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Muslim Immigrants in the Netherlands: Characteristics, Identification and Diversity



Willem Huijnk, Jaco Dagevos, and Floris Vermeulen

Who Are the Muslim immigrants in the Netherlands?

The Muslim community in the Netherlands is, for the most part, made up of migrants and their children. From the 1960s onwards, Turkish and Moroccan migrants took Islam with them to the Netherlands. Since that time, the number of Muslims has increased largely, partly due to further migration and subsequent family reunification. As a result, the Islamic faith in the Netherlands is strongly linked to migration history and is often practised within ethnic communities (Maliapaard & Gijsberts, 2012; Vermeulen, 2006). However, Islam is not just a migrant religion. Many Muslim migrants have passed on their faith to their children. For example, more than half

This chapter is based on the report ‘The religious experience of Muslims in the Netherlands’ by the Netherlands Institute for Social Research (SCP) (Huijnk, 2018). It uses survey data to investigate developments among Muslim immigrants in the Netherlands over the period 2006–2015. The available data, which are based on various editions of the Dutch Survey of Integration of Migrants (SIM), are the most comparable databases over this period and enable us to provide an overview of developments in the religious experience and participation of different Muslim groups in the Netherlands. Most information exists on the two biggest Muslim groups in the Netherlands in particular, namely those with a Turkish and Moroccan background. We also briefly describe the religious experience of a number of smaller Muslim immigrant groups in the Netherlands (Afghan, Iranian, Iraqi, Somali and Surinamese Muslims). Together, these groups make up a large majority of the Muslim population in the Netherlands.

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Table 1 Religious behaviour and religious attitudes among Muslims, 15 years and older, by origin, 2015 (in percentages)

	Turkish	Moroccan	Somali	Surinamese ^a
Regards self as Muslim ^b	86	94	95	9
Non-religious ^b	10	5	5	34
Visits mosque at least weekly	40	37	38	16
Prays five times a day	33	78	80	21
Fasted every day during Ramadan	55	87	70	34
Eats halal everyday	80	93	94	69
Wears the headscarf (women)	49	78	90	19
My faith is an important part of who I am ^c	89	96	93	80
I wouldn't like it if my daughter married someone from another faith ^c	60	63	50	22
Muslims should be able to live in accordance with the rules of Islam ^c	61	66	74	41

^aTo be able to present a reliable picture of their religiosity, Surinamese Muslims from 2011 and 2015 (9% and 8%, respectively, of the total number of Dutch citizens of Surinamese origin) were taken together

^bThis is the share of the total population group; the other indicators in the table relate purely to Muslims

^cThe share who disagree/disagree completely with the statement

Source SCP/CBS (SIM' 11-'15); weighted data

of Dutch citizens of Turkish or Moroccan origin are of the second generation (CBS, 2018, 2020); they were born and raised in the Netherlands.

It is estimated that around 6 percent of the adult population of the Netherlands are Muslims (around one million people). The vast majority of them have an immigrant background, and roughly two-thirds are of Turkish or Moroccan origin. The share who regard themselves as Muslim is higher among those of Moroccan origin (94 percent) than those with a Turkish background (86 percent) (see Table 1). A bigger proportion of the Turkish group (10 percent) are non-religious than in the Moroccan group (5 percent). The share of Muslims in the Turkish-background group fell from 93 to 86 percent between 2006 and 2015. This decline featured in both generations: in 2015, 82 percent of second-generation Turkish migrants regarded themselves as Muslim, compared with 90 percent in the first generation. The share of those identifying as Muslim in the group of Moroccan origin is also smaller in the second generation (91 percent) than in the first generation (96 percent), though both in the whole group and in the two separate generations, there was no decline in the share regarding themselves as religious. Around 0.1 percent of Dutch people without an immigration background identify as Muslim (around 13,000 people) (Butter & Van Oordt, 2017).

In the 1950s, Muslims built the first mosques in the Netherlands, in The Hague in 1955 and in the small city Balk in the north of the country in 1956. From the early

1960s, more small simple prayer rooms were set up in numerous companies and abandoned buildings in cities with a high concentration of guest worker communities. This occurred in the large cities in the west of the country and some industrial cities in the south and east of the Netherlands. Over the years, more and larger prayer rooms were built. These were mainly located in former churches, school buildings or factory halls. After 1980, the number of Islamic centres and mosques in the Netherlands increased greatly in relation to the arrival of women and children to the Netherlands. This was a transition within these Muslim immigrant communities to a longer or even permanent residence in the Netherlands. Today, the number of mosques in the Netherlands is estimated to be between 450 and 500 (Butter & Van Oordt, 2017; Roex & Tuzani, 2020).

Mosque attendance has increased over the last ten years in both generations of Turkish Muslims. No clear trend can be discerned among Moroccan Muslims. The share of Turkish and Moroccan Muslims attending the mosque at least weekly was roughly equal in 2015 (40 and 37 percent, respectively). A fifth of Turkish Muslims never go to a mosque, and the same applies for a quarter of Moroccan Muslims; this holds across both generations, though first-generation Moroccan Muslims visit the mosque weekly—more often than the second generation (42 percent, versus 28 percent). Men visit the mosque weekly, more often than women, reflecting the fact that Friday afternoon mosque attendance is not a religious obligation for women. Praying is increasing in both generations of both Turkish and Moroccan Muslims. Moroccan Muslims pray considerably more often than Turkish Muslims—more than three-quarters (78 percent) pray five times a day, compared with a third of Turkish Muslims (33 percent). The majority of Turkish Muslims pray at least weekly; the share of both Turkish and Moroccan Muslims who do not pray at all is low (15 and 6 percent, respectively). Women pray more often than men. Those who pray five times a day are more often older (45 years or over) and are members of the first generation. Nonetheless, more than two-thirds of young Moroccan Muslims or Moroccan Muslims from the second generation still pray five times a day. This figure is much lower (18 percent) among young and second-generation Turkish Muslims.

Muslims living in the Netherlands almost always eat halal, 93 percent of Moroccans and 80 percent of Turkish Muslims. The share of Turkish Muslims eating halal has remained constant since 2006 and has increased slightly among Moroccan Muslims (from 89 to 93 percent in 2015). The vast majority of Moroccan Muslims (87 percent) fast every day during Ramadan, while just over half of Turkish Muslims do this (55 percent). While the share of both Turkish and Moroccan Muslims who fast every day during Ramadan has declined, the reduction is slight, especially in the Moroccan group, and the majority still fast every day.

In terms of wearing a headscarf, with Moroccan Muslim women, we witness a strong increase over the last decade, from just under two-thirds (64 percent) in 2006 to more than three-quarters (78 percent) in 2015. This trend has also occurred in the second generation, as well as among young and highly educated women. There was virtually no change in the percentage of Turkish Muslim women wearing the headscarf between 2006 and 2015, as just under half (49 percent) of them wore a headscarf in 2015. There is a wide difference between age categories here, especially

in the Turkish group; a quarter of young Turkish Muslim women (aged 15–24) wear the headscarf, compared with almost three-quarters of Turkish Muslim women aged 45 or older. Members of the second generation wear the headscarf less often than the first generation.

The other Muslim immigrant communities display similar developments as the Turkish and Moroccan communities, although for some groups, the level of religiosity is much lower than among Moroccan and Turkish immigrants. Islam plays a central role for virtually all Dutch Somalis. In many areas, their religiosity has actually increased slightly from its already fairly high level in 2009. They pray frequently, more than two-thirds fast every day during Ramadan. Almost everyone always eats halal and nearly all Somali women wear the headscarf. They also attach great value to their faith. Religion plays a less prominent role in the daily lives of Surinamese Muslims, as they pray less frequently, go to the mosque less often and fewer than a fifth, around 19 percent, wear the headscarf. A minority of Surinamese Muslims (22 percent) would find it problematic if their daughter were to marry a non-Muslim, and those who believe that Muslims must live by the rules of Islam are also in the minority at 41 percent. No recent data is available on Muslims from refugee groups, but research from 2009 showed that a relatively high proportion of Dutch Iranians are not religious and that 20 percent are Christian. Religious participation is the lowest on all fronts among Iranian Muslims, and their views on the role of religion also show the least religious effort. Afghan and Iraqi Muslims are situated between the Iranian and Somali groups in many of their religious behaviours and views. Their religious participation is markedly lower than that of Somali, Turkish and Moroccan Muslims in the Netherlands, but their religious identification is relatively strong (Huijnk, 2018).

1 What Is the Sense of Belonging and (Political) Identity Among Muslim Immigrants in the Netherlands?

Research suggests that social identification plays an important role in individuals' daily lives. Social identification is about the emotional significance that people attach to perceived membership of the social groups in which they self-categorize and with which they self-identify. Social identification helps them to comprehend what they share with others and how they differ from them (Brubaker & Cooper, 2000; Kranendonk et al., 2018; Simon, 1999).

Religious identification among Muslim immigrants in the Netherlands remained more or less unchanged between 2006 and 2015. Respondents were asked how important their faith is to them. In 2006, Turkish and Moroccan Muslims placed strong importance on being Muslim. In 2015, this is still the case. A very high proportion say that their faith is a very important part of who they are, especially Moroccan Muslims (96 percent). The religious identification of Turkish Muslims is slightly less pronounced, at 89 percent. In both groups, women in the first generation exhibit

the strongest religious identification. There are no uniform trends in religious views over time, for example, regarding the role of religion in politics, mixed marriages or living, according to the rules of Islam. The differences between Turkish and Moroccan Muslims are small on this point. A bit less than two-thirds of Turkish and Moroccan Muslims say they would disapprove if their daughter wants to marry someone of a different faith, and they believe that Muslims should live according to the rules of Islam. Religious identification is also strong among many young Muslims (De Koning, 2008; Ketner, 2008; Noor, 2018; Vroon-Najem, 2014).

The perceived discrimination and the feeling of being less accepted among Muslims in the Netherlands have increased in recent years (Andriessen, 2016; Huijnk et al., 2015). The third Muslim Discrimination Monitor (Van der Valk & Törnberg, 2017) showed an increase in the number of incidents of aggression against mosques, in the number of complaints to anti-discrimination agencies and in the number of reports to the police and internet discrimination hotlines about Muslim discrimination and anti-Muslim incidents. A large-scale study of perceived discrimination in the Dutch population revealed that Dutch citizens of Turkish and Moroccan background most often experience unequal treatment and most often feel they are perceived negatively. These findings indicate the presence of a stigmatisation ladder in the Netherlands, on which members of these groups have the highest scores. By way of comparison, native Dutch men aged between 35 and 55 years, experience virtually no discrimination (Andriessen et al., 2018). In addition, numerous studies show that there is labour market discrimination against migrants and Muslims (Andriessen et al., 2010; Van den Berg et al., 2017; Thijssen et al., 2021). People with a Turkish or Moroccan background experience labour market discrimination more often than members of other migrant groups. Research by Thijssen et al. (2021) shows that 46 percent of native Dutch job applicants were invited for an interview, compared with 31 percent of Moroccan and 32 percent of Turkish applicants. Negative images of these groups play a role here. The unequal treatment of people with a Turkish and Moroccan background is associated with perceived cultural differences and religious background (Nievers, 2010).

Islam, in many Western countries, is often evaluated in form of what studies identify as a process of racialization. In this perception, Islam is presented as the negative mirror of western constructions of identity and gender (Al-Saji, 2010). This process of racialization is also present in the Netherlands and is primarily based upon the idea that Islam is a danger to social cohesion, security and Dutch national (mostly secular) identity (De Koning, 2016). Experiences of increased discrimination and racialisation are associated by Dutch Muslim communities with greater ritual and social engagement (Phalet & Güngör, 2004), as well as greater importance attached to Islam, greater emphasis on religious identity, greater claim to public recognition of Islam and consent to orthodox views (Buijs et al., 2006; De Koning, 2008; Verkuyten & Yildiz, 2007). The stronger the feeling that Muslims are not really accepted and valued, the more they can emphasize the importance of the immutable foundations of Islam. In these foundations, some Dutch Muslims can find security and a positive identity (Verkuyten & Yildiz, 2007).

The fact that religion forms a key part of the identity of many Turkish and Moroccan people living in the Netherlands can also not be seen in isolation from the social climate in the country. For Dutch citizens with a Moroccan background, the Muslim identity also appears to be an alternative to their Moroccan identity. This is because of the affiliation with a large global community (the Ummah), which offers a moral framework and confers a sense of belonging. At the same time, research has shown that young people of Moroccan and Turkish origin experience multiple identities simultaneously (Huijnk et al., 2015): they are Moroccan or Turkish, and they are Dutch, they are also residents of a city and they are Muslims. In principle, they do not see this as a problem. What is problematic is that others do make the choice, emphasising in all manner of contexts that the person concerned is above all Moroccan or Muslim. This gives young people with a migration background the feeling that they are not *permitted* to see themselves as Dutch, because those around them regard them predominantly as Moroccan or Turkish or as Muslims. The fact that they are essentially forced into seeing themselves in a particular way is perceived as a form of exclusion—they are not regarded as citizens, but as members of a migrant or religious group. They feel that they denied the Dutch identity, and that a Muslim identity and a Moroccan or Turkish identity is imposed upon them, whereas they themselves feel that different identities can perfectly well coexist alongside each other. This process, and the associated development of negative perceptions of migrants and Islam, contributes to an increased identification with religion. In that sense, the Muslim identity can also be seen as a ‘resistance identity’, which emerges as a reaction to what is perceived as the negative social climate in the Netherlands towards migrants and Muslims. It leads to a complex relationship with feeling at home in the Netherlands and with belonging. The religion that these groups consider as essential for almost all aspects of their lives is regarded by a substantial proportion of the Dutch population as something that does not belong in the Netherlands (Dagevos & Huijnk, 2019). Muslims are sometimes even regarded as the ultimate Other (De Koning, 2016). At the same time, many Muslims were born and raised in the Netherlands and regard it as their homeland.

The negative opinions about Islam and Muslims emanating from the Dutch social setting stimulate the strengthening of ties within the Muslim groups and the under-scoring of their Muslim identity. Social networks are largely separate from each other, as are the social and other forms of media (Huijnk et al., 2015). Discussing themes such as religion or secularization is often difficult or impossible in classrooms and schools where the tensions, polarisations and dividing lines that characterise broader society are also seen and felt (Kleijwegt, 2016). As stated earlier, the mutual perceptions of Muslims and non-Muslims are generally not positive, and this impedes contact and the willingness to learn about each other’s ideas. Negative attitudes from Dutch society make religion, the Muslim identity and belonging to a community, more attractive (Ketner, 2008). The negative perceptions can also encourage people to learn more about Islam. This may apply the most for the Moroccan group, perceptions of whom are the most negative, as they are the most stigmatized migrant group in the Netherlands (Vermeulen, 2014).

Life in a Western society, with opinions and behaviours that are out of line with what their religion prescribes, appears to strengthen the determination of some young Muslims to stay close to their religion (Huijnk et al., 2015). The Netherlands is not only a secular country, but also a highly individualised country (De Hart & Van Houwelingen, 2018). This is reflected among other things, such as in broadly shared views about equality of men and women and in permissive attitudes towards people's sexual orientation. In that respect, the Netherlands perceives itself as a relatively culturally homogenous country (Duyvendak, 2021). It is not just the confrontation with secular and liberal ideas which stimulates the quest for a deeper truth or processes of heightened religiosity in young people (Roeland et al., 2010), but also the religious or cultural diversity within the community. As stated, a proportion of these young people question the way in which their parents interpret the Islamic faith (Roy, 2004). The Islam of their parents and family is seen as being based on tradition, custom and culture, rather than on the true Islam (De Koning, 2008). More generally, the confrontation with the different interpretations of their faith based on country of origin and/or between religious schools can result in a quest for the 'true' Islam, which is independent of local, culturally driven interpretations. A more personal, individualistic quest for the true Islam can actually cause young people to become stricter adherents to their faith than their parents or those around. This can be a process in which they set themselves not just against their parents, who in their eyes do not practise the religion in a pure way, but also against a secular context which essentially rejects Islam. This purification is accompanied by discussions and conflicts about who is interpreting Islam correctly, both among young people themselves and also explicitly between young people on the one hand, and their parents and older generations of Muslims on the other (De Koning, 2008; Roeland et al., 2010). For those looking to become more deeply engaged with their religion or searching for 'truth', the Internet offers an almost limitless source of information and social contacts. Virtual contacts cut across the barriers of people's front doors, school doors, municipalities or countries. Faith and feeling part of the Islamic ummah can impart a feeling of security and a strong sense of community.

This increase in the religiosity of Muslims in the Netherlands, among different religious subgroups, is not happening in a vacuum; a (renewed) revival of religious values, identification and participation has been ongoing within a large (geographical) diversity of Muslim countries since the 1970s (Carvalho, 2009). There is also a general trend among religious young people in Dutch society to adhere more strongly to their faith and forms of orthodoxy (De Hart, 2014; De Hart & Van Houwelingen, 2018). The quest by young Muslims for ways to give form to their faith in a pluralistic and largely secular society appears to follow this trend. A stronger religious observance can in part be a reaction to life in a secular and liberal society, where believers are in the minority and a religious lifestyle is far from the norm. This forces those who are religious to actively maintain their faith themselves, in order to prevent it from weakening (Beekers, 2015). The need for a safe, familiar setting in which people can be themselves is no different for Muslims than for orthodox Protestant communities or Christian migrants. Christians and Muslims occupy a comparable position on this point and struggle in similar ways. The heightened quest for the authentic heart of

the religion, which goes beyond the existing traditions and institutions, can also lead to a greater susceptibility to an orthodox interpretation of a religion. For example, Salafism appears to hold particular appeal for young (Moroccan) Muslims. Based on self-identification studies, it is suggested that 0.3 percent of Turkish Muslims and 0.5 percent of Moroccan Muslims in the Netherlands regard themselves as Salafists (Roex & Tuzani, 2020; Roex et al., 2010).

In general, this increase in religiosity and the associated increased sociocultural distance in the Netherlands appear to be leading to an ever greater segregation between the worlds inhabited by Muslims and non-Muslims. Since 2017, there is also a political translation of this distance and subsequent segregation with the successful emergence of political parties like DENK and NIDA. DENK, the most successful political party of the two, entered the Dutch parliament with three seats in 2017, representing 2.06 percent of the votes. For the first time in Dutch political history, a party headed by three Muslim politicians of immigrant background promoting a clear diversity agenda was represented in Dutch parliament. Its name means 'think' in Dutch and 'equal' in Turkish, and the party was established to combat rising intolerance, right-wing thinking and xenophobia in the Netherlands. The party itself is not religious, different from NIDA, but its supporters are primarily Muslims (Loukili, 2019; Vermeulen, 2018; Vermeulen et al., 2020). DENK retained its three parliamentary seats in the 2021 general election.

DENK's success can be largely explained by the growing influence of radical right, anti-Islam and anti-immigration parties in recent years. There is increased frustration among Dutch Muslim voters about the fact that traditional parties (like the Social democratic party) did not react strongly against radical right parties like the Freedom party (PVV) of Geert Wilders. Compared to these traditional parties, DENK can stand up for the specific interests of these groups much more directly and visibly. The party does not have to take into account the interests and/or views of other groups of voters. In addition, DENK has been able to make use of the well-organised, more conservative religious part of the Turkish-Dutch community. A dense and extensive network of organisations, such as mosques and sociocultural associations, has given party leaders, who have been active within these networks for years, direct access to large groups of potential voters (Vermeulen et al., 2020).

DENK mainly attracts voters who identify themselves as Muslim, especially voters who have a Turkish and to a lesser extent, a Moroccan background. DENK is popular among young voters. The strong performance of the party and its leaders on social media play an important role here. The party is also particularly popular among low-skilled voters within Muslim communities. Support for DENK among voters without a migration background is small (around 2 percent in the Amsterdam municipal elections) (Vermeulen, 2018; Vermeulen et al., 2020). DENK voters generally take conservative positions with regard to moral issues such as euthanasia or the emancipation of homosexuals. With regard to issues such as immigration, integration, discrimination and Islam, DENK voters take positions that political scientists generally identify as progressive (Vermeulen et al., 2020). Although DENK itself is a secular party, it provides Dutch Muslim voters the possibility to gain political

representation at both the national and the local level. Feelings of political representation enhance feelings of identification and belonging to the Dutch political system. From that perspective, DENK fulfils an important democratic role in Dutch politics (Vermeulen & Kranendonk, 2019).

2 Differences Among Muslims in the Netherlands and Different Subgroups

A latent class analysis¹ of different aspects of religion was used to construct a typology with five categories of Muslims (see Table 2). Placing people in groups or categories flattens out individual differences, but makes it possible to observe group differences and therefore to gain some understanding of common differences and processes. The typology used is based on fairly usual forms of religious expression and attitudes. Extreme orthodox groups cannot be identified on the basis of these data.

For secular Muslims, religion has little significance and is barely practised at all. For cultural Muslims, religion is important but does not manifest itself in practicing the rituals such as praying or visiting the mosque. Selective Muslims occupy an intermediate position; they take part in the social and ritual practices regularly, but not very frequently. Religion occupies a very important place in the lives of the pious, private Muslims, who pray often and adhere to the dietary prescriptions, for example. On the other hand, they practise their religion largely in private, rarely visiting a mosque, for example. Islam plays the biggest role in the daily lives of the strict, practicing Muslims. They participate very actively in the rituals (prayers, mosque attendance) and social practices (eating halal, Ramadan), and believe—strongly, that other Muslims must also abide by the rules of Islam.

The vast majority of Moroccan Muslims fall into the strict practicing (41 percent) or pious (43 percent) category (see Table 3). Taken together, therefore, 84 percent fall into the two most religious categories. Secular or selective Muslims are very rare in the Moroccan group (2 and 5 percent, respectively). There is more diversity among the Turkish Muslims, and the two strictest groups (pious and strict practicing) are much smaller. These latter two groups are also roughly the same size (27 and 30 percent). Taken together, over a quarter are cultural (21 percent) or secular (7 percent) Muslims. In addition to Dutch Moroccan and Turkish Muslims who regard themselves as non-religious, there is also a small group who regard themselves as Muslim, but for whom religion appears to have little significance. The Somali group closely resemble the Moroccan group in terms of religious typology. Together, those

¹ Latent class analysis (LCA) is a statistical method that is used to group individuals into classes of an unobserved (latent) variable on the basis of their responses on a series of observed variables (Vermunt, 2004). In other words, it is an inductive statistical technique which aims in a systematic way to classify people into homogeneous, similar groups with certain characteristics, based on the most likely class membership (Hagenaars & McCutcheon, 2002). This assignment to the different classes is based on model fit measures and interpretation.

Table 2 Muslim typology by underlying indicators, population aged 15 years and older, 2015 (in percentages)

	Secular	Cultural	Selective	Pious, private	Strict, practising	average
Goes to mosque at least weekly (%)	0	5	45	0	84	38
Prays five times a day (%)	0	0	0	85	90	61
Eats halal everyday (%)	57	96	96	99	100	97
Fasted during Ramadan (%)	24	69	83	90	96	86
Faith is important (% agree/agree completely)	6	93	92	97	98	92
It hurts if someone says something derogatory about my faith (% agree/agree completely)	42	76	77	79	87	80
Live by rules of Islam (% agree/agree completely)	1	42	57	66	82	65

Source SCP (SIM'15); weighted data

Table 3 Muslim typology by origin, population aged 15 years and older, 2015 (in percentages)

	Secular	Cultural	Selective	Pious, private	Strict, practising
Turkish	7	21	27	15	30
Moroccan	2	8	5	43	41
Somali	2	6	5	43	43
Surinamese ^a	14	19	17	29	22

^aThe typology for Surinamese Muslims was determined by taking the 2011 and 2015 data together in order to obtain sufficient respondents.

Source SCP (SIM'06-'15); weighted data

in the strict practicing and pious categories are the biggest groups (both 43 percent). There are virtually no secular or cultural Muslims in the Somali group. The secular category is relatively large among Surinamese Muslims (14 percent) and the strict practicing group is small (22 percent) compared with the three other origin groups. At the same time, around half the Surinamese Muslims fall into one of the two stricter categories (pious or strict practicing).

Secular Muslims are rare among men and women, young and old, low and high-educated and first and second generation. There is a relatively high proportion of cultural and selective Muslims among young people and in the second generation, while the pious and strict practicing Muslims tend to be older on average and belong to the first generation. Many of the low-educated Muslims are pious (38 percent) or strict practicing (44 percent). Men are more often strict practicing (46 percent) and women are more often pious (50 percent). This is mainly due to the fact that women are less often visit the mosque. If we look at the total of pious and strict practicing groups, we find that more than three-quarters of women (78 percent) and almost two-thirds of men (63 percent) fall into the two most religious categories. There is a strong relationship between experiences and socialisation practices in childhood and the degree of religiosity in later life. A minority of secular Muslims attended Qur'an lessons as a child, and those whose father attended a religious gathering on a weekly basis are also in the minority. This is not the case for the other groups of Muslims; for example, almost all fathers (92 percent) of the strict practicing Muslims visited the mosque at least weekly and nearly three-quarters of them attended Qur'an lessons as a child.

The two categories which are the most religious in terms of behaviour and opinions (the pious and strict practicing Muslims) have grown since 2006 in both the Turkish (from 37 to 45 percent) and Moroccan groups (from 77 to 84 percent). The category of cultural Muslims has declined steadily since 2006 in both the Turkish and Moroccan groups, while the (small) share of secular Muslims has not changed in either group.

The way in which the different categories of Muslims take their place in Dutch society shows a number of clear patterns. The study controls for differences in age, gender, generation, origin and education level. The secular Muslims are the most progressive in their opinions, are most often in paid employment, feel an affinity with the Netherlands, have relatively frequent social contacts outside their own origin group, have a positive attitude towards the Netherlands and the Dutch and exhibit a relatively high degree of social and institutional trust. They are clearly oriented towards the Netherlands, they see and experience many opportunities and their sociocultural distance is limited. The socio-emotional ties with the origin group are weaker than in the other Muslim categories. Secular Muslims also engage less often in volunteering and providing informal care relatively—possibly because they are relatively often in paid work.

In many respects, the strict practicing and, to a slightly lesser extent, pious Muslims, are at the opposite end of the spectrum from the secular Muslims and their sociocultural distance to Dutch natives is considerable, as they endorse traditional values and do not have strong emotional ties with the Netherlands. They are also the least accepting of mixed friendships or relationships. As with the cultural, selective and pious Muslims, they are much more deeply embedded in the origin group, identify strongly with it and have many social contacts within it, through their religion or otherwise. However, that is not the whole story. In line with earlier research among Christians, for example, we find positive effects of a stronger religious observance on well-being and prosocial behaviour. The strict practicing Muslims experience better

mental health, are happier, are more often members of a religious or other organisation and engage in more volunteering and informal care than the other Muslim groups. Their informal participation does not go hand in hand with formal participation; a relatively small proportion are in paid employment.

Roex et al. (2010) estimate that approximately 8 percent of Dutch Muslims are strictly orthodox. This is based, for example, on norms relating to listening to non-religious music, avoiding locations where alcohol is drunk and norms concerning interaction between men and women. The estimated percentage of strictly orthodox Muslims in the study by Roex et al. (2010) is thus notably smaller than our estimates of the pious or strict Muslims in the period of 2006–2015. Although the two studies are not mutually comparable due to differences in research design and timing, there are nonetheless strong indications that these are substantively different groups. The Muslim groups identified in our study as the most religious (strict and pious categories) can therefore not be regarded as strictly orthodox. There is little understanding in any of the Muslim groups for those who employ violence in the name of their religion, nor support for the idea that violence is sometimes the only way of achieving an ideal. There is also little difference between the Muslim groups in the appreciation of cultural diversity; almost all the strict Muslims also take the view that it is a good thing if society is made up of different cultures.

Trust in the government and police is relatively low in all Muslim groups. They also share the perception of a social climate that is less than positive and sometimes hostile. In some cases, this perception manifests itself in feelings of exclusion, lack of perceived acceptance and experiences of discrimination. These feelings are less pronounced in the secular group, apart from the experience of discrimination. The perceived acceptance is lowest among the selective and strict practicing Muslims. The feeling that the Dutch are too negative about Islam is also widespread in these groups. The selective Muslims have little social trust and enjoy relatively lower levels of good well-being. It may be that, compared with the more dogmatic groups such as the strict practicing and pious Muslims, they have more doubts about the exact role of religion in their lives. They also have the most negative views about the Netherlands and the Dutch. For example, they are the least satisfied with the Netherlands, feel the least at home there and would most often like to return to their country of origin. They are not the most religious group, but they are closer to Dutch society, which means they may be confronted with negative experiences and challenges more often than the stricter Muslims. The strict practicing Muslims move more in their own circles and may therefore be relatively less affected by the negativity of the host society. Only 20 percent of this group have frequent social contact with Dutch people without an immigrant background, whereas this percentage is 40 percent among secular Dutch Muslims (Huijnk, 2018).

3 Conclusion

For many Muslims in the Netherlands, as in other parts of the world, religion is as important as ever. A very high proportion of Turkish and Moroccan Dutch citizens regard themselves as Muslims. Religion plays an important role in the lives of virtually all Muslims, with the exception of the small group of secular Muslims. Nonetheless, this commonality masks a degree of diversity. Among other things, this plurality runs along ethnic dividing lines; Moroccan and Somali Muslims, for example, are more religious than Turkish and Surinamese Muslims in many respects, especially as regards practicing their religion. The Muslim typology also reveals religious diversity among Muslims in the Netherlands. Certain behaviours and views are more heavily concentrated within certain groups of Muslims, and those groups differ from each other in their attitudes and their positions in Dutch society. This pluralism is more marked among Turkish than Moroccan Muslims. A very high proportion of Moroccan Muslims fall into the two most religious categories, the pious and the strict practicing Muslims. The degree of orthodoxy of the strict or pious Muslims cannot be accurately determined based on the current data, but what our survey does show is that the majority of the strict and pious Muslims are open to cultural diversity and reject the use of violence. A high proportion of them also say they intend to vote. The majority of them therefore do not reject the constitutional democracy and associated institutions, as is the case for certain orthodox Salafist movements. A very small proportion of Turkish and Moroccan Muslims in our study regard themselves as Salafists. However, it is likely that not every Salafist will explicitly identify themselves as such—they see the way they practise their religion as the only true form of Islam, not as one of the schools within it (Roex et al., 2010).

3.1 Individualisation, Mild Secularisation and Religious Revitalisation

The way in which Muslims in the Netherlands experience their religion is changing, but the direction of travel is not uniform. There is a mild secularisation trend among Turkish Muslims in the Netherlands; the percentage who regard themselves as non-religious is small but has grown. This is not the case for the Moroccan Muslims. Religiosity is increasing among both Turkish and Moroccan Muslims. Among Turkish Muslims, for example, mosque attendance and praying have increased in both generations. For Moroccan Muslims, this applies for praying, eating halal and wearing the headscarf. Wearing of the headscarf has increased relatively strongly among the young, highly educated Moroccan Muslim women. These two (opposing) trends—secularisation and increased religious observance—are in line with the idea that faith in the Western, secular and pluralistic society is becoming more individualised. Islam is increasingly interpreted individually (De Koning, 2008; Noor, 2018; Wage-makers & De Koning, 2015). According to the individualization thesis, young people

go in search of their own meaning and interpretation of their faith and do not unquestioningly follow what the imam or their parents instruct them. Individualization then refers to the path that someone follows in their religious expression and the way in which they give form to their faith. For a small proportion this leads to secularisation, but for most of them, it means that religion actually becomes more important. It is therefore by no means the case that an individualistic approach to religion necessarily leads to ‘modern’ views or the abandoning of traditional practices—quite the reverse (De Koning, 2008). The individualization of religion also does not mean practicing religion in private; the way in which young Muslims observe their faith is often highly social in nature, tied in with social relationships and with online and other social networks (Beekers, 2015).

3.2 Almost No Increase in Secularisation Despite Rising Education Level and Generational Succession

A longer time spent living in the Netherlands, generational succession and rising education levels have to date had virtually no secularising effect, especially among Moroccan Dutch citizens. Although those with the lowest education level, consisting mainly of the older members of the first generation, are the strictest adherents to their religion, beyond this there are few differences across the different education levels among Moroccan Muslims in the Netherlands. There are clear signs that highly educated Dutch Turks are the most often non-religious, attend the mosque less often and identify the least with their religion. Members of the second generation are slightly less religious than the first generation in many respects. A slightly higher proportion are non-religious, pray less often, wear the headscarf less often and, in the Moroccan second generation, attend the mosque less often. Other research has also shown that young people aged 15 are less religious than their parents (De Hoon & Van Tubergen, 2014). On the other hand, adolescents with a Muslim background are substantially more religious than their Dutch native peers or adolescents with a different background (De Hoon & Van Tubergen, 2014; Güngör et al., 2011; Van Tubergen & Sindradottir, 2011). Muslims are much more successful in passing on their religion to their children than Christians (De Hoon & Van Tubergen, 2014). Religion is also very important for a substantial proportion of the second generation (see also Huijnk et al., 2015), and that importance is increasing.

People can give form to their faith in networks of like-minded people, who offer them support, confirm their faith and encourage them to strive for their true faith. Both Christians and Muslims use online communities to share information, form religious identities and participate in collective online rituals (Schrover & Roeland et al., 2010; Vermeulen, 2006). References are also made when discussing religious developments in the Christian community to a ‘hardcore’ effect (De Hart, 2014; De Hart & Van Houwelingen, 2018), whereby the exodus of more liberal youngsters means that those who remain are the most fervently religious young people. This

could play a limited role among Dutch Turks, where the percentage of non-religious people has increased slightly, but appears to apply less to Dutch Moroccans, where there has been no increase in those abandoning their religion.

3.3 Sense of Belonging of Muslims in a Secular, Individualised and Hostile Society

It is not unambiguously clear what the increasing religiosity means for the position of Muslims in Dutch society. Growing religiosity could have a positive impact on aspects such as mental health, prosocial behaviour, political participation or the ties with other members of the origin group, but at the same time appears to increase the sociocultural distance between Muslims and non-Muslims in Dutch society. The perception of (growing) cultural differences between Muslims and non-Muslims is reflected in their mutual perceptions, potentially reinforcing dividing lines, also politically, and group boundaries (Huijnk et al., 2015). Muslims are seen by a section of the non-Muslim community as ‘the ultimate other’ (De Koning, 2016). And although a Dutch identity and a Muslim identity need by no means be mutually exclusive, for many Muslims their religion appears to be the most important social identity (Huijnk et al., 2015). This means that, for many Muslims, feeling at home in the Netherlands is a complex matter. The secularised nature of Dutch society alone is enough to ensure that there is little understanding for the great importance that many Muslims attach to their faith. In addition, Islam is associated with traditional views on the role of women and homosexuals and with radical violence. In that sense, for many Muslims, this makes the Netherlands a fairly hostile environment. This appears to reinforce boundaries between groups and exacerbate negative mutual perceptions. At the same time, it generates its own dynamic: precisely because Muslims regard their faith as so important and at the same time feel, and are, members of Dutch society, they fight, including through the political arena, to secure an equivalent place for Islam and against the negative perceptions and unequal opportunities.

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