

**Citizenship experiences of young migrants**

**Optimism and disadvantages**

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**Citizenship experiences of young migrants**  
**Optimism and disadvantages**

Burgerschapservaringen van jonge migranten  
Optimisme en achterstand  
(met een samenvatting in het Nederlands)

Proefschrift

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# 1 Introduction

To the doctoral thesis

*Citizenship experiences of young migrants*

*Optimism and disadvantages*

## 1.1 Introduction

The position of young migrants in Dutch society is contested. Their integration has been the focus of public and scientific debate for many years because their weak positions in education and on the labour market are seen as signs of failed integration. Both first and second generations of migrant youngsters are relatively low educated people and school-dropout rates among them are high, as are unemployment levels (Ministry of Education, 2007; Statistics Netherlands, 2010). Twice as many migrant youngsters leave school before graduating than their native counterparts (6% and 3% respectively), and unemployment levels are also almost twice as high (20% and 9%) (NJI, 2009; Statistics Netherlands, 2010). And when migrant children finish primary education they already lag behind native Dutch children. Language skills among Moroccan and Turkish children are poor because many children in these groups do not speak Dutch at home. Similarly, in their later school careers migrant children face more problems than native children. Migrant children tend to end up in lower levels of secondary education and their educational career is often fairly protracted (Statistics Netherlands, 2010). The lower educational level of migrant youngsters makes their entry to the labour market more difficult, and their labour market position is generally weaker than that of native youngsters. In addition to a low educational level, there are several reasons that account for the disadvantaged position of migrant youth on the labour market: a low socio-economic background, language deficiency, lack of beneficial social networks, and discrimination (Regioplan Beleidsonderzoek, 2005; Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment, 2005; RWI, 2006a, 2006b; SER, 2007). Migrant youth tend to work more often on the flexible job market and often have a short-term contract and are therefore more vulnerable when the economy hits rough times.

The global crisis intensified the disadvantaged position of migrants in the Netherlands, and they were affected the most by the crisis with their unemployment levels increasing significantly (Statistics Netherlands, 2010). The globalisation trend and the emergence of knowledge or service economies has rendered their position even more fragile. Some authors believe that the transition to knowledge societies is leading to dualisation in Western societies where some groups are able to meet the requirements of a knowledge society: high levels of education, flexibility and employability, and other groups find it difficult to meet those requirements (Buchholz et al. 2009; Davidsson and Naczyk, 2009). The trends towards globalisation and knowledge economies mean that migrant youth are perceived as one of the at-risk groups since they have problems adjusting to these new demands. Of particular

concern are non-participants: youngsters without an education, who are unemployed, and who do not have a regular income. The fear is that these youngsters will face long-term unemployment and end up marginalised (Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment, 2007).

However, a clear picture of migrant youngsters in the Netherlands can only be obtained by taking a more nuanced approach to this problematic image because, in fact, the second generation are taking big steps forward. The gap between native and migrant youngsters in educational level decreased in recent years and today there are more second generation migrant youngsters in higher levels of education, and drop-out rates are lower than in the past (Statistics Netherlands, 2010). It should also be observed that there are differences between different migrant groups. For example, of the main migrant groups in the Netherlands, Surinamese youngsters attend higher education the most and their educational level is to-day on a par with that of Dutch native youngsters. Moreover, boys and girls also perform differently: second generation migrant girls have improved their situation in education remarkably. Migrant girls used to lag behind but now they are more highly educated than migrant boys: they are to be found more frequently in higher education, and they do not often leave school before graduating (Statistics Netherlands, 2010; SCP, 2009).

Some scholars speak of polarisation in and between migrant groups in the Netherlands, with some migrants doing better than others when it comes to integrating into Dutch society (Crul and Doornik, 2003; Crul and Heering, 2008; de Graaf and van Zenderen, 2009). However, the 'well-integrated' group of migrants also face a number of problems. For example, higher educated second generation youngsters feel more cultural distance than first generation migrants and lower educated second generation migrants. This group also reports experiencing as much discrimination as low integrated migrants. This phenomenon is referred to as the integration paradox (Entzinger and Dourleijn, 2008; Tolsma, Lubbers and Gijsberts, 2011). Migrant youngsters are better integrated today, but society does, in fact, place higher demands on integration which reinforces the feeling of rejection among minority youth (Tolsma, Lubbers and Gijsberts, 2011).

These concerns about the integration process of many young migrants in the Netherlands should be placed in the wider context of a society in which public debate and social policies on migration and integration have changed drastically. Discourses in the 1980s and 1990s focused more on overcoming structural shortcomings, whereas the focus today is more ethnic and cultural in nature and migrants' culture and difficulties adjusting to Dutch norms and values are perceived as barriers to integration. In line with this, young migrant dropouts and unemployed youth are portrayed as 'youth at risk', unwilling or incapable of

participating in Dutch society. In this light, dropping out of school and unemployment are seen as signs of failing to integrate. And failed integration was even publically addressed in the Netherlands in 2000 (Scheffer, 2000).

Requirements for participation have become more demanding. The knowledge and service economy requires highly educated and skilled citizens. Furthermore, integration demands have also become much stricter. The integration of young migrants is affected by this state of affairs. Although their position is still disadvantaged compared with native Dutch youngsters, the second generation is making some progress. However, this progress is more or less ignored by public debate and integration is perceived as having failed, and nowadays the norm for being integrated is assimilation. All this makes the situation for young migrants in the Netherlands more complex. Young migrants are increasingly integrating better, but society is demanding much more of them in order to integrate. There is already a considerable body of knowledge about the structural integration of young migrants and data are widely available. However, scientific studies often forget to look at the experiences of young migrants themselves. This study examines how young migrants are affected in their participation in education and in the labour market, both important measures for structural integration in the host society. This study takes a broad perspective, and includes factors on different levels in order to reach a holistic and rounded understanding of young migrants' participation. We examine the role of discrimination, social networks, gender and social policy, putting the main focus on the experiences of young migrants themselves.

### ***1.1.1 Non-western migrant youth in the Netherlands***

The term 'young migrant' refers in this thesis to the children of immigrants, these children are in most cases second generation migrants, but can also belong to the first generation when they are born abroad. The young migrants we are referring to are categorized by official institutions in the Netherlands as non-western allochthonous. You are allochthonous in the Netherlands when at least one of your parents was born abroad. Non-western refers to migrants originating from Turkey, Africa, Latin America and Asia, with the exception of Japan and Indonesia (Statistics Netherlands, 2010). Allochthones from Japan and from Indonesia are included for social-economic and social-cultural reasons. Most of them are born in Indonesia when it was still a Dutch colony or are employees (and their families) of Japanese companies (Statistics Netherlands, 2011). The term *non-western* is used in the Netherlands to define groups of the most visible migrants, and those groups of migrants with the lowest socio-economic

position in the Netherlands. The four largest non-western allochthonous groups in the Netherlands are the Turkish, Surinamese, Moroccan and Antillean. The migrant youngsters that participate in this study are mostly originating from these four migrant groups. Turks and Moroccans arrived in the Netherlands in the 1960s and 1970s as guest workers. People with a Surinamese or Antillean background arrived in the Netherlands as a result of colonial ties with the Netherlands. Today about half the people in the non-western migrant group are the children of migrants; they were born in the Netherlands and are part of the second generation (Statistics Netherlands, 2010). Although not all migrant children were born in the Netherlands, what they have in common is that they all underwent (part of) their education in the Netherlands. Migrant children, compared with Dutch native children, have a disadvantaged position. Their families often have a low socio-economic background, which is a strong predictor for low educational outcomes. However, the second generation is showing some progress and have a better socio-economic position than their parents. Furthermore, migrant youngsters tend to live in migrant neighbourhoods where many families with low socio-economic resources are located. More migrant children also often grow up in single parent families and in poor housing (Netherlands Statistics, 2010).

Labeling the youngsters that participate in this study as one group of ‘migrant youth’ has some clear disadvantages. Firstly, the categorization includes every young person of whom at least one parent was born abroad. But a young person born in the Netherlands, having the Dutch nationality might be categorized as ‘migrant’, while in reality this person could better be categorized as ‘native’ Dutch. The group ‘young migrants’ is thus not always an easily identifiable group. This issue is discussed more thoroughly in chapter 5. Secondly, there exist many differences between migrant groups in terms of culture and socio-economic situation. Thirdly, also within migrant groups there are clear differences (for example between genders and generations). Therefore we will always be attentive when differences are at stake and always make clear when differences are expected and found in this study.

Nevertheless, we decide to use the formulation ‘migrant youth’, to define the group of youngsters with a migrant background that are under study in this thesis. We are aware of the disadvantages, but using this categorization has also clear benefits. This categorization is being used by the official institutions in the Netherlands and is broadly used in policy but also research. By using the same categorization it is possible to place our results in the national context and to use and compare with national statistics and scientific publications on this group. Furthermore, using the categorization ‘migrant youth’ has another benefit; it makes it

possible to compare the situation of migrant youth with native youth. Furthermore it makes it also possible to draw conclusions about the group ‘young migrants’. Besides many differences there also exist commonalities between non-western migrant groups in the Netherlands, for example school dropout and unemployment rates are higher for this group than for native youth.

### ***1.1.2. Research questions***

This study analyses the citizenship experiences of young non-western migrants in the Netherlands. Young migrants are in a disadvantaged position in education and in the labour market and this leads to concerns about their integration in Dutch society. The focus of this study is on the participation of migrant youngsters in education, in which an analysis of the experiences and perspectives on education and future labour market participation of migrant youngsters themselves are the central objectives. The expectation is that the experiences of young migrants are influenced by their disadvantaged socio-economic background, social networks, practices of exclusion, the harsh policy climate, and the negative public debate about migrants in Dutch society. This study also aims to explain the pronounced gender differences that can be observed: migrant girls outperform migrant boys in education, but in comparison they are less active in the labour market. It is expected that migrant girls encounter different supportive and impeding factors for their participation in education and on the labour market. This study also aims to explain how young migrants’ social networks influence participation. Finally, this is followed by a discussion of how social policy and projects that aim to reinforce successful participation of young migrants actually influence the experiences of young migrants in school and work. Central to this discussion is the question as to which policy initiatives can be defined as *good practices* and which may have unintended negative effects for the participation of young migrants, i.e. *bad practices*. This study is unique in the sense that the experiences of the migrant youngsters themselves are investigated. This was done by conducting a mixed-method study, in which extensive qualitative and quantitative data were collected. Furthermore, this is a practice-based study, which means the study is relevant from scientific and from social debate perspectives. The aim of the study as outlined above can be summarised in the following central research question:

*What are the experiences of young migrants concerning their participation in education, and what are their perspectives on their future labour market prospects, and how are they supported or hindered?*

Sub-research questions:

1. *What are the experiences of young migrants in education?*
2. *What are the perspectives of the youngsters themselves on future opportunities?*
3. *What are the experiences with discrimination and how do youngsters think discrimination will influence their future opportunities?*
4. *What are the differences in experiences between migrant boys and girls?*
5. *What is the role of a supportive social network in participation in education and on future perspectives?*
6. *What is the role of social policies and projects to reinforce the successful participation of young migrants in education and in the labour market?*

## **1.2 Theoretical framework**

The research questions are answered by using a framework that combines a number of pertinent theories. Theories of migrant participation and acculturation are first discussed. The insights from these theories will help describe the participation and integration processes of young migrants in the Netherlands. The experiences of migrant youngsters in education are then analysed. Education is crucial to the integration of young migrants and the children of migrants. The immigrant optimism theory and the theory of the dual frame of reference explain the optimistic stance of migrants towards education and their future career. This is followed by a discussion of the role played by social networks. It is argued that positive relations with and support from parents and siblings have a positive effect on the school experiences of young migrants. Gendered experiences are explained by referring to theories on traditional culture and gender inequality. Furthermore, discrimination has a negative impact on experiences in school. Negative outcomes at school are explained by theories of negative social mirroring and adjusting to what is referred to as an oppositional culture. This is followed by a discussion on the public discourse on migrants in the Netherlands in order to arrive at a context in which the experiences of young migrants must be placed, and a discussion of how public discourse affects the experiences of young migrants. Finally, social policies that influence the participation of young migrants are considered, together with theories of new public management and street-level bureaucracy, to arrive at a framework for how social policies might, and in some cases even unintentionally, have had consequences for migrant youth.

### ***1.2.1 Migrants and citizenship***

Although a large proportion (20%) of Dutch citizens has a migrant background, a clear division is made between native Dutch citizens and first and second generation citizens with a migrant background (Alba, 2005). Citizenship entails a tension between inclusion and exclusion, and allows us to analyze the extent to which migrants and their descendants are incorporated into receiving societies. Usually, citizenship is defined as a form of membership in a political and geographical community. Globalisation and immigration challenge simple understandings of citizenship as state-centered and state-controlled (Bloemraad et al., 2008), since practices of immigrants change the notion of citizenship within national borders, and place those borders into question (Bloemraad et al., 2008). Bloemraad and colleagues (2008) discuss four dimensions of citizenship that are originating in the work of T.H. Marshall (1950): legal status, rights, participation, and a sense of belonging. Second generation migrants in the Netherlands have a legal status, they have Dutch nationality which comes with the mutual relationship between state and individual and includes all the rights and obligations for citizen and state. However, this thesis will focus on the other two aspects of citizenship - participation and a sense of belonging, because these are more difficult for migrants to achieve. For example, language deficit complicates educational opportunities, discriminatory practices may hamper entry to the labour market, and the harsh and negative dominant discourse currently prevailing in the Netherlands may obstruct any feelings of belonging for many migrants in the country. Although all citizens have the same rights and duties and are all considered full members of society, migrants are not always perceived as such. Participation is seen as both a right and an obligation, and the second generation is expected to be even more integrated and to participate since they were actually born in their country of residence. According to Schinkel (2008) citizenship is nowadays in the integration discourse of the Netherlands, an equivalent for integration. In his work he discusses that nowadays in the Netherlands 'active' citizenship is expected from citizens. This 'active' citizenship refers not to the formal side of citizenship, which used to be the norm for migrants, but to the moral side of it, in which the citizen is expected to behave according to the existing Dutch norms and values, and to actively participate. This implies an individualisation of the integration notion, in which migrants are held responsible for their own integration and to make sure they 'belong' to Dutch society. In this way citizenship is problematised, since the citizenship of formal citizens, who are believed to lack proper integration, is doubted (Schinkel, 2008).

This means that migrant youngsters themselves are blamed for their low participation levels in higher education and the labour market, politics and society - and migrant youngsters are obliged to improve their situation in order to be good citizens. Migrant participation is nowadays more often defined as assimilation, in the sense that migrants are expected (in one or more generations) to relinquish their former languages, identities, cultural habits and loyalties and integrate fully in the host society. However, as some scholars have shown, integration does not always happen in this way. For example, the segmented assimilation theory demonstrates that a number of different paths can be taken: the path of traditional assimilation, in which migrants assimilate into the white middle classes; the path in which migrants retain ethnic ties and use their cultural capital to achieve upward mobility; and the last path of downward assimilation into an urbanised ethnic underclass with few economic prospects (Bloemraad et al., 2008; Portes and Zhou, 1993; Zhou, 1999).

### ***1.2.2 The acculturation of immigrant groups***

What classical theories of assimilation and acculturation have in common is that over time they expect immigrant groups to adapt to the culture and society of the dominant majority population. Merton M. Gordon (1961, 1964) was one of the first to theorise the assimilation process of immigrants and ethnic minority groups. He views acculturation as a uni-linear process in which immigrants or minorities are gradually assimilated into the dominant culture. He made a distinction between cultural assimilation and structural assimilation. The former refers to absorbing the cultural patterns of the host society. Structural assimilation refers to the entry of immigrants and their offspring into social cliques, organisations, institutional activities and general civic life of the receiving society, in which intermarriage is seen as the ultimate form of structural assimilation (Gordon, 1961).

Theories on the process of assimilation or integration of migrant groups have, over time, been further developed by other scholars. One scholar is John W. Berry (Berry, 1997; Berry et al., 2006) who formulated four acculturation strategies. The first is *assimilation* in which minorities do not wish to maintain their cultural identity and seek daily interaction with other cultures. The second strategy is *integration* in which minorities wish to maintain, to some extent, their cultural identity, but also seek daily interaction with others. *Separation* is the third strategy, and here minorities prefer to maintain their cultural identity and do not wish to interact with other cultures. And lastly, there is *marginalisation* in which minorities do not wish to maintain their cultural identity, but neither do they interact with others. The lack of

interaction in the latter strategy is often the result of exclusion practices or discrimination. The strategy that is adopted is not always a matter of choice: a minority may wish to integrate, but when society is not open or tolerant towards cultural diversity, separation may be the outcome. Similarly, when a minority wishes to assimilate but experiences exclusion and discrimination, marginalisation may result. Mutual accommodation is essential if integration is to succeed, so that culturally different people live together in one single society (Berry, 1997). The chosen acculturation strategy may also change - national policies influence the path minorities decide to take, and over time different strategies can be explored. Berry associates education with positive adaptation. Education is not only a personal protective resource, but also leads to high status, a good income, and support networks. Furthermore, education serves as pre-acculturation in language, history, and the values and norms of the new culture (Berry, 1997).

In 2006 Berry and colleagues studied the acculturation of migrant youth in order to examine whether acculturation processes are the same, or different from those of adult migrants. The children of migrants may experience intense acculturative and intergeneration conflicts when growing up (Portes, 1994). Berry et al. (2006) found that most migrant youngsters, like adult migrants, fit in the integration profile. However, a substantial group of youngsters fitted in the ethnic profile: these youngsters are primarily oriented towards their own ethnic groups and do not particularly look for involvement in the host society (Berry, et al. 2006). In addition, a group similar in size could be defined as diffused youngsters without any clear orientation. The group of youngsters fitting in the national profile was the smallest, and therefore serves as an indication that assimilation is the least favoured adaptation strategy among youngsters. The difference between adult and adolescent migrants is that youngsters have a wide range of diffuse and ethnic profiles, and low national orientation. The best adaptation was found in the group in the integration profile who displayed the best psychological and socio-economic adaptation. In this same study a link was found between perceived discrimination and an individual's orientation: when an individual perceives more discrimination, that individual is more likely to reject involvement with the national society and be more oriented towards his or her own group. Inversely, when an individual perceives less discrimination or no discrimination at all, this person is more likely to belong to the integration profile or to a lesser extent to the national profile.

It might be expected that migrant youth in the Netherlands are in general also in favour of the integration profile. However, public discourse in the Netherlands changed in recent decades from a multicultural perspective to a more assimilationist perspective. This

clash between perspectives on migrant integration could turn out to be a problem as youngsters may perceive the demand for assimilation as rejection, and instead adapt to the ethnic profile which results in the separation strategy in which the youngsters are oriented towards their own ethnic group and have little interaction with the host society.

### ***1.2.3 Segmented assimilation***

Scholars who have studied the segmented assimilation of migrant youngsters are Portes and Zhou (1993). Their segmented assimilation theory is similar to Berry's acculturation theory in the sense that adaptation to the host society is not always in a straight line directly into the dominant white middle classes. According to Portes and Zhou (1993), it is also possible that second generation migrants end up marginalised. According to the segmented assimilation theory, there are different paths of assimilation: acculturation and integration in the white middle classes; assimilation in the underclass in the direction of constant poverty, or thirdly, upward mobility all the while preserving immigrant community values and tight solidarity (Portes and Zhou, 1993; Portes et al., 2005). Most studies on segmented assimilation are American and may not necessarily apply to the European context (Crul and Vermeulen, 2003). Few researchers have indeed applied the theory to the European context and some argue that the path of downward mobility is non-existent or is at least different in Europe (Heath et al., 2008; Crul and Schneider, 2010). Many migrants entered European societies at the bottom, and there is no other way but up. However, the path of stagnation might also be possible, with limited opportunities for social mobility among second generation migrants.

Scholars argue that segmented outcomes can also be found in Europe, but mechanisms and institutional settings differ (Crul and Schneider, 2010). In Europe and also in the Netherlands, the children of migrants do, generally speaking, perform better in the education system and on the labour market, and show signs of upward mobility (Crul and Heering, 2008; de Graaf and van Zenderen, 2009; Thomson and Crul, 2007). However, it is clear that there is also a group in European societies for whom marginalisation is also a possibility. This group of young migrants tends to be poorly educated, unemployed, and lack the social resources to overcome institutional barriers such as discrimination.

It will be clear from the above debate on the theory of the acculturation of migrant youngsters that the integration processes of migrant youngsters are very diverse as they are influenced by several factors on different levels: individual, network, and societal. It is beyond the scope of this study to examine all the interactions and processes present in society today

that are linked in one way or another to the participation of young migrants. This study therefore focuses on the main factors that affect the experiences of young migrants: the influence exerted by social networks, discrimination, and social policy. In addition, gender differences are examined in order to compare the experiences of migrant boys and migrant girls. The following sections outline the theories that explain how these factors exert their influence.

#### ***1.2.4 Social networks and social support***

Structural integration in terms of education is positively related to adaption to the host society (Berry, 1997; Tolsma et al. 2011; Van Geel and Vedder, 2011). Furthermore, education is seen as the most important means to achieve upward mobility. How young migrants fare in school is a predictor of future socio-economic outcomes. Expectations and experiences concerning the education or professional careers of young migrants are influenced by their social networks and in particular by their parents and siblings. Compared with native youngsters, migrant youngsters may have more ambitious expectations for their educational and occupational futures. The immigrant optimism hypothesis states that migrant youngsters are more motivated to succeed in school because their parents have high expectations for their children (Andriessen, Phalet and Lens, 2006; Bankston and Zhou, 2002; Kao and Tienda, 1995). Migrants have a *dual frame of reference*; they compare the situation in the country of origin with their situation in the host country and believe that their children should take advantage of the opportunities for education and a professional career on offer in the host country (Ogbu and Simons, 1998). One reason to migrate is for the children to have a better future and migrant parents have a strong wish for their children to be upwardly mobile. This wish is transferred to their children, and when compared with native youngsters, migrant children have higher ambitions for their educational and occupational careers (Feliciano and Rumbaut, 2005). When it comes to meeting expectations, migrant girls displayed more success than migrant boys (Feliciano and Rumbaut, 2005). We expect the same to apply to migrant parents and their children in the Netherlands whose situation in their country of origin was disadvantaged. The opportunities in terms of education and labour market participation are much better in the Netherlands and migrant parents may hope their children will make the most of these opportunities.

Support from family members proved to be strong motivation for young migrants to be and stay in school. Having a supportive family with positive parent-child interactions has a

significant impact on the educational achievements of migrant youngsters (Rumbaut, 2000). In those cases where parents are low educated, not proficient in the dominant language and unfamiliar with the school system in the host country, older brothers and sisters who do have a command of the language and are familiar with the school system, may take over the task from the parents and can be supportive actors for the younger children in the family (Stanton-Salazar, 2001; Valenzuela, 1999). Older siblings can be key figures in offering emotional, social and institutional support and can act as inspiring role models for their younger brothers and sisters. Since migrant parents in the Netherlands are often low educated and unfamiliar with the Dutch language and school system, the expectation is that older brothers and sisters are important supportive actors and role models for migrant youngsters.

### ***1.2.5 Traditional views***

The experiences of migrant youth may be gendered because of the traditional gender roles present in migrant or ethnic cultures. More than migrant boys, migrant girls are confronted with traditional gender roles that obstruct their participation in education and on the labour market (Crul and Doomernik, 2003; Crul and Vermeulen, 2003). Parents may also have lower expectations for their daughters' educational outcomes. For example, the Turkish community did not previously give much priority to the education of girls, expecting girls to get married and be stay-at-home mothers (Crul and Doomernik, 2003). Nowadays their stance towards the education of girls is less conservative, but traditional views are still fairly widespread (Coenen, 2001). However, migrant girls also benefit from traditional gender roles at home. Parents supervise and control their daughters rather strictly and expect their daughters to behave in the correct manner. Girls often have less freedom than boys and this gives them the opportunity to focus more on their schoolwork. This pushes girls, more so than boys, toward academic performance (Bankston and Zhou, 2002; Feliciano and Rumbaut, 2005; Qin-Hilliard, 2003).

Another motivation for girls to succeed in school is to escape from gender inequality. Migrant families often come from disadvantaged situations, from developing countries where traditional culture strongly influences gender roles, and where women have few opportunities for an education. In many migrant families the mother is very low educated, uneducated or illiterate. Some scholars therefore applied the dual frame of reference to girls specifically: they compare their situation with the situation in their country of origin, but they also compare themselves with their mothers and feel they have to make the most of the opportunities their

mothers never had (Lee, 2006, 2007; Lopez, 2002, 2003). Migrant mothers therefore strongly motivate and encourage their daughters to complete their education. In the Netherlands the same line of thought is applicable to non-western migrant girls, particularly Turkish and Moroccan girls, whose mothers barely received any education at all, belong to the lowest income groups, and whose participation rates on the labour market are very low. It is therefore expected that migrant girls in the Netherlands are highly motivated to get an education. Traditional views on gender roles are also still expected to be found in non-western migrant groups in the Netherlands, and the belief is that Moroccan and Turkish girls in particular are supervised more and are therefore more dedicated to their schoolwork. However, it is also thought that traditional views impede participation in school and on the labour market, for example when girls have care responsibilities or get married young.

### ***1.2.6 Negative social mirroring and oppositional culture***

Several studies mentioned how negative experiences in society at large have an effect on school experiences (Andriessen et al., 2006; Lee, 2007; Schmid, 2001; Suárez-Orozco and Qin-Hilliard, 2004; Zhou, 1997). For example, perceived discrimination has proven to have a detrimental impact on how migrant youngsters adjust to school (Andriessen et al., 2006; Liebkind, Jasinskaja-Lahti and Solheim, 2004). Migrant youngsters are challenged to navigate between achieved identities and assigned identities. When assigned identities from society become one's own identity, one can speak of 'negative social mirroring'. Different sources in society, such as teachers, politicians and the media may perpetuate negative stereotypes and reflect those images to migrant youth in the social mirror. This negative social mirroring affects the self-esteem of young migrants. Social mirroring is highly gendered: for example, Latino boys in the US are often stereotyped as gang members and as violent, while the image of their female counterparts is that of the domestic worker (Suárez-Orozco and Baolian-Qin, 2006). If youngsters feel roads are blocked and upward mobility is not possible because of, for instance, discrimination, they are liable to develop a negative stance towards education. This is referred to as oppositional culture: youngsters feel badly treated by society and feel excluded and discriminated against, and as a response they develop a negative attitude towards education and shy away from it. Migrant youngsters feel that the rewards of education are not as high for them as for the dominant group in society, and instead they embrace a collective culture opposed to that of the dominant group (Ogbu and Simons, 1998). Boys more than girls have to cope with negative stereotypes and therefore feel mistreated by society and

discriminated against and show signs of an ‘oppositional culture’ (Suárez-Orozco, 2000; Suárez-Orozco and Qin-Hilliard, 2004). Oppositional culture theory gained prominence in social science over a number of years, however scholars such as Downey (2008) question the theory because the optimism and pro-school attitudes of black students in the US do not reflect the idea that minorities reject education. Ogbu (1994) states that minorities who migrated voluntarily are less prone to adapt to an oppositional culture than involuntary minorities, as for example African-Americans in the US. It is therefore questionable whether an oppositional culture is to be found among migrant groups in the Netherlands, since most of them have a history of voluntary migration. However, there are signs that young migrants encounter feelings of exclusion and disillusion, and discrimination is experienced by a large section of the migrant population (SCP, 2010). Furthermore, migrant boys perform worse than migrant girls in the Dutch education system, and they also tend to adopt a street culture that is incompatible with school culture (de Jong, 2007; Werdmölder, 2005). It is expected that some young migrants in the Netherlands experience discrimination and feelings of exclusion. These youngsters might feel the roads towards upward mobility and a successful career are blocked, and therefore they shy away from education or show signs of adjusting to an oppositional culture.

### ***1.2.7 Public opinion and policies on migration and integration***

Public opinion towards migrants and integration has changed considerably in the past few decades. From a country famed for its tolerance and multicultural approach towards the integration of migrants, the Netherlands has become a nation in which migrant culture is seen as an obstacle to integration, and full assimilation is demanded of our migrant fellow citizens. This attitude was reinforced by several events: terrorist attacks, the events of 9/11, and the murders of a right-wing populist Dutch politician, and a Dutch filmmaker. In particular, attitudes toward Muslims and the Islamic religion have become more negative (SCP, 2011). Central to the public debate is the concept of a ‘realistic’ approach to the multicultural society (Prins 2002, 2004; Prins and Saharso 2008). According to Prins (2002, 2004, 2008), the genre of ‘new realism’ gained the upper hand in the debate. There are five different aspects to this genre. Firstly, new realism emphasises listening to ordinary people (low income, working class). Secondly, new realists are not afraid of facing the truth - they are frank and do not mind breaking taboos. Thirdly, new realism opposes the progressive elite, who are perceived as being too politically correct, with lax toleration policies. New realism advocates a reaffirmation

of liberal western values. Fourthly, new realists are in favour of reaffirming a national identity. And finally, the discourse of new realism is highly gendered, and it addresses the issue of gender inequality in foreign cultures.

Similarly, policies on immigration and integration changed in the same direction. Initial integration policies fitted the pillarized system in which Dutch society was divided along religious lines. These first policies advocated that migrants maintain their own ethnic culture. Maintaining a migrant culture was even expected to facilitate integration in Dutch society (Prins and Saharso, 2008). In the period after 1994, socio-economic integration in education and the labour market was given precedence over integration while maintaining ethnic identity. In 1999 the minister of Urban Policy and Integration introduced a Bill in which citizenship was explained as being *self reliable* and *defensible* in our democratic society. Migrants themselves were held responsible for successfully integrating into Dutch society. The year 2002 saw a turning point: following a stance of diminished attention for maintaining culture, culture was now seen as an obstacle to integration. From then on migrants were expected to assimilate fully, as it was believed that their own culture undermined social cohesion and national identity. The Netherlands changed in a very short space of time from a multicultural nation to a nation in which assimilation was required of migrants, and migrants themselves were held responsible if they failed to integrate (Entzinger, 2006). This drastic change meant that the position and stance on migrants in Dutch society is now rather harsh. It is even argued whether today's approach to integration issues actually undermines the integration of migrants; as Entzinger (2006) states: *'forcing "them" to be like "us" is not only counterproductive, but also provokes re-ethnisation, as can be observed in the Netherlands today.'* The changing attitude in the public debate together with policies on migration and integration becoming stricter may severely influence the feeling of belonging among migrant citizens in Dutch society.

### ***1.2.8 Globalisation and activation***

The situation of young migrants is not only influenced by policies on migration and integration but also by other social policies such as social security, education and labour market policies. These policies are heavily influenced by globalisation trends and the emergence of knowledge or service economies. Some authors argue that globalisation trends and activation lead to dualisation and increasing social inequality in Western societies (Buchholz et al. 2009; Davidsson and Naczyk, 2009). Dualisation implies that some groups are able to meet the demands of the new knowledge societies, but other groups, particularly lower

educated groups which include migrant populations, are not. Lower educated groups are affected by the transformation into knowledge economies because they have difficulty complying with the demands of higher qualifications, flexibility and self responsibility. In short, the demands of employability can therefore make the situation of (young) migrants in the Netherlands more fragile.

Be this as it may, in 2000 the European Union came up with the Lisbon Agenda, the aims of which are to make Europe the most competitive and dynamic knowledge economy (European Council, 2000) in the world. Some of the agenda's goals involve getting more people into higher education, working to decrease school-dropout levels, and higher levels of labour market participation for younger people, women, and the older population. These goals were to be achieved through active labour market policies and lifelong learning.

Policies in the Netherlands are in line with European policies and have a strong activating character, already developed before 2000 (de Graaf and van Berkel, 2011). The transition to an active welfare state was accompanied by several forms of new governance, implying a shift from state bureaucracy to a diversity of operational policies regarding policy delivery. At least four forms of new governance can be discerned (van Berkel, de Graaf, Sirovatka, 2011). The first principle of new governance entails decentralizing social policies to local government and multiple local stakeholders responsible for providing social services. The second principle is the introduction of market mechanisms in social policies. Private reintegration companies were set up in order to make activation services more efficient and of better quality (Lindsay and McQuaid, 2009; Struyven and Steurs, 2002; Van Berkel and van der Aa, 2005). A third important principle of new governance is interagency cooperation. One-stop shops have been introduced at local level to reinforce cooperation between local stakeholders, such as organisations responsible for income provision and activation. These partnerships not only involve 'old' partners, but also 'new' commercial partners. The fourth principle is the introduction of forms of new public management, giving rise to private sector management techniques in the public sector. These techniques are strongly oriented towards performance criteria (targets) and on accounting for them.

In the Netherlands these new governance principles have been implemented in a fairly advanced stage, and have created a strong emphasis on activation policies for the labour market and social security (Daly, 2003; Van Berkel and Borghi, 2008; Lindsay and McQuaid, 2009; Van Berkel, de Graaf and Sirovátka, 2011). The reforms continue to bring unemployment insurance, social assistance, sheltered work and disability insurance into one framework (Employment Capacity Act (*Wet Werken naar Vermogen*)), which underscores the

tendency towards decentralisation and interagency cooperation, steered by national targets and accounting regulations. In this new activation constellation, professional front-office workers or ‘street-level bureaucrats’, have an element of discretion and can influence policy execution (Evans and Harris, 2004; Lipsky, 1980; Winter, 2002, 2003). Street-level bureaucracy theory consists of two key concepts: discretion and coping strategies. Discretion is the relative freedom enjoyed by professionals to decide the kind of service given to a client. Street-level bureaucrats may also use their discretion to adopt coping strategies, which are informal practices to handle complex work situations and pressure. Two examples of coping strategies in social services are ‘creaming’ and ‘parking’. Creaming is when organisations or professionals only admit ‘workable’ clients to their programmes in order to meet their placement targets (Struyven and Steurs, 2002; Van Berkel and van der Aa, 2005; Winter, 2003). The term ‘parking’ is used where difficult clients are ‘parked’ rather than given help (Van Berkel and van der Aa, 2005).

Governance reforms also have an impact on the execution of policies concerning young migrants, such as policies to reintegrate school dropouts and unemployed youngsters. For example, professionals now cooperate in one service for youngsters under 27, and their remit is to steer youngsters towards education or work training facilities. However, when executing this task professionals can, to some extent, work in accordance with their own preferences within the targets and performance indicators that are set at national level. The present study examines how new governance principles are implemented in practice, and looks at the effects they have. We expect that social policies and their execution will have (unintended) consequences for the target groups, in this case for young migrants in Dutch society.

## **1.3 Method**

### ***1.3.1 Approach***

The goal of this study is to interpret and when possible to explain the experiences of participation of young migrants. The research questions of this study could best be answered using a mixed method approach which combines quantitative and qualitative research methods (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004). The qualitative part of this study is based on an interpretative perspective which focuses on how people give meaning to their experiences (‘t Hart, 1998). This part of the study aims at answering *why* questions. The quantitative data

collection is based on a descriptive and empirical analytical perspective, and has the purpose to describe and quantify and to answer questions like: how many youngsters experience discrimination, how positive are youngsters about their school life, and how often do youngsters experience discrimination (t Hart e.a., 1998).

Mixed method research makes it possible to mix and match design components that have the best chance of answering specific research questions. A mixed method research design is a logical and practical alternative in which research methods should follow research questions. It is a method that has several benefits over single method approaches. Combining quantitative and qualitative methods complements the strengths, and overcomes the weaknesses, of both approaches. Furthermore, a mixed method improves the generalisation of the outcomes and improves confidence levels. There are five purposes or rationales for conducting mixed method research (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004). The first is *triangulation*, by seeking convergence and corroboration between the results of different methods studying the same social incident. The second is *complementarity*, seeking elaboration, enhancement illustration and clarification of the results from one method with results from the other method. Thirdly, *initiation*, discovering paradoxes and contradictions that lead to a re-framing of the research question. Fourthly, *development*, using the results from one method to help inform the other method. Finally, *expansion*, seeking to expand the breadth and range of research by using different methods for different inquiry components. This study lent itself to a mixed method approach because in addition to a generalisation of quantitative results (e.g. discrimination or school satisfaction) we were looking for the perspectives and experiences of the respondents. For example, discrimination was quantitatively measured in the survey, but we also asked for the youngsters' perspectives on discrimination in in-depth interviews. This enabled us to obtain a holistic and rounded understanding of youngsters' experiences with discrimination (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004).

### ***1.3.2 Target groups***

The target group of this study consists of migrant youngsters in the Netherlands between 13 and 27 years of age. Our respondents and informants have a variety of ethnic backgrounds, but most are from Turkish, Moroccan, Surinamese or Antillean backgrounds. Furthermore, with a view to making a comparative analysis, our survey also consists of a large group of native Dutch youngsters. A second target group in this study is the group of professionals, consisting of teachers, youth workers, project coordinators and policymakers, who were taking

part in the qualitative part of the study. For the evaluation of the reintegration field in the city of Utrecht we selected key informants from the most relevant projects concerned with the reintegration of dropouts in this city. The qualitative part consisted of observations, in-depth interviews and focus groups with native and migrant youth and professionals. The total number of persons interviewed for this study is 236 (Case-studies 179 respondents, case-study reintegration field Utrecht 28 respondents, focus groups 23 respondents, interviews teachers 6 respondents).

The respondents for the survey consist of native Dutch and migrant youngsters in secondary vocational education and were selected by cluster sampling. Our sample is a 'cluster' sample where the population is concentrated in a natural cluster i.e. school. The schools are all located in deprived urban neighbourhoods, where the majority of the population comprises migrant youngsters with various backgrounds. The average response rate was 60% and the final sample consists of 608 students. The sample consists of 164 natives (27%) and 444 young migrants (73%) and both genders are roughly equally represented (54% girls, 46% boys). The informants for the in-depth interviews and focus groups were so called convenience samples (evaluated for the appropriateness of fit).

### ***1.3.3 Data collection***

The data for this study were collected for the comparative European research projects TRESEGY (2006-2009) and PROFACITY (2008-2011). The EU research project TRESEGY was a sixth framework programme entitled: 'Factors of economic, social and cultural in- and exclusion of second-generation migrants in Europe', and ran from June 2006 through May 2009. PROFACITY was an EU research project in the seventh framework programme which ran from November 2008 through October 2011, and focused on 'profane citizenship', studying citizenship practices of and alternatives for marginalised groups in Europe. For this present study the data from the Dutch context were used, only in chapter 6 we refer to the international results of TRESEGY.

The data collection of this study started with ethnographic fieldwork to collect qualitative data at secondary vocational schools and at projects (2007/2008). Traditionally the ethnography is a method originating from cultural anthropologist research. Nowadays ethnography is also used in other social science disciplines like, education research, sociology and psychology (Berg, 2009; Boeije, 2010; 't Hart e.a., 1998). The fieldwork contains several

methods of data collection. The benefit of the use of different methods is triangulation of data sources.

The ethnographic fieldwork of this study involved case studies, (participant) observation, and in-depth interviews in a school (secondary vocational education) and other settings -the street, community centres and projects for young people in the Netherlands. In this phase 14 case-studies were realised in the neighbourhoods *Overvecht* and *Kanaleneiland*, two neighbourhoods in the city of Utrecht where the population is overrepresented by migrant inhabitants. In-depth, semi structured, open interviews were held with a total of 179 respondents, including youngsters and professionals working with young people. The chosen qualitative methods for this study (observations, interviews and focus groups) allow the researcher to get closer to the phenomenon being studied and to examine the experiences and meanings of the informants in their daily life. During the fieldwork the researchers performed participant observations. Participant observations give the researcher the opportunity to get an 'insiders' perspective on the phenomenon being studied. In this study observations were beneficial in several ways. First of all it gave the researchers the opportunity to enter the research setting gradually, and in this way a relationship of trust and confidence could be established with the professionals and youngsters who were involved in the study. Secondly, observations made it possible to study youngsters who were difficult to reach and unwilling to be interviewed, by observation we could still collect some data about this group (the most marginalised group of migrant youngsters). Thirdly, observation made it possible to compare 'speech' and 'behaviour'. The survey outcomes showed for example that migrant girls have a very positive school experience, by being present in the school classes and observing them during lessons, we could confirm our results. The observations were sometimes clear participant observations: when for example participating in class by helping students with their work or by participating in English workshops.

The in-depth interviews had the goal to gather more specific information to answer the research questions. The qualitative study focused mostly on youngsters' experiences in education and at the labour market, experiences with discrimination, their future perspectives concerning education, work and relationships, gendered experiences and perspectives and the importance of social networks. Since we were interested in the perspectives and the experiences of the youngsters involved, we interviewed them to trace their personal stories. We also interviewed professionals because we were also interested in their perspectives and experiences. The interviews with the professionals were mostly used to evaluate social policies and to reveal their ideas about the perspectives and opportunities of young migrants. This was

necessary because there was an expectation that youngsters could possibly have a too positive view on their future (this became clear during the research process). We developed a topic list which served to structure the interviews in a way that all the relevant topics were discussed during the interviews. We made different topic lists for the youngsters and the professionals.

During the observations field notes were written down, which were structured and analysed in a later stage of the research process. The contact with two organisations in the neighbourhoods helped us to establish the various case-studies: a secondary vocational school in Kanaleneiland and a Community Art Center in Overvecht. To realise the case-studies the researchers (Kaj van Zenderen and Debby Gerritsen) cooperated with bachelor and master students of *Interdisciplinary Social Science* of Utrecht University. The students received intensive training to perform ethnographic fieldwork before entering the field together with the researchers. The researchers developed a methodological outline for ethnographic data collection which served as a manual for the students. During the fieldwork the students were supervised by the researchers. The data collection and interpretation was realised in close consultation and cooperation with the researchers. The data collected during this phase are examined in chapters 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6.

#### **Overview case-studies:**

1. **Elga Sikkens**, Wat zal de toekomst brengen? Interviews met jonge migranten over hun persoonlijke toekomstverwachtingen, gedeeltelijk gebaseerd op hun ervaringen in heden en verleden. *What will the future bring? Interviews with young migrants about their personal future perspectives, partly based on their experiences in the present and past.*
2. **Klaas Vernhout**, Wij zijn de beste! Observaties met drop-outs en delinquente migrantenjongeren in een buurthuis in Kanaleneiland. *We are the best! Observations with drop-outs and delinquent migrant youngsters in a community center in Kanaleneiland,*
3. **Violetta Schlotter**, Wij zijn Moslims! Observaties en interviews met Marokkaanse meiden. *We are Muslims! Observations and interviews with Moroccan girls.*
4. **Neda Yamani**, Informele netwerken van allochtone jongeren. Interviews met allochtone jongeren over hun informele netwerken. *Informal networks of migrant youth. Interviews with migrant youngsters about their informal networks.*
5. **Vester Bergmans**, Risico jongeren en hun toekomstverwachtingen: een vergelijking tussen autochtone en allochtone jongeren. *Youth at risk and their future perspectives: a comparison between migrant and native youngsters.*

6. **Anne Czyzewski**, Carrière maken of internetten op je luie reet? Studie naar de motivatie om te werken van Marokkaans-Nederlandse jongeren. *Making a career or surfing the net on your lazy ass? A study on the motivation to work of Moroccan-Dutch youngsters.*
7. **Ties Beek**, Dit is discriminatie! Interviews met studenten en werkgevers over mogelijke vormen van arbeidsmarktdiscriminatie. *This is discrimination! Interviews with students and employers about the possible manifestations of labour market discrimination.*
8. **Leonie Slot en Sanne Winkelman**, Schoolbeleving en sociale netwerken: observaties en interviews met allochtone jongeren over hun ervaringen met onderwijshervormingen en onderwijs gerelateerde ervaringen. *School experience and social networks: observations and interviews with migrant youth about their experiences with educational reforms and experience in education.*
9. **Liselotte Thijssen**, Wij promoten onszelf en anderen! Observaties en interviews met studenten van twee promotieteams die worden getraind om andere allochtone jongeren te helpen. *We promote ourselves and others! Observations and interviews with students of two promotion team who are trained to help other migrant youngsters.*
10. **Joyce Lagerweij en Pauline van Vliegen**, Re-integratie initiatieven van de Gemeente Utrecht. Interviews met lokale uitvoerders en hoofden van bestaande re-integratie projecten. *Re-integration initiatives of the municipality of Utrecht. Interviews with local stakeholders and coordinators of existing re-integration projects.*
11. **Ilse Jurriëns**, Dit is onze wijk! Observaties en interviews met jonge migranten over hun binding met de wijk Kanaleneiland. *This is our neighbourhood! Observations and interviews with young migrants about their bond with the neighbourhood Kanaleneiland.*
12. **Laura van Heusden**, Wij willen blijven! Allochtone jongeren over hun school, toekomst en uitval. *We want to stay! Migrant youth about their school, future and drop-out.*
13. **Anne den Doop**, Ik boks dus ik besta! Observaties met sportende allochtone meiden. *I box, therefore I exist. Observations with migrant girls who play sports.*
14. **Yvonne Coret**, Interviews met allochtone jongeren over hun arbeidsmarkt perspectieven. *Interviews with migrant youngsters about their labour market perspectives.*

Total of informants interviewed: N=179

The qualitative part of the study furthermore consisted of an extensive case study in the re-integration field of young migrant dropouts in the local context of the city of Utrecht in 2008/2009. In this part of the study 16 organisations participated in the study and 28 key-persons in these organisations were interviewed. These interviews were semi-structured and a

topic list was developed in order to structure the questions asked during the interviews. The interview data are complemented with data from participant observations at the garage and the rebound facility (see table 1.1).

Table 1.1: Organisations and informants:

<b>Organisation:</b>	<b>Public or private?</b>	<b>Informant:</b>
1. Study-Work Office	Public	Coordinator
2. Garage	Private	Owner, Advisor, Teacher/foreman 1, Teacher/foreman 2
3. Rehabilitation Project	Private	Coordinator 1, Coordinator 2
4. Employment Desk	Public	Coordinator
5. Employers Office	Public	Coordinator
6. Municipality: Department of Education	Public	Policymaker 1, Policymaker 2
7. Youth Office	Public	Coordinator, Work Coach
8. Rebound Facility	Public	Coordinator
9. Regional Training Centre 1	Public	Policymaker, Coordinator Internships, Career Counsellor, Coordinator Basic Vocational training (level 2), Intercultural Coach
10. Reintegration Service	Private	Coordinator
11. Buddy Project	Public	Coordinator
12. Regional Training Centre 2	Public	Policymaker Coordinator
13. Self Employment Project	Private	Coordinator
14. School Attendance Office	Public	School attendance officer 1, School attendance officer 2
15. Empowerment Initiative	Private	Coordinator
16. Migrant Network	Private	Coordinator

Total: 28 respondents

This case study was conducted by the researchers (Kaj van Zenderen and Debby Gerritsen). Main goal of this part of the study was to investigate and evaluate the re-integration field of a local context (city of Utrecht). Different organisations were examined to investigate how they prevent school dropout and how dropouts are supported back to school or work. We established contacts in the field using snowball sampling; in this way we composed a sample

that represents the whole reintegration field of the city of Utrecht. The informants are all professionals; coordinators, policymakers, but also staff who are actually working with the youngsters. The outcomes of this case study are discussed in chapter 7.

#### ***1.3.4 Survey***

Next to the qualitative fieldwork a survey was developed and distributed (2007-2009). The (preliminary) results of the ethnographic fieldwork were used to develop the questions for the survey. Furthermore, the researchers (Kaj van Zenderen and Debby Gerritsen) used existing scales for the survey (derived from NKPS/SPVA-02 (Sociale Positie en Voorzieningsgebruik Allochtonen), Integratie Monitor Dordrecht, PAS (Preventie Alcoholgebruik Scholieren)). The questions in the survey were based on themes like school experiences, social networks, school drop-out and the transition from school to work. After a successful pilot the survey was distributed at a secondary vocational school in Utrecht. Since the number of respondents at this school was too low, other schools in Amsterdam and Utrecht were invited to participate in the survey. Finally three secondary vocational schools participated in the survey (N=608):

1. Secondary Vocational School in Utrecht: ICT
2. Secondary Vocational School in Amsterdam: ICT, Care and Welfare, Economics
3. Secondary Vocational School in Utrecht: Juridical, Care and Welfare

The survey was at first online distributed, later on hand written surveys were distributed because not all the schools had a sufficient number of computers available for students to complete the questionnaire. Teachers supervised the students when filling out the questionnaire. The average response rate was about 60% per school. The survey data are examined in chapters 2, 5 and 6. In chapter 3 and 4 we briefly discuss some of the quantitative results as well.

#### ***1.3.5 Focus groups***

The last phase of the data collection concerns a qualitative study at two of the secondary schools that participated in the survey (Amsterdam and Utrecht). In this phase participant observations were conducted and teachers and students were interviewed, individually or in focus groups. A topic list was developed, and topics were based on results of the survey that

needed more clarification. For example, the survey showed that girls are more satisfied with their school life than boys, but a clear explanation of this result was still lacking. Six teachers were interviewed (Utrecht) and four focus groups were organised. One focus group was organised at the secondary vocational school in Amsterdam in which five teachers participated. The other three focus groups were organised at the secondary vocational school in Utrecht. Three Turkish girls participated in the first focus group, six Moroccan girls participated in the second focus group and nine teachers and policymakers participated in the third focus group. In total 23 people participated in the focus groups. We referred to these focus groups as 'sensing meetings'. We decided to organise focus groups in order to address particular preliminary results on which we needed the perspectives of the persons involved. Focus groups have the benefit of examining group interactions (Berg, 2009). By organising focus groups we could examine whether perspectives and experiences of different people were in concordance or in contrast with each other. In addition to enlarging the data for this study, these meetings also had an ethical significance. We wanted to return the results of the study to the people involved and also wanted to double check and if necessary, refine, complement or adjust the results.

### ***1.3.6 Role of the researcher***

When starting our data collection we soon found out that it was not easy to get access into the field. In the Netherlands, and especially in the larger cities, schools are coping with 'research fatigue'; they are tired of all the researchers wanting schools to participate in their studies. Therefore it was in the beginning very difficult to start the data collection, but by the time first contacts were established we found more people and schools willing to participate. One key person helped us to find departments of secondary vocational schools willing to participate. This person is a policy maker at a secondary vocational school in Utrecht and he used his personal social network to find participants for the study.

It proved to be easier to motivate people for participation in the qualitative part of the study. We found many people being very passionate about their jobs as professionals working with youngsters and it was never a problem to make an appointment for an interview. We had to be conscious about the fact that some professionals had their own agenda's and wanted to use the study to prove that their project or school was doing a good job. We have always taken a neutral position and have tried to be as objective as possible.

The youngsters however were often shy and sometimes refused that the interview would be recorded. It was also necessary to develop mutual trust before they wanted to be interviewed. It was therefore beneficial that the researchers were present during classes, so that the youngsters got familiar with the researchers. The researchers are relatively young of age, which made it quite easy to connect with the youngsters. As researchers we always introduced ourselves as such and always had an open and honest stance towards the youngsters, which was very much appreciated. After mutual trust was established most of the youngsters we asked to interview were willing to participate. It was more difficult to establish a relationship of trust with the more marginalised youngsters and they did refuse to be interviewed. By doing observations and having small conversations in the field we were able to collect data on this group as well.

The gender of the researchers sometimes played a role during fieldwork. For example, at the garage where we observed a group of boys whistled at the female researcher. This created a distance between the researcher and youngsters and the particular boys were not included in the interviews. This was however an incident. At a later stage of the study focus groups were organised with Moroccan and Turkish girls. These were organised by the female researcher in order for the girls to feel safe and confident to tell their perspectives and experiences on relationships, career and family formation.

The ethnicity of the researchers never caused a problem. The youngsters were sometimes curious about the ethnic background of one of the researchers, because they sometimes expected her to be also Moroccan or Turkish (she has a native Dutch background but brown hair and eyes).

### ***1.3.7 Quality of the study: Triangulation***

As stated before a mixed methods approach enables researchers to perform triangulation of research methods. In this way the results of the study can be verified and the validation improves. We also used a variation of qualitative data collection methods (interviews, observations, focus groups). By combining these methods we could compare 'words' with 'actions' and verify answers given in face-to-face interviews with statements posed in group discussions. This improved the validation of the study. There are other forms of triangulation existing next to the triangulation of methods (Berg, 2009; 't Hart e.a., 1998). In this study we carried out (next to triangulation of methods) triangulation of researchers, triangulation of data sources and triangulation of theories. Triangulation of researchers means that more than

one researcher is involved in the study. In this study there were always more researchers involved in the study, from the beginning until the end of the research process. Many of the interviews were, for example, carried out by two researchers. During the phase of analysis also two researchers were involved. The benefit of working with two or more researchers is that two always know more than one, and that interpretations could always be verified with the other researcher.

Another form of triangulation carried out in this study is triangulation of data sources. By including youngsters and professionals in this study, we were able to formulate different perspectives on the participation of young migrants. For example, professionals have arguments to state that they believe the expectations of young migrants concerning their future are not always realistic. This enabled us to nuance our finding that migrant youngsters are optimistic about their future.

Finally we also used triangulation of theories. At the beginning of this study we formulated different hypotheses, based on different theories. By combining and comparing these theories (for example, segmented assimilation theory, acculturation theories, immigrant optimism theory) we established a framework in which the social phenomenon of the participation of young migrant could be examined.

### ***1.3.8 Analysis***

In this study we performed an interpretational analysis; we examined the collected data to find out how participants attribute meaning to social life situations. Our qualitative data were systematically organised and analysed using a grounded theory in which existing theories are the starting point (Boeije, 2010). Our analysis is characterised by a spiralling approach; an interplay of theory and empirical data, in which empirical finding nuanced our theoretical assumptions until we achieved data saturation.

The data were collected, reduced, displayed and finally analytic conclusions were drawn. The observations were written down in field notes and the interviews and focus groups were recorded when possible. In cases where informants refused to be recorded, notes were written down. The recordings were all transcribed and entered together with the field notes into the software package MAXQDA 2007. This enabled a systematic analysis of the qualitative data in which open, axial and selective coding were employed (Boeije, 2010). Segments from the field notes and interviews were coded with the help of our theoretical concepts. Core concepts were identified as overarching themes of the study and we were able

to get results based on theoretical themes which were constructed with the coded fragments of our analysis. Finally our results were reported back to the field to verify our results with the people involved in the study and results were adjusted, revised or nuanced if necessary.

The quantitative data were analysed with the software program SPSS16. The surveys were electronically read and inserted in a SPSS database. Before the main analysis, the data were first examined for missing values, outliers and assumptions of normality, linearity and homoscedasticity. Furthermore, the variables were examined for multicollinearity.

The *education mother* variable appeared to have too many missing values (11%). After close examination using missing values analysis (MVA), we decided to apply means substitution for the missing values of the variable *education mother*, except for those respondents who do not have a mother (2.5%). Means substitution is a conservative way of estimating missing data; it reduces the variance of the variable and the mean for the distribution as a whole does not change (Tabachnick and Fidell 2007, p.67). Using this method prevents overestimation of the effect of the education of the mother.

Three cases in our data were multivariate outliers, one case had a significant Mahalanobis distance ( $p < .001$ ), the standardized residuals for the other two were too high ( $< 3$ ), and these three cases were removed from the sample. One variable (*school importance*) did not meet the assumption of linearity and a logarithmic transformation was performed. After these transformations all the evaluations of normality, linearity and homoscedasticity had the correct values. The variables included in our study showed no signs of multicollinearity. All variables had small missing values, but the cases with missing values were deleted from the dataset for the regression analysis, which led to a final dataset of 497 cases.

The descriptive statistics were written down in a report of the survey. We then employed sequential regression with a series of regression models to look at the predictors of school satisfaction. We constructed seven models in which the above mentioned topics and their variables are represented per model, and to examine their possible contribution in school satisfaction (for a detailed overview of the analysis of the quantitative data see chapter 2). The results of the survey were reported back to the schools (*Resultaten TRESEGY RVO Europese Jongerenenquête*) and several discussions with teams of teachers have taken place.

The theories and methods discussed above were employed to examine the experiences in participation of young migrants in the Netherlands. It should be mentioned here that the factors discussed in the theories should not be taken as separate factors that influence young migrants' experiences with participation. In fact the factors described interact with one

another and should therefore be combined. For example, feelings of discrimination are reinforced by the political climate and public debate in society; how youngsters cope with these feelings depends on the support they receive from their social networks. It is therefore important that different factors affecting the participation of young migrants are included in the study to demonstrate that several factors influence the integration of young migrants and on different levels (individual, meso and macro). Nonetheless, it is beyond the scope of this study to examine all the interactions and processes in present-day society which, in one way or another, are related to the participation of young migrants. For this study we used a selection of theories to be found in the literature that deal with topics that proved to be important for the participation of migrant youth, but also topics that emerged during our study. This selection of theories is empirically examined in the following chapters. The chapters 2-7 of this dissertation are, although based on the same study, independent articles that have been submitted to international social scientific peer reviewed journals. Therefore there might be some overlap in methods, theory or results discussed in the separate chapters. The final chapter presents a summary of findings, together with a reflection on the theories and a discussion.

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## 2 School satisfaction of migrant youth: the role of ethnicity, gender and social network

This chapter is co-authored by Kaj van Zenderen (Utrecht University, the Netherlands). A slightly different version of this chapter is forthcoming in *The International Journal of Diversity in Organisations, Communities and Nations*. Earlier versions of this chapter have been presented at the 8<sup>th</sup> Annual ESPAnet Conference ‘Social policy and the global crisis: consequences and responses’, September 2010, Budapest (Hungary) and at the 11<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Diversity in Organisations, Communities and Nations, Cape Town, June 2011 (South Africa). Readers must contact Common Ground for permission to reproduce.

**Abstract:**

This study focuses on school satisfaction among young migrants in secondary vocational education in the Netherlands with an emphasis on gender differences. The results of our study, using a mixed method approach, show that Moroccan girls have the most school satisfaction. This ethnicity effect fades once socioeconomic background, social capital, and school environment variables are included in the regression model. School satisfaction for all groups was generally explained by social network variables: positive relations with parents and teachers. School satisfaction improves where there is communication with parents about school, and where there are fewer conflicts with teachers. Lower life satisfaction has a negative impact on how migrant girls adjust to school. Interviews with teachers revealed that being in school offers migrant girls a less restricted social space with opportunities for meeting friends. Care responsibilities at home can hinder the school engagement of migrant girls.

**2.1 Introduction**

In the Netherlands school performance of migrant youngsters varies widely and there are clear differences both in and among different migrant groups. There are signs of polarization among groups of migrant youngsters that are more successful and those that are less successful (Crul, Pasztor and Lelie, 2008; Gerritsen and van Zenderen, 2009). There are also gender differences and several international studies on the school performance of various migrant groups show that gender is an important factor for migrant school success and that migrant girls perform better than boys (Abada and Tenkorang, 2009; Feliciano and Rumbaut, 2005; OECD, 2009; Qin-Hilliard, 2003; Rumbaut, 2000; Schmid, 2001; Suárez-Orozco, Rhodes and Millburn, 2009), and that migrant girls are more dedicated to their schoolwork (López, 2002; Suárez-Orozco and Qin-Hilliard, 2004). A recent study on the integration of young migrants in education in the Netherlands indicated that migrant girls have caught up with migrant boys and currently they outperform boys at every stage of their educational career (CBS, 2011). More migrant girls than boys in higher education in the Netherlands graduate, and they also tend to do so more quickly (Jennissens, 2006; SCP, 2009). Despite this progress among migrant girls, it should be noted that there is still a considerable difference compared to the performance of native girls (SCP, 2009; CBS, 2011).

Migrant girls not only perform well in education, they also show high levels of school satisfaction (Ding and Hall, 2007; Lopez, 2003; Qin-Hilliard, 2006). Studies on youngsters'

school satisfaction in the US context reveal that youngsters who are dissatisfied with school and feel detached from school perform less well in education. For instance, dropouts often point out their negative school experience as a major obstruction to their educational aspirations (Lee and Breen, 2007; Tidwell, 1988).

How young people fare at school is an important predictor of their future outcomes such as high school and college graduation and labour market opportunities (Garcia-Reid, 2007). Early school leaving, for instance, has a negative effect on labour market prospects (SCP, 2009). Van Geel and Vedder (2009) discuss that a positive school adjustment results in an increased general adaptation of migrant adolescents to the host society.

There is plenty of information about how young migrants perform in education in terms of grades or educational outcomes, but understanding the personal school satisfaction and commitment of young migrants is still rather limited, particularly among migrants living in European countries.

This study focuses on the school satisfaction of young migrants in secondary education in two cities in the Netherlands - Amsterdam and Utrecht - where half the residents under 25 have a migrant background. As stated above, little research has been conducted on this topic in Europe. Our first aim is therefore to examine whether these differences in school satisfaction between migrants and natives and between migrant boys and migrant girls do, in fact, actually exist in the Netherlands. To outline how young migrants experience school in the Netherlands, we present our results from extensive quantitative and qualitative research, which used a mixed-method approach. The second aim of this study is to examine the predictors of school satisfaction of natives and different ethnic groups, using, in the first place, the results from our quantitative study and applying multivariate analysis, complemented with the results from the qualitative study.

## **2.2 Theory**

Studies into the educational performance of migrant youth often refer to the immigrant optimism hypothesis (Andriessen, Phaet and Lens, 2006; Bankston and Zhou, 2002; Kao and Tienda, 1995). Migrant parents, in most cases, clearly wish for upward mobility for their children, and have high expectations of their offspring's socioeconomic prospects. Especially migrant parents coming from underdeveloped countries where there are fewer chances for educational and professional success. They feel their children should take advantage of the educational opportunities available in the host society. Migrants have a positive dual frame of

reference: they compare the disadvantaged situation back home in their country of origin with the better opportunities for their children in the host country and believe education and having a career is the road to success (Ogbu and Simons, 1998). This stance is adopted by their children and tends to motivate them to perform well at school. Young migrants themselves have high educational aspirations and expectations and almost all emphasize the importance of a good education (Rumbaut, 2000). Therefore, the advantage of migrant parents having high educational aspirations for their children is that it boosts their offspring's learning and academic performance (Shah, 2008).

Noteworthy is that the above insights are based on the US context and its applicability for the European or Dutch context might thus be questionable. However, the frame of reference of the subjects of our study, young migrants who are officially categorized as 'non-western', might not be different since their parents originate from rural disadvantaged areas in their countries of origin and occupy the lowest socio-economic positions in the Dutch society (SCP, 2009). This might make migrant parents expect their children can benefit from the available educational opportunities and experience upward mobility. We therefore hypothesize that migrant parents in the Dutch context hold school in high esteem and therefore their children will have high levels of school satisfaction.

Migrant girls tend to be exposed to traditional gender roles in the home, and this may affect the girls in different ways. First, girls' parents may not have particularly high expectations for them on the educational or professional front. For instance, the Turkish community in the Netherlands did not, in the past, place much store by their daughters doing well in school (Crul and Doornik, 2006). However, this rejective attitude towards education among the Turkish community began to change at the turn of the century towards a more positive and open stance (Coenen, 2001).

However, the opposite may also be true, with migrant girls, paradoxically, also benefiting from traditional gender roles. Studies among migrant groups in the US reveal that the home situation motivates migrant girls to perform well at school as a means for them to free themselves from gender inequality. In these studies the authors applied the dual frame of reference theory at migrant girls specifically (Lee, 2006, 2007; Lopez, 2002, 2003). They argue that migrant girls are aware that their current opportunities are better than those offered by their country of origin, and that education will help them achieve a gender equality greater than their own mothers experienced (Lopez, 2002).

The above might also apply to non-western migrant girls in the Dutch context as the overall majority of their mothers, particularly Turkish and Moroccan foreign born or first

generation migrant woman, are in a disadvantaged situation: they received hardly any education, many are unemployed and belong to the lowest income groups. Moreover, traditional views on gender roles and involvement in care tasks seem to obstruct their labour market participation (SCP, 2007). It is visible that many of their daughters, particularly second generation Moroccan women, have high aspirations and they often postpone getting married and having children by continuing in education and entering the labour market (Crul and Doornik, 2006). We hypothesize that because of a positive dual frame of reference regarding gender opportunities for woman, non-western migrant girls are motivated in school, and have higher levels of school satisfaction.

The gender relations at home also mean that parents control and supervise their daughters, and they expect their daughters to behave in the correct manner. As a consequence, the girls are pushed, more so than boys, towards academic performance (Zhou and Bankston, 2001; Feliciano and Rumbaut, 2005; Qin-Hilliard, 2003). Boys, in turn, experience less supervision and enjoy more freedom, and they are consequently easily distracted from school in general. Zhou and Bankston (2001) found that Vietnamese migrant girls were exposed to considerable parental supervision which resulted in them behaving correctly both at home and in school and in positive school performance.

One important factor involved in explaining school success and dedication is the social network youngsters have at their disposal. Family webs are valuable and offer migrant youngsters a safe haven through the availability of supportive family members. Rumbaut's (2000) study of migrant youngsters and their school achievements shows that the strongest predictor of children leaving school early was that they came from a disrupted family where there was little positive parent-child interaction.

Stanton-Salazar's (2001) extensive study on US Mexican youth and Crul's studies (2006, 2008) on education and labour market integration of Dutch second generation Turkish and Moroccan youngsters showed that older siblings and extended family members can help young migrants overcome their disadvantages and improve their resilience and mobility opportunities. They both particularly point out the supportive role older brothers and sisters may have on the educational and career outcomes of young migrants. Older siblings can be key figures in offering emotional, social and institutional support and can act as inspiring role models for their younger brothers and sisters (Valenzuela, 1999).

Support for school is not just a matter of having family members who value school. What is also essential is that family members actively participate in discussions on school issues. An extensive meta-analysis of dropout literature showed that communication within the family

has a positive effect on educational performance and reduces the risk of students opting to leave school early (Strom and Boster, 2007). Previous studies also found that migrant girls receive much more social support from their family ties than boys do (Lopez, 2003). Girls talk about school more often and also discuss their schoolwork more frequently with family members. These results indicate that migrant girls are inclined to be more socially embedded in networks at home and in their community.

We hypothesize that the support young migrants receive from the social network as assessed by the quality and frequency of communication about school issues, has a positive influence on their school satisfaction. This applies in particular to girls who are expected to communicate more about school.

The literature also refers to gendered relations at school i.e. teachers perceive and treat girls and boys differently. The literature indicates that boys are punished and corrected more often, and that girls are generally considered to be good pupils (Lopez, 2002, 2003). Strom and Boster's (2007) meta-analysis of dropout studies revealed that negative student-teacher interactions and a lack of perceived teacher support increase the risk of a pupil dropping out of school.

The relations at school can take on an additional dimension in the context of a multicultural school. Teachers may hold gendered stereotype and deficit views of migrant students, and this may contribute towards a negative school experience and educational disadvantage (Patterson, Hale and Stressman, 2007). Boys in particular are affected by these stereotypes, and teachers' views of migrant boys are generally more negative than their views of girls. This is partly responsible for boys doing worse in school than girls (Lee, 2007; Lopez, 2002; Suárez-Orozco and Qin-Hilliard, 2004). The hypothesis we would like to derive is as follows: girls are expected to have higher school satisfaction because relations with their teachers are better than those of boys.

Finally, we need to mention the negative experiences in society at large that affect school satisfaction. If youngsters feel that roads are blocked and upward mobility is not possible for them, because of discrimination for instance, they are liable to develop a negative attitude towards education (Andriessen et al., 2006). This is also referred to as an oppositional culture in which migrant boys confronted with disadvantage and discrimination shy away from education as a means for upward mobility (Lee, 2007; Schmid, 2001; WRR, 2007; Zhou, 1997). They question if achieving success through education really is an option that is open to them.

There are indications that non-western migrants in the Netherlands might encounter the same feelings of exclusion and disillusion concerning future options and prospects. A previous study reveals that many migrant youngsters perceive discrimination (44%) (Gerritsen, van Zenderen and Maier, 2009). The hypothesis we would like to formulate in line with our expectations is that negative experiences of non-western migrant youngsters in the Dutch society at large i.e. discrimination and satisfaction with life in general, are negatively reflected in their school experiences.

### **2.3 Data, methods and analysis**

The data for our analyses are derived from TRESEGY, a comparative European research project. The project ran from June 2006 through June 2009 and focused on: “Factors of inclusion and exclusion of second-generation migrants in Europe”. We use data from the Dutch context to answer our research questions.

We employed mixed methods research (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004) consisting of three steps: firstly, explorative case studies involving participant observations and interviews were set up in a school (secondary vocational education) and other settings such as the street, community centres and workshops for young people.

Secondly, a quantitative study was conducted among 608 students from five secondary vocational schools in the cities of Utrecht and Amsterdam (Amsterdam is the largest and Utrecht the fourth largest city in the Netherlands). Our sample is a so called cluster sample, in which the population is concentrated in a natural cluster (the school). The schools are similar concerning their urban context, location in deprived neighbourhoods, population with a majority of migrant youngsters, and the size and urgency of the dropout problem. The sample consists of 164 natives (27%) and 441 young migrants (73%) and both genders are equally represented (54% girls, 46% boys). The largest migrant groups in the Netherlands are represented in the sample: Moroccan, Turkish, Surinamese and Antillean youngsters. Written questionnaires and an online survey were used which students had to fill out in the classrooms under the guidance and instruction of teachers. The average response rate was about 60% per school.

Our analysis of the survey data comprised two steps. We began our analysis with a descriptive analysis to distinguish the major differences between the migrants and natives with regard to immigrant optimism, support and communication about school, socioeconomic status, experiences with discrimination, and life satisfaction (see Table 2.1). We then employed

sequential regression with a series of regression models to look at the predictors of school satisfaction. We constructed seven models in which the above mentioned topics and their variables are represented per model, and to examine their possible contribution in school satisfaction.

During the third step, the descriptive results of the survey were discussed in interviews and focus groups with youngsters, educational managers, policymakers and teachers, both individually and during staff meetings, from the schools involved. The results of the survey served as topics for questions and discussion during the interviews.

## **2.4 Results**

### ***2.4.1 Descriptive results***

**School satisfaction:** The school satisfaction scale (7 items, 5 points) indicates that youngsters are fairly satisfied with their life at school with migrants and natives showing an equal average score of 3.8. However, boys are less satisfied. Turkish and Moroccan girls are the most satisfied with their school life. We computed t-tests and found significant differences between boys and girls: girls have higher school satisfaction than boys ( $p < .001$ ), with a small-sized effect, Cohen's  $D = -0.30$  (see Tabachnick and Fidell, 2007 p.54). After further analysis we found that the differences between boys and girls were significant for the migrant group ( $p < .001$ ), with a small-sized effect, Cohen's  $D = -.35$ , and not for the native group.

**Immigrant optimism:** Our descriptive results show manifestations of existing immigrant optimism: migrant youngsters, for instance, tend to have parents who believe school is very important. Furthermore, migrant girls report more often that their parents stress the importance of education than migrant boys do. The opposite was found to be the case between native girls and boys, although not significant, boys claim their parents strongly value education more often than girls.

**Mothers' level of education:** Mothers of young migrants are significantly not as highly educated as the mothers of their native counterparts. Forty-four percent of the native mothers, for instance, have an educational level above high school compared to 32% of the mothers of migrant youngsters.

**Support and communication about school with parents:** Both young natives and migrants regularly talk with their parents about school-related issues, such as their teachers or homework. Grades are discussed the most. Girls in both groups speak significantly more

about school with their parents than boys, with an average of 3.1 for native girls, ( $p < .01$ ) and 3.2 for migrant girls ( $p < .001$ ) with medium-sized effects, Cohen's  $D = -0.40$  for natives and  $D = -0.41$  for migrants. The gender differences are more pronounced between migrant boys and girls.

**Table 2.1 Descriptive statistics**

	Natives	Migrants	Migrants		Natives	
			Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
School satisfaction (5 points never to very often $\alpha = .81$ )	3.8	3.8	<b>3.7***</b>	<b>3.9***</b>	3.7	3.8
Indicators of school satisfaction (% agree/strongly agree)( $\alpha = .81$ )						
Do you enjoy school?	64.7	61.5	60.2	63	62.9	66.7
Do you try to do the best that you can in school?	<b>72***</b>	<b>81.3***</b>	<b>74**</b>	<b>86.7**</b>	71.9	72
Are you satisfied with your schoolwork?	57.3	51.8	44.7	57.2	55	60
Is school easy for you?	65.4	62.9	60.6	64.5	63.6	67.6
Are you satisfied with what you learn at school?	<b>41.7**</b>	<b>54.9**</b>	<b>46.1*</b>	<b>61.7*</b>	39.4	44.6
Do you get along with your classmates?	87.7	85.2	82.9	86.8	85.4	90.7
Are you satisfied with the contact with teachers?	<b>75**</b>	<b>70.9**</b>	66.3	76.7	71.9	78.7
Parents feel school is very important (%)	<b>64.4***</b>	<b>88.2***</b>	<b>84*</b>	<b>90.9*</b>	69.3	58.7
Mothers with an education higher than high school (%)	<b>43.9***</b>	<b>32.2***</b>	31.9	32.3	41.7	46.9
Communication about school with parents (5 points never to very often $\alpha = .88$ )	2.9	3	<b>2.8***</b>	<b>3.2***</b>	<b>2.8**</b>	<b>3.1**</b>
Indicators of communication about school with parents (% often/very often)						
...about your grades	40.1	50.3	<b>38.9***</b>	<b>57.5***</b>	32.2	49.3
...about the teachers	31.5	31.6	31.3	32.1	28.7	34.7
...about your homework	<b>21.1**</b>	<b>38.1**</b>	<b>29**</b>	<b>44.2**</b>	14.9	28.4
...about your fellow students	<b>27.3*</b>	<b>33.3*</b>	<b>23**</b>	<b>40.1**</b>	<b>19.5*</b>	<b>36.5*</b>
...about what you did during the lesson	33.3	37.2	<b>28.4*</b>	<b>43.1*</b>	32.1	34.7
Communication about school with siblings (5 points never to very often $\alpha = .95$ )	<b>1.9***</b>	<b>2.5***</b>	<b>2.3***</b>	<b>2.7***</b>	<b>1.8</b>	<b>2</b>
Indicators of communication about school with siblings (% often/very often)						
...about your grades	<b>13.7***</b>	<b>34.5***</b>	<b>24.3**</b>	<b>40.9**</b>	10.7	17.2
...about the teachers	<b>9.3***</b>	<b>28.5***</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>32.4</b>	6.7	12.4
...about your homework	<b>9.4***</b>	<b>26.4***</b>	<b>19.2*</b>	<b>31.1*</b>	8	10.9
% reporting have conflict with teachers	27.5	26	26.1	29.2	30.4	23
Early school leavers (%)	28.7	21.2	23.9	19.4	33.7	22.7
Perceived discrimination last year (%)	<b>21***</b>	<b>40.6***</b>	42.5	39.1	21.6	20.3
Life satisfaction (% very satisfied)	<b>32.1</b>	<b>36.2</b>	32	39.4	34.1	29.7
N	164	432	181	251	89	75

\*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$

**Support and communication about school with siblings:** Youngsters do not generally often discuss school-related issues with their siblings. Young migrants, however, clearly talk more often with their siblings than natives ( $p < .001$ ) with a medium-sized effect, Cohen's  $D =$

-0.55. Again, as with parents, migrant girls communicate about school significantly more often than migrant boys ( $p < .001$ ) with a small-sized effect, Cohen's  $D = -0.36$ .

**Conflicts with teachers:** More than a quarter of the youngsters reported having conflicts with their teachers. In most cases, however, these conflicts are only occasional (20%). A slight minority report having regular conflicts (7%). Migrant girls have conflicts somewhat more often than boys, although not significant.

**Early school leaving:** Quite a few youngsters are former dropouts (23%) which corresponds to the high dropout rates in secondary vocational education in national figures (Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, 2009). There are more native youngsters than migrants who dropped out of school before graduating: 29% as opposed to 21%, and more native boys than girls.

**Perceived discrimination:** Migrant youngsters have felt themselves discriminated against more often in the past year than their native counterparts, 41% compared to 21%, ( $p < .001$ ). There are no appreciable gender differences.

**Life satisfaction:** Both migrant and native youngsters are relatively satisfied with their current lives (85% is satisfied). Migrant girls are slightly more positive than migrant boys. The opposite is the case for natives, with boys being slightly more satisfied than girls.

#### ***2.4.2 Regression analysis***

Before the main multivariate analysis, the data were first examined for missing values, outliers and assumptions of normality, linearity and homoscedasticity. Furthermore, the variables were examined for multicollinearity. After data inspection and the data were adjusted so that all the evaluations of normality, linearity and homoscedasticity had the correct values. The variables included in our study showed no signs of multicollinearity. All variables had small missing values, but the cases with missing values were deleted from the dataset for the regression analysis, which led to a final dataset of 497 cases.

The sequential regression analysis tested several models starting with a model to examine the differences in school satisfaction between migrants and natives. The second model includes a variable for gender, since our hypotheses anticipate differences in school satisfaction between boys and girls. In model three we test an interaction effect between gender and being a migrant, since we hypothesize that migrant girls are more satisfied with their school life. In ascending order we include in models four, five, six and seven variables to test our immigrant optimism and dual reference theories, the effects of social support, the

effects of teacher conflict and dropout experience, perceived discrimination and life satisfaction. The change in  $R^2$  is significant for all our models ( $p < .005$ ). The final model has a value for  $R^2$  of .28.

Our first model (see Table 2.2) shows clear differences in school satisfaction between native and migrant youth: youngsters with a migrant background have higher levels of school satisfaction than native Dutch youngsters (reference group), except for the group of Surinamese and Antillean youngsters. Therefore this group is treated separately from the migrant group in our analysis.

The second model shows that girls have a significantly higher school satisfaction level than boys ( $p < .001$ ).

**Table 2.2 Multivariate regression school satisfaction**

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7
Surinamese/Antillean <sup>a</sup>	-.004 (.074)	-.029 (.074)	-.007 (.075)	-.032 (.075)	-.018 (.073)	-.032 (.070)	-.013 (.069)
Migrant <sup>a</sup>	.144** (.056)	.129* (.055)	.004 (.074)	-.084 (.076)	-.133* (.075)	-.153* (.071)	-.122 (.071)
Girl		.152*** (.049)	.020 (.072)	.023 (.071)	-.052 (.069)	-.064 (.066)	-.062 (.065)
Interaction Girl * Migrant			.224** (.098)	.209** (.096)	.231** (.093)	.230** (.088)	.211** (.087)
School importance				.099* (.200)	.046 (.197)	.030 (.187)	-.032 (.185)
Education mother				-.175*** (.026)	-.195*** (.026)	-.173*** (.025)	-.182*** (.024)
Communication Parents					.206*** (.028)	.160*** (.027)	.134*** (.027)
Communication Brothers/sisters					.111* (.024)	.132** (.023)	.129*** (.022)
Teacher Conflict						-.284*** (.022)	-.265*** (.022)
Dropout						-.052 (.052)	-.029 (.052)
Perceived discrimination							-.095* (.046)
Life satisfaction							.154*** (.030)
Constant	(.044)	(.049)	(.055)	(.106)	(.119)	(.123)	(.146)
$\Sigma$	.543	.537	.534	.525	.505	.480	.471
$R^2$	.021	.044	.058	.093	.163	.247	.278

\* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$

<sup>a</sup>reference group: native Dutch

In model three an interaction variable between being a migrant and being a girl is included. In this interaction variable the group of Surinamese and Antillean youngsters is left out, because apparently this group has a different school satisfaction than the other migrant groups. The interaction term is highly significant ( $p < .01$ ), indicating that migrant girls (except for Surinamese and Antillean) are indeed more satisfied with their school life.

Model four examines the immigrant optimism hypothesis, the variables *do your parents think school is important* (log) and *education of the mother* were entered. Both variables have a significant influence on the youngsters' school satisfaction ( $p < .01$  and  $P < .001$ ). Migrant youngsters have higher school satisfaction levels when parents feel school is more important.

When the mother has a low educational level, the youngsters also have higher school satisfaction levels. Our results are therefore in line with the immigrant optimism hypothesis.

In the fifth model we included the variables that account for school support from family members. The frequency of communication about school with parents has a strong significant positive effect on school satisfaction ( $p < .001$ ). Communication with brothers and sisters also shows a positive relation with school satisfaction of youngsters ( $P < .01$ ). The variable school importance is no longer significant, which means that school satisfaction is not only explained by parents greatly valuing education but more by the fact that they communicate about school.

The sixth model shows the effects of having a history of leaving school early and of having conflicts with teachers. School dropout does not, according to our model, influence the school satisfaction of youngsters. Teacher conflict, however, is strongly related to school satisfaction ( $p < .001$ ). Interestingly, communication about school with brothers and sisters becomes significant after controlling for early school leaving and teacher conflict ( $p < .001$ ).

Finally, in model seven we included the variables of perceived discrimination and life satisfaction. When youngsters felt discriminated against in the past year they are less satisfied with school ( $p < .05$ ). When youngsters are satisfied with their lives, they are also significantly more positive about school ( $p < .001$ ). Controlled for these variables, the interaction term, the educational level of the mother, communication with parents and siblings about school and conflicts with teachers remain significant predictors of school satisfaction.

### ***2.4.3 Results of the ethnographic study***

Our study consisted of two phases of qualitative field work: first 14 case studies were set up in neighbourhoods in the city of Utrecht where many young non-western migrants, in majority Turkish and Moroccan youngsters, live and attend school. The case studies consisted of

participant observations in several locations such as classrooms, a community centre, an internship project and workshops, and of interviews with migrant youngsters. Case study topics concerned young migrants' experiences with schooling, transition to work and social networks. Many questions in the survey of the quantitative part of our study were based on these case studies. The second phase of qualitative fieldwork started when the quantitative study had ended; we returned to the participating schools and attended two staff meetings where the results were presented and discussed in focus groups (with a total of 14 participants). We also conducted participant observations in the schools that participated in the survey and held in-depth interviews with six teachers and organised focus groups with Turkish (three participants) and Moroccan girls (six participants). The topics covered in the interviews and focus groups were based on the findings of the survey and used to validate our findings. A number of interesting results of the ethnographic study which confirmed the survey results are discussed below.

Interviews with teachers and youngsters about the results of the survey confirm the differences in school satisfaction between migrant boys and migrant girls: they state that, generally speaking, migrant girls not only do better in school, but they also enjoy school more.

Furthermore, more so than boys, it is important that migrant girls perceive school as a social space where they meet and interact with their friends without being restricted or supervised by family or other members of their community. Teachers talk and give examples of Moroccan and Turkish girls who stay at school longer than necessary to meet up with friends or just to be away from home:

*When I just started working in this multicultural school I was surprised to see that Muslim girls stayed longer at school to surf the internet and spend their time on other things than school work, just because of the freedom, to be away from the social control and the home situation.*

The interviews with young migrants and teachers all point to existing immigrant optimism: most migrant youngsters are motivated to graduate from school and are optimistic about their future prospects, and have a clear wish for upward mobility. They expect that, compared with their parents, their own future prospects will be better and can be achieved through education or by setting up an independent business. Girls in particular feel they must do better than their mothers, some of whom are often not educated at all. Migrant girls clearly state during the focus groups that they want to end up in a better position than their mothers:

*[Interviewer]: How come migrant girls are so positive about school?*

*[Migrant girl]: Those girls just like school a lot, they are eager to learn. They want to demonstrate they are willing to accomplish something and to oppose the negative image of their ethnic group which is portrayed by the media. And we want to take the chances our mothers never got (the girl just told that her mother is illiterate).*

The results from the case studies indicate that the will or motivation of youngsters to graduate or to work is influenced by the existence of a supportive network and important role models such as older siblings. Most youngsters say they communicate with their parents about school as confirmed by the survey. However, migrant students feel that their parents are not particularly well informed about the Dutch educational system, and this prevents them from sharing their experiences and related matters with their parents. Where parents are unable to support their children, older sisters or brothers can take on this responsibility.

Several case studies show that most young migrants do feel that there is discrimination, and they state that the labour market in particular is an area where they have less opportunity than their native counterparts. In line with the quantitative results, migrant youngsters report having been discriminated against, for instance Turkish or Moroccan girls for wearing a headscarf, or during their attempts to secure a trainee position. Despite the general feeling that discrimination exists, it is not viewed as a serious hindrance: they are optimistic, and feel if they do their best at school they will be able to find a job.

The case study at the community centre provided an opportunity to speak to the most marginalized youngsters who are neither in school nor in work. Worthy of note is that these youngsters talk of discrimination more than the more successful youngsters. This might be an indication of an oppositional culture. Classroom observations also brought instances of aversive or problematic behaviour to light. Teachers explain this behaviour by saying that youngsters adopt street culture (fighting/standing up for oneself, gaining respect from others) that conflicts with the school culture. Young migrant boys in particular bring their street culture to the classroom. They refuse to take off their jackets and hats because their clothes give them status, make them look tough, and give them a sense of feeling protected. It is interesting that despite this 'oppositional' behaviour youngsters do not reject schooling as a means towards upward mobility, and they clearly state they want to obtain a diploma. It must be said that most migrant youngsters show resilience against discrimination and negative media images; instead of adapting to an oppositional culture they are more eager to provide proof to the contrary and are determined to perform well at school.

## 2.5 Discussion

Our study confirmed that differences in school satisfaction between migrant boys and migrant girls also exist in the Netherlands. Migrant girls do well at school and they are satisfied with their school life. Interestingly, Surinamese and Antillean girls are less satisfied with school compared to the other groups. There are two possible explanations for this state of affair. First, Moroccan and Turkish girls have a background which is socio economically speaking more disadvantaged. According to the immigrant optimism hypothesis their disadvantaged background pushes them to perform well at school, which makes them more satisfied than Surinamese and Antillean girls. Second, most of the Surinamese and Antillean youngsters grow up in single parent families (around 75%). Considering the importance of parental support in school satisfaction, this might result in lower satisfaction for these girls.

Instances of immigrant optimism were clearly visible among Turkish and Moroccan youngsters. Their parents, compared with native parents, tend to stress quite frequently that education is important. The qualitative data indicate that especially Turkish and Moroccan youngsters also appear to be optimistic about their future prospects and they clearly wish for upward mobility. Our hypothesis that when migrant parents greatly appreciate school their children will have high levels of school satisfaction would seem, initially, to be confirmed. However, this optimism does not prove to be decisive in explaining higher school satisfaction. What is more important is that parents or siblings actively engage in communication about school. Our results show that girls communicate more about school with their parents and siblings than boys do, and their high level of social embeddedness explains their higher school satisfaction. We can therefore confirm our hypothesis that the support young migrants, and girls in particular, receive from their social network positively influences their school satisfaction.

We hypothesized that migrant girls in the Dutch context have a positive dual frame of reference: they are more motivated for school because they compare their own opportunities with their mothers' who are in many cases low- or uneducated. Our qualitative data shows that migrant girls, because of the low educational levels of their mothers, are more motivated to perform well at school and have high levels of school satisfaction. However, our quantitative data showed that a low educational level of the mother proved to be important for boys as well which might mean that the comparison with the disadvantaged situation of their mother stimulates their schooling as well.

Having fewer conflicts with teachers appeared to be the most important contributor to high school satisfaction. This is an important finding for schools and teachers who, as it emerged in the interviews, are not fully aware of their influence or felt they had only a modest level of influence on the wellbeing of their students. In this study we did not find any significant differences between migrant boys and girls in the degree of conflict with teachers, so our hypothesis that differences in school satisfaction between migrant boys and girls are related to differences in teacher contact is rejected.

Possible alternative explanations for migrant girls faring well in school emerged from the interviews with teachers and relate to girls being confronted more often with strong social control and restrictions from their parents and the community than boys. Firstly, according to teachers, just being in school gives migrant girls a less restricted social space with opportunities for meeting friends. This applies to Turkish and Moroccan migrant girls in particular, who, in some cases might possibly have care responsibilities for younger siblings. The combination of being controlled and having feelings of obligation towards their family means that girls show more discipline and responsibility towards schoolwork and at the same time they experience school as a less restricted social space to which they can temporarily escape. This clearly shows that the experiences of migrant girls differ from boys and how gender and ethnicity, being a Turkish or Moroccan girl from a traditional household, shape and explain their school satisfaction.

The above particularly seems to count for the Moroccans girls who stand out with high levels of school satisfaction and high educational and professional aspirations. This might point out shifting gender roles in the community with enlarged opportunities which enables them to enjoy schooling. However, on the other hand, care responsibilities for, for example younger siblings, can mean it is inevitable that girls are less engaged in school and in this sense being an migrant girl imposes restrictions. Our qualitative data confirm this picture, but unfortunately the questionnaire did not include questions on this topic. In this area of gender patterns at home, research still needs to be conducted into the role of care responsibility and restrictions on girls in migrant families.

Our results make it clear that there is discrimination in the life of many young migrant people and that it significantly contributes to diminished school satisfaction. Furthermore, not being satisfied with your life results in less school satisfaction. Our hypothesis that negative experiences of migrant youngsters in society at large (discrimination and satisfaction with life) are negatively reflected in their school experiences is confirmed. The qualitative study even showed some indications of young migrants adopting an oppositional stance towards school,

and they adapt to street culture instead. However, these youngsters do not reject education altogether, and in the end the majority, even the dropouts, hope to obtain a diploma. So, to speak of a real oppositional culture in the Dutch context, is actually going too far.

Our findings of migrant girls' high school satisfaction and their optimistic stance are at par with their gradual but clearly improving position in the educational system. Worthy of note is that the better school achievements of migrant girls and their more positive stance of school generally do not yet result in higher rates of labour market participation of migrant females. It seems they often drop out prematurely from the labour market or do not enter the labour market at all (E-quality, 2009). Migrant girls' transition from school to work is a topic that requires more attention in the scientific field.

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### **3 Labour market perspectives of migrant girls in the Netherlands: barriers and optimism**

This chapter is currently under review at the international journal *Work, Employment and Society*. An earlier version of this chapter has been presented at the ESPAnet Social Policy Research day, April 2010, Amsterdam (the Netherlands).

**Abstract:**

Despite the improved level of education and labour market participation of the past decades, the literature shows the position of migrant women in European societies continues to be disadvantaged. Labour market participation in particular is still relatively low, and educational advancement is not always translated into labour market participation. There are several explanations for the gendered picture of differences in education and labour market outcomes of migrant youngsters in the Netherlands, including differences in social support, perceived discrimination, and traditional beliefs. This study examines possible explanations for this and analyses the future perspectives of migrant girls. We use qualitative data for our analyses consisting of observations of and interviews with migrant students in vocational education, supplemented with survey data. In addition we also discuss the policy reforms that have affected the young migrants' situation, such as emancipation and integration policies to stimulate their participation in education and on the labour market.

**3.1 Introduction**

When it comes to schooling and employment, young migrants in Europe and in the Netherlands are in a disadvantaged position: they are concentrated in the lower segments of education, have high dropout rates, and have higher unemployment rates (CBS, 2010a). In spite of this somewhat negative picture it is important to note that the school performance and experiences of migrant youngsters are diverse, and there are, for example, clear differences between males and females.

Generally speaking, migrant girls manage to make up for lost ground in the education system, and nowadays they tend to outperform boys. For example, relatively more migrant girls than boys attend higher education in the Netherlands (CBS, 2010a). And compared with their male counterparts, the girls are very satisfied with their school life (Gerritsen and Van Zenderen, 2010). Their considerable increase in participation in higher education demonstrates that migrant girls have higher intergenerational mobility than boys: compared with their low-educated mothers, the girls have made a leap forward (Crul et al., 2008).

Nevertheless, research shows that second generation migrants in Europe usually have lower education levels compared with their native counterparts. The Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), a study of the educational outcomes of 15 year-olds in all OECD countries, shows that educational outcomes and attainment levels of migrant children tend to lag behind those of native children (OECD, 2007).

Migrant youngsters are not only disadvantaged in their schooling, but also in employment. Previous studies have shown that labour market participation of young migrants was mostly, but not fully, explained by their education level (Liebig, 2009; OECD, 2007; OECD, 2010). However, when controlling for educational attainment, migrant women still have fewer opportunities on the labour market than migrant men and native women (CBS, 2010a). Several studies show that even when migrant women are higher educated, they receive less occupational status in return for their education, have a long-term contract less often, their wages are lower, and the status of the jobs they have is lower than native women with the same education level (Fleischman and Dronkers, 2007; Nielsen et al., 2003).

Furthermore, native born children of migrants have higher employment prospects than foreign born children: being born, raised and educated in the host country is beneficial for their labour market participation. However, there are significant gaps in many European countries between the participation of second generation migrants and the native population. The size of these gaps differs by country, e.g. employment rates are very low in Belgium and in the Netherlands compared with other OECD countries (Liebig, 2009; OECD, 2007). A Danish study found that second generation migrant girls seem to do better in the education system than male second generation migrants, but they face greater problems on the labour market (Nielsen et al., 2003).

Despite the improved level of education and labour market participation of the past few decades, the position of migrant women in European societies is still disadvantaged (Liebig, 2009; OECD, 2010). Interestingly, more school engagement of migrant girls does not automatically result in better labour market outcomes, and participation in European labour markets, and in the Dutch labour market, is still relatively low (see Tables 3.1a and 3.1b). The participation rates for younger cohorts are also low. For example, the participation rate of migrant women aged between 25 and 34 in the Netherlands was 55-60% in 2006-2009, whereas the participation rate for native women of the same age was between 80 and 85% in the same period (CBS, 2010b).

The contradiction is interesting: participation levels of second generation girls in education and on the labour market is not increasing at the same pace – as education levels improve strongly, labour market participation improves more slowly, which leads to discrepancies between the education level and labour market outcomes of migrant women. National statistics for the Netherlands (Table 3.1b) confirm this state of affairs (CBS, 2010b; OECD, 2010; Van Egten and De Hoog, 2009).

**Table 3.1a** *Employment and unemployment (percentage of the working population) in OECD countries by origin (foreign born/ native born) and sex in 2008 and 2009.*

	Migrant				Native			
	Men		Women		Men		Women	
	2008	2009	2008	2009	2008	2009	2008	2009
Employment	75.6	72.2	58.2	57	74.7	72.1	62.9	62
Unemployment	8	12.3	9.6	11.8	5.4	7.9	6.3	7.7

*Source: SOPEMI: OECD, 2010*

**Table 3.1b** *Employment and unemployment (percentage of the working population) in the Netherlands by origin (non-western migrant/ native) and sex in 2008 and 2009.*

	Non-Western Migrant				Native			
	Men		Women		Men		Women	
	2008	2009	2008	2009	2008	2009	2008	2009
Employment	65.9	63.1	47.9	47.2	79	78	60.7	61.5
Unemployment	8.1	11.2	10	10.5	2.5	3.5	3.9	4.4

*Source: Statistics Netherlands [CBS], 2010b*

The integration of migrants is a current issue facing European societies, and the question as to which aspects foster successful integration applies to many European countries. The labour market integration of migrant women is one of the most important indicators of their socio-economic integration in the host society, and studying the obstacles and opportunities encountered by migrant women would therefore be worthwhile (Liebig et al., 2009).

This paper first discusses the general explanations for the disadvantaged position of migrant women on the labour market. We then examine the future perspectives and expectations of migrant girls in the Netherlands for their future labour market situation. We examine whether they confirm or reject general explanations for the disadvantaged position of migrant women in the labour market. We then go on to perform a document and literature analysis and discuss how policy and public debate in the Netherlands influence the labour market participation of migrant women.

This study examines the position of young migrant women of Turkish or Moroccan origin in the Netherlands in education and on the labour market. Women from these ethnic

groups in particular have very low participation rates on the Dutch labour market (CBS, 2010a). We then analyse the future perspectives of these young women. By migrant women we mean first and second generation female migrants, of whom at least one parent was born outside the country of residence. In this paper we mostly talk of ‘migrant women’, but where relevant we make a distinction between the generations. We use the term ‘migrant girls’ to indicate female migrants who are still at school.

### **3.2 Theory**

The literature puts forward many different explanations for the disadvantaged position of migrants on the labour market. However, literature that specifically focuses on girls and women is rare. Previous studies offer explanations in line with theories of human capital, discrimination, social capital, and cultural differences (OECD, 2007; OECD, 2010; Schröder, 2009). In 2006 Keuzenkamp and Merens published a report on the position of migrant women in the Netherlands. They acknowledged that the women from ethnic minorities have weak positions in Dutch society. According to them, education, their command of the language, migration generation and traditional views of gender roles are the most important determinants of the position and participation of migrant women (Keuzenkamp and Merens, 2006).

#### ***3.2.1 Education***

The explanation human capital theory offers is that human capital (skills, knowledge and qualifications, generally reduced to education) has a positive effect on the labour market participation of migrants in the host society. A study by Van Tubergen (2006) discusses how human capital, defined as education level, language proficiency, and work experience, is an important determinant of labour market participation (Van Tubergen, 2006). Other scholars also found that educational attainment is the most important determinant of labour market outcomes (Fleischman and Dronkers, 2007; Liebig, 2009; Nielsen et al., 2003). Nonetheless, Fleischman and Dronkers (2007) observed that while individual education is an important predictor of migrants’ labour market outcomes, the results of their education, in terms of occupational status, are much lower for migrant women than for native women. Nielsen et al. (2003) found that education has a considerable influence on wages and the employment duration of second generation migrants in Denmark. However, the financial return of their

education is much lower than for native women. According to Biffl (2008), the participation of migrant women in Denmark tends to have a bipolar skills structure. Highly skilled migrants tend to do as well as natives, whereas low skilled migrant workers are often marginalised or excluded altogether from the labour market.

Other studies point to the importance of language proficiency (Crul and Doornik, 2003; Keuzenkamp and Merens, 2006). Migrant women with a better understanding of the language participate much more on the labour market than migrant women with poor language proficiency.

Accordingly, existing studies established that educational attainment improves the labour market position of migrant women positively. This also implies that second generation women have better positions on the labour market since education in the host country offers them more country-specific human capital. Nevertheless, some studies show that highly educated migrant women also have disadvantaged positions compared with their native counterparts. A gap in participation levels between migrant women and native women still exists, also for second generation women. So other factors, in addition to low education levels, may restrict the participation of migrant women in European societies.

### ***3.2.2 Discrimination***

The literature gives discrimination as a limiting factor for migrants to enter and to participate in the labour market (Castels and Miller, 2010). According to Kofman et al. (2000) there is evidence of racial discrimination in mainstream labour markets in Europe and even highly educated second generation migrants encounter difficulties on the labour market. Some studies in which comparable candidates, apart from their nationality/national origin, applied for jobs do show evidence of discriminatory practices. All revealed the prevalence of racial discrimination in all the countries in the study (OECD, 2007). Although migrant women are generally discriminated against less than migrant men, it remains a serious obstacle for migrant women's labour market participation (Arai et al., 2008; Güngör and Bornstein, 2009; Timmerman et al., 2003). Van Tubergen (2006) also underlines the role of discrimination on the labour market participation of migrant women. Castles and Miller (2009) state that migrant women have to cope not only with racial discrimination but also with gender discrimination, some employers may, in fact, be prejudiced against women. They do not expect women to be the primary breadwinners, they assume that women prefer to work part time, and that they are

temporary workers and will leave once they become pregnant. Women are therefore deemed to be less suitable employees.

Most complaints about discriminatory practices in the Netherlands concern the hijab, or headscarf. Muslim women feel disadvantaged on the labour market because they are rejected because of the headscarf they wear. Employers do admit that women who wear a headscarf are not hired for representative jobs or jobs that require neutrality (Andriessen et al., 2010). We hypothesise that discrimination is a serious obstacle for migrant women who want to participate in the labour market (H1).

### ***3.2.3 Social capital***

Another explanation for the disadvantaged position of migrant women is their lack of access to networks. Networks, or ‘weak ties’ as the social capital literature refers to them, are important when looking for a job (Field, 2008). The children of migrants and their parents frequently lack these networks (OECD, 2007). As a rule, migrant networks do not often correspond with the networks of native employers. Moreover, migrant women tend to have same-gender networks, which limits their opportunities to enter a labour market that is still white-male dominated. Attending segregated schools and living in segregated neighbourhoods also makes it more difficult to develop a network that overlaps with Dutch employers. We hypothesise that migrant women have networks that do not overlap with employers’ networks and therefore they have scant access to the labour market (H2a).

In addition, there is also a general lack of knowledge about how the labour market works. Support from family and friends, the so-called ‘strong ties’, can provide the necessary support for youngsters when in education or looking for a job (Field, 2008). This support is crucial for youngsters to finish their education successfully and to make a smooth transition to the labour market. Various studies have pointed out that the parental background is of great importance for the educational and labour market outcomes of migrant children (Nielsen et al., 2003). The children of high-skilled migrants have more opportunities to participate fully in the host society than the children of low-skilled migrants because they are in a better position to provide their children with the support needed for education and labour market entrance (Nielsen et al., 2003). The majority of the parents of Turkish and Moroccan migrant youngsters in the Netherlands have, in general, a low education level and they are therefore often not in a position to assist their children in how to apply for a job or how to do well at a recruitment interview (OECD, 2007). We hypothesise that migrant children receive limited

support from their parents, which can hinder them in obtaining an education and in making a smooth transition to the labour market (H2b).

### ***3.2.4 Cultural factors***

Cultural factors might possibly explain differences in participation between migrant men and women and between migrants and natives. Views on educating girls, fertility and marriage may all influence participation. Previous studies have shown that migrant girls feel not only constrained by the host society, but also by their own community (Gerritsen and Van Zenderen, 2010). Traditional norms and values sometimes limit girls' choices about studying or working. For example, being responsible for the care of younger siblings may prevent girls from investing in school. Sometimes the influence exerted by the community means that girls get married early (Crul and Doornik, 2003). Turkish and Moroccan communities in the Netherlands do not approve of cohabiting or of living on one's own, and more highly educated girls often marry early. In the 1970s and 1980s many migrant parents in the Netherlands did not set much store by their daughters' education. However, most migrant parents today do appreciate education, and it is self-evident that their daughters go to school (Crul and Doornik, 2003).

Antecol (2000) suggests that the differences between migrant men's and women's labour market participation can be attributed to cultural factors such as a preference for a particular family structure, and also to the attitude towards a woman's role in society at large as opposed to her role in the home (Antecol, 2000). Nielsen et al. (2003) conclude in their study that migrant parents' attitude towards a woman's role accounts for the discrepancy between what second generation migrant women achieve on the labour market and what native Danish women manage to achieve. Other scholars also found that traditional role divisions exert a profound influence on the labour market participation of migrant women (Keuzenkamp and Merens, 2006; van Tubergen, 2006).

Socio-demographic factors, such as marital status and number of children, represent traditional customs and practices surrounding marriage and starting a family. For example, in European countries, migrant women in the 20-29 age range are overrepresented among those who are married and have children (Liebig and Schröder, 2010). We can now formulate our fourth hypothesis: we expect that traditional views on gender roles mean that migrant women are more involved in care responsibilities because they marry early, have a family at a young

age and generally have more children, which means that they participate less on the labour market (H3).

The theories discussed above should not be taken separately as factors that influence labour market participation of migrant women. For example, a low education level, a lack of networks and support, and traditional views on gender roles are more common in migrant families with a lower socio-economic background. However, it is important to examine these theories one by one to illustrate that there are numerous factors that affect the position of migrant women in the labour market.

### **3.3 Method and analysis**

We conducted extensive qualitative and quantitative research to examine the barriers that young migrant girls encounter that affect their prospects on the labour market. Our target group consisted of migrant girls with Turkish and Moroccan backgrounds in the 13-27 age range. Turkish and Moroccan migrants are two of the four largest migrant groups in the Netherlands and labour market participation for women in these groups is the lowest of all the groups, e.g. it is much lower than for women of Surinamese or Antillean descent.

The data were collected for the comparative European research projects TRESEGY and PROFACITY. Both projects examined the situation and experiences with education and labour market inclusion of young second generation migrants in the host country.

The qualitative data was collected during ethnographic fieldwork (2008-2010) at a trainee project for migrant youngsters and at a secondary vocational school (different locations: care and welfare work, economics, ICT). Thirteen migrant youngsters on the trainee project (case study 6, see p.30) were interviewed. At the secondary vocation schools we conducted participant observations in classrooms (case study 1, see p.30) and 11 youngsters (native and migrant) and six teachers were interviewed. Furthermore, four focus groups were conducted: two with teachers/professionals, and two with migrant girls with Moroccan and Turkish backgrounds. A total of 30 people were interviewed, 23 people participated in focus groups, and around 50 people were involved in the participant observations.

The data was analysed using the MAXQDA 2007 software package. Segments were coded and codes were rearranged to produce a systematic overview of the perspectives of youngsters on education and labour market participation.

We also conducted a quantitative study (2009) in which 608 youngsters from five vocational schools filled in a questionnaire. The survey included questions on educational

ambition, labour market identity, social networks, and discrimination. The results of the qualitative and quantitative studies complement each other and are presented below.

We also examined policy documents and the literature to see if the perspectives of young migrant women correspond to the aims of current minority and emancipation policies.

### **3.4 Results**

The results of the survey show that, of all groups, migrant girls with Moroccan or Turkish backgrounds are the most satisfied with their school life. They are willing to continue to study and obtain a higher education, and aspire to upward mobility. Moroccan girls are even more satisfied with school than their Turkish counterparts.

This optimism is in line with the general tendency that migrant girls are managing to catch up in the education system, and today, in fact, do better than their male counterparts (Schröder, 2009). There is, however, still a gap between migrant girls and native girls in educational attainment, which partly explains their lower participation level on the labour market. Migrant girls themselves also confirm that they feel they have fewer opportunities on the labour market because their education level is too low. However, this is not the full story, and other factors impede their school engagement and transition to the labour market.

The qualitative and quantitative studies both show that many migrant youngsters feel discriminated against. We found many explicit examples in the ethnographic studies in which youngsters report being discriminated against for wearing a headscarf or for living in an area with the wrong postcode i.e. a neighbourhood where numerous migrants live. Some of our respondents refer to companies or trainee places where there is a clear aversion to youngsters with certain backgrounds. Boys and girls generally report having had similar experiences with discrimination, and about 50% of the migrant youngsters have felt discriminated against in the last year. However, when we examine individual ethnic groups we find a significant difference between Moroccan boys and girls. Moroccan boys felt discriminated against in the past year much more than Moroccan girls (59% vs. 41%). The results of the survey also show that migrant girls experience discrimination at work and on public transport, whereas boys feel discriminated against when going out or in the street. Muslim girls' experience with discrimination often involves their wearing a headscarf. For example, getting higher position jobs seem to be a real problem for them. They also expect to have difficulties in the future, when they make the transition from school to work:

*Interviewer: 'What are your expectations about finding a job in the future? What's going to happen when you've finished your education?'*

*Migrant girl: 'I think it's going to be very difficult in my situation because I wear a headscarf and that's really given me a lot of problems. I even expect it's going to be more of a problem in the future. That's why I have my doubts, my headscarf plays a large role in my decision about my future education. Because I'm not sure that when I get my diploma whether I'll be able to work if I wear a headscarf. Are there companies that will or won't hire you? You have to think about that. I think girls with headscarves think more about their education than other girls, just because they wear a headscarf.'*

The above clearly shows that young migrant girls make different choices simply because they wear a headscarf, and they therefore expect to have difficulties when looking for a job.

The data clearly show that discrimination is an obstacle for these youngsters, so our hypothesis that discrimination has a negative impact on labour market participation is confirmed. However, interviews with the youngsters also revealed that many of them do not see discrimination as a real hindrance:

*Interviewer: 'Do you think discrimination will affect you when applying for a job?'*

*Migrant girl: 'I don't know, maybe because I wear a headscarf, I will be affected more than someone who doesn't. We'll see!'*

*Interviewer: 'Don't you think it will affect you in the future?'*

*Migrant girl: 'No, I don't think so.'*

*Interviewer: 'And what do you think is important when looking for a job, which qualifications? What are employers looking for?'*

*Migrant girl: 'Your education for sure and your work experience, that's really important.'*

The girls are convinced that they will find a job if they have the right papers, the right experience and the right attitude. Even the girls who wear a headscarf feel that finding a job will, in the end, not pose a problem. So interestingly the young migrant girls do confirm that discrimination exists, but at the same time they feel they can overcome it.

The literature demonstrated that young migrant girls are disadvantaged when it comes to support from their social network, and they do not have the right networks that might help them enter the labour market. The quantitative data revealed that most migrant youngsters (56%) do not get any support with their schoolwork. This was also confirmed by our

qualitative study: many migrant youngsters, boys and girls, experience a lack of support, which makes it more difficult for them to stay at school if things go wrong.

*Interviewer: 'Are there people to help you with school, study, looking for a job, things like that?'*

*Migrant girl: 'Not really, I usually go to the employment agency, or I hear about a job from my neighbour. Then I think nice, I'm going to take a look. But I usually just go to employment agencies.'*

*Interviewer: 'And help with school, or your studies?'*

*Migrant girl: 'Uh, no.'*

It was clear from the interviews that many migrant parents do not know how to help their children with their schoolwork and their transition to the labour market. In many cases they are low educated and are unfamiliar with the Dutch school system and labour market. One teacher explains why she thinks it is difficult for migrant parents to support their children in school:

*Teacher: 'Thinking school is important is not the same as actually showing your children that you think it's important. And I think it's very important to show them that you do think it's important, so being there for them and showing them that it is the case. I think it has to do with their place of origin, where they had hardly any education at all themselves. So it's difficult for them to appreciate how important it is for parenting.'*

Our study revealed that migrant girls' networks are often single-ethnic (82%) and single-gender (more than 60% mostly girls vs. 20% for native girls) which gives them fewer opportunities to find a job through their network. The results of the survey reveal that many migrant youngsters attempt to find work through temporary employment agencies, which might mean their job position on the labour market is somewhat uncertain. On the other hand, in most cases native youngsters find a job through their networks. Trainee posts are very important in this sense because youngsters are often offered a job following a successful internship.

As we have seen, young migrant women experience a lack of support and have limited networks, which makes it more difficult for them to access the labour market or high status jobs, which confirms our third hypothesis. Combine this with the discrimination they encounter when looking for a trainee post, and their entry to the labour market is severely affected.

We asked the young migrant girls in our study about their future prospects and outlooks. All of them would like to finish higher education, to have a career, to marry and to have a family. The migrant girls in our study have modern views on work; they have an idea about what their future job will look like, and are convinced about their future job. The majority of migrant girls reported, for instance, that their heart lies with the profession for which they are studying.

In the first place the girls do not see marriage and a family as an obstacle to their getting an education and having a career. Despite their modern views on work, they have traditional views on marriage and the family. They all want to marry a man from the same ethnic background, mostly for religious reasons. None of them would like to cohabit and all want to marry and start a family. Finishing their education is not even a prerequisite; they believe they will continue in education after getting married and starting a family.

*Field note (focus group with Moroccan girls):*

*Before getting married the girls prefer to finish their education first and start a career. They would like to have a stable situation before getting married and having a family. However, one of the girls argues that it is possible to get married when you're still in school because 'it's just a man, you can still stay at school, right?' She tells of a pregnant girl in school who is continuing her education. The girls agree that combining work and a family might be difficult, but they believe it all depends on your own mentality and that of your husband. All the girls agree that they want to continue working after getting married.*

However, when questioned further they admit that combining work and a family might be difficult and therefore many of them would prefer to work part time. The Turkish girls in particular feel that it is a woman's job to take care of the household and the children. The girls said in the focus groups that, generally speaking, their parents and future husbands have more traditional views on gender roles than they have themselves, which might make combining work and family life difficult for them in the future. The teachers confirm that many Muslim girls leave school once they get married. The girls themselves also confirm this and give examples of older sisters who did not continue school after getting married. There is clearly some friction between modern views on work and traditional views on marriage and family. A Turkish girl explains why her sister did not finish her education:

*Field note:*

*One of the girls explains that her older sister wanted to get an education and then get married, but in the end she married young, at 16. I asked why she had changed her mind and decided to get married. She told me: 'love is blind.' The sister got married, did not finish her education, gave birth to her first child and is not at work. The Turkish girls in the focus group said that this happens a lot: 'If you have a job it's difficult to combine the household and care for children. These are, after all, the tasks of a woman.' The community has traditional views, and so do the parents.*

We also found that girls sometimes use their education to postpone or avoid care responsibilities or marriage. As long as they are at school, less pressure is put on them to get married. A teacher explains the situation of many migrant girls at the school she works at:

*Teacher: 'The longer you go to school, the more freedom you have. I have to say I encourage this a lot. It is fantastic if you can do that, that you can study. I mean, for many migrant girls it is over afterwards, you get married and your hands are tied.'*

*Interviewer: 'Is that the future of many girls when they finish school?'*

*Teacher: 'Yes, and their parents and parents-in-law put a lot of pressure on them. And if they are married they have to show that they're fertile. This means we have a lot of pupils with a child. Only one child, but it is something they have to prove. So they have to fight to stay at school. Why not just stay at home? Well, it's easy to understand why they prefer to go to school when they explain their home situation.'*

Our study and national statistics show that, on average, girls of Turkish or Moroccan descent in the Netherlands marry and start a family at a younger age than native Dutch girls do, and they also have more children than native girls. This clearly has a negative impact on their participation on the labour market. We can therefore confirm the hypothesis that traditional views on gender roles in Turkish and Moroccan communities in the Netherlands do limit the labour market participation of the women in these groups. In contrast, the views of the girls themselves are not in line with our hypothesis: in the first place they do not feel impeded by traditional values. They do agree that many migrant girls marry early, but they feel they are in control of their own future and things might turn out to be different for them. Indeed, figures on marriage and the arrival of a first child are, for the second generation, getting closer to those for native girls (SCP, 2009). However, the interviews revealed that many migrant girls still leave school or work because they have care responsibilities.

### 3.5 Emancipation and integration policies

In the past few decades the migration and integration policies in the Netherlands have shifted from a multicultural approach to an assimilation approach requiring full cultural and social adaptation of immigrants to the host society. This was heavily influenced by the public debate which turned in favour of what is called ‘new realism’ (Prins and Saharso, 2008; Prins, 2010). Prins (2010) distinguishes five distinct features of this new approach. Firstly, a new realism discourse involves daring to face facts, and speaking frankly about the ‘truth’ that integration actually failed, something that former discourses concealed. Secondly, the new realism speaks up for ‘ordinary people’, i.e. the indigenous population. A third characteristic of new realism is the suggestion that realism is a characteristic feature of national identity: being Dutch equals being frank, straightforward and realistic. Fourthly, new realism is in opposition to the political left. Finally, the new realism discourse is highly gendered, centred on gender and sexuality, as evidenced by its criticism of ‘headscarves’, arranged or forced marriages, female genital mutilation, honour killing, the cult of virginity, domestic violence and homophobia. Prins labels the extreme-right discourses as ‘hyper-realism’.

This public debate has influenced integration policy in the Netherlands and immigrants are expected to adapt to Dutch norms and values. Integration courses, a Dutch canon and civic education in school were introduced in 2006 to ensure immigrants were loyal to Dutch values. Furthermore, immigrants themselves are held responsible for their own integration. Attention has shifted in the last thirty years from structural barriers to cultural barriers located in the migrant culture (Roggeband and Verloo, 2007). Integration policies target first and second generation migrants. Because second generation migrants are born and raised in the Netherlands, they are even more expected to integrate and therefore integration policies put more pressure on them. However, there is little attention for gender differences in these policies. ‘E-quality’ – a knowledge centre on emancipation, the family and diversity in the Netherlands, insists that it is essential to pay attention to the labour market outcomes of migrant girls, particularly those who are low educated, simply because their position is very weak and no specific measures are in place for them (Alibux, 2009).

A remarkable development in Dutch emancipation policy is that an implicit distinction is made between native Dutch women on the one hand, and non-western immigrant women on the other (Prins and Saharso, 2008). The objectives of more financial independence and more women in positions of power and decision making primarily target native Dutch women, whereas the aims of preventing and combating violence against women and

preventing social exclusion of vulnerable and deprived women target women from ethnic minority groups, and Muslim women in particular. Labour market participation is not considered a priority for this group, and volunteering or having care responsibilities are seen as a first step towards participation (Keuzenkamp, 2007; Prins and Saharso, 2008). Most of today's emancipation policies on migrants target newcomers. However, the aims for second generation female migrants are unclear.

Dutch minority and gender equality policies have undergone two major shifts. Minority and integration policies have become more gendered, where unequal gender relations received more attention. At the same time the emancipation policies became more 'ethnicized', with a special and different focus on the emancipation of migrant women (Roggeband and Verloo, 2007).

Dutch policies on integration and emancipation have twofold consequences for immigrant women. The dominant discourse of new realism views immigrant women as victims of their own culture and religion. The Muslim culture in particular is seen as being oppressive to women and as a threat to social cohesion in Dutch society and to Dutch values. However, the shifts in integration and emancipation policies moved immigrant women from the margins of interest to the focus of these policies. This made immigrant women more visible and gave them the opportunity to speak up. They can defend their interpretation of Islam and their own views and desires for emancipation (Prins and Saharso, 2008). Dutch minority policies shifted from a focus on structural barriers to a focus on cultural barriers to satisfactory integration, for which the migrant groups themselves are held responsible. This suggests that Dutch policymakers believe cultural norms and values are highly restrictive for migrant women since they are being culturally victimised. The migrant girls in our study hold different opinions: according to them wearing their headscarf, for instance, is perceived as a form of emancipation instead of a form of oppression, as often viewed by Western cultures. They would like to have a choice, to be Muslim and to be active in the labour market and strive for equal opportunities for women who wear a headscarf. In a study by Roggeband (2010), migrant women's organisations challenge the assumption that culture and religion are barriers to participation and instead feel that processes of exclusion and othering are actual barriers to participation. So according to migrant women, policy should focus on combating discrimination and exclusion, instead of demanding that migrant women give up their cultural and religious norms and assimilate. Policies that aim to change traditional cultural norms do not fit in with their perspectives and might not be effective. Policies should instead focus on creating scope and opportunities for migrant women to participate in the labour market.

Policies should not only target the responsibilities of migrants themselves to adapt, but should also create opportunities to combine personal cultural norms of migrants and participation in the labour market.

### **3.6 Conclusion and discussion**

Young migrants are very optimistic about their future, and migrant girls from Turkish and Moroccan backgrounds in particular are very satisfied with their school life and with their life in general. Interviews and observations revealed that school is a place where they can escape from strict social control from their family and community and from care responsibilities, and it offers them a safe social space in which they can meet friends. Being in education does, in some cases, postpone the age at which Muslim girls get married.

Young migrant women feel that if they get the right education, the right work experience, and have the right attitude, then their future career will be successful. Migrant girls themselves have more meritocratic views, and focus primarily on human capital factors for participation in the labour market. From their perspective, discrimination, the lack of support, or not having the right network do not seem to be considered as a real hindrance. They also think they will be able to combine running a household and bringing up children with studying and making a career. Youngsters feel they are fully in control of their future.

However, existing statistics on labour market participation and the results of our study show a different, gloomier picture, and young migrant girls might have too optimistic a view. Our empirical data shows that many migrant girls feel discriminated against, many lack support from their social network, and the social networks of many young migrants are single-ethnic, which restricts their access to the labour market. Young migrant girls are also optimistic about having a career without being restricted by early marriage. However, many of them do marry early and start a family, which does in fact limit their opportunities to finish their education or enter the labour market. Because of the traditional views on gender roles, many migrant girls decide not to work and instead become a fulltime housewife and mother.

The question as to the likely explanation for differences in educational attainment and labour market participation of migrant girls can be answered as follows. There are two lines of explanation. Firstly, a socio-economic perspective, and secondly an ethnic perspective. The position of migrants in western societies is, to a great extent, the result of their low socio-economic background. Lower education levels compared with native girls still account, to a certain extent, for their disadvantaged position on the labour market, which is partly the result

of their parents' low education level and socio-economic status of many second generation migrant youngsters. However, other factors that can be defined as more 'ethnic' are also relevant. We found that discrimination plays a role, particularly for immigrant Muslim women who, in many cases, feel excluded from the labour market because they wear a headscarf. Traditional views on gender roles, early marriage and care responsibilities might explain the differences in labour participation between immigrant men and immigrant women.

According to our analysis there are different explanations for the continuing disadvantaged position of migrant women in the Netherlands. We feel migrant youngsters underestimate this disadvantaged position and are not fully aware of the above-mentioned obstacles. Our findings are in line with the immigrant optimism hypothesis (Andriessen, Phalet and Lens, 2006; Bankston and Zhou, 2002; Kao and Tienda, 1995), which explains why migrant youngsters are usually optimistic and satisfied with their current situation whereas in reality they are in a disadvantaged position. Migrant parents clearly have aspirations for their children to be upwardly mobile, and they encourage them to get a good education. They feel their children should take advantage of the educational opportunities available to them in the host society. This stance is adopted by their children and tends to motivate them to do well at school. Young migrants feel they are getting opportunities their parents never had.

The optimistic stance of migrant girls can be further explained by their dual frame of reference: compared with their parents, and particularly girls compared with their mothers, are making big leaps forward (Lee, 2006; Lopez, 2002, 2003). They have more opportunities for education and labour market participation and experience greater gender equality than their mothers experienced in their country of origin. In addition, many migrant youngsters grow up in segregated neighbourhoods and go to segregated schools and have no native friends. As a result they do not compare themselves with native Dutch youngsters, but mostly with other migrant youngsters. When migrant youngsters compare themselves with their parents, and with other migrant youngsters, and look at the situation in their country of origin, then they are not in a disadvantaged position.

We can now answer our second question: do minority and emancipation policies in the Netherlands meet the needs of migrant women? Migrant women are today the main focus of minority and emancipation policies. This has made them more visible and has enabled them to voice their wishes. On the other hand, these policies see migrant women as victims and as unemancipated, without the voice of migrant women themselves actually being heard. In this way the policies do not meet the demands of migrant women. Another way in which policies do not meet the wishes of migrant women is that integration and emancipation policies pay

scant attention to second generation migrants. Current policies mainly target first generation migrants. The disadvantaged position of second generation migrant boys and girls is covered by general policy on early school leaving and youth unemployment. However, special attention is needed for young migrant girls, since their position in the labour market is clearly weak (Alibux, 2009).

The current economic crisis renders the need for appropriate policy even more urgent. Despite their disadvantaged position, migrant women seem to be less affected by the global crisis than migrant men. For example, unemployment rates among young migrants are on the increase, although less so for women than for men. Moreover, the labour market participation of migrant women in the Netherlands continues to improve, whereas for migrant men it is deteriorating (Statistics Netherlands [CBS], 2010b). However, unemployment rates are still high compared with native Dutch women. Sectors where, traditionally, more women work seem less affected by the crisis. And the fact that participation is actually on the increase also points to an ongoing emancipation process of migrant women which is not only restricted to their life at school and is not hampered by the crisis. One might expect labour market participation figures to be even higher if there weren't a global crisis. This outcome is in line with the fact that second generation migrant girls perform better in the education system, and education in the host country seems to have an emancipating effect. The modern perspectives on making a career, and on marriage and family also corroborate this. Statistics on marriage and childbirth indeed show that second generation migrant women are more in line with the statistics for native women, nowadays they marry at an older age, and have, on average, fewer children than their mothers did. Altogether one might expect that the emancipating processes of young migrant girls in the Netherlands will in the future be translated into more labour market participation of migrant women.

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## 4 Migrant girls: conquering the future?

This chapter is co-authored by Willibrord de Graaf (Utrecht University, the Netherlands) and is currently resubmitted and under review at the international journal *Gender and Education*.

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**Abstract:**

Second generation migrant women in the Netherlands have, in recent decades, made considerable progress in education and work, particularly when compared with their mothers. They have even surpassed their male counterparts in education. However, there is still a rather large gap between their educational performance and their participation on the labour market. We examine current developments in education, labour participation, and relationships and place them in the context of emancipation and migration policies. This context already hints at the hypotheses we wish to propose to explain the gap between education and work: we stress the possible effects of discrimination on the one hand, and the convictions about family formation and motherhood on the other. These hypotheses are placed in the changed context of the Dutch integration debate, in which the migrant women, especially the Muslim women, have an ambivalent position.

**4.1 Introduction**

The position of young migrants is contested in the Netherlands. The dominant conviction in public debate is that young migrants lag behind their native counterparts in education and at the labour market generally as a result of their unwillingness to integrate into Dutch society. This unwillingness is ascribed to their ethnic/cultural and religious backgrounds, and supposedly indicates the 'failed integration of migrants'. Islamic migrant girls in particular are seen as a group in danger: they are considered to be the victims of a 'conservative' Muslim religion that oppresses women (of which the veil is a visible token), and moreover as victims of an ethnic culture that is not up to date in matters relating to the emancipation of women (Schinkel, 2008; Prins, 2004; Van den Berg and Schinkel, 2009). We will discuss later the ambivalent meaning of emancipation in this context of integration. Yet a more complex reality is concealed behind this public perception. As native Dutch girls overcame their disadvantage in education and on the labour market in recent decades, migrant girls have, in the last ten years, displayed a remarkable leap forwards in this respect, and they seem to be taking part in a wider emancipatory process. More so than their male migrant counterparts, migrant girls display advances in education and in their behaviour and attitude towards marriage and the division of roles between the sexes. However, this does not mean they are now on an equal footing with native Dutch girls. In some areas they are closer to native girls, but they continue to lag behind in other areas. Particularly remarkable is the fact that they do rather well in education, yet show no comparable increase in labour market participation. This paper is an

attempt to examine how this situation can be explained. We put forward a number of hypotheses because existing data and our own research results are not unequivocal.

When we use the term ‘migrant girls’ in this article we refer to female members of the four largest migrant groups in the Netherlands: Turkish, Moroccan, Surinamese and Antillean. Nowadays about half of the people originating from these groups are second generation migrants. Turks and Moroccans arrived in the Netherlands in the 1960s and 1970s as guest workers. People with a Surinamese or Antillean background arrived a decade later in the Netherlands as a result of colonial ties. The situation of Turkish and Moroccan women differs clearly from the situation of Surinamese and Antillean women, as we will discuss in later stages of this article.

We will start with a theoretical orientation, in which we discuss how the public discourse on migrants and their integration in society has developed, and what that implies for the emancipation policies regarding migrant women. This offers the framework for the analysis of the differentiated development of migrant girls in education and the labour market. After a short methods section, we first give an overview of the available data on the current position of migrant girls in education, work and relationships. We aim to give a clear overview over the years, for different migrant groups and for first and second generation migrant girls. We also discuss the institutional context of the Dutch education system and the labour market and how this context may influence the prospects and experiences of young migrant girls.

Thereafter, we look at likely obstacles to labour market participation. Previous studies have demonstrated that the following factors may impede the labour market participation of migrants: low education level, incompatible job search strategies and networks of migrants and employers, discriminatory practices (ethnic and gendered penalties) and gender views on marriage and the family (OECD, 2007, 2010). This study focuses on the last two obstacles: discrimination and gender views. The above-mentioned obstacles together with the shifting public debate with anti-immigrant (and in particular anti-Islam) attitudes and assimilationist demands, make the position of migrant women in Dutch society rather complex. We argue that prejudice and stereotyping do not benefit the labour market participation of Muslim women, and that discrimination against those women who wear a headscarf is a very real obstacle to their entry into the labour market.

## 4.2 Theoretical orientation

The dominant discourse<sup>1</sup> in the Netherlands on the multicultural society and on Muslim women has changed considerably in the last ten years, and the effects of this change may actually obstruct the emancipation of this group. Prins and Saharso (2010) argue that the Netherlands has changed from being a relatively tolerant country to a nation that now calls for cultural assimilation, tough measures and neo-patriotism. A number of events e.g. 9/11, the terrorist attacks in Madrid and London, and the murder of a Dutch filmmaker who openly criticized Islam, have all reinforced anti-Muslim feelings in the Netherlands. As in other western European countries, the public discourse in the Netherlands is dominated by associating Muslims with violence and terrorism. About 78% of the population are concerned about Islamic extremism, and 52% of the native Dutch population have negative feelings towards Muslims (Pew Research Center, 2005). In addition, it has also been suggested that Islamic views and ways of life might not be compatible with western lifestyles. For example, over 75% of western Europeans believe that Islamic attitudes towards women conflict with western values (Van der Noll, 2010). The wearing of the headscarf by Muslim women has become a central topic in (European) public debate. Although most women wear a headscarf voluntarily, many western people perceive the headscarf as the oppression of women and as a rejection of gender equality (Van der Noll 2010). A court in the Netherlands recently ruled that schools may forbid its students from wearing headscarves in class if it is against a school's (religious) convictions. Public opinion on the headscarf is clear: about half the population of the Netherlands is in favour of banning headscarves in public places.

The examples discussed above make clear that the public discourse in the Netherlands is not only mostly focussed at Muslim immigrant groups, but also highly gendered. According to Van den Berg and Schinkel (2009) this change in the integration discourse has the dual effects of excluding minorities and counteracting the emancipation of women in minority groups. The focus on the 'assumed' gender inequality experienced by Muslim women and the incompatibility of western values with Islamic values are also visible in current emancipation and integration policies. Initially, emancipation policies aimed at the labour market integration of women and on improving equality and autonomy. The emancipation policies changed during the 1980s to focus on migrant women (Korteweg, 2005). Nowadays formal emancipation policies still focus on increasing the labour market participation of women, with

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<sup>1</sup> We use the term discourse in a broad sense (Blommaert 2005) as "a meaningful semiotic human activity seen in connection with social, cultural, and historical patterns and developments of use" (p. 3).

special attention for the labour market participation of migrant women, and on the themes of security and the international struggle against discrimination of women (Ministerie van OCW, 2007; SCP/CBS, 2011). Emancipation policies have, over time, become more ethnicised. Most attention is given to Turkish and Moroccan women, especially since they are representing the Muslim women who are considered to be suppressed by their religion. According to the policies, Muslim migrant women still have a long way to go (Du Bois-Reymond, 2009; Korteweg, 2005). Besides, women from the two other main migrant groups in the Netherlands -Surinamese and Antillean- show similar participation rates in education and the labour market to those of Dutch women, and are therefore considered to be emancipated. Policymakers implicitly assume that native Dutch women have completed the emancipation process and serve as a reference group for migrant women. Additionally, the 2008-2011 emancipation policy document draws attention to the need for men to be emancipated in matters relating to their behaviour and views towards division of work, care and household tasks (Ministerie OCW, 2007). Despite the introduction of some limited measures to ‘emancipate’ men, substantial measures did not follow.

At the same time, policies on integration and migration have undergone drastic changes. The approach in integration and immigration policies has changed from having a multiculturalist character to having an assimilationist character, which means migrants are required to adapt to Dutch culture. The focus changed from structural integration in Dutch society (in education and work) to a greater emphasis on culture. In this culturalist perspective migrant culture is believed to be an obstacle to integration and Islamic culture in particular is viewed as incompatible with Dutch culture. Together with the shift towards culture, the position of migrant women also came to the fore. Women are seen as victims of their own culture and at the same time as responsible for their own emancipation and integration (Van den Berg and Schinkel, 2009; Bevelander and Groeneveld, 2010). This suggests that, in line with the culturalist shift in the public debate, Dutch policymakers believe cultural norms and values are highly restrictive for migrant women since these women are turned into cultural victims. The linkage between emancipation and integration policies implies that gender inequality is believed to be an inherent element in migrant cultures and is perceived as an obstacle to integration in Dutch society (Van den Berg and Schinkel, 2009).

In short, Dutch minority and gender equality policies have undergone two major shifts. Integration policies are now more gendered, with more attention being given to unequal gender relations especially for Muslim women. At the same time emancipation policies became more ‘ethnicised’, with a special and different focus on the emancipation of migrant

women (Roggeband and Verloo, 2007). This shift in Dutch emancipation policies is discussed by several scholars, who drew similar conclusions (Ghorashi, 2010; Prins and Saharso, 2008; Roggeband, 2010).

This current state of affairs makes it interesting and relevant to examine the intersection of ethnicity and gender. Therefore, we will in this article make use of what is called the concept of 'intersectionality', and combine insights from feminist theory and Critical Race Theory, arguing that the position of migrant women in the Netherlands is not only affected by gender inequality, but also by racism (Davis, 2008). Davis defines 'Intersectionality' as: the interaction between gender, race and other categories of difference in individual lives, social practices, institutional arrangements, and cultural ideologies and the outcomes of these interactions in terms of power. Intersectionality is giving centrality to questions how race is gendered and how gender is racialised. Although Critical Race Theory is originating from the US, it is also relevant for the European context, since according to Gillborn (2006) 'Critical Race Theory is not so much a theory as a perspective; it is a set of interrelated beliefs about the significance of race/racism and how it operates in contemporary western society'. In the Netherlands the term 'race' is not commonly used, therefore we will in this article use the term 'ethnicity'. In this article we explore how ethnicity is interacting with gender, and how the change in the dominant discourse in the Netherlands contributes to the 'othering' of migrant women and may obstruct the participation of especially young Muslim women on the labour market and in society at large. We will pay special attention on the role of discrimination as a corollary of the changed discourse on integration and emancipation, and on the own attitudes and beliefs of the young migrant women about women's' tasks in family and care.

### **4.3 Methods**

This study combines different social science research methods: analysis of existing data and quantitative and qualitative methods. Most of the existing data used for this study are taken from *Statistics Netherlands* (CBS) and several other national research centres. In addition to statistical data we also examined policy documents and the existing literature in order to make the overview as comprehensive as possible.

Further we also used data from two comparative European research projects TRESEGY 2009 and PROFACITY 2011 for which we collected quantitative (n=608) and qualitative data among native Dutch and migrant youngsters in secondary vocational

education. The present study mostly relies on the qualitative data, but in some cases we also refer to the quantitative data.

The qualitative data were collected during ethnographic fieldwork (2008-2010) in a number of different settings: a trainee project for young migrants in Amsterdam (part of the 14 case studies discussed in chapter 1) and at a secondary vocational school in Utrecht. Twenty-six youngsters and six teachers were interviewed. Additionally, 23 people (9 migrant girls, 14 teachers/professionals) participated in four focus groups organised at the secondary vocational schools. The data were analysed with the MAXQDA 2007 software package. Segments were coded and codes were rearranged to produce a systematic overview of the perspectives of youngsters on education and labour market participation.

#### **4.4 The situation in education, work and relationships**

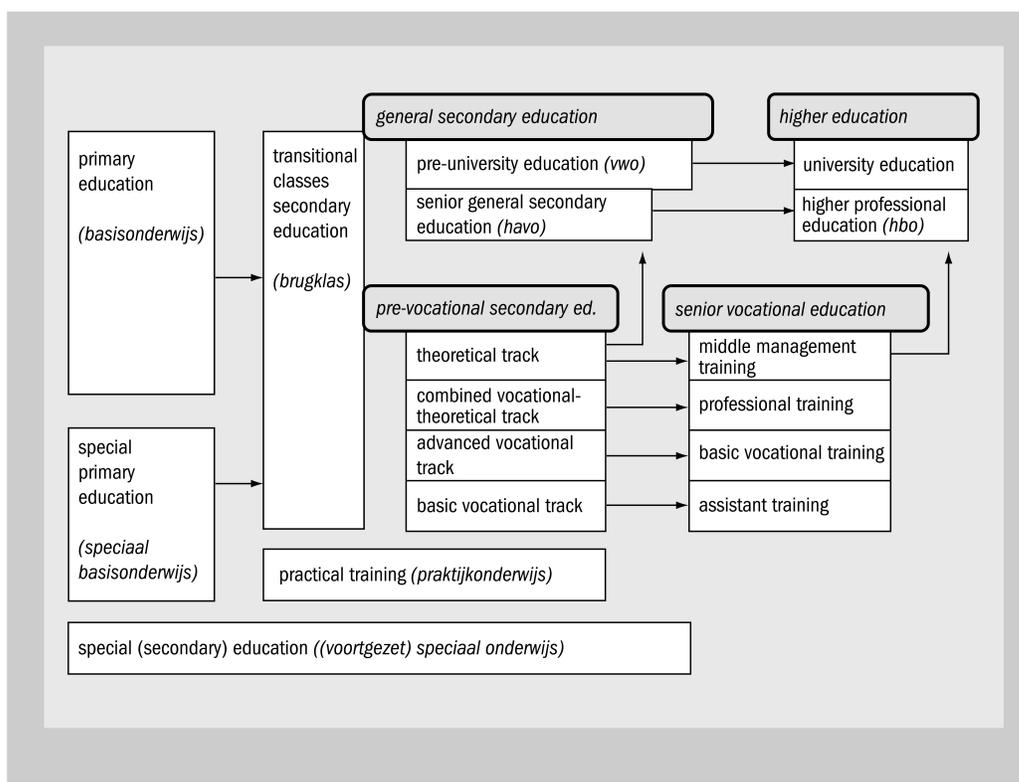
##### ***4.4.1 Education***

Although migrant girls are currently doing better at school than a decade ago, they still lag behind their native counterparts. Their disadvantaged position is already visible in the results of the CITO test, which all children take towards the end of primary education. The Dutch school system has an early selection procedure, and the CITO test is the first selection point in the educational career of children in the Netherlands. Most migrant youngsters end up in lower levels of the education system since, on average, they are two years behind in mathematics and language skills when they take the CITO test. A high proportion of migrant youngsters enter the VET system (vocational education and training), which exists in parallel with general secondary education (see Figure 4.1). About 55% of all pupils enter the prevocational and senior vocational system after primary education, but migrants account for 70% of this figure (CBS 2010).

It is theoretically possible to move from lower levels to higher levels of secondary education, referred to as the 'piling up' of diplomas. More migrant youngsters take this route (25% against 18% of native Dutch). About a third of Turkish and Moroccan youngsters enter higher secondary education (20% direct route, 15% long route by 'piling up' (Crul and Heering 2008)). In practice it requires considerable effort and motivation to reach higher levels of education, and only the 'go-getters' succeed. Despite the difficulties many migrant youngsters encounter in their school life, their educational level is improving, even more so for migrant girls who have made a step forward in terms of educational success, compared with about a

decade ago. It is important to see where they came from: their parents were mostly newcomers and low educated, and in most cases their mothers in particular had no primary education at all. It was not uncommon in the 1980s and 1990s for Turkish and Moroccan parents to keep their daughters at home and away from further education. The fact that parents started to see the significance of education for girls is only a recent development (Crul and Doornik 2003; SCP 2009). In the 1990s migrant girls lagged behind migrant boys in primary education. However, they have since started to outperform the boys to some extent, as evidenced by the results of the CITO test, though Turkish girls are the exception, who, in spite of progress, continue to lag behind boys.

**Figure 4.1** *Structure of Dutch education system.*



*Source: Herweijer (2009)*

This pattern of a gradually improved performance and even surpassing migrant boys cannot only be seen in primary education but in almost every aspect of further education: there are improvements in secondary vocational education, in more streaming into forms of secondary and higher education, in lower drop-out rates, and in migrant students passing exams etc. (SCP 2009; CBS 2010a). Surinamese girls show the greatest progress and are now almost on a

par with Dutch girls. Overall the educational results of second generation women are now outperforming those of the first generation. Table 4.1 gives an indication of these processes by showing the inflow in higher education.

**Table 4.1** *Inflow in higher education, by sex and ethnic group (x1000).*

		Women					Men				
		T	M	S	A	D	T	M	S	A	D
<b>HBO</b>	1995/96	0.8	0.7	2.4	1.4	11.1	1.3	1.1	2.2	1.2	11.6
	2009/10	4.9	4.9	6.8	4.0	15.4	4.5	4.3	5.2	3.1	14.4
<b>WO</b>	1995/96	0.4	0.3	1.8	0.8	6.7	0.7	0.5	1.8	0.8	7.9
	2009/10	1.8	1.4	3.1	1.8	8.4	1.5	1.2	2.2	1.2	8.3

T= Turkish, M= Moroccan, S= Surinamese, A=Antillean, D=Dutch

HBO=higher professional education, WO=university education

Source: CBS Statline

#### 4.4.2 Work

The steady progress made in education is however not reflected on the labour market. In general the labour participation of migrant women, particularly Turkish and Moroccan women, is much lower than among Dutch women. The lowest participation rates can be found among the first generation women, whereas the second generation (while partly still in education) are already showing higher participation rates, although not as high as among Dutch girls. Surinamese women are the exception here, and the first generation participates more than the second generation. The lower participation levels of migrant women in the labour market can partly be ascribed to their lower education level. However, studies have shown that even when controlled for education level, there is still a difference in labour market participation (CBS 2010a). Table 4.2 presents the figures for 2010, but it should be remarked that the trend for the last three years has declined to a certain extent as a result of the economic crisis. This effect is particularly conspicuous among migrants: a decrease of 3-5% in labour participation. The low labour market participation of migrant women is not just the result of the recent economic downturn, since the participation rate has been low for some time. Labour market participation among migrants is heavily influenced by economic fortune: they benefit in the good times but unemployment tends to hit them harder in the bad times. Young migrants in particular are mostly hit by unemployment, particularly among those aged

**Table 4.2** *Net Labour participation 2010 by sex and ethnic group, as a %.*

	Dutch	Non- Western	Turkish	Moroccan	Surinamese	Antillean
<b>Total</b>	69.4	52.8	52.1	48.4	60.2	57.2
<b>Men</b>	76.8	60.4	64.4	59.8	62.4	61.7
<b>Women</b>	61.9	45.3	39.0	36.6	58.3	52.9
<b>Women age 15-25</b>	38.9	25.4	24.4	24.8	28.8	25.3
<b>Women age 25-35</b>	85.1	55.4	47.4	49.8	73.3	63.4
<b>Women 1st gen</b>		46.1	38.8	35.6	62.5	51.3
<b>Women 2<sup>nd</sup> gen</b>		43.4	39.5	38.6	50.1	55.7

*Source: CBS (EBB, own computation)*

between 15 and 25 (24% boys and 22% girls were unemployed in 2010, compared with their native Dutch counterparts at 9% and 10% respectively). Furthermore the nature of the labour contract also has to be taken into account: 45% of migrants, particularly the younger ones, have flexible jobs, twice as many than the native Dutch (CBS 2008). And flexible jobs, as is well-known, run a greater risk of unemployment in harsher economic times.

It is also possible to look at labour participation in a different way: how many women earn enough to be financially independent (earning at least 70% of the minimum monthly wage of 834 euros), which is a formal Dutch criterion for the emancipation of women.

**Table 4.3** *Economic independency, women aged 15-64, as a %.*

	2001	2002	2004	2006	2008
<b>Dutch</b>	42	43	42	45	48
<b>Turkish</b>	20	20	19	19	22
<b>Moroccan</b>	19	19	20	20	24
<b>Surinamese</b>	47	47	46	48	51
<b>Antillean</b>	36	37	38	38	48

*Source: CBS (income statistics)*

Table 4.3 clearly shows that economic independence is increasing slowly, for all groups of women, but there is sharp division between migrant groups: Turkish and Moroccan women lag behind, whereas Surinamese and Antillean women are on the same level as Dutch women simply because they work more hours. In 2008, 45% of the first generation of migrant women was financially independent, and 35% of the second generation. But this is due to the younger age of the second generation: after correcting for age their figure rises by 20% (CBS 2010a).

#### 4.4.3 Relations and attitudes to care and work

One of the reasons for poor labour market participation might be the fact that migrant women are, more than Dutch women, focused on marriage and care and less on labour and earning a living. We now present some interesting demographic data, and then discuss attitudes towards work and care.

**Table 4.4** *Average number of children and age of firstborn child, 1st and 2<sup>nd</sup> generation.*

	First generation		Second generation					
	1996	2008	2000	2008				
<b>Dutch</b>	1.47	29.2	1.78	29.6				
<b>Turkish</b>	2.53	24.3	1.96	26.4	1.48	27.7*	1.66	29.3
<b>Moroccan</b>	3.37	26.1	3.25	27.2	1.65	28.5*	1.93	28.7
<b>Surinamese</b>	1.51	26.6	1.71	27.2	1.57	28.7*	1.70	28.4
<b>Antillean</b>	1.59	26.0	1.81	25.7	1.76	29.6*	1.81	29.1
<b>Total non western</b>	2.31	26.3	2.09	27.5	1.69	28.3*	1.72	29.2
<b>Total</b>	1.53	28.9	1.77	29.4				

Source: SCP, Jaarrapport Integratie 2009

\* year 2001

It can be concluded from Table 4.4 that the average number of children has risen, but mostly because of Dutch women. Surinamese and Antillean women have a birth pattern similar to that of Dutch women, while the number of children born to Moroccan and Turkish women has declined. The birth pattern for the second generation in particular is similar to that of Dutch women, both in numbers of children and age when the first child is born. Neither is labour market participation after marriage showing any signs of diminishing (SCP 2006) although after the birth of the first or second child most migrant women (except Surinamese) leave the labour market, more so than Dutch women. After 2006 more non-western migrant mothers were active on the labour market, and about 30% of non-participating migrant mothers would like to have a job (CBS 2010b).

These data correspond to a shift in attitude towards care and the division of roles between men and women. Several studies (SCP 2004, 2006, 2007, 2008; SCP/CBS 2009) show that migrant women have, over time, adopted views about the role division between men and women more corresponding to the views of Dutch women, and about labour market participation, although they do not fully share the views of Dutch women on these topics. Migrant women tend anyway to think less traditionally than migrant men. The second

generation in particular has views on the position on women and men that can be compared with those of the native Dutch (SCP 2004, 2007, 2009). It is also well-known that attitudes towards a more equal task division change in line with the level of education: the higher the level of education, the more emancipated the views. The fact that the second generation is more highly educated than the first generation contributes towards their adopting more 'modern' opinions on men and women. However it is the more reluctant attitudes among migrant men that make it difficult to put these views into practice (Pels and De Gruyter 2006). We will discuss this later.

#### **4.5 The divergence between education and labour market participation**

The above overview examined the current state of affairs in education, the labour market, and attitudes towards relationships. We now consider the potential explanations for the discrepancy between migrant girls' relatively high educational performance and their low participation levels on the labour market.

We start with the possible influence of discriminatory practices. Following on from the negative attitudes towards Muslims as mentioned above, and the debate surrounding the wearing of the veil, we can find indications of discrimination. It must be remarked here that official figures on discrimination, based on official complaints to Anti Discrimination Offices (SCP 2007, 2010), are only the tip of the iceberg. About 75% have stated they would not make an official complaint if they experienced discrimination because they fear it would not help (Van den Berg and Evers 2006). Another study by Entzinger and Dourleijn (2008) points out that reporting discrimination might possibly turn someone into a victim, a loser. This study, based on surveys in 1999 and 2006, shows how Turkish and Moroccan youngsters report less discrimination in 2006, even though as a group (based on ethnic descent and religion) they encounter discrimination more frequently, particularly on the labour market and in daily life. It is therefore difficult to obtain satisfactory data on discrimination, both objectively and subjectively, although discrimination is known to exist (SCP 2007b). Recently, two studies on temporary employment agencies confirmed this: the studies showed that 76% of the discriminatory requests were honoured by the intermediaries (Backer 2011, Loeters 2011).

With this caveat in mind, the official figures show that women experience less discrimination on the labour market than men: they make fewer complaints than men (43% against 57% respectively). The results of our survey also show that girls generally feel less discriminated against than boys (Turkish youngsters 59% vs. 32%; Moroccan youngsters 71%

vs. 45%). The reasons for discrimination differ. In contrast with Antillean and Surinamese youngsters who see their skin colour as reason for discrimination, Turkish and Moroccan youngsters feel discriminated against most often because of their religion and secondly because of their ethnic background. Additionally, Turkish and Moroccan girls feel discriminated against because of the way they dress. While men complain about racial discrimination, women generally give religion as a reason for discrimination. Three quarters of the complaints are about religion and are made in particular with reference to entering the labour market (recruitment and selection) where the veil is a reason for rejection (SCP 2010). Many Muslim respondents in our study claim to have been rejected for a job or internship because of their headscarf.

*R: Last year I applied for a job and I was invited for an interview. I went there and they asked me who I was, and when I told them my name they said that they had no place for me.*

*I: And you had the feeling it came from...*

*R: Well, we didn't even have an interview, even though they'd invited me for one.*

*I: Why do you think they didn't do that?*

*R: Like I said, discrimination, maybe because of my headscarf, or...I don't know.*

*R: I've often experienced that, because I'd like to work in a clothes shop, because a lot of people go there, I just like it a lot, but I can't work there because many times they say no.*

*I: Could you give an example?*

*R: Yes, when I recently applied they were very enthusiastic on the phone, but when I got there they just looked at me from head to foot and asked: so you are (name respondent)? I thought, what's wrong with that? And then they don't want you to work here, because you wear a headscarf. It does something to you because they don't look at what you can do, but at how you look. I think that is wrong.*

If the idea of the tip of the iceberg is correct, then this might be an indication of a much greater phenomenon than official data suggest. And there are serious grounds to confirm this. In the Trendmeter 2009 (Forum 2009a), 54% of employers of companies with 20-500 employees agreed with the following: 'I prefer my staff not to wear a headscarf'. The reason employers give for not hiring someone who wears a headscarf is that they are not representative. One respondent stated that there are many erroneous stereotypes associated with the headscarf:

R: *I think many employers think girls who wear a headscarf are not good employees.*

I: *Why do you think girls with a headscarf are seen as inferior?*

R: *What I hear is that the headscarf is associated with being stupid, it's seen as a sign of oppression, and I have to laugh about this: a potential terrorist. I think it's just ignorance.*

In general about 25% of employers are rather reluctant to hire migrants (Forum 2009a). Other studies establish the same pattern: discrimination is rife on entry to the labour market, particularly among the lower educated (Klaver, Mevissen, and Odé 2005). However, higher educated migrants also have to deal with this phenomenon, as 29% of successful migrants indicated that they have had negative experiences with employers (Gravesteyn et al. 2006). In another study, 40% of the higher educated migrants believed that their colour or ethnic origin made it difficult for them to find a job (Regioplan 2006).

It is important to analyse how discrimination works. It is much more subtle than plain discrimination because of a headscarf or a foreign name. The 2010 Discrimination Monitor (SCP 2010) gives a number of aspects that seem to play a role, varying from speaking correct Dutch to having the necessary 'soft skills' i.e. attitude, motivation, communication and contact, all deemed essential attributes for a good employee. As a result, employers prefer not to risk hiring a migrant, even if he or she has the same qualifications as a potential Dutch employee. The risks are assumed particularly prevalent among Moroccan or Antillean migrants. Moreover, the social-normative qualities of migrants, assumed to be found in the soft skills, are believed to be missing, and according to the authors of the monitor this only contributes towards further disadvantage (SCP 2010).

So there is statistical discrimination based on group stereotypes, and there are several hypotheses that explain discrimination. According to the meritocracy hypothesis, discrimination should decrease over time, and improving education levels among migrants should be increasingly more significant. This hypothesis is to be rejected because opportunity inequality is not diminishing linearly. The other two hypotheses assume a link between discrimination and economic fluctuations, and a greater social acceptance of discrimination because sanctions are on the wane. These two hypotheses could not be rejected, which indicates that both the economic climate and the acceptability of discrimination may play a role in discrimination (SCP 2010). One study would appear to confirm the latter hypothesis: Entzinger and Dourleijn (2008) state that the threshold for experienced discrimination between 1999 and 2006 may have lowered: what in 1999 was seen as discrimination, is now acceptable.

Discrimination is not only a factor on entry to the labour market, but is also to be found in internships and work placements. However, the available data are less accurate than data on the labour market. It is also very difficult to find figures about women and men separately, which makes being specific about the position of women almost impossible. According to the National Internship Survey (Landelijke Stage Enquête 2011), about half migrant students report having experienced discrimination when looking for a job placement. The JOB Monitor reports that migrants have more difficulty than their native counterparts finding a placement in BOL (a track in which pupils are in full-time education at school which they combine with a short internship), or BBL (a track in which the pupil is employed as an intern combined with attending school once a week): in 2008, 24.3% of migrants and 16.8% of native Dutch had difficulties with the BOL, and 14.4% of migrants and 10.4% of native Dutch had problems in the BBL (Forum 2009b). The Algemene Rekenkamer (2008) found that 27% of teachers had experienced that their pupils in secondary vocational education had been discriminated against, but only one in three reported it.

Many teachers confirm that it is indeed very difficult for them to mediate between potential employers and migrant students looking for an internship. Young Islamic girls with a headscarf are even more disadvantaged. There are many examples of Muslim girls not being accepted on the work floor because a headscarf is considered not to be representative for potential clients or customers. Teachers in our study also confirm this image.

*Teacher 1:*

*Internships are quite difficult, because you don't want, actually you don't want to admit that it only takes native Dutch children one or two attempts to find a place, and 6,7,8, or 9 attempts for migrant students to secure a place.*

*Teacher 2:*

*I: Is discrimination a problem when students are looking for a trainee post?*

*T: For boys in particular, and sometimes also for girls if they wear a headscarf. And there are headscarves and headscarves. You have, how shall I put it, these small bath caps, that's not so bad. But if you wear a long black or grey veil, well you actually look quite impressive. And some trainee places say they think headscarves aren't safe for little children because, as you saw, they are fastened with little pins, and that was not what was wanted. And sometimes the girls say they'll take their veil off and wear a small cap instead.*

Not finding an internship has serious consequences for the youngsters. The internship is a required part of VET education and if a student does not find an internship position on time it has serious implications for the student's educational career. Additionally, many youngsters in the Netherlands find their first employment through their internship, so not finding an internship also obstructs entry to the labour market. The National Internship Survey indeed established that job prospects following an internship are more favourable for native Dutch students than for migrant students (65% vs. 56% chances of a job).

Neither is discrimination on this internship market always direct, but it is more subtle, as mentioned above: not having a good command of the language, or on the face of it not having the required soft skills are also negative factors in the selection procedure. Sometimes schools also accept discrimination: if they know that employers are reluctant to take on migrant students, the schools do not offer these places to migrants, or try to seek placement elsewhere.

Overall we may conclude that there is discrimination both on the labour market and on the internship market, and that migrant women are affected in two different ways. One more explicit way consists of discrimination because of external characteristics such as a headscarf, a foreign name, or skin colour, and the other more implicit way is statistical discrimination based on stereotypes of supposedly at-risk groups, or the misapprehension that migrant student lack the necessary soft skills. Discrimination may to some extent explain why labour market participation levels among second generation girls are low.

A second point that needs discussing are developments in marriage and attitudes towards marriage, and task division between men and women. It has already been stated that second generation migrant women are more emancipated than first generation women, both in fertility rates and in attitudes towards task division. However, we must refine this picture in order to understand the link between forming relationships and having children, and the labour market. Let's start with the wish to have children. Turkish and Moroccan women in the 18-27 age group consider it more obvious to have children than Dutch women: 52% and 41% as opposed to only 14% of Dutch women. Turkish and Moroccan men in the same age group find it even more obvious than women: 62% and 60% (Distelbrink and Loozen 2005). The results of our own qualitative study come up with the same picture: all migrant girls are convinced they will get married and have children at some time in the future. The Moroccan girl in the interview below believes she is more modern than other Moroccan girls, and explains why she differs from other Moroccan girls:

R: *My future? How I think I will end up? I'd like to study, and become a career woman, and yes, get married, and have children. I think I'm different from other Moroccan girls, I'm more, I've the tendency, that when I want something I go for it, no matter what. Whatever happens, I'll go on. So for example when I'm married with children, I don't think I'll stay at home just because I have children. No, I'll stay working, I see myself as a hardworking woman in the future.*

I: *Do you think this is different for other Moroccan girls?*

R: *Yes, in my neighbourhood, well most girls think like this: when I'm married I'm going to stay at home on the sofa, and my husband will make money, they are very unmotivated. I think, you should not think like that, you have to make your own money. I prefer to stand on my own two feet, without help from others. I want to be independent, to show I can do it as well.*

Education levels influence these attitudes: lower educated students find having children more obvious, also native Dutch girls (Distelbrink and Loozen 2005). There are also differences when it comes to union formation: more than their Dutch counterparts, Turkish and Moroccan adolescents prefer to marry and not to cohabit. And Turkish girls believe this the most: 65%, followed by Moroccan girls at 52%, and they have this wish more so than their male counterparts. Moroccan boys in particular (61%) want to cohabit before marriage, but Turkish and Moroccan girls also prefer to cohabit before marriage (30% and 41%) (De Valk and Liefbroer 2007). But this preference for cohabitation is barely reflected at all in practice.

Table 4.5 shows that one third of young Turkish women and one fifth of Moroccan women are married, and cohabitation is rare, whereas few Dutch women are married and generally cohabit.

**Table 4.5** *Young couples 20-24 year, by sex, ethnicity, cohabitation and children, 2004.*

	Cohabitation	of whom married	with children
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> generation Turkish</b>			
<i>Men</i>	21	16	7
<i>Women</i>	39	34	19
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> generation Moroccan</b>			
<i>Men</i>	11	4	2
<i>Women</i>	28	20	13
<b>Dutch</b>			
<i>Men</i>	14	2	1
<i>Women</i>	31	6	6

*Source: CBS*

Moroccan and Turkish women also already have more children than the Dutch. A Moroccan girl we interviewed explains the preference for marriage as follows:

*R: Moroccan girls are often Islamic, and this religion does not allow boyfriends, or dating. As soon as these girls meet a boy they see as a potential husband, they want to get married. So they get married much younger than native Dutch girls do, who often date for 2 or 3 years before they decide to get married. That's one of the reasons they get married younger. I also notice a strong wish to have children, that's also because of our background. Our parents often married young and had children young. I notice native Dutch girls wish to have children later, in their thirties, and we talk about it in our twenties.*

The figures conceal an interesting development. Turkish and Moroccans youngsters hardly ever marry a Dutch partner, only about 10%. This is different for Surinamese and Antilleans, and particularly Antilleans often (70%) marry a Dutch partner. Migration marriage, i.e. a partner from the country of origin, was the norm for first generation Turkish and Moroccan migrants, and this was still usual for the second generation in 2002, though this trend would seem to be coming to an end, and the second generation now mostly marry a partner living in the Netherlands (Van Huis 2007). This changing marriage pattern may have consequences for the evolution of practices and attitudes about care and task division.

The attitudes about task division between partners have evolved quite strongly for both the first and second generations. Moroccan and Turkish women now subscribe to the view that women can work outside the home and earn their own income, and as far as the latter is concerned, their feelings are stronger than those of Dutch women (90% against 75%). But Turkish and Moroccan men are convinced, more so than women, that men should be the breadwinner and that women should stop working when they have children. Only on one point do Turkish and Moroccan women differ from the Dutch: they believe they care for children better than their partner. We can see that it is mostly young migrants whose views on task division correspond with the view of the Dutch population, and they are more 'modern' than their male counterparts. Education influences these opinions, in the sense that lower educated Turkish and Dutch men and women tend to have more traditional views. Moroccan women are an exception and education does not affect their views: their opinions are rather modern (Distelbrink and Loozen 2005).

These data are also discussed in a qualitative study on young mothers of Moroccan and Turkish descent. The modern views on task division and emancipation are generally embedded in a social context where autonomy is linked to care and to considering others.

Combining this care identity with the more traditional views of Turkish and Moroccan men leads to less room for manoeuvre when it comes to the actual practices of dividing the burdens of care and household tasks (Pels and De Gruijter 2006).

#### **4.6 Conclusion**

This paper analysed the emancipation process of migrant women in the Netherlands. We examined national statistics on education, labour market participation and family formation and relationships, analysed national policies on emancipation and integration and used material from our own study to research experiences of discrimination.

We first established that there are clear differences between migrant groups in the Netherlands. Whereas to-day Surinamese and Antillean migrant women do not lag far behind native Dutch women, Turkish and Moroccan women are in a more disadvantaged position in education and on the labour market. However, Turkish and Moroccan girls are rapidly catching up in education, but continue to lag behind when it comes to labour market participation, which can be explained by a number of factors. First of all, as our analysis showed, the Dutch education system, with its early selection procedures means that many migrant youngsters end up in the lower levels of education. ‘Piling up’ education makes it possible for them to enter higher education in a later stage of their educational career. However, this long route is only achieved by a small group of migrants. Additionally, ‘piling up’ also has a number of negative connotations (SCP 2010), and employers view youngsters who have taken this path as indecisive, and probably less interesting as potential employees because they are older. It gives the impression that students take too long to finish their education. Since migrant girls advocate getting married early, compared with their native counterparts, marriage is likely to have priority once they have left school and this might have a negative impact on their entry to the labour market.

Secondly, migrants are more susceptible to economic fluctuations, and the recent global crisis had a negative effect on the labour market participation of migrant women. In addition, employment contracts migrant women enter into are often short-term which makes their position on the labour market rather weak. Previous studies and the results of our own study indicate that migrant women face discrimination in society and on the labour market. Discrimination is a phenomenon that is difficult to grasp, but we found convincing evidence of discrimination in existing data and in our own. We can indeed affirm that discrimination plays a role in the lives of many migrant girls. The headscarf is associated with negative

stereotypes, and many girls feel mistreated if they are rejected for a trainee position or job because of their headscarf.

Lastly, second generation migrant girls have more 'modern' views on relationships and task division than the first generation. However, some of the conventional cultural norms and values are still to be found among young migrants. For example, all migrant girls consider it evident that they will eventually marry and have children. This is much more obvious for Turkish and Moroccan girls than for native Dutch girls. It seems that migrant girls manoeuvre more between care responsibilities and a working life, and that the wishes of the husband and parents (in-law) are also taken into account. Their autonomy is influenced by a social context (the family), and working is only possible when a balance can be found with the home situation (Pels and De Gruyter 2006). This also applies to native Dutch women, but to a lesser extent. Marriage and starting a family have priority in the lives of these young women and this might mean that once they leave school they postpone their entry to the labour market. As a result, some do not enter the labour market at all, or have low status jobs. Many women in the Netherlands prefer to work part time, particularly women who care for young children. Holding down a high status job is much more difficult if you are only available on the labour market part time.

We can conclude that migrant girls are indeed part of a larger emancipatory process. They have made considerable steps forward in schooling, labour market participation and their views on relationships and task division. The fact that in one generation their position changed substantially shows that their emancipation is actually much faster than that of native Dutch women. However, migrant girls are not there yet: the economic climate, a harsh tone in Dutch society towards migrants and Islam, and a (less) conventional situation at home, make the situation of migrant girls rather complicated. They have to find a balance between participation in the labour market and conforming to their passed on norms and values. And once they opt to be active on the labour market, discrimination and negative stereotypes may impede their participation. We expect that this process of emancipation for migrant girls will continue and educational outcomes and views on relationships and division of tasks will eventually become similar to those of native Dutch girls. It is however currently difficult for migrant girls to emancipate in a society dominated by negative attitudes towards immigration and integration, and of Muslims in particular. Social emancipation policies currently focus strongly on the position of migrant women in Dutch society. This focus has, on the one hand, made the problems of migrant women more visible. On the other hand, migrant women are seen as the victims in these policies, which places them in an impossible position: at the one

hand they are deemed to be passive actors who are oppressed by their culture, religion and their men, and at the other hand they are supposed to liberate themselves by adapting to the Dutch norms and leave their background behind. Their disadvantages are attributed to their ethnicity, and by this process exclusion and othering can be counted as the real barriers to participation (Roggeband 2010). If this is true, then current policies actually hamper the emancipation of migrant women in the Netherlands.

The conclusions of our study make clear that the intersection of ethnicity and gender is relevant for the study of the position of young migrant women in education and work in the Netherlands. It is a specific combination of class, gender and ethnicity that produces in discourse and practice effects of exclusion. In policy and public discourse emancipation objectives have become ethnicised and integration policies have become gendered, which shows that intersectionality is also visible in policies and the public debate in the Netherlands. In this way the change in the dominant discourse in the Netherlands contributes to the 'othering' of migrant women and may obstruct the participation of especially young Muslim women on the labour market and in society at large.

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## 5 Discourses of young migrants and on young migrants in the Netherlands

This chapter is co-authored by Robert Maier (Utrecht University, the Netherlands) and is currently under review at the international journal *Innovation, The European Journal of Social Science*.

**Abstract:**

Against the backdrop of the dominant discourse surrounding migrants currently prevailing in the Netherlands, this article takes a look at how young ‘migrants’ experience their life and examines how they see their future perspectives. Using ethnographic studies and questionnaires, the European research project TRESEGY studied the experiences and perspectives of young migrants in the Netherlands. At present, the dominant discourse in public debate in the Netherlands formulates normative expectations of individual adaptation; it adopts particular positions and strategies, and historically speaking, it has replaced previous dominant discourses on migrants. There are a few limited areas of convergence between the dominant discourses on migrants and the experiences of young ‘migrants’ themselves. However, the overlap is minimal.

**5.1 Introduction**

As in many other European countries, the multicultural society has become an important issue in public and political debate in the Netherlands (Van der Valk, 2003). Van der Valk speaks of the politicization of immigration since the 1980s; immigration is seen as posing a problem, and politics in general and extreme right-wing parties in particular have an important role to play in this. She views discourse as a powerful mechanism in our modern post-industrial, communication and information society: “Discourse is central to the reproduction of society. Social processes, developments and changes are reflected in texts. Discourse analysis accordingly links the micro dimensions of text and speech to structures and strategies of cognition and communication and both of these to the macro dimensions of society.” (Van der Valk, 2003)

In this article we limit ourselves, firstly, to presenting the characteristics of the dominant discourses on ‘migrants’ in the past and present by referring to the literature on this subject without any attempt to provide a substantial discourse analysis. In a second step we present the main results of our research in terms of the experiences and perspectives of young ‘migrants’. As such, the presentation of the results can be seen as a particular type of discourse analysis because from the results we can distil the experiences and perspectives that correspond, to a certain extent, to the content of the dominant discourses. Finally, we compare the perspectives of ‘young migrants’ with the dominant discourses, in terms of convergence and divergence and discuss the possible meaning of these convergences and divergences. This last step can therefore also be interpreted as a particular type of discourse

analysis. As there are many conceptions of discourse, it is worth stating that for these steps we adopt the critical discourse analysis as, for example, elaborated by Fairclough, Reisigl and Wodak and many other authors (Fairclough, 1989; Reisigl and Wodak, 2001). A recent presentation of this kind of approach can be found in Blommaert (2005). We would also like to add that we see discourses as sites of cultural contest (Shi-xu, 2007), elaborating on different ideas of how to achieve a good life, and examining what a satisfactory form of community looks like.

In this article we distinguish several types of discourse: firstly, the experiences of young 'migrants' about their life and their perspectives in the Netherlands as expressed in interviews and survey questions. Secondly, the discourses on migrants produced by social scientists, policymakers and actors in public debate. Thirdly, we refer to 'objective' data concerning migrants, for example their educational success, participation in the labour market, etc., provided by statistical offices such as the OECD and Statistics Netherlands (*CBS*). These data can be distinguished from the second category because these data, based on various distinctions, can be given different meanings in different types of discourses. However, we are well aware that these data are not purely 'objective' because they are based on questions and presuppositions concerning, for example, the definition of migrants and the distinctions established between different migrant groups. Finally, there is our own discourse as social scientists. This discursive activity consists of the elaboration and combination of the characteristics of the dominant discourses from the literature and the discursive presentation of the experiences and perspectives of young 'migrants' and the discussion of the meaning of the convergences and divergences.

We start in this introduction by discussing the general assumption to be found in dominant discourses in the Netherlands i.e. young 'migrants' are an easily identifiable group, and that this identification does not lead to problems. This assumption is, in itself, somewhat problematic. Firstly, the majority of young 'migrants' in the Netherlands are naturalized citizens of this country. Secondly, the majority of young 'migrants' are often referred to as 'second generation' (or even third generation) 'migrants'. This is actually a misnomer since many of them were born in the Netherlands, they are nationals of this country and are not planning on emigrating. Classifying them as 'migrants' is actually questionable because doing so means that a significant proportion of the population of Europe would, under this definition, have to be classified as migrants. It can at best be said that they have a migrant background, though even this description identifies them as descendants of former migrants, an assumption that entails their being placed in a social group with which they do not

necessarily identify. Scientifically speaking (Benhabib, 2004), such designations are, to say the least, a problem. In this paper we either say ‘with a migrant background’, or use quotation marks when talking of ‘migrants’.

Serious reservations surround the negative image of young ‘migrants’ in European societies. Indeed, current figures indicate that ‘migrant’ youngsters are at a disadvantage in the educational and professional spheres compared with their native counterparts. And the current economic crisis would seem to be intensifying this disadvantage. For a number of reasons, the OECD (2009) has seen both a significant increase in unemployment rates among ‘migrants’ and also a decrease in the employment rates of ‘migrants’. ‘Migrants’ are overrepresented in sectors that are vulnerable in an economic downturn, their contractual arrangements are less secure, and they are subject to selective hiring and firing (OECD, 2009). However, it is important to refine this negative image because young ‘migrants’ tend to polarize between those who get on well and others who do not; and an overall negative image is somewhat unjustified (Portes et al., 2005). For instance, today the children of ‘migrants’ in Europe generally perform better in the education system and on the labour market, and are showing signs of upward mobility (Crul and Heering, 2008; De Graaf and Van Zenderen, 2009; Thomson and Crul, 2007).

Having expressed these reservations and questions, we now present the main questions addressed in this paper. The first series of questions is: ‘How do young people of migrant origin experience life in the Netherlands?’ and ‘What problems do they encounter, and what kind of perspectives do they formulate?’ These questions address how young ‘migrants’ talk about their experiences. A second series of questions concerns the discourses on migrants among social scientists, policymakers and actors in public debate, and how these discourses have changed in recent decades. Answers to these questions allow us to examine the third series of questions: the convergences and divergences between the discourses on ‘migrants’ on the one hand and the experiences and perspectives of young ‘migrants’ on the other, including the possible tensions and dilemmas within and between these discourses.

We first present the changing discourses on ‘migrants’, and then examine the experiences of young ‘migrants’ themselves. Finally, we specify the convergences and divergences and the possible tensions and dilemmas.

## 5.2 Discourse on ‘migrants’

Migrant populations in the Netherlands are classified in a particularly unique way, and this classification is used by Statistics Netherlands and all other research institutes and public bodies. The main categorization draws a distinction between what are referred to as ‘*autochthonous*’ and ‘*allochthonous*’ populations. This terminology is typically Dutch and is used in no other country. This distinction has nothing to do with nationality or with ‘racial’ or ‘ethnic’ characteristics, but is based purely on the parents’ place of birth. Since the 1990s, a person is referred to as ‘*allochthonous*’ if at least one parent was born outside the Netherlands. In fact, whether such a person has Dutch nationality or not is of no importance for this categorization.

Moreover, official statistics (and political and public discourse in the Netherlands) make a distinction between ‘*western allochthonous*’ and ‘*non-western allochthonous*’ populations. This distinction is particularly curious when we know that migrants from Japan and Indonesia are considered to be ‘*western-allochthonous*’ populations. *Allochthonous* people from Japan and Indonesia are included for socio-economic and socio-cultural reasons. Most of them were born in Indonesia when it was still a Dutch colony or are employees (and their families) of Japanese companies (CBS, 2011). This means that non-western allochthonous people are mainly from Africa, from Asia (with the exception of Japan and Indonesia) and Latin America. Non-western groups of ‘migrants’ are the most visible migrant groups in the Netherlands and are believed to have the most problems integrating. The ‘non-western’ category is quite puzzling because this distinction automatically stops with ‘regular’ third generation ‘migrants’, because when two ‘second generation’ migrants born in the Netherlands form a family, their children will by definition become ‘*autochthonous*’.

The Netherlands, for centuries, had a long tradition of immigration (protestants from Spain and France, traders, etc.). However, since World War II, migrants are mainly from former colonies (Indonesia, and more recently from Surinam and the Netherlands Antilles), and are above all immigrants who were ‘invited’ to come to work in the Netherlands, mainly in the 1960s and 1970s, generally from Morocco or Turkey. These immigrants were not expected to settle in the Netherlands, but to return home once their term of work was finished. Family reunion and the import of partners means that these groups now – together with immigrants from Surinam – make up the three largest ‘migrant’ groups in the Netherlands. Furthermore, there are also asylum seekers and illegal residents. Similar kinds of

immigration patterns can be seen in other western European countries, such as France, Germany and the United Kingdom.

About 20% of the Dutch population (of 17 million) is '*allochthonous*', of which more than half are classified as non-western. These populations are mainly concentrated in the big cities (Amsterdam, Rotterdam, The Hague and Utrecht), and the percentage of young '*allochthonous*' people under the age of 14 in these cities is higher than 50% of all young persons (CBS, 2010).

Past decades have seen three different waves of public policy on 'migrant' populations. After 1980, when it became clear that the foreign 'guest workers' would not, en masse, be returning to their country of origin, a so-called 'ethnic minority policy' was developed, based on a report from the Scientific Council for Government (WRR, 1979). The aim was participation and emancipation of all minority groups, to be achieved by combating discrimination and social and economic disadvantage. The essence of this policy was the idea that the Netherlands should be seen as a multi-ethnic society in which integration should take place whilst, at the same time, cultural identity was maintained.

A new report, entitled "*Allochthonous Policy*" was published by the Scientific Council in the early 1990s (WRR, 1989). The main thrust of this report was that the previous integration objectives could not be achieved. The 'multicultural' politics of integration were abandoned. The new perspective focused on active citizenship, and on developing more individualized relations between members of migrant groups and Dutch society. The goal of maintaining cultural identity was left to the immigrants themselves and it was now their own individual responsibility. This new policy was referred to as 'Integration Policy', the targets of which were no longer ethnic groups but individuals. However, the policy did include a number of other provisions, such as more funding for schools attended by high percentages of disadvantaged children.

The past ten years have seen increased criticism of the fact that the former policy failed. Real integration has not met with success, and the cultural distance between migrant groups and Dutch society is seen to be a very real issue. To put it briefly, what is being demanded is for more pressure to be put on immigrants to adapt to Dutch society. These developments were, to some extent, brought about by 9/11, and by the murder, in 2004, of Theo van Gogh, a well-known publicist who censured Islam for being backward and out of place in the Netherlands. The *idée fixe* in the Dutch discourse that sees 'migrants' as 'absolute others' has been a constant factor throughout integration policies since 1980 (Ghorashi, 2010). Moreover, the last decade has seen 'migrants' increasingly being considered as an at-risk

group, with the main focus on Muslim ‘migrants’. This consideration combined several, quite distinct categories of risk factors.

The first category involves the disadvantages migrants have in terms of education, language proficiency, and participation in the labour market, etc. Numerous studies by Statistics Netherlands (CBS, 2010) have corroborated these disadvantages, but it is worth mentioning that these disadvantages generally diminish over time and the second generation usually performs better than the first generation. Moreover, these disadvantages differ considerably among the different migrant groups. This discourse on ‘deficit’ portrays ‘migrants’ as being unable to participate in society and in need of special attention in terms of education and guidance (Van den Berg and Schinkel, 2009; Ghorashi, 2010), or insists that these ‘migrants’ have to make a particular effort to adapt to Dutch society.

A second category of risk factors has been identified as the ‘traditional’ or ‘pre-modern’ family structure of the majority of ‘migrant’ groups, as evidenced by the emancipation of women in these populations being somewhat behind the times. The belief is that Muslim women in particular are trapped within their culture and somehow they need to be freed (Ghorashi, 2010). This second category of risk factors is sometimes referred to as ‘cultural’, denoting the cultural distance between ‘migrant’ groups and the host society. This category includes the assumed or real differences between norms and values, and in particular the norms surrounding socialization and bringing up children. The latter is sometimes deemed to be inadequate for preparing young children sufficiently well for primary education. Another example is the conviction that young ‘migrants’, as a result of their cultural or ethnic background, lack the appropriate social skills for successfully entering the labour market (Van den Berg and Schinkel, 2009).

A third category of factors that has been identified is the disproportionately high percentage of ‘migrants’, and in particular of young ‘migrants’, among offenders, coming into contact with the police and appearing in court (Blokland et al., 2010). In popular terminology, offences include public order disturbances, theft, drug dealing, and other criminal activities. Finally, terrorism is the fourth risk category. There have indeed been terrorist attacks in a number of European countries, including Spain, the UK, Germany, the Netherlands, and also a number of other apparently serious attempts to perpetrate acts of terrorism. The generally young terrorists are predominantly Muslims. This last risk factor is certainly present, and some have referred to it as ‘home-grown terrorism’ (Buijs et al., 2006).

These four, rather heterogeneous categories of risk factors have been combined in the past decade to construct a new ‘at-risk group’. The power of this construction should not be

underestimated because it has been translated and widely used in public space and policy debate in the Netherlands and in many other European societies. Moreover, it is a central tenet of the discourse used by new right-wing and populist political parties throughout Europe, albeit somewhat exaggeratedly. The discourse, public opinion and perceptions about the children of ‘migrants’ are profoundly influenced by the mass media, which in fact may reinforce negative preconceptions and disaffection among the children of immigrants for the host country (Liebig and Schröder, 2010).

The combination of these four categories of risk factors, which tend to be quite influential, is questionable. From a purely theoretical, interpretive point of view, this discursive construction can easily be rejected. Indeed, these four categories are first of all diverse, without any inherent connection between them. Secondly, some of these categories apply, and then only to a limited extent, to specific groups of migrant populations. Thirdly, the category that includes the threat of terrorism, while very real, only applies to a tiny fraction of young people with a migrant background. Finally, a number of people with a migrant background cannot be subsumed into any of these four categories of risk factors. The dominant discourse (Fairclough, 1989) intensifies the negative images of migrants. They are characterized as disadvantaged, incompetent and having a ‘backward or violent’ culture or religion (Ghorashi, 2010).

Prins (2010) analysed in depth how discourses within Dutch minorities’ research transformed over time. She draws a distinction between four genres of discourse: the genre of ‘denunciation’; and the genre of ‘empowerment’ -- mainly found in the first policy waves-; and the genres of the ‘report’, and ‘new realism’. Denunciation, mainly produced in left-wing anti-establishment circles, denounces the exploitation and discrimination of migrant workers, and calls for solidarity with the migrant workers. In contrast, empowerment, mainly from the same era, addresses people with a migrant background and highlights the diversity of individuals with a migrant background. The ‘report’ genre, mostly used in studies conducted on government request, provides information from a so-called neutral and distanced perspective, while at the same time promoting individual emancipation.

In spite of the fact that some of its roots are old, the last genre is referred to as ‘new realism’, and, according to Prins (2010), it has become the dominant discourse in the Netherlands. Prins distinguishes five distinct features of this new genre. Firstly, those who subscribe to the new-realism discourse present themselves as people who dare to face the facts, who speak frankly about the ‘truths’ that former discourses obscured. Secondly, the new realist acts as spokesperson of the ‘ordinary people’, i.e. the *autochthonous* population. A third

characteristic of new realism is the suggestion that realism is a characteristic feature of national identity: being Dutch equals being frank, straightforward and realistic. Fourthly, new realism opposes the political left. Finally, the new-realism discourse is highly gendered, centred on gender and sexuality, as evidenced by its emphasis on 'headscarves', arranged or forced marriage, female genital mutilation, honour killing, the cult of virginity, domestic violence and homophobia. In short, the 'new-realism' discourse has characteristics typical of a popular discourse, and Prins labels the extreme-right variants of this discourse as 'hyper-realism'.

According to Prins (2010), the four genres are, on the one hand, mutually exclusive, but are sufficiently flexible to enter into strange coalitions with one another. She sums up the four discourse genres as making a distinction on the one hand between the perspectives of collective struggle and individual development, and on the other hand between a perspective to offer support for 'migrants' and a perspective of self-responsibility. While the denunciation and report genres underline above all the necessity to give support to immigrant groups, either collectively or individually, the empowerment genre points to collective self-empowerment. The 'new realism' genre formulates a purely individual programme of 'do-it-yourself' without any help.

Prins (2010) states on page 92: "The victory of the genre of new realism has had serious consequences for the position of ethnic minorities in the Netherlands ...". Whether this statement can be confirmed when studying the experiences of young 'migrants' themselves is the subject of the following part of this article.

We can conclude this section, which briefly examined discourses on 'migrants', by stating that the dominant discourses on 'migrants' in the Netherlands have substantially changed in recent decades. There is currently more insistence on individual adaptation to Dutch society. Moreover, 'migrants' are presented as an 'at-risk group'. And finally, the 'new-realism' genre shows that the dominant discourse on 'migrants' has taken on something of a populist nature. However, these characteristics of the dominant discourse should not hide the fact that other voices concerning 'migrants' are also to be found in the Netherlands, e.g. from social scientists (including Duyvendak, 2006; Schinkel, 2008; Tillie, 2009; Verhagen, 2010) and from other participants in public debate. These voices are still significant even though they are in a minority.

### 5.3 The experiences and perspectives of young ‘migrants’

The data for our analyses of the experiences of young ‘migrants’ are derived from TRESEGY, a comparative European research projects. The project ran from June 2006 through June 2009 and focused on: “Factors of inclusion and exclusion of second-generation migrants in Europe”. The project studied how young ‘migrants’ experience life in the Netherlands, what problems they face and how they are supported by social policy. The project conducted both quantitative and qualitative (ethnographic) case studies in various local settings where many ‘migrant’ youngsters live or hang out.

We use data from the Dutch context to answer our research questions. In the Dutch studies of the research projects, 14 ethnographic studies with young people (with a Dutch and a migrant background) were conducted in schools, local neighbourhoods and youth centres. A questionnaire was also filled in by 608 respondents, 73% of whom with a migrant background. Most ‘migrant’ youngsters in the study are of Moroccan or Turkish descent.

We first present a few relevant results from the quantitative study, based on a questionnaire (Padilla and Scaglione, 2008). The questionnaire posed some sixty questions on topics related to experiences of social, economic and cultural inclusion and exclusion such as education, identification and discrimination. The questions ask about origin, education and parents’ income, the respondents’ education and work perspectives, their experience with discrimination, and their outlook on their future.

Respondents’ age varied between 13 and 27. The highest level of education completed and the occupational status of the parents of the young respondents with a migrant background are significantly lower than the level and occupational status of the parents of their native counterparts.

The results of the Dutch quantitative study show clear segregation in the friendships and relations between ‘native’ and ‘migrant’ youth. ‘Native’ youth report having only native friends, whereas the majority of friends of young people with a migrant background are from the same ethnic group, but some also have friends from the group of ‘natives’. ‘Migrant’ youngsters also more often say they would like to have more friends from other ethnic backgrounds, while this is not the case for ‘native’ youngsters. All youngsters reported that family is important for them. Youngsters with a migrant background report more often than native youngsters that it is the mother who is the most important person in their lives. ‘Migrant’ youngsters indicate that they do not see their father’s role as one of support, either emotional or otherwise.

There are significant differences between the groups for self-identification. 'Native' youth mention in the first place gender and clothing style, whereas origin and gender are considered important for the respondents with a migrant background. The (Islamic) religion plays an important role for the identity construction of young Muslims.

The survey also includes questions on perceived discrimination. More often than their 'migrant' counterparts, 'native' youth indicate that racism does exist in the Netherlands. The majority of respondents affirm that there is 'some' racism (45% 'migrants' and 31% 'natives') or 'a lot' of racism (32% and 51% respectively). 'Native' youngsters believe there is more discrimination than 'migrant' youngsters.

Furthermore, the results of the questionnaire showed that most youngster are satisfied living in the Netherlands. The majority of respondents ('migrant' and 'native') indicated that they are 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied'. Only very few respondents stated they are not satisfied with their life.

The survey results also show that generally speaking, young people with a migrant background tend to live in segregated, deprived neighbourhoods characterized by a lack of financial and social resources. Youngsters living there report the existence of violence, delinquency, drug abuse and theft. However, the majority reports they are happy living in their neighbourhood. Interestingly, 'migrant' youngsters are happier or more satisfied with the neighbourhood than the natives are. Furthermore, the survey results showed that for 'migrant' youth the neighbourhood is an important reference point for their sense of identity.

Finally, the respondents reported to aspire to upward mobility: the majority report that they feel that that their situation in the future will be better than that of their parents. This general result can be interpreted as an evident sign of strength and resilience among young people of all origins, even in a situation where the existence of obvious discrimination is recognised.

The objective of the ethnographic studies was to complement the material and to explore the experiences of the youngsters with a migrant background in greater detail. In addition to participant observations, extensive interviews were held with the respondents to explore the biographical aspects and future expectations of the interviewees. In total, 179 young migrants (mainly young people with parents originating from Morocco or Turkey) and young natives were involved in the ethnographic studies in the Netherlands.

A first result of the ethnographic study is that the young 'migrants' are generally rather optimistic about their future opportunities. Most respondents have a strong

wish for upward mobility and expect to be better off in the future than their parents are. They explicitly acknowledge that they are in a situation that enables them to develop interesting future perspectives, either through education or through opportunities to set up an independent business. Young 'migrants' often refer to people they know who achieved such things in their surroundings, who are important role models for them. However, it is the question whether their hopes are realistic, because they are not always in line with their present education or work experience.

The ethnographic study also showed that the vast majority of young migrants clearly situate themselves in the Netherlands. Most of the 'migrant' youngsters state that they were born in the Netherlands, and they feel their future is in the Netherlands too. Almost none of them talk about re-emigrating to their country of origin. Some 'migrant' youngsters said that when visiting the country of origin of their parents, they have to go through a phase of 'integration' in the original culture.

There are several outcomes of the ethnographic study that make clear that young 'migrants' situate themselves in the Netherlands. Firstly, most interviewed youngsters agree that finishing an education and having good work experience is a precondition for achieving a professional and personal life in the Netherlands. This implies that they see their future in this country. Another outcome that supports this statement is that young Moroccan boys in Utrecht act quite defensive if the media, the police, or local or national politicians speak ill of their neighbourhood. They tend to be rather proud of their neighbourhood, which is a place they strongly identify with. Also critical voices about their behaviour or about their forming associations, either as a family, a community or as a group of friends, are sharply rejected. This rejection also implies that they see their roots in their country of residence, and that they defend their right to organize themselves as they see fit.

Thirdly, most youngsters, 'native and 'migrant', report they associate almost exclusively with members of their own ethnic background. This result is particularly interesting because it reveals a profound dilemma among young 'migrants', because young 'migrants' generally situate themselves in the Netherlands. Young 'migrants' have a strong orientation on their own community, and when speaking about future spouses, the vast majority of young 'migrants' affirm that they want a partner from the same community. The young 'migrants' from the ethnographic studies do not see this as a dilemma, even though on the other hand they do see their family and community as a constraining force because they impose certain norms and forms of conduct. Parents can, for instance, have conservative ideas about the future of their daughters and wish to see them getting married instead of obtaining

higher education. However, in the case of girls it also shows that mothers often encourage them to finish their education.

Another result involves discrimination. (See for example Reisigl and Wodak (2001) for an overview of discrimination.) According to the ethnographic study, young 'migrants' experience a definite degree of discrimination in Dutch society. In the street and particularly when looking for work, they sense prejudice from the native population because of their names, or their limited language proficiency, or their living conditions, or religious habits. Most young 'migrants' report that discrimination does exist. They have the expectation that discrimination might play a role when trying to find a suitable job. However, discrimination is generally not perceived as a serious hindrance and the majority of 'migrants' are optimistic about finding a job. They have a meritocratic perspective of equal chances and opportunities, and believe that as long as they do their best and try hard, then the opportunities are there, in spite of discrimination. A clear exception was the group more marginalized young 'migrants' (in terms of schooling or work). Communication with them seems to be limited to a kind of collective "self-defence" against presumed, and certainly to some extent very real instances of harassment and discrimination. For this reason it was almost impossible to interview individuals in this group because they were apprehensive about any prejudice we as researchers might share with the police or the media etc. Research with this group was therefore conducted through participant observation and group discussion.

Another significant variation involves the differences in behaviour and attitudes among boys and girls. When asked, young 'migrant' women are apparently more open to contact. In contrast, young male 'migrants' associate quite openly with each other, and explicitly confirm that they mainly have male friends with the same ethnic background. Neither 'migrant' boys nor girls mix at school. 'Migrant' boys do in general not meet up with friends at their homes (most live with their families), but outside in the neighbourhood and in the street. This means they are more visible in the public sphere and encounter more discriminatory behaviour.

To conclude this section we can state that young 'migrants' present an astonishing picture or discourse of their experiences and expectations in the Netherlands, full of optimism and with considerable resilience. On the other hand, when speaking about their experiences, quite a number of dilemmas and paradoxes are apparent. Moreover, there are significant differences, both between boys and girls, and between young 'migrants' (in terms of education or work), and others who have fallen by the wayside.

## 5.4 Conclusion and discussion

Having examined the changing discourses *on* ‘migrants’ and the experiences *of* young migrants concerning their conditions of life in the Netherlands, we now move on to analyse the convergences and divergences between the discourses on ‘migrants’ and the experiences of young ‘migrants’. Particular attention should also be given to the tensions and possible dilemmas of young ‘migrants’.

It should first be underlined that the current dominant discourses (Fairclough, 1989), characterized by an insistence on personal responsibility, the perception of ‘migrants’ as an ‘at-risk group’ and the genre of new realism (Prins, 2010), are addressed to all inhabitants of the Netherlands. It can be understood as a defensive, partly nationalist, discursive reaction to the process of globalization. Indeed, notwithstanding their many differences, all European countries are active participants in the globalization process, a consequence of which is a new international division of labour and increased flows of goods, capital and services throughout the world. Globalization restricts the independence of certain countries to define their own economic and social policies.

Data show that disadvantages in terms of education and labour market participation among young people with a migrant background have diminished in recent years. However, these disadvantages have not disappeared altogether. Moreover, our data show that in many cases the youngsters with a migrant background live in families that do not conform to the new normative model of post-modern families as promoted in the Netherlands. Indeed, the goals of the Lisbon agenda expect more individual responsibility and flexibility in order for the EU to become the world’s most advanced knowledge society. The new ideals of social policy foster a family model based on the idea of independent men and women, all with a good education and engaged in the labour market, who share the task of bringing up children with the help of paid assistance, and who, on an equal footing, negotiate the daily tasks involved in running a household. This model is referred to as the ‘adult worker model family’ (Lewis and Guillari, 2006). However, this normative model has only been realized somewhat sparingly in Europe. Indeed, investigations have established that the majority of women opt for ‘neo-traditional’ behaviour when they run a household with children (Born, 2003) which points to the predominant model of family life, sometimes called the 1½ household, or to the situation that women after giving birth consistently modify their engagement in the labour market. However, it seems that quite a number of the families of people with a migrant background live in family systems and communities that are at some distance from the ‘neo-traditional’

behaviour of women. This became evident in our research through the comments on the ‘valued’ role of the mother, and from the impression that young people feel that constraints are placed upon them by their families and community.

Our results show that young ‘migrants’ have partially adopted some important elements of the dominant discourses in the Netherlands. Important elements of the following genres: denunciation (e.g. concerning discrimination and how to live with it); report (e.g. their defence of the neighbourhood they live in) and empowerment (e.g. the insistence on the necessity of a ‘good’ education and of a ‘good’ job, whether as an employee or as a small independent business) clearly emerge in the perspectives professed by the majority of young ‘migrants’. The only exception is the group of marginalized young people with a migrant background (dropouts, unemployed, possibly criminals), who present themselves predominantly as victims of harassment and discrimination.

Even some elements of the new realism discourse and of the discourse insisting on personal responsibility can be identified in the answers young ‘migrants’ gave, such as for example their acknowledgment of individual responsibility for their future life, or in their way of dealing with discrimination. However, many other elements of the new realism do not appear at all in the perspectives and impressions expressed by the overwhelming majority of the respondents, such as formal gender equality or the importance of specific ethnic groups (in terms of origin or religion) which are rejected by the dominant discourses. Moreover, our respondents compare themselves almost exclusively with members of their own community or with the inhabitants of their parents’ country of origin, and not with ‘ordinary Dutch people’, which is a strong presupposition of the prevailing dominant discourses.

We can conclude that there are quite a number of convergences between the experiences described by young ‘migrants’ and the dominant discourses on migrants. However, two important divergences also emerged. Firstly, it appears that these two discourses, the dominant discourses on migrants and the feelings expressed by young ‘migrants’, are out of sync with each other. Indeed, young ‘migrants’ frequently use elements of formerly dominant discourses, such as professing a multicultural identity, or they use elements of the genres of discourse of denunciation and of empowerment, while these former discourses are currently fading from public debate in the Netherlands. Secondly, young people of migrant origin (mainly from Morocco or Turkey) present themselves as having strong community ties (neighbourhood, friendship, contacts, possible marriage partners, valued family, religion) while at the same time situating their personal future in the Netherlands.

In their answers the young 'migrants' demonstrate a typical multicultural attitude, with their own community and country of origin central to their identity. However, they situate their personal future in the Netherlands, with their education, their work perspective and their citizenship rights as central elements. We can therefore conclude that the experiences and expectations of young 'migrants' and the current dominant discourses on migrants, while exhibiting some areas of convergence, do diverge on essential points.

Considering tensions and dilemmas, there are two clear tensions in the experiences and expectations of young 'migrants'. Firstly, many affirm that their own community constrains their future perspectives in the Netherlands, while at the same time they fully identify with this community. Secondly, they present themselves as living in the Netherlands and that it is where they see their future. Moreover, they are fairly optimistic about their future perspectives. However, they also confirm that they rarely engage with members of the multifaceted Dutch society other than with those in their own community. They see this practice not as a choice but as a reality, without questioning the limitations this practice may possibly throw up. The experiences and expectations of young 'migrants', interpreted as discourse, display strong multicultural characteristics. The young 'migrants' opt for mutual adaptation, in which Dutch society offers them opportunities while they continue to maintain their own cultural heritage and identity. They want to be seen and accepted as equal members of Dutch society, despite cultural differences. This expectation is in stark contrast to the current dominant discourses on 'migrants' in the Netherlands.

Finally, there are two questions that cannot be satisfactorily answered from the data in this paper. Firstly, young 'migrants' seem to be highly resilient and optimistic as far as their attitude towards discrimination and their future perspectives of life in the Netherlands is concerned. They accept the need for personal responsibility in terms of education, qualifications and personal effort for engaging in a professional career. However, they do not seem to hear the other points in the dominant discourses which is for example reflected in the continued viability of specific ethnic groups that maintain their own specific characteristics.

The second question involves the statements cited before: that dominant discourses are central to the reproduction of society (Van der Valk, 2003), or that the victory of the genre of new realism has had serious consequences for the position of ethnic minorities in the Netherlands (Prins, 2010). Our data show that young 'migrants' acknowledge only very limited aspects of the dominant discourses. The question that then arises is whether or not the impact of the dominant discourses is sufficient to have a substantial effect on the experiences of young 'migrants' at all, and whether it is, in fact, still too early to expect any effect.

However, it is possible to combine these two questions. Will the resilience and optimism of young ‘migrants’ prevail and undermine the objective of the dominant discourses to destroy their multicultural hopes, or will, in the future, the dominant discourses succeed in moulding young ‘migrants’ in terms of Dutch norms and values?

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## **6 Education and labour market participation among young migrants: challenges and policy**

This chapter is co-authored by Robert Maier (Utrecht University, the Netherlands) and Kaj van Zenderen (Utrecht University, the Netherlands). An earlier version of this chapter has been presented at the 7<sup>th</sup> Annual ESPAnet Conference ‘The future of the welfare state’, September 2009, Urbino (Italy).

**Abstract:**

This article discusses the results of the European comparative research project TRESEGY which studied how young migrants experience their life in their country of residence, what problems they face and what kind of support from social networks they receive. We will reflect on the results of the TRESEGY project by placing them within current changes of the European welfare systems which are set in by the globalisation process. Our thesis is that the effects of globalisation and of emerging new social policies have far-reaching consequences for young people with a migrant background in European countries, because the general conditions of living and support of social policy are undergoing clear changes. Globalisation has changed conditions on the labour market in European societies and influences the extent to which young migrants participate on the labour market, and dualisation is something that would appear to be on the increase. New social policies of exercising personal responsibility for one's own life course affect those at the margins of society either because their level of education is insufficient, or because they are unemployed. Moreover, young migrants are increasingly being constructed as an at-risk group. However, despite these developments we found that migrant youngsters display strong resilience and optimism, which can help them overcome the tensions they are confronted with.

**6.1 Introduction**

Behind the intention to study how young migrants fare at school and on the labour market in European countries is the underlying assumption that they form an easily identifiable group, and that this identification is not surrounded with problematic meanings. It is evident that this is far from reality. Firstly, the majority of young migrants studied in TRESEGY, a European research project, are naturalised citizens of their country of residence, as in France and the Netherlands. Some migrants in a few other countries, such as Germany, Italy, Spain and Portugal, are naturalised and others are not, and some are even illegal. Secondly, the majority of young migrants are what are referred to as "second generation" (or even third generation) migrants. However, labelling them as migrants is a misnomer since many of them were born in their country of residence, are nationals of this country and have no plans to emigrate. Classifying them as "migrants" is actually arguable because doing so means that a large proportion of the population of Europe would, under this definition, be classified as migrants. At best, it could be said that they have a migrant background, but even this identifies them as descendants of former migrants which might mean they are placed in a social group with

which they do not necessarily identify. When we refer to the group young migrants in this paper we mean “youngsters with a migrant background”, though we are aware that even this qualification can be a problem when these youngsters are compared with their native counterparts, the descendants of long-term residents of the country in question. For an overview of the diversity of the group young migrants in our study see table 6.1.

As we are interested in how young people with a migrant background fare in education and on the labour market, it is essential that the conditions of social citizenship are considered. It is well known that these conditions are not identical throughout the various European countries because there is no common European social policy. We therefore have to deal with the differences that exist between the different countries and take them into account in our investigation.

Another important reservation has to be made about the negative image of young migrants in European societies. Indeed, current figures indicate that migrant youth are at a disadvantage in the educational and professional spheres compared with their native counterparts. And the current economic crisis would seem to be intensifying this disadvantage. The OECD (2009) has seen both a significant increase in unemployment rates among migrants and a decrease in the employment rates of migrants due to a number of reasons. Migrants are overrepresented in sectors that are vulnerable in an economic downturn, their contractual arrangements are less secure, and they are subject to selective hiring and firing (OECD, 2009).

However, it is important to nuance this negative image because the debate on segmented assimilation makes it clear that the position of young migrants tends towards polarisation, and an overall negative image is somewhat unfair (Portes *et al.*, 2005). The segmented assimilation theory postulates that migrants adapt to a host society in different ways. One way is successful integration into the host society whilst maintaining one’s own cultural heritage (Portes and Zhou, 1993). For instance, in Europe, children of migrants are nowadays generally performing better in the education system and on the labour market, and are showing signs of upward mobility (Crul and Heering, 2008; de Graaf and van Zenderen, 2009; Thomson and Crul, 2007). Heath *et al.* (2008) argue that the debate on segmented assimilation is not the same in Europe as in the US. In particular, as far as downward assimilation is concerned, because many guest workers entered at the bottom of European societies there was no way to go - but up. Most children from first generation migrants in Europe are upwardly mobile and the existence of a new underclass among this group is doubtful. However, it is clear that there is also a group in European societies for whom

marginalisation is also an option (De Graaf and Van Zenderen, 2009; Heath *et al.*, 2008; Thomson and Crul, 2007). Furthermore, segmented assimilation theory states that upward mobility can be reinforced by having strong bonds with the co-ethnic community and culture. This path of selective acculturation is questioned by authors who found the opposite. For example Crul and Vermeulen (2003) found that although in the Netherlands Moroccan migrants are having a less cohesive ethnic community than Turkish migrants, they tend to perform better in the educational system.

Having formulated these four reservations and questions, we now present the main questions to be addressed by this paper: How do young people of migrant origin experience life in their country of residence and what problems do they encounter? Some of them are illegal residents, which means they are entitled to only minimum support, such as basic schooling and assistance with life-threatening situations. However, social citizenship, with all the concomitant diverse meanings of being a (social) citizen, is, in principle, available for the majority.

In addition to political citizenship, social citizenship affords, in theory, the opportunity to participate fully in life in the country of residence, for instance in education and on the labour market, to gain an appropriate standard of living (Marshall and Bottomore, 1992), and to be fully accepted without specific hindrance, such as discrimination because of, for example, a migrant origin. Moreover, social rights mean equal entitlement to education, healthcare and the labour market, and to support in cases of illness, unemployment and old age. These rights are to be found in all European countries, though not necessarily in the same way or to the same degree. Moreover, over the past twenty years or so, all European countries have drastically transformed their welfare systems, resulting in some similarities but also numerous differences.

Despite all the obvious differences, there are two distinct and related trends in the changes made to the welfare systems throughout Europe. Firstly, all the countries are involved in the current globalisation process and in European integration, and they experience, to some extent, similar constraints, such as, for example, the loss of national independence to define social policy supported by monetary or fiscal policy. Moreover, the rapid increase in the trade of manufactured goods, and their production in low wage countries, such as China, has serious consequences for labour markets in Europe. Much more could, of course, be said about the influence of globalisation, but that is beyond the scope of this paper.

In response to the effects of globalisation, the European Union has defined a program to secure the strength of European economies in the coming years, under the slogan that

European countries must become “knowledge and service societies”. The Lisbon Agenda formulated a raft of aims in the hope of turning this slogan into reality, such as, for example, more people in higher education, fewer educational dropouts, increased labour market participation, particularly among young people, women and the older population. In line with the Lisbon Agenda, active labour market policies, lifelong learning, and a change from welfare to workfare have all been introduced.

The second trend, linked to the first one, can be seen in the ongoing changes to the welfare systems in European countries. The reasoning is as follows: as globalisation entails increased flexibility and mobility, new risks emerge, such as the risk of losing one’s job. Buchholz *et al.* (2009) argue that globalisation increases the risks of unemployment. Young adults in particular are the “losers” of globalisation, and education and class determine the extent to which individuals face increased labour market risks. They state that “*globalisation triggers a strengthening of existing social inequality structures*”. Rosholm, Scott and Husted (2006) have shown that migrants without the appropriate skills have considerable difficulty on the labour market in Scandinavia.

However, these risks can be tackled, to a certain extent, by individuals themselves, provided that they are responsible citizens to begin with. This responsibility not only calls for the pursuit of a good education and the acquisition of general competences in order to be employable, it also means that one should anticipate various life events and avoid being overwhelmed by them. In addition to emphasizing the necessity of long-term sustainability, all the changes to welfare systems in European countries put the accent on personal responsibility in order to either prevent or be prepared for the new risks. The terminology used to describe these changes includes “social investment policy” or “activation policy” (Jenson, 2009).

These two convergent trends should not hide the fact that globalisation affects different countries in different ways, and national institutions filter the increasing uncertainty resulting from globalisation in a specific way, and most countries have different forms of labour market flexibilization, changing life courses and social inequality structures (Buchholz *et al.* 2009). In most of the countries involved we perceive a limited application of these new social policy lines, and of their relevance for migrant participation on the labour market (Feld, 2005). However, these new policy lines certainly apply to dropouts and to young people involved in the transition from education to work. As far as young people are concerned, some authors identify a tendency for social citizenship to become more fragile (Castel, 2009; Somers, 2008); others (Bradley and van Hoof, 2005; Buchholz *et al.*, 2009) consider the

situation of young people in Europe to be problematic. We discuss this point more specifically in the conclusion.

We can now formulate the general hypothesis of this chapter. Our contention is that the effects of globalisation and of the new social policies have their repercussion on the experiences, perceptions and future expectations of young people with a migrant background in European countries. The reason for this is twofold: globalisation leads to more insecurity on the labour market. To cope with this insecurity there is an increased demand for skills, flexibility and mobility. Secondly, within the new social policies the accent increasingly lies on personal responsibility of constructing one's own potentials in terms of acquiring sufficient educational qualifications and employability. In view of their disadvantaged societal positions - low educational levels, youth unemployed, living in segregated neighbourhoods- we expect migrant youngsters to having difficulties coping with these developments and to express negative experiences and future expectations. However, one cannot presume that the increased uncertainties and risks directly affect the experiences of all young people with a migrant background. Our hypothesis is more subtle: our target group will be affected in diverse ways by these developments, and that this diversity of reactions has implications for understanding the situation of these populations.

After a section describing the studies of the European TRESEGY research project, we go on to present and discuss the results pertinent for the issues in this paper. In the conclusion we interpret these results in the light of the formulated hypothesis.

## **6.2 Method**

The EU research project TRESEGY was a sixth framework program, under the priority theme "Citizens and governance in a knowledge-based society", entitled: "Factors of economic, social and cultural in- and exclusion of second-generation migrants in Europe", and ran from June 2006 through May 2009. Six countries participated in the project: Italy, Spain, Portugal, France, Germany and the Netherlands, and nine cities were selected to be research locations: Rome and Genoa in Italy, Lisbon and Porto in Portugal, Madrid and Barcelona in Spain, Metz in France, Berlin in Germany and Utrecht in the Netherlands. Ethnic segregation is widespread in European cities and even on the increase and many migrants live in segregated neighbourhoods (Semyonov and Glikman, 2008). Therefore, for our study we decided to select one or more neighbourhoods with a significant number of migrant inhabitants in each of these cities.

The research project was conducted in three stages: 1) an investigation into national and local situations and policies on migrants; including interviews and group discussions held with key informants like social workers, policy makers, police officers to better understand the local issues of the youth, the associations and the neighbourhood. 2) an extensive ethnographic study, involving participant observations, interviews and biographical interviews, etc. Case studies were set up in various local settings e.g. the street, schools, community centres and young people’s workshops. For the purpose of this article the results of the ethnographic study form the main base of our analysis. In the Dutch context we particularly focussed on the inclusion of (migrant) youngsters in (vocational) education and their transition to the labour market. We will also use some quotes from interviewees from the Dutch context. 3) a quantitative study of 608 respondents in each research location (73% young migrants and 27% young natives). The surveys were mostly conducted in schools. Some descriptive results will be used to illustrative the results of the ethnographic study.

Finally, a transnational comparison was made to conclude the project. As expected, different migrant groups were investigated in the various research locations. See Table 6.1 for more detailed information on the various migrant groups and local settings by city and the methods used.

**Table 6.1** *Overview of local contexts, populations and methods*

<b>Cities and neighbourhoods</b>	<b>(Main) Populations</b>	<b>Research sites &amp; methods used</b>
Genoa: West Bank of Genoa	Ecuadorian, Moroccan (age 14 to 23)	- Participant observation in self managed community centre (by Ecuadorians) - In-depth interviews with 30 youngsters, 15 boys, 15 girls
Rome: Municipality I (Piazza Vittorio square) and VI (Rampa Prenestina)	Ukrainian, Philippine, Romanian, Peruvian, Ecuadorian, Bulgarian, Moldavian, Somali, Cape Verdean, Polish, Kosovian, Belarusian, Italian (age 15-32)	- Participant observations in a vocational school (101 youngsters involved, 66 boys, 35 girls, five classes) and on a square where youngsters meet and during a workshop (16 youngsters involved, 5 boys, 11 girls) - Interviews and focus groups
Lisbon: Vale de Amoreira	Angolan, Cape-Verdean, Guinea Bissauan, São Toméan, Portuguese (age 15-27)	- Participant observation in summer workshop for youngsters (creating dance, hip hop, video, graffiti) - Discourse analysis of produced rap lyrics - 21 in-depth interviews (13 girls 8 boys)

Cities and neighbourhoods	(Main) Populations	Research sites & methods used
Barcelona: Torrassa, Florida and Pubilla Cases	Latin American, Ecuadorian, Castilian (age 15-25)	- Participant observation in street, school, during activities or rituals of “Latin Kings” (60 youngsters involved, 51 boys, 9 girls) - Biographical interviews, group discussions
Madrid	Latin American (mainly Ecuadorian), Moroccan (age 16-24)	- Participant observation in school, street, bars, shops and tea houses - Biographical interviews with 13 youngsters (5 boys, 8 girls)
Metz: Talange and Metz- Borny	Italian, Algerian, Turkish (age 15-24)	- 12 in-depth interviews (6 boys, 6 girls)
Berlin: Kreuzberg	Turkish (majority), Chilean, Korean, Bolivian, Polish, German (age 14-26)	- Participant observations took place in a school, in the street, in a Mosque - 25 in-depth interviews, group discussions
Utrecht <sup>1</sup> : Kanaleneiland and Overvecht	Moroccan, Turkish, Surinamese, Antillean, Dutch (age 14-23)	- Interviews en participant observation in a vocational school, community centre, activation projects, workshops (100 migrant and 30 native youngsters involved)

## 6.3 Results

### 6.3.1 Ethnographic studies

The TRESEGY research project conducted intensive ethnographic studies in the nine research locations. The objective was to explore the experiences of the youngsters with a migrant background. In addition to participant observations in all the research locations, extensive interviews were held with the respondents to explore the biographical aspects and the future expectations of the interviewees. However, as ethnographic methodology has to be adapted to local circumstances which vary widely, comparing the results has its limitations. For this reason we only present here the results that are most pertinent to the present discussion and which show similar processes in the different national contexts. Furthermore, there was one important limitation: in many cases contact was established with the young

<sup>1</sup> Number of respondents differ from overview given in chapter 1, since in this chapter only the respondents from TRESEGY are included.

people with the help of certain institutions, and this influenced the interaction, how the researchers were perceived by the young people and how they reacted to them. For instance, when working together with a school, the migrant students associated the members of the Dutch team with this institution and saw them in the beginning as teachers.

The most interesting and in a sense a somewhat pedestrian result of the ethnographic studies is that the great majority of young migrants situate themselves clearly in the country of residence, with the exception of Rome and to some extent Lisbon. The reason for this is that in Rome, young 'migrants' arrived only recently and were more or less 'forced' to migrate by their parents. In Lisbon, the informants are long-term migrants from Africa, living in difficult circumstances and who have experienced a considerable amount of discrimination. Generally speaking the perception of young people with a migrant background is: this is where we live, it is here that we want to develop a future, and it is here that we experience our hopes and our difficulties. Almost none of them talk about re-emigrating to their country of origin. Quite a few explicitly state that when they spend some time in their country of origin, they have to go through a phase of "integration" in the original culture, which is far from easy for them.

The fact that the young migrants situate themselves in the country of residence becomes evident through a number of outcomes. Firstly, all acknowledge that an education and good work experience is a precondition for realising a suitable professional and personal life in the country of residence which implies that they see their future in this country. Other reasons that support this statement can be found in the results that for example young Moroccan boys in Utrecht defend 'their' neighbourhood, 'their' meeting places and 'their' rights. They are in general rather proud of their neighbourhood, and even the groups that official institutions e.g. police or municipality consider to be problem groups, defend the name and the character of their neighbourhood; they are not happy if the media, the police, or local or national politicians speak ill of their neighbourhood. The same applies to Metz. Critical voices about their behaviour or about their forming associations, either as a family, a community or a group of friends, are sharply and sometimes even violently rejected. This rejection also implies the fact that they see their roots in their country of residence, and that they defend their right to organise themselves as they want.

A second general result of the ethnographic studies, which is an extension of the former point, is that the young migrants are, in general, rather optimistic about their future opportunities in their country of residence. All respondents expect to be better off in their future life than their parents are. This again points to a strong wish for upward mobility and to the expectation that this is something that is achievable. They explicitly acknowledge (or

implicitly in the case of failure) that they are in a situation that enables them to develop interesting future perspectives, either through education or through the opportunities to set up an independent business or small workshop. And they all know of other migrants who have indeed achieved this. However, in general, their hopes are not always realistic or in line with their present education or work experience. Moreover, some of them qualify their optimism by mentioning forms of discrimination or a lack of resources. For instance, discrimination and limited access to proper jobs and education mean that the youth of African descent in Lisbon feel deprived and pessimistic about their future prospects (see tables 6.2 and 6.3). However, in general, it is not only society in the country of residence that is seen as a constraint to achieving their expectations, but also their families and their community. This result is, in a way, paradoxical, because in all other discussions they all vehemently defend their community and their way of life.

This brings us to a third general result. This result is particularly interesting because it reveals a profound dilemma among the young migrants. We have already indicated that they situate themselves in general in their country of residence. However, they do seem to see themselves very much as a group, and also in their behaviour they associate almost exclusively with members of their own community. They do not 'sit' or 'work' with 'native' youngsters at school neither during lessons nor during breaks. And in the street, young migrant boys in particular associate almost exclusively with members of the same community of origin. They also compare themselves with their parents and not with other residents of the country of residence. And when speaking about future spouses, the great majority state they want a partner from the same community. The young migrants from the ethnographic studies do not see this perception and attitude as a dilemma. However, on the other hand, they see the family and the community as a constraining force either by obliging them to migrate or by imposing certain norms and forms of conduct. Family expectations can, for instance, constrain young migrants in Lisbon: girls have care responsibilities, often at home, and boys are expected to work and earn money for the family. However, in the case of girls it also shows that mothers often encourage them to finish their education.

A fourth result involves discrimination. Young migrant populations draw a distinction between two forms of discrimination. Firstly, some of them feel they are viewed as 'different' by the native populations, either because of their skin colour (as in Lisbon), or because of their ambiguous status i.e. as having no or only a limited residence permit. Secondly, all the young migrants experience a different kind of discrimination that can best be described as cultural. In the street and particularly when looking for work, they sense prejudice from the

native population because of their names, or their limited language proficiency, or their living conditions, or religious habits. This prejudice generally involves their supposed “ethnic” characteristics.

The young migrants do quite frequently mention discrimination, and when specifically asked they all say they have been the victim of discrimination or that they expect discrimination might play a role when trying to find a suitable job. For example, a number of young Muslim women anticipate that wearing a headscarf might lead to problems when looking for work. However, discrimination is mostly not perceived as a serious hindrance and the majority of the migrant are optimistic to find a job. They have a meritocratic perspective of equal chances and opportunities, as long as you do your best and try hard the you have opportunities, in spite of existing discrimination as shown in the following example of a Dutch migrant youngster:

*Migrant male 17: 'If you just have a good diploma, it will not give problems. I think every company will hire you, regardless of your background and I feel background never.'*

This last point brings us to some of the variations that our case studies revealed. Whereas young migrants in education or work are somewhat defensive about using the terminology of discrimination, the marginal migrants (in terms of schooling or work) are much more explicit about discrimination: they feel harassed by the police, by CCTV, and by being depicted in a negative way in the press. Communication with them seems restricted to a kind of collective “self-defence” against presumed, and certainly partly real, instances of harassment and discrimination. For this reason it was impossible to interview individuals in this group, because of their apprehension of prejudices we as researchers might share with the police, the media, etc. Agreeing to be interviewed individually would be seen as letting down or betraying the group.

All the other groups investigated affirm a strong attachment to family and community. However, there are evident differences: Chinese migrants in Porto, for example, who tend to be reasonably highly educated, have much more contact outside their own community. Families and communities are a strong point of reference, for identification purposes and for forming networks, but they are also seen, to some extent, as constraining the opportunities of the younger ones.

This outcome partially conflicts with the general desire to construct a future in the country of residence, which is the case for the greater majority of investigated youngsters with a migrant

background. They are aware that they will have to get a ‘good’ education and put effort into achieving their future expectations. However, because they tend to be involved mainly in networks with members of their own community, with the concomitant norms and habits of these communities, they are to some extent at odds with the norms and values of the host society, dominated by a different family system, with a more equal distribution of gender roles and power relations, based on negotiation. This is particularly true for young migrant girls.

### ***6.3.2 Survey***

We present some relevant results from the quantitative study, based on a questionnaire used in the nine research locations (Padilla and Scaglione, 2008). The questionnaire posed some sixty questions on topics related to experiences of social, economic and cultural inclusion and exclusion such as education, identification and discrimination. The questions ask about origin, education and parents’ income, their own education and work perspectives, their experience with discrimination, and their outlook on their future life.

As stated above, the participating groups were widely diverse. In principle, the surveys were carried out among some of the same respondents involved in the ethnographic study. Young immigrants arriving after their birth in the host country constituted the majority of respondents in Barcelona, Madrid, Genoa and Rome, whereas the majority of the respondents were born in the country of residence in the other locations.

The highest level of education completed and the occupational status of the parents of the young respondents with a migrant background are significantly lower than the level and occupational status of the parents of their native counterparts.

The young respondents recognise that there are many social problems in the neighbourhood in which they live. These results are fully in line with the outcomes of previous research on migrants’ living conditions (OECD, 2007).

As far as friendship and meeting places are concerned, the results show clear segregation patterns between “native” and “migrant” youth. One difference is that native youth tend to have only native friends, whereas the majority of friends of youth with a migrant background are from the same ethnic group, but some also have friends from the group of “natives”, because of the school they attend. Gender differences also show an interesting result: generally speaking, boys meet their friends outside the home, whereas girls of immigrant origin meet their friends at home.

Young people with a migrant background present a different pattern: a foreign identity is common, followed by local, national and European. A similar difference is evident for the spaces of identification: for “native” youth the identification levels were the neighbourhood, followed by country, city or Europe, whereas for young people with a migrant background the country of their parents is given first, followed by the neighbourhood.

The TRESEGY survey also includes questions on perceived discrimination. “Native” youth more often indicate than their migrant counterparts that racism does exist; there is, however, consensus on the existence of discrimination. The majority of respondents affirm that there is “some” racism (40% “migrants” and 50% “natives”) or “a lot” of racism (20% and 25% respectively).

**Table 6.2** *Perceived discrimination in %.*

None	Immigrant origin				Nationals			
	none	a little	some	a lot	none	a little	some	a lot
Barcelona	2,8	30,2	34,8	30,2	1,3	36,4	49,7	11,7
Berlin	2,1	11,0	40,3	46,3	1,4	6,3	36,8	55,6
Genoa	3,0	21,3	49,0	25,3	3,3	11,3	49,7	34,7
Lisbon	7,0	22,2	50,2	27,0	8,0	17,4	57,6	24,2
Madrid	8,0	51,8	29,8	10,4	3,3	17,3	50,7	28,7
Metz	5,2	7,3	38,7	44,3	4,4	7,9	39,6	45,9
Porto	11,3	31,0	40,8	16,9	1,4	17,7	65,3	15,6
Rome	0,7	13,6	53,4	31,6	1,3	11,4	48,0	38,6
Utrecht	13,5	9,5	44,6	32,4	8,5	9,9	31,0	50,7

‘Native’ youth give age and clothing style as the main reasons for discrimination, and young ‘migrants’ always specify origin, skin colour and religion. “Migrant” youngsters feel more often discriminated against than “native” youngsters. Both groups generally feel that most discrimination is to be found in school. Migrants also feel discriminated against on public transport, in shops and bars and in their own neighbourhood.

The questionnaire posed a number of questions about expectations and on satisfaction with living in the country of residence. The figures were high for young ‘migrants’ (between 50% and 60%) and even higher for ‘native’ youngsters (between 60% and 70%), and quite a significant proportion is ‘reasonably satisfied’ (30% and 20%).

Only a tiny minority of 4 to 5% say they are not satisfied. Lisbon is the one exception to this general trend: here the neighbourhood and social prospects where the respondents live

are seen as a problem. Finally, when asked whether they are satisfied with their life, the majority of respondents indicated that they are ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’. The answer ‘not satisfied with life’ was only given by a very few respondents.

**Table 6.3** *Satisfaction with living in country of residence in%.*

	Immigrant origin			Nationals		
	Yes	No	More or less	Yes	No	More or less
Barcelona	52,9	4,6	40,3	82,4	2,9	14,1
Berlin	54,1	6,6	39,3	41,4	8,3	50,3
Genoa	57,3	1,7	39,3	72,3	4,0	23,0
Lisbon	48,6	48,3	3,1	52,1	42,6	5,3
Madrid	64,0	7,0	29,0	85,0	2,0	13,0
Metz	59,6	6,3	29,6	72,8	4,1	21,8
Porto	54,5	2,1	42,8	75,8	2,7	20,8
Rome	49,3	5,8	44,2	77,8	2,0	19,9
Utrecht	56,0	5,3	38,7	64,8	11,3	23,9

These results correspond with those in earlier studies, which confirms the validity of the enterprise. To some extent, this large study does indicate a number of new and interesting points. As stated above, the respondents are from a wide variety of different groups, and also live in countries with divergent systems of social and citizenship policies. These results should therefore be interpreted with caution.

There are two categories of results that are very similar, which seems to justify considering these results as truly significant for young populations of very different origins living in very different regions of Europe. These are results from both the quantitative and the qualitative study. The first category of results shows that the great majority of all young people are satisfied with their life, and that they are also satisfied with their living conditions in their country of residence. Only a tiny minority is not satisfied. They also aspire to upward mobility: they all feel that that their situation in the future will be better than that of their parents. This general result can be interpreted as an evident sign of strength and resilience among young people of all origins, even in a situation where all of them recognise the existence of obvious discrimination, which is the second category of results that is very similar for all respondents.

In addition to the results that confirm the disadvantages of populations with a migrant background, such as the parents’ education level and their occupational status, there are a number of interesting results that are more difficult to interpret. The majority of young ‘migrants’ also see their parents’ country of origin as a significant place of identification. These

results could be explained in many ways, but one explanation might possibly be that the majority of the populations with a migrant background tend to manifest a sense of belonging to a specific community more than the young 'natives' do, though this does not exclude the possibility of identifying with other young people on matters relating to their style of living and clothing, etc.

Another interesting result concerns living conditions. Generally speaking, young people with a migrant background tend to live in segregated, deprived neighbourhoods characterised by a lack of financial and social resources (Semyonov and Glikman, 2008). We conducted most of our research in such neighbourhoods and the young people living there often report that violence, delinquency, drug abuse and theft are rife. However, when asked, the majority do state that they like living in their neighbourhood and do not want to move (between 65 and 90%). They are even happier or more satisfied with the neighbourhood than the natives are. Furthermore, the neighbourhood is also an important reference point for their sense of identity. The ethnographic studies revealed that the young people act and react quite defensively when they feel their district or neighbourhood is negatively depicted in the media or by the police.

#### **6.4 Conclusion and discussion**

Notwithstanding their many differences, all European countries are active participants in the globalisation process, a consequence of which is a new international division of labour and increased flows of goods, capital and services throughout the world.

The globalisation process also entails new risks, and a raft of 'risk' literature has emerged, starting with the publication of 'Risk Society' in 1992 (Beck, 1992), followed by many others (Beck, 2000; Giddens *et al.*, 2006; Giddens, 2007). The conviction is that these new risks can, to some extent, be anticipated and prevented by individual members of European societies, through a new responsibility of constructing one's own potentialities, for example through education and by being prepared for flexible employment. The EU has explicitly confronted these challenges, on the one hand by the goals formulated in the Lisbon Agenda, and on the other hand by formulating new social policy based on activation. The concepts of this new social policy, referred to as 'social investment policy' or 'activation policy', have been elaborated upon, but they have not yet been translated systematically into policy practice in the same way throughout Europe. However, policy measures for young people have been adopted in all EU countries.

We now examine the new risks facing our target group in more detail. We make a distinction between three different kinds of risks, introduced by Castel (2003). Firstly - the social risks. These are risks identified and taken into account, mainly through guaranteed assurance schemes (Ewald, 1986) by the construction of welfare states, roughly during the last century, such as work accident, illness, etc. Unemployment falls into this category. The globalisation process has, without doubt, modified the configuration of this family of social risk.

The second family of risk identified by Castel is the discursive and political construction of the concept of 'groups at risk', in other words, groups of people identified as a social group sharing certain characteristics that threaten to push these groups into a marginal, somewhat excluded position. This group includes for example the 'young', the 'lower educated', 'single-parent families' (mostly women), 'older males' (often alcoholics, in danger of losing their job and family ties) and also 'migrant populations'. In all these cases, risk factors have been identified that facilitate anticipating a significant event in the future, which is highly likely due to the combination of certain factors. Therefore, it seems necessary to supervise and check constantly whether or not the serious event is going to happen. This kind of procedure can be effective because there is certainly nothing wrong with prevention. However, it is possible that social groups are objectified in this way, with the corresponding consequences that this would entail. This seems to be the case with migrant populations. Before discussing this question, we only mention the third family of risks distinguished by Castel, which comprises the awkward and problematic consequences of the unwanted effects of scientific and technical developments and from the exploitation of natural resources of the planet earth.

Over the past few decades migrant populations have been identified as an 'at-risk group' in European societies as a result of several, quite distinct categories of risk factors. The first category, mentioned in the introduction, is the disadvantages migrants have in terms of education, language proficiency, participation in the labour market, etc. Numerous studies have corroborated these disadvantages, but it is worth mentioning that these disadvantages generally decrease with time. Moreover, these disadvantages differ considerably for the various groups of migrants as becomes clear in the debate on segmented assimilation. Youngsters in general have also been formulated as an at-risk group, which turns youngsters with a migrant background into a group with a double risk.

A second category of risk factors has been identified as the 'traditional' culture of the majority of migrant groups, with, in general, a deficit of emancipation of women among these populations. Social and integration policies in the EU focus mainly on the emancipation of

women. This second category of risk factors is sometimes referred to as a 'cultural' one, denoting the cultural distance between migrant groups and the host society. This category includes the supposed or real differences between norms and values, and in particular the norms surrounding socialisation and bringing up children, which many countries consider insufficient for preparing young children in a suitable way for primary education. Another example is the conviction that young migrants, due to their cultural or ethnic background, lack the appropriate social skills for entering the labour market successfully.

A third category of factors that has been identified is the disproportionately high percentage of migrants, and in particular of young migrants, among offenders, coming into contact with the police and appearing in court. In popular terms, these include public order disturbances, theft, drug dealing, and other criminal activities. Finally, terrorism is the fourth risk category. There have indeed been terrorist attacks in various European countries, such as Spain, the UK, Germany, the Netherlands, and also some apparently serious attempts to carry out acts of terrorism. The generally young terrorists are predominantly Muslims. This last risk factor is certainly present, and some have referred to it as 'home-grown terrorism' (Buijs *et al.*, 2006).

These four categories of risk factors, which are quite heterogeneous, have been combined over the last two decades to construct this new 'at-risk group'. The power of this construction should not be underestimated, because it has been translated and widely used in public space and in policy debate. Moreover, it is, often in exaggerated ways, a central part of the discourse used by new right-wing and populist political parties and movements in European countries.

Scientifically speaking, combining these four categories of risk factors can easily be rejected. Indeed, these four categories are first of all quite heterogeneous, there is no inherent linkage between the four categories. Secondly, some of these categories apply, and then only in part, to specific groups of migrant populations. Thirdly, another category, the threat of terrorism, while real, only applies to a tiny fraction of young people with a migrant background. Finally, a number of people with a migrant background cannot be subsumed under any of these four categories of risk factors.

Nonetheless, it appears that the TRESEGY research project has established that disadvantages do exist, and that in many cases the youngsters with a migrant background live in families that do not conform to the new normative model of post modern families promoted in Europe. It seems that quite a number of the families of people with a migrant background live in family systems and communities that are at some distance from the host

society culture and traditional gender roles are more present among migrant families. This became evident from the reported impression that young people feel that constraints are placed upon them by their families and community. However, this statement remains a general affirmation, because much more detailed research on specific issues is needed to detail the situation of the households of people with a migrant background.

It is time to summarise and discuss this paper's general hypothesis. Three developments affect the conditions under which groups with a migrant background in European societies live, and the experiences and perceptions of youngsters among them in particular. Firstly, globalisation has brought about significant changes to the European labour markets in general, and has in particular diminished opportunities for lower educated groups. However, because our target group is disadvantaged, it is a group that will be more affected by this development. Secondly, new social policy is being developed, with a definite accent on personal responsibility for one's own life course in terms of employability and financial resources. This new social policy has to date only been partly implemented, but it clearly affects young people at the margin who have dropped out of the system. As such this new social policy is interesting, though it does assume the existence of robust, guaranteed social support for individuals to be able to take on these new responsibilities. The question is whether this is in fact the case with our target group, and this is debatable because this new social policy means that the support it offers is conditional and threatens to erode the substantial character of social support that was formerly guaranteed. This is why Somers (2008) sees social citizenship becoming more fragile. Thirdly, 'migrant populations' have been constructed as an at-risk group, which has had numerous consequences, and means that this at-risk group will be monitored and supervised more thoroughly than in the past. All in all, these three developments mean that the life and working conditions for our target group are deteriorating. Given these developments, the fear is that European societies are undergoing increased 'dualisation' (Davidsson and Naczyk, 2009) and that indeed globalisation tends to intensify social inequality structures in modern societies (Buchholz *et al.*, 2009). This seems to be justified when one takes account of the fact that entry positions (where there is an 'entry') to the labour market have durable effects on further careers, particularly in Germany and Italy.

It is quite astonishing that the results of our research show a widely shared optimism among youngsters with a migrant background. The majority are reasonably satisfied with the conditions of life in their country of residence, they see their future in this country. Their choice of life is clearly inspired by what can be called a multicultural perspective, or in other words, they recognise the need to adapt to the host country (e.g. education and the criteria for

labour market participation), while at the same time they defend, to some extent, the lifestyle of their community.

These results show that transformations of the general conditions of life and of social citizenship do not directly affect the experiences and expectations of our target group. On the contrary, our target group manifests a high degree of resilience and optimism. This is evidenced by the fact that the members of our target group compare themselves in the first place with their parents and other members of their community. And in all probability they are right: their future is brighter than that of their parents, and their conditions of life are far better than the conditions to be found in their parents' country of origin. However, we can also conclude that they do not fully appreciate the consequences of the present changes to the conditions of life and social citizenship, like a teacher in the Netherlands said about migrant secondary vocational students: "They have unrealistic future perspectives (becoming a doctor or lawyer), but you cannot take away their dreams, their wishes and demotivate them". Expectations are therefore that the tension between the changed conditions and their optimism will lead to a multitude of different reactions and life experiences among youngsters from a migrant background. This confrontation offers support for the thesis of segmented assimilation.

The thesis of segmented assimilation means that the situation of youngsters with a migrant background is polarised: the situation some groups of migrant youngsters find themselves in is indeed not improving or it is even getting worse, e.g. for dropouts and the unemployed, but instead of overall downward mobility the situation is clearly improving for most migrant youngsters. This is reflected in the optimistic and motivated attitude of many youngsters in the TRESEGY study. The results correspond to what is referred to in a recent American study as 'the second generation advantage' (Kasinitz *et al.*, 2008). Second generation migrants display considerable ambition and a desire for upward mobility, which they hope to establish by integrating into the (host) society through education or work and at the same they strive to maintain their own culture. This means that more of them will end up in middle class society.

Moreover, they can benefit from living in two (cultural) worlds. This entails (cultural) creativity and enables them to cope with different and sometimes conflicting norms and expectations. For instance, the TRESEGY study showed that some young migrant girls with less access to the public sphere, such as the street and neighbourhood, spend more time at home and are more focused on educational achievement. Another example is migrant youth of African descent in Lisbon. On the one hand their skin colour is sufficient reason for native

groups to exclude them because they are clearly African and are therefore outsiders. On the other hand, their African characteristics are important for identification and bonding with other young migrants which is expressed through clothing, food, music and dance.

In short, migrant youngsters follow a diversity of life paths, and their resilience and optimism can in many cases help them overcome the tension they face in their everyday lives.

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## **7 New governance: pitfalls of activation policies for young migrant dropouts in the Netherlands**

This chapter is co-authored by Kaj van Zenderen (Utrecht University, the Netherlands) and is published in an international journal (2011): *Journal of Social Research and Policy*, 2(2), 93-109. Earlier versions of this chapter have been presented at the ESPAnet Social Policy Research day, April 2009, Tilburg (the Netherlands) and at the 2<sup>nd</sup> ASPEN/ETUI Conference 'Activation and Security', April 2009, Brno (Czech Republic).

**Abstract:**

Migrant youth are at a disadvantage in the Netherlands when it comes to schooling and work: many drop out of school and are unemployed. We will use concepts of new governance to discuss the complexities surrounding the execution of policies to reintegrate dropouts back into school or the labour market from the perspectives of professionals (street level bureaucrats) working in activation programmes. The results show that cooperation is difficult. The most difficult youngsters are beyond the reach of most policy initiatives. Furthermore, many professionals perceive educational requirements as unrealistic for some youngsters. Finally, new requirements for employability may stigmatize youngsters as unwilling and unmotivated.

**7.1 Introduction**

Current figures on the position of young migrants<sup>1</sup> in the Netherlands indicate that migrant youth are at a disadvantage in the educational and professional spheres compared with their Dutch counterparts. They are overrepresented in the lower segments of education and leave school before graduation almost twice as often (Ministry of Education [Min. OCW], 2007a). On the labour market they are concentrated in the lower segments and show structurally high levels of unemployment (Statistics Netherlands [CBS], 2008). Of special concern are what are referred to as non-participants i.e. young people who do not attend school, who are not active jobseekers, and who are without a regular income (Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment [Min. SZW], 2007a).

Many social policies and measures to improve the position of young migrants in the Netherlands have been developed in order to help them cope with their disadvantaged position. These measures originated mainly from two policy lines. Firstly, there is a more activating approach towards unemployment which resulted in the Active Labour Market Policy (ALMP) (Eichhorst, Kaufmann & Konle-Seidl, 2008). This pertains to recent transitions from a 'passive' to an 'active' welfare state in which activation to work has increasingly taken precedence over social security provision (Van Oorschot, 2004) and in which social security functions as a reintegration tool, an incentive to stimulate the 'inactive'

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<sup>1</sup> In the Netherlands the term non-western migrant includes migrants from Turkey, Africa, Latin America and Asia, with the exception of Indonesia and Japan, with at least one parent born in one of these countries. The young migrants referred to in this paper are non-western, mostly Turkish, Moroccan, Surinamese or Antillean. Those groups represent the four largest migrant groups in the Netherlands. Furthermore, among them dropout rates and unemployment figures are the highest.

unemployed or benefit recipients to work (Van Berkel & Borghi, 2008). The goal of these policies is to improve economic self-reliance and to reach social integration of these groups since their status is often associated with poverty and social exclusion (Eichhorst et al., 2008). Secondly, a number of policies that aim to combat school dropout rates fit in with the ALMP context and have an activating character. In line with the European aspiration to become a knowledge economy (European Council, 2000), the aim is to prevent youngsters from leaving school early, to educate young people as much as possible so in the future they will have more opportunities on the labour market, and to reintegrate dropouts back into school and onto the labour market.

Policies on early school leaving and youth unemployment are developed and coordinated on national and European levels, but policy implementation and activation programmes are decentralized. Municipalities, employment offices (in the Netherlands, Centre for Work and Income [CWI]) and schools are all responsible for achieving the national and European goals. This study examines the execution of policies to reduce school dropout levels and to activate young migrants to work in the local context of the city of Utrecht. We are interested in how official policies take shape in the institutions and organisations responsible for policy execution. We are also interested in what this implies for the young migrant dropouts involved. The central questions of our study are: how are policies concerning early school leaving and youth unemployment executed in the local context (the city of Utrecht) and what are the consequences for the migrant youngsters involved?

To answer our research questions our study consists of three different parts. The first part treats the theoretical field of policy execution focussing on new governance and street level bureaucracy. We also offer an overview of the main European national and local policies to combat early school leaving and youth unemployment. Together this serves as the (theoretical and policy) background for the second and third part. In the second part we examine how official policy takes shape in the local context along the lines of activation and new governance. Therefore we did an extensive case study research in the regional context of the city of Utrecht. Utrecht is one of the four largest cities in the Netherlands where the dropout and youth unemployment rates are the highest (Min. OCW, 2007a; CBS, 2008). The third part deals with the consequences of the policy execution for the young migrant dropouts and we examine in what ways the policies work out beneficially or obstructive.

## 7.2 New governance and street level bureaucracy in activation

Central in the implementation and execution of activation policies are forms of new governance (Van Berkel & Borghi, 2008; Van Berkel, 2009; Lindsay & McQuaid, 2009). New governance entails that to address complex social problems like disadvantaged youngsters with multiple problems new models for provision of activation must be employed: welfare provision is less organised on a state level and instead responsibilities for providing services are decentralized to locally responsive multi-agency partnerships which consist of multiple stakeholders with specific expertise (Daly, 2003; Van Berkel & Borghi, 2008; Lindsay & McQuaid, 2009).

In his studies Van Berkel (2005, 2008) distinguishes key concepts typical of new governance in implementing activation policies. First, *decentralisation*: In active welfare states local governments are more and more responsible for the implementation of national policies and the provision of social services. Secondly, *marketisation*: with the transition from passive to active welfare states, (semi) privatized reintegration markets were created in order to make activation services more efficient and of better quality (Struyven & Steurs, 2002; Van Berkel & Van der Aa, 2005; Lindsay & McQuaid, 2009). This means providing welfare services is (partly) contracted out to private re-integration or activation companies (providers) by governmental institutions like employment offices, who act as purchasers of these services. This competitive climate should stimulate private companies to promote more individually focussed and responsive service provision. Lastly, the promotion of *interagency cooperation*: on the local level one-stop shops have been introduced with the aim to have a more effective cooperation between organisations responsible for income provision and activation and to serve tailor made services for the unemployed. These partnerships are between old providers of these services, but also with new (contracted out) commercial partners.

Several studies highlight some difficulties or tensions in delivering services by means of new governance. Firstly regarding interagency cooperation: differences between (local) partners in professional and organisational values, cultures and interests can hamper successful interagency cooperation and integration of services in one-stop shops (Axelsson & Axelsson, 2006; Glendinning, 2003; Vangen & Huxham, 2003). Power differences and struggles between partner organisations over who's in charge of the partnership, fear of losing one organisational territory and interest can obstruct trust-building between partners (Glendinning, 2003). Contracting out activation services can hinder 'genuine partnership' because it entails unequal

power relationships between purchaser and provider. This can limit the exchange of shared knowledge and experience which are vital for partnerships (Lindsay & McQuaid, 2008).

Furthermore, instead of delivering individualized tailor made services contracting out seems to lead to private activation services applying standardized approaches (Lindsay & McQuaid, 2009). Van Berkel & Van der Aa (2005) point to several disincentives for private companies to offer more tailor made services: for instance they only have to meet a success rate (job placements) of around 50 percent, and there is a lack of quality control and monitoring by the purchasers of the services offered to the clients. Lastly, the way in which private activation services are financed, by outflow in job placements, can lead to ‘creaming’ in which difficult clients are excluded from programs or ‘parking’ in long term trajectories in which hardly any job counselling or job training takes place (Struyven & Steurs, 2002; Van Berkel & Van der Aa, 2005).

To examine our second question whether the social policies have unintended, consequences for the target group, young migrant dropouts, we will examine how the supply of social services for young migrant drop-outs is affected by the principles of new governance: marketisation and interagency cooperation. However, the delivery of social services is not only determined by formal and operational organisation, but also by the way professionals adopt these policies and put them in practice. Therefore we also use street-level bureaucracy theory which states that the street-level workers in organisations ultimately decide what kind of services and benefits clients receive. Consequently, according to Lipsky, they do not just deliver but in fact make policy (Lipsky, 1980; Evans & Harris, 2004; Winter, 2002, 2003). The street-level bureaucracy theory consists of two key concepts: discretion and coping behaviour. Discretion is the freedom professionals or street-level bureaucrats have when deciding what action to take. They use their discretion to apply various coping behaviours which are the informal practice strategies professionals apply to handle complex work situations and work pressure, such as an enormous workload and limited resources. One important coping strategy is ‘creaming’ where professionals tend to focus on ‘workable’ clients at the expense of the more difficult ones. In this present study we explore whether discretion and coping behaviours on the part of professionals in reintegration organisations in Utrecht have positive or questionable consequences for young migrant dropouts.

In the next section we provide an overview of the Dutch national and local activation policies on early school leaving and youth unemployment. For this we use existing data such as official policy documents and other studies that evaluate activation and reintegration policies.

### **7.3 Research context**

We now give a brief overview of the main national and local policies to reduce the number of dropouts and to promote labour market participation of young migrant people. We focus on the main policies that pertain to young migrant dropouts. Migrants are often seen as a group that needs extra attention in order to improve their educational level or to encourage their labour market participation (Social and Economic Council [SER], 2007). However, the problems of migrant youth are dealt with in the more general framework of achieving a sufficient educational level and consequently improving labour market participation. Nevertheless, since migrant youngsters are well represented in dropout and youth unemployment rates, these policies implicitly target this group. This can also be observed in the reintegration programmes which are generally to be found in migrant neighbourhoods and where clients with a migrant background are overrepresented.

#### ***7.3.1 National context***

Policies on early school leaving stem from the early 1990s with reforms in vocational education. In 1994, the basic qualification was introduced as a way of establishing a minimum level of vocational training which would ensure labour market access (Houtkoop, 2004). Obtaining the basic qualification entails completing at least the second level of secondary vocational education. Without a basic qualification, sustainable labour market options are assumed to be limited and the definition of ‘dropouts’ in the Netherlands therefore actually refers to all youngsters who do not obtain this basic qualification. Furthermore, since 1994, the Netherlands has been divided into Regional Report and Coordination Points (RMC regions) to facilitate tackling the problem of school dropouts and to register the number of early school leavers.

The recent boom in Dutch policies to prevent young people from dropping out and to return dropouts to school is heavily influenced by the Lisbon Agreements. The European council set the goal to become one of the most competitive and dynamic knowledge economies and therefore one important aim is to reduce the number of people in the 18-24 age group who only completed the lower level of secondary education by half (European Council, 2000). In this intensified attack on reducing dropout, a new law was introduced in 2001 that required municipalities and schools to report the number of dropouts to the RMCs.

In 2006 the Dutch government launched an action plan entitled ‘Attack on Dropping Out’ because the number of dropouts remained high and it was feared the Lisbon targets were out of reach (Min. OCW, 2006). This plan entailed, for instance, to create more trainee places and one-stop shops for young people with questions relating to education and employment. Another important measure was to extend the compulsory school leaving age from 17 to 18 and introduce a ‘qualification obligation’ (Min. OCW, 2007b). This means that all youngsters between 16 and 18 who have not attained a basic qualification level should attend school until they turn 18.

The policies give priority to education rather than to employment. The goal for young unemployed people is for them to achieve the basic qualification through additional education or to award them qualifications for skills obtained through work experience (Min. OCW, 2003, 2006).

The primary responsibility for executing labour market policies lies with the municipalities and their social-service departments. As of 2004, responsibility for providing social benefit is tied by the new Social Assistance Act (WWB) (Min. SZW, 2003), which provides municipalities with their own budget to implement social assistance policies at local level. The aim is to limit the inflow of people into social security and to stimulate the outflow into work. The municipalities and the Social Security Agency contract out private reintegration companies that are responsible for providing reintegration programmes for benefit recipients.

The aims to improve both the qualification level and the labour market position of young people converge in the last year introduced study-work obligation to the age of 27. All youngsters applying for social benefit are referred to work programmes or sent back to school, or to a combination of work and study. If young people refuse this offer to learn or work they may no longer be entitled to benefit (Min. SZW, 2007b).

### ***7.3.2 Local context: prevention and activation in Utrecht***

In Utrecht, there is integrated cooperation, i.e. a ‘comprehensive approach’, between different organisations - schools, youth care, social work, the municipality and employment offices and also private initiatives which run different kinds of preventive and curative programmes are all involved in the field of activating young dropouts (see model 1). The municipality also created a covenant scheme together with the Ministry of Education and the local training centres for secondary vocational education (ROCs) to reduce the number of dropouts. Also, Utrecht implemented the obligation to work and study up to the age of 27. The municipality opened a

youth office in January 2009, this is a front office where young Utrecht residents between 13 and 27 years of age can go with their questions on school, work and income. The youth office refers dropouts to the most suitable institutions that will help them return to school or find employment on the labour market.

This overview of current policies is the background against which we studied the local execution of measures to combat dropping out and to enhance reintegration. To further answer our research questions ‘how are the policies executed and what does this imply for the young migrants’ we concentrate on matters related to new governance in activation and the role of front line workers or the street level bureaucrats. First, interagency cooperation and marketisation are treated: how does cooperation between organisations work and how do organisations approach and admit young people. Secondly, issues surrounding obtaining sufficient educational qualifications and new requirements for employability that affect young migrants are discussed. These imply important implications for the execution of official activation policies and the position of young migrant dropouts.

#### **7.4 Methods and overview of the local field of activation**

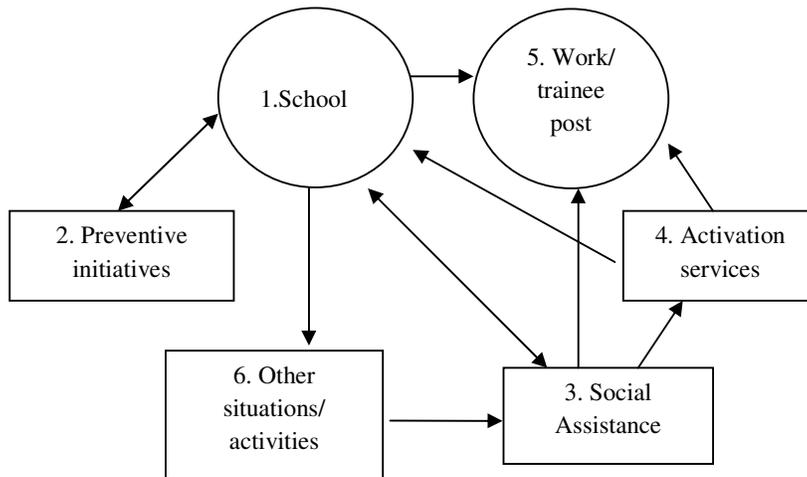
Our study was part of the comparative European research project TRESEGY. The project ran from June 2006-2009 and studied how young migrants experience their life in their country of residence, what problems they face and what kind of support from social policy they receive. Six European countries with nine cities as research locations participated in the project. The project realised extensive quantitative and qualitative studies involving youth surveys and ethnographic studies in various local settings like on the street, schools, community centres and activation programmes for young people. In this article we are discussing the findings for the Dutch context.

For the qualitative field study on policy execution, we conducted a case study and interviewed 28 professionals which are key figures in public and private organisations involved in the activation of young dropouts and the young unemployed in Utrecht (see table 7.1).

The picture below (figure 1) provides a schematic overview of the local field of activation and its main levels and actors. We also included the different trajectories dropouts can take. Moreover, other cities in the Netherlands are similarly organised so this picture resembles the situation of activation of early school leavers in major Dutch cities. The programmes and policies target ‘dropouts’: youngsters in the 13-27 age range who are at risk of dropping out of school, who have already dropped out, and who may also be unemployed.

In the city of Utrecht, there is a large migrant community. Because many migrant youngsters in Utrecht are in a disadvantaged position, the presented local activation initiatives often involve this group.

**Figure 7.1** *Local field of activation*



The following main actors are involved in the field of activating dropouts: first schools (Regional Training Centres) which house care and advice teams and rebound facilities for youngsters who face dropping out. Secondly, in Utrecht there are several dropout prevention projects which collaborate with schools and are executed in classrooms like buddy projects, a self employment project and a migrant empowerment association. Third, social assistance organised around municipality institutions entailing one-stop offices like the youth office, and the study-work office. Other important players on this level are the school attendance office and the Department of Education responsible for executing educational policies. Fourth are private activation and rehabilitation services. Fifth are work and trainee posts. Work and trainee posts are joined in this figure because trainee posts are considered to be necessarily stepping-stones for being employed. Finally, youngsters can be in other activities or situations like care tasks, black work, psychological or psychiatric services, juridical circuit etc. Within this field dropouts can take the several trajectories (indicated by the arrows): for instance, dropping out and entering directly the labour market, or not finding/searching work and applying for social benefit, and from social assistance back into school, work or trainee posts (e.g. work-first projects). It should be clear that there are more possibilities and that these trajectories can be repeated in variable ways several times. For example, when youngsters lose their job or drop out of school once more, a new cycle can start again.

Between February and May 2007, and September 2008 and April 2009 we held semi-structured in depth-interviews from over an hour with 28 figures that are representatives of local organisations and projects (see Table 7.1). We selected our respondents so that they form a balanced representation of our case study (Yin, 1994). We established contacts in the field using snowball sampling; in this way we composed a sample that represents the whole reintegration field of the city of Utrecht. We started with policymakers of the municipality and the schools because they have a good overview of all the different organisations active in this area. Their information enabled us to map the local field of activation and they also provided us with several contact persons within the different organisations. Our respondents are in most cases professionals who are often programme coordinators or policymakers and also staff who actually carry out the work, in order to establish a broad local overview of the policies and their implementation in the city of Utrecht. Moreover, all the coordinators were, in addition to their managerial tasks, actually working with the youngsters.

We complemented the interview data with participant observations of actual policy execution in the field. We conducted participant observations in a garage that has work-study programmes for young dropouts. We interviewed the training staff, the owner and several migrant youngsters and observed how educational goals were merged with practical training in a real life work situation. Furthermore, we attended a rebound class for youngsters who face dropping out and interviewed several youngsters and the coordinating teacher. The observations were written out in field reports and the interviews were recorded and transcribed.

We decided to stop to recruit new informants when we noticed we could not retrieve new information from extra interviews, which meant that we reached data saturation (Boeije, 2010). Furthermore, in this study we carried out triangulation to validate our data. We used three different types of triangulation; triangulation of researchers, data resources and methods. During the whole research process two researchers were involved in the study. The benefit of working with two or more researchers is that two persons always know more than one person, and that interpretations could always be verified with the other researcher. Triangulation of data resources was established by interviewing many different actors in the field of reintegration in the city of Utrecht. In this way we were able to examine many different perspectives on the same issues, in order to verify the statements of informants. Last, by combining methods like interviewing and observations we could compare ‘speech’ with ‘actions’ and verify answers given in face-to-face interviews with observed behaviour. This improved the validity of the study.

We analysed the data using the MAXQDA07 software package, which enabled us to perform an accurate and systematic analysis of our qualitative data. Segments from the transcripts were coded with the help of our theoretical concepts (Boeije, 2010). Core concepts were identified as overarching themes of the study and we were able to get results based on theoretical themes which were constructed with the coded fragments of our analysis.

**Table 7.1** *Organisations and informants:*

<b>Organisation:</b>	<b>Public or private?</b>	<b>Informant:</b>
1. Study-Work Office	Public	Coordinator
2. Garage	Private	Owner, Advisor, Teacher/foreman 1, Teacher/foreman 2
3. Rehabilitation Project	Private	Coordinator 1, Coordinator 2
4. Employment Desk	Public	Coordinator
5. Employers Office	Public	Coordinator
6. Municipality: Department of Education	Public	Policymaker 1, Policymaker 2
7. Youth Office	Public	Coordinator, Work Coach
8. Rebound Facility	Public	Coordinator
9. Regional Training Centre 1	Public	Policymaker, Coordinator Internships, Career Counsellor, Coordinator Basic Vocational training (level 2), Intercultural Coach
10. Reintegration Service	Private	Coordinator
11. Buddy Project	Public	Coordinator
12. Regional Training Centre 2	Public	Policymaker Coordinator
13. Self Employment Project	Private	Coordinator
14. School Attendance Office	Public	School attendance officer 1, School attendance officer 2
15. Empowerment Initiative	Private	Coordinator
16. Migrant Network	Private	Coordinator

We complemented the interview data with participant observations of actual policy execution in the field. We conducted participant observations in a garage that has work-study programmes for young dropouts. We interviewed the training staff, the owner and several migrant youngsters and observed how educational goals were merged with practical training in a real life work situation. Furthermore, we attended a rebound class for youngsters who face dropping out and interviewed several youngsters and the coordinating teacher. The observations were written out in field reports and the interviews were recorded and transcribed. We analysed the data using the MAXQDA07 software package, which enabled us to perform an accurate and systematic analysis of our qualitative data. Segments from the transcripts were coded with the help of our theoretical concepts (Boeijs, 2010). Core concepts were identified as overarching themes of the study and we were able to get results based on theoretical themes which were constructed with the coded fragments of our analysis.

## **7.5 Results**

### ***7.5.1 Interagency cooperation***

*'One problem you come across is that so many organisational cultures are working together in the office. And we try to develop unity, some kind of professional unity. If at first you don't succeed, try, try, try again.'*  
(Coordinator P7 Youth Office)

Central to the comprehensive approach is inter-agency cooperation in which the different and multiple social problems of youngsters are taken care of. There are different levels of cooperation. Firstly, the municipality is involved in various cooperation initiatives, or one-stop shops such as the youth office, a work-study office, and an employers office. All aim to put the unemployed or dropouts in contact with the right institutions, or to put employers in touch with the unemployed. When talking of these kinds of initiatives, a phrase that was often heard was: 'they work like a spider in a web'. For the young dropouts the youth office is the most relevant, where partners from secondary vocational schools, social work, employment offices, employers, school attendance officers and social affairs cooperate in the office. The main objective of the cooperation is to present dropouts with a tailor-made programme in which various aspects of their particular situation are taken care of. This tailor-made or individual approach entails a considerable amount of discretion on the part of the youth office

professionals, because they are the people who decide what care will be given and which organisation a youngster will be referred to.

Secondly, preventing students from leaving school early also involves collaboration between the municipality and schools. Vocational schools in Utrecht work together with the school attendance officer from the municipality and professional care institutions.

Thirdly, as a result of marketisation, the municipality contracted out the reintegration tasks to commercial organisations. The youth office, for instance, put out the reintegration services, which means that youngsters who need to be reintegrated into the labour market are referred to a private reintegration company. These organisations work together with official partners such as youth care, employment offices, the police and judicial authorities and some are also connected to the youth office. If some kind of professional care or help is not possible in one organisation, other parties are contacted and clients referred to them.

There has been a recent move to increase cooperation with professional youth care institutions. For example, schools and reintegration projects cooperate with professional care, in order to provide support for youngsters with their personal and psychological problems. Activation programmes provide social care themselves through psychologists or cooperate with different professional care organisations. Since some students drop out because they have personal problems, secondary vocational schools set up special needs advisory teams to refer pupils to social work and mental health care when necessary.

### ***7.5.2 Complexities of interagency cooperation***

The interviewees explained that most of the dropouts have numerous personal problems, including mental health issues, addiction, debt, or care responsibilities. This means that in many cases numerous parties are involved and this makes working together more complex. In the past it used to be possible for different organisations to work independently of each other on a youngster's various problems, for example a housing organisation and debt aid operated separately without even being aware of the other's involvement. Despite it is considered to be complex there is a lot of willingness to make the cooperation succeed:

‘It is easy to say we work integrated right? However, it is not easy to collaborate with all these parties, it is very complex. People who talk easily about it do not know what it means in practice. It is really something...nevertheless you should at least try to do it.’

(Policymaker 2 P6 Municipality Department of Education)

Furthermore, registration of young dropouts and their problems was difficult in the past and a newly introduced computer system to which all involved organisations and institutions are linked should now make it easier to share and collect information and provide tailor-made programmes for youngsters. However, so far the effectiveness of the new computer system is not clear and concerns about privacy hinder the full implementation of the system.

Another difficulty informants mentioned is that, despite intensive cooperation, different organisations and institutions continue to work in their own interest; first and foremost they are part of the organisation they work for, and cooperation takes second place. Therefore, despite the aim of interagency cooperation there is still a lot of discretionary space left for individual organisations to operate in their own interest as the coordinator of the youth office explains:

*'What is complicated to such an one-stop office, it is of course an multi-disciplinary office in which enthusiastic employees of the various organisation are working but they remain part of their own mother organisation. So the project manager of the office is just a functional executive so to say. All interests of the parties involved remain of importance. That makes it very complicated.'*

*(Coordinator P7 Youth Office)*

The interviewees informed us also that cooperation between social and commercial actors can be difficult. Because of marketisation, the youth office is compelled to refer youngsters to commercial partners because the municipality has contractual agreements with reintegration services. Social partners and commercial partners sometimes conflict because the commercial partners also have a commercial interest in activating dropouts. Commercial parties, in turn, sometimes feel excluded by the social partners who feel more affiliation with each other.

Another example of organisations having different interests is that social affairs of the municipality attempts to place people in sustainable labour market positions, while the public employment service (CWI) sometimes tends to 'push' people into short term positions simply to meet placement targets as formulated by the coordinator of the employers office:

*'And well, the public employment service (CWI) is solely targeted at placements and do not care if they are still there the next day, so to speak, while for the municipality that is a primary goal, we want establish sustainable placements as we call it within the municipality.'*

*(Coordinator P5 Employers Office)*

The coordinator of the youth office is afraid that cooperation between social affairs and the employment service will be disadvantageous for people receiving social assistance:

*'The municipality is responsible for people in social assistance and in general these people are qualitatively speaking less good than people on unemployment benefit, so the municipality is afraid that taking these groups together will be disadvantageous for the outflow of people on social assistance.'*

*(Coordinator P7 Youth Office)*

### **7.5.3 The 'lost' group – the youngsters who are not reached**

Some of the policies on early school leaving or youth unemployment will not reach all youngsters. For example, when youngsters become 18 and beyond the scope of compulsory education, it is difficult for schools and the municipality to intervene in someone's personal situation. The municipality states that it tries to have in view all youngsters in the 18 year old and younger age group:

*'We do say that we have all the youngsters in view. And officially that is true and that is what we try in reality too. We really do visit them at home if we cannot reach them.'*

*(Policymaker 2 P6 Municipality Department of Education)*

However, when dropouts older than 18 are not in trouble with the law or the police and if they do not apply for social benefit, they are invisible. The work-study obligation is supposed to take care of this group. However, a complain from the informants from the municipality is that they wish to see the work-study obligation as an obligation for the youngsters too, and not only as an obligation for the municipality to provide education or work opportunities.

In addition to the group of invisible youngsters there is also a group of 'difficult' youngsters. This group embarks on the programmes, but they are often rejected and passed on or not really taken care of. In fact, according to our informants, there are no suitable programmes for the most difficult group of youngsters.

Our interviewees define the most difficult group as a group of youngsters who are not motivated to finish the programme successfully or who have (psychological) problems that are too complex to deal with. An unmotivated group is, in fact, a lost group because the youngsters themselves no longer put in an appearance. There is, in this case, nothing that the professionals can do to make the youngsters stay in the programme - participation is voluntary

and motivation is crucial as reflected in the following statements from the coordinators of a rehabilitation project:

*'It happens that someone does not show up for the intake and eventually you have to stop quite soon. You just cannot reach all of them. We also have a group we can not reach'*

*(Coordinator 2 P3 Rehabilitation Project)*

*'We do not try to get this group, it will become too complicated.'* (On youngsters with psychiatric problems).

*(Coordinator 1 P3 Rehabilitation Project)*

Programmes generally have certain intake procedures to ascertain whether dropouts have the necessary requirements and motivation to conclude the activation programme successfully. 'Difficult' groups are then rejected. The organisations and their professionals use discretionary power and apply coping behaviours in order not to get involved with the most difficult youngsters. It is therefore very easy for organisations to apply their own admission requirements.

One explanation for these practices may possibly lie in the marketisation of the reintegration services. Commercial reintegration services only accept 'workable' customers, who, they are sure, will be reintegrated into school or work within a certain timeframe. Most programmes have a fixed schedule and have to meet the targets set by the municipality in order to receive financial support. This might indicate a strategy of creaming in which only workable clients are admitted (Struyven & Steurs, 2002; Van Berkel & Van der Aa, 2005; Winter, 2003). As stated above, creaming strategies are coping behaviours of professionals to handle work and time pressure in order to meet their targets.

*'One group is left over, and we take care of part of that group. And still, there are many who first need something else before they can start here or who are not suitable for our programme at all.'*

*(Coordinator 1 P3 Rehabilitation Project)*

We noticed that reintegration programmes focus increasingly more on mental care. Mental care provision generally takes longer than activation programmes and reintegration to the labour market is not the main goal. We recognised this process as a possible parking strategy in which difficult clients are 'parked' in long-term psychological programmes (Van Berkel & Van der Aa, 2005). 'Parking' is another example of coping behaviour, in which difficult clients

are not really taken care of because the risk of them failing the programme is high, while at the same time they can officially report to the municipality that the youngsters have, in fact, been admitted and receive payment. The following example shows how clients who according to the social affairs intake are considered to be 'easier to activate' (belonging in category 1-2 programmes) are sent to a private activation company to be activated and then are being re-categorised:

*'We noticed that social affairs presented many clients for programmes 1 and 2 whereas their problematic situation was one in fact that belongs to programme 5 –the psychological programme- where you have more time to get to the essence of the matter.'*

*(Coordinator P10 Reintegration Service)*

A work coach of the Youth office complains about this practice of the private activation company:

*'They made a lot of phone calls to transfer youngsters to a care programme. A care programme lasts a year so they have more time to place youngsters and also receive more money. My idea is that they try to categorise many youngsters as having psychological problems and yes money seems to be a clear target.'*

*(Work coach P7 Youth Office)*

#### **7.5.4 Basic qualification requirement**

One interesting point relating to the demand for sufficient qualification arises from the interviews with professionals from schools and reintegration companies. In line with national activation policy, returning to education often takes precedence over work as far as possible (Min. SZW, 2007b).

However, the opposite picture emerged during the interviews. On the one hand the need for sufficient education and the emphasis on the basic qualification is often stated to be an important official goal of the programme. On the other hand, for several reasons many professionals in the field reject the need for these youngsters to obtain the basic qualification. First, they feel this standard is too high for some groups and too much is asked of these youngsters.

*Is the norm of the basic qualification perhaps too high?*

*'Yes, in some cases the level of the basic qualification does appear to be too high. And these youngsters are always perceived as dropouts and we feel this is not fair. Students who do not have the ability, who can just attend level 1, they have to, that's it.'*

*(Policymaker P12 Regional Training Centre 2)*

Secondly, the officials consider that making older youngsters in particular (over 23, the age above which they are no longer officially deemed to be a dropout) attend school is unrealistic. They are too old and will certainly not be motivated to attend school together with 16 and 17 year olds. Instead, many youngsters are actually better off when they have a good place to work. Furthermore, the basic qualification level is not necessarily required in order to find and keep a job. Interviewees state that many lower-educated people are successful on the labour market. Many professionals in the field thus do not agree with the official goals to improve qualifications and they focus instead on the transition to work.

*'What we see in Utrecht, and what I'm convinced of is that everybody who wants to work can work, regardless of their qualification.'*

*(Coordinator P5 Employers Office)*

Professionals use their discretionary power and often support youngsters to find a job instead of helping them get back to school if they think someone would be better off on the labour market. Doing so they give their own twist to official activation policies which prioritise education. The following quote from an educational policymaker summarizes some of the basic qualification issues:

*'Early school leaving involves youngsters without a basic qualification who drop out. So all the youngsters who reach level 1 and for whom we do our utmost to get them to develop, well, this is something that is not rewarded. They leave school with a level 1 certificate and go straight to the labour market where they perform fine but they do not have a basic qualification and are still perceived as being a dropout - this is actually a bit strange.'*

*(Policymaker P9 Regional Training Centre 1)*

This demand for the basic qualification level also has repercussions on the young people. Youngsters are clearly aware of the qualification norm that is imposed on them and adjust their future expectations in line with this norm. Many professionals report that these

youngsters have a too high expectation of their future career and many dropouts participating in activation programmes find it difficult to accept their ‘too low’ qualification. This hampers their reintegration process for the simple reason that youngsters are not willing to accept a lower level education or job, and this process of acceptance often takes a long time.

*‘Many of them can’t reach the level of the basic qualification, level 1 is the highest achievable for them. The problem is that we all say: you need the basic qualification (level 2) and youngsters believe they have to achieve this as well. Even when you tell them it is too difficult for them to achieve, they still want to. That’s the norm we set as society.’*

*(Coordinator P7 Youth Office)*

### **7.5.5 The supposed lack of employability**

An important element in the activation programmes focuses on the transition to work. In these programmes, professionals instil in the young people that it is their personal responsibility to make themselves suitable to enter the labour market; they must improve their employability. This relates to the characteristics of activation policies and ALMPs, where welfare entitlements, such as to social benefit, are made more conditional on individual action and effort (Van Berkel & Van der Aa, 2005; Eichhorst et al., 2008). Many professionals in the field indicate problems with attitude towards working and in particular with ‘employee skills’, which are seen to be needed in order to be ‘employable’.

*‘Learning soft skills is a point of interest; I mean we are not trying to objectify whether a person meets the norms of employee skills, but in the work first projects that is mostly the point of interest. We continuously point out: do you know what is usual behaviour in the workspace? That means being on time, to cancel by telephone if you are ill. Things that are normal for most people, but not in the starting phase of a paid job for this group.’*

*(Coordinator P4 Employment Desk)*

It is assumed that many young dropouts, and migrants in particular, do not have these skills. Therefore, the primary task of the reintegration programmes is to help dropouts get used to a daily work routine, and to practice skills to enable them to perform as expected at work. A coordinator of one of the projects in Utrecht makes clear why it is important to focus on learning employee or social skills to young migrant dropouts:

*'They are being prepared here for the labour market, so how exactly does that work and what is important?'*  
*'All the skills needed to be able to perform as required. So, being on time, keeping appointments, decent communication, no shouting, no getting angry and throwing things around and then walking away. But it won't always work, but you have to try because they just don't know.'*  
*'Is that really a deficiency or a problem of this group?'*  
*'Yes, yes, with migrant youth it's just that they're not used to it, they're just not used to it. It's also ignorance. It's not that they are unwilling, it's often sheer ignorance.'*  
*(Coordinator P10 Reintegration Service)*

The interviewees also indicated that the particular problems with migrants' employee skills can also be explained by their having street culture combined with insufficient (parental) guidance or structure at home and school. This makes it difficult for them to conform to the prescribed nine to five pattern of work and to keep appointments.

*'Most of these youngsters grew up in a street culture. In street culture it is the survival of the fittest, so it matters how you present yourself to your friends. That brings a lot of problems, because they learned to think and behave in a particular way, which is difficult to change.'*  
*(Coordinator P10 Reintegration Service)*

## **7.6 Conclusion**

The aim of this study was to examine the execution of policies to reduce school dropout levels and to activate young migrants to work in the local context of the city of Utrecht. In this conclusion we answer our research questions: how are policies concerning early school leaving and youth unemployment executed in the local context (the city of Utrecht) and what are the consequences for the migrant youngsters involved? Below we will summarize and discuss the tensions and difficulties that became apparent during the analysis. These are in line with existing literature and relate to the following issues: successful implementation requires new cooperation structures and working methods. Moreover, high demands -in the sense of qualification and professional skills- resulting from the activation policies are placed on the youngsters.

Social policies on dropouts are implemented along the national policy lines of the forthcoming work-study obligation and the basic qualification requirement. The policies that oblige youngsters to study or to work have to be achieved through a comprehensive approach

strategy involving different parties cooperating in a joint structure. A recent example of this strategy is the founding of the Utrecht youth office. All informants are convinced of the necessity and added value of this interagency cooperation and they are all keen to see it established. However, the informants also made it clear that cooperation is difficult - the more parties have to work together, the more complex the cooperation. Different organisations or institutions remain responsible for their own target groups and have their own objectives and targets to meet, and therefore continue to work from their own perspectives and agendas as also shown in other studies (see for instance Glendinning, 2003). This points to discretion, because the organisations' targets often conflict with the aims of cooperation, and street level bureaucrats ultimately decide how far cooperation goes.

Another focus of the comprehensive approach was a more customer-oriented style, in particular in the privatized reintegration market. Despite the aims for a more individualised approach, reintegration services continue to offer standard reintegration programmes, which, as other scholars (Van Berkel & Van der Aa, 2005; Lindsay & McQuaid, 2008) have pointed out, is more (cost) effective for them. The problem with this is that it results in 'creaming' practices i.e. only admitting 'workable' clients. Some cases also showed instances of 'parking' strategies, where 'difficult' groups are 'parked' in long-term projects that mainly focus on psychological support. Applying street-level bureaucracy theory, creaming and parking strategies can also be seen as coping behaviours that professionals deploy in order to handle time constraints and to meet imposed targets. In general, we observed a more psychological approach to at-risk youngsters or dropouts, both in policies, as in schools and also in the various programmes.

Moreover, all the professionals from the various organisations indicate that there is a 'lost' group. It is generally accepted that this group cannot be helped. Organisations are free to reject certain clients, and sometimes youngsters are passed on to other organisations or are beyond reach which again indicates 'creaming practices'. The respondents claim some problems are too complex to deal with or that some youngsters are simply not motivated enough to participate in the programmes successfully. Other studies show that negative perceptions of the motives of the target group can enforce coping practices such as creaming (Winter, 2002). The discretionary power of professionals is important in these situations because professionals can decide whether a young person is admitted to the programme or not. There is also some doubt as to whether the customer-oriented approach is suitable for this group: their expectations of education and a future professional career are often seen by the professionals as unrealistic and impossible to fulfil.

In general, the activation policies give precedence to study rather than employment. However, we found that professionals acknowledge that obtaining a basic qualification is simply not realistic for some youngsters who would be better off on the labour market. This imposed qualification norm stigmatizes dropouts who are, in fact, successfully employed and it makes it more difficult for young people participating in the programmes to accept their lower educational level. The central premise of the street-level bureaucracy theory, which says that professionals ultimately decide how official policies are implemented, becomes clear in this case; despite the official educational policy goals, many professionals focus more on labour market participation. Discretion makes it possible for professionals to act independently when making their own decisions about the best programme for a youngster.

Finally, we would like to indicate how young migrant dropouts are perceived by the professionals- they are not employable and lack the appropriate employee skills. However, they do feel that obtaining these skills is an important aim of preventive and reintegration projects. Respondents believe the lack of competences has to do with street culture and not having the right structure and guidance at home and school. However, by focusing on their lack of social competences the professionals can unintentionally contribute towards stigmatizing them as unmotivated and unwilling. Well-intended interventions that try to improve the social skills can in this way also lead to further stigmatization and even exclusion of young migrant dropouts in particular. A number of studies confirm this statement and show that the presumed lack of social skills is used by some employers as an excuse for not hiring young migrants. This is defined as a subtle form of discrimination (Moss & Tilly, 1995, 2001; Schaafsma, 2006).

## **7.7 Discussion**

All the current activation policies and measures can be seen in the light of the general trend in European welfare states to make a transition to a knowledge/service based economy. This kind of economy requires young people to be educated as much as possible to ensure successful labour market participation. However, the danger is that vulnerable groups, such as migrant youngsters, will have problems meeting the new requirements and will end up as 'losers' in the knowledge economy (Esping-Andersen, 2000; Giddens, 2007; Bude, 2009). Indeed, what the professionals in our study say confirms the fact that some young migrants in the Netherlands have problems meeting the requirements of today's society in terms of professional and social skills. Moreover, our evaluation of activation policies in the local

context showed that measures which aim to improve these skills can hinder instead of support these youngsters.

From all the projects we included in our study, we spoke to one or two key figures. We expected them to be the right source of information about the implemented social policies in the local context. A next step in our research would be to include perspectives of more persons involved in the programmes, and especially executive staff, which could contribute to a better understanding of the complexities and working methods of the individual programmes. Although we have conducted research with a few youngsters for this study, we believe in future studies more attention should be paid to the perspectives of the young dropouts themselves. The ideas of the youngsters about the basic qualification and supposed lack of soft skills are of importance to get a better understanding of the consequences of these requirements for the youngsters.

This study analysed the activation of young migrant dropouts in a major Dutch city and described the possible tensions, problems and contradictions in the field. This revealed that well-intended policies and reintegration initiatives can contribute to the marginalisation of some young dropouts. Attention should be given to these issues. Although reintegration policies and programmes can be beneficial for a large number of the dropouts, we have to bear in mind that some youngsters will be hampered rather than supported and end up in an even worse position.

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## 8 Conclusion and discussion

To the doctoral thesis

*Citizenship experiences of young migrants*

*Optimism and disadvantages*

## **8.1 Conclusion**

### ***8.1.1 Introduction***

The citizenship experiences of young migrants in the Netherlands are the central focus of this thesis. These experiences are examined by researching obstructive and supportive factors for their participation in education and their future perspectives. Despite discernible progress, young migrants are still at a disadvantage both in education and on the labour market, and their integration in Dutch society is therefore under question. This study focused on the participation of migrant youngsters in education, and investigated their experiences and future labour market perspectives. It was expected that the experiences of young migrants would be influenced by their disadvantaged socio-economic background, their social network, practices of exclusion, the current harsh policy climate and negative public debate about migrants in Dutch society at large. Furthermore, current figures show pronounced gender differences: migrant girls perform better at school but compared with their male counterparts they are less active on the labour market. The aim of this study was to explain these gender differences.

Gaining a better understanding of participation and the future perspectives of young migrants in the Netherlands has clear societal relevance. Nowadays, about half young people (under 15) in the four largest cities in the Netherlands (Amsterdam, Rotterdam, The Hague, and Utrecht) have a migrant background (Statistics Netherlands, 2010). Most of these youngsters are currently in education and are going to make the transition to the labour market in a few years' time. It is therefore important to establish how these youngsters' participation is supported or hindered.

The next section summarises the main findings of this study, and answers the research questions. This section is followed by a discussion on the societal and scientific implications of this study. The chapter concludes with possible directions and suggestions for further research.

### ***8.1.2 Main results***

Research question:

*What are the experiences of young migrants concerning their participation in education, and what are their perspectives on their future labour market prospects, and how are they supported or hindered?*

Sub-research questions:

1. *What are the experiences of young migrants in education?*
2. *What are the perspectives of the youngsters themselves on future opportunities?*
3. *What are the experiences with discrimination and how do youngsters think discrimination will influence their future opportunities?*
4. *What are the differences in experiences between migrant boys and girls?*
5. *What is the role of a supportive social network in participation in education and on future perspectives?*
6. *What is the role of social policies and projects to reinforce the successful participation of young migrants in education and in the labour market?*

### **8.1.3 Experiences in education**

The experiences of young migrants in education were examined in several ways. The first is to examine school satisfaction among migrant youth in the Netherlands. School satisfaction not only measures how satisfied youngsters are in school, but also measures their motivation and engagement. School satisfaction was studied by applying the immigrant optimism hypothesis, which states that migrant parents have high expectations for their children's upward mobility. They have what is referred to as a 'dual frame of reference': parents compare the situation in their country of origin with the situation in the host country and feel their children should take advantage of the opportunities in education offered in the host country. Migrant parents transfer their ambitions to their children, and migrant children are therefore expected to be motivated for school and to have high school satisfaction. The results of this study confirmed the immigrant optimism hypothesis: in general, migrant youngsters have higher school satisfaction than native youngsters. We also found that migrant youngsters often report that their parents feel school is important. However, in this study we found some interesting differences between ethnic groups and between the genders. Migrant girls stated more often than migrant boys that their parents find schooling important, for native youngsters we found the opposite: more boys than girls stated that their parents find school important. We also found that Turkish and Moroccan youngsters are the most satisfied, and Surinamese and Antillean youngsters are the least satisfied with their school life. One possible explanation for this phenomenon is that the dual frame of reference is more relevant to Turkish and Moroccan migrants who often came from a more disadvantaged position in their country of

origin. This is also the case for Surinamese and Antillean migrants, but to a lesser extent. Youngsters from Turkey and Morocco compare the situation in their country of origin with the situation in the Netherlands and feel opportunities for schooling are much better in the Netherlands and they are therefore more satisfied with their school life.

Another difference we found was that migrant girls showed a more positive stance towards schooling than migrant boys. Not only do they perform better at school (Statistics Netherlands, 2010), they are also more satisfied with school. Some scholars state that the dual frame of reference (Lee, 2006, 2007; Lopez, 2002, 2003) is particularly important for girls, because they compare their opportunities not only with the situation in their country of origin, but also compare themselves with their mothers who are often low educated or not educated at all, and come from a situation in which they experienced gender inequality. We hypothesised that low educated migrant mothers would motivate their daughters to finish school and achieve gender equality. A low educated mother was therefore expected to have a positive effect on the school satisfaction of migrant youngsters and of girls in particular. We indeed found that migrant girls with Turkish and Moroccan backgrounds compare themselves with their mothers and feel that they should make the most of the opportunities their mothers never had. Interestingly, we also found that migrant boys are more satisfied with their school life if their mother is low educated, indicating that a mother's low education also motivates boys' attitude towards school.

Another result that explains higher school satisfaction among Moroccan and Turkish girls from the qualitative study is that Moroccan and Turkish girls in particular use school as a social setting where they meet up with friends because here they are able to avoid the social restrictions imposed on them by their family.

The results of this study show that migrant girls in particular are very satisfied with their school life and make the most of the opportunities the Dutch education system affords them. This is in line with their advances in education: they appear to translate their optimism into positive school outcomes. This indicates the ongoing integration and emancipation of this group. The question remains as to whether the educational success in this group is translated into success on the labour market. The following section deals with this question, and discusses their perspectives on future labour market participation.

### ***8.1.4 Future outlook***

The future expectations of migrant youth are also in line with the immigrant optimism hypothesis. This study showed that, compared with native Dutch youngsters, migrants displayed much more optimism and that they have very ambitious goals. For example, our survey results showed that 70% of migrant youngsters expect to finish higher education or to obtain a university degree. They have a strong wish for upward mobility and declare that they are convinced they will find work after finishing school and have a successful career. Professionals often see the ambitions of migrant youth as unrealistic. They state that only a small number of students make the move from secondary vocational education to higher vocational education, and even smaller numbers reach university. However, as we know from current data, this 'piling' route -from secondary vocational education to higher vocational education- is taken more often by migrant youngsters than by native youngsters, which, to a certain extent, proves that part of the migrant youth do fulfil their ambitions (Crul and Heering, 2008).

National data show that some groups of migrant women participate very poorly on the labour market. This is particularly the case in the Netherlands among Moroccan and Turkish women. The literature on this topic demonstrates that even when controlled for education level, fewer migrant women participate on the labour market, which gives the impression that other obstacles might play a role. In addition to discrimination, traditional views and gender roles impede the labour market participation of migrant women. Our study showed that Moroccan and Turkish girls are very optimistic about finishing school, even about moving to an education level higher than they are currently in and having a career, but also about having a family. Getting married and starting a family is much more evident for them than for native Dutch girls. Their views are more modern than those of migrant boys, but more conservative than those of native girls. For example, our qualitative results showed that more so than native girls, migrant girls feel that household and care responsibilities are women's tasks. These data also revealed that they expect it will be difficult to combine caring for a family with a fulltime job. The result is that they experience a level of restraint when it comes to a career. We found that migrant girls fluctuate between a traditional culture in which gender roles are still more conservative and a wish for education and labour market participation. It seems that migrant girls do make the most of the opportunities they have in education. On the other hand, work is still difficult because migrant girls tend to marry young and they have to negotiate between obligations on the home front and a career.

These results on school experiences and future perspectives ask for differentiation of the immigrant optimism hypothesis. Our results confirmed the hypothesis in the sense that we showed that migrant youngsters were more optimistic than native youngsters about school and future opportunities. However, our results showed the importance of making a distinction between ethnic groups and gender. Furthermore, our results made it clear that professionals perceive the optimism of young migrants as unrealistic. The question that then arises is how the stance adopted by professionals influences the educational and occupational career of migrant youngsters. For instance, migrant youngsters may feel their ambitious goals receive little or no support, so instead they abandon them.

### ***8.1.5 Discrimination***

The literature suggests that negative experiences in society, e.g. discrimination, could have a negative impact on the experiences of young migrants, and as a result they adjust to negative social mirroring and develop an oppositional culture (Ogbu, 1994; Ogbu and Simons, 1998; Suárez-Orozco, 2000; Suárez-Orozco and Qin-Hilliard, 2004). Both our quantitative and qualitative data show that many young migrants experience discrimination. The results of our survey show that 40% of migrant youngsters felt discriminated against at some time in the past year. Most of them feel discriminated against because of their ethnic background or their religion (Muslims). Migrant girls generally experience less discrimination than migrant boys. However, Muslim girls do believe that one obstacle to them being hired by employers is the fact that they wear a veil. Although many migrant youngsters report they have experienced discrimination, the qualitative data showed a different, more refined picture. Most youngsters agree in the interviews that discrimination is a general problem, but they believe that discrimination is not a real hindrance for them. They are all convinced they will be able to find a traineeship or a job once they finish school. Their stance is meritocratic: they believe that having the right attitude and a diploma is the key to a position. The exception is formed by the most marginalised youngsters who dropped out of school and who are unemployed. They often feel discriminated against. However, even these youngsters believe an education and a job is the road to success.

Professionals have different opinions and views on discriminatory practices. Some teachers are pretty certain that discriminatory practices exist. They give examples of companies not wanting to offer internships to migrants or veiled girls, or of migrant pupils applying 7 or more times for a place, whereas native youngsters usually find a place

immediately. Other teachers mention the victim role some migrant youngsters adopt when it comes to discrimination. They think that in some cases migrant youth are too sensitive and feel discriminated against while, in fact, there is no discrimination at all, or there are justifiable reasons for their being rejected.

This study failed to establish a rejective attitude towards schooling, as formulated by negative social mirroring and oppositional culture theories, even among the most marginalised migrant youth. In spite of their experiences and feelings of discrimination, there are only weak signs of an oppositional culture. Our qualitative data showed that professionals and teachers observed youngsters adapting to street culture, which they believe is incompatible with school culture or the work floor. These youngsters use slang, wear caps and refuse to take their jackets off. However, to speak of a truly oppositional culture goes too far in the Dutch case, since none of the youngsters in our study turn their back on schooling and work as a means towards upward mobility. In line with this result, Downey (2008) questions the theory of oppositional culture because he found that the optimism and pro-school attitudes among black students in the US do not corroborate the idea that minorities reject education. Since our findings were similar, it would seem that the theory does not always apply. Different national contexts and different minority groups also ask for different explanations of current disadvantaged positions in education.

Professionals sometimes refer to a lack of soft skills among youngsters, and give it as one of the main reasons for youngsters being in a disadvantaged position. As a consequence, many projects and school curricula focus on developing soft skills. These skills include certain cultural and social skills, for example, having a sufficient command of the language, knowing how to present oneself, and other social normative values such as cooperation and communication. However, when migrant youngsters are believed to lack certain social or cultural skills in order to participate on the Dutch labour market, this could be seen as a subtle way of discrimination. Stereotyping a group as lacking certain skills stigmatises the group as a whole and is likely to result in exclusionary practices. The emergence of and emphasis on soft skills as important qualifications for labour market participation may lead to indirect discrimination by employers who assume that young migrants lack the appropriate social skills to work in their company or organisation.

These results raise the question as to why migrant youngsters are so optimistic, while on the other hand discrimination is supposedly rife. As formulated by the theory of the dual frame of reference and the immigrant optimism hypothesis, one possible explanation for this situation is that migrant youngsters compare themselves with their parents and the situation in

their country of origin and not so much with the situation of native youngsters in the host country. In fact, most migrant youngsters are much better off than their parents and their situation in terms of education and the labour market is much more promising than the situation in their country of origin, therefore they are optimistic and display considerable resilience.

Another possible explanation for the optimistic stance of migrant youth is that they refuse to be seen as victims or losers. A previous study by Entzinger and Dourleijn (2008) showed that youngsters reported a decrease in perceived discrimination in 2006, even though as a group they encounter discrimination more frequently. This indicates that youngsters might de-personalise discrimination in order not to feel like a victim or loser, or to be seen as such. It might therefore be possible that the resilient stance of youngsters towards discrimination is a sign of self-defence or coping.

#### ***8.1.6 Social network***

This study revealed that social networks are important in the school life of migrant youngsters. If migrant parents believe school is important, it is a stance that is transferred to their children and adopted by them. Our study showed that supportive parents who actually talk about school does have a positive influence on the school satisfaction of migrant youngsters. We found that migrant girls benefit more from the positive effect of communication than migrant boys, for the simple reason that girls are more socially embedded in the family and community and therefore talk about school more. Compared with boys, migrant girls are more strictly supervised and expected to be obedient and to behave well at home and also at school, which motivates them to work towards better school performance. Although migrant parents are very important supportive actors for migrant youngsters, we found that when it actually comes to concrete help, migrant parents are in many cases not able to give it. They are unfamiliar with the Dutch school system and their command of Dutch is poor.

Furthermore, many migrant parents are low educated which means it is difficult for them to help their children with schoolwork or with decisions about future education. For the same reasons there is a definite lack of interaction between migrant parents and school. The teachers in our qualitative study admitted that migrant parents have little contact with school and it is difficult for teachers to reach them. Though it is perhaps possible that this is a problem that works both ways: teachers feel migrant parents are not involved, and migrant parents believe that teachers do not understand them.

If parents are unable to support or help their children with school, older brothers and sisters may do so. We found that migrant youngsters, more so than native youngsters, talk with siblings about school and personal problems. Our study also showed that role models are very important for migrant youngsters. Having people around who finished higher vocational education or started a business, gives youngsters the impression and confidence that they can do the same. For example, a few years ago a Moroccan girl was 'student of the year.' She became a role model for a group of Moroccan girls in our study: they believed that if she could do it, so could they.

We also examined the extended social network of migrant youth, and found that the networks and job search strategies of young migrants are incompatible with the networks and search strategies of employers, which makes it more difficult for them to enter the labour market. Migrant youngsters' networks are, in many cases, single ethnic and single gender networks. Where native youngsters use their social networks to find a trainee place or a job, migrant youngsters tend to rely on employment agencies, which often leads to short-term, flexible labour contracts. However, the ethnic networks of young migrants can also be beneficial in helping to find a job in the ethnic community. Entrepreneurship is, for example, widespread among Turkish people in the Netherlands, and many Turkish youngsters find jobs at businesses run by relatives or community members. Opportunities in the ethnic niche depend on the economic tide, and in times of decline small ethnic businesses have difficulty keeping their business alive, which means youngsters working in this branch will lose their jobs.

Working within the ethnic community indicates that some migrant youngsters opt for the ethnic path of the segmented assimilation theory: they integrate in the host society and experience upward mobility, while maintaining their own culture and a strong focus on their own community. The focus young migrant youth have on their own community may therefore prove to be both an obstacle and an opportunity to participate in Dutch society.

### ***8.1.7 Social policies***

This thesis also studied the influence of social policies on the participation of migrant youth. In order to examine social policy, we conducted research into reintegration in the city of Utrecht where youngsters without an education, work or income are reintegrated back into school or work. We investigated how concepts of new governance were implemented, and by applying street level bureaucracy theory we analysed how these governance reforms influenced

the work of frontline workers in the reintegration field. In sum, we can conclude that the implementation of new governance principles in activation and reintegration in Utrecht sometimes has unintended negative consequences for migrant youth.

A first result is that professionals in the reintegration field are in favour of interagency cooperation; they are convinced of the need for it and are keen to see it established. However, the professionals also admit that cooperating with different stakeholders throws up its own problems. Different organisations or institutions continue to be responsible for their own target groups and must meet their own objectives and quotas. The agendas of individual organisations often conflict with the objectives of cooperation, and organisations ultimately decide how far cooperation goes.

Secondly, new governance principles should result in a more customer-oriented approach to reintegration activities. Market mechanisms should reinforce reintegration projects to offer tailor-made programmes in order to reintegrate more people successfully. However, standardised programmes turn out to be more cost effective and therefore most projects do not offer tailor-made programmes. Instead, organisations offer standardised programmes in order to meet targets imposed on them by the state or state agencies as a performance incentive. Not meeting targets has negative consequences for reintegration companies, for example contracts are not extended or their services receive less funding. Therefore, professionals only admit clients who are certain of finishing the programme in time.

Thirdly, creaming and parking practices are the result of the introduction of market mechanisms and imposed targets. This means that projects and reintegration programmes only admit 'workable' youngsters, and the more difficult clients are either not helped at all, or they are 'parked' in long-term programmes. Professionals have limited discretionary power, which they use to influence the execution of social policy in order to reach their own targets. Creaming and parking practices can be understood as coping strategies among professionals faced with time constraints and imposed targets.

A fourth result is that it is generally accepted that there is a group that is too difficult to work with and who cannot be helped. The assumption is that these youngsters are not motivated to complete the programme, and after an initial interview they are not admitted to the programmes. Professionals use their discretion in these cases, because they can decide whether a client is admitted or not. Furthermore, professionals assert that an individualised approach is not suitable for this group because their wishes are often unrealistic and cannot be fulfilled.

A final result is that official policy on youth reintegration gives precedence to education over employment. The basic qualification is an important measure in education policies in the Netherlands. Only when youngsters secure this basic qualification is it believed they have a secure base from which to access and participate in the labour market. Consequently, all youngsters without the basic qualification are seen as dropouts. Professionals agree that the basic qualification is an important goal of labour market policies. However, they often reject the requirement for youngsters to obtain the basic qualification. According to teachers and professionals, requiring the basic qualification is setting the bar too high for some youngsters and youngsters are stigmatised as dropouts even though they may have obtained some educational qualification. Professionals also argue that older youngsters may be better off on the labour market because they do not want to go to school after having already failed in education a number of times. They also state that the basic qualification is not essential for finding a job (the majority of dropouts are, in fact, employed). This is a clear example of how professionals use their discretion to implement social policy as they see fit; they help youngsters find a job, while official policy is that these youngsters should go back to school.

The results discussed above show that there are advantages and disadvantages to the implementation of new government principles on activation and reintegration. The introduction of interagency cooperation and tailor-made programmes is believed to be a positive development. Furthermore, current studies show that the number of people participating in activation programmes has increased significantly, although this does not mean that actual placement in jobs is high (Van Berkel and de Graaf, 2011).

For youngsters in particular, interagency cooperation seems a necessity since this target group is characterised by multi-problem issues, and different stakeholders can cooperate with each other and provide coherent services. Nevertheless, there are also a number of concerns. Firstly, it would appear that the most marginalised and difficult group is not reached by social services. The fact that professionals more or less accept this situation is cause for concern. This group requires particular attention when new policies are developed. Secondly, most reintegration projects focus on short-term placements, since the number of placements is rewarded. The effects on long-term employment are unknown. Furthermore, many professionals prioritise work placement over school placement. What this is going to mean in the long run is doubtful, since the Netherlands is developing strongly as a service and knowledge society. Finally, the new Dutch government does not have a very positive attitude towards activation services and has announced budget cuts. The Netherlands may undergo a

shift towards a more liberal approach to activation, which puts less emphasis on activation services to support people's return to the labour market, and a stronger emphasis on financial incentives (less income support) (Van Berkel and de Graaf, 2011). In this scenario, young dropouts may receive less support with their reintegration into school or work, and if they are unemployed their benefits might be reduced.

### ***8.1.8 Good and bad practices***

Some of the above results can be defined as *bad practices* or *good practices*. Bad practices are those practices that emanate from social policy that have no effect or (unintended) negative consequences for migrant youngsters, which may hinder instead of support their participation in Dutch society. On the other hand, *good practices* are beneficial for participation, and according to our respondents there are a number of promising and motivating initiatives. In this section we highlight some of the bad and good practices we encountered in our fieldwork.

One of the bad practices we encountered was 'projectitus'. The professionals in our study state that there are far too many projects, they are often short term, and have short-term effects or no effect at all. Moreover, these projects are rarely evaluated. What professionals would like to see instead is for projects that have proven to be successful to be continued.

Another bad practice is that many teachers and professionals protect young migrants against discrimination. For example, teachers are aware of which companies do not want migrant pupils to fill internship positions, so they do not send migrant youngsters to these companies. This means that youngsters are discriminated against, but they are not aware of it. Pupils are consequently not hurt by discrimination, but on the other hand discrimination is kept quiet and not combated. Despite some bad practices in the field of integrating young migrants, we also found several good practices, as outlined below.

One of the good practices we came across are buddy or mentor projects (see TRESEGY, 2009a, 2009b). What these projects had in common was that a (migrant) youngster is linked up with another person who is the mentor. This may either be an adult or another youngster. The reasons youngsters gave to having a mentor were: wanting to meet Dutch people; a need for help from older students when deciding what to study; a need for a role model to introduce a youngster to different professional occupations or to help other youngsters to find a trainee place. The professionals in our study confirmed that mentor projects are very promising. Professionals observed that it is advisable not to target only migrant youngsters, otherwise they might feel there is something wrong with them. They

would prefer mentor projects to be offered to all students, to avoid stigmatising migrant youngsters.

A second *good practice* are the internships or trainee posts youngsters have to fulfil during their secondary vocational education (PROFACITY, 2010). Trainee projects are crucial for labour market entry. Youngsters have their first experience with the labour market during internships. Many youngsters find this a very instructive period during which they feel they really learn something. A trainee position quite often leads to a job, so the traineeship is important for the transition from school to work. Migrant youngsters are able to learn the social or soft skills that are today considered important, and they can demonstrate their talents and get rid of any prejudices employers might have. In this situation both migrant youngsters and employers are able to make a transition: youngsters can make a difference by displaying their talents, and employers can make a difference by acknowledging the talents of young migrants, and hopefully change their attitudes towards this particular group.

Thirdly, initiatives instigated by migrant youngsters themselves or in which there is considerable space for initiative, can be defined as *good practices*. During our study we saw numerous projects whose aim was to improve young migrant participation. The most beneficial projects were those in which migrant youngsters had the opportunity to execute their own initiatives. For example, an initiative in which one group of migrant youngsters had to mediate between youngsters and employers for internships. It seems that bottom-up initiatives are better than top-down initiatives (PROFACITY, 2010). Another example is the Polder Moslima Hoofddoek Brigade. This initiative was founded by a group of Muslim girls who strive for equal labour market opportunities for veiled women. They received considerable media attention after they organised a conference to which they invited key speakers, including the chairwoman of the FNV labour union, Agnes Jongerius. Bottom-up initiatives like this one are successful because it is not only the target group that benefits from their activities, but they also empower themselves as Muslim women who wear a veil. Furthermore, they also serve as role models, who, as this study demonstrated, are very important for young migrants.

The above is only a selection of the many bad and good practices to be found in Dutch society today. The practices discussed above are those considered important by the informants in our fieldwork and originate from the field. They are therefore worthy of attention when future social policy is developed.

## 8.2 Discussion

The results summarised above are now placed in the broader context of Dutch society. The results of this study will be discussed in light of the dimensions of citizenship (Bloemraad et al., 2008; Marshall, T.H., 1950) and acculturation theories (Berry, 1997; Berry et al., 2006; Gordon, 1961, 1964; Portes and Zhou, 1993) as discussed in the introduction.

### *8.2.1 Citizenship and acculturation preferences*

As outlined extensively in this thesis, the Dutch discourse and political climate on migrants and integration is increasingly moving towards assimilation. This means that migrants are expected to assimilate into Dutch society and culture, and renounce their own cultural background. The most recent government report on integration and citizenship (Min. Binnenlandse Zaken, 2011) testifies to this ‘new reality’. The report states that the days of a multicultural society -seen as an undesirable reality- are over, and that immigrants are now expected to assimilate into Dutch society, and immigrants themselves are responsible for this and not the government. This is the formal confirmation of the tenor of public debate which, in particular since the start of this century, has become increasingly adverse towards migrants. Several studies document this tendency (Prins, 2004, Schinkel, 2008, Ghorashi, 2006, Slegers, 2007).

This trend in the political and public debate influenced the citizenship experiences of young migrants in the Netherlands. This shift actually challenges two of the four citizenship dimensions discussed in the introduction of this dissertation: participation, and feelings of belonging (Bloemraad et al., 2008; Marshall, T.H., 1950). Young migrants want to participate and have a strong feeling of belonging. According to our study, they are ambitious when it comes to finishing their education and entering the labour market and investing in a career. They identify strongly with their neighbourhood, with Dutch society, and none of our respondents want to re-migrate to their country of origin. In fact, Dutch society is asking the same of young migrants: to participate and to identify with the Netherlands. There is however one difference: society asks migrants to assimilate fully into Dutch society, while young migrants advocate a multicultural approach: they want to participate in Dutch society while maintaining their own culture and religion. Active citizenship, as described by Schinkel (2008), in which migrants are expected to adapt the Dutch norms and values and in which they are responsible for their own integration, is only partly found in this study. Young migrants do

not wish to fully assimilate in Dutch culture. Furthermore, the notion of active citizenship is problematic, because youngsters are held responsible for their own integration and they are being blamed for their (still) disadvantaged position in education and work, while in fact other factors like discrimination influence the opportunities of young migrants too.

According to Berry (1997), mutual accommodation is necessary for integration to exist, so that culturally different people live together in one single society (Berry, 1997). The integration strategy of migrants is not always a choice: someone may wish to integrate, but when society is not open and tolerant towards cultural diversity, separation may be the outcome. The current situation shows that the integration of young migrants in the Netherlands does not fit the separation strategy of Berry's acculturation theory; instead, their situation fits the integration strategy. However, the question is whether their perspectives on integration will be negatively influenced in the future by the assimilationist stance of Dutch society, and, as Berry (1997, 2006) indicates, result in migrant youngsters ending up in the separation strategy.

### ***8.2.2 Segmented assimilation***

This thesis showed interplay between different factors either obstructs or promotes the position of young migrants in education and on the labour market. In addition to institutional factors such as the school system or discrimination, social factors also influence the opportunities of young migrants to participate in education or on the labour market. These factors contribute to migrant youngsters' upward or downward mobility. In general, we can talk of upward mobility among second generation migrant youth. As the results of this study show, migrant youngsters are doing better in several respects: their education level is improving, labour market participation is on the increase, and their views on gender roles are more up-to-date. On the other hand some youngsters may experience considerable obstruction and little support, and in the worst case scenario may end up dropping out of school and eventually be unemployed.

The results of this study are to be placed within the segmented assimilation theory, as we found different integration paths in and between migrant groups. Our results showed that there is polarisation and despite the upward mobility that many migrant youngsters experience, there is also a marginalised group of youngsters who find participating difficult. The path towards integrating into the white middle classes is not favoured by most of the youngsters since they have a strong focus on their own ethnic background and have close ties

with their own ethnic community. Many of the young migrants who participated in our study actually take a path of successful integration while maintaining their own culture and a strong focus on their own community. The experiences and wishes of many migrants can be placed in this path, since most youngsters wish to obtain an education and participate in the labour market, while maintaining their own cultural and religious customs. This outcome is in stark contrast to the dominant discourse in the Netherlands which sees migrant culture as an obstacle to integration and insists upon assimilation into Dutch society and culture. However, this assimilationist approach and the new realism discourse are counterproductive: they fail to rectify structural problems in education and the labour market, and focus on cultural barriers, blaming young migrants for their own disadvantaged position.

The path to downward mobility is the least common, but other scholars have also stated that migrants in the Netherlands have nowhere to go but up, simply because they enter Dutch society at the bottom. In the Dutch case we found a fourth or substitute path which could be described as *stagnation*. This path is characterised by youngsters who experience neither downward nor upward mobility, as they are having difficulty achieving any success in higher education or finding a job after finishing their education.

### ***8.2.3 Final remarks***

The fate of young migrants is not secure in this political and discursive structure of opportunities (Koopmans et al., 2005): how much they exert themselves to participate in and to adapt to Dutch society, at a certain time they are rejected as full citizens, as not belonging to Dutch society. This is the ‘integration paradox’: even when you have tried to be a Dutch citizen, you are not accepted as such because in the end it is believed you lack some subtle commonality with native Dutch inhabitants (Entzinger and Dourleijn, 2008; Tolsma, Lubbers and Gijssberts, 2011). Tolsma and colleagues found, for example, that higher educated and more integrated migrants do not necessarily have more contact with natives, and are aware of as much discrimination as other migrants. This means that as a migrant you can be structurally integrated, but it is almost impossible to be culturally integrated.

But in this established environment of implicit or explicit rejection of migrants, the young migrants themselves do not, in the main, despair, despite the integration paradox. On the contrary, they tend to be rather optimistic, and believe that they can seize the opportunities in education and work that Dutch society offers them, even when they know that, for instance, discrimination is working against them. This does not mean however that a

minority are losing their way, and this group tends to symbolise the prejudices against this group. Migrant youth who, despite setbacks on the home front and the general social climate in education and the labour market, do generally attempt to make a future for themselves, believing that they can succeed where their parents did not. The figures show that increasing numbers of young migrants are participating in education and the labour market, and this is reason for hope, even though social circumstances are still adverse. It can be said in general that migrant youngsters are making steps forward – a fact supported by the figures, and they are making more progress than their parents did. This study showed that, despite obstacles and the changing discourse in the Netherlands, migrant youngsters are optimistic and resilient.

### **8.3 Directions for future research**

This study has, in addition to academic relevance, a strong societal relevance: examining the experiences of young migrants, a group that is perceived to be at-risk because of their relatively low educational level and poor labour market participation. This study is unique in that it investigated the experiences of youngsters themselves, and their perspectives were compared with those of professionals and public debate. Combining qualitative and quantitative research methods proved to be very suitable and valuable and resulted in a holistic and rounded understanding of the phenomena under study.

However, the study also has a number of limitations that may have impinged upon our conclusions and need further research. First of all are the methodological limitations. It became clear from the outset that recruiting schools to participate in the study was going to be difficult. Schools, and those in bigger cities such as Amsterdam and Utrecht with a large proportion of migrant pupils, receive numerous requests to take part in surveys. This ‘research fatigue’ meant it took a long time before we had the right contacts that gave us access to interested schools. In the end, we managed to distribute the survey to five different locations in Utrecht and Amsterdam, and achieved a satisfactory sample of 608 students.

A second limitation involves the target group itself, as some groups of youngsters are underrepresented. For example, the most marginalised youngsters, who are not at school and are unemployed, were difficult to reach. These youngsters were also the most reluctant to participate, and only in one location, a community centre in Utrecht, were we able to include this group in ethnographic fieldwork. Another group that is not included in this study is the group of higher educated migrant youth. Because our data were mostly collected at secondary vocational schools, youngsters in other types of education were not included. It might have

been beneficial to also have included more highly educated migrant youngsters in order to get a better understanding of their drive to finish their studies and of their perspectives on future labour market participation. However, the majority of migrant youngsters in the Netherlands attend secondary vocational education, and therefore the most representative sample of youngsters of migrant origin in school is to be found in this kind of education.

Thirdly, our target group was, for several reasons, sometimes difficult to reach. During data collection we encountered situations in which professionals were reluctant to introduce us to youngsters in order to protect them. For example, at one school it was known that some girls believed they were discriminated against, and exposing these girls to a study on discrimination would perhaps be detrimental to them. Furthermore, organisations sometimes refused to put us in contact with youngsters for similar reasons. Also for the qualitative study, we were finally able to interview a satisfactory number of young migrants. In some cases it took some time before the youngsters felt comfortable enough to participate. In order to gain their trust we, as researchers, first spent a few days in class, and only once the youngsters were accustomed to the researchers being around, did we ask them to participate.

Another limitation of this study is that we only studied the perspectives and experiences of migrant youth at one stage in their life i.e. when they are still at school. It is however questionable whether their perspectives and experience are the same in later stages of their lives, for example when looking for a job or being active on the labour market. We included some youngsters in our study who were taking part in reintegration programmes, but most youngsters were involved in work-study combinations or had not yet entered the labour market. It may be the case that experiencing discrimination might have more negative consequences when looking for a job than when still at school. It is to be expected that optimism fades following several rejections on the labour market. These questions are not answered in this study, and it would be interesting to include them in future studies.

What this study furthermore has shown is that integration processes are different in and between migrant groups. For example, we found considerable differences between the four main migrant groups in the Netherlands: Turkish, Moroccan, Surinamese and Antillean. Future research should therefore always make a distinction between ethnic groups and gender, and not take them together as one single group of migrant youth.

This study also demonstrated that there is discrimination in the lives of many young migrants, in spite of the fact that this study also showed that discrimination is a difficult concept to grasp. Discrimination is often measured as perceived discrimination, and actual discriminatory practices are difficult to prove. More studies on discrimination with an

experimental design would contribute towards shedding light on discriminatory practices in Dutch society. These studies combined with qualitative data on discrimination would help expose and explain discrimination in a more detailed manner.

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## Samenvatting in het Nederlands

Van het proefschrift:

*Burgerschapservaringen van jonge migranten*

*Optimisme en achterstand*

## Inleiding

Jonge migranten in Nederland hebben een achtergestelde positie in het onderwijs en op de arbeidsmarkt in vergelijking met autochtone Nederlandse jongeren (CBS, 2010). Deze achterstandspositie heeft tot gevolg dat er in toenemende mate zorgen bestaan over hun integratie in de Nederlandse samenleving. Deze studie heeft als focus de participatie van migrantenjongeren in het onderwijs en hun perspectieven ten opzichte van hun toekomstige arbeidsmarkt participatie. Hierbij staat de analyse van de ervaringen en perspectieven van de jongeren zelf centraal. De verwachting is dat de ervaringen van jonge migranten beïnvloed worden door hun sociaal economische achterstand, hun sociale netwerken en de steun die zij daarvan ontvangen, praktijken van uitsluiting, het strenge politieke klimaat en de negatieve publieke opinie over migratie problematiek in Nederland.

Deze studie heeft verder als doel om de verschillen tussen de seksen te verklaren; migrantenmeisjes hebben hun achterstand ten opzichte van migranten-jongens in het onderwijs ingehaald, maar hebben in verhouding een lage participatie op de arbeidsmarkt. De verwachting is dat voor migrantenmeisjes ondersteunende en belemmerende factoren voor participatie in het onderwijs en op de arbeidsmarkt een andere rol spelen dan voor migrantenjongens.

Als laatste behandelt deze studie de rol van sociaal beleid en projecten die als doel hebben het ondersteunen van de participatie van migranten jongeren, en hoe deze de ervaringen van deze jongeren op school en op de arbeidsmarkt beïnvloeden. In deze discussie staat de vraag centraal welke beleidsinitiatieven bestempeld kunnen worden als *good practices* en welke soms ongewenste, negatieve consequenties hebben voor de jongeren, zogenoemde *bad practices*.

De hierboven besproken thematieken en verwachtingen hebben geleid tot de volgende hoofd- en deelvragen:

*Wat zijn de ervaringen van jonge migranten wat betreft hun onderwijsparticipatie, en wat zijn hun perspectieven op hun toekomstige arbeidsmarktparticipatie en hoe worden zij daarin ondersteund of beperkt?*

- 1. Wat zijn de ervaringen van jonge migranten in het onderwijs?*
- 2. Wat zijn de perspectieven van jonge migranten op mogelijkheden voor de toekomst?*
- 3. Wat zijn de ervaringen met discriminatie en hoe denken de jongeren dat discriminatie hun mogelijkheden in de toekomst zullen beïnvloeden?*

4. *Wat zijn de verschillen in ervaringen tussen jongens en meisjes?*
5. *Wat is de rol van een ondersteunend sociaal netwerk in de participatie in het onderwijs en op toekomstperspectieven?*
6. *Wat is de rol van sociaal beleid en projecten die de participatie van jongeren in onderwijs en arbeid moeten bevorderen?*

## **Methode**

In deze studie is gebruik gemaakt van een gecombineerde methode, ook wel *mixed method* genoemd. Deze methode combineert verschillende onderzoeksmethoden (kwantitatief en kwalitatief) om tot een zo volledig mogelijk antwoord te komen op de gestelde onderzoeksvragen. Een gecombineerde methode heeft als voordeel dat de sterke punten van verschillende methoden elkaar kunnen complementeren en de zwakke punten kunnen worden ondervangen (Johnson en Onwuegbuzie, 2004).

De doelgroep van deze studie bestaat uit jongeren van zowel etnische als Nederlandse afkomst in de leeftijdsgroep 17-23 jaar. De migrantenjongeren in het onderzoek zijn voornamelijk afkomstig uit de vier grootste migrantengroepen in Nederland: Turken, Marokkanen, Surinamers en Antillianen. Een tweede belangrijke doelgroep van deze studie bestaat uit professionals: docenten, jongeren- en sociaal werkers, projectleiders en beleidsmakers.

De opzet van het onderzoek bestaat uit drie fasen. De eerste fase beslaat een etnografisch veldonderzoek waarin door middel van case studies, interviews en participerende observatie data zijn verzameld op verschillende locaties (de straat, jongeren projecten en buurthuizen). In deze fase is bij een totaal van 50 informanten een diepte-interview afgenomen. Verder kenmerkt deze fase van het onderzoek zich door een discours analyse en een analyse van bestaande data en beleidsdocumenten.

Gedurende de tweede fase van het onderzoek is een vragenlijst verspreid onder 608 leerlingen van verschillen opleidingen op ROC's in Amsterdam en Utrecht. Van alle respondenten heeft 73% een allochtone afkomst en 27% een autochtone afkomst. Verder bestaat de steekproef voor 54% uit meisjes en voor 46% uit jongens. De vragen in de vragenlijst zijn gebaseerd op thema's als sociale, economische en culturele in- en uitsluiting. Een deel van de vragen is gebaseerd op resultaten van de etnografische studie die in de eerste fase van de studie is uitgevoerd.

In de derde fase zijn de resultaten van de enquête teruggekoppeld aan het veld. De resultaten van de vragenlijst vormden de basis voor de topiclijsten die gebruikt werden tijdens focusgroepen en diepte-interviews. In deze fase zijn vier focusgroepen georganiseerd met verschillende doelgroepen (jongeren, docenten, onderwijsmanagers en beleidsmakers). Een totaal van 23 personen hebben deelgenomen aan de focusgroepen. Daarnaast hebben zes docenten deelgenomen aan diepte-interviews.

## **Theorie**

In deze studie komen verschillende theorieën aan bod die samen het theoretisch kader vormen. Ten eerste worden in deze thesis theorieën van burgerschap en acculturatie besproken. Het begrip burgerschap bevat verschillende noties die van belang zijn voor migranten, zoals legaal burgerschap en burgerrechten, multiculturalisme en groepsrechten, en gelijke rechten en kansen voor participatie in de economie, de samenleving en het politieke systeem (Bloemraad e.a., 2008). Bloemraad en collega's hebben naar aanleiding van het werk van T.H. Marshall (1950) vier belangrijke dimensies van burgerschap geformuleerd, namelijk: de legale status, rechten, participatie en een gevoel van verbondenheid (sense of belonging). In Nederland hebben migranten, en tweede generatie migranten zeker, een legale status en dezelfde rechten als autochtone Nederlanders aangezien zij vaak de Nederlandse nationaliteit hebben. De laatste twee dimensies (participatie en een gevoel van verbondenheid) zijn echter moeilijker te bewerkstelligen. Daarnaast worden migranten in het huidige politieke klimaat en publieke opinie vooral zelf verantwoordelijk gesteld voor hun participatie in de Nederlandse samenleving en zijn de eisen voor participatie in de afgelopen decennia veranderd van structurele of economische integratie naar assimilatie. Bij de eis van assimilatie wordt van migranten verwacht dat zij op den duur volledig assimileren in de Nederlandse samenleving, waarbij de eigen culturele, etnische en religieuze gebruiken meer naar de achtergrond verschuiven. Het is echter gebleken dat de integratie van migranten in het gastland niet altijd rechtlijnig verloopt (met uiteindelijke assimilatie als gevolg) en dat er verschillende paden van integratie bestaan. Berry (1997, 2006) beschrijft in zijn werken verschillende acculturatie strategieën. Naast assimilatie bestaan er ook de strategieën van integratie, separatie en marginalisatie. De integratie strategie betekent dat migranten integreren in het gastland met behoud van eigen culturele identiteit, separatie houdt in dat migranten kiezen voor behoud van eigen culturele identiteit en ook weinig interactie wensen met de gebruiken en gewoonten van het gastland. Als laatste bestaat er de strategie van marginalisatie waarbij migranten weinig

interactie hebben en/of wensen met het gastland, maar ook niet vasthouden aan hun eigen culturele identiteit. Volgens Berry (1997, 2006) is een wederzijdse aanpassing van zowel migranten als het gastland noodzakelijk om tot een succesvolle integratie van migranten te komen. Zo kan een migrant bijvoorbeeld de wens hebben om te integreren, maar als de samenleving assimilatie verwacht kan separatie de ongewenste uitkomst zijn. Een andere theorie die verschillende integratiepaden beschrijft is de gesegmenteerde assimilatie theorie (Portes en Zhou, 1993). Volgens deze theorie kunnen tweede generatie migranten jongeren naast het pad van assimilatie, ook het pad van neerwaartse mobiliteit en marginalisatie bewandelen. Daarnaast bestaat er volgens deze theorie ook nog een pad van succesvolle integratie met behoud van eigen culturele, etnische of religieuze achtergrond en waarin de jongere een sterke oriëntatie houdt op de eigen gemeenschap.

Ten tweede worden in deze thesis verschillende theorieën gebruikt om ondersteunende en beperkende factoren voor participatie in het onderwijs en de arbeidsmarkt te bepalen. Zo bestaat de verwachting dat het sociale netwerk van jonge migranten erg belangrijk is bij de ondersteuning in het onderwijs. Volgens de *immigrant optimism hypothesis* hebben ouders van migrantenjongeren een hoge verwachting van de schoolprestaties van hun nakomelingen (Andriessen, Phalet en Lens, 2006; Bankston en Zhou, 2002; Kao en Tienda, 1995). Deze verwachting dragen zij over op hun kinderen, die op hun beurt daarom sterk gemotiveerd zijn voor school en hoge ambities hebben ten opzichte van hun onderwijs carrière. Migrantenouders hebben een *dual frame of reference* (Ogbu en Simons, 1998), wat inhoudt dat zij de situatie in het herkomstland vergelijken met de situatie in het land van aankomst en zich daarom sterk bewust zijn van de kansen en mogelijkheden voor onderwijs in het gastland.

Het hebben van een ondersteunend netwerk lijkt erg belangrijk voor het schoolsucces van migrantenjongeren (Rumbaut, 1994). Migrantenouders kunnen hun kinderen echter vaak niet voldoende ondersteunen wanneer het aankomt op concrete hulp. Migranten hebben vaak een matige Nederlandse taalbeheersing en zijn meestal niet bekend met het Nederlandse schoolstelsel, waardoor contact met school soms lastig is en ouders hun kinderen moeilijk kunnen helpen met het maken van bijvoorbeeld huiswerk of het maken van studiekeuzes. In deze gevallen kan een oudere broer of zus deze taak op zich nemen en een jonger broertje of zusje ondersteunen (Stanton-Salazar, 2001; Valenzuela, 1999).

Een andere factor die de participatie van migrantenjongeren, en in het bijzonder die van meisjes, kan beïnvloeden, is de aanwezigheid van traditionele opvattingen over het huwelijk, het starten van een familie en de rolverdeling tussen man en vrouw. Het kan

bijvoorbeeld zo zijn dat verwacht wordt dat meisjes na het huwelijk huisvrouw worden en zorgtaken op zich nemen en daardoor niet beschikbaar zijn voor de arbeidsmarkt. Hierdoor kan er ook minder waarde worden gehecht aan de scholing van meisjes (Crul en Doornik, 2003; Crul en Vermeulen, 2003). Meisjes kunnen echter ook profiteren van traditionele opvattingen thuis. Wanneer meisjes minder vrijheid krijgen toegestaan kan dit betekenen dat meisjes meer thuis zijn en meer tijd en aandacht aan school en huiswerk kunnen besteden en daardoor beter presteren op school.

Verder is de verwachting dat meisjes gemotiveerder zijn voor school omdat zij zichzelf vergelijken met hun moeder die vaak uit een situatie komt waarin zij seksongelijkheid heeft ervaren en geen tot weinig onderwijs heeft genoten. Migrantenmeisjes willen het graag beter doen dan hun moeder en zijn daarom extra gemotiveerd voor school (Bankston en Zhou, 2002; Feliciano en Rumbaut, 2005; Qin-Hilliard, 2003).

Een andere belangrijke factor voor participatie in onderwijs en de arbeidsmarkt is discriminatie. De theorie van de oppositionele cultuur beschrijft dat jonge migranten een negatieve en afwijzende houding kunnen ontwikkelen ten opzichte van onderwijs wanneer zij het idee hebben afgewezen te worden door de samenleving en het gevoel hebben dat kansen voor hen beperkt zijn (Ogbu, 1994; Suárez-Orozco en Baolian-Qin, 2006). Deze negatieve houding ontstaat door het spiegelen van negatieve boodschappen; wanneer jongeren geconfronteerd worden met negatieve uitspraken over hun eigen etnische groep (door de media of bijvoorbeeld door politici, docenten of jongerenwerkers), kunnen zij deze aangemeten identiteit overnemen en een oppositionele cultuur aannemen.

Het publieke discours en het politieke klimaat ten aanzien van migratie en de integratie van migranten is sterk veranderd in Nederland. Van een land met een tolerante houding en multiculturele aanpak, is Nederland veranderd in een land waarin etnische culturen gezien worden als een obstakel voor integratie en waarin volledige assimilatie wordt verwacht van onze medeburgers met een migratieachtergrond (Entzinger, 2006; Prins en Saharso, 2008). Deze veranderingen kunnen de participatie van jonge migranten beïnvloeden. Een van de dimensies van burgerschap, het gevoel van verbondenheid, kan negatief beïnvloed worden door deze veranderingen.

Een laatste factor die de participatie van jongen migranten in Nederland kan beïnvloeden is het sociaal beleid. De afgelopen tien jaar heeft het sociaal beleid in Nederland een sterk activerend karakter gekregen, wat betekent dat uitvallers actief worden geholpen bij de terugkeer naar onderwijs of werk. Er zijn verschillende vormen van 'new governance'

ingevoerd om dit te realiseren, zoals ketensamenwerking, decentralisatie en de invoering van marktmechanismen (Van Berkel and Borghi, 2008; Van Berkel, de Graaf and Sirovátka, 2011). De verantwoordelijkheid voor de uitvoering van het beleid ligt nu bij lokale commerciële en publieke partners, die verantwoording moeten afleggen aan het nationaal bestuur en van wie verwacht wordt dat ze maatwerk bieden en targets halen.

De *streetlevel bureaucracy* theorie stelt dat de uitvoering van beleid niet alleen van bovenaf bepaald wordt, maar dat ook uitvoerende professionals (streetlevel bureaucrats), een mate van vrijheid hebben (discretionaire ruimte) om de uitvoering van beleid naar hun hand te zetten en zo uiteindelijk bepalen welke hulp uitgevallen jongeren geboden wordt (Evans en Harris, 2004; Lipsky, 1980).

## **Resultaten**

De resultaten van deze studie laten zien dat jonge migranten in Nederland erg tevreden zijn met hun leven op school. Zij rapporteren een positieve schoolbeleving en hebben hoge ambities wat betreft het behalen van diploma's in het hoger onderwijs. De uitkomsten van de enquête geven weer dat ouders van migrantenjongeren school belangrijk vinden. Migrantjongeren zeggen vaker dat dit het geval is dan autochtone jongeren. Deze studie leert verder dat er belangrijke verschillen zijn tussen de verschillende migrantengroepen en tussen de seksen. Jongeren met een Surinaamse en Antilliaanse achtergrond presteren vrijwel even goed als autochtone jongeren in het onderwijs. Als het echter aankomt op schoolbeleving scoren zij slechter, ook in vergelijking met Marokkaanse en Turkse jongeren. Meisjes presteren beter in het onderwijs dan jongens, dit geldt voor alle groepen (allochtoon en autochtoon), ze hebben naast betere prestaties ook een positievere schoolbeleving. Een van de verklaringen voor de positieve houding van migrantenmeisjes is dat deze meisjes zich vergelijken met hun moeders die in veel gevallen laagopgeleid zijn en uit een situatie komen waarin sprake was van seksongelijkheid. Deze studie laat inderdaad zien dat migrantenmeisjes zich vaak vergelijken met hun moeders en de kansen willen pakken die hun moeders nooit hebben gehad. Dochters van laagopgeleide migranten vrouwen hebben in vergelijking de meest positieve schoolbeleving. Deze studie laat echter ook zien dat zonen van laagopgeleide migrantenvrouwen ook een positievere schoolbeleving hebben, wat erop duidt dat ook jongens zich gemotiveerd voelen voor school wanneer hun moeder laag opgeleid is. Een andere verklaring voor de positievere schoolbeleving van voornamelijk Turkse en Marokkaanse migrantenmeisjes is dat zij school vaak zien en gebruiken als een sociale ruimte

om vriendinnen te ontmoeten en om gebruik te maken van internet zonder de sociale controle van familieleden of de gemeenschap.

Naast de positieve beleving die migrantenjongeren hebben in het onderwijs zijn ze ook erg optimistisch over hun toekomstmogelijkheden. Deze uitkomst bevestigt de verwachting van de *immigrant optimism hypothesis* dat migrantenjongeren optimistischer zijn en hogere ambities hebben als het aankomt op scholing en arbeid. Een voorbeeld hiervan is de uitkomst dat in deze studie 70% van de migrantenjongeren die nu op het MBO zit verwacht een studie af te ronden op HBO of universitair niveau. De migrantenjongeren in deze studie hebben een sterke wens voor opwaartse mobiliteit en hebben de overtuiging een baan te zullen vinden na hun studie en een succesvolle carrière op te kunnen starten. Professionals geven aan dat zij de verwachtingen van migrantenjongeren soms onrealistisch vinden, in werkelijkheid bereikt namelijk maar een kleine groep uiteindelijk het HBO of de universiteit.

In tegenstelling tot de sterk toenemende participatie in (hoger) onderwijs, blijkt uit nationale gegevens dat van alle migrantenvrouwen in Nederland een relatief laag percentage actief is op de arbeidsmarkt. Dit is voornamelijk het geval voor Turkse en Marokkaanse vrouwen. Naast een relatief lager onderwijsniveau spelen ook andere obstakels een rol bij de lage arbeidsmarktparticipatie van migrantenvrouwen. Naast discriminatie op de arbeidsmarkt kunnen traditionele opvattingen de arbeidsmarktparticipatie van vrouwen belemmeren. Deze studie laat zien dat migrantenmeisjes in Nederland gemotiveerd zijn om na het afronden van hun opleiding de arbeidsmarkt te betreden en carrière te maken, zij verwachten echter ook (vroeg) te zullen trouwen en kinderen te krijgen. Dit is voor deze groep veel vanzelfsprekender dan voor autochtone meiden. Daarnaast hebben zij modernere opvattingen dan mannen van allochtone afkomst, maar minder moderne opvattingen dan autochtone vrouwen. De resultaten van deze studie laten zien dat veel migrantenvrouwen moeten schipperen tussen het hebben van hoge ambities ten aanzien van werk en de traditionele opvattingen die heersen bij henzelf en hun omgeving.

Een ander obstakel voor participatie van jonge migranten in de Nederlandse samenleving is discriminatie. Uit dit onderzoek blijkt dat veel jongeren van allochtone afkomst zich regelmatig gediscrimineerd voelen en ook professionals geven aan dat er vaak sprake is van discriminatie wanneer allochtone studenten een stageplek zoeken. De redenen die vaak genoemd worden voor discriminatie zijn etnische afkomst en religie. Meisjes rapporteren minder vaak discriminatie dan jongens. Moslima's geven wel aan zich regelmatig gediscrimineerd te voelen vanwege het dragen van een hoofddoek. Jonge migranten voelen zich dus regelmatig gediscrimineerd maar zeggen desondanks discriminatie niet echt als een

obstakel te ervaren. Zij zijn zich bewust van de aanwezigheid van discriminatoire praktijken, maar zijn overtuigd dat dit hen niet zal hinderen in bijvoorbeeld het vinden van een baan. Ze hebben een meritocratische houding: zij denken dat het juiste diploma en de juiste houding uiteindelijk het belangrijkste zijn voor het vinden van werk. Een afwijzende houding ten opzichte van onderwijs door het ervaren van discriminatie, zoals de theorie van de oppositionele cultuur beschrijft, is in de Nederlandse context niet gevonden, zelfs niet onder de meest gemarginaliseerde jongeren, ook zij onderschrijven het belang van een goede opleiding voor participatie in de Nederlandse samenleving.

Naast vormen van directe discriminatie bestaan er ook subtielere vormen van uitsluiting. Deze studie toont aan dat veel professionals erop wijzen dat veel jonge migranten bepaalde sociale vaardigheden (soft skills) missen, die volgens hen bijdragen aan de achtergestelde positie van deze groep. Veel schoolcurricula en projecten richten zich dan ook op het aanleren van deze soft skills. Het is echter riskant om een bepaalde groep een gemis aan vaardigheden toe te kennen omdat dit een subtiele manier van discriminatie is, zeker wanneer deze toegekend worden aan een als problematische beschouwde culturele of etnische achtergrond en wanneer werkgevers het gemis van soft skills als reden gebruiken om geen migrantenjongeren aan te nemen.

Naast belemmerende factoren zijn er ook ondersteunende factoren in het leven van jonge migranten die hen helpen bij hun participatie in onderwijs of op de arbeidsmarkt. In deze thesis wordt duidelijk dat het hebben van een ondersteunend sociaal netwerk een bepalende factor is voor een positieve schoolbeleving. Deze studie toont aan dat het vooral belangrijk is om actief te communiceren met ouders en broers en zussen over schoolzaken. Communiceren over school en het ontvangen van concrete hulp bij school zijn twee verschillende zaken. Uit de interviews en het enquêteonderzoek komt naar voren dat veel migrantenjongeren concrete hulp zoals hulp bij huiswerk of het maken van een studiekeuze missen, omdat veel ouders laag opgeleid zijn en niet bekend zijn met het Nederlandse onderwijssysteem. Ook blijken jonge migranten vaak rolmodellen te missen in hun omgeving, terwijl juist gebleken is dat deze een belangrijke motiverende factor zijn voor jonge migranten.

In deze studie is ook de rol van het sociaal beleid bestudeerd. In het kort kan geconcludeerd worden dat de invoering van 'new governance' principes in het activering- en re-integratiebeleid soms onverwachte negatieve consequenties heeft voor jonge migranten. Ten eerste hebben ketensamenwerking, decentralisatie en de invoering van marktprincipes ervoor gezorgd dat lokale (commerciële en publieke) partijen gezamenlijk verantwoordelijk zijn voor

de uitvoering van het sociaal beleid. Deze samenwerking wordt ervaren als positief en de meerwaarde ervan wordt door professionals ook zeker erkend. Maar veel partijen hebben te maken met targets en daarom blijven partijen vaak handelen vanuit hun eigen belang en agenda, wat de samenwerking niet ten goede komt. Daarnaast is één van de doelstellingen van de invoering van ‘new governance’ principes het bewerkstelligen van maatwerk. Veel projecten en programma’s blijven echter standaardpakketten aanbieden, omdat dit kostenefficiënter is en omdat zij hun targets willen behalen. Hierdoor wordt ‘creaming’ toegepast en worden voornamelijk jongeren toegelaten waarvan zeker is dat zij het programma succesvol zullen afronden. De ‘moeilijk’ te plaatsen jongeren worden geweigerd of ‘geparkeerd’ in langdurige trajecten waar volgens de professionals meer tijd is om aan de problemen van de jongeren te werken.

Een laatste belangrijk resultaat van deze studie is dat in het beleid onderwijs voorrang heeft op werk. Dit betekent dat professionals jongeren moeten motiveren om terug naar school te gaan om hun startkwalificatie te behalen. In de realiteit blijkt dat veel professionals de eis van de startkwalificatie te hoog vinden voor sommige jongeren en van mening zijn dat deze jongeren beter af zijn op de arbeidsmarkt. Zij vinden de startkwalificatie geen vereiste voor het zeker stellen van een positie op de arbeidsmarkt. Nationale data bevestigen dit: het merendeel (ongeveer tweederde) van de drop-outs is actief op arbeidsmarkt.

Deze studie heeft tot slot geresulteerd in de formulering van verschillende praktijken die bevorderend zijn voor de participatie van jonge migranten. Ten eerste worden buddy- of mentorprojecten genoemd als veelbelovend. Deze projecten helpen jongeren bij het vergroten van hun netwerk en het in contact komen met rolmodellen. Ten tweede worden stages gezien als een goede praktijk om jongeren kennis te laten maken met de arbeidsmarkt en werkgevers. Stages zijn belangrijk in de overgang van school naar werk omdat veel jongeren hun eerste baan vinden via hun stage. Verder kunnen jongeren op hun stageplek zogenaamde soft skills leren die belangrijk worden geacht voor hun integratie in de arbeidsmarkt. Ten derde wordt het als positief ervaren wanneer er een grote mate van vrijheid is binnen projecten voor eigen initiatief van de jongeren.

## **Conclusie en discussie**

Deze thesis laat zien dat de participatie van migrantenjongeren beïnvloed wordt door verschillende factoren. Sommige factoren kunnen worden bestempeld als ondersteunend andere als belemmerend.

Van de kant van de jongeren heeft deze studie vooral aangetoond dat er bij hen veel optimisme en ambitie aanwezig is. Zij zijn gemotiveerd voor hun opleiding en hebben de ambitie een baan te vinden en carrière te maken. In die zin ligt de verwachting van migrantenjongeren in lijn met de verwachting van de Nederlandse samenleving. Daartegenover staat dat het huidige politieke klimaat en de publieke opinie echter volledige assimilatie vragen, terwijl jonge migranten een voorkeur hebben voor integratie met behoud van de eigen culturele identiteit.

Wanneer de uitkomsten van dit onderzoek geplaatst worden binnen de gesegmenteerde assimilatie theorie kan geconcludeerd worden dat ook in Nederland verschillende integratie paden bewandeld worden. Er zijn weinig jongeren die het pad van volledige assimilatie in de (blanke) middenklasse verkiezen. De meeste jongeren prefereren het pad van opwaartse mobiliteit met een sterke oriëntatie op de eigen culturele gemeenschap. Hoewel een aantal migrantenjongeren voortijdig school verlaat en werkloos is, kan er niet echt gesproken worden van een pad van neerwaartse mobiliteit. In de Nederlandse context kan er beter gesproken worden van een pad van stagnatie; sommige migrantenjongeren lukt het niet een betere sociale positie te bereiken dan hun ouders.

Volgens Berry (1997, 2006) is voor een succesvolle integratie van migranten een wederzijdse aanpassing van samenleving en migranten nodig. Wanneer een samenleving geen open houding heeft ten opzichte van migranten kan dit uiteindelijk leiden tot separatie. Op dit moment lijkt er nog geen sprake te zijn van een duidelijke keuze van migrantenjongeren voor separatie. Het is alleen wel de vraag hoe de huidige trend van beleid en publieke opinie die steeds negatiever wordt ten aanzien van migratie en de integratie van migranten, uiteindelijk zijn uitwerking heeft op de positie van jonge migranten in Nederland.

Op dit moment is de positie van jonge migranten in Nederland nogal onzeker. Ondanks verbeteringen van hun prestaties in onderwijs en op de arbeidsmarkt en hun positieve houding ten opzichte van scholing en werk wordt in het huidige politieke klimaat en de publieke opinie hun etnische en culturele achtergrond gezien als een belemmering voor integratie en worden zij niet geaccepteerd als volledig lid van de Nederlandse samenleving. De jongeren zelf tonen echter veel veerkracht en tegenkracht en blijven optimistisch.

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## **Curriculum Vitae**

Debby Gerritsen was born in Apeldoorn, the Netherlands on January 19, 1984. She graduated from secondary school in 2002 (HAVO, de Heemgaard in Apeldoorn). After taken a foundation course (propedeuse) in economics at the College of Higher Professional Education Utrecht (Hogeschool van Utrecht) she started studying Interdisciplinary Social Science at Utrecht University in 2003 where she obtained her Bachelor of Science degree in 2006 on a thesis on an evaluation study of an intervention for aggressive youngsters. From 2006 to 2008 she enrolled in the Research Master Migration, Ethnic Relations and Multiculturalism. During this period she spent one semester as an exchange student at the Political Science Department of Vanderbilt University, Nashville US. She wrote her Master thesis on international trust between populations in the European Union. After obtaining her Master of Science degree in Migration, Ethnic Relations and Multiculturalism in 2008, she started working as a researcher for the European comparative research project PROFACITY. This is when she started her dissertation research on the participation of young migrants in the Netherlands in education and at the labour market.

