. They are all housed in the national bureau of the party and receive subsidies on the basis of their link to the CDA. Some of these organisations are formally represented in the party structure.

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29 For more information on the discussions see: (Kroeger & Stam 1998)
The Christen Democratisch Jongeren Appèl (CDJA, Christian Democratic Youth Appeal) is the youth branch of the CDA. The organisation is the result of the merger of the youth organisations of the KVP, ARP and CHU in 1980-1981. Its goals are political education of youth, and thinking along and critically counselling the CDA and Christian democracy in general (Parlement en politiek 2009). Officially, the CDJA is independent from the CDA, but it is closely connected to the party. In the past, there was more direct influence of the CDA on the youth branch through a CDA-representative in the general board of the CDJA and the nomination of the secretary of the CDJA by mutual agreement (Welp 1998: 208). In the current articles of association of the CDJA such provisions no longer exist. The other way round, the CDJA is still formally represented in the national bodies of the CDA (CDJA 2006). Being a political youth organisation the CDJA receives a subsidy from the government, based on the amount of seats of the CDA in the House of Representatives. Furthermore, the CDJA receives contributions from its members. It has an executive board of six people, all volunteers. Currently, the organisation has about 1800 members.

The Wetenschappelijk Instituut voor het CDA (WI CDA, Scientific Institute for the CDA) is a think tank and counselling body for the organisation. The institute is carrying out research, on demand and unasked for, on political issues that rise above everyday discussions. Formally, the organisation is independent, but it designs its research programme in consultation with the CDA and its representatives. The Scientific Institute has published reports on a wide range of topics; recently on the housing market, integration of migrants, citizens and Europe, armed forces, and the costs of public health. The think tank has a director and a board that oversees the work of the institute. It has a permanent staff of about eight people (Website WI CDA 2008).

Other sub organisations of the CDA worth mentioning are the CDA Vrouwenberaad (CDA Women Council) and the CDA Foundation for International Solidarity Eduardo Frei, which mainly focuses on democratic development and projects in Eastern Europe. CDA Kleurrijk (CDA Colourful) is a network to encourage the integration of cultural minorities within the party and society.

Interviewee Mr Wim van de Camp (1953) has been a member of the House of Representatives between 1986 and 2009. He has been spokesperson for a broad range of topics, including asylum and aliens policy. For the elections of the European Parliament in 2009 Van de Camp has been appointed as leader of the party list. He is a Catholic and open about his homosexuality.

Mr Coskun Çörüz (1963) is a member of the House of Representatives since 2001. He is a member of the commissions for foreign affairs, home affairs and justice. Çörüz was born in Turkey and is a Muslim.

Mr Harry van der Molen (1980) has been member of the CDJA since 2001 and was chairman of the organisation between 2006 and 2009. He is also a member of the municipal council of Leeuwarden and member of the Christian Reformed Church.

Mrs Neda Naderi (1981) compiled the report about citizens and Europe for the Scientific Institute for the CDA. For the Institute she also worked on (European) legislation and other legal issues. Naderi was born in Iran and has a background in law.

Mrs Ria Oomen-Ruijten (1950) is a member of the European Parliament since 1989. Between 2004 and 2009 she was a member of the Commission for Foreign Affairs and since 2007 she is rapporteur for the accession of Turkey. Other topics that she has been working on are social rights of migrant and cross-border workers. Oomen-Ruijten is a Catholic.

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30 Information provided by Marcel Migo, secretary of the CDJA. For an historical overview of membership figures see (Welp 1998)
3.2.2 Immigration and integration issues

Dutch confessional parties have a history of emphasising *soevereiniteit in eigen kring* (sovereignty of communities). This partly has its roots in the Dutch system of pillarisation in which each community organised its affairs and founded institutions (e.g. schools, media and social organisations based on religious beliefs). For many years, the CDA has applied this idea to immigrants as well. They had the right to express their own identity and to establish their own schools according to Dutch law. Within the safety of their group they were supposed to adapt to the Dutch pattern of life. Immigrants should emancipate and then integrate via institutions of their own: *integratie via emancipatie in eigen kring* (integration through emancipation within your own community). An ‘open pillar’ would be a means to incorporate migrants. During the 1990s the CDA more and more emphasized that migrants themselves have a responsibility to contribute to Dutch society and the party stressed the importance of shared norms and values. Migrants should not withdraw into their own organisations (Fermin 1997b: 121-130).

The current political debate on integration is also affecting the CDA and in the last years several discussions have taken place. The Scientific Institute published reports about integration in 2003 and 2008 and in 2003-2004 a special committee (led by a CDA alderman from Rotterdam, Van der Tak) organised a series of debates within the party. Despite these discussions, there has been criticism from within the party for a lack of discussion and not taking a clear position. Especially the CDJA has been active in this respect and accused the party of being too silent (Van der Molen & Meijering 2007). Recently Anton Zijderveld, one of the party’s ideologists, gave up his membership because he thought the party was Islamofobic (Tromp 2009).

During the last few years, the CDA is more and more emphasizing the cultural aspect of integration. In 2003 the Scientific Institute stated that integration of migrants includes more than having a satisfying position on the labour market or achieving good results in education. There is also a need for participation, an understanding of shared common values, a collective respect for diversity and binding cultural elements (WI CDA 2003). Following the Institute, the Van der Tak Committee emphasized the need for a search for ‘connecting values’ and the importance of active citizenship (Commissie Van der Tak 2004). While taking a more culture-oriented approach, the CDA is not ignoring the importance of social and economic factors. To CDA-parliamentarian Coskun Çörüz multiculturalism is no longer a goal in itself:

“There has to be one the Netherlands. The main question and challenge is to find the core. (...) We have the task to show what our language and culture is to newly arrived people. (...) Authorities can throw some light on the conventions and rules of the game of Dutch society. (...) This is not just a task for the authorities, but also for Dutch citizens and those who wish to become Dutch citizens. (...) When you think your future is here in the Netherlands, you have to get used to the rules of the game and [Dutch] values. The basics are language, certain customs and education. People have to do everything to become self-acting and independent. (...) Another minimum [requirement] is that people are dedicated to society.”

CDJA-president Harry van der Molen recognizes that the idea of *emancipatie in eigen kring*, for immigrants via their own communities, is outmoded. He is “sceptic about that”, because “that is not the way it [Dutch society] currently works”. He thinks that it is “trying to integrate

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31 For more information on pillarisation see § 3.1.
people on the basis of principles from thirty years ago”. Parliamentarian Wim van de Camp thinks migrants have to integrate in certain fields. Integration via migrant institutions may have some negative effects:

“They [migrants] have to adapt a lot. (…) People who come to the Netherlands should be more often given the idea that they are welcome. (…) Furthermore, I think they have to integrate on basic components: labour, housing, speaking the language and rules (…) Thinking in terms of pillars [in the field of migration] has turned out to be a hindrance for example to the emancipation of women.”

Van der Molen draws the boundaries of adaptation of immigrants between public and private situations and explains why integration policy needs to be strict:

“As soon as something touches upon the public [space], in contacts with others, then adaptation is preferable. (…) Everyone experiences his own culture, but within the boundaries of Dutch society. (…) It is in the own interest of those groups, that they can find their place and can participate fully in social life. (…) Requirements [e.g. for the integration exam] should not be meant to keep people out, but to give them a fair chance to build a life here. (…) I think the obligatory character is positive.”

CDA respondents endorse the cultural aspects of integration and the importance of participation in society. However, these terms remain vague. It is not clear what these ‘connecting values’ are and how far participation in society should go. Besides this growing emphasis on the cultural elements of integration and participation, the CDA has also been advocating a stricter immigration and integration policy. Some examples are linking a residence permit to passing the obligatory integration course, compulsory education and work for new migrants and age and income requirements for family reunification. Main motivation for these requirements is, again, that they are necessary for people to be able to participate in society.

According to the CDA the EU should also be involved in integration issues. Integration courses should be offered in the EU as a whole to stimulate integration of migrants. EU citizens living in another EU-state for a longer period should also learn about culture and history of this state (CDA 2009: 26).

The CDA has reservations towards admitting unskilled migrants. The 2008 report on integration proposes to make immigration procedures for highly skilled migrants easier and to limit the entrance of underprivileged, unskilled migrants (WI CDA 2008). Labour migration is viewed from the perspective of the benefits it has for the Dutch labour market. Neda Naderi explains that the Scientific Institute is “in favour of labour migration, when it can contribute to the needs of the Netherlands”. Van der Molen thinks a country has “to dose migration, especially migration from outside the Union.” A state has “the right to see what is needed on the labour market and to determine whom to admit and whom not.” Çöüz thinks that “the Netherlands has an interest in granting resident permits faster. If it takes too long, highly skilled migrants will go somewhere else” and that is not a good thing, because “the Netherlands need them”.

Although the CDA supports a strict admittance policy for migrants in general, it makes an exception for refugees. For the CDA refugees are welcome, but the EU should make a clear distinction between ‘real refugees’ and ‘economic refugees’ and aim at offering relief in
the region of origin (CDA 2009: 25). Even though the party wants to be generous in accepting refugees, the general opinion is that the Netherlands is already doing much. Naderi:

“We [the Netherlands] do not always have to be the best kid in school. (…) I think it is important that regulations are made on the European level to distribute refugees. Greece for example does not admit refugees, while Germany is less strict. There must be agreements between member states.”

Çörüz explains that stringency is needed to keep support for migrants in society:

“As a small country we do relatively a lot. We invite people [refugees]. Keeping the discussions of the last few years in mind, we cannot do anything else than pursuing a just and strict asylum policy. (…) If you want public support you have to be restrictive. (…) If relief in the region of origin is possible, for example via UNHCR, it is better. (…) Europe cannot handle everything. It is also very complicated if people have to return from here.”

The party recognizes that it is necessary to develop a European policy on asylum and migration. According to the party, the EU needs highly skilled migrants for its ambition to be a knowledge-based economy and to ease the effects of ageing. Van der Molen differs from the main position and has doubts about the successfullness of European policy in this field. He is “inclined to think that [labour] migration policy should be decided upon nationally” and he “doubts whether you can arrange that effectively on a European level”. He thinks it is “not possible to put quota on the number of refugees admitted”, because their number is determined by the situation in the rest of the world. For him, there is “a moral duty to offer relief to refugees in case of war, although the system must also be just and sustainable”.

Within the party there is still discussion going on whether a European Blue Card for migrants would be a good idea. The Scientific Institute argues that at the European level agreements should be made on entrance, admittance and rights for different groups of labour migrants. However, how many migrants can be admitted, should remain a national competence (Centre for European Studies & WI CDA 2008: 81-86). Van de Camp sees advantages in attracting skilled migrants:

“Someone can come here, invited by a company, and he will receive a Blue Card. We are positive about that. Our society is ageing and in order to keep our high level of wealth we need highly skilled migrants, especially from outside the EU. (…) On the downside is the problem of the brain drain. The development and emancipation of Africa has to happen there, not here. (…) That cannot be solved by people arriving here in boats.”

Van der Molen is foreseeing problems in deciding when to admit people. This decision should not be made at the European level, because then “the specific situation of the labour markets in the member states cannot be taken into account”. Member of the European Parliament Ria Oomen-Ruijten also sees practical problems with the Blue Card related to the freedom of movement. She does not want “individual member states to bear responsibility for migrants that other member states have admitted”. In case people with a Blue Card would also have the right to free movement, this would imply that they could live in a member state that did not invite them.
3.2.3 Citizenship

According to the CDA, receiving the Dutch nationality is more than just a formality. Therefore, the party was one of the proponents of organizing a ceremony for people who become Dutch. Current criteria for the acquisition of the Dutch nationality are supported. Van der Molen is “happy that the Dutch nationality is not linked to ethnicity”. For him it “shows that being Dutch is more than just where you are from” and he thinks “it is the Dutch national spirit that where you are from does not matter, as long as you participate”. Van de Camp would like to “grant citizenship on the basis of a positive choice, when someone has expressed his bonds to the Netherlands”.

On the issue of multiple citizenships the CDA is internally divided. There is a group that takes a strong position and finds it desirable for a person to have a single nationality. In 2003 the Scientific Institute stated that an immigrant must make a choice about which nationality he wants to keep. Only in circumstances beyond his control, he should have the possibility of keeping his old nationality (WI CDA 2003: 74). However, in 2008 the Institute seems no longer an opponent of multiple citizenships. According to Naderi, one could “consider prohibiting people from holding multiple citizenships when it leads to problems” during the process of integration. Others within the CDA take moderate positions as well. Van de Camp sees “dual nationality as a reality” and is more lenient. Van der Molen thinks “the world is so complex today that you cannot say that someone’s identity coincides with a single piece of paper”. On the other hand a person should in his eyes “have the option to give up one of his nationalities” if he wishes to. Çörüz, having both the Dutch and Turkish nationality, does not see problems in having two nationalities. For him “loyalty is not written down on paper; it is in your heart”. At the same time Çörüz supports the official view of the party that “people should have a single nationality as much as possible”. His argumentation is, that holding multiple citizenships may cause problems related to private law.

Concerning EU citizenship, CDA representatives think it is important that this citizenship is derived from the nationality of the member states. According to Naderi EU citizenship is “now just a reality on paper. People do not yet have a feeling for it”. She thinks this can develop over time. European citizenship is an addition to national citizenship and should remain derived from it. Çörüz explains why:

“The EU is a community of values. (...) Twenty-seven components shape this community. There are certain rules of the game, values, and norms. (...) You would break this up when you decide to grant EU-citizenship to someone who is living in the Union for a long period. EU-citizenship does not develop by time, but by nationality. The nationalities shape the EU and you cannot disconnect this.”

Van der Molen also sees EU citizenship as “a sort of added value” and underlines that “Europe will be more successful if it preserves the national identities”.

Although the CDA endorses the rights of EU citizens to travel and live in another member state, it wants to keep restrictions for workers from Bulgaria and Romania. The most important reason for this is the influx of especially Polish workers in the past. Van de Camp thinks that “the next three years the restrictions must stay”. According to him “the Polish case has not finished yet” and “the enlargement with Romania and Bulgaria has not been good for the EU”. Oomen-Ruijten, however, does not agree with the official party position:
“In principle, every EU-citizen has the right to the freedom of movement. (…) If this freedom of movement cannot be honoured, we should have let these countries [Romania and Bulgaria] wait. (…) I do not think it is logical for the Dutch government to impose restrictions now. They should have voted against accession.”

3.2.4 European Union

The CDA characterizes itself as a pro-European party. In various publications support for the European idea and European integration is expressed, often mentioning that Christian democratic politicians were the founders of European integration after the Second World War (CDA 2009; CDA 2006; CDA Commissie Buitenland 1999). Although the party claims to be pro-Europe, this does not mean that it has always been supporting further European integration in practice. Support is highly dependent on the policy area. In line with the general tendency of growing Euro-skepticism in the Netherlands the CDA is also approaching European cooperation from the perspective of national interest. Illustrative is the 2009 electoral program. In the past European elections the CDA used the manifests and programs of the European People’s Party, but 2009 the party published its own national program. This signifies the attempt of the CDA to come to a more national view on European cooperation.

In the case of EU enlargement the CDA has always had some reservations. In the run-up to the accession of the Central and Eastern European states the party has been hesitant to express unequivocal support. In Europa Eureka!, published in 1999, the CDA stated that it would take a long time for the candidate countries to actually join the EU. The countries could not fulfil the criteria and were not ready to join yet (CDA Commissie Buitenland 1999: 28). This hesitance is also reflected by the position taken by the EU Commissioner for Enlargement and former CDA Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hans van den Broek, who did support enlargement in words, but always emphasized it would be a very long process (Ludlow 2004: 23-24; Postma 2002). Despite its initial doubts, in 2002 the CDA voted in favour of accession of ten candidate countries. In the case of Bulgaria and Romania, however, the party voted against accession because of corruption and the lack of a well-functioning rule of law in these two countries (2006). In its 2006 Europe manifesto the CDA declared no further enlargement could take place before the EU has been restructured. The option of membership in the long run for candidate countries Croatia, Macedonia and Turkey is kept open and the countries of the West Balkans also keep the prospect of accession, but no other state should be offered membership (CDA 2006: 11-12). And for any future enlargement the criteria of Copenhagen should be strictly applied. In addition to these criteria, the CDA is expressing more clearly that the EU itself has to be capable of absorbing new countries, where in the past this view was not expressed directly (CDA 2009: 28-29).

Turkish accession is a very sensitive issue for the party. There is a current within the party that is clearly against accession. Others underline that promises made to Turkey should be honoured. In its official position the party is very careful in phrasing its opinion: Turkey can join the EU if it qualifies, but the negotiations are an open-ended process (Website CDA 2009: 28-29). Rapporteur for the European Parliament Oomen-Ruijten wrote a critical report about the progress of Turkey. She expects that the accession process “will take a long time” and that “it will be very difficult when Turkey keeps reforming at the present speed”. Van de Camp agrees that accession of Turkey will take a long time and is keeping options open:
“The European people are very afraid and I represent the people, so the next ten years it [accession] is no option. (…) I see a growing tension between formally meeting the Copenhagen criteria and the feeling: ‘Does Turkey belong to Europe?’ The Western part does, but beyond Ankara there is not much European community spirit to be found. (…) But Turkey does have an enormous history in common with Europe and NATO.”

For the CDA the European Union is a community of common values. This community is geographically fixed, but the party is not clear about what the boundaries of this geographical unit are. The party seems to avoid a discussion on what the boundaries of the EU are and does not want to make promises for future membership to other states. Furthermore, the values are not a clearly defining principle, because the CDA phrases European values in very general terms such as respect for human dignity, freedom, equality, tolerance and justice (CDA 2009: 5-6). Although the CDA endorses the community of values, it takes a step back from the position that these values are exclusively Christian. Çörüz:

“The boundaries are geographically fixed. It is about the European range of ideas. That is not purely geographically defined. (…) Europe is a community of values. (…) Many of these values, which are important to us, like justice, solidarity, taking responsibility, are not exclusively Christian. (…) As a Muslim I can ascribe to them.”

The principle of subsidiarity is an important guiding principle for the CDA in order to determine whether issues should be dealt with at a European or a national level. This principle is used often and pragmatically. The Scientific Bureau interprets it as “doing nationally what can be done nationally and doing European what must be done European” and as “rules should be decided upon as close to the citizens as possible” (Centre for European Studies & WI CDA 2008: 98). This vagueness creates a freedom to determine in each case whether a policy issue should be dealt with at a national or a European level. It also creates the freedom of not being too specific about the future of European cooperation and the relation between the member states and EU institutions. For the CDA national parliaments should stay in charge when deciding at which level a decision needs to be taken (CDA 2006: 13). To Oomen-Ruijten subsidiarity is that “Europe is only doing those things that can be best done there. At the national level things should be done, that are best done there”. She thinks it is important that “national parliaments are involved in decision-making at the European level from the first moment.” At the same time, national parliaments “should not misuse their role.” Oomen-Ruijten observes that sometimes “the Dutch House of Representatives is misusing its role”, for example in the case of trans-border health care. Naderi does not think it is “advisable to define exactly what the relation between national governments and European institutions is” and “whether the EU is a federation, confederation or other constitutional structure”. For her it depends on the topic on which level that topic should be dealt with. For Van der Molen, there is no need for a federal state. He thinks that “a Moloch of fixed laws and procedures does not automatically guarantee the required flexibility to act on the world level.”

3.2.5 European public sphere

The CDA has intensive transnational contacts. These range from contacts between individuals to formal contacts between its sub organisations. For example there is an exchange between the directors of Christian Democratic research institutes in which the director of the Scientific
Institute for the CDA participates. One result from these contacts is a joint publication with the EPP’s Centre for European Studies (Centre for European Studies & WI CDA 2008). The Eduardo Frei Foundation was established to improve relations with Eastern Europe and to encourage exchange projects. Finally, the CDA affiliates itself with the EPP and actively participates in activities such as conferences.

Most of the CDA-interviewees think that European communication and contacts are increasing. Van der Molen thinks that in a sense there is already a European communication space, because “a European level of social movements is developing”. He sees that “between many countries networks are being formed” and that “NGOs make the connections between European countries”. For him it stands out that under youth these networks are already much more developed. Naderi explains that:

“A European public space exists, but it is not clearly visible. (…) At this moment especially environmental groups and lobby groups participate. The space is somewhat asymmetrical. (…). I think that it is important that all social organisations are being involved; that you try to correct the asymmetry in this space in order to represent interests proportionally.”

According to Van de Camp a European public sphere “will develop by itself” and he thinks that people will make their own contacts. In his opinion the European Commission “should not try to influence this process”.

### 3.2.6 Conclusion

Within the CDA there has always been discussion about the position of religion in the party. The official position is that members do not have to be Christian and that everyone who shares the same political beliefs can join. Although the party officially is an open organisation, local groups have room to be more liberal or orthodox. Especially among orthodox local groups it is not a natural thing that for example a Muslim represents the CDA. It is worth mentioning Ayhan Tonca, a CDA representative with a Muslim background and member of the Van der Tak Committee:

“Within the CDA there has always been discussion about religion, independent from migrants. (…) For a part of the supporters, especially for the more traditional and orthodox part, that discussion is of importance, still. (…) You can see that there is much lost ground to make up for the CDA [when it comes to representation of migrants]. (…) To a certain extent there is a ‘glass ceiling’. (…) I am chairman of the group in Apeldoorn. We have had a good discussion about it, but it says a lot that we had a discussion. (…) In principle they [party functions] are open, but within the party there is discussion, especially for the orthodox group, although I think that an overwhelming majority within the CDA is open in that respect.”

Already since the 1980s the CDA is paying attention to the position of migrants within its organisation. Nowadays the CDA Kleurrijk network tries to encourage the integration of

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32 Ayhan Tonca was interviewed for the TICF (see § 5.2.1) He is also chairman of the CDA group in the municipal council of Apeldoorn. Tonca was on the list of candidates for the parliamentary elections in 2006, but he has been withdrawn due to his position in debates on Armenian genocide.
cultural minorities within the party. Despite these efforts, there are still discussions about migrants and their integration. Some accuse the party of being not clear about its position; others say the party is not tolerant towards non-Christians and finally some think the CDA should not have Muslim representatives at all.

After years of applying the principle of soevereiniteit in eigen kring to migrants and advocating integratie via emancipatie in eigen kring, since the end of the 1990s the CDA is emphasizing cultural aspects of integration and participation. The party thinks ‘connecting values’ are important, but remains vague about what these are. When these are formulated it is done in a very general way or it is just assumed that everyone knows what they are. The other aspects of integration, participation and active citizenship, also remain vague.

While remaining vague about what integration is and how far migrants should adapt, during the years the CDA did support stricter policies. Some people in the CDA seem to have reservations towards migrant organisations, especially when they hamper migrant emancipation and participation. Again, the party cannot be very outspoken, because it may lead to a general discussion about organisations and institutions on a religious basis. The CDA, being the champion of the freedom of religion and the right to establish special schools based on conviction, has no interest in such a discussion.

The CDA is also advocating stricter admission criteria for migrants, especially when it concerns family reunification and unskilled labour migrants. For highly-skilled labour migrants who are needed on the Dutch labour market procedures should be easier. In the field of refugees the party prefers offering relief in the region. The CDA thinks that the Netherlands is already doing a lot for refugee relief. Agreements on the European level are needed to distribute refugees more equally among the member states and it is also important that the EU makes a distinction between real refugees and economic refugees. Contrary to what other CDA respondents think, Van der Molen doubts whether European regulations on migration will be successful. The interpretation of the European Blue Card is still a point of debate. This debate focuses on whether the amount of migrants admitted should be a national competence and whether other member states should share responsibility for migrants invited by others.

Obtaining Dutch citizenship is something special in the view of the CDA; it expresses a positive bond with the Netherlands and is more than just a formality. There is dissent within the party about holding multiple citizenships. One group wants to prohibit people from having more than one nationality. The other group finds it preferable for people to have a single nationality, but does not want to enforce this. European citizenship should remain derived from holding the nationality of one of the member states, because these are the basis of the EU. Oomen-Ruijten finds differences in rights between EU citizens undesirable and thinks that the Netherlands should have voted against accession of Romania and Bulgaria if it was not ready to open up its labour market. The CDA supported this restriction in access.

The CDA presents itself as a pro-European party, although during the last elections for the European Parliament the tone was more critical. In practice it is highly dependent on the policy area whether the party is supportive of European cooperation or not.

The CDA has shown restraint in relation to the accession of the Central and Eastern European states and it does not want to make new promises for further enlargement. A part of the CDA is against Turkish accession, but since accession is still far away, there is no need for a fierce discussion. The official position is that promises have been made and Turkey can accede when it meets the Copenhagen criteria. All sides can agree upon this position.

33 Illustrative is CDA leader Balkenende’s attempt at starting a discussion about norms and values, which was not taken very serious.
knowing that accession will not take place soon. All our respondents endorsed this position. Recently, the CDA has expressed more clearly that, besides meeting the Copenhagen criteria, also the absorption criterion is of importance during the accession process.

CDA representatives are explicit in stating that the EU is a community of values. This community is not defined by geographical boundaries. However, countries that do subscribe to these values and are not situated on the European continent cannot become members. What these common values are remains vague; at least they seem not very specific and distinctive. Within the CDA there is also dissent on whether these values are exclusively Christian or not. Our respondents did not support this exclusiveness, but from the debates around the preamble to the European Constitution it becomes clear that others within the CDA did.

To define whether an issue should be dealt with at the European or national level the CDA is using the principle of subsidiarity, often in a pragmatic way. The party does not want to define competences too precisely, because this would limit the flexibility to take decisions. According to the CDA national parliaments should have an important role in deciding at which level an issue is dealt with. Oomen-Ruijten warns that national parliaments should not misuse these powers.

The CDA is internationally orientated and actively participating in European affairs. CDA respondents see an increase in transnational contacts. They hold different opinions about whether a European public sphere should be encouraged. Some think it will develop by itself; others think some encouragement may be helpful.

3.3 PvdA

3.3.1 Introduction

The Partij van de Arbeid (PvdA, Labour Party) is with 33 seats the second largest party in the Dutch House of Representatives. The PvdA is a social-democratic party, which means that it strives for social legislation via the democratic state. General principles are the right to a decent living, equal opportunities, and equal participation in society for all. Furthermore, the PvdA strives for a more equal distribution of power and income and more care for the environment. Traditionally, the PvdA is an internationally oriented party: it advocates a strong(er) Europe and international solidarity (Partij van de Arbeid 2005a).

The PvdA was founded in 1946 and is considered a continuation and merger of the pre-war parties Sociaal-Democratische Arbeiders Partij (SDAP, Social Democratic Labour Party), Vrijzinnige Democratische Bond (VDB, Liberal Democratic League), and Christelijke-Democratische Unie (CDU, Christian Democratic Union). Two years after the party’s foundation some former VDB members felt there was not sufficient room for their ideas and they left the party to found the Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie (VVD, People’s Party for Freedom and Democracy) (see §3.6).

Throughout history PvdA has known electoral successes and losses and the number of seats in the House of Representatives fluctuated between 33 and 53. The first years of its existence (from 1946 until 1958) the party took part in the government, which operated in a society characterized by economic and social recovery. During this period a higher standard of living became common for a broader part of the population. This was reflected in the creation of most of today’s social security regulations. PvdA Party leader and Minister of Social Affairs Willem Drees became famous for the Algemene Ouderdomswet (Dutch Old Age Pensions Act) (De Rooy et al. 1995: 54-55). Despite the relative success in its early years, between 1958 and 1994 the party roughly was found among the opposition two thirds of the time. De Rooy et al. state about PvdA government participation during those years:
“(…) it was not allowed to join, it did not want to, or the Cabinet in which it took part made an early fall” (De Rooy et al. 1995: 60).

During the 1960s PvdA tried to find a balance between conventional ways of making politics on the one hand, and new modes and issues on the other. The latter was put forward by an internal movement, called Nieuw Links (New Left), characterized by controversial styles and issues, such as feminism, and environmental pollution. Although Nieuw Links supporters and the establishment within the party top initially clashed, gradually a rapprochement appeared. As a result of the coexistence of these two currents within the party board, the PvdA in those days was typified by heterogeneity in styles and standpoints (Partij van de Arbeid 2009c; De Rooy et al. 1995: 62-63). The variation in styles and standpoints exists until today and forms an important feature of PvdA’s character.

During the 1970s and 1980s the party focussed on a strategy how to enter the coalition. The year 1989 seemed to be a turning point, when party leader Wim Kok brought back some of the spirit the party knew during the leadership of Drees. Kok became premier in two cabinets (from 1994 until 2002), which consisted of a non-confessional and therefore unusual coalition of PvdA and the (liberal) VVD and D66 (Democrats66). In the 2002 elections the party lost a lot of supporters. Apart from a badly run campaign and complaints about the performances of the Kok cabinets (Cf. Fortuyn, 2002, ‘De puinhopen van acht jaar paars’), this was also a result of a changing political climate in the Netherlands. A year later the party seemed to have re-established its support among voters, but in spite of this success the party did not manage to get the desired place in the coalition. Since 2007 the party is in the government again, in the fourth Balkenende Cabinet, with Wouter Bos as political leader and Minister of Finance (De Rooy et al. 1995: 65-70; Partij van de Arbeid 2009c).

3.3.2 Organisation

The PvdA is a democratically structured party and the highest decision-making body is the members’ congress, which elects a new party board every two years. The current chairwomen is Lilianne Ploumen. The party has approximately 56,500 members (DNPP 2009). In the current cabinet six ministers and also six state secretaries are provided by the PvdA. Since the 2006 local elections, a large part of the mayors in the (bigger) cities is of PvdA origin.

The PvdA’s scientific bureau is called Wiardi Beckman Stichting, (WBS), Some famous Dutch politicians, amongst them Ayaan Hirsi Ali and Femke Halsema, began their political career in the bureau. The bureau has a staff of seven employees and besides that, it relies on volunteers. Part of the WBS is a centre for local governance (Centrum voor Lokaal Bestuur), focused on educating and networking for local and provincial PvdA politicians. The WBS is also editor of the monthly opinion magazine Socialisme & Democratie (Socialism & Democracy). The WBS plays an important role in the writing of election programs and internal decision-making ((Partij van de Arbeid 2009c). Furthermore, the bureau functions as an intermediary between (social) science and social-democracy in general. It provides the party with studies and analyses, by which the party is able to (re)consider its views. The WBS director is a member of the PvdA party top with an advisory status. The WBS takes part in a European network of like-minded scientific bureaus (Wiardi Beckman Stichting 2009).

PvdA has a youth organisation, called Jonge Socialisten (JS, Young Socialists). Since its foundation the PvdA has had three youth organisations that differed in terms of closeness vis-à-vis the mother party. In 1977 the JS was founded as a continuation of the relatively

34 A (liberal) minority woman of Somali origin who later received a lot of media attention because of her explicit critical attitude towards the Islam
35 GroenLinks’ current party leader
independent *Federatie van Jongeren van de PvdA* (FGJ, Federation of PvdA’s Youth groups). JS is more closely linked to the PvdA than its predecessor (Welp 1998: 216-217). JS has approximately 1500 members (JS 2009) and sponsored by the mother party in terms of housing, office supplies, and financial support (see §3.1.1). Generally, the PvdA party board takes JS remarks into account. Traditionally, the JS takes, like other political parties’ youth organisations, more extreme positions than the PvdA, but it generally agrees with the PvdA party ideology; however it sometimes takes deviant strands. JS is a member of the European organisation of young socialists, the ECOSY (European Community Organisation of Socialist Youth), and of the worldwide organisation IUSY (International Union of Socialist Youth).

In the European Parliament PvdA is represented in the Party of European Socialists, PES, which hosts European Social-Democratic and Labour Parties of EU countries. In addition, the PES is also a political movement of like-minded political parties from both EU and non-EU countries. In general, PES strives for the strengthening of the socialist and social-democratic movement in Europe, wants to define common European policies, and promotes collaboration between national parties and affiliated socialist organizations, e.g. PES women and ECOSY (PES 2009).

Other PvdA organizations worth mentioning are: *Evert Vermeer Stichting*, which focuses on sustainable development in foremost Africa, the *Alfred Mozerstichting*, which specializes in political participation in Central and Eastern Europe, and the *Anne Vondeling Stichting*, which represents the Dutch delegation in the socialist group in the European Parliament.

In all, seven PvdA interviewees participated in this research: Mr Luuk Blom (1957) has been an MP since January 2003. He is the party’s spokesperson on Europe (except for European Agriculture). From 2003 till 2006 he was a spokesman on several issues, amongst which industry policy, tourism, cross-border work and sports. Prior to his political career, Blom worked in the field of insurance.

Mrs Emine Bozkurt (1967) has been a Member of the European Parliament since 2004 and is of Dutch-Turkish origin. She was elected via preferential votes and was the first Dutch person with a foreign background to be elected in the EP. In the PES she is involved with justice and social affairs, and gender issues. Bozkurt has initiated several proposals on anti-discrimination, especially within sports, and advocates women’s rights in Turkey.

Mr Jeroen Dijsselbloem (1966) is the party’s current spokesman on integration (and child welfare) and the vice-chairman of the parliamentary group. He has been an MP since 2000 (with an absence from May until November 2003). Dijsselbloem has worked for the EP and was a board member of the *Alfred Mozer Stichting*. Dijsselbloem is co-author of the hotly debated *Resolutie Integratie* (Integration Resolution).

Although Mr Ahmed Marcouch (1969) was selected in this research because of his (former) board membership of the Moroccan organization UMMAO, he is also a prominent (local) PvdA politician with a non-Dutch background. Particularly because of his views on integration in relation to the party, he is included in this section as well (see also §5.3.2).

Mr Niek Ritzen (1987) is the international secretary, or vice-president of youth organisation JS. He is involved in all kinds of international activities, including maintaining contact with the ECOSY. During Obama’s election campaign Ritzen spent three weeks in the United States to support the campaign and learn about it.

Since 2008 Mrs Monika Sie Dhian Ho (1967) has been the general manager of the scientific bureau of the PvdA, WBS. Before she became head of the institute, she was a member of the PvdA Programme Committee for the 2006 elections. Prior to her WBS appointment, Sie Dhian Ho worked for the WRR (Scientific Council for Government Policy) as a social scientist (see also §4.2).
Mrs. Ella Vogelaar (1949) was PvdA Minister of Integration and Housing in the fourth Balkenende Cabinet. Although she was popular with many local organisations, some developments made her position as a minister untenable, e.g. she was criticised for the way she dealt with the press and a large housing project that turned into a fiasco. In November 2008 the party top made her resign. Some media picked this up as an internal struggle within the PvdA between a ‘hard line’ with a stricter approach towards integration (supported by party leader Bos, chairwomen Ploumen and integration spokesman Dijsselbloem) on the one hand, and a more nuanced, ‘soft line’ of which Vogelaar would be a representative.

3.3.3 Immigration and integration

Immigrant integration has been a prominent issue within PvdA policy proposals for a long time. This is not only expressed in party objectives, but also in the number of members and representatives with a minority background (Lucardie et al. 2006). Already in 1967 the WBS published a report on the subject of guest workers, who in the WBS’ views, would eventually return to their home countries. Ten years later, in 1977, an internal advisory committee was established with the task to define measures that would improve the position of minorities in society, since all who faced the disadvantages of the social economic order needed support. A second aim of the committee was to strive for an open, multiform society in which both autochtonen and allochtonen were able to develop (Fermin 1997b: 101-102).

In line with the political climate at that time, PvdA recognized that processes of emancipation were best served when people’s own identity was preserved. However, in the early 1980s the party stated that certain cultural norms, such as the authoritarian relations within many minority communities, were a hindrance to emancipation. This critical undertone towards certain cultural habits disappeared (temporarily) from view in a report published in 1984 (which was a response to the 1983 Minorities Policy), in which the PvdA seemed to have fully accepted multicultural society without any reservations. Fermin states that this attitude might be seen as a counter balance to the rise of politically organized racism at that time. In 1992 the critical position towards certain cultural preferences was reintroduced. An internal report stated that the standards and norms of the Dutch constitutional state would be at all times superior to other codes. Around the same time, the party principle of solidarity was more and more regarded from a pragmatic point of view, hereby replacing the former idealist principles. In 1996, a new internal critique was expressed: PvdA had been wrong because of not speaking about allochtonen anymore at all (Fermin 1997b: 104-110). In the following years the party debated – sometimes heatedly – on what would be the right approach towards integration. This seems an unanswered question until today.

According to the PvdA’s current standpoints, integration is one of the major issues in contemporary society. A smooth integration concerns three main points: 1) a command of language and knowledge of society, 2) participation, and 3) living up to the key values of the Dutch society. Islam is specifically mentioned as an important matter in the societal and political debates (PvdA website 2009). The party’s scientific institute WBS values integration highly; the subject takes a prominent place in its magazine Socialisme & Democratie (Cf. Schuylt 2009). In addition, WBS hosts several integration experts (either as an employee, or as a guest writer).

In 2008 the party really got involved in a struggle about integration. The party board, supported by a part of the electorate and some MPs, called for action. They no longer accepted the troubles caused by certain immigrant groups living in the Netherlands, e.g. Moroccan problematic youngsters in neighbourhoods in Gouda or Ede. This resulted in an internal report in which integration spokesman Jeroen Dijsselbloem stated that the time of “non-committed solutions was history” (PvdA fractie 2008). By the fall of 2008 another
internal report, *Resolutie Integratie* (Resolution Integration), was composed as basis for further discussion at the party congress in the spring of 2009. The key point in the resolution was that the Dutch constitutional state should be better preserved (law enforcement) and it furthermore elaborated on how to deal with cultural differences (by confrontation and tolerance) (Partijbestuur PvdA 2009b). However, by January 2009, many members and PvdA politicians, especially at a local level, expressed their worries about the tone of the document, which was seen as very strict and intolerant. The party top and the authors felt they had to rewrite it in a less strict tone, in order to prevent the report from being rejected by the members’ congress.

In addition, there was a lot of tumult around PvdA Minister of Integration, Ella Vogelaar. The minister was forced by the party board to resign, officially because she had lost her credibility as a minister, but rumours had it her following a different approach towards integration than party leader Bos (Van der Laan 2008). Former minister Ella Vogelaar explains her view of the situation:

> “I don’t like the qualification hard versus soft. It is neither right nor productive (...). I would prefer the qualification ‘more balanced’. (...) I think the debate on integration within the PvdA has become too narrow, in the sense that the party focuses too much on the problems that come with integration (...), through which the ‘us-versus-them’ -feeling is being fed even more. (...) This starts, in my opinion, from a short-term consideration.”

Therefore, Vogelaar points out, it is important to show “the successes of integration”. She furthermore thinks “there is a broad current” within the party that “supports my opinion”, but that there is a “gap between opinion makers on the one hand, and managers and politicians – particularly at a local level – on the other”. Amongst the latter she finds a lot of support “against the polarisation”.

PvdA’s official spokesman on integration, Jeroen Dijsselbloem, stresses that the approach towards integration that “used to be common” and was “characterized by being without obligations”, has changed. Dijsselbloem puts forward “to consider [the resolution] as a counter balance to the cultural relativism that characterized the passed decades”. “From now on,” he states, “fundamental achievements of Dutch society”, such as “civil rights, freedom of speech, and equal gender treatment, are priority again”. He continues: “the PvdA has fought for these achievements” and “on this point we emphatically do not want to adjust [to other opinions]”. “If that’s what you call ‘hard’, then let it be ‘hard’”. Otherwise Vogelaar does not so much disagree with the resolution’s content of preservation, confrontation and toleration, but states:

> “If you constantly confront and shock people, and if you’re outraged about their habits, you automatically force them into defence, while if you treat them respectfully, and actually start a conversation, you give them space to ventilate their opinion and eventually, some reflection may occur.”

Local PvdA politician Ahmed Marcouch states that “PvdA is the only party that has a vision on integration” and therefore agrees on the party’s newly chosen path. He analyses: “it is no question of a ‘hard’ but of an ‘honest’ line”. Marcouch explains further, “the way we treated migrants was just not fair. If you want to achieve something in this country, you’ll have to work for it. It doesn’t help [migrants] to hold their hands [as a social worker] and say that it’s going to be fine.” Marcouch furthermore states that “culture does not cause problems, but it can be of help in finding solutions”. Although Marcouch advocates “room for orthodoxy” he
states that “this doesn’t imply any concessions to achievements concerning the emancipation of women, gays and lesbians”.

WBS director Sie Dhian Ho tells that “integration has been WBS’ preoccupation for many years”. This appears from the many publications on integration the WBS has produced in recent years. “Apart from the subject of Europe” Sie Dhian Ho underlines, “integration is a subject of which I think it is important to take a better defined stand.” This is in line with her general opinion that “political parties should formulate arguments that are thoroughly founded in scientific research”. JS secretary Ritzen stresses that “integration is not only to be expected from allochtonen, but should also take place among autochtonen” with which he takes a milder standpoint towards integration than e.g. Dijsselbloem who thinks “integration is not 50/50”. Furthermore Ritzen mentions about migrants: “we did make them come here ourselves, so we shouldn’t reject them now”. In spite of the rather mild view, JS advocates stronger government control on incorporation tests. Bozkurt makes a critical remark towards the receiving society: “As an immigrant you may integrate endlessly. It doesn’t mean, however, that if you pass the test, you can consider yourself fully integrated, because it is also necessary that the people [of the receiving society] feel that you belong”.

Already at a relatively early stage, the PvdA was involved in the question of how to deal with policies aimed at specific target groups (doelgroepenbeleid). The party view on these policies have shifted over time. A key point in this respect was the idea that socio-economic improvement needed to take place within the existing societal structures in the Netherlands. The party was aware of the fact that inhabitants of the so-called ‘old neighbourhoods’ in the cities, where traditionally a lot of PvdA supporters lived, would see policies focused on ethnic minorities as a threat. Therefore, the PvdA supported general measures, and focused on all vulnerable groups (Fermin 1997b: 102).

Dijsselbloem recalls: “the old target group policies had a kind of ‘blind spot’”, which resulted in its abolishment. However, Dijsselbloem stresses:

“There seems to be a new kind of dogma, namely: we do not make target group policies anymore at all. (…). I stress that there are specific minority groups in the Netherlands that have specific problems. (…) We often do not solve these problems because there are no target group policies anymore. Therefore, I want to get rid of this new dogma.”

Like integration, migration forms a long time subject of interest within the PvdA party politics, although it was absent in the first party constitutions. Since the subject appeared in 1977, it has been linked to integration, although in recent years integration seems to have taken over most of the party’s attention. However, many issues that are addressed in relation to integration, also apply to immigration (Partij van de Arbeid 2004a; Partijbestuur PvdA 2009a). Since 1977 PvdA has stated that there should be restrictions to immigration for several reasons: first of all because: “solidarity [is] threatened by increasing diversity. A selective migration is needed to alter this development” (Partij van de Arbeid 2005b). Simultaneously, the party stresses that “a world-wide unequal distribution of wealth is the most important cause of migration and this could be fought with (amongst others) worldwide solidarity and development aid” (Partij van de Arbeid 2004a). In 2008/2009 PvdA still makes a plea for selective migration, because society’s ability to adjust (to migrants) is not considered to be endless (Partijbestuur PvdA 2009a).
Concerning **asylum** migration, in general the PvdA supports a so-called ‘strict but fair policy’, in which protection should be provided for the ‘real’ refugee (Partij van de Arbeid 2008). The distinction between real refugees and less real ones probably stems from the general Dutch opinion that economic refugees are not seen as ‘real’ asylum seekers.

In line with the political developments of that time and the Resolution Integration, the PvdA (partly) supported stricter requirements for **marriage migrants**, in order to reduce their number. Dijsselbloem states that “PvdA supported the Wet Inburgering Buitenland because we think one can ask people, who choose for a future in the Netherlands, to prepare for that.” PvdA did not support other additional requirements that were suggested, such as raising the income requirement because “there already existed an income requirement (…) that implied the duty to maintain one’s partner”. Dijsselbloem states “this was already a legitimate requirement. However, raising the minimum requirement in this respect would lead – in our opinion – to a situation in which people with lower incomes could not fall in love anymore with a foreign partner. (…) So we were against it.”

A group that is particularly mentioned in the PvdA’s standpoints concerns migrants with specific skills that are of important value to the Dutch labour market or universities. These specific **highly skilled migrants** should be granted (easy) access on the basis of “Dutch interest” (Partij van de Arbeid 2008). MEP Bozkurt stresses that PvdA therefore supported the “construction of the Blue Card” in which “access is being made possible for highly educated migrants”. She puts forward that the Blue Card “is a big step forward towards a common EU migration policy”. Although there is an attitude of “cold feet” among the member states, and “a lot of bureaucracy”, Bozkurt underlines that “all 27 member states in the end miraculously agreed”. Furthermore, she points out that all member states “are connected” and therefore “migration should be coordinated at a European level”.

### 3.3.4 Citizenship

The notion of **citizenship** appeared relatively late within PvdA’s documents; it was not until the 1994 national election program that the concept itself was mentioned. By then, the concept of citizenship was presented as a key concept, which ‘binds people’ (Partij van de Arbeid 2004b). Later on, in 2005, PvdA stated that ideally, citizens needed to be committed to society, were able do deal with differences, and were highly independent and emancipated. Education was seen as the key condition under which citizenship as promoted by the party could be achieved (Partij van de Arbeid 2005b). In 2006 a link was made between citizenship and **nationality**. The party stated that citizens could be committed to multiple societies, which was not considered a hindrance to fully-fledged participation in Dutch society. Furthermore, it was stressed that a successful integration did not depend on holding one single nationality (Partij van de Arbeid 2006). In recent years both citizenship and nationality have been absent in the party’s standpoints (Partij van de Arbeid 2008).

The issue of **double or multiple nationality** has occupied the PvdA in recent years. In 2002 the party stated that acquisition of Dutch nationality prevailed over the renunciation requirement. Therefore, the PvdA stressed that this requirement needed to be abolished (Partij van de Arbeid 2002). In fact, this was a political compromise, in which the abolition of the renunciation requirement was promoted in order to give migrants more political rights. Since they no longer had to give up their old nationality to become Dutch, migrants had – through naturalisation – access to more political rights, such as voting at a national level (Groenendijk 36).

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36 The Civic Integration Abroad Act (in force since March 2006), which arranges that migrants must follow incorporation courses in their country of origin, and – more importantly – pass the incorporation test before they are granted access to enter the Netherlands.
et al. forthcoming: 7). In 2007 Dijsselbloem expressed his relief about the recent disconnection of double nationality from loyalty, which used to be a trend under Verdonk’s ministry (Jeroen Dijsselbloem 2007). However, in the Resolutie integratie it was expressed that multiple citizenship was undesirable because of the possible interference of other states with Dutch citizens’ affairs, e.g. Turkish military service for Turkish-Dutch men (Partijbestuur PvdA 2009a).

Bozkurt puts forward that “when it concerns expats, there is no discussion about multiple nationalities and loyalty”, but the discussion “only concerns Moroccans, Turks and the like”. Furthermore, she stresses that “people should be given the choice” about what nationality they want, because currently “it is not possible to refuse a nationality, for instance, if one of your parents has a double nationality.” Vogelaar agrees with Bozkurt “that the discussion is only about a small group, although there are many citizens with multiple nationalities”. Vogelaar elaborates on the issue: “the fact that there are a million Dutch with multiple nationalities is a direct result of PvdA and CDA proposals to make that possible. Imagine, that’s not even twenty years ago! And now we promote a renunciation!”. Concerning the clash of law systems, as suggested in the Resolutie Integratie, Vogelaar remarks: “people [involved] don’t consider this a problem at all, we make a problem of it”.

3.3.5 European Union

In the party history Europe as a political construction appears in the party constitution in 1959 (directly after the establishment of the EEC). By then, Europe’s future was seen as a supranational economic and political community, which ideally had a federative structure. The polity of Europe should have its own political institutions, but foremost needed to contribute to the development of a peaceful democratic international society (Partij van de Arbeid 1959). In the 1977 party constitution European cooperation in economic and socialist sense was formulated as one of the party goals. Apart from control over the internal European markets, Europe should also coordinate environmental measures and fair development aid (foremost fighting unfair competition of western enterprises in third world countries). The EEC should have control over subsidies and tax facilities in order to realise these goals. National governments only should transfer tasks towards European authorities if a democratic way of control was guaranteed (Partij van de Arbeid 1977).

In the 2005 edition of the PvdA’s constitution, Europe was seen as an important issue: it was not only considered an important ‘community of values’, the party also attributed the high standard of living, that had become available for many, to the European economic cooperation. Despite this, PvdA formulated some domains in which European integration needed to be minimized and which would remain a national competence, i.e. education, health care and social security. On subjects such as external affairs, the fight against terrorism, asylum policies and criminality, there needed to be more European integration, according to the party (Partij van de Arbeid 2005a).

The 2003 EP election program (for the first time) stressed some critical remarks about Europe’s performance in which its bureaucracy was put forward as a major problem. As a result of that, the subsidiarity principle was mentioned: if an issue could be dealt with adequately at the national level, it should not be on the European agenda. In addition, Europe was not only seen as a governmental layer, but also as ‘a value in its own’, based on the concepts of democracy, peace and stability (Partij van de Arbeid 2003). The EU was considered to be heading towards a real European government with a (more) democratic European Parliament, that would be a real representative body for European citizens. The Council of Ministers would function as a Senate (Partij van de Arbeid 2003). Five years later, the idea of a European government seemed abandoned and in the 2009 election program the
scepticism of (Dutch) citizens towards Europe is broadly emphasized. The program states that Europe lacks (and therefore needs) vision, ambition, political leadership, and civic support that is not undermined by top-down measures in a speed people are not able to deal with. PvdA furthermore acknowledges that European integration is an important solution and a means to cope with different problems in contemporary Dutch society (Partij van de Arbeid 2009a).

Despite the increase of people’s aversion towards Europe, which was expressed by the Dutch ‘no’ against the European constitution, the PvdA realizes that Europe has become an important issue that needs more attention within the party. This is expressed (amongst others) by the appointment of the new WBS chairwoman, Monika Sie Dhian Ho, who is considered an expert on Europe. Sie Dhian Ho explains: “as a social-democrat I think it is important that we take a constructive stand on Europe,” and: “a political party needs to educate people about Europe by debating about it.” The WBS and Sie Dhian Ho have access to several means to put Europe on the party’s agenda, e.g. publishing “a WBS yearbook about it” (in 2008), “(co)writing the election program”, and “taking part in public debates”. Sie Dhian Ho criticises the 2009 election program, because “it is focused on Europe’s role in international politics”. Although “this is true to a certain extent”, she stresses that “it is a diversion”, because “social-democrats would agree on that [international role]”, but “find it hard to agree on social policy and enlargement”. Furthermore, Sie Dhian Ho points out that the election program “concerns in fact the [European] Council” since “the EP is not dealing with policies on external affairs”. Sie Dhian Ho wants to “let people understand what’s at stake [in the EP elections]”. She points out: “in the elections” people look at “the question of subsidiarity as: do we want more or less Europe?”, although the “left-right dimension is far more important in the European elections. Member states governments and parliaments decide about the competences of the EU, not the European Parliament. So, if you want to influence decisions regarding more or less Europe, you should consider Europe as a political issue in national elections. With these remarks, Sie Dhian Ho refers to the actual competences of the EP and explains that voters often make wrong assumptions about what is at stake in the EP elections.

The party’s spokesman on Europe, Luuk Blom, states: “the PvdA (…) is an internationally oriented party” in which “international solidarity plays an important role.” Blom sketches the ideal political form of the EU as “not unlike it looks today: a cooperation between member states and citizens. No more, no less. It certainly should not be a federal Europe.” Subjects that typically are of European importance are “climate, energy, security, fighting terrorism, and immigration.” JS member Ritzen, adds “education” to that list. Concerning Europe JS takes a rather remarkable stand by “striving for a federation”, although Ritzen recognizes “that is not a common view anymore”. He stresses that a European federation “should not look like the US” and should not concern “all issues”, but on the issues that are a European competence, the EU is “definitively heading towards a federation”. However, the typically Dutch issues of “drug policy, abortion legislation, and gay marriage” should remain a national (Dutch) competence.

The general standpoint towards enlargement is that as yet no new promises should be made to new potential candidate member states. As soon as the three current candidate member states (Croatia, Turkey and Macedonia) meet the Copenhagen criteria, they are allowed to join the EU. The (temporary) stop to enlargement needs to be implemented in order to rearrange things in Europe after the enlargement with the ten Eastern European countries. In addition, Europe’s ability to absorb new countries is not inexhaustible. The party states that no countries are allowed to join when they do not meet all criteria (which was the case with Romania and Bulgaria) (Partij van de Arbeid 2009a). About these two countries
Blom states: “in fact we let them join too soon,” which is the reason “that we delayed the free movement of employees”.

According to the official standpoints, Turkey is allowed to join as soon as it meets political, social and economic conditions, and only if the EU internally is ready. That will probably take some time, because PvdA stresses that the Turkish implementation of legislation will not be finished in the near future (Partij van de Arbeid 2009b). The fact that Turkey is “a country with an Islamic background” is no “problem” for Blom. Instead he points at the advantages Turkish accession would bring: “Turkey is a country with 70 million Turks and which, demographically, has the youngest labour force in Europe”. Ritzen underlines: “you should look further than only at the market. There is also something like solidarity with the common Turk”. Besides, Ritzen argues, “Turkey may play an important role in the conflict in the Middle East”. Bozkurt adds that “already in 1963 the EU and Turkey have signed an association treaty (…). In fact, provisions in the treaty have not been given effect by the EU, although Turkey could have played a more active role in this respect.” The PvdA representatives’ opinion about the accession of Russia is best described in the words of Ritzen: “No. Because you can ask the question what joins what?”

3.3.6 European public sphere
An interesting remark concerning European cooperation within the PES is made by Blom. He suggests:

“to dissolve the PES. I know that sounds heavy, but I propose to seek cooperation with like-minded social-democratic parties. For example, the Danish, Norwegians, Swedish, Flemish, Irish, New Labour and the SPD: we are better connected with these than with those Eastern European parties (…). At least we should consider that.”

Also Ritzen stresses that European cooperation with other social-democratic parties is limited: “We collaborate with the Flemish and the Germans, but the English, for instance are much more conservative than we are”.

Vogelaar voices most of her fellow PvdA representatives by stating that a European public sphere: “only exists among politicians and policy-makers”. Bozkurt adds:

“I see a public space as something where discussions take place. (...) In recent years there have been increased discussions on Europe, although in a sceptical way, and in a sense of what people do not want from Europe. I would like more space for the question what it is that people do want from Europe and what Europe is capable of.”

Vogelaar elaborates: “Europe is used to mobilise resistance”. Blom only sees a “European connection through a common European history, although not everyone is aware of that”. Also Ritzen doubts the existence of a common European sphere: “There is no media organisation that operates throughout the whole of Europe”, but he stresses that it is important that “people know that Europe is a governmental layer, because we’re increasingly heading towards multi-level governance.”

3.3.7 Conclusion
Throughout history PvdA has struggled with its broad ideology and has tried to combine the various strands from its supporters into one common position. Ever since Nieuw Links entered
the party, rivalling strands became an important PvdA characteristic. Until today, this provides the party with many internal debates and struggles. Integration is a long time subject of interest for the PvdA and in particular finding the right approach towards it. This varied from accepting the multicultural society without reservations, to a very strict approach in which almost all deviating differences need to be underlined in a confronting way. A culminating-point of the shift in view on integration forms Vogelaar’s departure. It not only made clear that a serious call for strictness concerning migrants existed within the party, but it also showed a different current within the party, which stands for more nuance and a softer tone. Also positions with respect to multiple nationalities and policies targeted at specific groups differed and followed the political movements over time, although these subjects were not as hotly debated as integration.

The PvdA advocates ‘strict but fair’ policies where it concerns migration. This can be roughly seen as a result of two developments: on the one hand it concerns stricter policies, including restrictions on migration in order to protect Dutch society and market; and on the other hand the idea of international solidarity plays an important role, although the latter is increasingly pushed aside. Migration is seen as a subject that is necessarily dealt with at a European level. Within PvdA circles Europe is looked at with increased suspicion: doubts about the EU and its performance are rising, but simultaneously the importance of cooperation is being stressed. The federative view with respect to the EU has been replaced by skepticism and reservation. The PvdA states that the three candidate member states that are made promises to may join the EU as soon as they meet the criteria, but adds an additional criterion (at least for the Turkish case): the EU should be internally ready for it. However, the party is convinced that Turkish accession does not take place in the near future.

A European public sphere does not really exist, according to most of the PvdA representatives. Maybe it is found among some elites or in a shared history, but most of the European population is not aware of it. In general, Europe’s image needs to be improved and supported, because from there the construction of an EU that is European-wide and highly valued, can start.

3.4 SP

During the last decade the Socialistische Partij (SP, Socialist Party) has gone through a rapid growth and it is currently the third party in the Dutch House of Representatives. The SP operates at the leftist side of the political spectrum and it has a national and anti-European orientation. This section deals with the party and its views on migration, integration, citizenship en European cooperation and the views on these topics of our interviewees. Due to a lack of willingness to participate we could not include the views of the youth organisation nor of a representative with a minority background, which we did in the cases of the other political parties.

3.4.1 Organisation

At the end of the sixties fierce discussions on which position to take in the Sino-Soviet split, and differing opinions on whether a political party should be intellectualistic or more oriented towards ‘the proletariat’, resulted in a series of secessions from the Communistische Partij van Nederland (CPN, Communist Party of the Netherlands). One of the dissident factions formed the Kommunistiese Partij Nederland/ Marxisties-Leninities (Communist Party of the Netherlands/ Marxist-Leninist), but in 1972 this name was changed to Socialistiese Partij (SP, Socialist Party).
In its first years the SP was Maoist and later Marxist-Leninist in its orientation, but this orientation was gradually released. In 1991 the party officially abandoned Marxism-Leninism and took a socialist approach. The SP was, and still is, strongly oriented towards local activism and extraparliamentary actions. Although it used to have an aversion to the parliamentary system, the party did participate in national elections. Due to their local orientation, they did not succeed in winning seats in Parliament until 1994 (Voerman 1986; Voerman 1994; Van der Steen 1994). Since then, the party has been in opposition and its number of seats has increased significantly. During the last elections the SP became the third largest party, but it did not realize a position in government.

Traditionally, the SP is focussing on ‘the common man’, people with a low income, and workers in particular. The party’s basic principles are human dignity, equality and solidarity and its main interests are health, social affairs, environment, and local issues. The SP has the image of being a protest or anti-party, which is cultivated via slogans like Stem tegen, stem SP! (Vote no, vote SP!) and its logo, a red tomato. For many years outsiders have criticized the SP of being closed and non-democratic. The central position held by Jan Marijnissen, who is party leader since 1988 and who was also leading the parliamentary group between 1994 and 2008, was only one of the points of critique. The rapid growth of the party in the last few years and the large influx of new members have made the univocal expression of the party line less easy. This resulted in several incidents in which representatives left the party.

Since 1989 the SP has been participating in elections for the European Parliament and since 1999 the party is actually represented. The SP is part of the European United Left/Nordic Green Left. The SP has a youth organisation, Rood (Red), and a sub branch for elderly people. Elected party representatives transfer allowances they receive for their work minus expenses to the party. These form a large part of the SP budget.

Interviewee Mr Harry van Bommel (1962) is a member of the House of Representatives since 1998. He is spokesperson for foreign and European affairs. In 2005, during the absence of party leader Marijnissen, Van Bommel (‘Mister No’) was the leading figure in the referendum campaign against the European Convention.

Mr Erik Meijer (1944) was a member of the European Parliament from 1999 to 2009. In 1996 he joined the SP, after being active for GroenLinks for many years. Meijer was a member of the commissions for transport and tourism, and for foreign affairs. He was also member of the delegation for relations with the former Yugoslav states and EU Rapporteur for Macedonia.

Mr Jan de Wit (1945) was a member of the Senate between 1995 and 1998 and has been a member of the House of Representatives since 1998. Among his topics are justice affairs and immigration policy. He has been involved with de SP since its foundation.

3.4.2 Immigration and integration

In 1983 the SP published a controversial and heavily criticized report on guest workers. The party proposed that after two years of being in the Netherlands guest workers should choose between staying and returning to their countries of origin. Those wishing to stay should receive the Dutch nationality. They should integrate, receive support in learning Dutch, and learn about Dutch customs and traditions. Those who returned home should receive a repatriation bonus (Socialistiese Partij 1983). At that time these proposals were far from politically correct. Besides this, the tone of the report, in which guest workers were described as somewhat backward, was criticized as well. Other political parties found the report much too populist and accused the SP of trying to attract votes from the extreme right (Voerman 1986). Since this first report, the position of the SP towards integration has not changed much. Jan de Wit tells:
“We were the first to point out that integration can only succeed if people speak Dutch, go to school, and if jobs are adapted for them. (…) We thought that people who wanted to return should be given the possibility, financially, to start or restart in their country of origin. (…) We have to help people who wish to stay as well. We have to take care that they can integrate. (…) Integration is realized in education, at work and in the streets. (…) It is absolutely clear that people have to adapt.”

Member of the European Parliament Erik Meijer thinks there is a difference in the position of national minorities and migrant minorities:

“I think you have to distinguish [between minority groups]. On the one hand you have people who form a historical majority in an area and who resist the fact that others do not acknowledge this or try to suppress them. On the other hand you have people who have come as individual migrants with the perspective of making money and returning home, or with the perspective of emigration with a lasting nature and integration in Dutch society. Especially when people are here for over a generation you may expect that they are integrated in Dutch society.”

In the fields of housing and education the SP proposed to distribute foreigners spatially, because this was better for both the foreigners involved and for the Dutch population (SP 1994: 13). For Harry van Bommel mono-ethnic schools are the “unwelcome effect of a failed policy”. On the case of the arrival of the Surinamese in the Netherlands he concludes that “if people would have been distributed spatially, many problems could have been prevented.”

In a new report on integration the party concluded that the integration of foreigners had come to a deadlock because of failed policies; a new apartheid had been created (SP 2002). The subtitle of the report (Delta plan for an integrated society) invokes a sense of emergency and the idea that an enormous task has to be accomplished. Most of the suggestions in the report are addressed to the government, policy makers and executers, and migrants; not to the ‘man in the street’. De Wit is very outspoken about the observed failure: “People who did succeed in acquiring a job in the Netherlands, who did develop, did so on their own strength; not because of a successful policy.”

The SP is critical about the attempts to come to a migration policy at the EU level. Above all, the party does not want to encourage migration as such. Refugees, however, should always have the possibility to seek asylum. Competition between national regulations for the admission of refugees should be prevented. Therefore, the party endorses the importance of an asylum policy for the EU, although current results are by far not satisfactory (Van Bommel & de Heij 2006: 14; SP 2009: 35-36). Meijer thinks that “the EU should not encourage migration”. For refugees he is making an exception: “There must be a moderate admission policy for refugees”. De Wit thinks the current development to come to a European policy on refugees is not satisfactory:

“We have always pleaded for a generous admission policy. (…) Now, the EU has developed a minimum asylum policy. (…) You always have to check precisely whether people have a story of asylum. (…) If people seek asylum, it has to be honoured initially. (…) It is good that they are looking for agreement to come to a common level, but the question is: ‘What level?’”

Van Bommel thinks states should keep a certain degree of freedom to develop national policies. He explains that the SP is “not in favour of a complete harmonisation of policies. States should keep a certain amount of freedom to solve their own problems”.

The SP is opposing absolute free movement of labour within the EU. According to the party the promotion of labour migration should be ended and it is too early to open up the
Dutch labour market for Romanians and Bulgarians (SP 2009: 35). De Wit stresses that it is important that “you first find out whether there are unemployed people in the Netherlands. If that is not the case people from other EU-countries can come to work here”. According to Meijer the main push for people to move to somewhere else to find a job is the difference in welfare and income levels. These differences create:

“...a willingness to be underpaid and to work and live in unsafe conditions. These problems need to be solved before free labour is permitted. (...) I am not against labour migration, but I am against one-sided shifts, because people want to flee poverty. (...) For migration within Europe the EU has to take care that people have equal rights and equal citizenship, when they settle in another state.”

The introduction of the European Blue Card is not supported by the SP (SP 2009: 48). Meijer’s main objection is the brain drain such a system would cause. He is against “systematically taking away people from societies that very much need them”. Van Bommel says:

“We are against a Blue Card. In their position [the educated people in developing countries] it is completely understandable and for us it is convenient, because we do not have to pay for their education. That is absurd. A Blue Card will start that process. (...) We think that this inequality [in the preference given to highly educated migrants] has a negative effect for people in the Netherlands, but it also contributes to a brain drain.”

3.4.3 Citizenship

The SP thinks it should be made easier to obtain the Dutch nationality, but it is not exactly clear in what way the party thinks current rules should be changed (SP 2002: 7). Before someone can apply for Dutch citizenship he must have a valid residence permit. De Wit is clearer about the criteria for such a permit: “You receive a residence permit at the moment you meet the incorporation requirements. We think these requirements are very stringent. Especially the income requirement is too stringent.”

Although the SP prefers people to have just one nationality, it does not want to enforce strict rules to make people give up other nationalities. For De Wit it is “obvious that you choose for a single nationality the moment that you want to live in a country and choose for that country”. However, he does “not take it too serious”, because “if people cannot renounce their nationality, nothing much can be done about it.” De Wit also makes it clear that “the SP separates [nationality] from loyalty towards a country, since there isn’t a connection in any way”.

European citizenship, and the way it is promoted, meets scepticism. Van Bommel wonders “what European citizenship means”, since “there is no state, no government and no useful parliament”. According to him “one cannot just decide that there is a European state with European citizenship”; it has to grow. De Wit also thinks EU citizenship is artificial: “During the debate on the Constitution we said that we thought that European citizenship was a frill. It is absolutely nonsense and unnecessary what they are creating.” For Meijer European citizenship is “just a reality on paper”, although he does acknowledge that “there is a small minority of people who consider themselves European citizens”. He does not see that number increase very soon. Having that in mind, for Meijer it is “justifiable that European citizenship is now derived from the nationalities of the member states”.

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3.4.4 European Union

Traditionally, European policy is not an important area of attention for the SP and the party’s official opinion is formulated by only a small group of members. The SP has always been critical towards the European Union. The democratic gap, the focus on market economy, its neoliberal policy and further federalization have met the party’s critique. During the referendum campaign against the European Convention, the SP took a strong approach and succeeded in mobilising anti-Europe feelings in the Netherlands. In its 2004 election programme for the European Parliament the tone of the SP was more moderate compared to the 2009 program. The party proclaimed not to be against European cooperation as such, but against the current forms of cooperation (SP 2004). The target of the campaign was to get the voice of Eurocritics heard. In 2009, however, the tone is much stronger and more populist with slogans like *Minder Brussel* (Less Brussels) and *Een beter Europa begint in Nederland* (A better Europe starts in the Netherlands). The SP states that the European project has completely gone off the rails (SP 2009). The party seems to try to evoke the atmosphere of the referendum campaign and to attract votes of Eurosceptics again.

Over the years the position of the SP towards *enlargement* of the EU is not very consistent and it has changed from time to time. The party was never a proponent of enlargement, but eventually voted in favour of the 2004 round. According to Meijer this was “because even like-minded politicians in the candidate member states wanted to join the EU and the SP did not want to block them”. In the 2004 electoral programme enlargement was not even mentioned, but a few years later the SP voted against accession of Romania and Bulgaria (2006). Van Bommel stated that, until further notice, no accession of the Balkan countries could take place. The main motivation for this was that the latest round of enlargement had caused enormous economic problems and problems with labour migration (Van Bommel & de Heij 2006: 17-18). In 2009 the SP again stated that in the next five years no enlargement could take place, although the party makes an exception for Croatia, if it qualifies. Turkey can in principle join the EU if it does fulfil the criteria, but the SP expects that this will not be the case soon. The SP is clear in stating that the EU should not grow endlessly and introduces a proposal to have future enlargements approved by the citizens of the EU (SP 2009: 51).

Looking back at the last two rounds of enlargement Van Bommel concludes that “they were too early” and that “the new member states were not ready in terms of the labour market, in the field of the rule of law, democracy and the fight against corruption”. During the interview he reconsidered his 2006 statement that enlargement with the Balkan countries cannot proceed. He thinks “enlargement on the Balkans can proceed carefully”, but that in the next years “only accession of Croatia is realistic”. Membership for countries east of the Union is “something for the far future”. About the proposed referendum Van Bommel explains that it “is not only about whether a country is ready to join, but also whether we [the people of the EU] are ready”. According to him “the absorption criterion is there for a reason.”

Contrary to the official position of the SP, Meijer is a clear proponent of future enlargements. He is in favour of accession of the candidate countries and thinks that “Croatian accession by 2011 should not be delayed”. Turkey has a long way to go and although Meijer supported the start of the negotiations, he is “not sure about their final result”. Personally, Meijer thinks that “Moldova, Belarus and Ukraine should have the option to accede”.

Meijer notices that the EU does not play a role in the situation of minorities within the member states. He proposes a different form of organisation for the EU with a stronger position for regions:
“I suggest thinking in terms of a Europe of regions and not in terms of existing states. People should have the possibility to build up their region in Europe from below. In some cases borders will arise, differing from current state borders. That situation however is far away and in the short run beyond reach.”

Van Bommel thinks that the simultaneous process of deepening and enlarging the European Union has brought many problems. Therefore, it is important that the people in the Union grow closer first and that the EU “really becomes the community of values that people dream of”. For Van Bommel “it is good that things can be slowed down in case member states do not want a certain policy or want that policy to stay a national affair”. According to Meijer democracy is working best when it is directly influenced by the people and prefers “a decentralisation process towards the member states and the regions”. The EU is needed for solving cross-border and large scale problems, but “Europe can never be a state that completely wipes out the position of member states”.

3.4.5 European public sphere
Until roughly the 1990s the SP was mainly operating at the local level and local issues were the principal part of its work. Although now the party is also operating at the national level, it still works mainly on issues that affect ordinary people. International subjects the party is working on are ‘traditionally leftist subjects’ such as development aid, environment and military intervention. Due to the growing importance of European policymaking European issues receive more attention. However, at the national level there are no SP structures that deal with European or international exchange. On an individual basis SP representatives have an international network of contacts, but at the level of the national organisation such a network is lacking. International and European cooperation and exchange seem not important enough to pay attention to in a structural way.

The SP is not optimistic about the existence of a European public sphere. According to Van Bommel there is no European public sphere and public spheres are still national spheres. For him this is “reflected in the efforts to create European political parties that fail” and the preference for national parties that people still have. Meijer adds that “the reality in Europe is that there are national public opinions, national media, national priorities and national debates”. He expects that this will not really change in the future. In Meijer’s view a European public space “cannot be organized by the European Union”. If the EU tries to, that space will be artificial and limited to a small group of people”.

3.4.6 Conclusion
On many issues the SP speaks with one voice and it is difficult to find dissenting views. This fits in the party tradition of closure and strict discipline. In essence the SP is nationally oriented and European issues are certainly not among the important ones for the party. Migration issues receive more attention, because this has more relevance for SP supporters.

In the 1980s the SP was one of the first parties to take a strong position towards migrants and their integration in Dutch society. Migrants should either choose to live in the Netherlands and integrate in Dutch society or return to their country of origin. In both cases they should be supported by the Dutch government. Since the 1980s the position of the SP has not changed much. The party still thinks that migrants, who choose to live in the Netherlands, must adapt. They must learn the Dutch language and learn about Dutch customs and traditions. The SP wants to distribute migrants spatially, in order to prevent segregation, mono-ethnic neighbourhoods and schools, and all the problems that are associated with these. For the SP the (local) government is a very important actor in the field of integration, but
integration policies have failed so far. What has been achieved has been realised by people themselves. The SP does not support separate institutions for migrants. Meijer makes a distinction between the position of national minorities and migrant minorities. He expects the latter to integrate in the society they live in. National minorities should not be suppressed and forced to adapt to the majority.

The SP is against promoting (labour) migration. Migration stems from differences in income and welfare and leads to situations in which people are prepared to work and live under conditions that are not acceptable for the party. Migration has also another negative aspect: a brain drain from developing countries. This is another reason why migration should not be encouraged according to the SP. The party also does not support European initiatives to come to a common migration policy, such as the European Blue Card. In the view of the SP freedom of movement for EU citizens has caused many problems on the labour market and therefore it should be limited. Although the SP does not support policies for labour migration, it makes an exception for refugees. The EU should be open to refugees and the party proposes a generous admission policy. Although the party sees the advantages of a common European asylum policy, the current results are not good enough.

The ideas of the SP about Dutch citizenship seem somewhat underdeveloped. The party does not go further than that it should be easier to obtain Dutch nationality. Although the party does not prefer people to have more than one nationality, its deals with it in a pragmatic way by stating that it is not an issue of importance. For the SP EU citizenship is just a reality on paper that does not have real value for people.

The SP is somewhat ambivalent towards enlargement of the European Union. In the past the party was against the accession of the Central and Eastern European states, but eventually supported the accession. In the case of Romania and Bulgaria, when the effects of the 2004 enlargement had become clear, the SP voted against accession. With regard to enlargement the SP in general underlined the aspect of free movement of labour and the problems this would cause on the (Dutch) labour market. At present further enlargement has no priority for the SP. The party has not come up with a very thorough, univocally expressed idea of where the EU should head for, which it does for topics that have priority. The party is probably even internally divided about it as is reflected in the shifting positions towards accession of the Balkan countries and Meijer’s dissenting opinion about future accession of other countries. The proposal for a referendum, which in practice will be an extra barrier for accession of new states, is a sign that the party is not planning to support future enlargements fervently, although in words it does support enlargement of candidate countries that meet the Copenhagen criteria.

Complete harmonisation of policies at the EU level does not receive support from the SP, because it leaves too little room for action by national states. SP representatives are proponents of building in more guarantees for national parliaments in the EU Reform Treaty and they are in favour of decentralisation. For Van Bommel it is important that the EU first becomes more like a community of values before it continues deepening or broadening. Meijer has a dissenting view on the position of regions within the EU. He proposes a bottom-up approach of the EU with people building up their region in Europe. This will also be a better guarantee for the position of minorities.

During the interview Meijer explained that there are two ways for the SP to deal with the EU. Meijer himself focussed “on the organisations that are affected by what is happening on the European level. They see that they cannot solve certain problems in the Netherlands and want to address these on the European level.” He puts his energy in “being present at the debates in interested circles to present alternatives”. On the other hand Meijer sees “voters, who do not have a single idea of what Europe is doing and who also don’t want to have
anything to do with it”. From that perspective he thinks the SP has “to capitalize on the feeling that Europe is patronising, ridiculous and far away.” He seems not at ease with the latter approach, which the SP chose during the last election campaign. Meijer, although he is still critical about European issues, seems to have (developed) dissenting views about European cooperation, having to deal with this on a daily basis.

About the existence of a European public sphere the ideas within the SP are univocal: There is no European public sphere. Noteworthy is Meijer’s remark that “it is extremely tempting and attractive to do those things that do attract attention, but contribute less to the decision making processes in the Union.” This shows a discomfort with the lack of attention for the work of the members of the European Parliament in the national states and endorses Meijer’s view that a European public sphere does not exist.

3.5 GroenLinks

3.5.1 Introduction

GroenLinks (GreenLeft) is with seven seats in the House of Representatives the sixth largest (and the sixth smallest) Dutch political party. It was founded in 1990 as a merger of four leftist, pacifist and progressive parties: Pacifistische Socialistische Partij (PSP, Pacifist Socialist Party), Politieke Partij Radicalen (PPR, Political Party Radicals), Communistische Partij Nederland (CPN, Dutch Communist party), and Evangelische Volkspartij (EVP, Evangelic People’s Party). After several separate attempts of cooperation through electoral alliances on both the national and the local level, the four parties decided to merge into a new party. The political climate of the eighties had led to a diminished number members and voters of the respective parties’. Some of the parties had already disappeared from Parliament and felt only a merger could prevent them from dissolution. Beside this surviving strategy, the parties also felt an urge to work together on both an ideological and a practical basis (Lucardie et al. 1999: 42`, 103-104).

After several disappointing election results in its first years GroenLinks developed as a more or less mature opposition party. The fact that CDA did not get used to its new role as opposition, created possibilities for GroenLinks to become a well-heard opposition party. In the 1998 elections the party got eleven seats in Parliament, but in 2002 the political climate changed drastically which is one of the reasons why GroenLinks lost several seats, and ended up with the seven seats it has today (Parlement en politiek 2009; Lucardie et al. 1999: 162).

The Program van uitgangspunten (program of principles) published in 1991, is seen as the constitution of the party (Lucardie et al. 1999: 129-131). Unlike other European green parties GroenLinks is not rooted in the environmental movement and after its foundation it was expected that ‘red’ issues would prevail over ‘green’ politics. That indeed was the case with the programs of the mother parties. However, in the election program of 1989 an identical number of pages were spent on green and red politics. Today, GroenLinks presents itself as a progressive and environmental party and reaches a foremost intellectual, leftist public. It increasingly includes elements of social-liberalism in its views. The main issues of the party according to its starting points are to pursue green politics, and to strive for social justice, green values, emancipation and individual development.

3.5.2 Organisation

GroenLinks’ party structure does not deviate much from other party organisations in the Netherlands: party members are foremost member of local units, which operate relatively autonomous. The party congress is the highest decision making body (Lucardie et al. 1999: 147-148). The party tends to be open and transparent, which appears from the wide range of
information on diverse issues that is available on the party’s website (GroenLinks 2009d; Parlement en politiek 2009). GroenLinks generally supports all kinds of petitions and extraparliamentary actions are highly valued (Lucardie et al. 1999: 141-142). The party leader since 2002, when her predecessor Rosenmöller resigned, is Femke Halsema (1966) who is fairly popular among many (young) party members. She is an MP since May 1998 and prior to that she worked as a social scientist for the PvdA’s scientific bureau.

In the European Parliament GroenLinks is represented in the European Greens / European Free Alliance, that was founded in 1999 and consists of “Greens” and “representatives of stateless nations and disadvantaged minorities” (The Greens/European Free Alliance 2009b). The European party stands for “fundamental human rights and environmental justice”. With currently 43 MEP’s from fourteen countries it is the fifth group in the European Parliament37 (The Greens/European Free Alliance 2009a; Parlement en politiek 2009).

GroenLinks has a youth organisation, called Dwars, a name which amongst others refers to going against the grain and being obstructionist. Its aims are (in the long run) to change the world into a sustainable, free and – above all – just place (Dwars 2009). Formally Dwars is independent from GroenLinks and wants to be critical towards it, but agrees on many of its standpoints. Both organisations are intertwined to a certain extent in a practical sense (e.g. office work) and Dwars’ chairman attends GroenLinks parliamentary party meetings in which Dwars’ opinion is taken into account. Originally, Dwars had an anarchistic character, but gradually shifted its focus towards parliamentary issues and is nowadays more moderate-minded than in the first years of its existence. With the 2009 European elections in sight, Dwars is much engaged in European issues, which is stimulated by the MEP candidacy of one of its board members (who however has not been elected). Dwars is a member of the Federation of Young European Greens (FYEG) through which it cooperates with other European sister organisations.

Interviewee Mrs Naima Azough (1972) has been MP since May 2002 (with absence between January 2003 and March 2004) and is the party’s spokesperson on Justice, Police and Alien’s Affairs. Azough studied English and German, and is of Moroccan origin and a Muslim. Prior to her political career she worked in the cultural-political sector (GroenLinks 2009d).

Mrs Kathalijne Buitenweg (1970) was a Member of the European Parliament between 1999 and 2009. She was a member of the Commission for Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs. Before Buitenweg became a member of the EP, she worked as an assistant to the GroenLinks delegates in both the European Parliament and the Dutch House of Representatives.

The interviewee that took part on behalf of Dwars is Mr Diederik ten Cate (1989). He has been a board member since October 2007, first as political secretary and since October 2008 he has had the function of vice president (internationaal secretaris). Ten Cate is a student of political sciences.

3.5.3 Integration and immigration

Immigrant integration has been subject to discussion for many years within the party. Already in the mother parties immigrant emancipation was formulated as a point of concern, although by then it was strongly driven by the ideology to overcome exploitation by the capitalist system. Migrants were seen as a ‘suppressed group’ that needed protection. They shared their position with other groups, such as women, homosexuals, youth and disabled. Since

37 Until the 2009 EP elections.
GroenLinks’ foundation the issue of the multicultural society took a prominent place in election programs. Where the old parties talked about ‘emancipation’, GroenLinks formulated the problem more in terms of ‘integration’ and also focused on less idealistic and more instrumentalist goals, such as education, work, and removing arrears in language and education (Fermin 1997b: 113). In 2001 GroenLinks reflected on its position towards immigrants and concluded that it had focused too much on the socio-economic position of immigrants, through which their cultural position seemed to have been forgotten. Furthermore, it was stressed that the recognition of cultural differences should lead to social cohesion instead of to dividedness between different ethnic groups (Pas 2001).

In its current position towards integration GroenLinks stresses the importance to “emancipate”, to “participate”, and to “enhance one’s opportunities by learning Dutch”. Furthermore, the party states that “the multicultural society is a reality” and that it “makes no sense to fight it” (GroenLinks 2009c). Naima Azough acknowledges that the process of integration “may go hand in hand with conflicts”, but that “both sides need to make their contribution: migrant communities in the Netherlands need to realize that it is not always easy for the receiving society to see the country change (...); while [in the host society] there should be some sense of reality that society is changing due to immigration”.

About the conditions under which integration should take place Azough states: “it is essential (...) that you feel at home in the country you live in. To speak the language, to attend school and to know the society, are in my opinion part of that.” Buitenweg explains how the government should act by: “if needed, informing people in their own language as long as they do not have a sufficient command of Dutch”. Although GroenLinks in general is reluctant vis-à-vis measures that are forced upon by the government, both Buitenweg and Azough advocate a clear government position towards migrants. Buitenweg puts this as: “the government needs to formulate clear demands to make sure that people learn Dutch quickly”; Azough amplifies: “a certain level of compulsion can be in place, especially if it concerns language education”.

GroenLinks is critical about special arrangements for migrants (doelgroepenbeleid) because of unwanted side effects, such as dependency on the system and stigmatization. The party states that although such side effects are inevitable within the process of emancipation, policy measures need to be judged separately upon efficacy (Fermin 1997b: 118). Furthermore, on the party’s website the emancipation and participation of the individual (instead of groups) is emphasized (GroenLinks 2009c). Azough explains how she sees this matter:

“Integration policy based on certain categories can be useful, for example concerning teenage mothers. One needs to look at the specific group and adjust the policy to that. A group is characterized by specific preferences, but these are not everlasting, so to speak. Therefore, it is not right to take those preferences for granted. (...) I am not against every single form of category policy, but I look critically at it.”

Buitenweg fills in: “I do not like the idea of thinking in terms of groups. For me it is important that individuals know how to participate in society”.

Concerning diversity GroenLinks advocates the right for people to make their own choices “you may choose [to wear] a headscarf, a three-piece suit or a pink triangle” and therefore values diversity highly. Amongst GroenLinks (and PvdA) politicians there have always been relatively many minority representatives compared to other political parties in the Netherlands (Trouw 1993). This, however, brought the party on several occasions in an
awkward position, e.g. with the Tara Singh Varma-affair\(^{38}\) (Tros Opgelicht 2001), and Sam Pormes\(^{39}\) (Parlement en politiek 2009), after which the party decided to screen minority representative candidates more thoroughly (Plasterk 2002).

The party’s general point of view on migration is rather liberal and humane: to GroenLinks, refugees or asylum seekers do – above all – have the right to protection. In addition, all processes of admittance or rejection should be quick and transparent. In order to avoid illegal migration and illegal residence, rejected asylum seekers should not be thrown out on the streets. GroenLinks does not agree on additional requirements for admittance of family migrants, such as obligatory incorporation tests in sending countries (GroenLinks 2009c). Although migration is seen as a human right, GroenLinks acknowledges the necessity to regulate it. The party also wants to improve the situation in sending countries, in particular by reducing brain drain. **Azough** illustrates the party’s view on migration:

> “We see migration as a natural phenomenon and the logical need of people to strive for a better future elsewhere. That does not alter the fact that migration needs to take place as structured as possible. (…) If we consider the current situation, we observe too little opportunities for legal migration, which inevitably leads to illegality, human smuggling and abuse of legal migration and the asylum system. Therefore, it would be better to provide a broader frame of reference in which we are better able to arrange labour migration, not only for skilled migrants but also for lower skilled ones.”

In an internal report that appeared in 1999 GroenLinks advocated a set of minimal standards concerning asylum migration. Key point in the report was to minimize the so-called race to the bottom, i.e. the competitive attitude between member states to take in as little refugees as possible. Although then it was seen as much too early and therefore not realistic to come to the creation of one single European asylum procedure, those minimum standards would at least guarantee some basic rights for asylum seekers (GroenLinks 1999). Only ten years later such minimum standards are being realized, but to great dissatisfaction of the party, i.e. being far too minimal. In the 2009 EP election program the party advocates more harmonization between member states’ asylum policies, and stresses that Europe needs to monitor asylum within its borders. However, it does not go so far as mentioning a common European asylum policy (GroenLinks 2009b). **Buitenweg** tells how she changed her views with respect to asylum:

> “Part of the problem [of a European asylum policy] is that we often set certain minimum standards for it. Previously, I supported this idea, because individual member states can apply higher standards. The disadvantage of the idea is that in the debates about it critics are put to silence by the argument that individual countries always have the possibility to raise the standards. The final result is that all member states make use of lower standards in order to prevent them from becoming Europe’s waste-pipe. (…) My conclusion would be that we need a real European asylum policy system instead of these arrangements with minimum standards.”

\(^{38}\) This GroenLinks politician of Surinamese-Hindustan descent claimed to suffer from terminal cancer, which turned out to be untrue.

\(^{39}\) This Moluccan GroenLinks member of the Senate was contested because of non-transparency about his past and alleged connections with the 1977 Moluccan train hijackers.
According to the party’s standpoints labour migrants from within the EU are free to work in the Netherlands, like Dutch citizens are allowed to work in other EU countries. Not only highly educated and skilled labour migrants should be admitted (temporarily), but GroenLinks states that there also should be possibilities for lower skilled migrants. However, labour migrants should only have access to the Dutch labour market, as long as this market can process new labour force. Therefore, the development of the so-called ‘Blue Card’, a temporary EU work permit, should have a broader target group than only the currently designated knowledge workers. Furthermore all labour migrants should have access to basic facilities such as education and healthcare (GroenLinks 2009c).

GroenLinks sees a role for the EU in regulating irregular migration in a humane way. Illegal migrants should have the right to get legalized when they are able to prove they have been residing within the EU for a certain period or time, for example five years (GroenLinks 1999). Azough adds that our economy depends on illegal migrants, because “without illegal aliens one can ask oneself who is doing the dishes in our restaurants and who will take care of the children in many double-income households.” Apart from that, Azough recognizes the importance to “protect our own labour market”.

Diederik Ten Cate of youth organisation Dwars agrees with Azough whenever it concerns migration in a European perspective: he also supports a “European harmonization in asylum policy” in order to “arrange it in a more humane way”. But above all he emphasizes the “prevention of brain drain”:

“I think the most important thing is to avoid brain drain. This is a very big problem because it damages the development in those countries severely. One needs to view it per country. Imagine, we do have a shortage of doctors and start recruiting doctors in South Africa, while they are also badly needed over there. In this case it makes sense to me to construct some regulation to prevent those doctors from coming to Europe, even if it seems fair to give equal access to all.”

Ten Cate’s citation not only reflects the ideological principles of Dwars, but also expresses that Dwars gives more priority to the prevention of brain drain than to rights such as equal access to all.

3.5.4 Citizenship

GroenLinks is not very outspoken on the subject of Dutch nationality. The party expects newcomers in Dutch society to do several things when they choose to live in the Netherlands. Learning the language is the most important one of these (GroenLinks 2009d), but the party does not consider this as a criterion for obtaining the Dutch nationality. Buitenweg is more specific and thinks it is evident that children of Dutch parents are Dutch as well. She does not want to link receiving the Dutch nationality to passing the incorporation test:

“I think it is good to have incorporation courses and tests. (…) I am less positive about the idea of linking these to nationality. I wonder whether someone, who has not passed the course, is an inferior citizen by definition. I do not think a test is a good criterion.”

Ten Cate seems liberal towards granting Dutch citizenship and thinks there is “no need to apply strict requirements”. At the same time, however, he is aware that citizenship is linked to
certain social rights and thinks that “people should not become Dutch to profit from our social services”.

Holding multiple citizenships should not be prohibited according to GroenLinks. People who cannot give up one of their nationalities due to legal obstacles should not be forced to do so. Having multiple nationalities is no obstacle to participation in Dutch society (GroenLinks 2009d). In the past GroenLinks saw a role for the European Union in the field of multiple citizenships. The party stated that the European Union should actually promote holding multiple citizenships as a recognition of the fact that more and more people have transnational identities (Partijbestuur GroenLinks 2004: 59). The 2009 electoral programme, however, does not mention the issue any longer and this view seems to have been abandoned. Ten Cate’s comments are in line with this:

“We have been speaking about encouraging holding multiple citizenships, but I am not really a proponent. I see practical difficulties. (…) I do not have a problem with people holding multiple nationalities, but it is not a good thing by definition.”

Buitenweg finds “it preferable for people to hold the Dutch nationality” in addition to their old nationality, because it is a “sign of solidarity and because of the rights that people have when they are Dutch”. She does not want people “to renounce their origin by renouncing their nationality”.

GroenLinks is progressive in its view of who should have European citizenship and what rights are linked to it. Already soon after EU citizenship was officially created, the party pleaded for EU citizenship to be open to migrants (GroenLinks 1996: 43). However, the party did not specify to which migrants it should be open. In 2004 GroenLinks stated that third country nationals and stateless persons should receive European citizenship after three years of legal residence in the EU. This EU citizenship included the right to freedom of movement and voting rights at the local and European level. Furthermore, the EU should encourage the legalisation of illegal migrants who have been self-supporting and have never been convicted for serious crimes (Partijbestuur GroenLinks 2004: 57). In 2009 the party seems to have moderated its views. It no longer pleads for the legalisation of illegal migrants and the period after which legal migrants should receive the same rights as EU-citizens is extended to five years. A new proposal is that EU citizens living in another EU country should receive additional rights, namely voting rights for elections on the national and provincial level (GroenLinks 2009a: 27). Buitenweg explains who should be eligible for European citizenship:

“We have argued that people [migrants, citizens of EU member states who are excluded from certain rights] after a while, for example five years, should receive European citizenship. (…) It could be based on the fact that people have been living here for years. This does not need to be an automatism, but people can ask for it. Now, there are groups who fall between two stools. Rights, like the right to vote, can get people involved in society. And moreover, why should people who have been paying tax for more than five years not be represented?”

Azough is not optimistic about a direct form of EU citizenship. She sees problems in the way EU citizenship is assigned and what it implies:
“I am not against direct European citizenship, but I wonder whether this would lead to too much bureaucracy. (…) For highly skilled migrants, there should be possibilities to move internally within Europe, to work elsewhere and to use the services and rights that come with it. (…) Formally, the principle of nationality is reserved for states and it is a very sensitive issue. What does European citizenship mean in the legal sense? I fear for symbolic policies: ‘You are a European, but what does it mean?’”

3.5.5 European Union

GroenLinks is a pro-European party, but over the years it has also been critical of EU policies and the way the EU is functioning. Programmes for the EP elections cover many issues often with detailed policy proposals. The party has a strong believe that the European Union can work, especially in the fields of environment, energy, poverty reduction and world wide solidarity.

Already in 1990 GroenLinks pleaded for a treaty of basic rights. The party was a proponent of the proposed Constitutional Treaty and took the initiative to organise a referendum, although it did have objections to the proposals. GroenLinks has always underlined the need for democratic reform, e.g. more power for the European Parliament and less for the European Council. The general tendency within the Netherlands not to define a clear goal for European integration can also be found within GroenLinks. The party does not support a clear ‘final destination’, although it has the ideal of the EU as a peace and democracy supporting world power. Buitenweg:

“There is no need to define Europe. People like to have a sort of theoretical concept that fits exactly to Europe. Europe is a mess. It is partly based on states and partly on a people. It is torn between two ideas.”

Buitenweg explains that further integration could be achieved via groups of countries taking the lead in further cooperation. However, for her “the goal must be to have as many member states taking part as possible”. Buitenweg thinks that “a large disadvantage of fixed leading groups is democratic control: ‘Who is taking decisions?’”. Whether an issue should be dealt with at the European level depends on the topic. Buitenweg:

“You cannot arrange everything on the European level. Things that can be well arranged at the national level, should be done there. In other fields more or better European cooperation is necessary, for example in foreign policy, migration and environment. Those are the pillars for European decisions. In other fields distinctions may stay.”

GroenLinks has been a long time advocate of EU enlargement. Already in 1990 the party expressed its concerns about the focus of the European Communities on integration at the expense of enlargement (Tweede Kamerfractie Groen Links & Groen Links in de EG 1990). In 1993 GroenLinks stated that the then EG had committed itself to full membership of Turkey in earlier treaties (Tweede Kamerfractie Groen Links & Groen Links in de EG 1990: 58). Furthermore, the party finds it necessary to state explicitly that the EU is not an exclusively Christian project (GroenLinks 2009a: 23; Partijbestuur GroenLinks 2004: 15). Although GroenLinks has always been optimistic about enlargement, it does not deny that
there have been difficulties in the enlargement rounds so far. Countries that want to accede have to meet some criteria (Partijbestuur GroenLinks 2004: 15).

According to GroenLinks four criteria are important in the decision whether a country can join the EU. New member states should keep up to European laws; have stable institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and minority rights. A country cannot be too big, as would be the case with Russia, because relations will be distorted. Accession should not result in tensions among the population or with neighbouring countries. And finally a geographical criterion: the EU cannot cross the Mediterranean (GroenLinks 2009d).

Ten Cate explains that to accede to the European Union “a country must lie in Europe and meet the Copenhagen criteria”. This last point is a serious issue, because membership should “not be offered just to be nice to a country”. In Ten Cate’s eyes holding a referendum about accession, as the French president Sarkozy has suggested in the case of Turkey, after negotiations have started is not fair, because “when you have started accession negotiations, you have to keep to that”. Azough adds that “respect for minority rights in a country”, “to what extend a country complies with international treaties” and how “it is dealing with corruption”, are also import aspects in the decision whether a country is ready to accede to the EU or not.

Buitenweg explains that Switzerland and Norway are welcome to join the EU. The Balkan countries and Turkey have been made promises to and they can also accede, if they qualify. To do so, Turkey has to change seriously. Buitenweg is careful about future enlargement of the EU:

“We do not want to make further promises, although it is tempting to make them, because it has a stabilizing effect and can help the opposition. As soon as you mention a date, the EU has to enlarge at that point; otherwise it will lead to deception and economic problems. It is much too early to see whether further enlargements are a good plan.”

Looking back at the last round of enlargement, Buitenweg is quite positive. Although “the accession of Romania and Bulgaria was more difficult than that of the other ten” and “they still do not meet the requirements completely”, she believes that “the mechanisms of correction are set in motion”. For her it is too early to judge whether accession was a failure or not. Buitenweg points out that rejecting Romania and Bulgaria would probably have resulted in “massive withdrawal of investments and that could have resulted in much instability”. She thinks the question of enlargement “is not that easy”.

3.5.6 European public sphere

In general, GroenLinks thinks there should be more debates on Europe and European policy. One of its proposals was to realise a European TV-channel (Partijbestuur GroenLinks 2004: 59). Buitenweg thinks that “there is not really a single European public space”, but she sees things developing. She notices that “in the European Parliament a well-organized lobby is present”, but for her a public space is more than that. “In a public space discussions on culture should take place as well and that is only happening in a very limited way yet.” Ten Cate has some suggestions to make Europe more attractive:

“One of the ways to encourage a European feeling is to create European politics, for example via a president of the EU chosen by the citizens. Then you will have discussion
and European politics. If you democratise Europe more, you will have more public
debate, more media attention and you can create a feeling for Europe. (...) I think that [a
European public sphere] is more for the elite. I wish that more people would have the
feeling that they are part of it. (...) The European sphere is there, but for me it may be
extended much, much more.”

Azough also recognizes that a European public sphere is developing, especially among young
and higher educated people, who are interested in what is happening in other countries. She
also sees a tendency to connect among immigrants throughout Europe:

“A European Diaspora is developing, for example of Turks or Moroccans living in
different countries. (...) They are in contacts with each other. I think it is underestimated
how much a European character is developing there. (...) These communities are still
very much focussing on their country of origin, but both for the government and these
communities it would be interesting to find out what you can achieve on the European
level.”

3.5.7 Conclusion
Starting as an idealistic merger party in the 1990s with people from diverging political
backgrounds, over the years GroenLinks has grown more pragmatic towards many issues.
Although diverging opinions still appear, rivalling strands within the party are not as present
as they used to be. Youth organisation Dwars stands out as somewhat more idealistic than
GroenLinks, but has also grown more pragmatic. In general views of the respondents who
participated in the Eurosphere project did not differ strongly from each other or from the
official party position.

GroenLinks is a party that promotes and encourages diversity. Since its foundation the
party has included migrants and other minorities in its organisation. This eagerness to include
minorities has in some cases resulted in being not critical enough in attracting candidates,
which led to several incidents. GroenLinks has always had attention for migration and the
position of migrants. Initially focussing on socio-economic aspects of integration, the party
now has also more attention for cultural aspects. GroenLinks stresses that for successful
integration speaking Dutch is very important and expects migrants to learn the language. In
line with its individualistic approach GroenLinks prefers to treat migrants as individuals and
not as a group.

For GroenLinks migration is a natural phenomenon that cannot be halted, but which can
and should be regulated. Migration policy should create more opportunities for regular
migration. For GroenLinks this policy area needs to be dealt with at the European level and
the party supports a European migration policy. However, in its view the current set of
European regulations is too minimal. Migration policy should not just focus on highly-skilled
labour migrants, which happened in the case of the European Blue Card. For GroenLinks
refugees and asylum seekers should always have the right to protection. In the past the party
has supported the legalisation of irregular migrants who lived in the EU for a certain period,
but this view seems to be abandoned.

GroenLinks does not hold a strong view on the acquisition of Dutch nationality. The
party does not oppose people having more than one nationality, but finds it preferable for
people living in the Netherlands to hold the Dutch nationality in addition to their original
nationality. During the years GroenLinks has shifted from clearly propagating holding
multiple nationalities to not discouraging it. Besides being open to the nationals of EU member states, for GroenLinks EU citizenship could be open to others, for example migrants or minorities. Over the years the period that these migrants should be (legally) living in the EU before they can receive EU citizenship has been lengthened. Member of the European Parliament Buitenweg is more progressive in her view on EU citizenship than parliamentarian Azough, who has some reservations.

GroenLinks is a pro-European party, although in its view the EU needs institutional reform. Despite its objections the party supported the Constitutional Treaty, because it was an improvement to the prior situation. Whether an issue should be dealt with at the European level depends on the topic. For GroenLinks formation of leading groups could have advantages, for example in the field of foreign policy, migration and environment, though the party also has some reservations.

Countries joining the EU must meet the Copenhagen criteria. For GroenLinks other relevant criteria are that accession does not lead to tensions and that the country is not too large, which would be the case for Russia. Furthermore, the EU should not cross the Mediterranean. The party does not want to make promises about new accessions other than those of the countries that already are candidates or have been made promises to. For Dwars member Ten Cate accession to the EU is something very serious and membership should not be offered easily.

GroenLinks thinks that a European public sphere is still very limited, although it is developing. The party is positive about debates on Europe and European policies and wants to stimulate these. Azough mentioned the development of a European character in transnational migrant communities.

3.6 VVD

3.6.1 Organisation

The Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie (People’s Party for Freedom and Democracy, VVD) is a liberal party that was founded in 1948. The VVD united several pre- and post-war liberal parties. From the start, the VVD took part in many post-war coalitions. In the first decades of its existence, the VVD was a market liberal party with a largely upper class constituency. This changed when the young, charismatic and somewhat populist Hans Wiegel became party leader in 1972. Wiegel managed to transform the VVD into a real ‘people’s party’. With his talent to phrase matters in simple language he attracted many working and middle class voters. The transformation of the VVD was aided substantially by the process of ‘depillarisation’ (see §3.1.1 & §3.2 on ‘pillars’ and (de)pillarisation), which increased the pool of voters that were (no longer) linked to the traditional Protestant, Catholic and Social-Democrat ‘pillars’ (Te Velde 2008: 42-43).

For the VVD, the eighties were a period with several leadership changes and declining electoral success, until Frits Bolkestein became party leader in 1990. Bolkestein managed to put many, often touchy, issues on the political agenda, of which European integration and admission and integration policies are the most relevant for this study. This brought relatively

40 “The VVD was founded on 24 January 1948. There had been liberal parties in the Netherlands before that time: for example, in the years before the Second World War there were the Liberale Staatspartij (Liberal National Party), [between 1924 and 1938] also known as De Vrijheidsbond (Freedom League), and the Vrijzinnig Democratische Bond (Liberal [Freethinking] Democratic League). From 1946 to 1948 there was the Partij van de Vrijheid (Freedom Party), which can be regarded as the forerunner of the VVD. In 1948 supporters and sympathisers of these parties established the VVD. Dirk Stikker, later secretary general of NATO, chaired the Partij van de Vrijheid and was the first chairman of the VVD” (VVD 2009).
large electoral successes, with an all-time high of 38 seats (24.7%) in the 1998 elections, and further broadened the electoral base of the party. Part of that success was due to Bolkestein’s strategy to stay a Member of the House of Representatives, and to ‘oppose’ the cabinet in which his party participated from that position (Te Velde 2008: 48-49).

In 1998, Bolkestein became European Commissioner and left Dutch politics. His successor Hans Dijkstal had a more progressive-liberal view on immigration and kept a much lower profile on the issue. In the 2002 elections, the VVD lost heavily. The Dutch elections of 2002 were quite extreme in the sense that the accumulated loss of all parties was 30.7%, an all-time high in Dutch parliamentary history and the fourth most volatile elections in Western Europe since 1900 (Ellemers 2002). The main factor behind this political landslide was the emergence and murder of Pim Fortuyn; his party LPF (see §3.1.2) debuted with 17.3% of the votes (Ellemers 2002). Of all parties, the VVD lost most to the LPF: one third of the LPF voters had voted VVD in the 1998 elections. The main reason to vote LPF were Fortuyn’s views on aliens, integration and crime (Hippe et al. 2002). After the lost elections, Hans Dijkstal left politics.

A period of turmoil and internal struggle followed, in which the immigration issue turned out to be a stumbling block. In 2004, Member of Parliament Geert Wilders left the VVD, mainly because of a manifesto which meant to guide the VVD in a more conservative-liberal direction. This manifesto contained strong views on issues like crime and development aid. The breaking point was the fact that Wilders did not want to revoke his statement that Turkey should never become member of the EU (Hippe et al. 2004). Besides that, also personal tensions between Wilders and party leader Jozias van Aartsen played a role. After his departure, Wilders founded the nowadays successful Party For Freedom (PVV, see §3.1.2). In 2007, another split in the party occurred, and Rita Verdonk left to found her own political movement Proud of the Netherlands (ToN, see §3.7). Again, immigration turned out to be a stumbling block, though also Verdonks aspirations to become party leader were a factor in her removal. The VVD seems to have overcome most of the internal struggles, but there is still (official) criticism on the leadership of current party leader Mark Rutte (Lucardie & Voerman 2007: 64), and the VVD is not doing well in the polls either (15 seats or 10.1% of the votes on 27 August 2009, see: Synovate 2009).

The Jongeren Organisatie Vrijheid en Democratie (Youth Organisation for Freedom and Democracy, JOVD) was founded in 1949 on initiative of the VVD party (Habben Jansen 1994: 13). In the early period, the JOVD did not interfere much with internal VVD affairs and there was only sporadic contact between the two organizations (Habben Jansen 1994: 27). The position of the JOVD was quite independent and when the more leftist liberal party D66 was founded, many JOVD-members sympathised with the new party, and some even wanted to cooperate (Habben Jansen 1994: 48-49). This very independent position came to an end in 2000, when a new Political Parties Subsidies Act43 more or less forced the JOVD to ally with the VVD. Despite the more official alliance with the VVD, according to JOVD chairman Jeroen Diepemaat – interviewed for the research – there is still ample room to differ from the ‘official party line’. There is another important link between the VVD and the JOVD; the

41 The emergence of the LPF must also be seen in the light of a more general trend in which the large moderate parties at the centre of the political spectrum lose voters to their more outspoken and extreme counterparts, most notably, the PvdA (labour) loses to the more leftwing SP (Socialist Party), the VVD (liberals) to the more rightwing PVV of Geert Wilders and the CDA (Christian democrats) to the more orthodox CU (Christian Union), also compare §3.1.2.
42 Interview with Patrick van Schie.
43 Wet van 17 mei 1999, houdende regeling van de subsidiëring van politieke partijen (Wet subsidiëring politieke partijen).
latter counts as a ‘breeding ground’ for political talent, and many leading politicians of the VVD (and some other parties too) are former members of the JOVD.

The Teldersstichting (Telders Foundation) is a liberal think tank founded in 1954, since 1972 affiliated with the VVD, but independent. Its mission is to “scientifically investigate issues of societal importance, in particular issues of juridical, economical, social and political character, with the liberal principles as a starting point, in order to further liberalism in general, and partly in the service of the VVD” (Teldersstichting 2009). Its scientific output consists of written reports and (pre)advices. The Teldersstichting has a scientific staff of four people. Like the scientific bureaus of other parties, it is funded by the state via the VVD according to the Political Parties Subsidies Act. The current director of the Teldersstichting is Patrick van Schie, who has been interviewed for the research.

Finally, the Liberaal Vrouwen Netwerk (Liberal Women Network, LVN) is a sub-organisation within the VVD that aims at increasing political awareness and participation of (liberal) women (VVD 2009).

**Interviewees**

Han ten Broeke (1969) has been an MP since 2006 and is the VVD specialist on European affairs. Between 1992 and 1996, he worked for the VVD as a political assistant for MP and later Minister of the Interior Annemarie Jorritsma. In between (1996-2006), he worked for KPN (a Dutch telecommunications company) and owned a consultancy company. Finally, Ten Broeke has been active within the JOVD for many years from 1985 onward.

Jeroen Diepemaat has been the Chairman of the VVD youth branch JOVD since 2007. He studies Public Administration at Twente University, the Netherlands. He also works for the VVD faction in the municipality of Enschede.

Hans Dijkstal (1943) was an MP for the VVD between 1982 and 2002, with the exception of the period 1994-1998, when he served as Minister of the Interior and vice Prime Minister. He was also the VVD party leader between 1998 and 2002. Dijkstal left active politics in 2002. After his departure, he became very critical towards VVD policies regarding immigrants and was one of the founders of Een Land, Een Samenleving (One Country, One Society), an organisation of former politicians and civil servants that strives for a more tolerant society.

Jan Franssen (1951) has been the Queen’s Commissioner of the province of South Holland since 2000. Franssen is also Chairman of the Supervisory Board of Forum (See §4.4). Franssen started his career within the VVD as an advisor to former party leader Hans Wiegel. He was also a Member and Vice-President of the House of Representatives (1982-1994) and mayor of Zwolle (1994-2000).


Henk Kamp (1952) was an MP for the VVD between 1994 and 2008, with the exception of the period 2002-2006 when he served as the Minister of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment and as Minister of Defence. As an MP, Kamp was spokesman on immigration and integration issues. Currently, he is the Commissioner for Bonaire, St. Eustatius and Saba, three of the islands of the Dutch Antilles.

Patrick van Schie (1964) has been director of the Teldersstichting, the scientific bureau of the VVD, since 2001. He worked for the bureau as a researcher since 1991. As such, he (co)authored many publications and was co-editor of a book on the history of the VVD party (Van Schie & Voerman 2008).
3.6.2 Immigration and integration issues

Immigration and integration have been very important issues for the VVD since former party leader Frits Bolkestein problematised certain aspects of ‘Islamic culture’ in relation to certain ‘unnegotiable western values’ in 1991 (see §3.1.2, 3.6). After the turn of the century, the VVD came under the leadership of the relatively left-leaning party leader Hans Dijkstal, and lost ‘issue-ownership’ to the LPF of Pim Fortuyn. During the period 2002-2006, the VVD managed to ‘reclaim the issue’ to a certain extent, due to the actions of VVD-spokesman Henk Kamp and former VVD Minister of Alien Affairs and Integration, Rita Verdonk, who both championed much stricter admission and integration policies. As already mentioned, differences in view on immigration and integration issues within the VVD – together with other factors – caused a split in the party twice and led to the foundation of Rita Verdonks ToN in 2007 (§3.7) and the Party For Freedom of Geert Wilders in 2006 (§3.1.2). At the moment, especially Wilders’ PVV seems to dominate the issue.

In 2007, spokesman on immigration and integration matters Henk Kamp, in collaboration with the VVD-faction in the House of Representatives, wrote *Immigration and Integration* (*Immigratie en Integratie*) (VVD 2007a), which is the central VVD policy document on the issue and will form the basis for our discussion in the next two subparagraphs. According to this document, immigration policy should be very restrictive. Dutch admission policies were too lenient for too long and “irresponsibly large numbers of disadvantaged immigrants from non-western countries have been allowed into the Netherlands” (VVD 2007a: 2). Permanent settlement and chain migration were unconditional and ‘too easy’ for those immigrants. “Cultural differences, a low level of education and insufficient mastery of the [Dutch] language” give many non-western immigrants a bad starting position (VVD 2007a: 3). This leads to many problems like high unemployment and dependency on social benefits, low educational attainment and labour participation, high (juvenile) crime and many ‘problematic families’. Those problems are by and large reproduced in the second and third generation. The VVD is making a direct link with the extensive Dutch welfare state and the poverty trap: “No hard demands regarding integration were made towards those immigrants. Work was unnecessary. Those who did work didn’t gain from it financially. Good [social] housing, healthcare, education (…) and good care for the elderly ([state pensions], retirement homes) were guaranteed for everybody” (VVD 2007a: 2-3). According to *Immigration and Integration*, this description still holds for the current situation.

*Immigration and Integration* contains a central message which is expressed with a strong sense of urgency: ‘we must change this situation and we must change it now’. First of all, immigration must be curbed. The policy document contains many concrete measures how to do this, and the VVD-website also gives an “overview of measures to take in order to maximally reduce the influx of disadvantaged immigrants” (VVD 2007c).

Those measures target all immigrant categories. The number of asylum applicants should be reduced drastically by means of stricter (application of the) rules, because it is only in “exceptional” cases that applicants are truly “refugees in the sense of the [UN] refugee treaty”, and most applicants are “economic refugees who abuse the asylum procedure to obtain a permanent residence permit [verblijfsvergunning]” (VVD 2007a: 6). Also, the number of illegal aliens should be reduced through active detection and (among other things) by making (facilitation of) illegal residence punishable by law (VVD 2007a: 6-7). Numerous measures are proposed to curb family migration, many (seemingly) aiming at the reduction of the number of marriages of convenience (VVD 2007a: 7-8). Finally, the VVD (2007a: 8) states that there should be no low-skilled labour migration from outside the EU. VVD admission policies are restrictive towards all those categories. The only exception is made for
those “high skilled labour migrants that are certain to get a job” because their immigration is “in the interest of our society and should be promoted” (VVD 2007a: 8).

The set of proposed measures to curb immigration has two noteworthy features. Firstly, a link is made between immigration and (reform of) the Dutch welfare state, and secondly, a link is made between immigration and integration. Regarding the first point, Immigration and Integration states that it is “irresponsible to maintain a system of benefits that allows immigrants from non-western countries to remain inactive (…) while in our country there are many low skilled jobs (…) and much work remains undone” (VVD 2007a: 12). Several measures are proposed to change this situation, like the introduction of a “caution money of €7500” for ‘marriage immigrants’ which is to be paid back if immigrants do not make use of social security during five years (VVD 2007a: 7). Another measure is the introduction of a period of five years in which immigrants (in general) do not have direct access to the welfare state and must “earn their social security rights” (VVD 2007a: 12). Former VVD Minister of Alien Affairs and Integration Rita Verdonk tried to introduce such a so-called refereperiode but failed to do so due to lack of political support (see §3.7).

An example of the second point – linking immigration and integration – is the statement in Immigration and Integration that:

“Marriage immigrants should only be admitted – and even then conditionally – when successful integration can be expected: one has to be sufficiently educated (according to Dutch norms), master the Dutch or English language (speech and writing) and be able to prove to have both sufficient knowledge of, and a positive attitude towards Dutch society. Besides that, both marriage partners must show to have a stronger bond [affinity, lit. binding] with the Netherlands than with the country of origin” (VVD 2007a: 7).

This citation contains two important elements. The first element – being (partly) integrated through obligatory ‘integration courses’ in the homeland before admission – is completely in line with the Wet Inburgering in het Buitenland (Civic Integration Abroad Act), which was to a large extent a product of former VVD Minister Rita Verdonk. As we will see later, this law is disputed within the VVD itself. The second element – demanding bonding with, and having a positive attitude towards the Netherlands even before immigration – is remarkable, considering the long tradition of Dutch liberals of limited state interference in personal matters.

This last observation brings us to the VVD approach towards integration as proposed in Immigration and Integration. Besides the already mentioned integration courses, the focus is for a large part on second and higher generation non-western youth. The VVD sketches a gloomy picture, based on a lot of statistical data, of a high overrepresentation of school drop-outs, juvenile crime, unemployment, benefit dependency, etcetera, among non-western youth (VVD 2007a: 3-6). Among the proposed solutions is the idea to:

“appoint a supervisor for each high-risk family [risicogezin] in the earliest stage, that is, [when small children are seen] in the Infant Health Centres [Consultatiebureaus], in order to assess deprivation [lagging development], and to make clear to the parents what is expected from them (speaking Dutch, working, raise their children [i.e. teaching manners, correcting], being actively involved in [their school] education) and make clear [to the parents] what help is available (support [them with] upbringing [their] children

44 A period for which there are certain eligibility requirements (for example, requirements regarding the size and/or duration of the contribution of the welfare applicant to the various welfare state provisions in the form of taxes and premiums).
This cannot be done without interfering in the personal lives of the families involved. In a comparable fashion, the VVD states that regarding the position of immigrant women, there is a lot of “culturally legitimated violence” and suppression of women. Among the proposed solutions are the “installation of an adequate control system to prevent female circumcision”, which also implicates interference with private matters (VVD 2007a: 14).

In its analysis and proposed solutions, the VVD breaches with the long-standing liberal tradition to refrain from interference with the private lives of citizens – often described as ‘peeking behind the front door’. In a recent study of the Teldersstichting, the authors still take the position that “it is a misunderstanding that the [personal] identity of the immigrant is a hindrance for integration”, and that failing integration should rather be attributed to the culture or group identity of the ethnic group the immigrants belong to (Wiebenga et al. 2005: 136). However, at that time VVD thought was already shifting, because co-author – and current director of the Teldersstichting – Patrick van Schie devoted a footnote to the (minority) position, conceding that “full retention of the own identity can indeed be a hindrance for integration” (Wiebenga et al. 2005: 138).

When investigating how the official VVD party line relates to the opinions of the interviewees, it is helpful to make a clear distinction between three issues: (1) integration, (2) immigration and (3) the relationship between immigration and integration.

Regarding point (1), integration, most interviewees more or less agree that it is desirable that immigrants (i) speak the Dutch language, (ii) obey Dutch laws and regulations, (iii) acquire sufficient knowledge of Dutch social and cultural codes to function well in public space and (iv) obtain enough host country specific human capital to be economically independent. Most interviewees name at least two or three of those desiderata, phrased in their own words and with different accents. Jan Franssen, for example, takes the following position:

“For me, the implementation of a firm policy on integration of immigrants into Dutch society should be based on two premises. On one hand, that people are welcome in the host country, which means that people do not have to deny themselves and should have room to retain those elements of their culture, background and home country they are attached to. On the other hand, that they at the same time should be part of Dutch society and conform to certain values and standards, of which two things are paramount prerequisites to participate: (1) speaking the Dutch language and (2) obtaining an independent income through a job”.

However, the crucial question is whether integration should be obligatory, as is advocated in Immigration and Integration. For some, this approach is illiberal. To Hans Dijkstal, the state should never interfere with the private lives of citizens. For him, such integration demands can only be made as a result of stipulations in ‘generic’ laws on social security. For example, when a citizen applies for an unemployment benefit, the Dutch Unemployment Act demands from the recipient of the benefit to prepare for the labour market, and learning Dutch or acquiring human capital could be part of that, a point we will elaborate on later.

Another point that is put forward by Dijkstal is that politicians like Frits Bolkestein, Ayaan Hirsi Ali, Rita Verdonk and Geert Wilders – all (ex) VVD – are bringing “religion back into politics” (Cf. VVD 2007b). For Dijkstal this is illiberal and it is also mortgaging any debate on integration of Muslims in particular:
“I see a country with two realities. One reality is the reality of television, of Geert Wilders and Rita Verdonk and the ‘Muslim terrorists’ – who do not exist according to me. The other reality is that of all the cities and neighbourhoods where many positive initiatives are taken by ‘minorities’ (allochtonen) and the indigenous Dutch (autochtonen) to solve the [existing] problems. This is an interesting and positive development. We should make sure that the gap between those two realities narrows, because those people working on solutions are impeded by all the negative media exposure at the national level”.

When it comes to point (2), immigration and admission policy, the opinions of the interviewees do not differ very much, neither among themselves nor from the ‘official party line’, though they all put the accents differently. Regarding asylum, the interviewees roughly state that there should always be room to admit refugees, but that a strict distinction ought to be made between ‘political asylum seekers’ – those who are refugee according to the UN refugee treaty – and ‘economic asylum seekers’ – those who are just seeking access to the Netherlands for economic reasons. Furthermore, regarding labour migration the interviewees generally agree with Immigration and Integration that the Netherlands has little need for low-skilled immigrants and should aim to attract high-skilled immigrants, though some like Jeroen Diepemaat and Patrick van Schie phrase it more in general terms like ‘attracting those who can contribute to society and repelling those with a high risk of becoming dependent on society or on social welfare’. Most interviewees are in favour of a ‘strict’, ‘very strict’ or ‘somewhat stricter’ admission policy pertaining family migration as well.

More in general, the interviewees are in favour of a clear and restrictive admission policy. Some, like Van Schie, Dijkstal and Franssen advocate a strict admission policy with reference to the social and economic absorption capacity of the Netherlands. Dijkstal also relates this to the “all pervasive problem that we [in the Netherlands] live with many people on a small territory on which all functions like housing, work, nature and recreation have to be fulfilled” and the “all pervasive problem of congestion that exists even without immigration”.

Another motivation to curb immigration is the sustainability of the Dutch welfare state, or as Han ten Broeke puts it: “our welfare state urgently needs to be reformed, but I am not prepared to let these reforms be enforced by people that did not contribute to it. Hence, the welfare state needs to be shielded to some degree”, a point further elaborated in §3.6.4. Furthermore, Van Schie refers to the alleged relationship between diversity and solidarity: “more diversity makes solidarity more difficult to reach, because the solidarity demanded by the Dutch social security system hinges on the question ‘who we as a group have solidarity with’ and that depends on the answer to the underlying question ‘who we are’”.

To others, like Diepemaat, “the problem is not the Dutch welfare state itself, but rather the way we deal with it”. Dijkstal thinks that the Dutch welfare state is a problem because it attracts low-skilled immigrants and also has a tendency to keep people inactive once they become dependent on benefits. However, for him it would suffice to be more consequent in the implementation of (existing) social security laws vis-à-vis all citizens, immigrants and other residents alike:

“I think we should be more consequent [consistent] with our social benefits. If we give [people] an unemployment benefit, [while the law contains] the provision that people should strive to be fit [suitable, attractive] for the labour market, then you should keep that law strictly. Not [as we did in the past], turn a blind eye and later say: ‘Those headscarf-wearing women never leave their homes’ and make laws [that target them] in order to force them [onto the labour market]. That is working on the wrong side of the problem. So I think we should have general [generic] rules for everyone, should be
consistent with those rules, and therefore also towards those groups [of immigrants]. We should have done that long before”.

For Dijkstal, it is “essential that all individuals are treated equally before the law” and he is vehemently “against making distinctions between groups”. Hence, problems with integration of immigrants should ideally be targeted with generic policies. For that reason, he strongly opposes the suggestion in Immigration and Integration to exclude immigrants from welfare state provisions temporarily. For Dijkstal this would be “inconceivable” and “contradictory to Article 1 of the Constitution”, which guarantees equal treatment.

At first sight, the opinions on immigration of the interviewees do not differ much; they are in favour of a rather strict admission policy, though for different reasons. However, when it comes to point (3), the relationship between immigration and integration, the VVD is certainly divided. According to some interviewees, the VVD mixes up the problems of immigration and integration, a practice that according to Dijkstal was started by Bolkestein in the nineties. One of the objections here is that integration demands should not be (mis)used to curb immigration. This point is put forward the strongest by Franssen. Franssen chaired a commission that advised on the Civic Integration Abroad Act (Cf. Commissie-Franssen 2004). Franssen was very critical towards the idea of the obligatory integration course in the homeland of the aspirant immigrant, partly because he thought that the state ought to supply the integrating immigrant with more means, and partly because he thought that not integration, but curbing immigration was the actual (hidden) policy objective. He wondered whether the government wanted “to enhance integration or curb immigration?” (Santing 2004). Franssen further explains:

“I opposed the idea [of the government] to make integration policy part of the restrictive admission policy, because integration policy should be based on different principles. The restrictive admission policy should not be accompanied with an integration policy that on one hand points at the necessity to integrate, learn Dutch, etcetera, and on the other hand discourage integration by withholding the necessary facilities. Furthermore, they spoke too little in terms of reciprocity and reasoned too much from the principle of adaptation [assimilation]”.

3.6.3 Citizenship

In Immigration and Integration, the VVD pleads for reducing the number of Dutch citizens with multiple citizenship. This problem is approached at two levels. At the international level, the VVD deems it necessary to reach an international agreement in which all countries enable their citizens to renounce their citizenship. Meanwhile, the Netherlands should establish a clear regulation of citizenship matters. Parents with differing nationalities should decide which nationality their child should have. If they do not choose, and the child runs the risk to become stateless, it gets the Dutch nationality. Finally, non-nationals who want to become Dutch nationals should renounce their original nationality, though there are exceptions, for example for those that are unable to renounce (VVD 2007a: 14-18).

Van Schie corroborates the official VVD policy, and even goes a step further, stating that Henk Kamp deemed it good to use “the politically correct word ‘orientation’ in the debate on dual citizenship, and not the word ‘loyalty’, but in the end it is about loyalty indeed”. He adds: “I have no objections when an individual of Canadian origin feels more loyal to Canada than to the Netherlands, but if that person really says ‘I feel Canadian in every aspect of life’ then he or she should seriously consider whether it is good to adopt the Dutch nationality”.

However, some of the interviewees take a different position. Diepemaat is “not of the school” that identifies nationality with loyalty, and taking himself as an example, states that
“if I emigrate to the US, and I am integrated into society, and want to become a US citizen, I
would like to retain my Dutch nationality”. Dual nationality is no problem to him, though “the
rules could be stricter for high officials in public service” (like Ministers, MPs, etcetera) than
for ordinary citizens, this to avoid “practical problems with, for example, the obligatory
military service in Turkey”. However, Diepemaat agrees that it is a problem that nationals of
some countries like Morocco cannot renounce their nationality.

Other VVD politicians as well doubt whether dual nationality is such a big problem. Ten
Broeke states: “For me, dual nationality is no big deal, I do not think that dual nationality is
the first handle to solve problems related to integration”. Dijkstal even calls it “a non-
discussion”:

“It [multiple citizenship] is undesirable in theory, but it does not make sense to take that
position as long as there are countries where you cannot renounce your nationality. That
ends that very discussion. And because of that fact, you get two kinds of people: people
who have dual nationality because they cannot renounce and those who do not have dual
nationality. I think it is an irrelevant issue”.

Regarding the issue of naturalisation, Henk Kamp – the main author of Immigration and
Integration – formulates the following demands:

“I think that if somebody wants to adopt the Dutch nationality, one should (1) have
chosen to live here permanently, (2) be economically independent, (3) speak the Dutch
language, and (4) be able to identify with the fundamentals of Dutch society, i.e. have a
positive attitude towards the western society we have here. I think we should maintain
those demands. I meet people here [in the Netherlands] that have the Dutch nationality
and do not speak the Dutch language. (…) That worries me”.

Regarding naturalisation, we find differing opinions among the interviewees, that run roughly
along the same lines as with dual citizenship. Diepemaat and Dijkstal both want to stick to the
status quo and are not in favour of the stricter line Kamp advocates. Dijkstal especially
distances himself from the idea that immigrants should identify with the Netherlands:

“I do not want people to identify with our history of slavery, our ‘VOC-mentality’ of
exploitation [refers to the 16th –17th century colonial multinational corporation VOC]. I
mean: what are we talking about. Then we encounter the discussion about the identity of
the Netherlands, this idiotic ‘history canon’ [which is related to the before mentioned
identity discussion]. It is all rubbish”.

3.6.4 European Union

During the nineties, VVD party leader Bolkestein dominated the Dutch public debate on the
EU, because for a long time he was the only leading Dutch politician who was an outspoken
euro sceptic. It is telling that the Netherlands Institute on International Relations Clingendael
made study of Bolkesteins Euro scepticism (Rozemond 1996). This changed after Bolkestein
left for Brussels to become a European Commissioner. In the 2005 referendum on the
European Constitution, the VVD was part of the ‘yes-campaign’, while the public debate was
dominated by the very successful ‘no-campaign’ in which the Socialist Party (SP) was the
most important and visible player (Hippe et al. 2005). In that sense, one can say that the VVD
lost issue-ownership to the SP (see §3.4).\footnote{And probably to a lesser extent to the Christian Union, which is part of the current coalition.}
At the moment, the VVD can be described as positive towards, but critical of the EU. In 2006, the VVD faction in the EP published its vision on the future of Europe (VVD 2006). This document, named EU Spearheads (EU-speerpunten, EU priorities), is presented as a reflection on the ‘No’ of the Dutch electorate in the Dutch 2005 referendum on the European Constitution. The VVD presents five focal points of its EU-policy with the aim to show how the Dutch interests in the European Union could be served best:

1. Perfect the internal market, including freed movement of persons.
2. Give the EU a larger role in the world.
3. Put the focus of the EU on international (cross-border) problems.
4. Increase the democratic legitimacy of the EU.
5. Develop a clear vision and strict rules on enlargement.

Those points will be treated as follows: the first point, internal market, pertains to EU migration policy. Points two, three and four all relate to the future development of the EU and are dealt with together. Finally, the VVD position on enlargement is treated.

Regarding the internal market, the VVD states in EU Spearheads that it “should be perfected”, and “all barriers for the free movement of persons, goods, services and capital should be lifted, including the introduction of an immigration policy aimed at attracting high-skilled third country nationals” (VVD 2006).

In general, the opinions of the interviewees do not diverge much from the – rather liberal – idea of perfecting the internal market, but some worry about the freedom of persons. Ten Broeke states it this way:

“The free market still is not finished; think about the lack of freedom pertaining to services and transport, but also the lack of control of the international financial markets. When you look at the traditional four freedoms of persons, services, goods and capital, there is still much to be won. The freedom of persons is the biggest challenge now. That has to do with migration flows, with human trafficking, crime, labour, social security, all issues that directly touch upon the personal lives and expectations of people”.

Again (see §3.6.2), social security is the ‘central problem’ for Ten Broeke, “the only way to open social security to immigrants is to abolish social security, and I do not want to do that”. According to Ten Broeke, it is very difficult to harmonise social security within the Union, because “what the Dutch deem an acceptable level of social security differs substantially from the French or Greek perception of it”. Ten Broeke also thinks “that we might even have to change European treaties in order to limit or completely block the rights of immigrants from the EU or third country nationals”. In relation to this, Ten Broeke points at our “complete inability” to “attach immigrants to our society in a positive way” as is the case in the US and adds:

“I wished we had more of that ‘can do mentality’ of the Americans, but that seemingly is not a European trait. It also has to do with the fact that the US attract more people that want to contribute and participate. But we (at best) ignored immigrants. (...) US society absorbs immigrants much quicker, necessarily, because a social security safety net simply lacks. Here [in the Netherlands and Europe], there is an exit to social security [for immigrants] directly after arrival. Therefore, we should reform social security. (...) In Europe and the Netherlands, there simply are too few incentives to guarantee one’s own existence. Furthermore, the immigrants we attract also are low-skilled, because it is too

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46 The order has been changed as a matter of convenience.
easy for them to come to Europe and much more difficult for them to go to Australia, Canada or the US. (…) Eighty percent of the high-skilled immigrants do not come to Europe, while generally speaking that would be easier for them when you look at transportation”.

Here, we touch on the subject of the link between social security and the selectivity of immigration with relation to human capital. Both Ten Broeke and Hennis-Plascheart point out the difficulty of the EU to compete with traditional immigration countries like Canada, Australia and the US when it comes to attracting high-skilled immigrants. Ten Broeke refers to the fact that there is a brain drain from the EU to the US (Cf. EEAG 2003), and adds: “we make ourselves very attractive for deprived immigrants – to put it bluntly – and very unattractive for those [high-skilled immigrants] that can make a difference and can help to keep the welfare state in good shape”. Hennis-Plascheart calls the “legal immigration of the highly skilled positive”, but thinks that “the EU missed a chance with the blue card which contains too many restrictions; with this card we cannot compete with Australia, Canada and the US, so I expect a revision within six or seven years”.

Finally, both Ten Broeke and Hennis-Plascheart point at the importance of the fact that the border of the Netherlands is, in practice, the current outer border of the Union. Therefore, according to Hennis-Plascheart, it is necessary for the EU to reach a common admission policy:

“The EU will have to make appointments on admission, because immigrants will spread across the EU. It is currently a problem that the border of, say, the Netherlands, is on the outer border of the EU. A central problem is that those countries forming this outer border cannot handle the problems, admit immigrants and then let them pass to other countries. Here, member states are not always cooperative. For example, Frontex is completely dependant on equipment provided by the member states, and the Netherlands still has to provide promised boats and aeroplanes”.

Regarding the future development of the EU, the VVD remarks in EU Spearheads that it aims to give the EU a larger role in the world vis-à-vis other powers like the US, China, India and Japan. In order to improve the position of the EU in the world, it should develop a convincing common foreign and security policy, trade policy and energy policy. More in general, the EU should only focus on cross-border (trans-national) problems like crime, terrorism, environmental problems, asylum, etcetera, because those problems are best tackled on the EU level. Finally, the VVD wants to increase the democratic legitimacy of the Union and make the EU more democratic, transparent and decisive. The gap between citizens and the European Union can be bridged best via the Dutch Parliament, which should become more controlling and proactive regarding EU politics. According to the VVD, federalisation is not a realistic option; this is one of the lessons learned from the ‘no’ to the referendum on the European Constitution held in the Netherlands in 2005 (VVD 2006).

First of all, almost all interviewees make the point – in their own words and with different accents – that the EU should concentrate on a few important policy fields where it has ‘added value’ and leave all other policy fields to the national and lower levels according to the principle of subsidiarity. Hennis-Plascheart for example, states that “Europe must concentrate on those policy fields where (1) economic barriers can be lifted, (2) economies of scale can be realised, and (3) problems are truly international, like asylum, migration, the environment and ageing”.

With the exception of Van Schie who thinks that “Europe should not arrogate a more prominent role in the international arena” those interviewees who mention the role of the EU
in the world underline the general importance of close cooperation within the EU in order to become more prominent in the international arena. **Dijkstal** formulates it this way:

“There is a worrisome trend of centralisation in the EU, where we see an opposite development of decentralisation in many member states. This should be stopped and subsidiarity should be a guiding principle. On the other hand, it is necessary that Europe plays an important role in the world, in order to defend its interests vis-à-vis powerful countries like Russia, China, the US and later probably India and South America. So in some fields, like foreign policy and defence, the EU should develop something in order to really operate as one block. The internal divides within the Union were painfully visible in the case of the war on Iraq”.

Also, **Kamp** endorses the idea that “the world becomes smaller with America [the US], China, India and Russia as four big powers and in order to defend the interests of our own continent it is quintessential to cooperate very closely”. **Kamp** thinks that federalisation could add to the international political weight of the EU, but thinks this is a bridge too far:

“If we had an EU as one country, as one big federation of countries, we would be stronger internationally. But I think that Europe consists of countries, each with such a strong own history, own language, own culture, that it is realistic – and certainly valuable – to maintain those countries; cooperate at points where it makes sense, but maintain the independence of the countries”.

This brings us to the point of the **institutional reform** and federalisation in particular. Most interviewees oppose the idea of a federation at least for the near future. According to **Van Schie**, the VVD distanced itself from the idea of a federation in the early nineties, under the influence of Frits Bolkestein and a rather influential study of the Teldersstichting. **Dijkstal** (Cf. Dijkstal & Wiebenga 2001) distances himself from the ‘finality discussion’, but is not a principal opponent of federalisation:

“Look, we have obviously suffered a lot from the F-word – Federative State – which is all about the transfer of national powers to a supranational institution. I am a little careful with that because of [lack of] subsidiarity, [useless] pumping around of money, etcetera. But I have no objection in principle. And if the world has developed in such way that national states are increasingly unable to solve problems, larger units may be needed (…) Take for example the internet. Who is in control of the internet? In any case, certainly not national states. So I can imagine [a federation]. But all powers that are transferred should fall under the same guarantees as we have nationally, like legal liability (…) and the guarantees of democracy in its essence. Because if that is not guaranteed, we transfer powers to an anonymous, absolute power”.

According to **Hennis-Plascheart**, real institutional change is “not realistic, as one can tell from the 2005 referenda in France and the Netherlands”. Instead, “EU leaders should be more visible internationally, and this can best be achieved by better coordination”. Now Solana is “hardly visible”, while “Kouchner and Verhagen dominate the news”. According to **Hennis-Plascheart**, it is a “matter of psychology” and also of big egos; “all of the leaders in Europe want to have their say”. **Hennis-Plascheart** also tries to put the limitations of the current institutional constellation in perspective. According to her, the EP indeed has “limited powers”, for example, “it does not have the right of initiative”. Despite these limitations, the EP is able to put issues on the EU political agenda. To Hennis-Plascheart, the real problem is located in the control of the national parliament over the Council of the European Union.
Others, however, deem institutional reform necessary in order to turn the EU into a well-functioning, democratically legitimised international power. People like Dijkstal, Diepemaat and Franssen are in favour of a strong, democratic EU, including a powerful and ‘truly European’ European Parliament with European lists. This Union should have the power on a limited number of policy fields for which the EU has ‘added value’ because of their international character. They name policy fields pertaining to foreign affairs, migration, asylum, energy and the environment. Franssen probably takes the strongest position in this respect:

“...I am much in favour of a European government that has much power on a limited number of major issues and that is controlled by a European Parliament. The European Parliament should have more power and it should be much smaller. Maybe a Europe that really plays a role in the world, with a European government with executive powers in those [limited number of policy fields], requires something like the checks and balances that the American system has, with the executive power in the White House and the legislative power in the Capitol”.

For Ten Broeke on the other hand, reform of the EP in the opposite direction is a rather more attractive possibility:

[With European lists] one chooses for development of the EP that would than represent the ‘European people’. But there is no such thing as a ‘European people’ (...) So I ask: ‘Why should a Dutch Member of the European Parliament not be able to represent your interests?’ (...) Vice versa, one could abolish the direct elections for the EP and choose the [Dutch] EP representatives simultaneously with the Dutch national elections. Then Europe will finally become part of the national discourse and all fractions will have an interest to become as large as possible. In this way, the VVD will benefit if the German liberal party becomes large, but also has that national tie [bond, link]”.

Generally speaking, the VVD is a proponent of enlargement. All accessions should be assessed individually. Aspiring states should be democratic, meet the Copenhagen criteria and be able to implement all EU regulations. In addition, it should be possible to formulate transitional provisions and safeguards in order to ensure that the Union and the Netherlands do not suffer from future accessions. Furthermore, the EU must be able to absorb new member states. In particular, enlargement should not hamper the functioning and decision-making of the Union. Finally, commitments to open negotiations made to Turkey and countries on the Balkan should be fulfilled (VVD 2006).

First of all, there is a common tendency among the interviewees to delineate the potential territory of the EU in geographical terms; the Union should at most comprise the countries of geographical Europe, with the exception of Russia (too large) and the Caucasus, while most hesitate about Turkey. Probably the most inclusive approach is given by Diepemaat, who states that “all countries in geographical Europe should, in principle, be able to become a member of the EU”, with the exception of Russia and Turkey. For Ten Broeke, the potential outer border should be more westward and to him Belarus and Ukraine can “never” become member states.

Some interviewees (also) reflect on enlargement in geo-political terms, often in relation to Russia, the Iron Curtain and pressure from the US to unite Europe. Van Schie points at the fact that eastward enlargement of NATO, but also the EU, could bring us into conflict with Russia, for example about the Russian minority in Latvia: “What would happen if Russia (...) treats Latvia like Georgia? (...) I do not think that people in Western and Eastern Europe are willing to die for Riga”. Van Schie adds:
“Do not misunderstand me. My position is not based on the idea that we should not [want] to defend the independence of (for example) Latvia, because I think we should. My position is based on the fact that I suspect that few in Western Europe are willing to pay that [highest] price, and furthermore, that this point was not reflected on very well at the time of the enlargement”.

Furthermore, there is a general feeling among the interviewees that enlargement went too quick, especially in the case of Bulgaria and Romania. Hennis-Plascheart puts it as follows:

“Enlargement went too quick, without checking whether all member states complied with all criteria. This was the case with the big bang of ten countries. I was involved with the accession of Latvia and can tell you that Latvia was not ready. I even experienced the accession of Romania and Bulgaria as shocking. Those countries were not ready and cannot be seen as full EU members. This is a dangerous development that creates a lot of tension within the Union. For example, with the debates on the blue card, Romania and Bulgaria were obstructive, because they did not want to admit any third country nationals as long as their nationals could not travel freely within the Union”.

Besides that, many feel that the EU has to reform and consolidate and solve its problems before future enlargements can take place. According to Dijkstal, “enlargement is diminishing the quality of the Union”; and the Union “should first solve its existing problems” like the problems with agricultural policies, structure funds, and problems regarding pensions and ageing (Cf. Dijkstal & Wiebenga 2001). This point is made a bit more tangible by the introduction of the concept of ‘absorption’, as Ten Broeke explains:

“New member states should meet all criteria, like the Copenhagen criteria, and the acquis. Furthermore, there are ‘lessons learned’, i.e. no ‘big bang’ like the accession of ten countries at once, and no mentioning of dates of accession to would-be member-states. The third and most innovative point is that of ‘absorption’. That is important. We said: not only the question whether those countries comply with our criteria is important, but also whether we are able to absorb them. This criterion has not been operationalised yet, but I go further than most others in my opinion. For me it is not only whether our institutions can deal with future accessions, but also whether our structural funds and agricultural policy are reformed in such a way we can handle it”.

Some like Ten Broeke and Hennis-Plascheart also warn for granting membership to countries in the hope that it will have a positive effect on their development, democratisation, etcetera. According to Hennis-Plascheart the opposite often happens, and countries “take a break” to recover from the pressure to reform once they have acceded. To Ten Broeke, “Europe should first consolidate and reform itself before it can handle more accessions. That is only possible with intrinsically stable countries. Hence, an accession aimed at helping a country to realise such stability is dangerous for the Union”.

This relates to the most difficult issue of all: the accession of Turkey. None of the interviewees who spoke about this issue are enthusiastic about future accession of Turkey, but they are sceptical for different reasons. Kamp worries about the influx of disadvantaged immigrants, once Turkey has acceded:

“I stick to the position of my party: (…) there is no prospect of the accession of Turkey to Europe for the next ten years. Moreover, if Turkey were ever to join, (…) there can be no free movement of people, because a large part of the Turkish population is lagging behind in relation to European society, and free movement of people can lead to an
exodus from some parts of Turkey and major problems in the current European member states’.

Others point at the fact that Turkey can hardly be called ‘European’ in the geographical sense. Hennis-Plasschaert says: “Personally I think it is bizarre that we made promises towards Turkey. (...) only a small piece of Turkey is part of Europe. (...) So, for some time we have been busy not to define the borders of the European territory”. Diepemaat wonders “whether Turkey is in geographical Europe, because it is for 90% in Asia. Furthermore, it differs [in politico-cultural background] from Europe and it is a very big country too. I think it is not good to admit Turkey to the Union now”. He concludes: “I would draw the line there”. The fact that the country is inhabited by Muslims is no problem for Diepemaat, because “Muslims live on the Balkan too”.

Van Schie points at tendencies of de-secularisation in Turkish society, which makes accession difficult:

“On paper, Turkey is a secular state, more so than many European countries, by the way. But in practice one sees a growing influence of religion – the orthodox variant – on society, and that makes it difficult for me and many other Europeans to accept Turkish membership. Fifty years ago, Turkey had a much more secular society, and that would have been easier. However, that does not mean that there is a blockade once and for ever”.

For Dijkstal it is mainly the historical geo-political function of Turkey that would be lost in case of accession:

“I think for geo-political reasons that Turkey, which is positioned between two continents and is a window for the West to the East and for the East to the West, has always played a very central role and can play a central role in the future. Once Turkey is absorbed in one of those [power]blocks, it loses that ‘window function’. That would be a disadvantage of Turkish accession. But I think that now the expectations have been raised to such height that we can hardly say no, and the discussion is only about the criteria Turkey has to meet”.

For some interviewees, ‘a promise is a promise’, which is also the official party line of the VVD. Others doubt to what extent the EU should stick to those old promises. Diepemaat, who is against Turkish accession, states: “I am a new politician and I did not make that promise, and I would probably never have done it either”. According to Ten Broeke, Turkey disqualifies itself:

“Regarding Turkey: promises have been made, but we will see. Turkey is in no way what it looks like. In many fields such as the state of justice (constitutional state, the rule of law, de rechtsstaat), things are not right. I do not believe in the domino theory that we will influence the Middle East in a positive way if we absorb a big ‘secular’ Islamic country, also because there is much antipathy against Turkey in the Middle East. At this moment, an important point is that Turkey does not stick to the protocol that stipulates that it has to receive Greek-Cypriot ships and airplanes. The deadline is in October. We are very clear: if Turkey does not comply by then, there can only be one conclusion: they do not want themselves. Because our promise hinges on this stipulation in the Ankara protocol”.

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3.6.5 European public sphere

The VVD is part of a network of international organisations, both directly and via the scientific bureau Teldersstichting (Telders Foundation) and the youth branch JOVD. In European politics, the VVD is part of the European Liberals, Democrats and Reformists (ELDR). In the European Parliament the ELDR (in conjunction with the European Democratic Party) is represented by the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE). The VVD is also member of the Liberal International, which can be regarded as the liberal counterpart of the socialist International.

According to Van Schie, the Teldersstichting cooperates with other “liberal think tanks in the margin” of the regular meetings of the Liberal International. Roughly every one and a half years, these think tanks meet in a parallel session. The core of this cooperation consists of organisations from only a few countries, like the Teldersstichting from the Netherlands, the Naumannstiftung from Germany, and the Bertil Ohlin Institute from Sweden. A more recent development is the introduction of an EC subsidy for cooperation between think tanks, which resulted in the foundation of the European Liberal Forum (ELF) operating under the umbrella of the ELDR.

According to Diepemaat, the VVD youth branch JOVD cooperates nationally with the Political Youth Organisations (PJO, Politieke Jongeren Organisaties), which represents the youth branches of Dutch political parties. Within the PJO, but also ad hoc, the VVD cooperates with organisations like Dwars (§3.5) and the Young Socialist (§3.4), for instance by organising joint actions on specific ‘youth-related’ issues. In Europe, the JOVD cooperates with other liberal political youth organisations in the European Liberal Youth (LYMEC), which is affiliated with ALDE. Finally, the JOVD cooperates with the International Federation of Liberal and Radical Youth (IFLRY), an umbrella of youth organisations connected to the Liberal International.

Regarding the (existence of) a European public sphere, most interviewees are rather sceptical. Kamp thinks that this sphere will grow when cooperation increases, but thinks that language will remain a restrictive factor: “People are very much oriented to their own language area. Indeed, there is an elite that is able to think and debate in the English language, and for whom European borders are less important, but I think that a real European public sphere will be limited by the language problem”.

A related issue is the lack of a European identity. Diepemaat thinks that most people are primarily interested in news from their region and country and that “not many people identify themselves with Europe”. According to Ten Broeke, the European identity is at most a “background identity” one experiences outside Europe:

“I believe that the European identity will always be a secondary identity. (…) Once you’re in America, you feel it immediately. When you hear Americans talk, you feel the difference, despite the fact they have the same origins as we do, despite Pepsi, Levi’s en Disney. It is a background identity. It can be felt, also for Americans, but it isn’t dominant. And that’s no problem. That are the two legs Europe [walks on]: a national and a European leg. We should never lose sight of the national leg, because that [leg] just gives strength”.

Another problem put forward by some interviewees is the lack of European media. Ten Broeke asks rhetorically: “Whether there is a European public sphere? Yes, that is the problem! In fact, it does not exist, because there are no European public media”. He adds:

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47 Full name: Stichting Samenwerkingsverband Politieke Jongeren Organisaties.
48 Full name: Liberal and Radical Youth Movement of the European Communities.
“There is virtually no real European debate; it is always national” and also there is no such thing as “genuinely European literature”. He links this to the before mentioned weak European identity. When asked, the interviewees generally state that Euronews is not very influential. According to Diepemaat, the lack of European media is “a handicap” for the work of LYMEC:

“That makes it very difficult to reach the headlines with a LYMEC action. You always have to target European issues within a specific national context, because otherwise you don’t have media exposure. Recently, there was an action against the visa policy within the EU. Coming from certain EU countries, you still need visa to travel to certain other EU countries. That was a media success. Now they have an action against the European agricultural policy, which LYMEC wants to be changed, but the lack of European newspapers makes that very difficult for LYMEC”.

The interviewees do not think that facilitating a European communication space top-down would help much, but a more substantial EU cooperation will. In the words of Diepemaat:

“I do not think facilitating is a very viable method. I think it would be better to improve European integration. When things are organised better in Europe, when Europe only interferes with those issues it is good at, those issues Europe has added value in, and if Europe stops with nonsensical interferences, and when a more positive image of Europe will develop, then there will be a growing need for it”.

“It would be good to have an independent news source” says Diepemaat, but he deems it “unlikely that it can compete with national media”. Dijkstal links this to a more general tendency that the ‘populist media’ dominate while the ‘high-quality media’ only reach a limited public: in the Netherlands “300,000 people watch NOVA and 3.5 million people watch Hart van Nederland (Heart of the Netherlands). The voting power is at Heart of the Netherlands, not at NOVA. That’s a national problem in all member states: emergent populism, the hype of the day, the emotions”.

Finally, several interviewees state that the coverage of European news by Dutch media could be improved considerably. Dijkstal “wishes that our [national public] broadcasters and newspapers would resume good coverage of European news”. According to Diepemaat, “national journalism in Brussels is rather amateurish. At least, that’s what I hear from several sources in Brussels; former JOVD people who work in EU institutions and tell me that news coverage about EU decisions is often of poor quality”. Diepemaat also relates this to the fact that (Dutch) journalists abroad in general often experience great difficulty to get their items in the national media in the right way.

These points are also elaborated on by Hennis-Plasschaert. She states that generally speaking, Dutch media pay too little attention to EU-policies. That could be improved a lot, also in comparison with the national newsgathering on EU topics in countries like France and Belgium, which pay more attention to Europe. According to Hennis-Plasschaert, there are several problems. Dutch media like De Telegraaf (see Chapter 6) often do not present European laws and regulations in their appropriate context. This is damaging to the legitimacy of the EU. In general, correspondents of Dutch media organisations like NOS, NOVA and NRC know a lot about the EU, but according to Hennis-Plasschaert “some prominent TV journalists are seldom seen in Brussels”. Despite the knowledge about the EU among Dutch journalists, Dutch national media pay limited attention to the EU. For example, current affairs programme NOVA (see §6.3) only treats those EU topics “that are linked with a specific, actual debate in the Netherlands” says Hennis-Plasschaert. “That is remarkable, because EU
decisions are taken long before the resulting policies are implemented in the Netherlands, so it would make more sense to make news of it in the Brussels (EU) stage of decision making”. Dutch media and Members of European Parliament could do more to bring EU topics to the fore to Dutch citizens, states Hennis-Plasschaert. However, this is not easy because “EU regulations often are abstract; we do not decide on concrete matters like collecting garbage, but we for example regulate percentages of the garbage to be recycled. So if you tell it the right way, you can get the massage across to the citizen, but it is not easy”.

3.6.6 Conclusion
The VVD is a liberal party, that in the first 25 years after its foundation in 1948 had a somewhat elitist character, but developed from the seventies onward into a broad people’s party. Under the leadership of Bolkstein in the nineties, the VVD was very successful, for a large part because Bolkstein took firm positions about issues like immigration and European integration. When Bolkstein left for European politics in 1998 he left a political vacuum, both in Dutch politics and in his own party. In the new century, issue ownership on immigration and European integration was lost to other parties. Moreover, issues like Turkish accession to the EU and the integration of immigrants in Dutch society caused a split in the VVD twice. At this moment, the VVD has repositioned itself as a critical pro-Europe party, but differing views on immigration and integration still cause tensions within the party, with a ‘left-liberal wing’ under the guidance of people like Hans Dijkstal and Jan Franssen advocating a more inclusive and reciprocal approach towards immigrant integration.

Regarding the European public sphere, the VVD, including its youth branch JOVD and its scientific bureau Teldersstichting is well-anchored in several international organisations that operate on EU level or worldwide. In general, the interviewees are not very optimistic about the development of a truly European public sphere. Among the main causes given by the interviewees are a lack of a common European culture and identity, the many different languages spoken in the Union, a limited interest among the general public and a poor coverage of European affairs by the (Dutch) media. Some utter the expectation that a development towards a better functioning and democratic Europe will be accompanied by a growing importance of the European public sphere.

3.7 ToN (Political movement)
*Trots op Nederland* (Proud of the Netherlands, ToN) was founded in September 2007 by Rita Verdonk, the former Minister of Alien Affairs and Integration Policy⁴⁹ for the VVD (see §3.6). In 2006 Verdonk ran for party leadership, but ended second after Mark Rutte. The VVD campaigned for the 2006 parliamentary elections with Mark Rutte as party leader and Verdonk as second candidate on the party list. However, through preferential voting Verdonk gained – for the first time in Dutch parliamentary history – approximately 10% more electoral support than party leader Rutte. This led to a series of incidents, because Verdonk repeatedly disputed the leadership of Mark Rutte who she called ‘not right-wing enough’ and too soft on immigration issues.⁵⁰ In short, Verdonk stood for a tougher VVD-policy on immigrant admission and integration. This culminated in the removal of Verdonk from the VVD parliamentary faction, after Verdonk said that “Rutte was invisible in the debate on aliens” and that “the VVD lost the ball to the PVV of Geert Wilders”.⁵¹ However, Dutch

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⁴⁹ In Dutch: *Minister van Vreemdelingen en Integratiebeleid*, which covers all kind of issues in the field of admission and immigrant integration policy.


parliamentary law allows Members of Parliament in this situation to stay in Parliament as an independent member, which Verdonk did. As such she initially gained a lot of electoral support in political polls, with a peak of 24 seats (15.6%) on June 6, 2008 (Synovate 2009). However, one year later the support had dwindled to a mere 1% (one seat) in the poll of June 5, 2009 (Synovate 2009).

**Interviewee** We interviewed Mrs Rita Verdonk (1955), who was by the time of the interview the only Member of Parliament representing the newly formed ToN. Verdonk studied sociology and specialized in criminology. Between 1983 and 1996 she worked for the Ministry of Justice and several correctional facilities, mostly at management level. Between 1996 and 1999 Verdonk was Director State Security at the *Binnenlandse Veiligheidsdienst* (BVD, National Security Service). Until 2003 she worked as a manager at consultancy firm KPMG and then became Minister and in 2006 MP for the VVD party as described above.

### 3.7.1 Organisation
Verdonk regards ToN not so much as a ‘political party’, but as a ‘political movement’. This movement is rather anti-establishment; Verdonk distances herself from the Dutch political system that “doesn’t deserve to be called democratic” and has become “a kind of oligarchy” ruled by “some 200 people in The Hague [who] divide all jobs among themselves”. This leads to a ‘elitist’ style of politics in which “the citizen is looked upon as an incompetent figure who thinks with his underbelly”. To counter this development, Verdonk wants to “listen to the people”. For Verdonk, being called a populist counts as a honorary title (*geuzennaam*), “because *populus* means people”. A primary strategy is to develop the party program in cooperation with ordinary people via a bottom-up procedure; ToN gives a rather sketchy outline of its vision and invites citizens to complete the picture via a so-called ‘wiki’ (ToN 2009b). Another strategy to enhance democracy in the Netherlands is a broader use of referenda: ToN wants to use referenda more often, “especially in case of important decisions regarding the EU” (ToN 2009a).

### 3.7.2 Immigration, integration and citizenship
ToN envisions a much stricter admission policy. The movement makes a basic distinction between political refugees and other immigrants. ToN uses a rather strict definition of ‘political refugee’, which can be summarized as: “those few individuals who have to fear for their lives because they had the courage to address anomalies [evil, wrong doing] in their own country” (ToN 2009a). With regard to other categories of refugees ToN states that “the Netherlands are far too small to absorb larger numbers of people that flee for large disasters or persecution” (ToN 2009a). Regarding non-refugees, ToN only wants to admit those who can economically contribute to the Netherlands. Only those well educated immigrants should be admitted for which a demand exists in the Dutch labour market which cannot be fulfilled by indigenous (domestic) workers (ToN 2009a).

Preferably, *immigration* should be temporarily. Verdonk gives the example of Polish immigrant workers who ideally should commute between Poland and the Netherlands (on a weekly basis) like ordinary commuters within the Netherlands would do. One of the reasons is that Verdonk sees commuting within the EU as a means of decreasing the differences in income per capita among EU member states. Permanent migration on the other hand drains people with a ‘good work mentality’ from the source countries (like Poland) and causes problems in the host countries (like the Netherlands). She refers to the negative experiences the Netherlands had with the so-called ‘guest workers’.

Besides political refugees (in the before mentioned strict sense) and temporary labour migrants, there is legal ground for a third category of immigrants: family migrants (both
family reunification and family formation). This form of migration is linked to legal rights that are rooted in European and other international treaties.\textsuperscript{52} When asked how to prevent immigration of family migrants that do not contribute to the Dutch economy, Verdonk seeks the solution in a stricter application of existing laws and regulations, for example (1) raising the income requirement for the partner living in the Netherlands; (2) granting the immigrating partner the right to stay permanently only if (s)he has a job; (3) introducing more demanding obligatory ‘integration courses’ in the source country and (4) effectuating stricter enforcement of existing laws against ‘marriage of convenience’. According to Verdonk, this could be done within the framework of existing European treaties, and she refers to Denmark which is “even stricter” in this respect.

On a more general level, Verdonk links restriction of immigration to welfare state reform. In short, the Dutch welfare state offers a very high level of social security and is more or less directly accessible for immigrants. That makes the Netherlands an attractive country of destination for (would-be) immigrants who regard it as “a land of plenty” (Cockaigne, luilekkerland), where one “can hold up his hand which then automatically gets filled with money”. According to Verdonk, this situation has “run out of control” and forces the Netherlands to reform; either immigrants should be excluded from the welfare state for a longer time, or immigrants should contribute to the welfare state for some time before they can benefit from it. Hence, Verdonk suggests that the Netherlands should withdraw from those international treaties that (indirectly) guarantee the access of immigrants to social security. During the time she served as a Minister, Verdonk tried to limit immigrant entitlement to social security by making it conditional on a minimum period of contribution (rederaftertijdsperiode). However, she failed to do so due to lack of political support.

When it comes to diversity, Verdonk is “not against immigration”, “in favour of a diverse society” and “dislikes racism and discrimination”. This also applies to ToN: everybody ‘who is proud of the Netherlands’ is welcome to join ToN, regardless his or her (ethnic) background’. However, immigrants should adapt. “What people do behind the front door [of their homes] is up to them”, but in public space people must speak the Dutch language, make sure they have jobs and provide for themselves, and adapt themselves to Dutch norms and values (and raise their children accordingly). This adaptation applies to laws and regulations, but also to non-written (cultural) codes, like shaking hands between women and (Muslim) men. When asked how to enforce adaptation to those unwritten codes, Verdonk answers: “Why is this difficult? When we as Dutch en masse say: ‘these are our norms and values and men and women shake hands; that is not something we are going to discuss, but something one just does [i.e. should do]’”. However, according to Verdonk, the Dutch have a tendency to give in, are too indifferent and too tolerant, and are afraid of being seen as nationalistic:

“People are afraid to say they are proud of the Netherlands because they deem that nationalistic. But according to me, this is not nationalistic, but patriotic. That simply means that you love your fatherland, and nothing is wrong with that. We [ToN, Proud of the Netherlands] are always depicted as ‘they dislike foreigners, and want to build a fence around the Netherlands’. That is nonsense. But we want to look critically at who we admit [to the Netherlands]. That is the point”.

Finally, another point in which Verdonk wishes to be very clear is nationality: double nationality should be ruled out as a possibility. Immigrants should make a clear choice about

\textsuperscript{52} For example the European Convention on Human Rights, article 8.
their nationality, and whenever they opt for the Dutch nationality, they must give up their old nationality.

3.7.3 European Union

Regarding immigrant admission policy, Verdonk favours much more European cooperation. First of all, every EU member state should use the same criteria for the admission of asylum seekers in order to end so-called ‘asylum shopping’. Furthermore, the EU should define a list of ‘safe countries’ which is much longer than the current one. This list should (beside many others) also include all European countries. Another point is the development of an EU-policy for the treatment of immigrants at the external border of the EU, because immigration into countries like Italy and Spain effectively means immigration into the EU. However, Verdonk deems the realisation of an EU admission policy difficult, because in practice, individual member states pursue their own interests. She illustrates this with an example:

“During the time I served as a Minister, we had a deal with Spain. We agreed that we would inform each other in case a legalisation of illegal aliens was about to take place.
But Spain informed us [about the legalisation of nearly a million illegal aliens] after they had effectuated the legalisation, when it was already in the Dutch newspapers”.

Verdonk’s vision on European integration – in particular EU institutional reform – is less developed than her view on immigration and immigrant integration. This has to do with the bottom-up procedures of ToN. Verdonk explains: “What we at ToN try to do is to involve as many citizens as possible. This means that I have to wait for the debate with these citizens – and participate in those debates – to see how we will do this [institutional reform of the EU]”. The same grass-root-like approach influences Verdonk’s judgment of the EU Constitution and the Lisboa Treaty: “Initially I was in favour of the EU Constitution, but on second thought I became an opponent, because the Dutch population [in the 2005 referendum] clearly said: ‘No, we don’t want this’”. Hence, Verdonk only sketches the outline of the EU she envisions. She has sympathy for the US-model, but stresses the importance of the preservation of cultures and languages in the case of the EU. Furthermore, “cooperation is fine, but the rules should be clearer”. In general, Verdonk nor ToN had formulated an integrated view on EU-integration and the future development of EU-institutions by the time of the interview.

On the other hand, Verdonk holds very clear views on European enlargement. Enlargement has already gone too far and too fast. Verdonk calls the recent enlargements from 15 to 25, and later 27 countries “ridiculous”, and states that the EU “is still recovering from the blow of ten”. According to Verdonk, a much better strategy would have been the admission of fewer countries (e.g. three), and only after they completely fulfilled the criteria for EU-membership. After admission “we should then have worked together to make sure that those countries reach a reasonable level of welfare”, before the next enlargement takes place. Because of the rapid enlargement, Verdonk thinks that the EU has to consolidate for at least 15 years before new extensions can take place. There is a limit to future enlargements, because Verdonk sees the EU as defined by both cultural and geographical criteria. In the future, the EU should in principal admit European countries, including for instance Ukraine. However there are some exceptions. Russia is too large to be part of the EU, and would therefore dominate too much. For Verdonk, Turkey is also out of the question, because “it does not at all fit in the European culture”. The main reason is not that Turkey is a predominantly Islamic country, but because it is a country with an “entirely different culture, that – and this of course relates to religion – it is only paying lip service to secularity, while it
is not secular at all. As long as a country has a Ministry of Religion, it cannot really be secular”.

3.7.4 Conclusion

ToN is a political movement and political party in development. As such, its views are most articulated in the policy field of immigration and integration – Verdonks field of expertise as a Minister of Alien Affairs and Integration Policy. Views of ToN on the future development of the EU are for a large part still ‘work in progress’. As a newly formed political movement, ToN is predominantly focusing on national politics and not so much on lower level (municipalities, Provincial States) or higher level (EU) politics. Hence, its interference with the (developing) European public sphere is virtually nonexistent.

3.8 FNP (Regional party)

The Fryskse Nasjonale Partij (Frisian National Party, FNP) is a political party that operates at the local and provincial level in the province of Fryslân (Dutch: Friesland). The Frisians (Dutch: Friezen) are a people that live in the northern part of the Netherlands – mainly in the province of Fryslân. The Frisians have a long history that can be linked (at least indirectly) to the Frisii, a people that inhabited the area during the Roman era. In the seventh century the Frisians expanded their territory (known as Magna Frisia, greater Fryslân) to the coastal areas of Flanders, the Netherlands and Germany. The Frisians developed into a seafaring people that traded extensively in the British Isles and Scandinavia and many words in modern day English can be traced back to this period. Today, besides the (Western) Frisians who live in the Dutch province of Fryslân, there are the Eastern Frisians (German: Ostfriesen) who live in North-Western Germany near the Dutch border and the Northern Frisians (German: Nordfriesen) who live in the German Bundesland Schleswig-Holstein near the Danish border (Halbertsma 2000; Frieswijk 1998; Breuker & Janse 1997; Huisman 2003).

In the sixteenth century, the province of Fryslân became one of the states in the Republic of the Seven United Netherlands (the forerunner of present day Netherlands). However, in the Napoleonic era, the Netherlands became a kingdom under the rule of Napoleons brother Louis Napoleon Bonaparte. Fryslân lost its status of ‘state in a federation’ and became an ‘ordinary province’ in a centralized state, which still is the present situation. Besides historical pride, certain (specifically) Frisian sports and an attachment to the landscape of Fryslân, probably the most defining characteristic in modern day Frisian identity is the Frisian language. This language – Frysk (Dutch: Fries) – is the mother tongue of more than half the Frisians and spoken by three-quarters of the inhabitants of Fryslân (Halbertsma 2000; Frieswijk 1998; Breuker & Janse 1997; Huisman 2003).

The Frisian National Party has its roots in the Frisian Movement (Fryskse Beweging), a social movement dating back to the nineteenth century, which was led by poets, scholars, clergymen and other notables that strived for the preservation and strengthening of the Frisian language and culture. Initially, the focus of the Frisian Movement was on language and culture only, but some strived for (more) independence of the Dutch centralized state. This culminated in the foundation of the Fryskse Nasjonale Partij in 1962 (Halbertsma 2000; Frieswijk 1998; Breuker & Janse 1997; Huisman 2003).

53 Like kaatsen (a precursor of several modern-day sports), but also the success of many Frisians in speed skating.
54 Actually, there is more than one language; besides standard Frisian, four larger and several smaller dialects are spoken within the province of Fryslân.
Interviewee We interviewed the leader of the FNP-faction in the Provincial States, Mr Johannes Kramer (39 years old). He studied (juridical-)political science and worked for the FNP-faction in the Provincial States and as a secretary (clerk) for a municipality. Currently, Kramer works as a manager for the municipality of Menameradiel.

3.8.1 Organisation
The FNP operates on two administrative levels: municipalities (within Fryslân) and in the so-called Provincial States – the representative body in each Dutch province that is directly chosen by the provincial electorate. Provincial States govern the province and furthermore choose the members of the Senate in The Hague. Currently (2008), the FNP is represented in two-thirds of the Frisian municipalities, supplied the mayor in one municipality, and has five seats (10.7% of the votes) in the Provincial States.

As a provincial party, the FNP has certain objectives for the governance of Fryslân relating to specific issues in Frisian politics (FNP 2009). However, according to Kramer behind these specific goals lies the more general objective of the FNP “to give the province of Fryslân, and the Frisian community, ample room, rights, possibilities and means to shape its own future”. Despite its name – Frisian National Party – the FNP does not strive for full independence of the Dutch State, or, as Kramer puts it: “we do not strive for sovereignty in the classical sense. (…) We are not in favour of fences and barriers, flags and passports”. Kramer deems the world too much interconnected in too many ways for an entity like Fryslân – or the Netherlands for that matter – to be really independent: “Everything is interwoven, and we as Frisians [do] (…) not [want to] separate ourselves, but to participate – as Frisians – in the world, Europe, and the Netherlands”. Instead of striving for independence, Kramer says, the FNP wants to make Fryslân, with its Frisian identity, an autonomous political entity within the Kingdom of the Netherlands:

“We recognize the fact that Fryslân is an integral part of the Netherlands, and we are fine with that, but conversely, we also want the Netherlands to recognize Fryslân as a part of the Netherlands, and to acknowledge that Frisian culture and language in principle is Dutch culture and language. Often, The Hague misunderstands this. They tend to see Fryslân as an anachronism, as something that resisted time, but will in the foreseeable future be caught up by the progress of mankind. Hence, they do not want to stand for Frisian culture and language. So there are two aspects to our efforts; firstly, emancipation in the sense that we want to have the same rights in our province as Dutch people have in the Netherlands, and secondly, that we think that, from a historical perspective, Fryslân should be an autonomous political entity within the Netherlands, that shapes its own future”.

This goal not only implies a fundamental restructuring of the Dutch state, but is also embedded in a vision on the future development of the European Union, a point that is elaborated in §3.8.3.

3.8.2 Immigration, integration and the rights of ethnic and national minorities
Johannes Kramer regards diversity as “an asset in itself. (…) Different languages and cultures enrich society”. Diversity also is an advantage, in a world that “through the process of globalisation becomes more and more interconnected”. Furthermore, Kramer deems all notions of diversity (i.e. gender, ethnicity, language, sexual preferences, et cetera) equally relevant: “All dimensions of diversity are equal to me, and I do not want to make distinctions
between them, hence political institutions should not give priority to the claims of any particular group”.

Kramer stresses that the FNP “believes that acknowledging diversity is a prerequisite for a society in which human rights are respected. Acknowledging the rights of ethnic and national minorities makes for a more just society”. Hence:

“the state should definitely play a role in matters of ethno-national diversity. On the one hand, the state should be neutral with regard to ethno-national differences and all people should be treated equal. On the other hand, people have a right for their own culture, language and so forth. In that sense, the possibilities for education on religious basis that the Dutch educational system offers, are an asset. Furthermore, children should be able to receive education in their own mother tongue. In relation to that, the abolishment of OETC\textsuperscript{55} is a bad development”.

When it comes to the private domain, ethnic minorities have the same rights (derived from human rights, and several treaties) to preserve and strengthen their own identity. With freedom of religion and the right to found schools with a specific (religious) identity, ethnic minorities in the Netherlands also have two instruments to preserve that identity.

However, when it comes to the public domain, Kramer makes a distinction between national and ethnic minorities. The government has an obligation – also anchored in several international treaties (comp. §2.4) – to make an effort to preserve and strengthen the culture and language of national minorities. However, in this respect ethnic minorities cannot be automatically granted the same rights as national minorities; this depends on the period of residence. “If tomorrow two persons immigrate from Patagonia, so to speak, they cannot be granted the before mentioned rights”. According to Kramer, it is difficult to say under which exact conditions ethnic groups should be given those rights. An additional complication is that (unlike the Frisian situation), in general the language and culture of ethnic minorities are not linked to a specific territory. In the future, Kramer points out, this may give rise to “very interesting cases”; for instance, “does a Turkish EP-member of German descent have the right to speak Turkish in the EP, in the (hypothetical) situation that Turkey is a member of the EU?”.

When it comes to immigration, Kramer makes a distinction between international migration and migration of (wealthy, ethnic) Dutch from the western part of the Netherlands. The latter is an issue in Frisian politics. Some provincial parties want to attract well-to-do Dutch from other provinces by building estate-like houses, plans that are strongly opposed by the FNP for environmental reasons. Migration of non-Dutch into Fryslân is relatively insignificant. Nevertheless, Kramer sees immigration as an advantage, because of the growing interconnectedness of the world. “The Frisians migrated to Europe and the New World in the ‘Frisian Diaspora’ and we benefit from it”. Immigrants should be admitted according to economic needs and labour market requirements, in addition to family-related migration and asylum seekers.

Those immigrants should adapt themselves to a certain extent to the Dutch society. Adoption of a minimum set of norms and values is required in order to function in the public domain. Demanding that people learn the language might be part of that. On the other hand, Kramer is “strongly opposing the current political development towards the assimilation of

\[55\] An educational program for (Dutch) children of foreign descent (those belonging the target groups of the Minorities Policy) to teach them the basics of the (official) language of their home country, see §2.4.
immigrants”. Especially in the private domain, “people should have the full right to their own culture, religion, et cetera. That is a basic human right. We Frisians know by experience how it feels to be forced to another language and culture”.

3.8.3 European Union
As said, the FNP aims for a stronger position of Fryslân within the Dutch state, which should therefore be federalized. This objective is embedded in a vision on the future development of the European Union. For example, the FNP proposes the introduction of a Senate in which the regions are represented:

“European Parliament elections should be open to non-national political parties that represent European peoples – some 50 million people. The present ‘Region Committees’ have to be transformed into an elected Senate for Europe and so citizens can then vote for candidates from these non-national political parties, thus resulting in a more and better democracy in Europe” (FNP 2009).

With a Frisian nation-state ruled out as an option, one strategy to obtain a higher degree of autonomy of Fryslân vis-à-vis the Netherlands is to strengthen the European regions at the expense of the member states. In the words of Kramer:

“We want European integration to continue, because that would bring an end to the nation state, and the nation state has caused a lot of trouble in history [besides many good things]. (…) Since the Maastricht Treaty, and certainly since the grounding of the EU Constitution, the member states tend to view things from a national perspective, causing growing discord within the Union. (…) Therefore, we strive for a democratically legitimated European Parliament, with European-wide party-lists, and with rights that are comparable to that of the national Parliaments. (…) This will create truly European parties. (…) It will also change the perception of voters, and make them see things from a European perspective rather than from a national perspective. (…) They will start to see and manifest themselves as European voters. This will certainly cause conflict with the nation states, but it will also enable the regions to make a strong case vis-à-vis the nation state”.

To summarize, the FNP favours a strongly federalized structure of both the Netherlands and the EU, and a stronger and truly democratic EU in which the position of regions and national minorities is strengthened at the expense of the current member states (nation-states). To Kramer this all follows from the thoroughly federalist nature of the FNP:

“The FNP has always been a federalist party, and at any level – whether it be the municipalities, the province, the Netherlands or the EU – we have always supported government structures ‘bottom up’. (…) Decentralisation and federalisation brings power and decision making closer to the people and makes for a better government.

Federalisation may have a spin-off in other areas as well. An econometric study of the University of Groningen – initiated by the FNP – suggests that federalism, all other things being equal, may lead to a larger economic output (Crucq & Hemminga 2007).
Kramer sees enlargement in itself as “a very positive development”, because “it contributes greatly to the ethnic, cultural and linguistic diversity”. The recent enlargement with Eastern European countries, according to Kramer also changes the work of the FNP:

“We think so, because it implies that there are many more languages and cultures, and many more national minorities, and we think that’s enriching. We would like to make a contribution to it, in the sense that we would like to see Frisian bilingualism – together with everything we realised for it institutionally – as an ‘export product’. (…) For a part this pertains to very practical matters, like ‘how to deal with a minority language on the internet?’, ‘how to deal with the wordlists used in cell phones?, and ‘how to implement bilingual education’?. We have a lot of experience with those issues, that we could export to countries like Romania, Bulgaria and Hungary which have many minorities. This could also reduce ethnic tensions. (…) If people respect one another, and if people are facilitated to preserve their own culture and language, an important reason for potential conflict is removed”.

To Kramer, the EU is European in an geographical sense. For instance, Turkey (even if it is difficult to decide because this country is both Asian and European) can become part of the Union, but Morocco cannot. An important reason for Kramer to refuse accession of a country to the EU would be “lack of democracy and lacking protection of the rights of minorities”. Turkey, for instance, treats its national minorities like the Kurds and the Armenians in a very bad way and should not become a member state until this problem is solved. If that is the case, Kramer has no objections to the accession of Turkey.

3.8.4 (European) public sphere

The FNP cooperates with several other organisations. In the Senate, the FNP works together with other regional parties and the Greens (Groenen) in the Independent Senate Faction (Onafhankelijke Senaats fractie, OSF). The OSF has one seat, occupied by an FNP politician. Kramer explains:

“With the OSF we cooperate because its is representing our interests (regional interests) best. Originally, the Dutch Senate was meant to represent the regions and its members are voted indirectly at a provincial level, but unfortunately, the Senate is dominated by political parties that are organized at the national level. Besides that, the FNP in this way gets a tiny share of the state subsidies for political parties that can be used for scientific research and the like”.

At the EP, the FNP is represented by the European Free Alliance, of which it is one of the cofounders. “The collaboration with the European Free Alliance comes from a common interest in enhancing regional autonomy”, says Kramer. More recently, the FNP started cooperation with two political movements of national minorities in northern Germany, the Süd-Schleswiger Wahl Verein (a union of Nord-Friesen and Schleswig Danes) and Die Friesen. Finally, there are (personal) ties with some other regional parties in Europe.

The ability of the FNP to influence politics on a national and EU-level is limited, Kramer admits. One reason is that, where the media at local and regional level take the FNP seriously, the media at a national or higher level hardly pay attention. On the other hand, the FNP has
had a substantial influence on provincial politics. This, however, took time. From its inception, the FNP met a lot of ridicule and resistance (comp. Huisman 2003: 62-70). Kramer says:

“Especially when it comes to promoting a more autonomous status for Fryslân, we meet opposition. From the left, the criticism in general is that (regional) nationalism is evil in itself. When fascist groups in the nineties tried to infiltrate in our organisation, this type of criticism immediately followed. At the right side of the political spectrum, critics say we are undermining the unity of the Dutch state”.

Despite the often negative reactions, and despite the fact that the FNP in the Provincial States still is part of the opposition, over time many points of the FNP-program were adopted by other parties. Kramer gives the example of the use of the Frisian language by the provincial authorities: “Ten years ago we were ridiculed and seen as the lunatic fringe of Frisian politics, but now we are at the centre [of Frisian politics], and the Frisian language is used properly”. Kramer gives two reasons for this indirect success: the electoral gains of the FNP since 2003 (when the party got 13.2% of the votes) and the fragmentation of Dutch politics since the Fortuyn-era. The latter worked like a wake-up call for Dutch politics in general and urged Frisian politics to take the FNP-agenda more seriously.

Kramer thinks that the development of a European public sphere may benefit greatly from federalisation of the EU. He deems a top-down organisation of a European communication space unnecessary: “What we need is further integration and democratisation of a federal Europe. (...) For instance when the EP gains power, EU-citizens will be more involved in EU-politics and this European communication space will develop in a natural way as a result of that”.

3.8.5 Conclusion

Among the Dutch organisations studied for the EuroSphere research, the FNP stands out in several ways. It is the only Dutch political party that clearly intends to represent a national minority, the Frisians, which is in fact the only officially recognised national minority in the Netherlands. Furthermore the FNP envisions a rather fundamental restructuring of EU institutions and aims at a federalisation on all political levels, with the objective to weaken the current nation states and strengthen the position of regions, and hence of national minorities, vis-à-vis the member states.

This resembles the EU restructuring advocated by the nationalist organisation Voorpost (§3.9.1) and it is tempting to make comparisons. However, there are two marked differences: (1) the FNP wants more autonomy for Fryslân without altering the map of the Netherlands or Europe, but Voorpost wants to abolish many current nation states and create new nation states around the national minorities in the current nation states; (2) the FNP holds rather positive views on immigration and diversity in political entities like the Netherlands and Fryslân, but Voorpost wants the Netherlands, and the new to form nation states it envisions, to be ethnically homogenous.

Despite the fact that the FNP only operates (directly) at the local and provincial level, it is has a keen eye for cooperation at the European level. This seeming paradox can best be explained by the following two factors: (1) an awareness among the FNP and likeminded regional political parties that they together represent millions of EU citizens belonging to national minorities, meaning that successful EU level cooperation could generate substantial political power; (2) the realisation that national minorities in EU member states and the EU
(as a political entity) share a common interest, in the sense that strengthening the regions would give both the EU and the national minorities more power vis-à-vis the member states.

4 THINK TANKS IN THE NETHERLANDS

4.1 Introduction

In this paragraph three Dutch think tanks are investigated: the Scientific Council for Government Policy (WRR), a state-founded and state-funded think tank which task it is to give ‘scientific advice’ to the government (§4.2), the Verwey-Jonker Institute, a scientific institute that studies social issues and played an important role in the coming about of a parliamentary report on the success of integration policies (§4.3), and Forum which positions itself as an advocate of the multicultural society in general (§4.4).

In order to assess to what extent think tanks in the Netherlands differ from think tanks in other countries, we first look at the concept of think tank. First of all, it seems difficult to exactly define the concept of think tank. The term ‘think tank’ is applied to “a remarkably diverse group of organisations (…) [that] vary considerably in size, structure, policy area and political significance” (Stone & Garnett 1998: 2). Furthermore, it is “a slippery term which is applied in a haphazard fashion to organisations undertaking policy-related, technical or scientific research and analysis” (Stone & Garnett 1998: 3). To narrow this down a bit, we hold think tanks to be

“relatively autonomous organisations engaged in the analysis of policy issues independently of government, political parties and pressure groups; (…) ‘relatively autonomous’ [because] think tanks are often in resource-dependent relationships with these organisations. Funding may come from government sources but these institutes attempt to maintain their research freedom and at least claim to be beholden to any specific interest. They attempt to influence or inform policy through intellectual argument and analyses rather than direct lobbying. They are engaged in the intellectual analyses of policy issues and are concerned with the ideas and concepts which underpin policy. Towards this end, think tanks collect, synthesize and create a range of information products, often directed towards a political or bureaucratic audience, but also for the benefit of the media, interest groups, business and the general public” (Stone & Garnett 1998: 3).

Here, especially the notion of independence is of interest. In North-American definitions of think tanks, independence from the state seems to be a defining characteristic (Stone & Garnett 1998: 3). However, in other cultural areas – like Europe – this claim seems too strong and excludes most organisations we would like to include as a think tank. In the Netherlands, organisations like the WRR (§4.2) are founded by the government by an act of establishment, which also has an influence on the composition of the Council. Likewise, political parties in the Netherlands have independent foundations – so-called ‘scientific bureaus’ – which are subsidized by the state via the political party they are allied with (see §3.1.1) (Act of Establishment 1976). Those scientific bureaus of the political parties can be regarded as think tanks, but because of the one-to-one relationship between political parties at one hand and their scientific bureaus and youth organisations on the other hand, we have chosen to describe all three together in Chapter 3. Another essential aspect is influence. We focus our discussion
on an assessment of the influence the three think tanks have on the Dutch and European public sphere.

4.2 The Scientific Council for Government Policy (WRR)

The Scientific Council for Government Policy (Wetenschappelijke Raad voor het Regeringsbeleid, WRR) is a think tank that is directly related to the government. It was founded in 1976 by the so-called Act of Establishment (1976), which describes the tasks and organisational structure of the WRR. Its legal task is to:

“(1) supply for Government Policy scientifically sound information on developments which may affect society in the long term and draw timely attention to anomalies and bottlenecks to be anticipated; (2) provide a scientific structure which the Government could use when establishing priorities and which would ensure that a consistent policy is pursued; (3) with respect to studies undertaken in the sphere of research on future developments and long-term planning in both public and private sectors, make recommendations on the elimination of structural inadequacies, the furtherance of specific studies and the improvement of communication and coordination” (Act of Establishment 1976).

Besides subsidies, the government has a direct influence on the composition of the Council. The chairman and other council members of the WRR are appointed by the government “on the recommendation of Our Prime Minister, (…) made in accordance with the consensus of the Council of Ministers” (Act of Establishment 1976) for a period of five years, unless discharged earlier. Furthermore the government has a say in the scientific agenda of the WRR. The “programme of work” is drawn up or changed only after consultation of the PM, who in turn hears the Council of Ministers. On the other hand the WRR may, “on its own initiative, request that certain studies or research projects be undertaken (…) through the intermediary of [the Council of] Ministers” (Act of Establishment 1976). Furthermore, Ministries and other bodies of the government at all levels have the duty to supply the WRR with all necessary data, existing research results, information about (intended) policies, etcetera (Act of Establishment 1976). So on one hand the government has a direct influence on the WRR (funding, appointments, agenda), but on the other hand the WRR has a unique access to all kinds of information regarding government policies.

Interviewees We studied WRR advices regarding two policy fields: (i) immigrant admission and integration and (ii) European integration. (i) Regarding the first policy field we studied three, rather influential so-called ‘reports to the government’ of the WRR, Ethnic Minorities (WRR 1979), Allochtonenbeleid (WRR 1989) and the Netherlands as an immigration society (WRR 2001a). We interviewed Mr Han Entzinger a former staff member who was the main author of the 1989-report, and Mr Dennis Broeders, a staff member who was involved in the production of the 2001-report. (ii) For the second policy field we studied the reports Towards a pan-European Union (2001) on European enlargement, Decisiveness in a pan-European Union (2003) on the decision-making processes in the Union and The European Union, Turkey and Islam (2004) on Islam and Turkish accession to the European Union. In relation to those reports, we interviewed Mrs Monika Sie Dhian Ho, former staff member of the WRR and Mr Jan Schoonenboom, former member of the WRR, both involved in the production of the reports.

4.2.1 WRR-reports on migration policy: Ethnic Minorities

In 1979 – only a few years after its foundation – the WRR on its own initiative published a report titled Ethnic minorities (Etnische minderheden) (WRR 1979). This report came in a
period which was marked by a lot of societal unrest about immigration and integration. During the seventies, it became clear that a large share of the so-called ‘guest workers’ from the Mediterranean were to stay permanently in the Netherlands, and many reunited with their families. Furthermore, their presence was politicised because a new, and much stricter law on migrant labour provoked sharp protests and some ten thousand people (both guest workers and Dutch citizens) demonstrated against this new law (Schuster 1999: 194-196). At the same time, there was a considerable influx of immigrants from the former colony of Surinam. More importantly, there were several terrorist actions committed by militant members of the Moluccan minority, (descendants of) former soldiers in the Dutch colonial army in Indonesia who felt betrayed by the Dutch government and were by that time living ‘temporarily’ in the Netherlands for almost thirty years.

Despite all this, immigration (in the sense of permanent settlement of immigrants) was a political taboo, and the Dutch government was very reluctant to recognize (obvious) immigration as a fact (Van Amersfoort 1983). Amidst all this turmoil the WRR brought a clear and convincing message which came down to the following: (1) the government should accept permanent immigration as a fact, and develop a policy for the ‘ethnic minorities’ that came into existence due to this immigration, (2) this so-called ‘Minorities policy’ should aim at giving the minorities a position in Dutch society equivalent to that of the indigenous population, (3) responsibility for this Minorities policy should be put in one hand, preferably at the Ministry of Home Affairs, (4) the government should create a ‘structure for participation’ to give ethnic minorities a voice in (the implementation) of the Minorities Policy, (5) the government should create a scientific structure to monitor and guide the implementation of the Minorities Policy (Penninx 1979: 163-174; WRR 1979). This report turned out to be very influential. In a reaction (Regeringsreactie 1980) the government almost integrally adopted the advice and most of it was materialised in the subsequent development of the Minorities Policy (Min. BiZa 1981; Min. BiZa 1983).

However, during the late eighties, there was growing disappointment with the Minorities Policy. According to Han Entzinger, Henk Molleman, the director of the Directorate Minorities Policy of the Ministry of Home Affairs, approached the WRR because he doubted the effectiveness of the Minority Policy. He thought that there was a need for a new advice by the WRR – like the one of 1979. The government shared this vision and an official request for policy advice was sent to the WRR in 1987. In this request, the government stated that too little progress was made in key policy areas like housing, education and labour market, and that advice was needed to make ‘strategic choices’ regarding the future direction of the Minorities Policy (Min. AZ 1987: 207). This all happened against a background of rising immigration, and high unemployment, juvenile crime and school-dropout rates among immigrants, and growing societal unrest about those developments (De Jong 2002: 81).

4.2.2 WRR-reports on migration policy: Allochtonenbeleid

In 1989 the WRR published *Allochtonenbeleid* – the new report the government had requested in 1987. This title in several ways reveals a new vision. First of all it meant the introduction of a new term in policy. The term *allochtoon* – for which no proper English equivalent exists – literally means ‘originating from another country’. An *allochtoon* is a individual living in the Netherlands of which at least one parent is born abroad (see §2.2.2). The use of the term *allochtoon* also revealed a fundamental (proposed) policy shift and a distancing from the

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56 Though the term *allochtoon* was coined much earlier, see (Verwey-Jonker 1973).
57 Though the English word allochthon is used in geology.
Minorities Policy. Where the latter was targeting six specific ethnic minority groups, the WRR report *Allochtonenbeleid* took ‘allochthonous individuals’ as its target group.

*Allochtonenbeleid* also implied a shift from socio-cultural emancipation towards socio-economic participation. *Allochtonenbeleid* stressed the fact that allochthonous citizens represented ‘human resources’. The report claimed that the Minorities Policy had made immigrants dependent receivers of the welfare state, which hindered their participation in the labour market and educational system. More than before, the immigrants where to be held responsible for their own well-being. Enhancing their educational level and labour market performance would benefit both the allochthonous citizens themselves and Dutch society at large. To reach this goal, *Allochtonenbeleid* proposed a ‘Integration Policy’ targeting “recently arrived immigrants who are dependent on the [welfare] state, and unemployed allochthonous receivers of benefits whose educational level is below the level of Dutch Primary Education, including all young allochthonous women whose husband is receiving a social benefit” (WRR 1989: 43-44). This Integration Policy was to be sanctioned by reduction of benefits in case of non-cooperation.

The necessity for the proposed Integration Policy followed from a new vision on immigration brought forward in *Allochtonenbeleid*. With the Minorities Policy, the government had acknowledged the permanent settlement of immigrants already living in the Netherlands, but this policy lacked a vision on (future) immigration. This is illustrated well by the fact that the target groups included the autochthonous *woonwagenbewoners* (caravan dwellers), but not important immigrant groups like the Chinese. *Allochtonenbeleid* urged the government to see immigration as a permanent phenomenon, kept in motion by asylum, and family formation and reunification (WRR 1989: 19-20, 27-28). The Netherlands could only absorb this ongoing influx of immigrants if it adopted an Integration Policy and adapted its welfare state.

The report received a mixed reception among policy makers. First of all, the Directorate Coordination Minorities Policy (DCM) which originated the report, was not very pleased with its outcome. The main reason for DCM to request a new WRR-report was that its director Molleman deemed it necessary to get more powers to implement the Minorities Policy. However, as Entzinger explains, *Allochtonenbeleid* advised the government just to do the opposite:

“One of the conclusions of the [*Allochtonenbeleid*] was that laying down all responsibilities with the Ministry of Home Affairs [in casu DCM] reduced incentives for other ministries to take action and isolated the issue from the rest of society. So we in fact proposed that the other ministries would be kept responsible as well, instead of giving them an easy way out to get rid of their responsibilities. This meant that DCM would rather get less powers. DCM did not at all expect [that outcome], but at a certain moment they sensed it, and there was a lot of lobbying going on”.

The proposed policy shifts according to main author Entzinger certainly endangered vested interest, not only of DCM, but also of other parties: “Especially during the last weeks of the [completion of] the report, I was sometimes phoned several times per evening by a minority organisation, a MP or a civil servant, (…) and I realized: ‘we do matter’. But the line at the WRR was to resist lobbying. (…) I experienced the WRR as independent”. Also the research community around the Minorities Policy lobbied against the report, and some researchers stated that the research was “unscientific” (Muus & Penninx 1989) or even “racist” (Rex 1995).
It is difficult to assess the influence of *Allochtonenbeleid* on government policy. Unlike the WRR-report *Ethnic Minorities* from 1979, *Allochtonenbeleid* was neither immediately, nor completely adopted by the government. In a reaction, the government agreed that immigration would continue, but also expressed the intention to “limit immigration where possible” (Kabinetsstandpunt 1990: 7). Essential points like the sanctioned integration policy were rejected (Kabinetsstandpunt 1990: 20, 25). This led to great disappointment with Han Entzinger and together with economist and former WRR-Council member Arie van der Zwan he lobbied at the Ministry of Home Affairs for a policy shift in the direction of the Integration Policy they deemed crucial for the future capacity to absorb immigrants in the educational system and the labour market. This lead to a request for a policy advice from Home Affairs, which was offered to the government in 1994 (Van der Zwan & Entzinger 1994: 5). Many of the advices of *Allochtonenbeleid* were repeated, but one essential ingredient was added: the advice to make the Dutch welfare state ‘immigration proof’ by limiting the access of immigrants to welfare state provisions for several years during which they were allowed to work at so-called ‘concession companies’ and would receive a basic education. Much to the surprise of Entzinger, from 1994 onward several elements of both advices were adopted by the government and an integration policy took shape (Min. BiZa 1994; Min. GSI 2002; Min. GSI 1999). However, some points like temporary exclusion from welfare state provisions and financial sanctions for non-cooperation turned out ‘a bridge too far’ for policymakers and were not implemented.

### 4.2.3 WRR-reports on migration policy: The Netherlands as immigration society

In 2001 the WRR published its third large report on immigration, titled the Netherlands as immigration society (WRR 2001a). Like *Allochtonenbeleid* this report starts from the assumption that immigration is a lasting phenomenon, because the possibilities to curb immigration are limited by international obligations (like the UN refugee treaty). However, the Netherlands as immigration society differed in two respects from the former report. Firstly, where *Allochtonenbeleid* mostly focussed on national issues, the 2001-report had a ‘transnational perspective’ (Scholten 2007a: 209), heavily borrowing from insights from scientific research on internationalisation, transnational communities and hybrid identities. Secondly, the 2001-report contained an extensive analysis of the economic consequences of immigration into the Netherlands (Van Dalen 2001b).

*The Netherlands as immigration society* had a limited influence on policy. There are three reasons for this. The first reason is completely external to the report. The report was published around 9/11, which caused a 180 degrees turn in the Dutch political and public debate on immigration and integration, bending the integration policy in an assimilationistic direction (see §2.2.8). The transnational perspective the WRR had adopted in the report, simply did not fit in very well. Dennis Broeders explains this mainly from the turbulent (inter)national developments at that time:

> “The report came about just before everything started to drift; 9/11 and its influence on the national integration debate. The ‘shutters went down’ and stayed down for a long time, though now there is a growing understanding that the Netherlands cannot be closed [for immigrants]. This report went down a little bit in a maelstrom of developments”.

The second reason for its limited influence is based in the report itself, which was rather indecisive on the crucial point of the costs and benefits of immigration and its effect on the Dutch welfare state. At one hand the WRR states that “a clear policy vision on the

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58 Interview with Han Entzinger.
The phenomenon of immigration is lacking, and hence, [policymakers] often just refer to international obligations" (WRR 2001a: 20). This leads to “a reactive policy” with too little attention to questions like “which immigrants can we use, which immigrants do we need?” (WRR 2001a: 20). The WRR even discusses the possibility to change the treaties themselves (WRR 2001a: 89), but the report does not give any real answers to those questions.

Furthermore, the WRR explains its focus on non-western immigrants by “the fear that these migrants will make disproportionate demands on the facilities of the welfare state, to which they will be unable to contribute proportionately due to their lack of education, language skills and suitable work experience” (WRR 2001b: 14). Hence, one of the research questions of the report is “What course is the process of immigration taking and what consequences does this have for the prospects of integration and for the existing welfare state arrangements and their sustainability?” (WRR 2001b: 15). Also this important question is not answered properly in the report. Harry van Dalen – the economist who wrote the economic chapter (Van Dalen 2001b) – wanted to add recommendations in order to make the Dutch welfare state more ‘immigration proof’. However, for several reasons the program leaders deemed an analysis of the relation between immigration and welfare state undesirable. According to Broeders, lack of Dutch statistical data on immigration was one of the reasons not to include a (retrospective) economic analyses of the costs and benefits of immigration. Lack of data would make the outcomes very uncertain, and would also make it virtually impossible to assess what would have happened in the hypothetical case that no immigration would have occurred. Furthermore, also normative considerations played a role. The program leaders deemed it too painful to analyse the relation between immigration and welfare state, partly because they feared that immigrants would be blamed for the restructuring of the Dutch welfare state (Van de Beek forthcoming). Discontent with the functioning of the Council in general, Van Dalen left the WRR and published an article with much the same content as the economic chapter of Nederland als immigratiesamenleving, but with the recommendation to exclude immigrants temporarily from the welfare state (compare §4.2.2) and create financial incentives that link immigration to integration (Van Dalen 2001a). This kind of policy is now implemented with the Civic Integration Abroad Act (see §2.3.2, §3.6.2).

But there is also a more abstract reason for the limited influence of the Netherlands as immigration society, which relates to an more general restructuring of the science-policy nexus. In the seventies and eighties, policymakers held a ‘technocratic view’ on the science-policy nexus. They believed in the possibilities to solve societal problems with scientific means, and were confident enough to leave the conceptual design, implementation and monitoring of the Minorities Policy by and large to social scientists. However, at the turn of the century, policy makers had developed more moderate expectations about the abilities of science. In many cases, politicians even use a rather cynical ‘pick and choose’ strategy and – more often than before – just use scientific advise when and how it suits their political motives (Scholten 2007a).

### 4.2.4 WRR-reports on European cooperation: Towards a pan-European Union

In 2001, anticipating the enlargement of the European Union with the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, the WRR published its report ‘Towards a pan-European Union’. Objectives of this report were to provide building blocks for the Dutch policy towards the accession and towards the preservation of the achievements of the Union after Central and Eastern European countries had acceded. On the issue of accession the WRR was very clear: It would enlarge

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the zone of safety and stability in Europe and contribute to the further development of a political and economic order throughout Europe. Preservation of the achievements of the European Union after the enlargement was a more difficult issue. The WRR noticed that on the one hand candidate countries were going through an enormous transformation causing high costs. On the other hand EU accession and the adaptation necessary for this also brought many costs. In the eyes of the WRR it was unlikely that the countries could bear the costs of both. This meant that swift accession could not be accomplished if the candidate countries had to adopt the full acquis communautaire. Therefore, the WRR proposed to determine in which policy areas adjustment problems could be expected and then to determine what aspects of the acquis communautaire were essential to the functioning of the Union. The WRR suggested formulating a ‘core’ acquis to be applied immediately after accession, and a ‘residual’ acquis for which an introductory process had to be laid down upon accession, but which could be applied in a later phase. The WRR also advised in which policy fields this ‘core’ acquis should be developed (WRR 2001c).

The reaction of the Dutch cabinet to the report was half-hearted (Regeringsreactie WRR-rapport no 59 "Naar een Europabrede Unie" 2001). The cabinet subscribed to the conclusion that swift enlargement was in the interests of both the member states and the candidate countries. However, it held to the position that full adoption and implementation of the acquis communautaire should be the aim. Upon their request and if needed candidate countries could be granted transitional periods, but the cabinet did not want to address this beforehand or start a discussion on what a ‘core’ acquis should encompass. Although the WRR proposed a completely different approach, the cabinet explained tactfully, that keeping to the negotiation process would in practice lead to the same results as the proposals of the WRR.

The report of the WRR was published when negotiations were already underway and one could argue that at that stage it was not useful any longer to determine what was important to implement and what not. However, Monika Sie Dhian Ho, at that time member of the scientific staff of the WRR and contributor to the reports on Europe, thinks the report was not too late:

“Everything was being negotiated. At the same time it was observed again and again that the candidates failed in certain fields. They could have given priority to some fields. But that just did not happen. In some policy fields, especially in the field of justice and home affairs, they did differentiate. (…) In those fields, like the EMU and Schengen, there the idea of a ‘core’ acquis actually exists.”

Therefore, Sie Dhian Ho thinks that timing was not the reason why the proposals were not adopted. In her view there was still room for giving priority to certain aspects of the acquis and this actually happened when candidate countries were granted ad hoc exceptions.

According to Sie Dhian Ho, the main reason for ignoring the proposals was that the idea of a ‘core’ acquis “touched upon a taboo: ‘To accede to the European Union countries must implement the full acquis communautaire, the candidate countries do so, and therefore they can accede’”. For her this was the logic behind the whole accession process and she thinks this taboo left no room for discussion about a ‘core’ and a ‘residual’ acquis. Sie Dhian Ho thinks that there was an unwillingness “to systematically think about criteria on the basis of which exceptions can be granted”. This may also have resulted from the negotiation strategy. Sie Dhian Ho explains that “there is a once-only opportunity to decide whether countries can accede. As soon as they are members, that negotiating position is gone”. She acknowledges
that “telling beforehand which regulations are less important is not very clever”, since this could have led candidate countries to slacken their efforts for full implementation.

Although the main proposal of the report had not been received cheeringly, Sie Dhian Ho does not think it was completely irrelevant. She recalls that “the WRR was told informally that the strategic negotiation issue was of importance”. Therefore, the WRR “could understand that the prime minister did not spread about that the WRR had offered such a sensible approach for negotiations”. The cabinet did subscribe to the idea that enlargement should take place. For Sie Dhian Ho this was “at that moment a very important statement”, because “support for enlargement fluctuated around 50 percent and in none of the member states there was a majority in favour of enlargement”. She thinks that the report as such helped to increase the general acceptance of EU enlargement in the Netherlands.

4.2.5 WRR-reports on European cooperation: Decisiveness in a pan-European Union

As a follow-up to its report on European enlargement the WRR published ‘Decisiveness in a pan-European Union’ in 2003. In this report the WRR examined how an enlarged EU could act in a decisive way and preserve the achievements of the Union. The WRR observed an increased diversity in positions and interests within the European Union. More and more politically sensitive policy areas belong to the realm of the Union and, simultaneously, there is an increased demand for consistent and common action. Pointing out these trends, the WRR expressed its concerns about the decisiveness and legitimacy of EU decisions in the future. In its report the Council suggested to make better use of the options of institutional variance that the EU offers. Options described in the report are the Community method with binding legislation for all member states, hard and soft methods of coordination and the formation of leading groups. Following its suggestion for variance, the WRR explored the feasibility of these options in several policy fields. The WRR concluded that, depending on the policy area, a more differentiated approach should be taken (WRR 2003).

Traditionally, the Dutch government preferred the Community method as the ideal method for decision-making, because this served the interests of the Netherlands as one of the smaller member states. In its official reaction to the report, the Dutch cabinet endorsed the main conclusion that the EU can benefit from using institutional variance (Kabinetsreactie 2003). The cabinet emphasized that it still preferred the Community method, because in its view that is the best guarantee for legitimacy and equality of member states. Nevertheless, the cabinet acknowledged that this method was not feasible in all policy fields and by this, the cabinet opened a door for supporting other forms of decision-making. However, the cabinet’s reaction on the proposals for specific policy areas was less supportive and most of them were put aside.

For Sie Dhian Ho, the main contribution of the WRR report was that it helped to legitimise other forms of cooperation in the Netherlands. It changed the classical view that the Community method was the only correct way of decision-making in the EU. Sie Dhian Ho:

“All other methods were considered too intergovernmental; in which small countries would be crushed. Coordination was considered a substitute for issuing regulations, while it can actually be a move in the direction of regulations, a first step. I am convinced the report helped in legitimating different forms of cooperation. (...) The State Secretary used the report to legitimise his way of thinking.”

Sie Dhian Ho thinks that the WRR proposals for rules for the formation of leading groups (‘enhanced cooperation’ groups) in the EU have definitely influenced the position of the Dutch government. When formulation of these rules became an issue, the WRR report was handed to the negotiators. Sie Dhian Ho:
“During the negotiations he [Prime Minister Wim Kok] spread the concept among the negotiators. That was the moment that I felt our influence the most. It never happened before that the WRR had direct influence on negotiations.”

In Sie Dhian Ho’s view Dutch support for these rules was essential:

“Those rules for the formation of leading groups were actually formulated, because the Netherlands decided to be in favour of them. That was important, because some smaller countries were suspicious. The Netherlands took position.”

The final result was that rules for leading groups were actually formulated.

4.2.6 WRR-reports on European cooperation: The European Union, Turkey and Islam

In the second half of 2004 the Netherlands held the Presidency of the EU and in that period the EU was to take a decision on starting accession negotiations with Turkey. This issue lead to fierce debates on various levels. Jan Schoonenboom, former member of the WRR and involved in the realisation of the report, explains:

“Formally religion was not an issue in the question whether Turkey could become a member or not. At the same time there were many voices, for example in France and Germany, that had objections to Islam. There was also dissent about Turkey joining the EU within the Dutch Cabinet. The Dutch discomfort was related to Islam. At that time there was also much debate about including Judaeo-Christian principles in the Preamble to the European Constitution. When the argument of religion is clearly used, you cannot ignore that question in a report. Our motivation was that others were dealing with the criteria of Copenhagen; we had our own approach.”

The WRR had already decided to work on a project about Islam, which would include a part on Turkey. With these developments and the forthcoming EU decision in mind the WRR decided to make a separate report and move up the publication date, so its report would have relevance for the Dutch government.

The WRR noticed that the fact that Islam is the main religion in Turkey made many people hesitant about Turkish EU membership. Therefore, religion was an aspect that could not be ignored. The WRR report addressed the question whether the fact that a majority of the population in Turkey is Muslim forms an obstacle for Turkish accession to the EU. Derived from this was the question whether Turkish Islam conflicts with the values that form the basis of European cooperation. The WRR’s conclusion was that religion was no obstacle for accession. According to the WRR, relations between church and state are organized in very diverse ways within the European Union and it is impossible to speak of a European model of church-state relations on which Turkey can be tested. In the case of Turkey the constitution guarantees protection for the state against religious influences and the WRR thinks it is unlikely that Islam in Turkey will lose its moderate character. However, the WRR also noted that the influence of the state on religion should be loosened, but that this issue had already been addressed by the EU (WRR 2004).

The Dutch cabinet, keen on reaching a common position, accepted the conclusions of the report, which eliminated one of the main points of concern. In its official reaction the cabinet shared the conclusion that the majority of Turks being Muslim does not form an obstacle for EU accession. The cabinet further stated that the EU is a community of values that is not limited to a certain religion and underlined the reasoning that Turkish membership would be a positive signal for other Islamic countries. The way the Turkish state deals with religion and freedom of religion could, in the opinion of the cabinet, be addressed during the negotiation
phase (Kabinetsreactie op AIV en WRR-rapporten 2004). The cabinet succeeded in reaching agreement on opening accession negotiations under the conditions proposed by the European Commission before the EU summit on this issue actually took place. It is very likely that the WRR report has contributed to reaching this consensus.

Schoonenboom thinks the timing of the report to influence policies was perfect. He has “the impression that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the prime minister were happy with the report. The uncertainty about the Islam factor could be crossed out. The differing opinions within the cabinet could be mitigated.” He recalls that “Turkey also felt relieved and strengthened”. Schoonenboom estimates that the contribution of the report to a change in public opinion has been minimal:

“We thought we had written a beautiful report in a country that was on edge. At the press conference in The Hague there was hardly anyone. All attention focussed on a report, published at the same time, that stated that fear of Islam had sharply increased. For our report there was hardly any attention at that moment. (…) In society it did not have much effect.”

In the eyes of Schoonenboom the positions of political parties may have been influenced a little, but the rank and file of most of the parties were often too divided, so parties did not take strong positions. And although at that time the government decided to support the start of the negotiations, later “the government failed to stick to its principles”. According to Schoonenboom, “politicians make sure that the cultural aspect is not mentioned. Formally, no one dares to use the argument [of cultural alienation and Islam against Turkey], but everyone is using it, to put it bluntly”.

4.2.7 (European) public sphere

Although WRR reports are primarily addressed to the government, the WRR tries to have a broader influence. Normally after publication, a report is presented to the public via press conferences and series of debates. Sometimes presentations are organized abroad which was the case with the report on Turkey. The international orientation of the WRR is further shown by the translation of reports into other languages. The reports discussed before have been either fully translated to or summarized in other languages, including English, German, French and Turkish.

The WRR is part of a network of policy advising institutes throughout Europe and has direct links to European policy makers. According to Broeders, within the WRR

“There is a realisation that it is nice to advise the Dutch government, but that an important part of what the government is doing must eventually be arranged in Brussels. There’s a realisation that we must include that European dimension; not only for topics that deal with Europe, but for all topics.”

The network “has been launched recently and exists roughly for one year”. Although at the moment there is no direct cooperation between European policy advising institutes, Broeders thinks that it may well be possible that more exchanges between institutes will take place in the future. Jan Schoonenboom, however, notes that “others are often very interested in continued cooperation. That is not possible”, due to the way the WRR is working with a five-yearly change in members, working plans and focus. This may be a reason why structural cooperation with other organisations at the moment is still lacking and in practice only ad hoc cooperation, mainly focused on information gathering, is taking place.

Whether the viewpoint of the WRR are accepted and adopted outside the WRR or not is highly depended of the topic, as we described before. According to our interviewees the
Council has definitely standing and influence in the academic community, which is reflected in the adoption of WRR argumentation in this community. The fact that members of the Council and most of its staff are also working at universities, may well be contributing to this acceptance. The influence of the WRR on other publics is less clear. Policymakers are, at the least, aware of advises and proposals, and some reports have deeply influenced policy-making as we described before. Whether public opinion in general is influenced or changed by WRR reports is hard to tell. Especially in the case of the recent reports we discussed, the anti-migration and anti-Islam tendency in Dutch society seems too strong for the reports to really change public opinion.

In addition to the direct efforts of the WRR to have a broad influence, its advises are trickling through via indirect ways. Our interviewees stated that in the cases of the reports on European cooperation it was clear to them that European policy makers were at least informed about the advises via the Dutch government. From the timing of the Turkey-report it can be concluded that the Council was aiming at an international impact via the Dutch Presidency of the Union.

What contributes to the impact of the WRR is its reputation of having a scientific approach and character. In addition to this its position, independent of politics and political parties, also contributes to the acceptance of its reports. At the same time the obligation of the cabinet to give an official reaction guarantees a high level reaction and impact.
4.3 The Verwey-Jonker Instituut

4.3.1 Introduction
The Verwey-Jonker Instituut (Verwey-Jonker Institute) was selected as a think tank in the Eurosphere research because of its contribution to an evaluation of national integration policies in a parliamentary investigation. This evaluation was a result of a parliamentary motion in 2002 by MP Marijnissen (SP) and concerned the question why integration policies in the past 30 years had hardly been successful. The motion resulted in the establishment of a parliamentary committee, called Tijdelijke commissie onderzoek integratiebeleid, de Commissie-Blok (a – temporary – investigative committee to examine the Integration Policy, the Blok Committee), which had the task to evaluate the integration policies of successive Dutch governments over the past 30 years. The Blok Committee selected the Verwey-Jonker Instituut to conduct a study of sources that would form the basis for the Blok Committee’s report.

The context in which the research was embedded was highly politicised: political expectations were high and almost only directed towards a negative outcome of the integration policy evaluation. The parliamentary debates on it also resonated in Dutch society and also focused on a rather negative outcome of the evaluation. The research findings, however, were relatively positive in their evaluation of the integration policies of successive governments. Because of these positive outcomes, the research was heavily criticized: it hardly found any societal support and was seen as a ‘failure’.

In the section below, in particular, the mixed reception of the research findings is described. Furthermore, Jan Willem Duyvendak, the institute’s general director at the time of the integration research, reflects on the institute’s position, on the reception of the report in society and in politics, and on the potential influence social sciences in general may have on political and social debates.

4.3.2 Organisation
The Verwey-Jonker Instituut was founded in 1993 as a private foundation for social research. It was named after Mrs Dr Hilda Verwey-Jonker (1908 – 2004), who combined independent research with profound intellectuality and social engagement (ING 2009). The institute’s objectives are providing scientifically supported answers to societal and social questions. It depends (financially) on assignments from governments at different levels and social entrepreneurs. The Verwey-Jonker Instituut operates in three main fields: i.e. ‘citizenship, safety and social vitality’, ‘youth, child rearing and education’, and ‘participation in society’. It currently has a staff of 50 employees and two directors, general director Hans Boutellier and research director Rally Rijkschroeff. A key question in many of its projects is: who is in control of a particular situation? Therefore, it often operates in civil society with actors such as housing corporations, municipalities and local welfare organisations (Verwey-Jonker Instituut 2009b; Verwey-Jonker Instituut 2009a).

Interviewee Mr Jan Willem Duyvendak (1959) was general director of the Verwey-Jonker Instituut from 1999 until 2003. Under his leadership the institute acquired the Blok-assignment and conducted the research. Duyvendak himself was criticised for conducting such a research while being member of the GroenLinks election program committee. It was suggested that his leftist point of view would compromise the research, which he denied. After Duyvendak left the institute, he became professor at the University of Amsterdam. Duyvendak has a degree in sociology and philosophy.
4.3.3 The Verwey-Jonker Instituut’s role in the integration policy research

The Verwey-Jonker Instituut was selected by the Blok Committee because of its expertise and, simultaneously, for its relatively unbiased position in the field of integration policies: unlike other social research institutes, so far it had not been involved in the development of government policies about integration. The organisation was relatively young and the assignment offered opportunities to strengthen its reputation (Scholten 2007b: 225-227). However, the research assignment to the institute raised questions in society. Former director Jan Willem Duyvendak recalls:

“Integration research was not an elaborated profile of the Verwey-Jonker Instituut, but our profile became contested in the press. It was stated that we could not evaluate ourselves, because we supposedly had played a role in the development of integration policies. We had done some research on integration policy indeed, but that only concerned local or thematic questions, and was never about general integration policy. It was in that sense incomparable with the role that, for instance, Entzinger or Penninx had played.”

Although the parliamentary motion was formulated in a normative way, i.e. suggesting integration policy had been minimally successful, the research question was formulated in a (relatively) neutral way and therefore was open to conclusions which pointed both in a positive and a negative direction. The main objectives were to test the policy aims of successive governments with the results of those policies. The idea behind the research was that an evaluation of 30 years of integration policies legitimize future integration policies (Verwey-Jonker Instituut 2004b). The research was framed in such way that it mainly addressed socio-economic integration of immigrants, which did not leave much room for the evaluation of socio-cultural integration (Scholten 2007b: 227). After the first study of sources, the Blok Committee needed more in-depth information on several specific themes, such as emancipation of women and girls and minorities organisations. After this additional assignment, the Verwey-Jonker Instituut provided the Blok committee with an additional study of sources on the requested topics (Tweede Kamer 2004e).

After several months of research, the Verwey-Jonker Instituut published its conclusions. The institute’s report formed the starting point for the Blok Committee to write its own report, which mainly verified the conclusions of the study of sources with a series of interviews. The general conclusions of the report of the Blok Committee, called Bruggen Bouwen (Building Bridges), were that the integration of immigrants has ‘partly or totally’ succeeded. One of the reasons for this rather positive outcome lies in the relative success of immigrants in education. Since the committee considered education a key condition for integration, it made the overall conclusion that integration has been (relatively) successful (Tweede Kamer 2004a; Tweede Kamer 2004b).

Apart from these positive outcomes, the Verwey-Jonker Instituut also made some critical remarks towards integration policies and the government. A subject such as social unrest had not received much political attention in the last decades, and consequently was excluded from policy aims. Simultaneously, this was a key concept in societal debates. Therefore, the institute raised the question whether successive governments had formulated the ‘right’ integration objectives. Furthermore, the institute concluded that socio-cultural integration succeeded only to a certain extent. Besides the fact that there was not much space within the research for this topic, it was partly due to the fact that objectives on this aspect of integration
had been readjusted and sharper formulated only recently and therefore, were difficult to measure in such a short period of time (Tweede Kamer 2004e).

When the Bruggen Bouwen report appeared in January 2004, many MPs responded negatively. Many condemned the report shortly after its publication, and seemed to have done so without taking the time to read any of its 2500 pages (Van Gent 2004; Nieuws.nl 2004). Also the Dutch press reacted mainly in a very negative way and wrote about the report in terms of ‘underestimated necessity of incorporation’ (De Volkskrant 2004a), ‘inconvenient message’ (Azough 2004), ‘highly criticised’ (Ten Hoove 2004), ‘a successful integration cannot be true’ (Schulte 2004) and ‘first parliamentary investigation which turns out to be a failure’ (Moerland 2004). Only several ‘multicultural groups’, such as Forum, Vluchtelingenwerk and the Education League showed a more positive reaction to the Blok report (De Volkskrant 2004b). Nevertheless, by April 2004, 25 out of the 27 motions (recommendations) the Blok Committee had made, ultimately were accepted in the House of Representatives (Tweede Kamer 2004f). The Parliament also found there was sufficient support to give the research a follow-up by discussing it with the Cabinet (Tweede Kamer 2004d). In a reaction to the Blok report the Cabinet wrote that it underlined most of its principles, although it differed on some points, e.g. it did not accept the committee’s recommendation to install a integration policy sub-committee in order to improve the interdepartmental coordination on integration (Ministerie van Justitie 2004b).

Duyvendak tells about the publication of the Blok Committee’s report and the social impact it had:

“The Verwey-Jonker Instituuut and the Blok Committee did not seem to have much impact because it was unwelcome news: it was scoffed and it literally could not be true. People did not read it. Simultaneously, I think it did have impact, because since the report’s appearance there seems to be some recognition of the fact that not all migrants perform badly in Dutch society.”

He continues: “But where the Verwey-Jonker Instituuut’s study of sources mentioned the success of integration due to policy, the Blok Committee rather spoke in terms of successful integration despite policy.” Duyvendak furthermore analyses: “it is a short-term reaction to think that the report did not have any social impact,” because, “after all, most of the Committee’s motions have been accepted by the House of Representatives.” But, he stresses “if a social debate is highly politicised, people will always read it in a way you think is unjust. (...) And the Dutch debate on integration is extremely polarized.”

4.3.4 European public sphere
Duyvendak states: “the political debate is not only very polarized, it is also very much embedded in a national context.” As a solution to this he suggests “to take the debate to a European level. In this respect, a European perspective would be very welcome.” Duyvendak explains:

“people think that a redefinition of the national identity would be the solution to many problems [concerning minorities], which I think is extremely impractical because it only makes people insecure. (...) Many allochtonen identify above all with the local instead of with the national level (...) and therefore, a local and a European level of identification
would give people more space. (…) This would avoid the national preoccupation within the integration debates.”

Furthermore, he holds this opinion on a European public sphere:

“naturally, within the field of sciences I see many European forums and conferences, but a European public sphere presupposes European broadcasting corporations and European newspapers and that is hardly the case. For a European public sphere there needs to be a communication space.”

How this can be realised in contemporary Europe is not clear to Duyvendak:

“I do not have a clue how to establish that: the argument that Europe would be too large or too diverse to establish that is in my opinion not true. I think the question is rather related to people’s identification with Europe and their recognition of Europe’s importance. But that’s where the discussion becomes normative.”

4.3.5 Conclusion

A key concept in the interview with Duyvendak was the normativity of scientific research and its impact on society. Normativity was an issue when the the Verwey-Jonker Instituut got the assignment, when Duyvendak’s personal position as the director and author of the research report was criticised because of his political views. About this, Duyvendak states:

“the Verwey-Jonker Instituut would never present itself as an institute that is connected to a certain political party. It has indeed a suggestion of being rather leftist, but that is common to social sciences in general. (…) I stress that scientific research, including the work of the Verwey-Jonker Instituut, has no political colour.”

He underlines: “no one is ‘immaculate’ in this respect”, in the sense that no one is completely neutral. Elaborating on this discussion, Duyvendak makes a distinction between the Verwey-Jonker Instituut and a think tank: “think tanks often have a certain budget provided by sponsors and have a specific program and a political persuasion. They often do not conduct research, but write reports in order to provide arguments for their standpoints.”

Elaborating on the issue of social impact, Duyvendak says:

“In the last years, we published many reasonable books about integration, which we hoped would make a difference, but they were hardly read nor reviewed. Then, I decided to publish a more normative pamphlet, which resulted in Het bange Nederland (The Anxious Dutch) (Cf. Duyvendak et al. 2008b). (…) Sometimes you need to be more radical in your actions in order to achieve something. (…) Whether it has had impact, I don’t know, we shall see. On the other hand, you can ask whether writing a 2500 pages report makes sense and what would be the impact of that?”

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60 ‘We’ is: Jan Willem Duyvendak and the co-authors of the respective publications, Ewald Engelen and Ido de Haan.
Related to the discussion above about social impact is Duyvendak’s part in a newspaper polemic with social scientist Ruud Koopmans (of the Free University in Amsterdam) (Koopmans 2008; Duyvendak et al. 2008c; Duyvendak et al. 2008a). About this debate Duyvendak states:

“The current debate with Koopmans is about ‘the facts’ and our interpretation of those facts. Koopmans presents himself as a positivist, as someone who has the facts. He allows the facts to speak for themselves, for as a scientist you don’t want to be seen as another opinion maker. But, naturally the way you present the facts is normative, so we also introduced our interpretation of those facts. (…) What would be the best strategy? I couldn’t tell. Interestingly, Koopmans is given space on the front page, as if he were a ‘real scientist’, which makes us merely opinion makers rather than scientists. This makes you think!”

In conclusion, Duyvendak apparently is struggling with the issue of how to have the most effective impact on social and political debates. A thorough investigation such as the Verwey-Jonker Instituut study of sources did not seem to have impact when it appeared. But later on, it did seem to have led to a more nuanced position of politicians and media towards integration. Another strategy Duyvendak applied was in fact the opposite of the study of sources and consisted of a normative pamphlet. But Duyvendak also has doubts about the impact of that particular publication. Of great importance in the social and societal debates on integration is the question whether an issue is highly politicised or not. This implies that people interpret contributions in a specific way which best suits their political views. That is why the evaluation of 30 years of integration policies only ‘could’ point in a negative direction. When it turned out to point in a different direction, it could not be true. Thus, normativity matters and makes it difficult to predict what will be the outcomes of a specific more or less scientific contribution. Finally, Duyvendak suggests that bringing the discussion to a European level, reduces the fixation on the nation, which might open up the discussion.

4.4 Forum

Forum, Instituut voor multiculturele ontwikkeling (Institute for Multicultural Development), is included in our research as a think tank because of its contributions to the debates on Dutch multicultural society in general and for its advisory role to the government, civic society and welfare institutions. Although Forum principally aims at Dutch multicultural issues, there has been an increasing exchange with foreign (European) partners. In the following paragraphs, the presentation of Eurosphere topics differs from the way in which political parties and social movement organisations are presented: the main focus of the interview with the Forum representative was on Forum’s role in Dutch society and its contributions to a European public sphere.

4.4.1 Introduction

In the 1980s, Dutch society was characterised by many different organisations involved with migrants: there were organisations of and organisations for migrants, the latter aiming at both support of migrant organisations and improvement of migrants’ position in society. Each of these organisations had its own history and position, and also subsidies were allocated in various ways. In addition, it was not always clear whether a specific organisation served as either a migrant organisation or as a support body, or as both. On top of that, some organisations also received government funding because of their participation in the migrant
consultation structure *Landelijk Overleg Minderheden* (LOM, National Migrant Consultation Structure, see §5.1).

In the early 1990s, the nontransparency in the field of migrant organisations and support bodies resulted in a government request to restructure the field and to redefine the objectives and functions of the organisations involved. Following the government’s request, a committee proposed to combine seven existing national migrant platforms into one new organisation. The new institute was founded in 1995 under the name of *Nederlands Expertisecentrum voor de Multiculturele Samenleving* (NEMS, Dutch Expertise Centre for the Multicultural Society). It included organisations of Surinamese, caravan dwellers and Gypsies, foreign women, foreign workers, Antilleans and Arubans, Lalla Rookh (Hindustanis) and Moluccans. In January 1996 NEMS’ name changed into ‘Forum’ (Forum unknown; Den Exter et al. 2006: 1050-1052).

### 4.4.2 Organisation

Forum is based in Utrecht and has over 100 employees. Its yearly budget is around 10 million Euros, which are provided by several Dutch ministries and by private funds. Forum’s mission statement is roughly reformulated every four to five years, when it publicizes a new working program. In the 2003 strategic vision Forum focused on ‘shared citizenship’, which gradually shifted via ‘unity in diversity’ (in 2007) towards the current ‘socially stable society’ (Forum 2009b). Today, Forum’s mission is threefold and promotes “social cohesion”, “a multi-ethnic society of equal citizens”, and “shared citizenship” (Forum 2009b). The Dutch democratic constitutional state forms an important condition for social stability, according to the organisation’s principles (Forum 2008b). Forum organizes projects, conferences and meetings, and functions as an advisor on legal migration and integration issues. The institute recently published works such as ‘Poles in the Netherlands’, ‘Education and Training for Roma and Sinti in the Netherlands’, and ‘Youth and their Islam’. Some works are published in both Dutch and English, but most publications are in Dutch only. Furthermore it publishes a quarterly magazine, *Forum magazine*. Forum cooperates with a broad range of organisations – from migrant groups, expert institutes in multicultural development, to organisations active in education, health care and welfare, among which Refugee Organisations in the Netherlands (VON, see §5.5.2) (Forum 2002; Forum 2009b). In its work, Forum combines social and scientific insights, which is expressed by – amongst others – the creation of the *Frank Buijs leerstoel* (Frank Buijs chair) for radicalisation studies at the University of Amsterdam, and by cooperation with the Verwey-Jonker Institute, which is engaged in research into social issues (see §4.3).

Forum has several sub divisions, which each have their specific expertise. Until 2004 Forum managed a service centre for migrant organisations, but since that time there are no activities that purely aim at the support of migrant organisations anymore. Apart from units that focus on youth, education, or labour, Forum has a special division that functions as a centre of expertise in itself, called *Immigratie en Juridisch Burgerschap* (Immigration and Legal Citizenship). This unit aims at providing up-to-date information for legal aid, and improving the legal position of migrants. Another objective is to enable greater digital exchange of expertise on migration and integration between various European countries. After two years of preparation, the Forum sub organisation *Unit Internationaal* (Unit International) has become operative in January 2009. An important motivation for establishing this unit lies in the increased demand for knowledge about the Dutch integration debates by (Dutch) diplomats living in the Arab world. This was a main reason for Forum to found a new centre of expertise that functions as a European and world-wide advisory institute on integration and migration issues (Forum 2009b; Forum 2008c).
Interviewee Mr Sadik Harchaoui (1973) has been a member of the board of directors since 2003, of which he has been chairman since 2004. He is of Moroccan descent and has a degree in law. Harchaoui was the driving force of a recent reorganisation through which the institute got more independence. Apart from his position in Forum he is also chairman of the Raad voor Maatschappelijke Ontwikkeling (RMO, Council of Social Development) and takes part in several advisory boards of socially involved organisations.

4.4.3 Forum’s role in Dutch society

Initially, Forum was founded to make the organisational landscape more transparent. Since this implied a change in funding for migrant organisations, Forum’s establishment met a lot of resistance among the organisations involved. One important organisation in this respect was the Nederlands Centrum Buitenlanders (NCB, Dutch Centre for Foreigners), which was a migrant support organisation that was supposed to be included in the new organisation in 1996. However, NCB refused to enter Forum and stressed that its own expertise needed to find continuity. The government did not acknowledge NCB’s position as an independent institute, after which NCB went on without government subsidies. There were also difficulties with LOM organisations, about which former Integration Minister Van Boxtel (from 1998 until 2002), states: “although LOM was the government’s partner in consultation, all the means went to Forum. That resulted in a tension between the two.” (Tweede Kamer 2004c: 498).

Chairman Sadik Harchaoui describes Forum’s founding process and the period directly following as:

“In the 1996 merger the people who were involved in the migrant organisations were given a place within Forum. (…) However, in 1998 there was already a change in Forum’s objectives, which ultimately became operative in 2003. From then on, we were not into advocacy anymore (…) and focused primarily on knowledge.”

He elaborates on the organisation’s objectives: “Of course, we’re often connected to minority issues, but what I want to stress here is that we neither work for minorities, nor for allochtonen or autochtonen. Our standpoint is that we work for the multicultural society in general.”

Harchaoui points out that Forum “wants to be an ‘indicator’ of problems in society” in the sense that the institute wants to point out what problems in society could be. He explains:

“There are certain issues that are hidden from view and which lack public attention. For example, the feeling of insecurity among autochtone Dutch, which is much debated, but has never been investigated. We see it as our job to put such an issue on the academic or governmental agenda. Whenever attention is guaranteed, we withdraw from it, since in that case others have taken over.”

Forum’s role of picking up social issues is also described by Harchaoui as “being a catalyst”. Although knowledge takes an important place in Forum’s activities, Harchaoui stresses that “Forum is not a scientific institute”. Following on the catalyst-role, Forum tries to be involved with “relevant knowledge”. In this respect Harchaoui explains, “to us, knowledge is only relevant if it potentially leads to the solution of social problems.” He adds to this: “I would like to call this a critically-constructive attitude.” Forum’s preference for relevant knowledge does not keep the institute from cooperating with scientific institutions, such as universities: “it has connections with all kinds of institutes that are somehow engaged in knowledge”.

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Harchaoui explicates the nature of Forum’s relation with the Dutch government. Although Forum’s position has not been laid down in law, “like WRR’s has, we’re accountable to the government with respect to what we do”. After all, he concludes, “we’re an institute with a subsidy relationship with the Dutch government.” Nevertheless, Harchaoui stresses: “we’re independent in choosing the activities we want to be involved in”. Furthermore, he points out that “Forum needs legitimacy from both society and the government.” He explains this with: “we need society’s legitimacy in order to retain our [information] position, and simultaneously need a political one that enables us to do our job.” Sometimes, Forum is requested by the government to make an inquiry into a specific subject. Harchaoui states that: “most of the time, this doesn’t come as a surprise, since we often initiate inquiries ourselves. (...) We make a suggestion to the government, after which the government picks it up and asks us to explore it.”

In Dutch society the concept of multiculturalism, which is included in the organisation’s subtitle, has been connected to a leftist point of view. After all, multiculturalists believe in a society in which multiple cultural groups coexist. Harchaoui is aware of this “leftist suggestion”, but stresses that he tries to counteract it. He takes several measures to protect the organisation against an unwanted image: Firstly, he states: “as a director, I’m not a member of a political party.” Secondly, he tries to “select Forum’s activities in a neutral way”, which is – amongst others – expressed by the subject of allochtonen that feel threatened. Thirdly, he wants “to make sure that the staff is of mixed political ideologies”. And finally, he tries to do so by “inviting speakers who are renown for their [non-leftist] political point of views”. He adds to that: “We just want that also right-wingers and conservatives in the Netherlands understand what Forum is about.” Nevertheless, he recognizes: “Multiculturalism remains a subject with a leftist suggestion and we take the concept as one of our principles. Therefore, I doubt whether the leftist image will disappear.”

4.4.4 European public sphere

Forum’s main focus is on the Dutch society. However, there has been an increased exchange between the organisation and foreign partners, in particular via units such as MigratieWeb (Migration web) and Unit International (Forum 2009b). Harchaoui says:

“Until recently, Forum’s cooperation with foreign countries took place in two different ways: the first was via the Migration Policy Group, which operates within the Forum program ‘Immigration and Legal Citizenship’ and which focuses on the fields of migration and integration. The second form of cooperation was with other European institutes, but that was very limited and only took place on an irregular basis. Since last January the ‘Unit International’ has been added to this list, which expresses our intensifying international cooperation.”

The increasing foreign demand for cooperation comes particularly from embassies Muslim countries. Harchaoui illustrates the nature of those requests: “we were asked to explain how Dutch society can be understood, in particular in relation to Wilders’ film ‘Fitna’”. Furthermore, he stresses: “we didn’t take part in the political debates on freedom of speech, but merely communicated the facts of the Dutch constitutional state.”

Harchaoui takes a critical position towards cooperation with European institutes. He clarifies: “we recently withdrew from European cooperation within ENAR61, because that mainly consisted of talking, which did not lead us anywhere.” He calls this “an old way of cooperation” but sees opportunities in “new ways”, characterized by “a more dynamic, more

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problem-driven, less elevated, and less moralist way of working.” Harchaoui adds to this that project funding “should be taken into reconsideration,” since “currently, the means go to managers and scientist, and not to people who actually do the work. That has to change.” About European cooperation in general, Harchaoui remarks: “any European cooperation we are involved in is made possible with our own means, and is, for instance, not funded by the European Commission.”

About a European public sphere Harchaoui states: “from a legal point of view there is a European space, since we have Schengen, and there are rules, a European Court, and a European treaty.” However, “from a social, sociological or emotional point of view this only holds true for specific areas or groups.” He illustrates: “if you find yourself in a three border area, you can sense it”, and “among some people there is certainly some sense of European transnationalism, but their number is very limited.” Furthermore, he points out: “in opposition to other citizens there is something like a European citizen, but I don’t think that there is a set of common values to all European citizens.” Harchaoui concludes: “I would make a plea for a minimum set of values, of which the democratic constitutional state is the most important. I would never identify with, for instance, Italian citizens, whose leader is almost a dictator. Therefore, there are too many differences to establish a maximum set of values.”

4.4.5 Conclusion
Despite its focus on the Dutch society, Forum’s pragmatic and problem-driven approach indirectly results in an increasing international network of expertise in the field of migration and integration: many countries try to learn from the Dutch handling of multicultural issues (being it either as a good practice or a poor example) and request Forum for information. Simultaneously, its pragmatic approach prevents Forum from taking part in networks that merely address social issues in society, but do not achieve much in a practical sense. Harchaoui stresses in this respect the importance of dealing with issues in a ‘new way’ and points out that Forum is selective in the organisations it want to be involved with.

In conclusion one can say that Forum despite its focus on Dutch society, increasingly contributes to an international public sphere, which is mainly about legal issues. This transcends Dutch borders and therefore certainly contributes to an international public sphere, but since it also transcends Europe’s borders, it remains a question whether Forum actually contributes to a European public sphere.

5 SOCIAL MOVEMENT ORGANISATIONS IN THE NETHERLANDS

5.1 Introduction
Social movement organisations form the third kind of actors in this Eurosphere research. In the actor selection is explained what organisations have been selected and why (see §1.1.2). The Dutch selection mainly consists of migrant organisations. Before the diverse organisations and their leaders are described, we briefly present the history of social movement and migrant organisations in the Netherlands. Thereafter, the government’s position towards migrant organisations is addressed. Finally, we introduce the reader with the Dutch migrant consultation structure.

5.1.1 Migrant organisations
Organisations in general form an essential part of social life and collective action and therefore are equally vital in organizing the lives of immigrants. However, immigrant organisations often meet scepticism and ambiguity in receiving countries, since people in
migrant host societies question the organisation’s relevance and contribution (Vermeulen 2005: 9). The key issue in regarding immigrant organisations seems to be the question whether immigrant organisations contribute to or hinder immigrant integration (Vermeulen 2005: 9-11; Lucassen & Penninx 2009: 3; Tweede Kamer 2004c: 471). Consequently, migrant organisations are subject to discussion among (social) scientists, as well as among policy makers, politicians, and the like.

Migrant organisations play an important role in demarcating migrants’ ethnic or national identity. Vermeulen argues that involvement in an ethnically based organisation may go hand in hand with political integration and that, conversely less civic participation to a certain extent may lead to political deprivation (Vermeulen 2005: 10-11). The hotly debated question in this regard remains, however, whether strong ethnic ties and immigrant integration can coexist, or that the one excludes the other.

In the Netherlands migrant organisations have been subject to discussion ever since the first migrant groups founded their organisations. Throughout history many organisations were founded by immigrants for various reasons, from specific political or religious goals to the (basic) need for socio-cultural gathering. The continuity of the organisation’s existence depended on the one hand on developments within the migrant communities and their respective organisations. Tillie described this as their ‘social capital’, which refers to “the resources embedded in the structure of the organisational network of a community” (Tillie 2004: 531). On the other hand, the organisation process also depended on the so-called ‘(political) opportunity structure’ of the host society. This refers to the opportunities that are present in a society that facilitate or hinder the foundation process (Van Heelsum 2004b: 10). In addition, the governments’ attitude towards these kinds of organisations played and important role in their foundation, continuity and/or dissolution (Van Heelsum 2004a: 9; Tweede Kamer 2004c: 471).

5.1.2 Dutch government policy and migrant organisations

The right to organize is an old Dutch right, but it was redefined during the pillarisation of the Dutch society. In this structure, different kinds of (religious) groups (denominations) had the right to their own respective institutions. Migrant organisations did fit in the ideal of a multiform society where people were able to develop their own cultural and religious identity (Lucassen & Penninx 1994: 155). In daily practice however, in the government’s view this implied that immigrants had less access to society’s institutions because of relative unfamiliarity with the infrastructure. Therefore, immigrants needed support in improving their position. The minorities policies that were constructed after the publication of the 1989 WRR report (see §2.2.6 and §4.2.2) can (amongst others) be seen as a result of this perception (Tesser et al. 1999: 9).

In line with the changing migration and integration policies the Dutch government positioned itself in favour of or as reluctant towards migrant organisations. In the 1970s and 1980s, the Dutch government assumed that migrants would integrate best ‘on their own strength’, i.e. involvement in their own organisations would eventually lead to integration in the broader society. In the 1990s the idea prevailed that involvement in their own organisations would prevent migrants from integrating in Dutch society. Therefore, in this last decade of the 20th century, migrant organisations were viewed with suspicion (Verwey-Jonker Instituut 2004a: 6-7; Lucassen & Penninx 1994: 146-147).

After the turn of the century the political climate changed (which was demarcated by events such as 9/11 and the assassinations on Fortuyn and Van Gogh) and general integration policies of the Dutch government became stricter. This also found expression in the government’s attitude towards migrant organisations. By 2004, migrant organisations only
would find financial support (from the national government\textsuperscript{62}) if they included ‘integration’ into their official organisational objectives (Smeets 2004). Consequently, many migrant organisations adjusted their aims in order not to lose their subsidies. Nowadays subjects like integration, participation, and emancipation are to be found among many organisation’s mission statements (Cf. Milli Görüs 2008; TICF 2008).

Related to the issue of migrant organisations’ financing is the question about the rationale of their existence. Several scholars have questioned the aim of migrant organisations. Lindo addressed this question in his contribution to a GroenLinks essay as “Do migrant organisations exist for the purpose of either migrants or policy?” (Lindo 2001). There will inevitably be an area of tension between these two purposes mentioned by Lindo, since migrant organisations need financial means – often provided by the government – to develop activities, but they also need their grass-root support to remain their raison d’etre.

5.1.3 National consultation body structure

The minority policies were initially constructed around several specific target groups (doelgroepenbeleid) that were seen as vulnerable. In the target group policies several (ethnic) groups were appointed, i.e. people from guest worker sending countries (which included both guest workers and their families), people from the overseas territories of Surinam and The Dutch Antilles, refugees and asylum seekers, caravan dwellers and gypsies, and Moluccans (Tesser et al. 1999: 9-10). Later on the Moluccans were removed from this list and the Chinese were added. The minority policies were characterized by several incentives to improve migrants’ position. Examples of these are providing education in people’s own language and culture (onderwijs in eigen taal en cultuur) as well as providing broadcasting facilities for the specific groups. Another measure to improve immigrants’ position was government support for migrant organisations. These were seen as important contributors in the process of making government policy, which resulted in the creation of migrant organisations’ participation or consultation bodies (inspraakorganen) of the designated groups. National as well as local governments were obliged to take advise of these bodies into account in the development of new policies (Lucassen & Penninx 1994: 155-156). In addition, this strategy fits the Dutch government’s approach in which the government includes groups in official consultation bodies in order to prevent them from becoming too critical or even rebellious.

The Landelijke Advies- en Overlegstructuur minderhedenbeleid (LAO, the national advisory and consultation body on minorities policies) was constructed in the early 1980’s. Previously, contact between the government and minority or migrant organisations only existed on an irregular basis, but from then on the consultation took place at least twice a year. In the LAO the appointed minority groups could be consulted by the government and conversely they had (to a certain extent) a say in the construction of new policies. In 1997 the LAO was replaced by the Landelijk Overleg Minderheden (LOM, National Body on Minorities Consultation), which was regulated by Law\textsuperscript{63}. The LOM regulated and formalised both the governmental consultation with and the available subsidy for the target groups (Wet Overleg Minderhedenbeleid 1997). The LOM still exists and currently (2009) hosts seven umbrella organisations, i.e. refugees, Chinese, Turkish, Southern Europeans, Caribbeans, Surinamese and Moroccans (Landelijk overleg minderheden 2009).

\textsuperscript{62} There are also local (municipality level) or regional (provincial level) possibilities to find subsidies. Although these may differ and still provide means to the organisations, they also became stricter, but leave much more room for negotiation.

\textsuperscript{63} Wet overleg minderhedenbeleid (Law on Consultation in Minorities Policies).
Although the Dutch government initiated the consultation body herself, in 1992 it requested a committee to come up with alternatives for the migrant organisation’s subsidising structure, because it heavily doubted the structure’s appropriateness. The committee suggested creating a clear distinction between professional organisations and grass-roots (migrant) organisations. This resulted in one new organisation which from then on would deal with professional tasks concerning migrants, whereas migrant organisations would be able to focus on their original activities again. This new institute was founded under the name Forum and was established in 1996 (see §4.4).

For migrant organisations Forum’s foundation implied a change in the allocation of subsidies. The target group policies were abandoned and from that point on organisations were only able to apply for government subsidies on the basis of characteristics such as sex, age and religion and no longer on the basis of nationality or ethnicity. Structural subsidies concerning the preservation of national migrant organisations were no longer provided, which caused a lot of protests in both migrant organisations’ circles, and Parliament. Because the government still valued migrant organisations she decided to make subsidies for them available on a temporary or ad hoc basis (Tweede Kamer 2004c: 497-501). Ever since the abolishment of the target group policies, it was seen as a social taboo to speak of policies in terms of groups, although many policies targeted at specific groups were developed, particularly at a local level. By 2008, there seemed to be a turning point in this attitude, since several political parties tried to put ethnically based target group policies – in order to solve specific migrant groups’ problems – back on the national political agenda again (Doorduyn & Meerhof 2008).

The government (and particularly the Ministry of the Interior) has always been focusing on collaboration with migrant organisations that were characterised by a high level of representativity (Tweede Kamer 2004c: 508-516). Because many migrants are organised within religious organisations, the government realised that this implied the involvement of religious organisations in the consultation structures. Therefore, also religious organisations were included in the negotiations on the consultation bodies’ establishment (Rath et al. 1996: 69-73). That decision resulted in the foundation of migrant consultation bodies which were constructed around religious denominations, such as Hinduism and Islam. The coming about of a representative Muslim consultation body was initiated by both the Dutch government and several Muslim organisations (Basisdocument CMO 2002), and since January 2004 the Contactorgaan Moslims en Overheid (CMO, Consultation Body Muslims for the Government) has been recognized. However, the process of establishment was characterised by problems ever since the start; in particular it proved to be difficult to find a common ground on the recognition of the Ahmadiyya as a Muslim group. In response to those problems a second Muslim consultation body was founded under the name Contact Groep Islam (CGI, Contact Group Islam) which was recognized by the government in January 2005 (Ministerie van Justitie 2004a; Tweede Kamer 2004c: 491-497; Tweede Kamer 2004d; Musch 2008). In conclusion, Musch’ interestingly remarks that it is worthwhile exploring whether the government includes migrant and religious organisations because it is interested in what these organisation may contribute, or that it does so in order to ensure political and social legitimacy for its actions (Musch 2008).

64 Religious consultation bodies on ‘domestic’ religions such as Protestantism and Judaism already existed in the Netherlands.
5.2 Turkish organisations

Turkish migrants in the Netherlands are relatively well organised. In average, they have more organisations than most other migrant communities have, and the network of Turkish organisations is also more structured than in other communities is the case. This structure is expressed by the Inspraak Orgaan Turken (IOT, Participation Body of Turks), which represents the most important (national) Turkish organisations in the Netherlands and is part of the Landelijk Overleg Minderheden (LOM, National Consultation Body Minorities, see also §5.1).

The Turkish community is also characterised by differences in ideology. Although most Turkish organisations are religious by nature, most of them strive for social mobility and a better integration of Turks in Dutch society. We tried to cover a broad spectrum and therefore selected a mainstream (Diyanet) religious organisation, Turks Islamitische Culturele Federatie, a conservative religious organisation, Milli Görüş, and a progressive (religious) organisation, Hak.der.

5.2.1 TICF

Diyanet is the official Islam as disseminated by the Turkish government. Although the Turkish state has a secular character due to the separation of church and state, the government has a strong control over religious doctrine and education and the training of imams through the directorate of Religious Affairs, the Diyanet (Den Exter et al. 2006: 1050-1057; Van de Donk et al. 2006b: 120). Diyanet is a moderate Sunnite Muslim movement which strongly supports the Turkish sense of self-consciousness (Van Heelsum 2004a: 25-26).

Organisation

With 143 (mosque) organisations (TICF 2008) Diyanet forms the largest Turkish social movement in the Netherlands. There are two national umbrella organisations that are linked to Diyanet: on the one hand there is the Turks Islamitische Culturele Federatie (TICF, Turkish Islamic Cultural Federation) that aims at improvement of the socio-economic position of Diyanet supporters; on the other hand there is the Islamitische Stichting Nederland (ISN, Islamic Foundation in the Netherlands) that cares for the religious needs of its members. Members of one of the two organisations automatically become member of the other. Therefore, TICF and ISN share the same target group, but operate from different perspectives and do not share management and decision making structures. Furthermore, ISN mosques are often located next to TICF buildings; members regularly meet after religious gatherings in the social cultural centre. TICF was founded first, to promote the Diyanet supporters’ socio-cultural and political interests in Dutch society. Later on, the need arose to facilitate religious life, after which the ISN was founded in 1982.

Contrary to ISN, TICF formally has no direct connection to Diyanet but since the organisations are interconnected, Turkish governmental influence – although difficult to define – cannot be denied. The influence of Diyanet in ISN is mainly on the appointment of imams and the payment of their salaries. At request of local ISN organisations (mosques) Diyanet provides imams (for a period of four years) who are equipped with a basic course in Dutch language and culture. The monitoring of the imams’ performance in daily practice is being executed by the mosque boards themselves (Van de Donk et al. 2006b). Although ISN has connections with Diyanet in Turkey and other Diyanet organisations throughout Europe, TICF strongly focuses on the Netherlands. Hence, connections with foreign organisations are practically absent. Because TICF is actively engaged in the representation of social interest and religious needs. It is this particular organisation that is represented in the IOT and the
Contactorgaan Moslims Overheid (CMO, Contact Body Muslims Government), whereas the ISN is not.

The interviewee on behalf of TICF is Mr Ayhan Tonca (1964), who since 2004 has been an active board member. He has been holding different positions: from secretary to chairman, vice-chairman and since the end of 2008 he has been chairman again. Tonca is also a well-known CDA politician; in 2006 he was eligible for the House of Representatives, but was removed from the candidate list because of commotion around his standpoints on the Armenian genocide. Since that time he has been leader of the CDA faction in the municipality of Apeldoorn (see also §3.2 on Tonca’s position within the CDA).

Immigration and integration
TICF’s foremost goal is the integration of its members in Dutch society. This takes place from an Islamic point of view and goes together with a social responsibility “which is rooted in democracy, culture and ideology”. Other TICF objectives are to stimulate the “integration”, “emancipation”, “participation” and “performance” of the members. Furthermore, TICF strives for a “dialogue with all religious currents within and outside the Muslim community in the Netherlands.” The federation also states that it wants “to be held accountable for what it contributes to the Dutch democratic society” (TICF 2008).

Chairman Ayhan Tonca underlines that “language is one of the most important means to participate in Dutch society,” but he stresses that it is “only a means”. Interestingly, the TICF website (www.ticf.nl/) currently (February-July 2009) is only available in Turkish, while beforehand also a Dutch section was included. Tonca acknowledges this and puts forward that the website is “under revision”. Furthermore, Tonca stresses that for proper communication “an open attitude is necessary”, which he, e.g., does not see in Wilders’ approach: “We both speak Dutch, but are unable to communicate with each other: he has this image of us through which it turns out to be impossible to speak with him”.

About the process of integration Tonca is clear:

“There is a common set of values, such as the constitution, law and rules everyone needs to fight for. Within this framework it doesn’t matter whether you’re Muslim or non-religious, whether you’re Jewish or Christian, or whether you’ve a different skin colour or behave differently.”

Tonca continues by stating that the process of integration is “a reciprocal process”, which is not about “assimilation”, because “the idea that the other will become exactly like you, is only an utopian scheme”. The integration of newcomers “takes time,” Tonca states, and therefore, “newcomers need to be given that time”. However, “sometimes [the government] must be strict on this, because I don’t like the idea of pampering”.

Migration, and in particular labour migration needs to be “regulated better” than currently is the case. According to Tonca one reason for this is “the prevention of a race to the bottom between different EU countries” that “generates tension” between the different approaches in integration policy. In addition, Tonca states that “Europe needs to create a better labour migration policy in order to be able to compete with the Unites States”. He pleas for “a univocal European migration policy,” through which the aforementioned aspects can be solved. Furthermore, Tonca thinks that like in the US “temporary visa need to be available in the EU,” but under the condition that it is considered per country (“maatwerk”) whom to admit, because “not everywhere the same kind of work is available”.

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**Citizenship**

Citizenship, in the sense of “being an active member of society”, is a key point in the organisation goals, which is brought forward through a range of socio-political activities (TICF 2008). Tonca stresses the importance of “being involved in the country one lives in” and makes a connection in this respect to multiple citizenship:

> “On the one hand I’ve my motherland, and on the other hand I’ve my fatherland. The Netherlands is my fatherland: here is where I live and work; Turkey is my motherland because I was born there. If you want me to choose between my father and my mother I’ll tell you I can’t, because to me they are worth the same.”

He clarifies: “double nationality doesn’t mean double loyalty”. Tonca adds to this that it is important that “people shouldn’t abuse their second nationality” by “making a half-hearted attempt at contributing to society” and “butter one’s bread on both sides” because that would imply “a threat to the process of integration”.

**European Union**

TICF is an organisation with a strong focus on the socio-economical position of Diyanet supporters in the Netherlands. As already mentioned, there are no direct links with foreign organisations, at least not on a regular basis. Tonca tells that “as such the construction of the ISN and the TICF is fairly unique in Europe” because there is “no counterpart in other European countries”. Tonca considers himself happy with the situation in the Netherlands because of the Dutch migrant consultation structure. He clarifies: “an organisation such as the IOT (…) or CMO doesn’t exist elsewhere,” although in Germany a similar consultation structure “exists at a regional level”. Tonca advocates a European-wide body on migrant and Muslim consultation, like a kind of European CMO, for which he names several reasons. Firstly, “this would improve the position of migrants and their say in European politics”. Secondly, “it would help to fight Islamophobia”, and finally, it would “enhance the European notion”. The latter is important, because “it can be seen as an identity that transcends national identities.” Especially for those “with multiple nationalities it is better and easier to focus on a European identity than only on a single national one”. “So far,” Tonca continues, “there, however, haven’t been any concrete initiatives towards such a European-wide Muslim organisation” and he foresees problems with its realisation, because:

> “the body needs to represent an important part of the Muslim population and it won’t be easy to bring together all the different denominations under one umbrella. (...) Plus, it also has to do with ethnic differences. Religious differences probably are not too difficult to overcome, but that might not be the case with the ethnic ones.”

Tonca is against further enlargement: “To make any further enlargements is given the current structure too dangerous”. He explains this by: “because the accession of the last ten has made Europe work too hard to process it all”. Concerning the Turkish accession Tonca states: “the EU measures by two standards. They constantly re-stipulate conditions for Turkey and although Turkey indeed did not perform very well on certain issues itself, it already should have acceded long ago. Besides, the double standards were not applied to Poland for example.”
Tonca thinks that the European Union consists of a “value community” that is rooted in a “Jewish-Christian tradition, but of which Islam emphatically forms part”. Politically, the EU is facing several problems, according to Tonca: At first, “the Union has no workable structure, it’s too big and too heavy”, Secondly, “there are too many egos to come to a common decision easily”. Consequently, “a United Nations of Europe is difficult to establish”. Furthermore, Tonca recognizes that “the European value community is still developing” and that “the discussion is still going on”. He thinks that “migrants, and especially Muslims in the European context should play a more prominent role in the creation of the value community”. But, “the discussion usually concerns the cultural aspect of it”, which is “more difficult to include in the value community” and which is “harder to agree upon than on for instance notions about the constitutional state”.

Conclusion

TICF is an organisation based in the Netherlands. Whereas religion runs as a thread through all activities, integration and citizenship are put forward as the organisation’s main concern. The organisation is tolerant vis-à-vis others, especially concerning other religions, but in daily practice it turns out not to be easy to collaborate outside the Turkish community. Therefore, ‘external’ cooperation mainly takes place via the governmental structure of migrant representation. TICF’s leader Tonca expresses a wish towards more European cooperation, especially among Muslims, but so far a European-wide consultation body has not been realized yet. This is (principally) due to discord within the Muslim community, and is mainly marked by ethnic boundaries. Although the organisation is tolerant towards others, in practice it remains introverted and focused on (the socio-economic position of) the own community. In this sense it does not come as a surprise that Europe as an organisational subject is hardly put forward.

5.2.2 Milli Görüş Noord-Nederland

The second dominant Turkish religious current in the Netherlands is the Sunnite Milli Görüş. Milli Görüş has a strong orientation towards home country Turkey, as appears from the name, which literally means ‘national vision’. The movement is conservative and to a certain extent Islamist in character: during the first years of its existence (the 1960s) the Milli Görüş movement tried, under the leadership of Necmettin Erbakan, to establish an Islamic State via the Turkish democratic system. For that reason, Erbakan’s party was forbidden several times, but re-emerged repeatedly under different names. Although the current Turkish premier Erdoğan can be seen as a representative of the modernist branch of the movement, Milli Görüş remains an organisation with a somewhat obscure image and a rather ambiguous character. Den Exter describes this as: “The organisation is characterized by ‘two faces’: a modern, friendly face that is mainly focused on consultation and social uplift of the Turkish youth, and an intolerant, anti-western, orthodox face” (Den Exter et al. 2006: 8-9; Van Heelsum 2004a: 26-27).

Organisation

In the Netherlands there are approximately 107 local Milli Görüş organisations, amongst which mosque organisations, and (sub) organisations focused on youth and women (Van Heelsum 2004a: 26; Van de Donk et al. 2006a: 118; Milli Görüş 2008). The Milli Görüş organisations develop different kinds of activities, such as debates, courses, meetings, gatherings, and excursions, which are partly religious by nature and for another part aim at integration. Local departments are organised under an umbrella organisation called Nederlandse Islamitische Federatie (NIF, Dutch Islamic Federation), which represents
approximately 30,000 supporters and 5,000 paying members. NIF is divided into two regional branches or ‘sub umbrellas’: the progressive Northern branch and the conservative Southern one. The latter can be seen as a traditional Milli Görüş organisation, whereas the first tends to be more overt and progressive. The second branch, called *Milli Görüş Noord-Nederland* (MGNN, Milli Görüş Northern Netherlands) is the organisation here at stake. Milli Görüş is represented in the IOT through NIF, while both NIF and MGNN are represented in CMO (CMO 2009; IOT 2009).

Traditionally, the European Milli Görüş headquarters in Cologne, called *Islamische Gemeinschaft Milli Görüş* (IGMG) plays an important role in the organisation’s governance. Statutorily MGNN is independent of IGMG, but there is collaboration on (at least) religious matters, such as the hajj. The IGMG supports national mosque communities in eleven European countries \(^{66}\), which in total represent 30 regional organisations such as MGNN. Although the different national organisations are interconnected via the headquarters in Cologne (IGMG 2008) direct contact between them occurs on an irregular basis. Contrary to the Southern branch, which is relatively in line with the headquarters, MGNN shows a tendency to a more independent attitude vis-à-vis IGMG (Den Exter et al. 2006: 9) and is dominated by the ‘modern face’ (Van Heelsum 2004a: 26). The tolerant character of the organisation manifested after the turn of the century under the leadership of Karaçaer, who turned out to be an unexpected open partner in conversation to politicians and policy makers; for a while Karaçaer was seen as an important mediator between Muslims and the Dutch society (Forma 2007). A well-known project that was a result of his popularity was the initiative towards the realization of the *Westermoskee* \(^{67}\).

With his progressive attitude, Karaçaer seemed to have forgotten his own organisation and its supporters: many of them did not agree on the policy line Karaçaer had chosen. When in 2006 the entire board of MGNN, including Karaçaer, was replaced, rumour had it that IGMG had put an end to Karaçaer’s leadership because it strongly disagreed with his progressive policy (De Telegraaf 2008; Olgun 2006). Besides this, the *Amsterdams Centrum Buitenlanders* \(^{68}\) (Amsterdam Centre Foreigners, ACB) decided to break off all ties with the Turkish-Dutch organisation because of a feared connection with IGMG, that was suspected of having ties with Islamist movements. Although the suggestions were strong, Karaçaer’s departure was never recognized by the organisation as being the result of an internal struggle between MGNN and the Cologne headquarters. In line with the accusations, the Dutch government requested an inquiry into MGNN and its suspected connection with extremist movements. The resulting research that was publicised in 2008 by social scientist Lindo showed that there were no indications that MGNN was taken over by IGMG, neither that the organisation was involved in any activities that are inconsistent with the Dutch constitutional state (Lindo 2008: 45).

The interviewee Mr Yusuf Altuntas (1973) is the MGNN’s chairman, although he is looking for a successor (so far without result). He has been an active member of the board since 2004 and prior to that he was active at a local Milli Görüş unit. Apart from his position in MGNN, Altuntas is general manager of the *Islamitische Scholen Besturen Organisatie* (Muslim School Board Organisation, ISBO).

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\(^{65}\) This organisations was founded in 1985 under the name *Avrupa Millî Görüş Teşkilatı* (Organization of National Vision in Europe, AMGT).

\(^{66}\) Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium, France, Switzerland, Austria, Italy. England, Denmark, Sweden, and Norway.

\(^{67}\) The building of a Turkish mosque in Amsterdam characterized by a typical (combined) Dutch-Muslim appearance, in which MGNN collaborated with City Department *De Baarsjes of Amsterdam*.

\(^{68}\) A regional non-profit organisation that stimulates a fully-fledged participation of *allochtonen* in Dutch society.
Immigration and integration

The organisation’s website stresses the importance of the process of integration, since “integration”, “emancipation”, “participation” and “performance” are being presented as MGNN’s main goals (Milli Görüş 2008). According to the organisation, integration takes place “out of an Islam-based social responsibility” and needs to be implemented as follows:

“Integration in the Dutch society is a goal in itself. Newcomers and ‘oldcomers’ need to internalize written and unwritten rules, and need to participate fully-fledged in society. This is a two way process and there are rights and obligations on both sides” (Milli Görüş 2008).

Thus, integration seems to be one of the key-issues for the organisation. But at the same time, another Milli Görüş website in the Netherlands (milligorus.nl) turns out to be not that much focused on the Dutch context given that it is fully written in Turkish. Compared with the former website (milligorusnederland.nl), the latter contains more recent information and is better documented. Apparently, the importance of integration in the Netherlands, and speaking the Dutch language, is not in all parts of the organisation seen as an important goal to strive for.

According to Yusuf Altuntas MGNN “has changed its orientation in the last decade. Nowadays projects are very much focused on integration and participation of Turks in Dutch society, for example we organize training for our members in order to let them participate in Dutch (local) politics successfully”. Altuntas turns out to be dissatisfied with the way allochtonen are being involved in decision-making processes in the Netherlands. At the same time he recognizes the government’s failure in reaching certain groups of allochtonen. He describes it as: “The problem is that we [the allochtonen] are not involved in projects from the start. Only when a project is already running, they come to us. But that’s not how it works! We need to be involved from the beginning.”

Altuntas criticises the concept of diversity: “It is a nice concept to ensure subsidies, but what really counts are quota, at least that’s how it works in the CMO and the IOT”. With this statement he – again – refers to the involvement of allochtonen in decision-making processes, but also to a poor migrant consultation structure. About diversity within the Turkish community Altuntas remarks that “there is not so much a problem with ethno-national diversity, but there are problems with gender diversity, for example women’s rights and gay-emancipation”.

Regarding immigration Altuntas takes a clear stand:

“I think the Netherlands are too lenient in admitting immigrants. A large group of migrants, such as Muslims (...) and Poles, causes trouble. The Chinese group is a problematic one in my opinion: I don’t trust them because they solve their problems within their own community and are hidden from view. (...) the Netherlands needs to solve these problems first before admitting any new migrants.”

Oudkomers – This is the term used for immigrants that have been residing in the Netherlands already for some years, but who need to integrate like newcomers, because they do not have a good command of the Dutch language, or are seen as badly integrated.
On the question how this can be solved, Altuntas replied: “It’s typically a problem at a EU level. If immigrants are distributed more equally, so will the problem.”

Citizenship

Citizenship is part of the four formulated aims of MGNN and can be seen as a thread running through these objectives. One of the meanings of citizenship, according to the website (milligorusnederland.nl), is a “fully-fledged participation in society”; another of its characteristics is that “one needs to be of service to the society”, which stands for “an active attitude in life” and aims at “the participation in neighbourhood councils, social movement organisations, elderly people’s organisations, and political parties” (Milli Görüş 2008).

With respect to Dutch nationality Altuntas formulates the conditions under which it can be obtained: “As soon as someone has lived in the Netherlands for five years or more, and this person knows about the culture and the structure, why bother?” In addition, Altuntas tells about his double nationality: “Turkey is my homeland, but my future is in the Netherlands.” He continues: “The Dutch passport comes in handy (…). If you show your Turkish passport you are immediately searched and questioned. Besides that, it doesn’t mean so much to me.”

He continues about nationality and loyalty by stating: “for example Aboutaleb or Albayrak represent the Dutch people and made an explicit choice in that respect. Are they non-Dutch citizens because they’re born elsewhere?” In other words, as soon as people make the choice to live and work here, there is no problem with their loyalty, despite the fact that they hold an additional nationality.

European Union

Within IGMG Europe officially is an important subject, since “the vast majority of the members of the IGMG have come to accept that their stay in the Western-European countries will be permanent” (IGMG 2008), but that is one of the few times the subject is mentioned in the organisation’s documentation. Nevertheless, Altuntas has an idea of how Europe is going to develop in the future: “Within 40, 50 years, Europe will become like the United States of America”.

Altuntas states that Europe is originally a “Christian club”, and because of that, “the accession of Muslim countries takes longer”. Despite the difficulties Turkey faces in the process of accession, Altuntas advocates further enlargement: “Those [new] enlargements need to take place.” “Eventually,” Altuntas emphasizes, “Turkey will accede. That might take a while, but that’s where we’re heading.”

About the question whether there is a sense of unity in Europe Altuntas is clear: “No, there is not! But it might be there within 30 or 40 years. Europe is not a super power, but that’s what it’s supposed to be.”

Conclusion

Although MGNN denies the accusations and contradicts the rumours, it still has a bad reputation. Altuntas regrets this and stresses that they “want to move on” because “it prevents us from developing activities”. “Unfortunately,” he continues, “the people that are subject to those rumours, used to be MGNN board members, but they certainly are not Milli Görüş representatives anymore.” As a solution to this he emphasizes: “we will continue on our current line, which is organizing activities that are based in the Dutch society”. But the discrepancy between how the organisation wants to be seen and how it is actually seen is not likely to change in the near future, since the organisation is keeping low-profile and does not

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70 Two Dutch prominent politicians with a non-Dutch background.
organise many national activities. The days that MGNN was seen as ‘the’ example of Turkish-Dutch integration are over.

Being an immigrant himself Altuntas surprisingly takes a conservative stand towards the immigration of newcomers: he thinks the Netherlands needs to solve its problems with recent newcomers first before admitting new ones. In this case he identifies himself with the Netherlands, whereas in other cases, for example where the involvement of allochtonen is concerned, he regards himself as one of them. Although MGNN does take part in the migrant consultation structure in the Netherlands, Altuntas holds a critical stand towards it. Furthermore, nationality and loyalty are not seen as incompatible, as long as someone chooses to be an active citizen.

Europe certainly is a subject that is of MGNN’s concern, but only in the sense that it is seen as the new destination of Milli Görüş supporters who live there. The shift in orientation from Turkey to Europe or the Netherlands might exist on paper, in reality, however, the orientation toward Turkey remains strong, although Altuntas stresses that this is changing.

5.2.3 Hak.der

On the leftist side of the Turkish migrant organisation spectrum the Alevite organisations are to be found. Alevitism is related to (Shiah) Islam, but shows more similarities with humanism than with the Islam practiced by most other Muslims in the Netherlands. Alevites do not gather for praying in mosques, but practice their somewhat mystic religion in community centres or living rooms. Other characteristics that distinguish Alevitism from mainstream Islam are equality of men and women and tolerance towards other religions. Approximately 15 to 20 % of the Turkish population in Turkey is Alevite (Van Heelsum 2004a: 27).

Organisation

By the end of the 1980s the need among Alevites in the Netherlands arose to learn more about their religion or philosophy. Therefore, Dutch Alevites founded several local social-cultural organisations, that collaborated in the in 1991 founded national umbrella Federatie van Alevitische Sociale en Culturele Verenigingen in Nederland (Hak.der, Federation of Alevite Social and Cultural Associations in the Netherlands). Hak.der principally aims at the development of Alevitism, but also supports the interests of in particular of the Alevite community (and the Turkish population in general) in the Netherlands (Hakder 2008).

Hak.der currently represents fourteen local organisations in the Netherlands, most of which are located in the (bigger) cities of Rotterdam, Amsterdam and The Hague. Not all Alevite organisations in the Netherlands are represented within Hak.der, but Hak.der maintains relations with several organisations outside the umbrella and some of these are likely to be included in Hak.der in the near future (Hakder 2008). Hak.der is represented in IOT and Contact Groep Islam (CGI, Contact Group Islam); since March 2009 the CGI chairman is a Hak.der representative.

Hak.der is also member of the European Alevite organisation, called European Union of Alevites (EUA) that was founded in 2000 and is located in Cologne, Germany. The European organisation foremost engages in social issues concerning Alevites, e.g. Cyprus (that used to be an exile place for Alevites), and problems that arise with the Turkish EU-candidacy. Furthermore, EUA formulated conditions under which the European Alevites think Turkey is allowed to accede.

Interviewee

Mr Adnan Yılmaz (1959) has been (general) board member of Hak.der since its foundation. From 2002 until 2004 he was chairman and has been treasurer since 2004. Yılmaz has also been involved in the European Union of Alevites (UEA) from the outset and is currently vice-president of this organisation. Apart from his position in Hak.der Yılmaz is a
teacher and manager (in health care and welfare). Yılmaz is also an active member of GroenLinks within the city department Kralingen-Crooswijk of Rotterdam.

**Immigrant and integration issues**

Hak.der aims at “social mobility and integration of the Turkish and in particular of the Alevite community in the Netherlands”. Furthermore, it “strives, together with other citizens, communities and organisations for a tolerant society with even chances for all” (Hakder 2008). Adnan Yılmaz explains why Alevites in the Netherlands are relatively well integrated: “In general, Alevites do fit into Dutch society rather unobtrusively. (…) This attitude is partly caused by a fear they have known because of the Sunnite domination [in Turkey]. Therefore, Alevites supported the secular state founded by Atatürk.” Yılmaz adds that the social position of Alevites in Turkey “has improved”, but that they “still encounter discrimination because of their liberal religious persuasion”. In the Netherlands their position does not require much improvement “because they already are doctors, lawyers and the like”.

Alevitism supports the concept of equality for all “without making a distinction between ethnic background, religious affiliation, gender, sexual orientation or language” (Hakder 2008). In religious gatherings men and women are equal. Therefore, diversity is part of Hak.der’s worldview through which its supporters are tolerant vis-à-vis others. Yılmaz describes diversity “like a mosaic of different colours” that is “good the way it is” and in which “one needs to accept and respect each other”. Diversity in Dutch society, however, goes together with many problems, according to Yılmaz:

“I see that a lot of single events are turned into a problem of the society as a whole, although it concerns individuals. For example the Hofstadgroep71 is linked to all kinds of social problems, but in fact it concerns only a few Moroccans (…). Therefore, I stress that interculturalization72 might be a pretty concept, but it is not being used properly.”

He continues describing how immigrants should adapt to society and how society should adapt to them:

“As an immigrant you need to speak Dutch and know society, whereas the government needs to provide quality within public institutions and services (…). The government needs to take into account that it is dealing with a lot of different colours, and not merely just orange anymore.”

A way to deal with the issues sketched above is to make it possible for migrants “to be on a safe seat during elections, and not only somewhere on the bottom of the list for the purpose of attracting voters”. Another measure to provide more quality in governmental services according to Yılmaz is “to stimulate allochtonen to be in management positions more often”.

**Citizenship**

Concerning nationality Yılmaz remarks that “there are a lot of people that are Dutch on paper, but in reality they’re not!” Being a ‘real’ Dutch means that “you know the Netherlands (…),

71 The name of a group of young Islamic people that were suspected by the Public Prosecutor of terrorist activities. One of its members was Mohammed B., the murderer of Theo van Gogh.

72 A process that refers to the adjustment of the society to its multicultural composition.
and know how life works here: how municipalities, the government and facilities work”. Yılmaz adds to that: “People don’t change; you can’t change their ethnicity. That will stay as it is”. Yılmaz furthermore states that all residents, being either EU or non-EU citizens should be granted the same rights: “Of course non-EU citizens should have the same rights as EU citizens. For example people from Somalia, they also live and work here, why shouldn’t they have the same rights?”

European Union

Yılmaz regards the EU as a political system with possibilities for the future: “The EU needs to be a diversity union, in which there are plenty of possibilities for different migrant groups”. With this statement he aims at the EU subsidies available that “are being used in the wrong way”. They should be “beneficent for [migrant] youth and their education instead of being spent on jazz festivals and the like”. But, simultaneously, the EU “needs to keep a better control on how the subsidies are allocated”.

The European Alevite organisation EUA took the initiative towards the formulation of conditions “under which according to them Turkey is allowed to accede to the EU” and thereby formulated their own ‘Copenhagen criteria’. Major themes in this respect are “militarism”, “emptying prisons”, “Diyanet and the secularisation”, the “Kurdish question”, and “human rights”. All these themes require improvement according to the European umbrella. “Of course,” Yılmaz continues, “Turkey is not democratic and there is no freedom of speech”, thus it is not likely that Turkey will accede in the near future.

About the recent enlargement Yılmaz expresses his worries:

“I criticize Europe. Why has Poland been admitted to the European Union without any critical assessments or conditions? I wonder whether Poland is democratic. How would you described the case of human rights and the freedom of speech over there? Not good! Why has Poland been admitted and Turkey not, although Turkey has been a candidate member since the beginning? (...) My conclusion would be that Europe is not democratic.”

Yılmaz adds to his critique that it appears as if the EU wants to be “a Christian Union” and that it “doesn’t want to include any other religions”.

European Public Sphere

On the question whether something like a European public sphere exists, Yılmaz is clear: “No! Europe is not much more than the Euro and the stars.” He mentions the “absence of a common language” as an important factor in this matter. In addition, Yılmaz stresses that “Europe lacks social arrangements and that it mainly is an economic construction”. To overcome these hindrances for Europe a certain number of measures need to be taken: “social legislation, like social security, needs to be harmonised”, “monarchies need to be abolished in order to establish similar constitutions all over the EU” and, very importantly, “a common language needs to be stimulated”.

Conclusion

Hak.der is a movement that is tolerant by nature because of its humanist character. Hak.der’s supporters are relatively well integrated and pro diversity minded. This does not alter the fact that the organisation’s spokesman sees problems with diversity in Dutch society. The Dutch government plays an important role in both the existence of and the solution to these
problems. The existence of EUA is a clear sign of European awareness within the Alevite movement, although it is mainly inspired by Alevitism and Alevites’ position in society. Yılmaz is critical towards the EU, by stating that apparently religion matters in the case of the Turkish candidacy and Polish accession, and that it lacks democracy. Simultaneously, Hak.der is critical towards Turkey: it has to improve on many issues – including the establishment of Turkish democracy – before it is allowed to join the EU. Yılmaz concludes by stating that a common European sphere is absent. He sees Europe foremost as an economic construction, which lacks important binding factors such as social arrangements and a common language.

5.3 Moroccan organisations

In search for representative Moroccan organisations we encountered some difficulties. First of all, in general there are relatively few national Moroccan organisations (Van Heelsum 2004a: 62). Secondly, to find a national organisation which is representative of a large group of Moroccans and which has a vision on the Eurosphere topics, turned out to be even more difficult. In the project we emphatically focused on prominent organisation members and on active organisations. The latter means that we wanted to include organisations that not merely exist on paper, but also develop activities. This finally led us to three organisations: the national organisation called FION, that has a European branch as well; the Amsterdam mosque organisation UMMAO, whose leader Marcouch became renown for his role as the Moroccan community’s spokesman after Theo van Gogh had been murdered; and Argan, also an Amsterdam-based organisation that acted nation-wide after the incident of van Gogh’s murder.

5.3.1 FION

_Federatie Islamitische Organisaties Nederland_ (FION, Federation of Islamic Organisations the Netherlands) is an organisation that formally is Islamic by nature, but in practice is dominated by Moroccan members. In addition, organisation leader Mr Yahia Bouyafa is of Moroccan descent. Bouyafa holds such a central position in today’s Moroccan community, that we hardly could avoid including him in the research: Bouyafa is also leader of the _Raad voor Marokkaanse Moskeën in Nederland_ (RMMN, Moroccan Mosque Council in the Netherlands) and a board member of the _Nederlandse Moslim Raad_ (NMR, Dutch Muslim Council) through which he (until March 2009) was chairman in the Contact Groep Islam (see also §5.1).

Bouyafa cooperated on several occasion with the prominent Moroccan-Dutch local politician Marcouch (see §5.3.2 and §3.3); his connection with the latter also comes forward through the fact that Marcouch’ brother is a former FION board member. Simultaneously, Bouyafa’s position is contested because he sympathizes with the Islamic scholar Al-Qaradawi, who has made some controversial statements concerning homosexuality and Palestinian suicide attacks (Brendel 2009). Al-Qaradawi is also seen as a prominent member of the Muslim Brotherhood, that strives for Islamic world rule (Dijkman 2007). The Dutch Cabinet recognized that Bouyafa maintains relations with organisations that sympathize with the Muslim Brotherhood, but does not consider him or the organisations in which he is involved as a threat to Dutch society (Tweede Kamer 2006). Furthermore the populist newspaper _De Telegraaf_ was forced to rectify an article in which it accused Bouyafa of being member of the Muslim Brotherhood (De Koning 2007). Although he was never condemned of any offence, Bouyafa’s reputation remains contested.
Organisation

FION was originally founded by Arabic speaking students in the late 1980s and forms a religious, rather conservative national organisation under which twelve local (mosque) organisations are organized. The current statutes of the FION date from 2005; by then it was founded with the objective “to conserve and advocate Islamic existence in the Netherlands” (Kamer van Koophandel 2009). FION intensively collaborates with a European organisation called Federation of Islamic Organisations Europe, FIOE. Both FION’s and FIOE’s goals are to develop a kind of institutionalized Islam that is supported by European Islamic scholars, instead of relying on Islamic clergymen that are educated within the context of an Islamic society and who lack feeling with the contemporary European society. Because European legislation is not Islamic by nature, FION and FIOE stress that Islam practiced in Europe sometimes requires a different approach than the Islam practiced in countries with Islamic regimes. Therefore, they want to establish an Islamic School that is based in Europe, which is supposed to guide European Muslims in daily life. An important feature of this idea is the education of so-called second generation imams that are raised and educated in a Dutch or at least European context. FION is represented in the NMR (Dutch Muslim Council), through which it is represented in the CGI.

Interviewee

Mr Yahia Bouyafa (1962) has been FION’s chairman since its foundation, and is also board member of FIOE. Apart from these positions, Bouyafa is a board member of the NMR and the CGI and is the chairman of a local mosque in the municipality of IJsselstein. He also runs a small publishing-firm (which amongst others published some controversial works) and is a teacher. Bouyafa has an academic background.

Immigrant and integration issues

One of FION’s striking characteristics is its focus on Dutch and European society. The emphasis in this respect is particularly on Muslims in a European context. Bouyafa puts forward that practicing Islam in a way that is common in Muslim societies “does not work in contemporary European society”. Therefore, “it is important” that there are Islamic scholars whom are “educated in a European context and who know about the issues here”. Although FION was founded by Arabic speakers, the medium of communication gradually changed into Dutch. This is also motivated by a practical argument because “second generation members of the organisation not always have a command of Arabic” and therefore, Dutch seems to be the (only) language that organisation members have in common.

In integration processes Bouyafa attributes an active role to the government. The government “needs to bring people together, because ethnicity doesn’t disappear”. Moreover, the government needs to have a better control in allocating subsidies because “money is not divided equally, since most of it goes to administration and project managers and doesn’t go where it belongs: to the people themselves”.

Bouyafa values diversity highly: “People often see [diversity] as a menace to their originality, whereby they show a fear that is understandable and human, but I see it as enrichment”. However, FION does not cooperate with Turks under their umbrella. Bouyafa explains why: “on the level of the Islam, we do not encounter problems with Turks; the foremost problem [to cooperate] is language. Secondly, they are too nationalistic and behave as Turks [instead of Dutch] in Dutch society.” Thus, concerning Turks, differences are too big to overcome.

Citizenship

Bouyafa stresses the urge to make an explicit choice for living in the Netherlands:
“We need to make a decision now whether we want to be Dutch or want to remain Moroccan or Turkish. If Turks want to remain Turkish, that’s fine with me, because everyone has the right to one’s own opinion, but if they do so, they hinder a positive participation in society. For, if I were a foreigner, why would I make any investments here? If I were a Moroccan I would want to be over there and make investments over there. But that situation has changed now. We said goodbye to Morocco.”

Bouyafa continues: “For myself I chose to become Dutch.” This means that:

“I am aware of the fact that I belong to a certain group that ascribes certain values, such as freedom of speech and particular manners. If you’re not convinced of these characteristics, a passport only serves an administrative goal, because a residence permit provides you with less freedom and more fuss. But that’s not what I call citizenship.”

Both citations show the importance Bouyafa attributes to active citizenship and an explicit choice to live in Dutch society.

**European Union**

Bouyafa suggests that some of the people that acquired Dutch nationality probably “did not choose to become Dutch”, but wanted to “be part of a European culture”. The idea of a European citizenship is stimulated by FION since the organisation is “convinced of the fact we can achieve a lot at a European level”, and because “we’re not nationalists”. Furthermore, Bouyafa points out: “if you look around to what happens in the world, you see that it is complex in such way that in the Netherlands we can’t solve things on our own anymore. We are dependent of collaboration at a European level”.

However, “In the early 1990s,” Bouyafa recalls, “there was more sense of European unity than today”. He sees the Dutch as a people that “travels a lot” and that is “focused on the world around it” and consequently was “very surprised” by the Dutch ‘no’ against the European Constitution. Furthermore, he determines that “because of the increasing number of immigrants the resistance towards the EU is rising,” which is “a pity”. A solution to this might lie in “the emphasizing of Europe’s merits”.

In the end Europe will form a construction like the United States, Bouyafa thinks, “the US is an example of how this can work properly.” Furthermore, “Europe needs to have one single president for all countries” and will finally “become a federation”. On some issues, however, the individual states preserve their competence: “every country has its own typical affairs, such as language and culture, and that should remain the way it is, although there needs to be more political collaboration on these issues.”

Concerning enlargement Bouyafa states that it is important “to level up the new countries prior to their accession,” because “arrears need to be made up for anyway”. Concerning the Turkish candidacy Bouyafa has some critical remarks:

“The Turkish accession is being linked to religion and I think that’s a weakness. One either sets conditions to which all countries have to live up to and as soon as they do so they can accede, or one states to be a Christian organisation, through which all non-religious [and non-Christian] associations are excluded.”
Bouyafa concludes: “I personally think that the separation of church and state needs to be implemented consequently. I want to be judged upon my qualifications to manage an organisation (…). You shouldn’t disqualify me for being Muslim.”

Conclusion
In addition to FION’s standpoints, Bouyafa has a personal remark on the current representation of Moroccans in the Netherlands, which does not get his approval:

“The representation is done by a few Moroccan first generation guest workers that have been in that position ever since the 1970s. As a mosque chairman, I’ve never heard from them in all those years. (…) When we contacted them with the proposal to renew the organisation [UMMON], they didn’t feel like cooperating. That’s why we started an organisation of our own, the RMMN”.

Bouyafa turns out to be an active spokesman of the Moroccan and Muslim community in the Netherlands. In general, his opinions are well-formulated and are characterized by a rather high level of sophistication. This is a characteristic that he also wants to “emphasize more in the migrant representation body”. His highly-visible profile simultaneously leads to a contested reputation, which seems to be fed by the non-transparency of the movements he is involved with. His statements reflect a wished-for-future of the Muslim Moroccan community that is emphatically based in the Netherlands or Europe. Therefore, his ideas about Europe are mainly inspired by Islam.

Although diversity is a highly valued concept within the organisation, in daily practice it turns out to be impossible to collaborate with Turks (in the Netherlands). The religious differences are small, but there are several other issues, of which the most important one is the Turkish sense of nationality, that seems too big to overcome.

5.3.2 UMMAO
The Unie van Marokkaanse Moskeeorganisaties Amsterdam en Omstreken (UMMAO, Union of Moroccan Mosque Organisations in Amsterdam and its Surroundings) is a local mosque organisation that became renown during the period following Theo van Gogh’s murder. UMMAO’s representative Ahmed Marcouch turned out to be a voluble spokesman of the Moroccan community, which took away some of the tension in the societal debates. Marcouch’ message by that time was that Van Gogh’s murderer, Mohammed B, should not be seen as a representative of the Moroccan community as a whole, but as an (individual) extremist (De Fauwe 2004). Since this episode Marcouch was widely known and from then on he regularly took part in national debates on Islam in the Netherlands. Soon after that, he made a career switch to politics: he became the first allochton head of a city department in the Netherlands, in the Amsterdam city department of Slotervaart.

Organisation
UMMAO is a local umbrella organisation that represents 20 mosques in the surroundings of Amsterdam (Van de Donk et al. 2006b: 118). UMMAO is linked to the Unie van Marokkaanse Moskeeorganisaties in Nederland (UMMON, Union of Moroccan Mosque Organisations in the Netherlands), that was founded in 1982 and which claims to represent 90 Moroccan mosques in the Netherlands. When former spokesman Marcouch left the organisation to become a politician, UMMAO lost most of its media attention, but the
organisation incidentally still publishes press releases on topical social events (De Pers 2009; Magreb.nl 2009).

Interviewee Mr Ahmed Marcouch (1969), of Moroccan descent, was UMMAO’s spokesman and board member between 2004 and 2006. Prior to his position as a (local) politician (for PvdA), he worked as a policeman and as a social worker (see also §3.3).

Immigration and Integration

Marcouch accepted UMMAO board membership in the first place because he wanted the organisation to formulate a vision that corresponds with contemporary Dutch society:

“I had the ambition to formulate a general policy for the mosque organisations [of UMMAO], which would be an answer to questions such as: what is a mosque? What does a mosque want? What do Muslims want in Dutch society? And what contributions do mosque organisations make to a Dutch-Islamic identity?”

However, the defining of such a goal was “thwarted by Theo van Gogh’s murder” through which UMMAO’s members spent all their free time to “get out of the impasse” by “contributing to the Islam debate in the Netherlands”. Thus, before UMMAO had managed to define the desired goal, Marcouch left the organisation, through which the driving force behind the reform disappeared.

Citizenship

The essence of what Marcouch puts forward in the interview can be seen as the “sense of citizenship” (burgerschapszin), to which he referred repeatedly. With this concept Marcouch aims at a “commitment to the society” to which “one likes to belong to”. In this sense of citizenship it “matters what someone contributes to society” and that is exactly “what you’re judged upon”. In daily life this implies: “that you know where the Netherlands is coming from, that you know about the issues and sensitivities of society”.

Closely linked to Marcouch’ sense of citizenship is the concept of (Dutch) nationality. The idea behind it is that “a strong national identity is essential in being a world citizen, because only then one is capable of taking part in the world in a self confident way”. With this Marcouch does not refer to “sick nationalism”, but to “finding a balance between the two extremes of being a nationalist and a cosmopolitan”. Furthermore, Marcouch states that “foreigners should be granted the right either to become Dutch, or to retain their old nationality” which would lead to two kinds of inhabitants in the Netherlands. The first are “Dutch nationals” who are supposed to have made an “explicit choice to be Dutch”, who do have their “rights and duties” and are expected to be “active citizens”. The second category consists of “foreigners” that might be “loyal to their home country” and have “fewer duties but also fewer rights”. This is “a fair distinction” through which people “know where they stand”. He adds to this: “I see it as a sign of civilization when the state doesn’t force Dutch nationality upon foreigners, but instead of that leaves them a choice”.

The concept of citizenship in Marcouch’ view is also connected to double nationality, in which he stresses the importance of a “free choice of individuals to choose for the Netherlands” and that it is “inhumane when the government requires renunciation of people’s old nationality”. This does not mean, however, that “people should not have the possibility to make a renunciation if they wish to do so”. Because of the explicit choice people need to
make, Marcouch assesses “it is difficult to be morally involved with two countries.” He concludes by stating that nevertheless, identity “is not bound to a certain document”.

**European Union**

Marcouch’ notion of citizenship also applies to Europe: “The European integration starts from national identities” by which he again refers to the idea of “being a cosmopolitan (...) and a European citizen through a strong national identity”. He furthermore states that “what we have in common in Europe mainly consists of affairs related to citizenship”.

Although Marcouch “doesn’t really have ideas about Europe” he thinks that “Europe has a role in the fight against world poverty”. This is mainly inspired by the idea of solidarity. In this respect, Marcouch states: “Europe should strive for a stable world” and may make a contribution to this “by bridging the gap between Europe and Africa, for instance.” How this goal can be pursued is e.g. “by doing something in return when Europe calls in labour migrants, like paying for their education”. He continues this line of thought by suggesting that “seasonal employment is a better solution than development aid”.

With regard to the sense of European unity Marcouch points out that “one cannot create this in a cosmetic, spastic mode”. He compares:

> “if you look at the Muslim world, you see that people are connected to each other; they are each other’s brothers and sisters. That transcends borders and I don’t see that happening in Europe. (...) Religion doesn’t lead the way, so we need to find other commonalities.”

As mentioned before, these European commonalities are to be found in the sense of citizenship. Marcouch emphasizes that “finding things Europeans have in common would be very useful because that can make us happy: if we realise that we are part of a whole, we might overcome the idea of scarcity, which is a dominant view in the Netherlands”.

**Conclusion**

Although it is linked to other topics, the central point in the interview with Marcouch is the so-called “sense of citizenship”, to which practically all his statements can be reduced. Marcouch sees citizenship as the essential feature that makes contemporary society work. He consequently wanted to make the notion a key point in UMMAO’s vision, but did not manage to do so because of his early departure.

**5.3.3 Argan**

Although Argan is a (local) Moroccan youth organisation based in Amsterdam, the organisation has a national scope on social issues, particularly concerning the position of Moroccan youth and Islam in the Netherlands. After the murder of Van Gogh, Argan organized several debates in which Moroccan youth, but also people of non-Moroccan descent, ventilated their worries about the murder and the situation in the Netherlands. Because of these debates Argan became widely known: even the queen paid the organisation a visit (Argan 2008).

**Organisation**

Argan was founded in 1992 by Moroccan youth in Amsterdam. It started as a community centre but gradually transformed into an organisation that involved Moroccan youth in the
whole of Amsterdam. In the year 2000 Argan merged with four other urban organisations into *Stedelijk Jongerenwerk Amsterdam* (SJA, Urban Youth Work Amsterdam). The different units share a set of goals such as the development of talent and indicating specific youth issues (especially of youth between 16 and 21 years old), but each has its particular focus on music, sports, leisure activities, or a specific target group (SJADAM 2008). Argan mainly aims at social skills’ improvement of its target group by trying to involve them as much as possible in the development of activities (Argan 2008). Although Argan originally started as a Moroccan organisation, it now officially focuses on a broader public. However, it needs to be mentioned that only Argan’s debates attract a mixed public; with other activities it only concerns Moroccans.

**Interviewee**

Mr Mohamed Azahaf (1983), of Moroccan descent, entered the organisation as a volunteer and worked his way up to project manager and the organisation’s spokesman. By being a former member of the target group, he embodies the organisation’s profile perfectly: i.e. from volunteer to professional. Especially after Van Gogh’s murder Azahaf became the ‘face’ of the organisation (AT5 2009). After having been an active member for five years, he left the organisation in June 2009 to work for the Amsterdam city department of Zeeburg (after the interview had taken place).

**Integration and immigration**

Argan became nation-wide renown after several debates on, at that time, current problems concerning integration. Spokesperson Mohamed Azahaf explains this reputation:

“We already had a series of debates planned on Islam, radicalisation and integration when Van Gogh was murdered. (…) By chance, one of our debates had place only a couple of days after the incident. Suddenly the room was packed with people who wanted to talk about it, both *autochtonen* and *allochtonen*.”

Integration is a key point in the debates Argan organizes. Azahaf adds to this: “The current theme of the debates is ‘Moroccan-Amsterdam’s youth in conversation with…’, which means that it is youth that initiates the debates, instead of a politician wanting to get in contact with youth.” This also serves the goal of tackling the “negative image Moroccan youth is facing”.

Azahaf states that “thinking in groups is not the right way to carry out policy”, because “education or youth work shouldn’t be addressed to a particular group”. But in some cases, “it may be just to focus on a particular group”, “I think we are for instance better able to deal with Moroccans than *autochtonen* organisations do”. Therefore, Azahaf stresses, “I think it is important to present yourself as a Moroccan organisation”, but this does not mean that, “we deny a person admittance to our activities it they’re not [Moroccan]”.

**Citizenship**

On Dutch versus Moroccan nationality Azahaf states: “It would be odd to consider someone who is born and bred in the Netherlands as a Moroccan, only because his father did not request a Dutch passport when the opportunity was there. You’re Dutch to me as soon as you live, sit, stand, walk, study, and work here”. He furthermore emphasizes that “you can be anything you choose to be” and that “a piece of paper” in this respect, “doesn’t mean anything”. That the matter of nationality is not self-evident is put forward by Azahaf: “I have my Moroccan culture, because within the Dutch culture I still dislike and don’t understand
many things”, but “I don’t show my Moroccan passport while passing the Moroccan customs, because at that moment I feel Dutch”.

**European Union**

Continuing on the citizenship theme, Azahaf puts forward that “an additional European passport would make no sense, because that would be my third [laughs]!”. Europe is a theme that is not very much alive within Argan, although Azahaf expresses his worries about “power abuse” by European policy-makers and the “violation of privacy” in the context of the fight against terrorism. He notes in this respect: “Dutch persons who are called Mohamed, Ahmed or Ali do not have the same rights as other, autochtone Dutch persons”. He summarizes: “Europe and also the Netherlands look nice on paper, with pretty rules of law, the freedom of speech, education and religion, but in daily practice they don’t look that pretty.”

A common ground in the sense of “economy”, “ideology” and “law” are important factors according to Azahaf to form a European unity. Such a unity “does not really exist”, in the eyes of Argan’s spokesman, because “we are too much divided”, “But”, he adds, “it is good that not everybody follows one single direction, like zombies, but that we, instead of that, have our own particular focuses”. Azahaf concludes:

> “Because of the many different groups, there is no common sphere, but I see it as an enrichment that there is so much diversity. All those people with different thoughts, political colours, different ideologies, religions and cultures, that is just great! Not everyone needs to pray in the direction of Mecca; let people do whatever they like, just as long as they live up to the rules…”

**Conclusion**

Argan is renown because of its debates about integration, which in general are attended by a broad audience. The organisation is not very outspoken about Europe, although its spokesman made some critical remarks about it and mentioned that the topic is worth further exploration in the future. In general, the organisation is driven by a practical attitude and tries to be involved with current issues. On several issues, amongst which nationality and thinking in terms of groups, Azahaf takes a rather ambiguous stand. With this he not only underlines the complexity of these issues, but also expresses that Argan is a (local) youth organisation that has other things in mind than Europe, citizenship or a common European public sphere.

**5.4 Roma and Sinti organisations**

Currently, Roma and Sinti do not have a formal representative organisation at the national level and most organisations by Roma and Sinti operate at the local level. Two organisations are more or less active on the national level: the *Landelijke Sinti/Roma Organisatie* (National Sinti/Roma Organisation) and the *Landelijke Roma Stichting “Roma Emancipatie”* (National Roma Foundation “Roma Emancipation”, further abbreviated to “Roma Emancipatie”). In the past the National Sinti/Roma Organisation focussed more on Sinti, who are believed to have a longer history of settlement in the Netherlands than Roma. Sinti are considered to be a sub group of the Romani people that is concentrated in Western Europe. “Roma Emancipatie” is focussing on all Roma, including Sinti. Due to practical reasons and the strong identification of “Roma Emancipatie” with Roma living elsewhere in Europe, we included this latter organisation in our research. In this section a short description is provided of the position of
Roma and Sinti in Dutch society. Then, the ideas of “Roma Emancipatie” and its founder Gjunler Abdula on the Eurosphere topics are discussed.

5.4.1 Roma and Sinti in the Netherlands

The first documented presence of travelling groups, later referred to as gypsies, in the Netherlands dates from the 15th century (Lucassen 1990: 22). Since then, these groups reappeared regularly but, facing persecutions, they moved on as soon as life became too dangerous. Since the 19th century there has been a presence of Sinti in the Netherlands, who nowadays define themselves as a separate group. In the 1960s Roma were among the guest workers and in the 1970s new Roma groups came from Eastern Europe. These Roma were often stateless (Rodrigues & Matelski 2004: 14). During the 1990s after the fall of the communist regimes and the wars on the Balkans, again new groups of Roma arrived, many of them as refugees.

Different studies and organisations give different estimates of the number of Roma and Sinti living in the Netherlands, ranging from 2,000 in 2002 by the government, 6,000 in 2004 by the Anne Frank Foundation, and 5,000 to 10,000 in 2005 and 10,000 in 2008 by Forum. “Roma Emancipatie” estimates that between 20,000 and 22,000 Roma are currently living in the Netherlands (Rodrigues & Matelski 2004: 19; Forum 2008a; Jorna 2005: 2; Website "Roma Emancipatie" 2009).

The general attitude towards Roma and Sinti is characterized by rejection and neglect. After the Second World War the national government did not develop a special policy towards Roma and Sinti, but since many of them were living in caravans, they were affected by the policies for caravan dwellers. Caravan dwellers are native Dutch, but they became part of the official minority policy (Cottaar 1998: 114-115). For many years caravan dwelling was considered an undesired form of living and policies made travelling around the country very difficult. This also affected Roma and Sinti.

Until the 1980s there were no Roma and Sinti self-organisations, but since then they became organised, first in family associations. The National Sinti Organisation, later changed to National Sinti/Roma Organisation, has played an important role in the creation of a compensation fund by the government for the sufferings of Roma and Sinti during the Second World War. However, in 2003 the government subsidy for this organisation ended. The only other organisation operating at the national level is “Roma Emancipatie” (Rodrigues & Matelski 2004: 29-30).

Since 1995 Sinti and Roma are no longer part of the official national minority policies, because as a group they are too small and they are living dispersed over the country. After the repeal of the Caravan Act in 1999, responsibility for their situation was definitively transferred from the national to the municipal level. Currently, there is no structurally organised dialog between Roma and Sinti organisations and governmental departments, and the group has no consultative status within the LOM-structure. Participation of Roma and Sinti in primary and secondary education is weak and unemployment rates are extremely high. They face a high level of societal prejudice and are often in tense relations with local governments, housing associations and the local population (Jorna 2007b; Jorna 2005: 2,4; Jorna 2007a: 17). Several (international) organisations have criticized the Dutch government for playing an important role in the marginalisation of Roma and Sinti and not taking its obligation to monitor the situation of the group at the least (European Commission on Racism and Intolerance 2008: 26; Rodrigues & Matelski 2004: 51). The Dutch government has ratified the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, thereby recognizing the

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73 For more information on LOM see §5.1.
Romani-language, and the Framework Convention on the Protection of National Minorities. However, the government did not include Roma in the definition of national minority (Jorna 2007a: 18).

5.4.2 Landelijke Roma Stichting “Roma Emancipatie”

Organisation
In 1998/1999 “Roma Emancipatie” was founded by Gjunler Abdula and other socially active Roma. According to its website the organisation aims at bridging the gap between Roma living in the Netherlands and the Dutch population. Furthermore, the foundation provides information and it supports Roma in their integration in Dutch society. “Roma Emancipatie” also tries to help Roma coming from the new EU member states to integrate in Western Europe (Website “Roma Emancipatie” 2009). Around 480 Roma families are represented by the foundation and among its activities are festivals with a cultural and a discussion component. The foundation is also organising activities for youth and women, giving legal assistance, and is working on discrimination and racism. The foundation is based on voluntary work and it lacks structural subsidies, which makes the work of the organisation difficult, according to its founders. According to the founders another obstacle is that the European Union is financially supporting Roma NGOs in Eastern Europe, but not in Western Europe.

Interviewee Mr Gjunler Abdula (1965) was born in Macedonia, where he was active as a journalist and as a Roma representative. He came to the Netherlands as a refugee. In 2005 Gjunler Abdula was elected as a delegate to the European Roma and Travellers Forum. He is also a member of the parliament of the International Romani Union. Between 2005 and 2007 he was working for EU-parliamentarian Els de Groen (independent member, later member of the Greens/ EFA). Abdula is taking part in incidental consultations with the Roma communities on behalf of these communities.

Integration and immigration
For “Roma Emancipatie” education and social and cultural exchange are very important aspects for integration and participation of the Roma community in Dutch society. Gjunler Abdula emphasizes that integration is not a one-sided affair and he is worried about the current situation:

“Integration has to come from two sides. There needs to be respect and understanding at both sides. Unfortunately, the last five, six years things have gotten worse in the Netherlands. (…) The problem is that Roma themselves are not involved in solving their problems. In all the organisations working on Roma problems, there are no Roma working on Roma questions, while we have capable people for that. Gadje [non-Roma people] have the idea that they know what should happen with Roma and how they should work with them. They meet resistance, because Roma do not know them. (…) Ideas should be realised in cooperation with us.”

In the view of Abdula Roma as a group should have the right to a special position, because of their historical presence in Europe:

“Roma are an exceptional group. (…) We are an old people and meet the five criteria [of a national minority]. (…) Our people are not always well listened to. Roma and Sinti
should get a special legal position and treatment. (…) Other minority groups have a land of origin, for example the Turks. Our land is the land where we are living. (…) For us there is no support [from a national government].”

Abdula takes a liberal position towards immigration:

“We have to be open to our neighbours. As a human being, everyone has the right to live somewhere. The Netherlands should accept that. The Netherlands used to be known as a friendly country. It is a pity that the political situation and the media have decreased respect for people. The Netherlands must be open, tolerant and show solidarity with immigrants.”

European Union
Currently, EU citizenship is linked to holding the nationality of one of the member states. This puts Roma in a difficult situation, because not all of them are registered in their country of origin and some of them are stateless. This means they do not have access to the rights connected with being an EU citizen. Abdula thinks this is not fair: “It is a problem that we are not recognized as citizens of Europe, while we are here for so long. Because of an administrative thing we do not get it.”

In the view of Abdula the European Union will encompass more than Eastern and Western Europe in the distant future. He is foreseeing problems related to housing and labour if poorer countries join the Union. Therefore, the Western, wealthy countries should invest in a better life for the people in those countries. That will “prevent people from migrating to the richer parts of the Union and it will also prevent the development of tensions”.

Abdula notes a difference in the social position of Roma between Western and Eastern European states. Although the situation of Roma in the Eastern European states is not necessarily better, Roma there are better involved: “In Eastern countries Roma have more rights. (…) Roma are involved. They even have representatives in parliaments and in governments.”

The Foundation “Roma Emancipatie” is active in several transnational networks. The organisation is involved in the European Roma and Travellers Forum and the International Romani Union. Furthermore, the foundation is cooperating with like-minded organisations in Belgium and Germany.

Conclusion
In the Netherlands Roma and Sinti do not form a recognized national minority, although the Romani language is officially recognized as a minority language. Roma and Sinti are a marginalized group that is not represented in the national minority consultation structure. The Dutch government has been criticized for its reserved position. According to Abdula from “Roma Emancipatie” Roma are not involved in solving the problems of their communities and Roma do not work on Roma questions. Many resist working with people they do not know. Abdula thinks that integration has to come from both sides, from Dutch society and the Roma community, and his organisation tries to encourage exchanges between the two. The lack of support in Roma communities for (local) policies resulting often from not being involved in policymaking, and their perception of a failed understanding of their situation by non-Roma make it hard for efforts to improve their social position to be successful.
In Abdula’s eyes Roma have the right to a special legal position, due to their historical presence in Europe and the lack of a supportive national government. Roma have been living in Europe for a very long time and Abdula thinks it is a problem that they do not have direct access to European citizenship, because this depends on having the nationality of a member state. Travelling around and living on the fringes of society has resulted in Roma not having the nationalit of the state they are living in or even in statelessness. Thus, EU citizenship for them is often beyond reach.

Abdula finds it a pity that the Netherlands are not as tolerant and open towards immigration as it used to be. In his eyes the richer states of the EU should invest more in poorer regions in order to prevent people from migrating. This will decrease tensions in Western societies arising from migration. According to Abdula Roma in Eastern Europe have more rights and they are better involved than in the Western European countries. Despite this, their living conditions there are not better.

Several transnational organisations are working on Roma issues. Abdula and his organisation are in contact with Roma from other European countries and he himself is active in the European Roma and Travellers Forum and the International Romani Union. Due to family bonds and their travelling history many Roma have transnational contacts. In the Dutch public sphere Roma and Sinti are not very visible. In other European countries, where Roma form larger communities with their own representatives, and on the European level, they receive more attention and are better visible.

5.5 Refugee organisations in the Netherlands

In the Netherlands a broad range of actors are working on refugee issues: individuals, informal coalitions of people, local organisations based on all kinds of convictions, governmental organisations and regional and national non-governmental organisations. Of the organisations operating at the national level two stand out in size and influence: VluchtelingenWerk Nederland (VWN, Dutch Council for Refugees) and Vluchtelingen-Organisaties Nederland (VON, Refugee Organisations in the Netherlands). The two organisations have different origins. VluchtelingenWerk Nederland is an organisation that has sprung from initiatives of Dutch citizens to offer support to refugees. Vluchtelingen-Organisaties Nederland is an association of organisations by refugees themselves and was founded to ensure refugee representation. This section describes both organisations.

5.5.1 VluchtelingenWerk Nederland

Organisation

During the 1970s religious and political organisations provided relief for refugees arriving in the Netherlands. In 1979 these organisations merged and VluchtelingenWerk Nederland was founded. Nowadays, approximately 7000 volunteers and 600 paid employees are working for the organisation, in the national bureau and in local and regional branches. The highest decision-making body is a committee comprised of representatives of the regional organisations. A board is responsible for current affairs within the association and two directors lead the organisation. VluchtelingenWerk Nederland is active in all Dutch refugee centres and in about 90 percent of the Dutch municipalities. VluchtelingenWerk Nederland is financed through a gift from a national lottery, subsidies from governments and donations.

The mission of VluchtelingenWerk Nederland is to stand up for refugee rights and to support refugees in building up a new life. VluchtelingenWerk Nederland does this via the promotion of refugee interests on the individual and the collective level. The organisation is
involved in the asylum procedure from the moment someone seeks asylum and offers information, counselling and support. Once an asylum seeker has received a residence status, the organisation offers social support in the municipalities during the process of integration. Furthermore, the organisation is lobbying for refugee rights and tries to maintain and encourage support for refugees and asylum seekers in society. In the past the organisation was one of the driving forces in the campaign for a general pardon for asylum seekers who had applied for asylum under the old Aliens Act. Due to slow procedures at the Immigration and Naturalisation Service many of them were still living in the Netherlands without a residence permit. After years of lobbying in 2006 the newly elected House of Representatives accepted this general pardon.

Because asylum and integration issues are dealt with at the European level more and more, VluchtelingenWerk Nederland has participated in the foundation of the European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE). ECRE is lobbying at the EU level and is involved in capacity building in other (member) states. VluchtelingenWerk Nederland has a consultative status in the United Nation’s Economic and Social Council and is a member organisation of the International Council of Voluntary Agencies (VluchtelingenWerk Nederland 2008; Website VWN 2009).

**Interviewee** Mr Edwin Huizing (1962) has been general director of VluchtelingenWerk Nederland since 2006. Between 2001 and 2006 he was executive director for the organisation. He has studied Social Geography and has a background in development aid in Africa.

**Immigration and integration**

Traditionally, VluchtelingenWerk Nederland was an organisation of Dutch volunteers, but since the beginning of this century the organisation is trying to involve more refugees and minorities. Since 2003 the organisation has a specific diversity policy in which refugees are given preferential treatment. This has resulted in an increase of their number within the organisation. Furthermore, the organisation tries to encourage younger people to do volunteer work in order to reduce the effects of an ageing organisation. According to Edwin Huizing VluchtelingenWerk Nederland is “an organisation that wants to reflect society” and tries to show “that people who come to the Netherlands in most cases have an added value”.

VluchtelingenWerk Nederland has been criticising the Dutch asylum policy and the way asylum seekers are treated. According to the organisation current procedures are too short and negligent. Asylum seekers should be offered relief until a final decision about their status is taken and they should be detained only in very exceptional cases. Dutch regulations for family reunification are too strict and the procedure is too expensive. VluchtelingenWerk Nederland subscribes to the critique of the European Commission that Dutch procedures are at odds with European regulations. Furthermore, the Netherlands should be more generous in taking in officially invited refugees74 and the current number of 500 should be increased to at least 2500 per year (Website VWN 2009).

VluchtelingenWerk Nederland is a proponent of a single *European asylum policy* and this policy should be realised as soon as possible. Asylum seekers should have the same rights and chances for obtaining asylum irrespective of the EU country in which they apply. VluchtelingenWerk Nederland is against the Dublin Regulation, which stipulates that the EU state of first entrance is responsible for the asylum procedure of an asylum seeker. According to the organisation border countries receive too many asylum seekers and this endangers the

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74 These are refugees who are selected by e.g. UNHCR and who receive an official invitation from the Dutch government to come to the Netherlands. They should be distinguished from asylum seekers who come to the Netherlands without invitation and apply for a residence permit once they are here.
protection of those asylum seekers. The Northern EU member states have an obligation to confront the Southern states with their failure to protect refugees and their non-compliance with the Dublin Regulation. At the same time they should support better mechanisms of spreading asylum seekers. A European Asylum Support Office should improve the quality of refugee protection in Europe. For refugees who have been officially admitted it should be easier to settle in other European countries (Website VWN 2009). Huizing explains that Frontex “is training border guards in keeping people out and not in how the right of asylum can be guaranteed” and that “refugees do not receive protection, because they cannot reach Europe”.

Huizing thinks that labour migration will grow the next ten years. According to him the Dutch government should be clear about whether labour migrants are needed or not and what their position is. It is not fair to admit people and then suddenly tell them to leave again:

“A broad discussion is not useful. It would be more useful to count what is needed in terms of labour and to learn from past experiences with asylum and guest workers. The question is whether we need skilled or unskilled people. And another question is whether we need them because of ageing or because we do not want to do work ourselves any longer. (...) VluchtelingenWerk thinks that migrants should have some basic rights. You can be strict about what you offer, but you also have to take into account what they offer. (...) It cannot be just about cheap labour. (...) They should be able to take tax money back home, so they can invest. (...) This needs to be arranged at the European level. (...) The lessons learnt from the asylum experience are that it does not make sense to arrange this only in the Netherlands, because then countries will compete with each other.”

Huizing thinks it is wise for the EU to focus on offering relief in the refugees’ regions of origin as well: “These regions close to conflict areas are often very poor, but bear the heaviest burden of providing relief”. He thinks this is not fair. Europe should “spend more money on offering protection in the region combined with development aid, poverty reduction and negotiations on refugee rights with states neighbouring on a conflict area”. Although Huizing thinks much can be improved in this field, it cannot be a substitute for asylum in the EU: “Seeking asylum in Europe should always be an option open to everyone.”

For VluchtelingenWerk Nederland having work is a very important aspect for successful integration. Therefore, VluchtelingenWerk Nederland founded Emplooi (Employment), a job agency aimed at refugees (Website VWN 2009). VluchtelingenWerk Nederland is also involved in the integration of refugees in Dutch society. The organisation thinks it is very important that asylum seekers do not have to wait for years to receive a decision on whether they can stay in the Netherlands or not. Huizing thinks that if people had to wait for too long “it is difficult to stay motivated and start working hard again”. Uncertainty about their status and waiting in a refugee centre completely shut off from Dutch society for years does not contribute to a successful integration.

Citizenship

VluchtelingenWerk Nederland states that the fees for getting a residence permit and for naturalisation are the highest in Europe and that these should be lowered. The organisation says that this barrier to naturalisation is at odds with the government’s appeal to migrants to integrate in Dutch society (Website VWN 2009). According to Huizing people should choose consciously to live in a certain country. To him that means accepting the norms and values of that country:
“Some norms and values should get most of the attention, not just some language tests. The current practical exam is a good thing. In the run-up to the Dutch nationality you should take a look at how people are participating in society. (...) Criteria like living in a country, for example for five years, are fine. (...) But, fixation on language, topography and history does not mean that someone is a good citizen. (...) What do you ask from migrants? And also: What do you ask from your own citizens? Do you ask Dutch citizens the same things as refugees? The Dutch should not apply double standards.”

VluchtelingenWerk Nederland is not working on European citizenship. Personally, Huizing thinks that most people are not ready for European citizenship. To him citizenship means “active participation and investing in society” and he thinks that “for most people this is not an issue”. In his opinion the “European Union could do more for minorities who are living across borders, like Sami or Roma (...) because some minorities and cultures need protection”. He thinks that this is easier to deal with at the European level than at the national level, because at the latter level “all kind of emotions play a role”. Furthermore, Huizing thinks it is not a good idea to grant “political rights to all kinds of minorities”, because then things will “run out of control”.

**European public space**

VluchtelingenWerk Nederland is cooperating with like-minded organisations in other EU member states, because the issues the organisation is working on are transnational. Examples of organisations VluchtelingenWerk Nederland is in contact with are the Danish Refugee Council and the French *Forum Réfugiés*. The organisations see an advantage in joined lobbying, e.g. through ECRE, and exchanging experiences. Furthermore, VluchtelingenWerk Nederland is supporting NGOs in new member states. According to the organisation local support for refugees is a European value. However, as Huizing explains, “it is not a natural thing that they [people in the new member states] have the same views on refugee protection”. Furthermore, these new member states are the new border regions. VluchtelingenWerk Nederland finds it important that these border regions have a good infrastructure for offering relief. According to the organisation, the EU has already spent a lot of money on border protection and police in these states. Huizing thinks it is “also necessary that countervailing powers in the form of NGOs receive support” and VluchtelingenWerk Nederland is doing this.

**Conclusion**

VluchtelingenWerk Nederland is a proponent of diversity and tries to reflect the diversity of society in its own organisation. The organisation thinks it is important that a single European asylum policy is realised that guarantees the right of asylum and offers protection to refugees. In this field much has to be improved. For the director of VluchtelingenWerk Nederland, Huizing, it is evident that in the next years labour migration will increase. The Netherlands should not treat this issue only from the perspective of cheap labour. Instead it should determine what kind of migrants are needed and offer them some basic rights as well. In the eyes of Huizing labour migration should be dealt with at the European level. Europe should also put more effort in combining protection of refugees in the region with other instruments such as development aid and poverty reduction. This, however, can never be a substitute for the right of seeking asylum. For Huizing active participation and investing in society are important aspects of (good) citizenship. What is asked from migrants in this respect cannot differ from what is asked from Dutch people. VluchtelingenWerk Nederland observed that
migration and refugee issues are more and more dealt with at the European level and thinks that this is also the level at which these issues should be addressed. Therefore, the organisation is cooperating with other national refugee organisations and it is participating in European organisations, such as ECRE.

VluchtelingenWerk Nederland is dealing with European migration and asylum issues and not with other aspects of European integration. The organisation does not have an official vision on integration. For Huizing it is not exactly clear where the border of Europe should be drawn and the Union “can grow as much as it wants”. He thinks Turkey should be able to join, because it has “centuries of shared relations” with the rest of Europe. To Huizing, this relation is reflected “in the millions of Turks living in Europe”.

5.5.2 Vluchtelingen-Organisaties Nederland

*Organisation*

Vluchtelingen-Organisaties Nederland is a national association of refugee organisations and has about 400 member organisations. VON was founded in 1985, partly on the instigation of VluchtelingenWerk Nederland, to ensure refugee representation in the national minority consultation structure (Bronkhorst 1990: 86). The associated organisations are organisations set up by refugees from all over the world. About 80 percent of them are from countries with an Islamic background. VON provides the refugee organisations with information, services, training, and office facilities. Furthermore, VON represents refugees within the LOM-structure and informs and consults refugee organisations about the topics of the LOM.75

VON, its board and its member organisations mainly rely on volunteer work, although the organisation has a director and a small number of paid staff. The Council of Associates, consisting of representatives of the refugee organisations, ensures the participation of the member organisations in the policies of VON. Furthermore, VON has a Women Council, a platform for organisations of refugee women, and a youth network, which aims at involving one-and-a-half and second generation refugees. VON receives subsidies from several ministries, including subsidies for the organisation and for projects (Website VON 2009; Den Exter et al. 1993-2006: 7/1050-1039; Vluchtelingen Organisaties Nederland 2008).

*Interviewee* Mr Dzsingisz Gabor (1940) is chairman of VON since May 2008. He came to the Netherlands as a refugee from Hungary after 1956. Dzsingisz Gabor has been State Secretary for Agriculture and Nature Management and member of the House of Representatives for the CDA. In 1997-1998 he was already chairman of VON, but resigned due to an ambassadorship in Hungary. After he returned to the Netherlands he became chairman again. By publications on his own website Gabor hopes to contribute to a democratic order in Europe.76

*Immigration and integration*

For VON refugee issues are an important field of action and refugee protection is one of the topics the organisation is working on. VON checks whether Dutch law, policies and practices for asylum seekers comply with treaties for refugee protection. The organisation informs government and politics about its views and, if necessary, a broader public via the media (Website VON 2009). Dzsingisz Gabor is critical about the way asylum seekers in the Netherlands are treated, especially the long period they have to live in uncertainty:

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75 For more information on the LOM see §5.1.
76 www.gaborvisie.nl
“I do not know whether those [people] working on asylum procedures really empathize with the situation of people concerned. If you do not manage to assess a case within a year, and that is already a long period, then you have to award a status automatically. If you know what they [asylum seekers] are dealing with and what is happening with them when they have to wait for papers. Letting people wait for years is insane. (…) The right of asylum is an individual right. Applications must be investigated piece by piece. Filing individuals is indeed difficult, but still I think there must be a deadline.”

Gabor thinks that migration cannot easily be halted and “expects many refugees from other parts of the world”. Europe cannot “build a dam against it”. Gabor criticizes the idea of prevention and limitation of immigration as a technocratic approach and believes that a strict deportation policy does not work:

“Differences in the world will always lead to migration. Agreements have been made about political refugees. You have to deal with them generously and flexibly. In other situations there can also be a life-threatening situation, for example due to poverty. (...) You will have an increasing flow of economic migration. The [humanitarian] problem is not solved and we are not serious enough about it that we enforce a solution there [in the countries of origin]. (...) If people are exposed to a life-threatening situation, I think that they must be admitted from a humanitarian point of view.”

Migration and the admission of refugees are no longer subjects that can be dealt with only at the national level. According to Gabor “admission policy must absolutely be harmonised” due to the common external borders of the EU. Freedom of movement within the Union and member states having different norms for admission lead to a situation in which “a weak spot is chosen, where people can enter easily”. Gabor thinks that “then that system of rules [with the easiest admission] will spread all over Europe”. Therefore, not only policies, but “also the application of regulations must be harmonised”. In case countries try to undercut the norms, Gabor finds it evident that “you have to expose this and go the [European] Court”. In his opinion “the legislation in all countries must meet the standards agreed upon in international treaties”.

According to Gabor diversity is “extremely enriching” and people should not fear for it. He acknowledges that “diversity can lead to frictions” and in those cases there is a role for the government. For Gabor diversity is limited by just one condition:

“Everyone is welcome under the condition that he respects the separation of Church and State. When people get organised or claim rights while not accepting the separation of Church and State, I do not play ball. We have to be clear about that, because it is the future discussion we will find ourselves in. (...) The foundation on which Western European society is based, with all the good basic assumptions of tolerance, human rights et cetera, exists merely by the grace of the separation of Church and State.”

For Gabor a diverse society asks for mutual adaptation. He thinks that in principle, when it is possible, public institutions should meet the wishes of different ethno-national groups:
“Tailored services, like in hospitals or medical care, are well intended. Still, I think that knowledge about the Dutch language is a requirement to be able to function in this country. We should gain more knowledge about all kinds of backgrounds and take these into account. But I am not in favour of organising separate, closed institutions for specific groups.”

Besides learning the language, more aspects should be accepted by everyone in society:

“In principle, everyone should accept the legal order and the basics of social interaction. Different cultural backgrounds bring along some phenomena. If you cultivate these without respect for each other, conflicts will be the result. We have to find ways so everyone understands what is done and what is not done. Respect for each other is an important basic principle.”

Concerning group rights for minorities Gabor thinks that under some conditions minority groups should have the right to express themselves culturally. It seems, however, that he applies this to minorities that have a historical presence in a certain area and not to migrant minorities:

“[As a minority] you have the right to speak your language and on the basis of that you cannot be discriminated against. (…) You cannot do anything about it when you happen to end up on the other side of the border due to some political decision. If a group has a certain quantity, then they should be able to express themselves in the cultural field, language, literature, speaking their language in schools. They have the right of cultural autonomy. That is also what European regulations state (…) I do not have problems with that.”

For VON the end result of integration is active citizenship. The organisation wants to create conditions, both among the receiving society and among communities of refugees, for optimal participation of refugees in society. In its view integration asks for efforts, not just by policy makers, but also by Dutch people and refugees. In order to contribute to integration VON is organising projects aimed at social activation of refugees (Website VON 2009). VON thinks that refugee organisations play an important role in emancipation processes. However, in its view the idea of emancipatie in eigen kring (emancipation within your own pillar) until you are ready for society, is obsolete.77 Empowerment of refugees is necessary for their emancipation, but this should be realised through joint efforts with Dutch people and through social participation (Website VON 2009). During a presentation Gabor stated that a multicultural society in which everyone withdraws in his own culture will lead to nothing and will continuously lead to new tensions and outbursts (Gabor 2008). Earlier in an open letter to a national newspaper he already revealed himself as an opponent of an assimilation policy:

“After years of inward-looking, cramped reasoning and grim policy aimed at assimilation, now there is a plea for a different approach. Participation is more appealing than endlessly searching for divisions and stigmatisation. (…) Refreshing is the terminology of

77 For more information about this principle see §3.3.
‘old and new Dutch’, which does not strive for a uniform perception of culture. This relieves us from the obnoxious terminology of *allochtoon* and *autochtoon*. Living in different cultures at the same time is no schizothymia, but rather an enrichment of your identity” (Gabor 2007: 16).

**Citizenship**

According to Gabor the current criteria for obtaining *Dutch nationality* “are very complicated”. He thinks the requirement to live in the Netherlands for five years before you can acquire Dutch citizenship is an accepted criterion and he sees no problem in using it. The fact that a child of Dutch parents who is born outside the Netherlands does not automatically become Dutch is described by him as “strange”. Gabor also underlines that the complexity of acquiring citizenship is often underestimated and that many people think of it as something obvious:

“In the Netherlands people talk about it as a simple thing, but it is a complex problem. (...) Granting citizenship is an autonomous right of every country. (...) It is good to realise that there are all kinds of different systems. Sometimes a citizen cannot do anything about it when he receives a nationality or when it is taken from him. Having a passport is not related to loyalty. Loyalty does not depend on paper.”

According to Gabor it is not possible to say anything in general about having *multiple nationalities* and it depends on the situation whether it is preferable or not:

“If someone holds multiple citizenships of states that in a judicial and legal sense are not in conflict with each other, than that’s no problem. (...) A country can exercise rights over its subject that absolutely conflict with the rights of another country of which that person also has the nationality. You cannot make general statements about multiple citizenships. It depends completely on the consequences of those multiple citizenships. (...) I am against the kind of multiple citizenships that leads to problems.”

The connection that some people in the Netherlands make between holding multiple citizenships and the lack of loyalty that would appear from this is not endorsed by Gabor. He thinks that “you can live in the Netherlands and have emotional ties with the country you are from”. He accepts those ties and thinks that “you have to deal with these in a respectful manner”.

For Gabor the EU is still based on the member states. Therefore, for him *EU citizenship* exists by the grace of having the nationality of one of the member states: “The European Union is no supranational body or federation. As long as that is the situation, you have to start from the sovereign rights of the member states.” In Gabor’s eyes EU citizenship cannot offer a solution to the problem of member states not granting citizenship rights to large groups in their societies:

“When admitting a new member state, that state has to meet certain criteria, like a functioning constitutional state. I think that a country in which a substantial part of the population has no civil rights is not a constitutional state. (...) You cannot treat minorities that way.”
Gabor criticizes the fact that at the moment not all EU citizens have the right to work in other member states:

“Every European citizen must have the right to the freedom of movement. (…) All those years Western capital was present there [in the candidate countries] to play an important role in the transformation. (…) During the accession negotiations it was proposed to have a transitional period of seven years. Economically the countries have been stripped. The little thing that could offer added value, sending home money, has been taken away. That is applying double standards. The idealism of Europe is not compatible with such an approach.”

**European Union**

Gabor is sceptical about the enlargement of the European Union with the Central and Eastern European states. In his view the EU did not put much effort in helping the Central European states to get ready for membership. He explains that the Structural Funds “had run dry when the miserable Central Europeans came” and that “the means available were minimal.” In addition he thinks that:

“The Copenhagen criteria are not sufficient, that is what the last rounds of enlargement have proved. (…) One aspect that is forgotten is to what extent a society is capable of facing the threats and tensions [EU membership brings]. (…) The last enlargement has caused instability in some countries.”

In Gabor’s view historical ties connect the countries of the European Union. Countries that do not have those ties should not necessarily be excluded, although they must meet certain criteria before they can join. About the ties that bind the EU and which countries could join the Union Gabor states:

“‘European’ is not just [a] geographical [demarcation]. The countries have quite a lot of things in common: norms and value systems, tradition and history. In principle the humanitarian, Jewish-Christian values can be found in Europe, not in Turkey. You can step away from this due to strategic reasons. (…) The geographical boundaries more or less coincide with those of the ancient Roman Empire. They have to do with that Roman Empire and the French Revolution. The things that we have in common determine certain behaviour and ideas. That is characteristic for the geographical, almost-unity of Europe. Those things continue for hundreds of years.”

Gabor is clearly in favour of a strong European Union with strong institutions:

“I am in favour of strengthening the EU. At the same time much more things should be enforced. (…) The Union is tolerating things that shouldn’t be tolerated. They should be stricter. (…) I am in favour of strengthening European institutions.”
European public sphere

According to VON the international orientation of refugees has an added value. For them it is normal to think in both a national and a European context. Their networks often reach many European countries. VON thinks it is important to structure these networks to be able to react on European developments. The organisation participates in international conferences and has taken initiatives for founding a European umbrella organisation of refugee organisations. Such an organisation is needed in the eyes of VON, because discussions on integration and asylum policy are more and more held at a European level (Website VON 2009).

However, Gabor puts the active participation of VON in European networks in perspective. According to him it is difficult to participate: “It would exceed our powers if we would also want to do that. The organisation is run by volunteers. (...) There is no money.” But there is also another factor. Gabor thinks that “integration issues are national issues. He “could not say anything sensible about the German or French question of integration”. Therefore, VON “should not go for areas about which it knows little.” According to Gabor, VON does join activities of other organisations that work on an international level on issues of asylum rights, but this participation is “fragmented, not systematically”.

In the eyes of Gabor a European public space “does not exist: Europe propagates itself inadequately and does not present itself well”. If this will be improved it “can take away ignorance and bring Europe closer to the people”.

Conclusion

VON and Gabor are taking position against the heated, polarising debates about migration and integration in the Netherlands. During the interview Gabor expressed his worries about the effects of these debates on refugees and migrant youth:

“We have more problems with the internal opposition within refugee groups that are stimulated by this debate. Radicalisation is clearly developing. (...) The integration process has been set back. (...) Fanatics say: (...) join us. (...) It is important to increase the self-confidence of youth organisations of migrants. (...) They should be supported and get a chance. They should not feel less than those religious fanatics.”

Migration is unavoidable in the eyes of Gabor. The EU should have a harmonized admission policy that is generous in granting asylum to people in life-threatening situations. Current procedures in the Netherlands take too long and Gabor proposes to automatically grant a status to asylum seekers when it is not possible to assess their case within a year. For Gabor participation (of refugees) in society is a key word. On the one hand minorities should not withdraw in their own institutions and organisations, although they can play a role in the emancipation process of refugees. On the other hand, public institutions should pay attention to the wishes of different ethno-national groups. Speaking the language, accepting the legal order and the basics of social interaction, and respecting each other are necessary for an active citizen. In a diverse society mutual adaptation is needed. Minority groups, if they are large enough, should in the eyes of Gabor have the possibility to express themselves culturally. It seems however, that he applies this idea mainly to territorially-bounded minorities that have a historical presence in a certain area.

Gabor thinks it is important that people realize that acquiring citizenship is a complex process and that granting citizenship is a right of states. Citizens themselves cannot influence this. When holding more than one nationality leads to conflict, it is not preferable for people
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to have more than one. EU citizenship should remain derived from the nationality of the member states and all EU citizens should have the same rights.

An important question during the process of accession of candidate member states that should not be forgotten is whether the candidates can deal with the pressure of being an EU member. This aspect was not given priority during the last rounds of enlargement and has caused instability in some of the new member states. The countries of the EU share historical ties. However, this does not mean that other countries can never be a member. Gabor is in favour of a strong European Union with strong institutions. For VON European cooperation is important, but the organisation does not have the means to do this actively and structurally.

VON is optimistic about the contribution of refugees in the field of peace and security. The organisation sees an important role for them in reconstruction, development and conflict management in their countries of origin, because they know the cultures and societies of these countries and have experience in reforms and democratisation (Website VON 2009).

5.6 Moluccan organisations

Currently, the Moluccan community has no formal representative organisation operating at the national level. However, there is an organisation that serves as a source of information for both the Moluccan community and outsiders: the Museum Maluku (Moluccan Museum) in Utrecht. In the museum and its organisation much knowledge has been gathered about the Moluccan community. The process that this community has gone through is an interesting case when studying processes of integration. Therefore we included the museum in the Eurosphere project. In this section a short description is provided of the integration process of the Moluccan community. Then the position of the museum, the views of its director and how different aspects of integration are looked upon by Moluccans are discussed.

5.6.1 Moluccans in the Netherlands

After the decolonisation of the Dutch East Indies, a group of soldiers of the Dutch colonial army, mainly recruited on Ambon and its surrounding islands, were transported to the Netherlands together with their families. This was meant as a temporary solution to the problem of where to demobilize the soldiers after the independence of Indonesia. Eventually the group would never return. In 1951 approximately 12,500 people arrived, followed in 1962 by a much smaller group of about 1600 people (Smeets & Steijlen 2006: 74,78). Most of the men were soldiers with hardly any formal education who barely mastered the Dutch language. From a religious perspective the group was also quite homogenous: approximately 2.5 percent were Muslims, 4.5 percent were Roman Catholics, the rest were Protestants (Van Amersfoort 2004: 155-156; Smeets & Steijlen 2006: 99). The group resisted Indonesian occupation of their homeland and supported the independent Republik Maluku Selatan (RMS, Republic of the South Moluccas). Despite the homogenous structure of the community, there were internal rivalries often between people from different islands or with different religious affiliations (Van Amersfoort 2004: 156). After their arrival in the Netherlands the soldiers were discharged. This meant a loss of their job and status and resulted in bitter disappointment about the Dutch government (Smeets & Steijlen 2006: 81-82; Veenman 2001: 19).

The Moluccans were not supposed to stay in the Netherlands. Therefore, in their first years of stay integration in Dutch society was not a goal. Moluccans were housed in separate camps, often located far away from the cities. They did not have access to the labour market and were not registered in the municipal administrations (Van Amersfoort 2004: 155,156; Veenman 2001: 18, 19). Moluccans did not object, because they had the idea that they would return to the RMS and as former soldiers they expected the Dutch government to support
them. As time passed by it became clear that the stay of the Moluccans would not be short-lived and the government pressed the group to integrate (Veenman 2001: 19). This also meant relocation from the camps to Moluccan neighbourhoods. The community could retain its leadership structure in the form of kampreden (camp councils), even after the relocation to the neighbourhoods. These councils developed into partners for the government, although relations were often tense. There was a mutual benefit: for the government it was convenient to achieve legitimacy for its policies via the councils. For the councils this offered an opportunity to strengthen their groups.

During the 1970s a part of the Moluccan youth radicalized and shocked Dutch society by a series of terrorist actions, including kidnappings and hijacks, in which several people were killed. Different factors contributed to this radicalisation: disappointment about their position in society in general, frustration about the lack of success in the realisation of the RMS and the lack of Dutch support for their ideal, internal strife within the RMS-movement, and a growing conflict between the first and second generation (Smeets & Steijlen 2006: 231-258; Van Amersfoort 2004: 160-165). According to Hans van Amersfoort, who has published extensively about the Moluccan community, the slow but ongoing integration of Moluccans in Dutch society resulted in tensions and a fear of the old leaders for diminishing loyalty towards the community and its political ideals. This was an important motive for the Moluccan leadership to steer the youngsters (Van Amersfoort 2004: 160-162).

After the violence of the 1970s it became clear for both the government and the Moluccan community that they should head for another direction. The political aspect of the RMS was no longer on the fore and socio-economic problems received more attention. The earlier formed Inspraakorgaan Welzijn Molukkers (Consultation Body Moluccans) really started to function. Through subsidies of the government a network of national and local Moluccan welfare organisation came into existence, run by Moluccans themselves. Moluccans more and more focussed on a life in the Netherlands and took initiatives to solve the problems within their community (Smeets & Steijlen 2006: 278, 279, 297, 305-306; Van Amersfoort 2004: 166).

Justus Veenman, who has done long-term research on the position of the Moluccans, concluded that after the 1980s young Moluccans were better educated compared to earlier, unemployment rates dropped and there was an increase in contacts with Dutch people (Veenman 2001: 20-22). However, his study of the third generation in 2001 shows a less positive picture. Veenman observes a stagnation in social integration of the third generation (Veenman 2001: 23-26). A study by Forum also shows the pattern of the third generation not fulfilling the expectation of continued social advancement, especially in the field of education (Tunjanan 2008).

5.6.2 Museum Maluku

Organisation
In 1986 a Joint Declaration was adopted by the Dutch government and Badan Persatuan, at that time the largest Moluccan interest group. One of the measures was to make money available for the realisation of a Moluccan historical museum (Smeets & Steijlen 2006: 305). In 1990 the Moluccan Historical Museum was opened. The task of the museum was to give an impression of Moluccan history and to stimulate Moluccan culture. Later its name was changed to Museum Maluku in order to reflect the attention for both historical and recent events and developments. Nowadays, the mission of the museum is to collect, preserve, research, and present the heritage of the Moluccan community in the Netherlands. The Museum Maluku organises exhibitions, conducts or orders research, and (co-)produces
events, shows, workshops and debates. Central idea is that the Moluccan community is an integral part of Dutch society while at the same time retaining its unique characteristics and strong ties to the Moluccas (Website Museum Maluku 2009). The museum attracts a wide range of people: Moluccans, people who are in some way connected to the Moluccas or Indonesia and Dutch people. After several years of subsidies from the government, the organisation is now financially independent.

Interviewee Mr Wim Manuhutu (1959) has been involved in the management of the Museum Maluku since 1987 and was director until January 2009. Wim Manuhutu is of Moluccan descent and has studied history.

Immigration and integration
As one of the older migrant groups, the case of the Moluccans offers an example of how the integration process of migrant groups can develop. Wim Manuhutu describes the first period after arrival and the strong position of Moluccan organisations:

“People arrived here as an organised group. (…) The high level of organisation is characteristic for the 1950s and 1960s and the fact that people were housed in groups also contributed to this. In the beginning this was in isolated places far from Dutch society and contacts with the rest of society went via the organisations.”

Manuhutu explains how the violence of the 1970s marked the changing approach towards integration and that the Moluccan case strongly influenced Dutch minority policy at that time:

“The hijacks resulted in a period of reorientation. The attention shifted towards the socio-economic position. People still worked within their own organisations. (…) The slogan integratie met behoud van eigen identiteit (integration while preserving your own identity) is actually a Moluccan term. (…) The Moluccans are an old migrant group. When you look at minority policy (…) they are clearly pioneers. Moluccan policy was a kind of experimental field for the later general minority policy.”

After the 1970s consultation and cooperation, although not always established easily, became keywords. Manuhutu tells that not everyone in the Moluccan community supported the Inspraakorgaan Welzijn Molukkers and that some considered it “a way of encapsulation: you give people room at the table hoping that other forms of protest are weakened.”

The Dutch government, besides setting up a structure for consultation and participation of minorities, also addressed some of the grievances of the Moluccan community. One of the gestures of appreciation for the Moluccans was the financial support for the foundation of a museum. Again, not everyone in the community was happy about that: “A part of the community was sceptic and considered it a sop. (…) ‘By giving us all kind of facilities, they want to calm us’.”

Manuhutu explains that the museum is “a centre where people themselves can do something in the field of culture” and that it “fits in the climate of the 1980s with integratie met behoud van eigen cultuur (integration while preserving your own culture).” Nowadays, the museum is “a meeting place for the community” and it has become “part of the cement of the community”. Manuhutu considers the museum a “successful example of grass-root organisation” and underlines that migrant institutions, like a museum, can contribute to the participation of migrants in Dutch society:
“By having an institution of their own, and that doesn’t always have to be a museum, it can also be a cultural centre, you can help groups. It is a bit a pillarised idea and I hope we have left pillarisation behind. But for some groups participation in Dutch society can be facilitated by creating their own, attractive institution. That doesn’t mean that it will be a bastion.”

However, Manuhutu thinks that “the climate has changed”. Although, according to him, some of the other migrant groups also would like to have a museum or house of culture, he thinks that such an institution financially supported by the government nowadays is “no option”. He comments:

(...) The cultural sector is still very ‘white’. (...) It is very difficult to get in and you need an institution like this museum for that. (...) We, together with NiNsee [National Institute for the Study of Dutch Slavery and its Legacy] and, partly, the Jewish Historical Museum are unique as ethnic museums in the Netherlands.

Currently, the Moluccan community is no longer represented within the LOM-structure. Recent research shows that the expected continuation of social progress of Moluccans did not take place and that there is actually stagnation in the position of the third generation. Manuhutu explains that this is a point of concern for the community and that people feel the need for organisations that “mobilise both the community and the government”. He points out that the phase of integration the Moluccan community is in, will also come for other migrant groups: “I see the position of the Moluccans as an example of the dialectics of progress. (...) Because the group has become invisible, a good lobby and representation of interests is needed.” Manuhutu underlines that other migrant organisations can learn from the experiences of the Moluccan community with the LOM-structure:

“Labour migrants consider the older migrant groups as an example and look at them to see how they have organised things. (...) The challenge for representative organisations is always to keep renewing. If you do not keep in contact with your community, you can tell a story that was valid five or ten years ago, but isn’t any longer. This goes for all representative organisations, but especially for organisations that act on behalf of communities. A community isn’t something that is made of wood that never changes.”

About the current debate on integration Manuhutu says:

“Integratie met behoud van eigen identiteit is considered blasphemy [by many people]. The emphasis is on integration. We say, keeping in mind the Moluccan background: ‘If you want groups not to feel at home in society, you have to stick to that goal’. Of course there is a set of rules, but if you force people to become Dutch in the cultural sense, in the narrow meaning of the word, then you will repel them.”

On the question to what extent migrants have to adapt to Dutch society Manuhutu answers:
“The constitution and the law in general define the rules. I can imagine having some social rules as well. (...) Speaking Dutch is important. The Moluccan story teaches us that if people do not learn to speak Dutch, forced or not, that they are condemned to a life in the margins of society.”

The Moluccan community has a relatively high number of interethnic marriages and the community has grown more diverse over the years. Despite this, Manuhutu explains that there is still some kind of group identity:

“People clearly define themselves as a separate community. (...) They kept long to the idea of exclusiveness and thought they had nothing to do with other groups. (...) I remember that in the 1970s and 1980s people could get mad when they were called migrant or allochtoon. This has changed. (...) Moluccans now belong [to Dutch society], unlike Muslims. Time is an important factor.”

Many Moluccans have found a place in Dutch society, but some of them are still strongly focussed on their own group. This is reflected in Manuhutu’s description of Moluccan neighbourhoods:

“In the past this has resulted in problems when a housing organisation wanted to put non-Moluccan families in vacant houses. Within no time they were chased away. (...) Until this moment, this hasn’t changed much and I do not see change coming in the next five or ten years. Moluccan neighbourhoods are ethnically homogenous in fact.”

**Citizenship**

The migration of the Moluccans was unique in the sense that it was a single event, apart from the small group that arrived some years later. Family reunification and repatriation to the Moluccan islands hardly took place. Reasons were that complete families had been moved to the Netherlands. Furthermore, in those times the means for contacts with the Moluccas were limited and people did not have the means or were not allowed to visit the islands. Thus, the growth of the community was almost purely realised by natural growth and not by new waves of migrants. Although the Netherlands has historical ties with its former colony Indonesia and the people from the Moluccas, it does not offer preferential treatment in the acquisition of citizenship to people from these areas, as some other countries do. For the Moluccan community this seems to be no issue of importance either. Manuhutu does “not recall that such a view was taken at the time that there was still a representative body”.

Until the 1980s the majority of the Moluccans were stateless. Manuhutu explains why this changed:

“It was not until the 1980s that this changed and that they became Dutch, mostly out of pragmatic reasons, to be able to travel. (...) I became Dutch simply because I wanted to have a travel document. That had little to do with the fact that I felt Dutch or not, so to speak.”
Therefore, to Manuhutu the current discussion of the dual nationalities of Turks and Moroccans linked to their loyalty “has a high symbolical value” and “political components”. For him nationality “says absolutely nothing about the loyalty someone has towards a country.”

**Conclusion**

The Moluccan community can be characterized as a homogenous, closed community with a high degree of organisations by community members. The last decade this high density of organisations has disappeared. This section described how these organisations in the beginning did not encourage integration of the Moluccans in society. Later organisations positively contributed to social advancement and integration of the community. The concept of *integratie met behoud van eigen identiteit* was especially applicable to the Moluccan community. The community has benefitted from this approach and the director of the Museum Maluku, Manuhutu, values it as such. He thinks the concept should not be completely disqualified: separate institutions for migrants can contribute to their integration. Support from the government combined with initiatives by the Moluccan community itself proved to be the formula for success for the establishment of the Museum Maluku. The museum, an organisation run by Moluccans, turns out to have a bridging function for the community itself and its relations with Dutch society.

Moluccans form a special group, historically connected to the Netherlands. Their case shows that such a bond is no guarantee for a smooth process of integration. By now, most Moluccans consider themselves as part of Dutch society and at the same time as somewhat different, as Moluccan. This is reflected in the position of the museum: an institute for showing Moluccan history and stimulating Moluccan culture, while at the same time stressing that the Moluccan community is an integral part of Dutch society with unique characteristics.

Keeping in mind the Moluccan case, Manuhutu concludes that some elements are necessary for successful integration: learning Dutch and respecting the constitution, the law and some social rules. Trying to achieve cultural integration, in his opinion, will be counterproductive. The case of the Moluccans also shows that acquiring a nationality is very often looked upon in a very pragmatic way. In Manuhutu’s eyes it has little to do with loyalty.

Manuhutu explains that Moluccans in general are not strongly involved in politics and that the idea of a united Europe does not appeal to most of them: “Europe is very far away from the people. (…) Many Moluccans shrug their shoulders and wonder what Europe has ever done for them.” Since Moluccans do not consider Europe an important platform and there is no Moluccan community outside the Netherlands, it is not likely that Moluccans structurally participate in a Europeanized public space.

In the current climate in the Netherlands radicalisation is often linked to political Islam and radicalising Muslim groups, and to a lesser extent to extreme right movements. In this respect it is interesting to mention that Manuhutu points out that other communities also have their radical tendencies and periods:

“If you take a look at the Moluccans, who in the Netherlands mainly have a Christian background, then you can say that violence linked to an ideal is not exclusively reserved for Islam. You also have to look for other factors [to explain radicalisation]. From that perspective it is good to draw lessons, with the comment that every group has its dynamics and is unique.”
5.7 Surinamese/Hindu organisations in the Netherlands

The Surinamese minority is with over 300,000 persons one of the largest minorities in the Netherlands (see §2.2). Most Dutch citizens of Surinamese descent (53%) are Hindu (Van Heelsum & Voorthuysen 2002). For that reason we focus on this group, which would otherwise not be represented in our research. In the Dutch context Hindu does not so much refer to ‘Hindus’ in general, but often to so-called Hindoestanen (Hindoestanen, Hindustanis), a group of people from the former Dutch colony of Surinam (Choenni & Mathura 1998: 5). Hindoestanen are the descendants of (contract) labour migrants who migrated in the late nineteenth century from British India to Surinam, mostly from what are now the provinces of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. Confusingly, also people of Surinamese descent who are Christians or Muslims may be referred to as Hindoestanen (Choenni & Mathura 1998: 5). Most Hindus in the Netherlands are Hindoestanen (83%), while the remaining Hindus are mostly people from India (11%) (Ministry of Justice 2006: 16).

5.7.1 HRN (Hindu Council of the Netherlands)

Organisation

The Hindoe Raad Nederland (Hindu Council of the Netherlands, HRN) is an umbrella organisation which represents many Dutch Hindu organisations. Most of the Hindus in the Netherlands belong to one of the two main branches Sanatan Dharma (75%) en Arya Samaj (25%), which are both – via nine different organisations – represented in de HRN. The HRN was founded in 1998 and is recognized by the Dutch government as the official body representing Hindus in the Netherlands (Ministry of Justice 2006: 9).

We interviewed the vice president of the HRN, Mr Tjandersekhar Bissessur (1943), who in his daily life runs his own lawyers office. Bissessur is president of the Federatie Shri Sanatan Dharma Nederland (the federation of Dutch Sanatan Dharma organisations). Furthermore, Bissessur is also president of the Hindoe Ouderenbond Nederland (a foundation of Hindu elderly).

Immigration, integration and citizenship

In general, diversity and tolerance for differences seems to be a common element in definitions of Hindu identity. For example, Choenni & Mathura – in a study among 305 Hindoestan youngsters in the Netherlands – call “tolerance, flexibility and absorption capacity typical for Hinduism” (1998: 4). On the other hand, the same research shows that many of those youngsters hold rather intolerant views on homosexual relations, relations between Hindus and non-Hindus, relations of widowed women, and relations between highly educated women and low educated men (Choenni & Mathura 1998: 26-29). It seems that they apply concepts of tolerance and diversity more readily to differences between groups than to differences between individuals within their own group.

Bissessur sees diversity as “inevitable”, and states that “within Hinduism, diversity is sometimes larger than diversity [between countries, in the sense that] within India there are very many dialects and groups”. He characterizes Hindus “in general as tolerant, non-violent, (…) and often choosing the way of cooperation and deliberation”. “The most important slogan within Hinduism is ‘Unity within Diversity’. That’s a main rule in Hinduism; that there should be unity within diversity, because otherwise the viability of the world is threatened”.

Diversity has its pro’s and con’s. Bissessur gives the example of a ‘Dutch Hindu centre’ the HRN intended to found, together with other organisations. It turned out to be impossible to reach consensus with the other parties:
“The majority were Hindus from Surinamese descent, others from Indian descent, but the Indians also consisted of (…) Sikhs, Bengalese, Hindus from New Delhi. [in short] Hindus of all kinds. This made it impossible, because it meant that we needed to construct a big, and hence expensive building, which than had to be financed by one or two of the largest groups. There the initiative stranded. This is a disadvantage of diversity, because it makes it difficult to reach consensus. (…) We respect each other spiritually, but failed to realize things together materially”.

On the other hand, “confrontation and deliberation with other groups can, through comparison, lead to a deeper insight of the positive and negative sides of certain systems, and that’s better than to be blinded by one specific system. Hence, diversity can be spiritually enriching. (…) People learn from each other”. Likewise, Bissessur has a positive vision on immigration. Besides spiritual enrichment (resulting from increased diversity), people may also benefit economically from migration, which works both ways; countries like the Netherlands benefit from labour migration, but as a result from the exchange of knowledge, technologies, et cetera, developing countries also may benefit from the immigration of (for example) Dutch people.

However, Bissessur thinks that immigration and diversity ought to be managed by the authorities. First of all, there is a need for a European immigration and integration policy. Currently, this is left too much to the governments of the member states. Member states like the Netherlands strived for zero migration, and implemented many restrictive measures, but are now “exhausted”. “Immigrants search and find ways to enter the country anyway. Now we have to look at the European level how we can manage immigration, that is, we must find out how to create room for those who come and how to create perspective for those who stay, say through development aid. According to Bissessur, the process of immigration will “continue unavoidably, and the advice from our organisation is to develop a system to guide that process in the right direction. Our vision on migration is: it is unavoidable, we must steer it, and we must ensure that it is to the benefit of the European societies”.

Regarding the integration of immigrants, Bissessur states that Hindoestanen “have the tendency to adapt themselves quite a lot”, a tendency deriving “from their [cultural] system” and the “unity within diversity approach”. He presents a model with three concentric circles. The first circle consists of the nuclear family, which is the core. Surrounding that core is a larger circle, consisting of the extended families, and all kind of other spheres, like one’s acquaintances, one’s political party, et cetera. The third circle is society at large, “where one is unconditionally subjected to the prevailing rules. There, one has to adapt in order to function well”. Also within the nuclear family rules exist, but those rules may not contradict with the rules in the larger circles.

Bissessur applies this model also to immigrant integration. For example, an immigrant may use the mother tongue in the circle of the nuclear family, but in the surrounding circles, the immigrant ought to use the language of the country one lives and works. Another example concerns the conditions for naturalisation, which according to Bissessur, should pertain to the largest concentric circle; in order to function in society, the would-be Dutch citizen should speak the language, and know the formal (laws) and informal (manners) rules that govern social interaction. Multiple citizenship is no problem to Bissessur, because “a passport is at most a partial definition of the identity of a person” and is more to be seen as a document to move around internationally.

To Bissessur, integration presupposes adaptation from both sides. Immigrants should adapt to the receiving society, and conversely, the receiving society should “create room for the cultural identity of the immigrants”. According to Bissessur “there is a law of nature that says: ‘birds of a feather, flock together’ and Hinduism says: ‘that rule shouldn’t be broken, because otherwise people won’t survive’ (…) That’s the ‘unity in diversity’. Let those groups stay together, as long
as they don’t disturb the peace”. It is the task of the government to manage diversity in such a way that conflicts are prevented.

**European Union**

The concept of unity within diversity also is the guiding principle regarding preferences to the future development of EU-institutions. A centralized European state or a federal ‘United States of Europe’ are not only unattainable, but also ‘unhealthy’ because of the need of people for identity and ‘belonging’. Here as well the model with three concentric circles can be applied, but now with the region, the nation state and the EU as the different levels. Hence, Bissessur prefers the status quo; retaining the current national states and increasing European cooperation.

According to Bissessur, the EU also has to play a role in this management of diversity. “Diversity cannot be maintained without good governance. Without that, it leads to conflicts and chaos. This can be observed in countries (…) like Afghanistan and Iraq, where deliberation and consultation between groups is lacking and groups don’t trust one another”. To Bissessur, the EU certainly has added value in this respect, “because member states could learn from each others best practices regarding the treatment of minorities, and furthermore European cooperation could ease the management of immigration”.

Concerning European enlargement, Bissessur states that “in general Hindus are advocates of accession, reasoning from the idea of ‘unity within diversity’”. Bissessur is a proponent of accession, whether it is the recent expansion to 27 member states, or future enlargements with countries like Ukraine and Turkey. However, accession is only possible after reaching agreements on the conditions. The enlargement with Eastern European countries did not influence the work of the HRN, because “very few Hindus live there; the largest concentrations of Hindus live in the UK and the Netherlands”.

**European public sphere**

On the European level, the HRN cooperates with the *Hindu Forum Europe* (HFE) (HFE 2009). The HFE was founded in 2007 by the HRN and four other Hindu organisations from Britain, Belgium and Italy. According to Bissessur, the HFE is “still in development’. The central goals of the HFE are to:

1. promote our shared values of European citizenship, interfaith friendship and peaceful coexistence, 2. provide support to the European governments and citizens in building communities that are cohesive and integrated, and 3. preserve European values of human dignity by drawing on the Hindu ethos that is rooted in respect for all traditions, cultures, religions and belief” (HFE 2009).

The main reasons to form the HFE, says Bissessur, were to create an advisory body at the European level and to strengthen the position of Hindus vis-à-vis the (European) authorities. According to him, the initiative to found the HFE came from the participating organisations, but also from the side of the EU:

“We have people in the [European] Parliament, who try to make a connection between us [the Hindu-organisations] and the European Parliament. Because in the European Parliament there is a delegate – to call it that way – who is responsible for religious affairs. And [this delegate] looked for an interlocutor for the Hindus. So the initiative not only came from our side, but also from their side. Because they couldn’t figure out which organisations – out of the multitude of Hindu organisations – they could contact in case they needed advise on Hindus in – say – Afghanistan”.

Bissessur relates this to a more general tendency of the EU to deal with immigration processes: “This is something in development. Until 2000 we had the situation that national governments

78 Hindu Forum of Belgium, Hindu Forum of Britain, Italian Hindu Union, National Council of Hindu Temples UK (HFE 2009).
dealt with immigration matters, and after 2000 there is a rising need for more international cooperation, which relates to the millennium goals, [and Tampere], among other things”.

**Conclusion**

The Hindu Counsel of the Netherlands (HRN) is an organisation that represents the religious minority of Hindus in the Netherlands in the Dutch participatory structure for minorities. HRN has a keen eye for the importance of cooperation on the EU level and is one of the instigators of the Hindu Forum Europe, which is lobbying for Hindu interests at the EU institutions.

### 5.8 Jewish organisations in the Netherlands

#### 5.8.1 Jews in the Netherlands

The presence of the Jewish minority in the Netherlands has a long history. Many Jews arrived as refugees, fleeing from the Inquisition on the Iberian peninsula in the sixteenth century and later from pogroms in Eastern Europe and Nazi Germany. At the beginning of the Second World War approximately 140,000 Jews lived in the Netherlands. Of them between 105,000 to 110,000 were massacred during the Holocaust, roughly 75%. This is a higher percentage that in any other country in Western Europe, including Germany (Vuijsje 1997: 107, 117). After the War, this fact induced (latent) feelings of guilt among the Dutch population (De Haan 1997).

Currently there are approximately 43,000 Jews living in the Netherlands, almost half of them in Amsterdam or direct surroundings. Since the mid 1960s the number of Jews in the Netherlands is more or less stable, although it concerns an ageing population with low fertility rates. After the Second World War the number of mixed marriages increased: two thirds of the Jews born after 1964 has a non-Jewish partner. Jews in the Netherlands usually are highly educated and are part of the intellectual elite; the number of academic educated people among Jews is four times higher than the national average.

In the Netherlands the term Jew may be applicable to people who consider themselves as ethnic Jews and to religious Jews. The first group is bigger than the latter. Most studies on Jews in the Netherlands concern the religious group. Within the religious Jewish community a distinction can be made between liberal or progressive Jews on the one hand and orthodox or conservative Jews on the other, which both have their own organisations (Vries 2004: 130-137; Alders & Schapendonk-Maas 2001: 131-133).

Besides the religious and ethnic aspects, the events during the Second World War, and connected to that anti-Semitism, make part of the construction of Jewish identity (Vries 2004: 137). Another binding – but also dividing – factor is the existence of the State of Israel as a safe haven for Jews in the Netherlands and elsewhere in the world. The two Jewish organisation included in the research have a strong focus on those issues.

#### 5.8.2 CIDI (Centre Information and Documentation on Israel)

The *Centrum Informatie en Documentatie Israel* (Centre Information and Documentation on Israel, CIDI) was founded in 1974 (CIDI 2009). The direct reason for its foundation was a change in Dutch political climate and public opinion towards Israel in the early seventies. The Yom Kippur war of 1973 and the subsequent oil boycott against the Netherlands undermined a rather unconditional Dutch political sympathy towards the state of Israel. Worries about the

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79 The number of Jewish inhabitants strongly depends on the definition of being a Jew: according to the Halakhic notion (the Jewish Law) one is able to consider oneself Jew when either one’s mother is Jewish or when one has entered Judaism by orthodox rabbinate. People who consider themselves Jew but only have a Jewish father are called father-Jews.
viability of ‘safe haven’ Israel and the wish to shed light on the complexities of the Israeli-Arab conflict led to the foundation of CIDI. The initiative was taken by professor of law David Simons and Bob Levinsson, a printer with a degree in law, who also became CIDI’s first director (Manheim 2006).

Interviewee Ronny Naftaniel (1948) has been director of CIDI since 1980. Naftaniel studied business economics at the University of Amsterdam and has worked for CIDI since his graduation in 1976. In 1973, he was one of the initiators and later president of the Werkgroep Israel (Taskforce Israel), an SMO that advocated an independent Palestinian state. Since 1993, Naftaniel is vice-president of the European Jewish Information Centre (Centre Européen Juif d’Information, CEJI) in Brussels (CEJI 2009). Besides this, he is also treasurer of Centraal Joods Overleg, the umbrella of Dutch-Jewish organisations.

Organisation
Many prominent politicians and media people portrait CIDI as a relatively independent lobby group or SMO that supplies adequate, trustworthy information (Kortenoeven et al. 2006). On the other hand, there is also criticism on CIDI, especially about its alleged role as uncritical supporter of the state of Israel (for example from EAJG, see §5.8.3). CIDI formulates its objectives as follows:

“CIDI is an independent Dutch foundation. It is inextricably bound up with democratic Israel. The foundation asserts the right to safety of the Jewish people, wherever it finds itself. From this commitment ensue the following tasks:

• to strengthen the ties between Israel and the Netherlands, i.e. the European Union;
• to offer a platform for the development, in peace and harmony, of relations between Israel and the Arab world;
• to increase and deepen the knowledge of Israel and its population;
• to fight, with democratic means, racism, xenophobia and anti-Semitism” (CIDI 2009).

CIDI depends on the financial support of private donors. Among those donors are Jewish institutions and also the so-called ‘Friends of CIDI’: people who pay a yearly donation. CIDI has a staff of four and a chairman that coordinate its activities, assisted by ten part-timers and volunteers. CIDI also has a youth branch, called CIDI Youngster Organisation (CiJO, CIDI Jongeren Organisatie) (CIDI 2009) and a website aiming at the youngest, called MiniCidi (2009). Finally, CIDI is associated with OPTIN (2009), the Organisation for the Promotion of Trade Israel-Netherlands.

CIDI publishes a yearly report on anti-Semitic incidents in the Netherlands (in Dutch, but with an English summary) (Cf. Friedmann 2008). Besides this, CIDI issues a periodical, the Israel Nieuwsbrief (Israel Newsletter), which is published 11 times a year. CIDI also keeps archives containing a collection of Dutch and foreign newspaper articles about the Middle East since 1974. It also regularly organises discussions and meetings with politicians and academics, from Israel and other countries. Finally, CIDI organises a yearly academic course on Israeli foreign policy, in association with several Dutch universities (CIDI 2009).

Diversity, immigration and integration
CIDI differs from the average minority organisation. In the first place, much of the efforts of the organisation are focussed on Israel and not on tailoring the needs of the minority it represents. It is indicative that according to Naftaniel “we [CIDI] have estimated that approximately one third of the [so-called] Friends [of CIDI] are not Jewish, [people that] are also attending meetings, et cetera”. Naftaniel even wonders to what extent Dutch Jews can be characterised as a minority:
“The question is whether you can characterise Jews as a minority. It is true that the Jews are a discriminated group; discrimination still happens frequently. But many Jews hold good positions in Dutch society, so they are a very successful group. The number of Jews in top functions is probably even relatively higher than among other groups. The question is whether you should depict yourself as a minority group after you have been part of this society for more than four hundred years and when you are integrated. I think not. I think that Jews are rather part of the majority. Within the majority there is also discrimination; think of the discrimination against Catholics and gay men. (...) I would like to describe a ‘minority group’ in a different way, and add an element of disadvantage [deprivation], and furthermore distinguish between potentially discriminated groups and minority groups. Women and blacks in South Africa may be discriminated against, but are no minorities. Jews do have a relatively high probability of discrimination, but the socio-economic position of Jews is such that you cannot speak of a minority”.

Furthermore, CIDI has developed from an organisation that stands for the existence of the State of Israel, to an organisation that also strives for tolerance and the acceptance of diversity and fights against racism and discrimination of all groups in Dutch society. This two-sidedness is well described by the CIDI slogan: “for Israel, for Peace, against racism and anti-Semitism” (CIDI 2009). Naftaniel sketches this development as follows:

“The CIDI was established in 1974 following the Yom Kippur war. That led, amongst other things, to an oil boycott and some people from the Jewish community thought that Israel had to be helped, because economic interest began to dominate over sympathy for Israel. This is how it started, but since then CIDI has developed into a very different kind of organisation. Naturally, we are active for the sake of Israel. We stand for the right of Israel and the Jewish community to live in peace and security, and by the way, strive for a two state solution, a state for the Palestinians and a state for the Jewish people. Besides that, we also do more to combat racism and anti-Semitism [in the Netherlands]. Often, those two activities [Israel & discrimination] overlap. We think we have the expertise to distinguish between criticism on Israel – which is allowed and can be opposed on the basis of objective arguments – and inveterate prejudices against Jews and others in society”.

The latter category of activities is based on the conviction that diversity is positive in itself, or as Naftaniel puts it: “Diversity is something very positive! Diversity makes society colourful. Diversity causes society to evolve; it brings cross-fertilisation with new ideas, new angles to look at things”. CIDI has deployed several activities over time to enhance tolerance and acceptance of diversity. Naftaniel gives, among others, the following example:

“CIDI cooperates in the Foundation for Intercultural Alliance [Stichting Interculturele Alliantie]. This is a separate foundation that we facilitate and fund. In this, CIDI cooperates with RADAR [an organisation that fights racism and discrimination], two Muslim organisations, ISBO [an Islamic organisation for education] and SPIOR [the umbrella organisation of Mosques in Rotterdam] and the COC [a Dutch gay organisation that operates on the national level]. Together with those organisations, CIDI offers schools a programme aimed at teachers. This (American) programme is called A World of Difference and aims at increasing mutual respect and acceptance of diversity. Two people have been permanently working on this programme since three years. The programme is very successful and we see an increasing demand for it”.

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When asked: ‘what do you think about immigration, Naftaniel answers:

“Immigration is dependent on the needs abroad. Here we must make a distinction between political refugees and economic refugees, which is a totally different story altogether. The last category is, of course, largely determined by the economic climate in the Netherlands itself and by the absorption capacity of the country. I do not advocate free immigration, which is an illusion. The country has a certain absorption capacity, and that is partly determined by economic factors. Furthermore, I believe that one should take into account that the cultural identity of the country must not be too affected by large immigrant flows. If, for example, the Netherlands admits two million Turks in a five year period, I think that would totally disrupt society. So that cannot be. You have a limit somewhere, but that is not easy to determine. (...) One should generously admit political refugees. Moreover, political refugees almost always are very valuable people, which can think critically, which belong to the social elites in their country of origin. So there you need to be very generous. When it comes to economic refugees, then the aforementioned limitations hold. (...) Especially given the current economic crisis, you must be careful that you do not admit too many people”.

On the other hand, Naftaniel pleads to make temporary labour migration easier:

“I also think it should be easier to work here temporarily, on the one condition that immigrants can be expelled when their contract has expired. This happens, for example, with American IT people, who can get a contract for one year pretty easy. I see no reason why a good Turkish welder could not be admitted for one year”.

Regarding integration, Naftaniel states that immigrants should do a citizenship course (integration course), learn the language and acquire a basic knowledge of Dutch society: “Immigrants must feel at home in the culture of the host country. One does not have to adopt everything, because the own culture of the immigrant is very important – that is the enriching and colourful element”. But immigrants have to learn basic things, for example “about Christmas, the Queen, and power relations [in society]” and basic cultural codes and manners necessary for social interaction. Naftaniel deems gender relations very important in this respect. He even calls gender relations “a touchstone for democratic processes in society”. For this, good citizen integration courses are needed. He makes a comparison with the situation in Israel where a ‘Ministry of Absorption’ offers a very good integration course to many immigrants every year. In general, integration courses should be tailor-made, because immigrants differ very much. Naftaniel gives the example of immigrants from Iraq in he Netherlands: “Among them are both highly skilled people and people with a rural background. One has to try to apply a personal approach, though that is difficult and costly”.

**Citizenship**

Naftaniel has no principal objections against multiple citizenship for ordinary citizens, but thinks it is complicated for those who represent the Dutch State:

“Dual nationality has nothing to do with loyalty, but it is complicated. Not for ordinary citizens, but for those who represent the Dutch State, like Ministers, etcetera. The problem is that it creates ambiguity. (...) For example, if the Dutch Minister of the
Exterior has both the Dutch and the Chilean nationality, and he goes to Chile for a work visit, that would be a very strange situation. First of all: on which passport does he enter the country? Maybe they can arrest him because he did not pay certain taxes or his children did not fulfil their duty in (obligatory) military service. That is an undesirable situation”.

However, he makes an exception for those who cannot renounce their old nationality and can prove that they tried to renounce.

Furthermore, Naftaniel is against the introduction of European citizenship for third country nationals, but thinks that the introduction of a (separate) European citizenship status fulfils an existing need among certain other groups, though he deems implementation difficult:

“No, not for third country nationals. But for mobile European groups that travel through Europe and for people that work in several member states, one could create a [separate] European citizenship status. But where they would have to pay taxes and how social security should be organised is unclear to me. So it is difficult to implement. I sometimes work in Brussels, and everything is totally unclear to me”.

**European Union**

Regarding the future development of the EU, Naftaniel stresses the democratic deficit. According to Naftaniel, a central “problem [for the EU] is that citizens have the feeling that decision-making is so far away and that they cannot influence that decision-making, which creates an anti-European feeling”. Neither centralisation nor federalisation are a solution to this. Instead, Naftaniel sees three ways to narrow the democratic gap. Firstly, “increasing the ‘recognisability’ [herkenbaarheid] of those representing Dutch interests in Europe”, and make them more accountable for citizens in the Netherlands. A way to do that would be the introduction of “a district system [in the Netherlands] for the European Parliament, so you can address your representative directly”. Secondly, there is a “lack of control” of institutions like the EC. That “can be improved; the role of governments could be larger, the role of the Commission could be smaller, and national parliaments could be more involved in the control of [EU] decisions”. Thirdly, “much could be improved in the field of information to European citizens”.

Regarding the position of minorities, Naftaniel deems European integration both “positive and negative. Europe is good for democracy. In the EU, the protection of minorities and fighting discrimination is taken care of relatively well, though implementation often turns out to be difficult”.

When it comes to enlargement, Naftaniel thinks that consolidation is the best strategy for the near future:

“For the time being, this is enough. We should continue with the 27 states for now, of which I think two really should not have acceded: Bulgaria and Romania. I know these countries pretty well, because I am also active in many other organisations that work in Eastern Europe, and these are very corrupt countries. These countries should first get rid of this corruption. It is wonderful for the Bulgarians and Romanians that they are part of the Union, because it brings a large increase in wealth, but accession must also be
accompanied by the necessary democratic and public control of the administration [government]. These countries are not able to do that yet”.

Furthermore, especially the potential accession of Turkey is a difficult case which holds both promises and threats:

“Turkey is difficult, I’m not overjoyed about Turkey joining Europe. There are two sides to it. Firstly, if Turkey becomes a member of Europe (…) then of course, say, 80 million Turks are able to move anywhere in Europe. There are educated Turks from Istanbul and Ankara, but also many people from disadvantaged rural areas. I think that will be difficult. On the other hand, if we have Turkey in the European sphere of influence – which also traditionally has been part of that sphere of influence – that is very attractive, especially in the light of developments in the Middle East itself. Because the Middle East benefits from democratisation. So it is interesting that in that case Syria and Iraq are at the borders of Europe. Perhaps one could do beneficial work in the Middle East from there. That would help to stabilise and democratise the region. That is the dilemma that could perhaps be solved by granting Turkey the EU membership and at the same time introduce immigration restrictions for the first ten or twenty years”.

Finally, Naftaniel defines Europe geographically rather than culturally, which he illustrates with the case of a possible accession of Israel:

“If you look at culture, then Israel probably belongs more to Europe than some other European countries, say, Ukraine. But if Israel integrates, I prefer it to be accepted in the Arab Middle East. I do not think it would be good for the position of Israel in the long term if it would be a member of Europe and the Arab countries would not. (…) But it is not inconceivable that Israel or an Arab country joins the EU. (…) I think the countries along the Mediterranean itself could form a union and work together on equal terms with Europe. Moreover, Israel is a technologically advanced country, so it does not really have much to gain from cooperation with, say, Morocco. Israel is, not without reason, the only country which is not an EU member, and still a member of the technical protocol; the technological cooperation between Israel and the EU is as if Israel were a member of the European Union”.

European public sphere

Naftaniel is rather pessimistic about the development of a European public sphere and the role the EU could play in this development:

“Unfortunately, I think that people are not very interested in Europe. It is this opposition between on one hand the fact that it is a good thing that we live [together in the EU] with many cultures, we cooperate and create this wonderful economy, but on the other hand, people do also no longer recognise [themselves in the EU]. And that will only get worse with Euronews, when people hear what is happening in Spain. I think the average [Dutch] citizen feels no need for that. I think it is more pleasant [for them] to hear about [local news, like] the state of bars [cafes] in [the Dutch province of] Brabant. Such a thing [like a European public sphere] should not be imposed from above, but should follow the
interest of the people; only democratic control [on decision-making] and the supply of information about what is decided could be improved”.

According to Naftaniel, CIDI as a lobby organisation is predominantly focused on influencing “opinion leaders” at the national level. The media are important to reach the opinion leaders, or just to bring news, but the objective is to reach the decision makers: (…) Ministers, Members of Parliament; we pay much attention to that”. Besides that, Naftaniel is personally involved in the European umbrella organisation European Jewish Information Centre (CEJI, Center Européen Juif d’Information) in Brussels, of which CIDI is a member:

“I am Executive Vice-President of the European Jewish Information Centre (CEJI), an organisation that concerns itself with diversity programs throughout Europe, and is currently also involved with the religious component, with programs on Islam and Judaism, for example. We have an organisation in Brussels, a European Platform for Jewish Muslim Cooperation. That is still in its infancy; it is very difficult to accomplish things”.

One of the reasons that those activities take place in Brussels is that Europe is “very interested” in them, an interest that manifests itself

“in particular through projects of the European Union that deal with intercultural activities, diversity and bringing groups together. One understands that religion and culture are important, that if you want to develop a harmonious Europe, then you should do just that. Naturally, the additional importance of Europe is that with the ongoing integration, the number of peoples and cultures within Europe grows, both of those who are already living in Europe for a long time and in addition to that immigrants, which is a good development as well. Hence, there is a clear interest in creating an effective [well functioning] Europe, while preserving the existing cultural diversity”.

Conclusion
CIDI stands out as a minority organisation in the sense that it is not so much catering to the wants and needs of the Jewish community in the Netherlands, but instead is focussing, firstly on the State of Israel, and secondly, on enhancing tolerance for diversity and combating anti-Semitism and discrimination in Dutch society in general. Hence, the organisation has a clear view and policy on issues like diversity and integration. Although CIDI’s focus is on influencing decision makers at the national level, CIDI and likeminded Jewish organisations in other European countries founded an umbrella organisation that operates at the EU level. This development stems from the need to cooperate among those organisations, to coordinate and lobby on the EU level, but also from an existing interest and need from the side of the EU to pay attention to the cultural and religious aspects of European integration.

5.8.3 EAJG (A Different Jewish Voice)
The Jewish foundation Een Ander Joods Geluid (A Different Jewish Voice,) can be regarded as the principal opponent to the CIDI (see §5.8.2) in the Dutch public debate on the

80 Or more literal: Another Jewish Sound.
Israeli-Palestinian conflict. EAJG was founded in 2001 by Anneke Mouthaan and Harry de Winter (Anstadt 2003). Mouthaan had been active in a committee that supports Israeli peace groups and human rights organisations for a decade or so, and was as such financially supported by Harry de Winter, a well-to-do Dutch media tycoon. They founded EAJG because they were upset by the way Dutch rabbi’s and other Jewish-Dutch spokesmen were commenting on the Second Intifada (uprising) of the Palestinians and the (in their eyes) violent reaction of the Israeli government and army (Arian 2003). De Winter (2003) was “extremely irritated about the fact that the Dutch media only knew one spokesman that informed them about Israel, namely Ronny Naftaniel from the CIDI, a very nationalistic club that justified everything that was wrong about Israel”.

The objective of EAJG is to “nourish the public debate (…) about Israel and the occupied territories; to break the taboo that Jews think they should not criticise Israel and do not accept criticism from others (Cf. Meyer 2003: 166); to support peace initiatives out of solidarity with the fate and future existence of Israel” (EAJG 2009). Starting point of this endeavour are “the generally accepted principles of equality, tolerance and humanity as laid down in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in order to reach a sustainable peace in the Middle East, without any form of suppression or discrimination by any party” (EAJG 2009).

The EAJG is a small organisation that predominantly depends on volunteers and has a fixed staff of approximately 1.5 full-time equivalents. The organisation is funded by gifts (approximately 20-25%) and subsidies (approximately 75-80%), which are partly related to specific projects. Of the EAJG we interviewed the organisation secretary, Mr Alfred Feberwee. Some of the views expressed here are personal opinions rather than ‘official’ EAJG-standpoints.

Organisation
EAJG is a Jewish organisation, but other than the average minority or immigrant organisation, it is not so much focussed on the Jewish community in the Netherlands, but more on the intricate triangular relationship between the State of Israel, the Jewish community in the Netherlands and Dutch society at large. Feberwee describes this relationship as follows:

“Our followers [supporters, achterban] exist of Jews and people with predominantly ‘Jewish blood’. But one cannot say that we have the best rapport with this group. That is not true, because especially within the Jewish community – which is by the way not really a community – there exists a lot of criticism on EAJG. There, the feeling dominates that we exaggerate the faults Israel makes and endanger the only safe haven for Jews in the world, namely Israel. Many of our critics lost family members during the Holocaust. That is a short sentence, but this [loss] has had a tremendous influence on the lives of those people. That makes it difficult for EAJG to parry their criticism. With the standpoints we defend, we often have more rapport with non-Jewish Dutch, because among them it [criticism on Israel] is less sensitive (though among them feelings of guilt exist about Dutch behaviour during the Second World War – and not to forget the so-called “Christian Zionists”). On the other hand, we have a unique position because it is difficult to accuse us – being a Jewish organisation – of anti-Semitism, something that happens rather quickly. Therefore, the EAJG is a ‘brand’ with value. There are of course [organisations] that stand for the rights of Palestinians (…) but a Jewish organisation that says ‘things are going wrong in Israel, this really must change’ has a different impact”.

81 Steuncomité Israëlieùche Vredesgroepen en Menschrechtenorganisaties.
82 Those estimates were given by Alfred Feberwee.
The deepest motivation for the EAJG to do what they do is twofold, states Feberwee. Firstly, many (mostly secular) Jews are ashamed about the development of Israel into a colonial power that violates human rights. Secondly, many worry about the consequences this development may have for the future of Israel, which is seriously endangered by the fact that Israel does not care for international law, occupies Palestinian territory and conducts in an unjust way. According to Feberwee the “short term ‘successes’ [of Israel] will in the long run turn out to be detrimental” for Israel. One or two EAJG-supporters even make comparisons between the Holocaust and the Israeli treatment of the Palestinians (Cf. De Graaf 2003: 41-42; Verhey 2006; Meyer 2007). But – says Feberwee – they form the rare exception: EAJG refrains from such comparisons.

Despite their criticism on Israeli conduct, EAJG stands firmly behind the state of Israel. They strive for a two-state solution, in which Israel retreats to the ‘green line’ of 1967. This Israel should be a state that offers safety, freedom and equal rights to all its inhabitants, including the Palestinians currently living within the ‘green line’. In Feberwee’s personal opinion, this state should be secular, i.e. a non-Jewish or a not exclusively Jewish state. But Feberwee immediately points at the tension between the wish of many to transform Israel into a ‘normal’ country and the wish to maintain Israel as a ‘safe haven’ for Jews. At the heart of the matter lies the demographic factor; there is a general fear that a non-Jewish state of Israel may quite rapidly lead to a situation in which no longer Jews, but another group (e.g. Arabs) will be the majority within Israel, which then loses its function of ‘safe haven’. Hence, EAJG sticks for the time being to the concept of a “Jewish” Israel, Feberwee says, but this state should be secular and with equal rights for all its citizens. And this should be seen as an intermediate stage in the development of Israel – on its way to become a normal state, like other secular states.

**Diversity, immigration & integration**

Feberwee holds a quite positive view on diversity; “diversity is enriching in itself” [diversiteit is op zich rijkdom]. Diversity may lead to tensions between different segments of the population and different value systems may clash, but “overall the advantages will outweigh the disadvantages”, and “in the end it will lead to something new, something better”. Feberwee deems all dimensions (religion, sexual preferences, ethnicity, gender, et cetera) of diversity relevant and no specific group deserves political priority. The Dutch government certainly must play a role in matters of diversity. “In case there are dilemmas we must rely on the Dutch Constitution. We are a secular movement, so whenever fundamental rights contradict, we will not tend to give more weight to religious arguments”.

Those are the personal views of Feberwee, but more in general one can say that EAJG has a quite liberal and secular view on diversity. More in particular, EAJG is quite open-minded when it comes to cooperation with other organisations in the Netherlands. According to Feberwee, this also has practical reasons: “EAJG is not a rich organisation (...) so when we invite from Israel two [experts] on the humanitarian position of Jews and Palestinians in the Middle-East, rent a location, et cetera, it certainly helps [financially, organisationally] when we cooperate [with other organisations]”. However, cooperation may compromise the ‘brand’ of EAJG. On an ad hoc basis EAJG works together with all kinds of (often pro-Palestinian) organisations. On several occasions, this led to problems, because EAJG unwillingly was identified with organisations which are (to put it mildly) more than critical towards Israel:

“once we took part in a demonstration which we supported in itself, but several Muslim youngsters participated as well, wearing ‘quasi suicide headbands’, and shouting ‘drive
the Jews into the sea’ and the like. We did not anticipate this, and we did not notice it at the time, because it was a long procession. The EAJG was ridiculed about this incident, and blamed for ‘also driving Israel into the sea’. Such incidents should in principle be avoided; in practice, however, that is not always possible. One should not refrain, for instance, from taking part in a very worthy demonstration just because the possibility can not be excluded that a few hooligans misuse the occasion’.

At another occasion, tells Feberwee, EAJG also tried to influence the debate about Islam in the Netherlands. EAJG co-founder and supporter Harry the Winter was upset about the (for Muslims) insulting tone of the debate. Together with EAJG, De Winter placed an advertisement in a national newspaper in which he compared Islamophobia with anti-Semitism and stated that insulting Jews in a similar fashion would bring one in court. However, this action wasn’t appreciated by many EAJG-supporters, who felt that this kind of action was not the “core-business of EAJG”, Feberwee states. Moreover, some feared that this message could have a backlash in the sense that it would legitimise anti-Semitism rather than stop Islamophobia.

(European) public spheres

EAJG tries to influence the public debate in several ways and on several levels. Firstly, they try to influence the media – local and national newspapers, and broadcasting organisations – typically by publishing ‘opinion articles’ and by taking part in discussions, e.g. on the Jewish public broadcast channel on Dutch national TV. For this purpose, EAJG employs a media coordinator. EAJG also tries to directly influence politics at a national level, mainly by meetings with MP’s of the large political parties. Another initiative is the foundation of an action committee within the PvdA (see §3.3) in order to ‘break the silence’ around Israel. However, it turns out to be rather difficult to influence politics, which Feberwee describes as “pushing against a super tanker”. Only the SP (see §3.4) and GroenLinks (see §3.5) are somewhat outspoken on Israel, the other parties keep a low profile. The same applies to the efforts of EAJG to influence other relevant organisations. For example, EAJG talked with the Protestant Church of the Netherlands (Protestantse Kerk Nederland, PKN), but also for them a downright condemnation of crimes against humanity committed by the state of Israel was deemed too touchy. Feberwee links this directly with ‘feelings of guilt’ about the holocaust among large parts of the Dutch population and a related ‘collective relief’ about the birth of the Jewish nation in 1948. Those feelings had an ‘tremendous influence’ on post-war generations. Criticism on Israel simply did not fit in this mix of collective feelings. However, despite the difficulties, the efforts of EAJG to influence public debates on Israel are not in vain:

“I think we are – together with others – successful [in influencing] the way newspapers, radio and television report on Israel and the Palestinians in comparison with ten years ago. There one sees a clear difference; [now the reports are] more balanced between the two perspectives [of both groups]. (...) To what extent this is a result of EAJG or a change in [political] climate is difficult to say, but I think we have contributed to a substantial change and this must have a political dividend at some point in the future”.

83 This is a merger of several of the largest Protestants denominations in the Netherlands.
EAJG also tries to influence politics at EU-level via the EJJP (*European Jews for a Just Peace*). This network of likeminded Jewish organisations in ten European countries (EJJP 2009) was instigated by EAJG.\(^{84}\) One of the goals of the EJJP is to “suspend the EU-Israel Association Agreement until such time as Israel conforms to the conditions on human rights, forming part of all such EU-agreements” (EJJP 2009). To reach this goal, EJJP wrote letters to the European Parliament. Feberwee is unsure about the effects of those actions “but at least we reached some members of the EP.”

According to Feberwee, the enlargement with Eastern-European countries did not affect the work of EAJG, simply because “there are no [organisations like] EAJG in Eastern-Europe, and hence no extension of the basis of EJJP, which is ‘Western-European’.

**Conclusion**

The EAJG differs from the average minority organisation in the Netherlands in the sense that it is not so much addressing the wants and needs of the rather diffuse, diverse and well-integrated Dutch-Jewish community, but the Dutch debate on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. This is a marked difference between the EAJG and its principal opponent – the CIDI (§5.8.2) – which is actively involved in combating anti-Semitism and in programmes to enhance tolerance towards and amongst Jews, Muslims, Christians, gays and other minorities in Dutch society. After a disputed ‘experiment’ to influence the Dutch debate on Islam, EAJG refrains from such actions and sticks to its ‘core-business’ of creating a more balanced Dutch debate on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The EAJG has a keen eye to the importance of lobbying at EU level as well, and therefore instigated the foundation of the umbrella organisation EJJP.

### 5.9 Rightwing and nationalist organisations in the Netherlands

Besides minority organisations and refugee organisations, we also wanted to add organisations that ‘ethnicise’ the Dutch majority. However, the large extreme right political parties disappeared in the nineties (see §3.1.2). The most active nationalist organisation in the Netherlands nowadays is Voorpost, which is well organised and has a quite consistent ideology.

#### 5.9.1 Voorpost Nederland

*Voorpost Nederland* is the Dutch branch of the Voorpost organisation which is active in Flanders [*Vlaanderen*], the Netherlands and South Africa. Voorpost (meaning Outpost) was founded in Flanders in 1976. The Dutch branch was founded in 1978. To make a distinction, the Flemish part of the organisation is often referred to as *Voorpost Vlaanderen*. Voorpost originates in the so-called ‘Flemish Movement’ (*Vlaamse Beweging*). The Flemish Movement is a collective term for many different organisations that strive for the autonomy of the Belgian region of Flanders and the emancipation of the Flemish language\(^{85}\) and culture. The statutory goal of the organisation is to defend the interests of all individuals belonging to the Dutch ethnic community.

Voorpost is a ‘volk-nationalist’ (literally: peoples nationalist) organisation, which wants to unite all Dutch (Flemish) speaking areas in Belgium, the Netherlands and France in a new political entity, often referred to as *Heel-Nederland* (literally: Whole-Netherlands), *Groot-Nederland* or *Dietsland*.\(^{86}\) To some Voorpost ideologists, also a strip of German territory

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\(^{84}\) Interview with Alfred Feberwee.

\(^{85}\) NB: Flemish is a dialect of Dutch.

\(^{86}\) This general information is derived from the Voorpost website (Voorpost 2009), and from the interview with Rob, but also compare (Kramer 2000).
bordering the Netherlands and Belgium belongs to *Heel-Nederland* because of linguistic and ethnic ties (Dieudonné 1995). Realising this ideal means that Belgium as a state is ‘redundant’ and should be dissolved. Furthermore, the border with France (and to some also Germany) should shift southwards (and eastwards).

Interestingly, Voorpost ideologists recognise the ethnic identity of the province of *Fryslân* (see §3.8) and the ‘related, but different tribe’ (*stamverwant, maar niet Diets*) of the Frisians (Dieudonné 1995). One author even makes a comparison between the Frisian Movement and the Flemish Movement (Van der Bos 1995). However, the president of Voorpost leaves open the question whether the recognition of Frisian ethnic identity must lead to an independent Frisian state, because “full independence could be a poisonous gift” to *Fryslân* (Vanslambrouck 1995).

Voorpost ideologists make a strict separation between the concepts of ‘volk-nationalism’ and ‘state-nationalism’; in the first the ethnic group (the people, *volk*) is the central element, and in the latter the (existing) state is the central element (Rüter 1995). The idea of *Heel-Nederland* has a long history that dates back to the nineteenth century (Martens 1995). However, both in Dutch and Flemish nationalism the idea of *Heel-Nederland* has always been connected to the *volk*-nationalistic tradition and was often lacking in Dutch nationalism, as was for example the case in the more state-nationalist ideology of CD_leader Hans Janmaat (see §3.1.2) (Rüter 1995; Reas 1995).

A central goal of Voorpost is to defend the identity and ethnic consciousness (*volksbewustzijn*) of the Dutch people. Voorpost chairman Vanslambrouck detects several threats to this identity. Firstly, the “hyper individualism” of totalitarian communism and globalising capitalism. Both “do not acknowledge any link between the individual and the global community” and turn a blind eye to the fact that “man can only thrive in the communities he belongs to: his family, his village or neighbourhood and his people” (Vanslambrouck 2008). Especially, the culture blindness of capitalism in combination with American-style multiculturalism is seen as a danger. To some Voorpost ideologists the US is “the great aggressor”, for whom “ethnicity, culture or religion is of no importance” (Ares 2005). A more recent enemy to Dutch identity is the Islam (Peters 2005; Vanslambrouck 2008).

Voorpost issues a quarterly journal, *Revolte*, which besides practical information contains many articles on the ideology of the organisation. Voorpost Nederland separately issues the monthly bulletin *Laagland*, which is predominantly devoted to practical matters like actions, social events and workshops on ideology. Currently, Voorpost Vlaanderen has some 550 to 600 members, Voorpost Nederland has approximately 180 to 200 members.\(^{87}\)

**Interviewee** Of Voorpost Nederland (for short: Voorpost) we interviewed Rob,\(^{88}\) a leading figure within the organisation. Rob has a long history in Dutch (*volk*)nationalist circles and was for a long time active within the CD (see §3.1.2). Rob has a professional career in business.

**Organisation**

The history of Voorpost Nederland differs somewhat from the history of Voorpost Vlaanderen and therefore we sketch the development of the Dutch branch during the three decades of its existence. This description is by and large based on the interview. Rob distinguishes three episodes in the development of Voorpost Nederland. In the early period,

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\(^{87}\) Those estimates of Voorpost membership were given by Rob.

\(^{88}\) In order to guarantee anonymity we only use his first name.
after the foundation in 1978, Voorpost had a difficult time (Cf. Vermeulen 2008; Vanslambrouck 2008). Rob tells:

“The early period was very difficult, and we faced a lot of [physical] violence. It was a very politically correct time. At the time Voorpost became active, Janmaat [of the CD party, see §3.1.2] got much media attention. This left little room for demonstrations or meetings. Our information stands faced massive resistance. Sometimes four Voorpost members faced 150 opponents. (...) [After] our chairman was attacked with a firebomb, we at Voorpost Nederland decided to keep low profile, because it became too dangerous physically. This situation lasted until the nineties”.

The second phase in the development of Voorpost was marked by the rise of a new generation of Voorpost members during the late nineties. According to Rob, many of this ‘second generation’ were former members of the CD and CP’86 (the successor of CP, see §3.1.2) who had grown disappointed with party politics, and tired of the internal quarrels and the inability to formulate and communicate an ideology. Under the leadership of Marcel Rüter and Tim Mudde, this second generation innovated the ideology and modus operandi of Voorpost, which profited greatly of the collapse of the CD and CP’86. One of the strategies was to broaden the agenda. Besides old issues like immigration and Islamisation, new issues were added, like animal rights, globalisation and Americanisation, causing some confusion among leftist activist.

In the new century, Voorpost attracted what Rob coins the ‘third generation’ of members. Many of those new members are young (between 20 and 35) and have no political background, though a part is coming from the splinter New National Party (Nieuwe Nationale Partij, NNP). Especially this third generation is refraining from party politics and often does not vote at all. Instead, the focus is on what Rob coins ‘metapolitics’ (cf. Kramer 2000) which he defines as ‘everything behind politics’ and which essentially comes down at making the average (ethnic) Dutch citizen aware of his or her (Dutch) ethnic identity and the threats to that identity.

Essential to the strategy of Voorpost are what Rob calls the ‘three pillars’: (1) action (actie), (2) education (upbringing, vorming), and (3) camaraderie (fellowship, kameraadschap). Action because “we as an ‘action group’ [actiegroep] follow the way of metapolitics, which works much better than striving for a lousy seat [in the Parliament] every four years”. Concrete action is the way to reach goals like enhancing ethnic consciousness of the ethnic Dutch. Rob gives an example:

“A supermarket puts Halal meat on its shelves. That’s another piece of Islamisation, another border crossed. Then we start an action. Several times such actions were successful, in the sense that the Halal meat was removed from the shelves. How do we do that? Simple. It might be that ten of us enter the shop with shopping carts, which we then fill with deep frozen Halal products together with [Voorpost promotion material], park it somewhere and walk away. Very annoying, [and] after a few times the Halal meat is removed from the shelves [because of] the economic loss. Mean? Maybe. But also effective”.

Education is necessary, because, in order to make other people aware “one must continuously reflect on [one’s ideology]”, says Rob. Camaraderie is enhanced by all kinds of non-action-
related activities, like sports and cultural trips. Close fellowship is a ‘must’ because “we need to know each other, and to rely on each other under difficult circumstances”. Friendship and education go hand in hand in keeping Voorpost out of trouble, Rob explains:

“Voorpost is the only nationalist organisation that hasn’t been convicted in the thirty years of its existence. That’s because of our strict discipline, and because we continuously make [our] people aware of what they are doing, in order to avoid that people do stupid things. And partly because of our strategy that we do not want to go back to the past. Yes, that would be nice, but we do not want to grow at any cost, and want to avoid attracting all kinds of idiots and fools. Everybody that is occupied with other [past] times, may leave [Voorpost], because we are nationalists and not National-Socialists [i.e. Nazi’s]. We continuously make and monitor that separation. (...) Violence is also excluded [as an option]. Why? We only have to do that once and we will have to face the judge. Our organisation will be dismantled, there will be house searches, [and everything will be] over. It doesn’t make sense, and even if we would want to do it, [it’s impossible] (...) because we are continuously monitored [by the secret services]. Besides that: it’s our task to convince people. Not some ‘Gabbers’ on some internet forum, but all those dull people [i.e. the average ethnic Dutch citizen] who do not think [about their ethnic identity and related issues]. It’s them who we must approach and convince, which isn’t easy by the way”.

Voorpost is very keen on avoiding any identification with neo-nazi-like groups and organisations. For that reason, Voorpost does not announce its actions beforehand, and does not organize large demonstrations in the Netherlands, because that will attract neo-nazi-like people of the “bald-headed type, loaded with old iron. We are very careful in that respect”.

Immigration, integration and citizenship
In the volk-nationalist ideology Voorpost adheres to, the identity of the volk is a key concept. This identity is not so much seen as a social construct, but as something that develops over time in a ‘natural way’. Rob explains: “Being Dutch is something that developed over time. For us, it is ethnic and cultural. It relates to a common background, and a cultural tradition, which are by the way hard to delimit”. In general, Rob sees three kinds of threats for Dutch (and European) identity: “a demographic threat from Africa and the Arab world, a cultural threat from America and an economic threat from Asia”. More specifically, the largest danger comes from a combination of Americanisation and Islamisation. The danger of Americanisation lies in the fact that “America is the country par excellence to propagate multiculturalism in all its fibres and roots”. “Multiculturalism and Americanisation make Europe susceptible to strange influences”. The problem with multiculturalism is that people “look for the greatest common divisor – for what they have in common – (...) in stead of [looking for] spiritual deepening. One can see that in America, with its very superficial culture”:

“It has no cohesion, no history, it is continuously looking to the future, and not to the past. It is a state that will disappear within fifty years (...) because it has no roots, and a tree without roots also collapses. The same is happening in Europe. This Americanisation

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89 Gabber is a hardcore techno music genre, but is also often used to refer to neo-nazi groups (among which the Gabber style gained a following in the Netherlands, Germany and some other countries).
alienates people from their roots, their customs. This gives rise to a new common divisor that is more superficial, and when people are more superficial they are more susceptible for strange influences. [They become indifferent] Americanisation is a precursor of the alienation of people from their roots, their descent. Identity is quintessential for who you are”.

According to Rob, this Americanisation and the multiculturalism that comes with it, paves the way for Islamisation. Americanisation is “absorbed easily by the population, (…) prevents that people start to think about who they are, and makes people allow Islamisation to progress. (…) if people do not know who they are, how can they know how society should be structured?”.

Another connection between Islamisation and Americanisation lies in the universal pretensions and ‘culture denying’ character of both. First, Rob makes a comparison between heathen (pagan) religions and “desert religions” like Judaism, Christianity and Islam:

“For us it is regrettable that desert religions have had a hold on Europe for 2000 years. First we had the misery of Christianity that did not deal meekly with pagan traditions, rituals and culture. Finally Christianity had become more European (…) and now the next wave of hatred, (…) the following desert religion is knocking on the door (…) to bring about change. Why should we allow that to happen? We have had enough misery in the past. [Christianity is alien to the European identity], it is not European, it comes straight from the desert, but there is a difference between Christianity and Islam. Christianity as a religion (…) washed ashore in Rome with a few people and was further spread orally, not ethnically. Now you see demographic, cultural and religious dissemination of the Islam and that is essentially a different thing than what happened with Christianity. There are several things that go together in case of Islam”.

The essential difference between the Islam and “pagan religions”, is that the latter are strongly attached to the cultural heritage and the territory of the peoples who adhere to them:

“Those are the characteristics of heathenism that the Islam lacks. It does not have a link [with territory], it has holy places, but it is universal, and also strives for universalism. Everyone must be brought under this one green banner [of Islam]. The Islam denies culture, descent, traditions, and is completely alien to Europe. In our eyes, the Islam is constructed by Mohamed from elements of the Bible and Judaism (…) and now there are one billion believers who deny their own roots, their own descent. That is not our ideal”.

To Voorpost, this is strongly related to the universalism Americanisation brings with it, and Rob makes a comparison with American mass-culture:

“The Islam can be seen as a religious – or ideological – McDonalds. It is everywhere, it is everywhere the same, it looks the same, the same interpretations, the same phenomena, it is globalising, destroys culture. (…) Bantering, we sometimes say: [the golden arches of McDonalds] one sees everywhere along the motorway are a kind of minarets of Americanisation”.
However, there is a marked difference as well. Where Americanisation is limited to the cultural realm, Islamisation also works demographically, through immigration and higher fertility rates of immigrant women. Therefore, Rob strongly opposes immigration in general, which is seen as a direct threat to (the identity of) a people. He refers to the many historical examples of displacement, merger and extermination of peoples in Europe and North America:

“With a people I do not mean something behind a fence that never changes. Continuously, peoples come into existence, and peoples disappear, even great cultures and civilisations. It is dynamic, but one can prevent the acceleration of this process of decay, and mass-migration is such an accelerator. There are many examples of migrations that led to the merger or disappearance of peoples. (...) Migration led to the extermination of the Indians in America. We do not want to become the Indians of Europe. Now we are being [demographically] replaced. In the future, we will be fair-haired, blue-eyed people living in a reserve. That we want to prevent, because that is what we are heading for. (...) The Arabs will become the dominant group. One can tell that from their very high fertility”.

Rob characterises the current migration in the Netherlands as “ethnic cleansing” or “ethnic replacement”. The high level of immigration and high fertility rates make that “locally and regionally minorities will soon become majorities”. Those local majorities will become more demanding and they will be indifferent to Dutch culture. Therefore, only temporary migration should be allowed, either temporary refugees (fleeing from conflicts in Europe, like the war in former Yugoslavia), or temporary labour migrants to do jobs for which no domestic labour supply exists. When the conflict is over or the job is done, those temporary migrants (from Europe or elsewhere) should be sent home. When asked, Rob also favours an active remigration policy:

“Yes. Absolutely. I understand that [a remigration policy] is difficult to realise, and tricky from a juridical perspective. Its also touchy, and references to [ethnic cleansing in] former Yugoslavia are readily made; scary practices we do not advocate. Hatred is no option. I hold nothing against other people. And hatred is a bad advisor anyway. But I am certainly no opponent of a remigration policy. (...) [For example] when it comes to those Moroccan troublemakers [juvenile criminals, ettertjes], one says, ‘we cannot take their passports from them’. But I say: ‘change that law, the law is just a piece of paper’. Firstly, that would have a moderating effect on their behaviour, and secondly, [to] all those troublemakers that do not want to contribute to society, do not want to be part of it [we say]: ‘go, live somewhere else, screw up things somewhere else, but not here [in the Netherlands]. To us, that’s very simple”.

Finally, in an ideal situation, immigrants should never be granted the Dutch nationality or political rights, which should be reserved for the (ethnically) Dutch. The one and only exception Rob makes is for children born from a mixed couple, which “depending on their behaviour” could be given the Dutch nationality.

**European Union**
Voorpost is a *volk*-nationalistic’ organisation. This means that Voorpost wants to make ethnic-cultural groups the basis for political entities. This has far-reaching implications for the
map of Europe, because all ‘artificial states’ like Spain, France, Belgium should be dismantled. Rob explains:

“We are part of the European people’s community (volksgemeenschap),\(^{90}\) we are a European people, among other European peoples. (…) We want to get rid of the current nation-oriented thinking in Europe. We actually want to get rid of the current states. We want a Europe of the peoples. Hence a united Netherlands that is independent. A Catalonia that is independent. The Basks that are independent. South-Tirol should be returned to Austria. Northern Ireland should be free from the British who have no business there. (…) Thus, in this Europe of the peoples, we want to go back to the natural borders. We want to bring the national minorities together in states, which then again will be [newly formed] nation states”.

This Europe is delimited in a geographical and a cultural sense. Hence, Turkey – “a country that has nothing in common with our descent, our European history” – cannot be part of the EU, despite the fact that a part of Turkey (“stolen from the Greeks”) is European in the geographical sense. About the accession of countries like Bulgaria and Romania, Rob is doubtful; in principal they can be part of the EU, because they share the same cultural heritage, but because of the differences in wealth there should be measures to prevent mass-migration. On the other hand, Rob calls Russia a “doubtful case”, because Europe ends at the Ural. Regarding the potential accession of Russia, there seems to be some disagreement within Voorpost. For example, Voorpost-thinker Van Oudenhove (2008) states that “for us, nationalists, there can be little doubt about it: geographically, historically and ethnically Russia is for the largest part European”.

Within this Europe of the peoples, Voorpost strives for the preservation of diversity. The EU should not develop as a kind of United States of Europe. On the other hand, the new-to-form nation-states should ideally be ethnically homogenous. This is a seeming paradox, but Rob explains this from “the difference between ethnic minorities and national minorities” (see also §2.4):

“National minorities already live here, while ethnic minorities arrive from elsewhere. That’s a fundamental difference, that determines how to deal with minorities. Adapting to newcomers implies denial of culture, but recognition of national minorities means confirmation of cultural heritage”.

**European public sphere**

Voorpost Nederland (naturally) cooperates with the Flemish and the (dwindling) South African branch of Voorpost. Within the Netherlands, there is little cooperation with other organisations ‘which are kept at a distance’, because Voorpost Nederland ‘has little to gain from cooperation’, says Rob. The reason is that there are virtually no like-minded organisations which work in the same direction. Rob contrasts this with the situation in Flanders, where Voorpost Vlaanderen is interacting with other organisations, like Vlaams Belang.

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\(^{90}\) Note that – despite the fact that Voorpost wants to distance itself from neo-nazism – volksgemeenschap is not a neutral term; the German equivalent Volksgemeinschaft was used by the Nazi’s who wanted to establish a nation of ethnic Germans defined by ethno-racial criteria.
However, within Europe, Voorpost is actively seeking cooperation with other ‘volk-
nationalist’ organisations, for instance with organisations in France, like those in Bretagne, 
the Elzas and the Dunquerque region which used to be Flemish-speaking. This comes from the 
perception that it is necessary to cooperate with volk-nationalists in other countries in order to 
overcome the current nation state ‘regimes’ (Pernet 2008). However, also with regard to 
European cooperation, Voorpost is very careful. Rob explains why:

“Only a single contact with a wrong organisation, and our good name is gone. It is 
important for us to make a good impression, [to show] that we are good people, [people] 
that are ideologically strong, and not acting on the basis of hatred or aversion. That’s 
often the case in Germany, where many organisations (...) [are geared towards the 1933-
1945 era]. That’s understandable from their background, but (...) it leads them nowhere”.

**Conclusion**

Voorpost is an organisation that seeks to represent the interests of ethnic Dutch, much like 
some immigrant organisation want to represent an ethnic minority. In that sense, Voorpost is 
‘ethnicising’ the Dutch majority in the Netherlands and Flanders, and the ‘Dutch’ minorities 
in France and Germany. The core of Voorpost ideology is volk-nationalism. Voorpost wants 
to create a new political entity, Heel-Nederland, that comprises all ethnic Dutch living in the 
Netherlands, Belgium and neighbouring states. Furthermore, Voorpost favours zero 
immigration and an active remigration policy. Regarding the national minority of the Frisians, 
Voorpost takes the position that they are entitled to have their own new to form nation state 
roughly coinciding with the present Dutch province of Fryslân, though this may not be the 
‘best solution’ for them. More in general, Voorpost wants to restructure Europe, abolish all 
existing states and create new political entities that all comprise only one nation. Ideally, 
those new to form nation states will be ethnically homogenous, will not contain any national 
minorities and will at most have temporary migration. Voorpost operates in the Netherlands, 
Flanders and South Africa and actively seeks cooperation with like-minded organisations in 
other European countries.

**6 DUTCH MEDIA**

This chapter is about the empirical findings on media. The media included in this section are 
the same as the media in the Eurosphere media data collection: newspaper NRC Handelsblad 
and current affairs programme Nova. Newspaper De Telegraaf has been included in the media 
data collection, but did not want to participate in our further research. Therefore, the 
newspaper is not included in this chapter. First, a brief outline is presented of the Dutch media 
landscape with attention for the position of print and broadcast media. This outline is 
followed by a short description of NRC Handelsblad and Nova and the empirical findings on 
both media. The focus of the interviews was on reporting on Europe and ideas about 
European public spheres.
6.1 Media landscape in the Netherlands

6.1.1 Newspapers

Mass circulation of newspapers in the Netherlands arose during a time when society was strongly divided and developed into a pillarised society. To mobilise and inform their supporters the various (religious) denominations started their own newspapers. These newspapers could be regarded as the voice of the pillars and functioned as forums for national public debates. They informed, recruited and mobilized supporters (Van der Eijk 2000: 305). Although formally newspapers were not bound to political parties, links existed in the form of personal connections. A much cited example is the KVP leader in the House of Representatives who was also editor-in-chief of De Volkskrant. Besides the pillarised newspapers, there were also ‘neutral’ newspapers that were independent from political parties or pillars. An example of such a newspaper is De Telegraaf (Bakker 1991: 62-63). Since the beginning of the twentieth century De Telegraaf has been the highest-circulation newspaper reflecting the demand for non-pillarised media (Van der Eijk 2000: 310).

The Second World War was followed by a period of concentration on the newspaper market. Companies that published newspapers merged and titles were integrated, reduced or disbanded (Van de Laar 1989: 3). The spread of television and the accompanying loss of advertising revenues for the newspaper industry, and investments in new technologies were some of the causes of this concentration. Market forces gained more influence and newspapers reacted by breaking away from the pillarised organisations and redefined their profiles (Van der Eijk 2000: 312). By the 1970s newspapers had laid down the relation between the editor-in-chief and the economic direction of the newspaper in redactiestatuten (editorial constitutions). It was no longer possible to combine both functions in one person. In this way the redactiestatuut guaranteed the editorial independence of a newspaper (Bakker 1991: 108). During the 1990s a second wave of concentration followed. Nowadays three large publishing groups own approximately 90 percent of the market of national newspapers. Ownership of newspapers is also internationalising (Broeders & Verhoeven 2005: 72).

The Netherlands does not have a real tabloid press, though De Telegraaf is generally considered to be more sensational than other newspapers. Media expert Van der Eijk considers the redactiestatuten and the editorial independence they brought as one of the causes why a fully-commercial or tabloid press did not develop in the Netherlands after depillarisation (Van der Eijk 2000: 315-316). Even when large newspaper publishing groups were formed, the redactiestatuten secured editorial independence. Competing newspapers can even be in the same publishing group without being forced to cooperate closely, which is the case with De Volkskrant and NRC Handelsblad.

Dutch newspapers are relatively dependent on press agencies for their materials. Due to the small and fragmented market they cannot afford to have a very broad network of correspondents. Newspapers cannot be distinguished by the news they bring, but ‘by the spin they put on it’. Diversity in reporting is achieved by a different approach to the news, largely determined by the audience a newspaper is aiming at. This audience can be distinguished by lifestyle and along left-right lines (Van der Eijk 2000: 312, 315). Recent research confirms the reliance on items from press agencies (Mediamonitor 2007: 10; Hijmans et al. 2009). Besides newspapers, press agencies have a strong influence on and partly determine the news agenda in the Netherlands.

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91 For more information on pillarisation see § 3.1.
The most important way of selling newspapers in the Netherlands is via subscription. Sales via newspaper agents are of little importance, especially when compared to other European countries. One of the reasons why so many people subscribe to a newspaper is that under pillarisation subscribing to a newspaper was a kind of public statement that someone belonged to a certain pillar (Bakker 1991: 62). Nowadays, people still subscribe. The reliance on circulation via subscription has several effects. Newspapers have a relatively stable market in terms of readers. They do not compete with each other through eye-catching front pages and a focus on rows. Dutch papers do not campaign or conduct smear campaigns, De Telegraaf being an exception. They are not activist and formally aim at neutrality.

The five most important national newspapers are De Telegraaf, Algemeen Dagblad, De Volkskrant, NRC Handelsblad and Trouw. Furthermore, there are three free newspapers (Sp!ts, Metro and De Pers) and some smaller, pillarised and specialised newspapers. The largest paper, De Telegraaf, is a conservative, centre-right newspaper. It pays much attention to non-political issues. NRC Handelsblad and De Volkskrant (formerly a Catholic newspaper, but since the 1960 secular and left of the centre) are the most important platforms for political debates. Trouw, formerly an orthodox-protestant newspaper, is known for its focus on religion and philosophy. Since 1997 almost all newspapers except the free ones face a steady decline in circulation (Broeders & Verhoeven 2005: 72). For circulation numbers of De Telegraaf, NRC Handelsblad, national and regional newspapers, see Figure 10.1.

6.1.2 Broadcast media
Contrary to the press market, pillarisation had a much stronger influence on the broadcasting system and state regulation of the system was strong. When radio broadcasts were introduced in the 1920s access was regulated by the state and pillarised broadcasting organisations were founded. The system was copied for television broadcasting. Broadcasting organisations made radio and television programs for their respective pillars and advertising was not allowed. Though the state did not own the broadcasting system, there was strict supervision by the
government (Bakker 1991: 64, 105-107). The pillarised broadcasting organisations did not provide newscasts. These were provided by the neutral Nederlandse Televisie Stichting (NTS, Dutch Television Foundation), the precursor of the Nederlandse Omroep Stichting (NOS, Dutch Broadcasting Foundation) and the Nederlandse Programma Stichting (NPS, Dutch Programme Foundation).

During the 1960s the broadcasting system has increasingly been criticized. Radio and television consumption could not be controlled and especially on television people could easily tune in to a program of a broadcasting organisation that was not linked to their pillar (Van der Eijk 2000: 309). Commercial players also wanted access to the system, but were not allowed. A solution to this was found in pirate radio broadcasts from boats on the North Sea. Finally, by the end of the 1960s the system was liberalised. Advertisements were introduced, new broadcasting organisations were allowed to enter the system and broadcasting time and funds were divided on the basis of membership instead of the link to a pillar (Bakker 1991: 116). Public broadcasting organisations now had to compete with each other. The effect was that most of the organisations chose for programmes that attracted many viewers and the profiles of the organisations became less distinct.

Commercial television broadcasting was still banned and the government fearing a loss of advertising revenues also banned foreign radio and television aimed at the Dutch market. However, the European Commission intervened and foreign broadcasters had to be accepted. In 1989 the first commercial television station, RTL Veronique, started transmitting via Luxembourg. The Dutch government could no longer uphold the ban and it was lifted. Since then a considerable growth in commercial television channels has taken place.

By 2009 the tight links between broadcasting organisations and social and religious movements have almost disappeared, though traces of pillarisation can still be found in the broadcasting system. Under the current system the identities of the (three) public channels gain more and more importance at the cost of the identities of the broadcasting organisations. Broadcasting organisations are admitted to the system on the basis of the number of members and receive a basic subsidy. Extra income and broadcasting time is awarded to the organisations by the managers of the channels on the basis of proposals for programs. There is still state regulation, even for commercial television. To receive funding public broadcasting organisations have to meet certain criteria set by the government. These include requirements for the Dutch, Frisian or European origin of productions, requirements for programming, and limitations to advertising. For commercial broadcasting organisations the state sets rules for the origin of productions, and advertising and sponsoring (Mediabesluit 2008 2009; Mediawet 2008 2009).

Currently, there are three public television channels on which the public broadcasting organisations can broadcast. There is also broadcasting time for religious and spiritual communities, e.g. the Dutch Muslim Broadcasting Organisation (NMO), the Interdenominational Broadcasting Organisation of the Netherlands (IKON) and Organisation Hindu Media (OHM). The situation in commercial broadcasting is very much in motion. Besides a number of smaller broadcasting companies, there are two large (international) commercial media companies. Together they provide for a dozen commercial channels. Commercial broadcasting organisations tend to focus on entertainment. They pay some attention to news reporting, but hardly to current affairs programmes. Public broadcasting organisations stand out for their thorough information and background programmes (Leurdujk 1999: 7). The public NOS is, among other things, responsible for daily newscasts and reporting on Dutch and European parliamentary affairs. The NPS takes care of background information, views on political and social developments and is supplying programmes for ethnic and cultural minorities (Mediabesluit 2008 2009). The Journaal (News) broadcasted by
the NOS has to be neutral. Dutch current affairs programmes, however, never had the legal obligation to be neutral and balanced. Every broadcasting organisation had its commentary program and current affairs programmes had a distinctive signature. In 1992 Nova was the first joint current affairs programme by the VARA and the NOS. After that other programmes followed and now every public channel has a daily current affairs programme, that is jointly produced (Leurdijk 1999: 64, 163-164). They can be distinguished by the audiences they aim at and the topics they choose.

6.2 NRC Handelsblad

In October 1970 the first issue of NRC Handelsblad appeared. NRC Handelsblad is a merger of the Algemeen Handelsblad founded in 1828 and based in Amsterdam, and the Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant (NRC) founded in 1844 in Rotterdam. Due to financial reasons the publishers of the newspapers merged already in 1964 and the editorial staff cooperated. Both newspapers had a liberal profile; Algemeen Handelsblad was more conservative and associated with the VVD, NRC had a more elitist profile. The newspapers had approximately the same group of readers. Both were facing a decline in readership and in 1970 the two newspapers merged (Van de Laar 1989: 8-9,43-50; Heldring 1995: 11-12). Since 1995 NRC Handelsblad is part of PCM Uitgeverijen (PCM Publishers) through which it became part of the same group as e.g. De Volkskrant and Trouw, two other Dutch ‘quality newspapers’.

NRC Handelsblad defines itself as a liberal newspaper. It adheres to the idea of freedom and does not accept dogmas or authority at face value. The newspaper wants to be tolerant towards dissenters and pursues modernisation. Its aim is to provide its readers with information so they can formulate their own opinion (NRC Handelsblad 2009b). Target group of the paper are educated people and the relatively well-to-do (Bakker 1991: 114).

NRC Handelsblad is the only national evening paper and is printed on broadsheet. The newspaper is characterised by its foreign reporting and has a relatively extensive network of foreign correspondents. Furthermore, NRC Handelsblad pays much attention to economic news, culture, science and opinion, and it publishes translated articles from leading international newspapers. In 2003 NRC Handelsblad started with a special editorial staff for Europe and a weekly section on Europe. Until June 2009 there was a special section for Europe on its website, but this has disappeared due to restructuring of the site. For the international version of its website NRC Handelsblad cooperates with Der Spiegel (Germany) and Politiken (Denmark). In 2006 NRC Handelsblad started nrc·next, aimed at young, educated readers who do not read newspapers yet or who read free newspapers. There is close editorial cooperation between NRC Handelsblad and nrc·next.

Interviewee Mrs Renée Postma (1951) is chief-editor of the foreign section of NRC Handelsblad and as such responsible for the Europe section. She was correspondent for Central Europe between 1994 and 2003 and worked for the Europe editorial staff.

6.2.1 Europe reporting

NRC Handelsblad has an international focus and pays special attention to news relating to the European Union. Renée Postma states that NRC Handelsblad struggled how to position the Europe section within the newspaper:

“The editorial staff [for Europe] initially started from the idea that it was good to have someone for every section who looked at reporting from a European perspective and who would pay attention to European issues that would not be in the news otherwise. (…) It appeared difficult to bring issues to the fore in the usual sections (…). We concluded that
you needed a page of your own. (...) In the [weekly] Europe section you have room for things that you otherwise would not pay attention to.”

Although the newspaper had the intention to bring a European focus in its reporting, it only partly succeeded in doing so. Postma:

“The initial thought was that all editors would be much more aware of the European space they are living in. So, if someone makes a story about Amsterdam, he should be aware that (...) certain directives and regulations come from Europe. (...) It is difficult, despite the enormous effort of everyone, to make this a matter-of-course. (...) How do you get this European reflex in domestic reporting? Now, this is difficult to achieve [in the current construction with a separate section for Europe].”

One of our findings during the Eurosphere media content analysis is that reporting on the European Parliament in the Netherlands tends to be apolitical in the sense that hardly any attention is paid to political positions. Postma thinks this is because “politics in the European Parliament is difficult. The separation between national and political positions creates a strange split.” She adds that European “politics is not very lively yet.” And she puts the importance of the European Parliament into perspective: “If you really want to know how things work in the European Parliament, you have to invest a lot of manpower and for that it is not important enough.”

NRC Handelsblad is known for its international orientation; however it remains a Dutch newspaper. Postma tells: “We try to keep a Dutch [national] approach towards reporting, but it’s not an iron rule. (...) For some issues it is good to explain what will be the consequences for the Netherlands.”

6.2.2 European public sphere

As already mentioned NRC Handelsblad cooperates with the German Der Spiegel and the Danish Politiken. According to Postma this cooperation was established because the newspaper was “looking for a larger reach on the internet”. The cooperation with Politiken started in the run-up to the European Parliament elections of 2009 “with the idea that you can exchange articles and explore the [common] space”. However, the amount of transnational cooperation between newspapers is limited. Postma:

“Translation, how much you can and want to translate on a day is a limiting factor. You can wish to link several European newspapers, translate articles and put them everywhere. (...) but who is translating?”

Besides the problem of language Postma also thinks “it is difficult to produce something that is European-wide which pays attention to everyday issues.” And finances are another point. Referring to the economic crisis she thinks “today is not the time for a large, broad European news channel”. About European support for media Postma is clear: “We keep far from that [European subsidies for press]. We don’t want that money!”

Postma is positive about the existence of a European public space:
“I have lived in it, worked in it. For me it is not a question that this space exists, but that is not experienced by everyone in the same way. (…) When people have lived abroad [they experience the European space better]. Apparently you do not have a feeling for it when you live in the Dutch protected sphere. (…) [A European space] is there for everyone who uses it. Not everyone is using it or wants to use it. (…) You cannot force people to use it.”

In Postma’s view “European media should play an important role in the European public space”, although she acknowledges that it “remains difficult if you take into account [the limited amount of] cross-border media.” She thinks that “national debates are so totally different and that “it is an enormous challenge to see the discussions in each others countries, to understand them and to respect them”. She sees it as a task for NRC Handelsblad “to do something with it”.

Postma is not sure whether NRC Handelsblad contributes to the thinking about the EU in the Netherlands or not:

“I hope so, but I know we are writing for a specific audience. (…) You would really contribute when you write for people with a different opinion. (…) NRC readers are readers who are looking for a liberal vision. I think nrc.next does contribute, because they started from scratch. NRC has a fixed group of readers. You try to base opinions and bring up content. We are not a mission newspaper and do not try to persuade people.”

6.2.3 Conclusion

NRC Handelsblad acknowledges the importance of reporting on European issues and the role newspapers can play in the European public space. The newspaper itself is trying to contribute to this by its way of reporting and its cooperation with other European media. Still, NRC Handelsblad is in the first place a Dutch newspaper for Dutch readers. Its reporting is and will first of all be guided by that principle.

6.3 Nova

In 1992 the NOS and the VARA integrated their current affairs programmes and started Nova. The VPRO joined the initiative for several years and later the NPS took over from the NOS. Nova has a strong focus on political items and current debates. Until 2009 Den Haag Vandaag (The Hague Today) was a special part of the show dedicated to political news and the House of Representatives. Today Den Haag Vandaag is no longer a separate part of the programme, although Nova continues to cooperate with the political editors of the NOS (NRC Handelsblad 2009a). Nova is televised six days a week in the evening after the ten o’ clock news. A typical show takes approximately twenty to thirty minutes and has three or four items.

Interviewee Carel Kuyl (1952) is editor-in-chief of NOVA since 2003. He started as an editor for political programmes of the NOS in 1981. When Nova started he became editor-in-chief for foreign news. Kuyl is also head of the educational section of the NPS.

6.3.1 Europe reporting

During our media content analysis we noticed that Nova is not paying much attention to European issues. Carel Kuyl explains why this is the case:
“The European Parliament is a rather weak institution. (...) Europe is not very interesting at the level of the European Parliament. (...) The European Council is much more important than the whole Parliament. (...) For current affairs programmes Europe is interesting in the field of the European Council. (...) Sometimes it is interesting in the field of the European Commission. (...) We regularly pay attention to the Council and the Commission. (...) [Furthermore] European decision-making is a matter of very long breath. (...) For a current affairs programme dealing with the news of the day this is of course hard to follow.

Kuyl thinks *Nova* should do more with European issues. He tells that they “are developing plans to see if European reporting should be strengthened.” In his opinion “the editorial staff in The Hague should be enlarged to a The Hague-Europe staff, because it [politics] is so much intertwined.” However, “that costs a lot of money.” Kuyl explains that most of the *Nova* programmes have a Dutch perspective, because “you have to provide the viewer with understanding.” *Nova* “does not just speak about the Dutch perspective, but it is there. It is a Dutch programme.”

As already mentioned before Dutch media pay little attention to the different political positions in Europe. Kuyl thinks that this “has to do with the technical character of the rules; in those areas there are no large, compelling political contrasts.” Another reason is that “the political debate hardly takes place in the European Parliament. The real debates still take place in the national parliaments.”

**6.3.2 European public sphere**

Kuyl tells that *Nova* exchanges items with the Belgian *Ter Zake* and, sometimes, with BBC’s *Newsnight*, because “they also work at the level Nova likes to work at.” He is sceptic about further European cooperation:

“I do not think there will be more cooperation between broadcasting organisations in Europe. What attracts viewers is the meaning it [a programme] has for them. The meaning of an event for a viewer in Spain is different from that of a viewer in the Netherlands, at least often. (...) A feature in Spain most of the time has a different perspective.”

Although he is sceptic about cooperation, Kuyl distinguishes between, on the one hand, newspapers and news programmes and, on the other, current affairs programmes. The latter have a specific task in which there is no room for large-scale cooperation. Kuyl: “I do not believe in large-scale European exchange. We are no newspaper or television news. We are there for background information and try to give meaning to events for a Dutch public.”

Kuyl is clearly no proponent of a broad European media system:

“You should not want to make everything one common issue. Public broadcasting is something that you can arrange nationally very well. (...) We have our own culture and media policies. You can organise that as a national state. You do not have to do that together; that does not create an added value.”

In his eyes it is also a national responsibility to make means available for Europe reporting:
“There should be more means, but not from Europe. Then you are making yourself dependent on one institution. It should come from the public broadcasting organisation. (…) Europe should not subsidise. (…) That will turn into propaganda. (…) We as public broadcasting organisation (…) should take care that there are enough means.”

For Kuyl independent media is a very important aspect also from the European perspective:

“I have no interest in teaching people about European ideals. That is not our task. Our task is to show what is happening: Why did people vote against the referendum en masse? What is wrong with European rules? Does fraud exist? Those kinds of things are our task, not to make people go in a certain direction.”

6.3.3 Conclusion

Nova considers itself a programme that gives meaning to events for the Dutch public. That is also the task of a current affairs programme in the eyes of editor-in-chief Kuyl. This meaning will be different for publics in other European countries. Therefore, Kuyl sees little added value in intensive European cooperation for current affairs programmes, though Nova does cooperate with other media on a small scale. Kuyl admits that more attention could be paid to European issues. At the same time he puts the importance of European politics into perspective. Especially on a medium such as television European politics is not easy to bring to the fore. Furthermore, financial means for Europe reporting are limited. In Kuyl’s opinion this problem should be solved nationally and not by the EU, because he fears a loss of independence.

7 CONCLUSION

This country report is a reflection of the Dutch contribution to the inductive phase of data collection of the Eurosphere research project. In the comparative phase of the Eurosphere project, the results of all participating countries are used to analyse the development of a European Public Sphere (EPS). This Dutch country report serves as one of the building blocks for the comparative phase. In this conclusion we will give preliminary answers to the following questions based on the data in this country report:

A) Does a European Public Sphere (EPS) exist?
B) What are the structural consequences of ethno-national diversity for EPS (and vice versa)?
C) Which discursive frames regarding ethno-national diversity, the European Polity, and the EPS can be distinguished and which networks do these frames create?

*ad A*) – Does a European Public Sphere exist?
The interviewees’ opinions of EPS can be categorised as follows: (i) No, an EPS does not exist; (ii) An EPS only exists partially, in the sense that certain types of organisations organise themselves and also lobby at the EU level; (iii) Yes, an EPS exists, but it is weak and still in development. The general pattern is that, at best, the EPS is partially and weakly developed. However, many interviewees express the feeling that the European Polity matters and that it makes sense for their organisation to be represented at the EU-level, for example via an umbrella organisation.
Hence, reasoning from the Dutch case, a preliminary answer to question A) could be formulated as: ‘No, there is no such thing as a united European Public Sphere. Instead, there are several overlapping European spheres which can be seen as extensions of the national public spheres’.

ad B) – What are the structural consequences of ethno-national diversity for EPS (and vice versa)?

Many of the interviewees hold rather strong views on the relationship between ethno-national diversity and the EPS. When interviewees think that the EPS does not exist, or is only partially or weakly developed, they often supply one or more of the following arguments:

1. There is no strong shared European identity, most people predominantly identify themselves with the regional or national level and only a small cosmopolitan elite (also) identifies with the European level;
2. There are too many different languages in the EU and only a minority master the English language;
3. There are no real European media, which relates to point 1. (most people would not be interested) and point 2. (the potential English-speaking audience would be too small or – in case of multilingual media – translation costs would be too high).

Furthermore, few interviewees support the idea of top down development of an EPS by the European Union. On the other hand, some interviewees link the future development of the EPS to the development of the European Polity, for example arguing that the EPS would benefit from a powerful, truly democratic European Parliament with European (instead of national) parties, because that would increase the identification of EU-citizens with the European Polity. However, such development is hindered by a lack of European identity.

Therefore, based on the Dutch case, a preliminary answer to question B) would be: ‘Ethno-national diversity hinders the development of an EPS. A weak European identity and the lack of a common European language makes that pan-European media and a European communication space hardly exist. The development of a more democratic and ‘truly European’ European Polity could increase identification with the European Polity, but such development is in turn impeded by a lack of identification of (Dutch) citizens with Europe.

ad C) – Which discursive frames regarding ethno-national diversity, the European Polity, and the EPS can be distinguished and which networks do these frames create?

Answering this question, we distinguish between the four types of actors featuring in Eurosphere, i.e. political parties, think tanks, SMO’s and media. Furthermore, we differentiate between discursive frames regarding ethno-national diversity, the European Polity and the EPS. We will now sketch (building blocks for) the most noteworthy discursive frames.

- With the answers to questions A) and B) we gave an outline of possible discursive frames regarding the EPS. Especially ad B), points 1-3 apply to the media organisations: the development of real pan-European media needed for a well-functioning EPS is impeded by ethno-national diversity, in particular the multitude of European languages and the limited identification of European citizens with the European Polity. This causes two practical problems: huge translation costs and the difficulty to find topics everybody can identify with.

- There is a growing awareness among the government-related think tank Scientific Council for Government Policy and the so-called scientific bureaus of Dutch political parties that they should not only supply policy advice on Dutch EU policy or the
development of the European Polity, but that EU policies penetrate Dutch national policies to such extent that they should include the EU component in any policy advice. Hence, in discursive frames of those organisations, the image of the national polity gives way to the image of a multi-layered polity that includes the European Polity. This is one of the reasons behind the formation of European networks of likeminded organisations, something that is also endorsed by the European Commission. However, this development is not groundbreaking, because scientists have a longstanding tradition to form European and international networks. Moreover, many of the scientific bureaus of Dutch political parties were already participating in European and international networks via their respective political parties.

- Naturally, it is possible to construct several frames pertaining to political parties. However, one frame connects the future development of the European Polity with ethno-national diversity within the Union and may serve as a greatest common divisor of the current position of Dutch political parties. On one hand, many interviewees sense that a large share of the Dutch electorate fears to lose identity and autonomy to an undemocratic European super state. Furthermore, those citizens often have difficulty identifying with Europe due to the large ethno-national diversity within the Union. In this respect, the 2005 referendum in which the Dutch electorate rejected the European Constitution, served as a wakeup call. On the other hand, many of the interviewees recognise the necessity to reform the European Polity in order to manage the current Union of 27 countries. Those two observations often result in a position that can be described as follows: (i) Qua content those interviewees are convinced that the EU should be reformed in such a way that it has (executive) power on a few cross-border policy fields for which it has added value (like foreign affairs, asylum, etcetera). All other decision-making should be brought (back) to the national and lower levels, according to the principle of subsidiarity. This should take away the beforementioned fears of (Dutch) citizens. (ii) Qua message towards citizens they take a very pragmatic position towards the future development of the European Polity, avoiding any reference to the European Constitution, finality discussions and blueprints for the European Polity.

- Of all political parties, only the regional Frisian National Party (FNP) developed a coherent discursive frame that includes national minorities. In this frame national minorities lost too much autonomy during the process of stateformation. This unwanted development could be reversed by a thorough restructuring of the European Polity, including federalisation of the EU at all levels, the creation of European lists in the European Parliament and the introduction of a representative body for the regions. In this frame, the European Union and the regions are natural allies joined by a mutual interest to diminish the power of the nation-states.

- Among the SMO’s, the ultra nationalist organisation Voorpost operates from a discursive frame which includes a radical restructuring of the European Polity into a ‘Europe of the Peoples’ or a ‘European Peoples Community’. All current member-states should be resolved and replaced by ethnically homogenous new nation-states, all comprising only one nation (i.e. people, demos). In this ‘Europe of the Peoples’ there will be no national minorities. Ethnic diversity is seen as unnatural and a threat to Dutch ethnic identity. Therefore, ethnic diversity should be reduced by a strict (re)migration policy.
• Some of the SMO’s – especially those representing ethnic minorities – reason from a frame in which the growing importance of the European Polity is an inescapable reality which necessitates representation in Brussels, typically via an umbrella organisation. Several motives can be distinguished, like furthering the goals of the organisation and serving the interest of the minority it represents, but also more abstract motives. Some interviewees value ethno-national diversity or diversity in general (religion, gender, sexual preferences, etcetera) as enriching, but also as a factor which is not unproblematic and has to be managed at the EU level. Others see the development of a European identity as a process that creates room for ethnic identities vis-à-vis dominant national identities within member states.

• Remarkably, some of the SMO’s representing Turks and Moroccans – minorities that live in many different EU-countries – are not represented at the EU level, and often show little interest in the EPS and/or the European Polity. This also applies to the Moluccans, but because they are a typically Dutch minority it is less obvious for them to be active on the European level. To what extent this lack of representation is due the socio-economic status of the minorities involved, internal divisions, the fact that some of those organisations predominantly operate regionally or other factors is as yet open to investigation.
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APPENDIX 1: INTERVIEWS

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92 The selected organisations were divided among the three authors. With some exceptions - like double interviews - every author conducted the interviews related to the assigned organisations and wrote the corresponding paragraphs. Jan van de Beek wrote §2.1, §2.2, §2.4, §3.1.2, §3.6-§3.8, §4.1, §4.2, §4.2.1-§4.2.3, §5.7, §5.8.2, §5.8.3, §5.9 & Ch.7. Saskia van de Mortel wrote Ch.1 (with Suzanne van Hees), §2.5, §3.1.1, §3.2, §3.4, §4.2.4-$4.2.7, §5.4-$5.6 & Ch.6. Suzanne van Hees wrote §2.3, §3.3, §3.5 (with Saskia van de Mortel), §5.1-§5.3, and §5.8.1 (with Jan van de Beek). The country report was written under the supervision of professor Veit Bader.
APPENDIX 2: EUROSPHERE QUESTIONNAIRE

Questions Block I:
Organizations’ views and preferred notions of societal diversity in general
I.1) In your own notion of diversity, which groups do you believe are relevant today for defining a diverse society?
I.2) Which groups’ claims are more important in your opinion than others? In other words, should our political institutions give priority and more importance to the claims of any of these groups in policymaking? Why should policymaking give priority to the claims of exactly these groups?

Questions Block II:
Organizations’ views and preferred notions of ethno-national diversity in general; of specific types of polities (institutions) and of policies (of immigration and incorporation) in particular
II.1) What do you think about ethno-nationally diverse societies?
II.2) In what ways do you see ethno-national diversity as an advantage or disadvantage for society?
II.3) Should questions of ethno-national diversity be regulated by the state, and, if yes, in which forms?
II.4) Should all ethno-national groups within one political system have the right to their respective own political institutions? What should be the conditions for and consequences of this right?
II.5) Should public institutions be adapted to meet the requirements of ethno-national minorities? What should be the limits of such adaptation? (e.g., health, welfare, election and representation systems)
II.6) Are there certain aspects of … (e.g. Dutch) way of life and certain institutions that immigrants have to adapt to??
II.7) How do your views on these questions correspond with the dominant public opinion in this country? Do you feel that your views on these questions face much support or resistance when you voice them publicly?

Questions Block III:
How is the EU perceived and evaluated by the selected organizations?
III.1) In which direction should the EU Polity (the political system of the EU) develop itself in the future in your opinion, specifically concerning the relationship between the central EU-institutions, member states, and regions?
III.2) What further positive or negative developments do you expect with regard to the impact of European integration on ethno-national diversity?
III.3) What further positive or negative developments do you expect with regard to the impact of European integration on gender equality?
III.4) What further positive or negative developments do you expect with regard to the impact of European integration on the other types of societal diversity (see I.1)?
III.5) Should the EU grant minority rights that cannot be revised by the Member States?
III.6) Would you name some non- or anti-European practices, values and ideologies?

Questions Block IV:
Preferred political strategies within three policy fields: Citizenship, Migration, Enlargement
Citizenship
IV.1) According to which criteria do you think that citizenship should be applied?
IV.2) What is your opinion with regard to dual citizenship?
IV.3) Should residents from Non-EU-countries have direct access to EU citizenship or should EU citizenship only be derived from national citizenship in one of the Member States?

Free Movement
IV.4) Should all residents from EU-countries and Non-EU-countries be granted free movement within the whole EU on an equal basis?

Political Rights
IV.5) Should all non-citizens living in this country have political rights – e.g. people coming from EU countries and other immigrants?

Migration and Political Asylum
IV.6) What do you think of international migration? Which benefits and problems for the receiving and sending countries do you recognize?
IV.7) Which groups of immigrants should be let into the country?
IV.8) Should this country have entry, work and settlement permit policies and rules which give equal treatment to all? Or should we have favourable policies for citizens of specific countries (e.g. EU countries, countries with historical relationships to this country)?
IV.9) Are refugee and asylum seeker flows a problem for this country? In what way?
IV.10) Do you think that laws on free movement, migration (including political rights of immigrants), political asylum, and illegal migration should be decided nationally, supranationally, or on a sub-national level (regional, local)?

Enlargement
IV.11) Can you name some reasons for not accepting a country as an EU member?
IV.12) What are the limits of EU enlargement?
IV.13) How do you assess the Eastern enlargement with regard to ethno-national diversity?
IV.14) Are EU policies or structures necessary to deal with ethno-national diversity in the new and in the old Member States?
IV.15) Are EU policies or structures necessary to deal with gender equality in the new and in the old Member States?
IV.16) Are EU policies or structures necessary to deal with other types of societal diversities (see I.1) in the new and in the old Member States?
IV.17) Has the Eastern enlargement changed the conditions of the work of your organisation? How? Do you expect future enlargements to change the context of your organization? In which ways?

Questions Block V:
Organizations’ Perceptions and Preferences of European Public Spheres in the perspective of propagating their opinions and proposals on ethno-national diversity

V.1) Is there one common European communication space today?
V.2) If there is a European communication space, do you think that it excludes important possible participants?
V.3) Do you think there should be more possibilities for trans-European communication and collaboration? How should trans-European communication be organized?
V.4) Why should the trans-European communication be organized in the way you mentioned?
V.5) Do you think that your medium should contribute to European communication spaces? (Only for media people)
V.6) If yes: Do you think that your medium in fact contributes to European communication spaces? If not, why not? (Only for media people)
V.7) Which other organizations does your organization collaborate the most with, and on which issues? Is your organization member of one or more trans-European and/or transnational networks? On which issues do you collaborate within these networks?
V.8) Why collaborate exactly with these organizations and networks and not with others?
V.9) How does your cooperation/contact with these organizations and trans-European/transnational networks function? What benefits is your organization getting from such collaboration? How do you assess your organization’s contribution to the work of other organizations and networks that you are collaborating with?
V.10) Which actors on all levels (international, supranational, national, sub-national, i.e. regional and/or local) do you want to address with your activities? Why? (Not for media people)
V.11) Do you see it as your duty to inform your audience about EU politics? (Only for media people)
V.12) Do you think it is important to inform your audience about perspectives of other Member States on EU politics? (Only for media people)
V.13) Which questions of EU politics do you see as the most important ones? (Only for media people)
V.14) Are you able to inform your audience about EU politics in a way satisfying your own aspirations? (Only for media people)
V.15) Do you see it as your duty to inform your audience about questions of ethno-national diversity or other types of societal diversity (see I.1)? Why? Why not? (Only for media people)
V.16) Are you able to inform your audience about questions of ethno-national diversity or other types of societal diversity (see I.1) in a way satisfying your own aspirations? If not, out of which reasons is this not possible? (Only for media people)
V.17) Which (European, national, regional) media are of relevance for your work? Why? (Not for media people)
V.18) How do you assess the influence of your organisation on public opinion, public debates, and the relevant institutionalized actors on the European, the national or the regional level? Can you give some examples from your own experience of successful and unsuccessful cases of influence?
V.19) Which resources do you have access to in order to influence public opinion, public debates and the relevant institutionalised actors on the European, the national or the regional level? (Not for media people)
V.20) Which additional resources do you need in order to create your desired level of influence on public opinion, public debates and the relevant institutionalised actors on the European, the national or the regional level? (Not for media people)
APPENDIX 3: EUROSPHERE INTERVIEWVRAGEN (DUTCH TRANSLATION QUESTIONNAIRE)

Diversiteit
I.1 Wat stelt u zich voor bij diversiteit in een samenleving?
I.2 Welke groepen en groepclaims zijn belangrijker dan anderen?

Etno-nationale diversiteit
II.1 Wat vindt u van etnisch gemende (multiculturele) samenlevingen?
II.2 Op welke manieren ziet u etno-nationale diversiteit als een verrijking of als een bedreiging voor de maatschappij?
II.3 Moet de staat zich bezighouden met etno-nationale aangelegenheden? Zo ja: in welke mate?
II.4 Zouden alle etno-nationale groepen in Nederland het recht moeten hebben op hun eigen instituties?
II.5 Zouden de publieke instituties aangepast moeten worden om aan de behoeften van etno-nationale minderheden te kunnen voldoen? Wat zijn de grenzen voor een dergelijke aanpassing?
II.6 Zijn er bepaalde aspecten van de Nederlandse manier van leven of bepaalde instituties waaraan migranten zich moeten aanpassen?
II.7 Komt uw visie op deze onderwerpen overeen met de dominante publieke opinie in Nederland?

Europese Unie
III.1 In welke richting moet de politieke organisatie van de EU zich in de toekomst ontwikkelen?
III.2, III.3 en III.4 Wat voor gevolgen heeft Europese integratie voor etno-nationale diversiteit? En voor gender? En voor andere soorten diversiteit?
III.5 Zou de EU of de natiestaat de eindbeslissingen moeten nemen over thema’s die met etno-nationale diversiteit samenhangen?
III.6 Kunt u enkele niet-Europese of anti-Europese waarden of ideologieën noemen?.

Rechten
Staatsburgerschap/nationaliteit
IV.1 Volgens welke criteria moet Nederlands staatsburgerschap worden toegewezen?
IV.2 Wat vindt u van dubbele nationaliteit?
IV.3 Moeten migranten (van buiten de EU) in de EU dezelfde rechten hebben als EU-burgers of moet EU-burgerschap alleen een afgeleide zijn van staatsburgerschap van één van de lidstaten?

Vrijheid van beweging
IV.4 Moeten alle legaal in de EU verblijvende niet-EU-burgers hetzelfde recht hebben op vrijheid van beweging als EU-burgers?

Politieke rechten
IV.5 Zouden alle mensen die in Nederland wonen, maar geen staatsburger zijn, politieke rechten moeten hebben?
Migratie en politiek asiel
IV.6 Wat vindt u van internationale migratie? Kunt u enkele voor- en nadelen noemen voor de landen van herkomst? En voor de landen waar migranten zich vestigen?
IV.7 Welke groepen migranten moeten worden toegelaten in Nederland?
IV.8 Moeten beleid en regels in Nederland voor inreis-, werk-, en verblijfsvergunningen iedereen gelijk behandelen? Of moet er voorkeursbeleid zijn voor burgers van bepaalde landen?
IV.9 Vormen vluchtenlingen- en asielzoekersstromen een probleem voor Nederland? Op welke manier?
IV.10 Vindt u dat besluiten over wetten over vrije beweging, migratie (inclusief politieke rechten van migranten), politiek asiel en illegale migratie op nationaal of Europees niveau genomen moeten worden?

Uitbreiding
IV.11 Kunt u enkele redenen noemen om een land niet als EU-lidstaat te accepteren?
IV.12 Waar ligt de grens voor uitbreiding van de EU? Op grond waarvan trekt u die grens?
IV.13 Wat voor invloed heeft de uitbreiding van de EU met de Oost-Europese landen op etno-nationale diversiteit?
IV.14, IV.15 en IV.16 Moet de EU voorzien in regels met betrekking tot etno-nationale diversiteit? En gender? En andere vormen van diversiteit?
IV.17 Heeft de Oostelijke uitbreiding gevolgen gehad voor uw organisatie?

Europese publieke ruimte
V.1 Bestaat er op dit moment zoiets als een gemeenschappelijke Europese ruimte?
V.2 Wie nemen daar (niet) aan deel?
V.3 en V.4 Denkt u dat er meer mogelijkheden moeten zijn voor trans-Europese communicatie en samenwerking? Hoe zou dat dan moeten worden georganiseerd en waarom?
V.7 Met welke andere trans-Europese organisaties/netwerken werkt uw organisatie het meest samen en op welke onderwerpen?
V.8 Waarom werkt u met deze organisaties en trans-Europese netwerken samen en niet met andere?
V.9 Hoe verloopt de samenwerking met deze organisaties en trans-Europese netwerken?
V.10 Welke actoren op alle niveaus (internationaal, supranationaal, nationaal, regionaal, lokaal) wilt u met uw activiteiten bereiken? Waarom?
V.17 Welke media (Europes, nationaal, regionaal) zijn relevant voor uw werk? Waarom?
V.18 Hoe beoordeelt u de invloed van uw organisatie op de publieke opinie en debatten en de relevante betrokkenen op regionaal, landelijk en Europees niveau? Kunt u voorbeelden noemen?
V.19 en V.20 Welke middelen kunt u inzetten om de publieke opinie, publieke debatten en relevante actoren op Europees, nationaal en regionaal niveau te bereiken? En welke middelen heeft u nodig om dat te bereiken?

Vragen alleen voor media
V.5 Vindt u dat uw medium zou moeten bijdragen aan Europese communicatieluimtes?
V.6 Zo ja, denkt u dat uw medium echt bijdraagt aan Europese communicatieluimtes? Zo niet, waarom niet?
V.11 Ziet u het als uw taak om uw publiek te informeren over EU politiek?
V.12 Vindt u het belangrijk om uw publiek te informeren over de perspectieven van andere lidstaten op EU politiek?
V.13 Welke kwesties met betrekking tot EU politiek vindt u het belangrijkst?
V.14 Bent u in staat om uw publiek te informeren over EU politiek op een manier die voldoet aan uw ideaal?
V.15 Ziet u het als uw taak om uw publiek te informeren over kwesties met betrekking tot etno-nationale diversiteit of andere vormen van diversiteit in de samenleving? Waarom wel of niet?
V.16 Bent u in staat om uw publiek te informeren over kwesties met betrekking tot etno-nationale diversiteit en andere vormen van diversiteit in de samenleving op een manier die voldoet aan uw ideaal?