SOCIAL TIES OF REFUGEES: DOES THE HOUSING CONTEXT MATTER?

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Abstract

People that fled have to build a new life. They need to find housing, learn the language and build a social network. This thesis concerns the question to what extent the residential environment, or 'housing context', for refugees affects the development of social ties with their neighbours. Two type of housing contexts in Leiden have been compared, which originate from the policy of housing association Portaal. The first type, the 'selected context', consists of 30 newly-built studios at the edge of Leiden. Fourteen studios are allocated to refugees, eight to young Dutch residents and eight to Dutch persons that were homeless previously. All residents have been selected on the basis of, amongst others, their *age* and household type. Refugees who came from seven different *countries of origin* were chosen. A concentration of refugees coming from one country of origin was prevented. The young Dutch residents had to point out their *motivation* to live next to, and the expected support to be offered to, refugees and persons that were homeless before. This context provides residents with the possibility to use a collective indoor space, located at some distance from the context. The second type of housing context, the 'regular context', consists of existing dwellings in different areas in Leiden. Refugees reside next to a variety of non-selected neighbours, i.e. Dutch and other citizens. The three aforementioned characteristics of the selected context (Similarity in age, and to a less extent in country of origin, positive attitude of neighbours and, the possibility to use a collective space) lead to the following expectation: refugees in the selected context have developed more and stronger ties with neighbours than refugees in the regular context. This expectation is explored by conducting interviews with 26 refugees, of which seven live in the selected context and nineteen in the regular context.

The results show that, in the selected context, all refugees developed one or more ties with their neighbours, while this applies to only nine out of the nineteen refugees in the regular context. In the selected context, relatively many refugees developed a tie with only fellow refugees and relatively few refugees build a tie with Dutch neighbours, compared to the regular context. Another point that differs between the contexts is the strength of ties. Ties in the selected context are somewhat stronger than ties in the regular context, in terms of support. On the basis of the results, it is argued that the selected context seems to be a good option for the young and single refugee who has just arrived. The regular context is more beneficial to others, because it offers more opportunities to meet and develop ties with a variety of Dutch neighbours. Preferably, cities and housing associations should offer both types of contexts. Building additional accommodation for refugees and other selected residents, enables cities and housing associations to house larger numbers of refugees and other specific groups, that are in urgent need of finding a place to live. Besides, it has the advantage that it does not add to the waiting list for the regular, affordable housing, which seems important in light of the high demand for social housing these days.

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1 Introduction

People that fled have to build a new life. The first step after being granted a residential permit is to obtain a dwelling. After this, they have to learn the new language, look for a job (Wetenschappelijke Raad voor het Regeringsbeleid, n.d.) and create a new social network. Housing associations like Portaal are involved in the allocation of dwellings. Their task is to allocate dwellings to persons with low income that seek housing, including refugees. Portaal is interested in how these refugees function in the neighbourhood and society and which factors contribute to successful participation in society. More specifically, they are interested in the social ties that refugees have developed. How many ties did they develop and with whom? This thesis presents the findings of a research carried out among 26 refugees housed by Portaal in Leiden. This research tries to discover to what extent the residential environment plays a role in the development of ties of refugees with *neighbours*.

Between 2015 and 2018 housing association Portaal allocated dwellings to refugees in Leiden in two ways. Most refugees were provided an *existing* dwelling in Leiden. This thesis considers this as the '*regular context'*. The high influx of refugees between 2013 and 2016 in the Netherlands (Platform31, n.d.) created a need to house refugees not only in existing dwellings. Therefore, a *newly-built project* of 30 studios in the University District of Leiden was realized in 2017. Fourteen single refugee households reside here, next to eight young Dutch residents and eight persons who had been homeless before. These groups were targeted because they all experience difficulties in finding housing these days. This is called the *'selected context'* in this thesis.

In the allocation process housing association Portaal, the municipality of Leiden and Stichting Vluchtelingenwerk are involved. The task of the municipality is to house a specific number of refugees each half year. Portaal and Stichting Vluchtelingenwerk cooperate in allocating dwellings to refugees. Stichting Vluchtelingenwerk indicates which refugees should be housed and Portaal selects the dwellings. In addition, De Binnenvest organization was involved in the newly-built project. This organization provides shelter for people that became homeless for a variety of reasons (DeBinnenvest, n.d.).

All residents in the newly-built project have been selected using the following criteria:

- Motivation. The eight young Dutch residents registered at Portaal had to be *motivated* to live here. In a motivation letter they had to point out how they could support the other two groups.
- Age and household type. All three organizations (Portaal, Stichting Vluchtelingenwerk and De Binnenvest), selected single households and took the age of residents into account. Portaal selected young Dutch residents aged between 23 and 27 years old. In this way specific rental contracts could be created. Stichting Vluchtelingenwerk also took the age of refugees into account. The underlying idea was that residents would be more inclined to interact with each other when they are rather similar in age. Refugees are between 24 years

and 40 years old. Residents housed by De Binnenvest are generally somewhat older. The youngest person is 27 years old and the oldest is somewhere in his/her 40's.

- Country of origin. Stichting Vluchtelingenwerk chose residents that came from different countries of origin: Syria, Iraq, Iran, Yemen, Eritrea, Uganda and Afghanistan. Refugees with different backgrounds are housed, because this was thought to prevent that they will only interact with neighbours who have the same background. This is not helpful in the integration of refugees in the Dutch society.
- Personal capabilities. De Binnenvest chose residents that want and were thought to be able to live on their own again. Residents allocated a dwelling by this organization were only allowed to live in this area for one year. This, in combination with their personal situation, created the expectation at Portaal that these residents might be less inclined to interact (intensively) with refugees and young Dutch residents.
- Gender. All three organizations tried to create a gender balance. It was assumed that if too much men would be allocated a dwelling, a different atmosphere could arise. About two thirds of all residents is male and one third is female, which was considered an acceptable proportion.

Portaal is interested in the ties that refugees developed. How do ties come into being? Ties can be developed when people have prolonged and repeated encounters with others (Tersteeg, 2017, p.110). People that build a tie with another person can receive or provide these persons with support or companionship (Tersteeg, 2017, p.106). Besides this 'advantage' for refugees themselves, ties can be argued to be beneficial for the neighbourhood and society in general. People that build a tie in a neighbourhood are able to recognize others as belonging there (Peterson, 2015, p.1). This familiarity could contribute to achieve social cohesion. Social cohesion helps to prevent disorder in neighbourhoods (Mollenhorst, 2015, p.117). Refugees that developed ties with Dutch persons might feel (more) accepted in the Dutch society (Pettigrew & Tropp and, Heath, Rothon & Kilpi, cited in Vervoort, Flap & Dagevos, 2010, p.587). These ties could be argued to be supportive in the long run and for the society as well. Dutch persons could eventually support refugees in learning and understanding the Dutch language and values more easily.

The research compared the ties that were developed by refugees in the selected and the regular context. Three characteristics of the selected context give rise to the expectation that refugees would interact with more neighbours and would interact more intensively with them, than refugees in the regular context:

- Higher level of similarity with regard to age, and to a less extent country of origin;
- Positive attitude of young Dutch residents towards refugees;
- Possibility to use a collective indoor space.

For these reasons, a higher number of ties and stronger ties are expected in the selected context compared to the regular context. This leads us to the *main research question*:

- To what extent does the housing context influence the development of ties of refugees with neighbours?

This question is disaggregated in the following three sub questions:

- To what extent did refugees in the selected context develop a higher number of ties with neighbours than refugees in the regular context?
- To what extent does the strength of ties with neighbours differ between the selected and the regular context?
- What role do individual factors play in the development of ties with neighbours and do these differ between the selected context and the regular context?

The third question has been created, because the literature reveals that, next to contextual factors, also individual factors may play a role in the development of ties with neighbours.

Chapter 2 provides the theoretical framework in which the research question is embedded. After explaining that ties can vary in strength and can be beneficial for people, certain factors that are expected to influence the development of ties of refugees with neighbours are discussed. Chapter 3 explains why this research method has been chosen and provides insight into the steps of the research process. Chapter 4 discusses the findings. Finally, Chapter 5 presents conclusions and recommendations for policy and further research.

2 Theoretical framework

This chapter discusses the existing literature about different kinds of encounters: short or 'fleeting' encounters and prolonged encounters that can lead to ties. The aim of the chapter is to find several factors that could influence the development of neighbour ties in the two housing contexts. In order to understand the development of ties, first of all characteristics of the different kind of encounters are identified. More specifically, this section discusses the two types of encounters, places where encounters can occur, strength of ties and importance of ties and fleeting encounters. The following section of this chapter discusses several factors that affect the development of ties. This leads to the conceptual model in paragraph 2.6 in which the factors are presented. The hypothesis, that refugees in the selected context would have developed ties with a higher number of neighbours and stronger ties than refugees in the regular context, is explained in this paragraph by use of this model.

2.1 Where can refugees meet others

One of the requirements of the establishment of ties is that people meet each other (Tersteeg, 2017, p.105). The neighbourhood, next to a job, study or a voluntary organisation is a place where others can be encountered. Refugees specifically may have met other persons in the asylum centre where they lived before being housed in Leiden, in their current neighbourhood in Leiden and in language classes. The social composition of these social contexts influences the composition of the social network of persons (Mollenhorst, Völker & Flap 2008, p.60). For example, refugees will mainly meet *other refugees* in asylum centres. In neighbourhoods with a *diverse* population, refugees will have a better chance to meet diverse people with whom a tie can be established.

This research regards 'neighbourhood' as the street where a refugee is housed and a couple of streets around. This is how most respondents in the study of Tersteeg 'defined' their neighbourhood (Tersteeg, 2017, p.12). A neighbour is seen as someone who is living in the neighbourhood. This is in conformance with the interpretation of Mollenhorst and colleagues of 'neighbour'. Respondents in their study could pick 'next-door neighbour' or 'someone from the neighbourhood' when they explained their relationship with someone (Mollenhorst, 2015, p.112; Mollenhorst, Völker & Schutjens, 2009, p.553).

2.2 Encounters and ties

Within encounters, one can discern superficial encounters and encounters that lead to continuing contact (Tersteeg, 2017, p.105). People only greeting or nodding to each other are examples of superficial encounters (Peterson, 2017, p.1078): these are short encounters. They are also dubbed 'fleeting encounters' (for example Tersteeg, 2017, p.105). Fleeting encounters can occur because people live or move in close proximity to each other (Tersteeg, 2017, p.105).

Importantly, in this thesis 'ties' are seen as *prolonged* encounters that lead to continuing contact. In order to develop a tie, people should have encountered others longer and repeatedly (Tersteeg, 2017, p.110). A reason for people to establish a tie is that they expect that the person will deliver them something such as advice, support or care (p.106). Fleeting encounters usually do not lead to actual ties (Tersteeg, 2017, p.105).

Specific spaces provide people with the opportunity to develop ties (Tersteeg, 2017, pp.105, 106, 110). Tersteeg discerns two types of these spaces: places near the house such as pavements, corridors and private green spaces and semi-public or public places (Tersteeg, 2017, p.106). Examples of these latter are schools, sport clubs, libraries, community centres and play grounds (Tersteeg, 2017, pp.106, 108). All these spaces are often located within the neighbourhood.

2.3 Ties of different strength

Ties can vary in strength. Multiple 'levels' of strength exist. Granovetter proposed four dimensions for discerning weaker and stronger ties (Rademacher & Wang, 2014, p.1214):

- Time spent on the tie
- Mutual services following from the tie
- Intimacy
- Emotional intensity

In relatively strong ties, people interact more frequently, the levels of intimacy and emotional intensity are higher and there are more feelings of reciprocity (Rademacher & Wang, 2014, p.1214). It is often found that ties with neighbours specifically are relatively weak (Mollenhorst, 2015, p.111; Mollenhorst et al., 2009, p.551).

Each of the dimensions needs to be measured:

- Time spent on the tie can be measured with a specific frequency (for example once a week). Yet, the research conducted here measured how long refugees and neighbours meet each other. This was thought to be closer to the time spent and the strength of the tie.
- Mutual services are measured as the exchange of support with a neighbour. It deals with both receiving and offering support.
- Intimacy may be seen as physical intimacy or emotional intimacy. As the ties studied here are ties with neighbours, only emotional intimacy will be found. Discussing intimate topics or personal problems could be seen as indicators of intimacy. Marsden & Campbell (1984, p.489) tried to measure intimacy in this way. These authors mentioned family, friends and politics as more intimate conversation topics.
- Emotional intensity may be measured by the feeling that refugees have about a neighbour. This could be measured by what refugees mention when they talk about their neighbour: do they indicate they see their neighbour as (good/close) friends or do they indicate they like them? The words 'acquaintance', 'good friend' or 'or a very close friend' were used by at least one study for reviewing the emotional intensity of ties (Marsden & Campbell, 1984, p.488).

In this thesis these measures are used. Refugees that meet a neighbour for a long time, receive and offer support to a neighbour, feel positive about their neighbour and discuss intimate/personal topics with each other are seen in this research as being relatively strongly tied to their neighbour.

2.4 Importance of ties and fleeting encounters

What do ties bring people? This differs between weaker and stronger ties. In general stronger ties offer emotional support and companionship (Tersteeg, 2017, p.106). Within stronger ties people often trust each other and experience feelings of reciprocity (Rademacher & Wang, 2014, p.1214). People involved in this kind of tie often feel more obliged or encouraged to support the other than in weaker ties (p.1214).

Weaker ties are often found to offer practical support (Tersteeg, 2017, p.112; Fischer, Thomése, Mollenhorst et al., cited in Mollenhorst, 2015, pp.111-112). Examples of practical support are: administrative issues, lending or repairing products, helping with issues in or around the house. The support provided by weak ties could complement the type of support of family and friends (Tersteeg, 2017, p.109). Also, weaker ties could provide people with new information. As these types of ties can fulfil a bridging function (Krackhardt, 1992, p.216), new information is more likely to be provided by weaker than by stronger ties. This bridging function can be illustrated with the following example. Within a network of weak ties, not all the persons are tied to each other (Rademacher & Wang, 2014, p.1214). Person C may have useful information for person A, but they may not be tied to each other. When another person, B, is tied to both of them, information can be transferred to person A.

Next to ties, fleeting encounters are also important for refugees and the neighbourhood as a whole. These encounters can result in a feeling of familiarity (Peterson, 2017, p.1080). By encountering other people, persons start to recognize more people on the street. This could make them feel less anonymous, which could on their turn stimulate them to greet or talk to other people (Peterson, 2017, p.1081). The feelings of familiarity could make people feel at home/feel comfortable with others in the neighbourhood (Peterson, 2017, p.1082; Bergeijk, Bolt & Van Kempen, 2008, pp.2-3). Another advantage of fleeting encounters is that it can make people feel more connected to others. People who interact with persons that differ in custom and culture may understand and/or learn to accept the differences (Peterson, 2017, p.1080). Next to advantages for persons itself, fleeting encounters might also be beneficial for the neighbourhood as a whole. As familiarity is linked to one aspect of social cohesion, namely social belonging, it could contribute to achieving social cohesion. Social cohesion is often strived for in neighbourhoods. It helps to prevent disorder in neighbourhoods (Mollenhorst, 2015, p.117).

2.5 Factors that stimulate the development of ties

2.5.1 Attitude of neighbours

The attitude of people might influence whether ties are developed. People with an open attitude towards other persons are more likely to interact. On the contrary, people who are strongly prejudiced, for example towards an ethnic group, do not start ties with persons of this group (Pettigrew, 1998, p.80). A negative attitude towards refugees might apply to Dutch neighbours in the regular context.

2.5.2 Similarity

A second factor that stimulates the development of ties is similarity. Similar people are more inclined to interact repeatedly and for quite some time, because people prefer to have contact with others who are similar or who have a slightly higher social position (Bergeijk et al., 2008, p.3). If they have a choice, people prefer to have contact with others who are similar in age, lifestyle, ethnicity, educational level and socio-economic position (Mollenhorst et al., 2008, p.60; Vervoort, Flap & Dagevos, 2011, p.600). This similarity is especially important for stronger ties. Stronger ties were characterized by more similarity in the studies of Mollenhorst et al. (2008, p.67) and Tersteeg (2017, p.109). Whether people can form ties with similar persons seems to depend on the composition of the social contexts they enter. In homogeneous neighbourhoods, encounters between similar people are more likely to occur.

Why do people prefer to have contact with similar others? These contacts are likely to result in understanding and trust (Mollenhorst, et al., 2008, p.60). Besides, comparing yourself with someone similar is less confronting; behaviour is less criticized among similar people (Bergeijk et al., 2008, p.3). A reason for people to start a tie with someone with a slightly higher social position might be the expectation that this person can offer specific support. Refugees might start a tie with Dutch persons, because they can support them in learning or understanding the Dutch language. However, refugees may also choose to interact with people who speak the same language, because this is easier for them.

People who share the same personal characteristics could have similar behavioural or cultural norms. The study of Tersteeg (2017, p.113) showed that differences in lifestyle lead to a disagreement on behavioural norms. Sharing personal characteristics could lead to similar cultural norms (Tersteeg, 2017, p.117). Cultural norms might influence which places are visited and thus where ties can be established. For example, persons who do not consume alcohol may avoid places where this is on offer. These persons will not encounter people at these places and will not be able to develop ties there.

2.5.3 Individual characteristics

Individual factors can affect neighbour ties. Three groups of people generally develop *relatively* many ties with neighbours (Van Kempen & Wissink, 2014, p.98):

- Ethnic minorities with children
- Persons with a high age
- Persons with a low education

In general, such people spend more time in their neighbourhood than others (Tersteeg, 2017, p.105). One could argue that they have more opportunities to encounter a neighbour frequently and for some time. Van den Berg & Timmermans found that persons with children, next to persons that live on their current address for a long time, also had a higher *number* of neighbours in their network (2015, p 61). These two 'groups' also appeared to interact more frequently with their neighbours. They also found that people with children tend to get to know neighbours via their children (p.61). The school of the children is one of the places where neighbours are met. Children who live in the same neighbourhood tend to visit the same schools in the Netherlands. Another Dutch custom is that neighbours tend to take care of other neighbours' children (Völker and Flap, cited in van den Berg & Timmermans, 2015, p.61).

Also, the language capabilities of refugees may enable them to form ties with Dutch neighbours. Refugees that solely speak their own language may be constrained to interact with Dutch neighbours. They may have formed ties with co-ethnics, persons that came from the same country of origin. As many Dutch neighbours speak English, refugees that speak English will be more able to interact with Dutch neighbours.

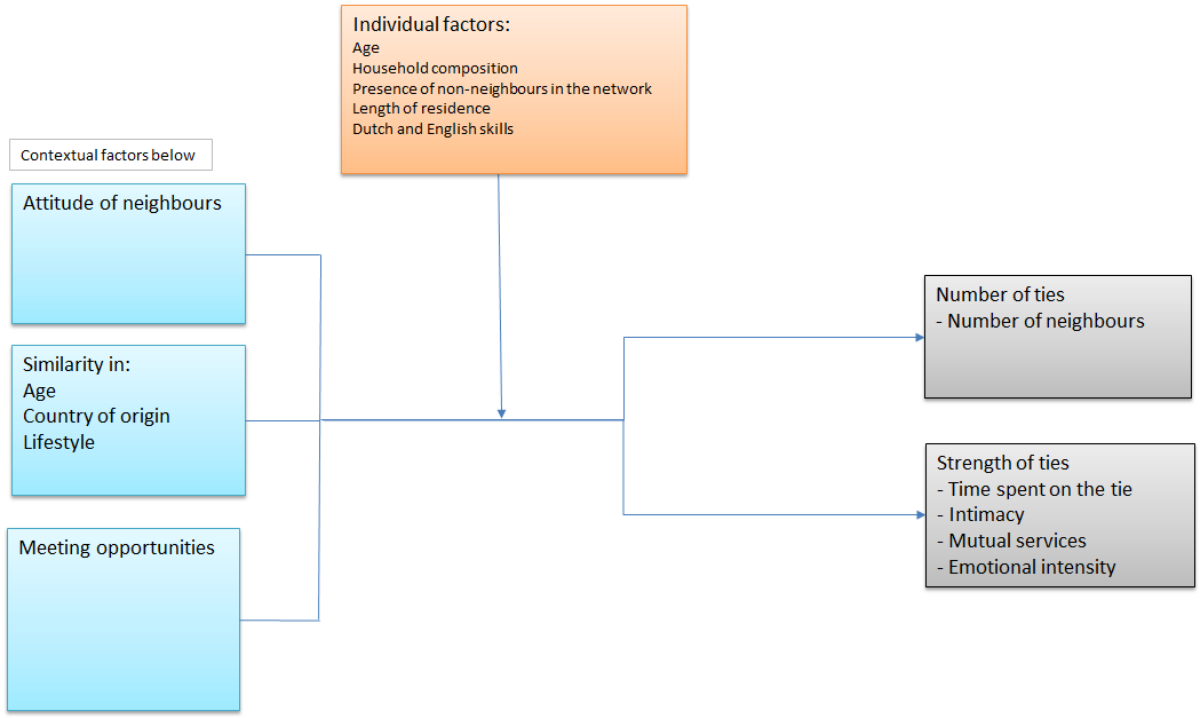
Another individual factor that may influence the number and strength of neighbour ties is the personality of refugees. 'Extravert' people will have a higher tendency to interact with neighbours than introverts. Therefore, they may develop more and stronger ties with neighbours.

The overall social network of refugees, consisting of neighbours and non-neighbours, may play a role in the number and strength of ties with neighbours. A small effect of the total network size on the number of neighbours in someone's network was found by van den Berg & Timmermans (2015, p.61); persons with a large total network had a higher number of neighbours in their network. The presence of non-neighbours in the network of refugees may affect the need to visit a neighbour and to ask for support. When refugees are kept company by non-neighbours, they may feel less need to visit a neighbour. There is a chance that they will not turn to their neighbour for (practical) support in the case they receive this from non-neighbours. As these measures, how long refugees meet their neighbour and whether they receive (or offer) support from/to the neighbour, indicate the strength of ties, the companionship and support provided by non-neighbours may influence the strength of neighbour ties.

2.6 Conceptual model

The factors that stimulate the development of ties, described in the paragraphs above, are combined in the conceptual model used in this thesis. Three contextual factors are depicted at the left hand side: attitude of neighbours, similarity and 'meeting opportunities'. These contextual factors may affect the number and strength of ties of refugees with neighbours. In addition, individual factors are discerned. These individual factors will moderate the effects of the context.

Figure 1: Factors affecting ties of refugees with neighbours



2.6.1 Contextual factors

Three factors related to the context are expected to influence the development of ties with neighbours: attitude of neighbours, level of similarity and opportunities to meet neighbours. These factors create the following hypothesis for the selected context: that refugees in the selected context have developed more ties with neighbours and stronger ties, compared to refugees in the regular context. The paragraphs below explain this hypothesis.

Firstly, the selected context differs from the regular context in the way dwellings were allocated to refugees. Young Dutch neighbours in the selected context were selected on the basis of, amongst others, their motivation to reside among refugees. It is therefore likely that these Dutch neighbours have an open attitude towards refugees. Refugees and the young Dutch neighbours might have a higher tendency to interact with each other in the selected context than in the regular context. The number and strength of neighbour ties could be therefore somewhat higher

in the selected compared to the regular context. Dutch neighbours in the regular context had to 'deal' with refugees moving into their neighbourhood; they had no choice in whether newcomers would be housed there. The attitude of these Dutch neighbours towards refugees might be more negative. Possibly, some of them may be prejudiced. These neighbours might feel less need to interact with refugees, whereby (strong) ties cannot be developed.

Secondly, the selected and regular context differs in the level of similarity among residents. In the selected context, refugees and neighbours are more or less similar in *age* (between 23 and somewhere in the 40's), while more variety can be found in the regular context. Whether this similarity in age results in a similar lifestyle is not wholly clear; lifestyles could also be argued to differ to some extent, because of a difference in culture. The second aspect in which the contexts vary is the share of refugees in the neighbourhood. The proportion of refugees to Dutch neighbours is high in the selected context in comparison with the regular context: in the selected context one refugee resides next to thirteen other refugees. Nearly all refugees in this context (except two) are able to meet one co-ethnic, a fellow refugee who shares the same country of origin. Refugees in the regular context are likely to reside next to mainly Dutch neighbours and possibly neighbours from other countries than theirs. Refugees here are not automatically 'provided' with one or more co-ethnics in their neighbourhood. The similarity in age and, to a less extent in country of origin in the selected context possibly stimulates refugees and neighbours to interact with each other. These arguments combined could cause refugees in the selected context to develop a higher number and relatively strong ties with neighbours, compared to refugees in the regular context.

The third contextual factor that varies is the opportunities to meet neighbours. In the selected context the chance to meet a neighbour instead of a non-neighbour is high. In this context no semi-public or public meeting places, such as libraries, community centres or sport clubs, where non-neighbours can be encountered, are present. It is highly likely that, when refugees encounter someone repeatedly and for a long time, this will be a neighbour. Repeated and prolonged encounters in the selected context could by facilitated by using a collective indoor space, provided to all residents by the University of Leiden. This space is located in a building of the University of Leiden, at a distance of about 100 metres from the houses. A condition for encountering neighbours is that neighbours are present. Refugees themselves should be present as well, but this is a factor linked to the refugee himself or herself (individual factor).

2.6.2 Individual factors

The previous paragraph argued that the three contextual factors could lead to a higher number and relatively strong ties with neighbours in the selected context, compared to the regular context. However, individual factors were also found to influence the development of neighbour ties. What does this mean for the selected context?

The number of ties with neighbours could be lower than expected on the basis of the contextual factors, because of two individual factors: all refugees are young and single households in the selected context, and they live in their current house for a comparatively short time. Both factors could also lead to a relatively low number of ties with neighbours in the selected context

compared to the regular context. When the age and household type of refugees in the selected context make them leave the neighbourhood relatively often, they have less chance to meet neighbours. The comparatively short length of residence of nearly one year also lead to lower chances to meet neighbours. Many respondents in the *regular context* live at their current address for somewhat or much more than 1 year to almost 3 years. They have had more opportunities to meet neighbours.

The number of ties with Dutch neighbours could be relatively low in the specific case that many refugees in the selected context do not speak Dutch (yet) or English. Respondents who neither speak Dutch nor English may be constrained to interact with Dutch persons.

Two other individual factors might lead to a lower number and less strong ties with neighbours, than expected on the basis of the contextual factors. First, when many refugees in the selected context are kept company by non-neighbours and receive support from them, they might feel less need to visit a neighbour or to ask him or her for support. Second, the number and strength of ties with neighbours could be lower than expected, when many refugees would be introvert.

2.7 Summary

This chapter focuses on the development of neighbour ties, specifically on the number of and strength of ties. A condition for the development of ties is that encounters occur. Three factors of the selected context are expected to stimulate that refugees and neighbours interact with each other: open attitudes of neighbours, higher level of similarity and opportunities to meet neighbours. This leads to the expectation that refugees in the selected context form more and stronger ties with neighbours, compared to refugees in the regular context. The literature, however, showed that individual factors could also influence the development of neighbour ties.

3 Methods and data

3.1 Method

Interviews with refugees have been conducted. The reason to choose this method is that participation among refugees was expected to be higher in interviews than for example in questionnaires. Inability or difficulties with the Dutch language seem to be less a constraint when using this method. Questions can be repeated or rephrased in an interview. Also, refugees that only speak their own language can be reached directly via an interpreter.

The interviews were guided by a semi-structured topic list, consisting of the following topics:

- Activities that respondents conduct regularly
- Types of encounters with neighbours
- Types of non-neighbour ties
- Appreciation of all their ties
- Use of ties for support
- Opinion about the neighbourhood.

All topics were touched upon in the same sequence in every interview. Within the type of encounters with neighbours, respondents were asked whether they meet in a fleeting way or that the encounters take some time. Within the topic 'use of ties for support' it was asked whom of all their ties they would ask for support. The topic opinion about the neighbourhood consists of their opinion about the physical characteristics of the neighbourhood, neighbours and their dwelling.

3.2 Data collection

3.2.1 Selecting and approaching respondents

Respondents in this research have been randomly selected from a list of housing association Portaal. This list consists of about 120 refugee households that were allocated a dwelling by Portaal between 2015 and 2018, listed according to the start date of their rental contract. From the list every second refugee household was selected. This was expected to result in a variety of the length of residence of respondents. This is one of the factors that influence the number of ties with neighbours (van den Berg & Timmermans, 2015, p.61). By selecting more respondents than needed, non-respons was anticipated. There was one exception to the random selection. Portaal was specifically interested in one refugee household and the interaction with its neighbours. This household had been allocated a dwelling in a neighbourhood with some residents having a negative attitude towards newcomers.

In order to ask respondents for their participation, they were called, or visited at different weekdays and times, in the case there was no telephone number known. Respondents that were not at home during the first attempt, were visited one other time. Prior to this, all respondents were sent an e-mail or letter, which introduced the research and the intention to

interview them. In total, 43 refugees were called or visited to ask them whether they would like to participate.

3.2.2 Non-participation

Seventeen refugees did not participate. The reasons for non-participation varied. Five refugees, all living in the regular context, said they are too busy to participate; two of them referred to their job. Three refugees were not interviewed because of a language barrier. For the others, the reason was not known. The non-participation may have affected the findings of the research. The fact that the five refugees are too busy might mean that they have no ties with their neighbours. This, however, does not change the main finding that respondents in the selected context interact more with neighbours than respondents in the regular context. It is very likely that the three refugees with a language barrier did not develop any tie with a Dutch neighbour. However, this does not affect the finding that the chance to meet Dutch neighbours is higher in the regular context.

3.2.3 Interviews

A total of 26 interviews were conducted (see table 1). In the selected context, 7 respondents were interviewed. When they were interviewed, all respondents live in the housing context for nearly one year. All respondents are single households. Their age runs from 24 to 34. The countries where they came from differed, three of them came from Arabic countries: Yemen, Syria or Iraq. Others came from Iran, Afghanistan, Uganda, Eritrea. Five of the respondents are male. Two women participated. Two interviews were in Dutch, three in English and at two interviews interpreters were present for translating. Many of the interviewees developed a tie with one or more interviewed others.

In the regular context, 19 respondents were interviewed. The length of residence varies between a couple of months and almost 3 years. The majority of them have been living in their current dwelling between 1,5 and 2,5 years. Fourteen respondents are part of a family household, one is a couple, and four are singles. The youngest respondent is 26 years old, the oldest is 71 years old. Thirteen came from Syria. Six others came from Jamaica, Sudan, Palestina, Iran or Mongolia. The majority of the respondents is male: fourteen. Five females participated. About half of the respondents were interviewed in Dutch (ten), four in English and five were interviewed with the help of an interpreter.

Table 1: Characteristics of respondents

Context	Number of interviews	Length of residence (approx.)	Age (years)	Gender	Household type	Country of origin
Selected	7	Nearly 1 year	24 - 34	M: 5 F: 2	All single	7 different countries
Regular	19	3 months - 3 years	26 - 71	M: 14 F: 5	14 families 1 couple 4 singles	13 from Syria 5 other countries

In the case of a family household, either one of the heads was interviewed. In some interviews, sometimes both responded. However, only the answers of the person to which the researcher initially directed the questions to, were analysed, since there was not sufficient information about the partner.

3.3 Data analysis

20 interviews were recorded; all have been transcribed. During six interviews only manual notes were made, because these refugees did not want their responses to be recorded. These notes were transformed into digital reports directly afterwards. All 26 interviews are analysed with the computer programme nVivo. In order to compare the answers, text fragments were appointed to labels (nodes). An overview of these nodes can be found in Appendix 1.

4 Results

This chapter presents the findings of the 26 interviews. The first two paragraphs describe the type of encounters that refugees have with their neighbours and the strength of ties with neighbours for each context. Paragraph 4.3 compares the contexts with regard to these findings. Paragraph 4.4 discusses the presence and importance of ties that refugees developed with non-neighbours. In paragraph 4.5, it is explored which role contextual factors might have had in the development of ties with neighbours in both contexts. The role of individual factors is discussed in paragraph 4.6.

4.1 Number of ties

4.1.1 Selected context

All seven respondents meet one or more neighbours repeatedly and for some time; they all build ties. The majority of the respondents (five) developed ties with one or two neighbours. Two respondents developed ties with either three or five neighbours.

Also, all respondents greet their neighbours. Although these fleeting encounters could be beneficial for residents, as it could make them feel at home, only one respondent indicated he appreciates these encounters. He said that the neighbours he only greets are ‘good guys’/’good girls’.

4.1.2 Regular context

Not all respondents meet their neighbours repeatedly and for some time. Only nine out of nineteen respondents build ties with their neighbours. Mostly, they developed ties with one or two neighbours. Nearly all nine respondents also indicated that they greet other neighbours.

The other ten respondents only greet their neighbours or, to a lesser extent, talk briefly with them when the neighbours are present in the street. They did not develop any tie.

The fleeting encounters are appreciated by at least four respondents. They made clear that they like the neighbours whom they meet in this way, for example:

Appreciation of fleeting encounters:

> R: They are very kind people. . . . They are always smiling. That’s a good thing. They always say ‘hello how are you’. That’s good. Yes… so I think I do not have bad people here. In my neighbourhood yes. And my children play outside, [it is a] safe area. [They] meet other people. Nice people. No problem with them’

(Regular context, man, family household, 42 years old, from Syria)
(parts are translated to English)

4.2 Strength of ties

4.2.1 Selected context

As mentioned in the previous paragraph, all seven respondents developed a tie with at least one neighbour. All respondents and neighbours meet each other repeatedly and nearly all visit each other. Besides the visits, the majority of the respondents, six out of seven, receive support from at least one neighbour. Five respondents offer support to their neighbour(s). Both receiving and offering support to a neighbour is found in three cases. Respondents often seem to feel positive about their neighbour; five out of seven indicated positive feelings about at least one neighbour. The ties are described in more detail below. The description is discerned into ties with Dutch neighbours and ties with fellow refugees, because Dutch neighbours could offer respondents other types of support than fellow refugees; for instance with finding their way in the Dutch society.

Respondents that build ties with fellow refugees

Six respondents developed one or more ties with fellow refugees. Five of them build ties with only fellow refugees and did not develop any tie with a Dutch neighbour. Nearly all of them visit each other, mostly at home or in fewer cases at the picnic table outside. Only one respondent said she inclines not to visit a neighbour. She explains that her culture makes it difficult for her as a woman to interact with men. When she is invited by him to visit him at home, she declines. This could be something to take into account when housing single female refugees with an Arabic background, though it is only found once in this research. Respondents that *do* visit each other, often chat together and some drink coffee together. How often they meet differs, for example few meet a couple times a month, one meets his neighbours when they can sit outside and another one does not meet often. Four respondents also visit the city centre together sometimes.

Many respondents receive support from (mostly one) fellow refugee: four out of six. The support seems mainly practical, for example: jobs in the house, buying products via internet and recommending shops. Two respondents *both receive* support and *offer* support, to each other. This support is reciprocal. They both seem to feel positive about each other, as they mention each other ‘a friend’:

Reciprocal support

R: But I have [this] friend from Syria. He talks much with me and he went… You know, he has a difficulty with the language. He cannot speak with a different language. . . . He still talks with me. I know he feel at rest when he talks with me. . . . Sometimes I visit him. To have a drink, to talk, whether he needs something. Like this, you know. Sometimes he tells me, to translate for post. Like this. He brings, he gets some…
I: He asks you what does it mean or something?
R: He ask me what is this. Like this.

(Selected context, single household, man, 24 years old, from Iraq)

Quotation continued on next page

Quotation continued

T: one of his friends does not have a bicycle. If he [neighbour, as quoted on previous page] visits the city, he always ask: 'what do you need from the city centre, do you need cigarettes? I will bring it with me. . . .'

(Selected context, single household, man, 34 years old, from Syria) T = Interpreter

Support is not always reciprocal. Two respondents only receive support from their neighbour(s), and do not provide their neighbour with support. Two other respondents only offer support to their neighbour and do not receive support from their neighbour. None of these respondents mention their neighbour 'a friend'; they do not seem to feel positive about their neighbour(s). One respondent describes his encounters with his Eritrean neighbours in the following way:

Offering support to neighbours

R: . . . Not all the time. Sometimes, I meet the Eritrean people. Because most of the time they need help. I am a little bit good, because they do not understand, they are not able to speak English and the [Dutch] language as well. Sometimes they face problems, I help them, try to help them. And sometimes, but now the weather is good, sometimes we sit here outside. Before, it was cold and rainy weather in Holland. We cannot sit there, [we] just met each other during the week, just 'hi hello, how are you' just something like this. But now since the weather has improved a bit, sometimes we sit there. If someone has time. Just for drink tea, something like this.

(Selected context, single household, man, 32 years old, from Afghanistan)

Respondents that build ties with Dutch neighbours

Two respondents build a tie with a *Dutch* neighbour, in both cases a young Dutch resident. They are visited by this neighbour at home. The two respondents chat with their neighbour and one also drinks coffee with the neighbour. How often they meet their neighbour varies: about once a week or a couple times a month. Both respondents receive support from their neighbour with understanding or practicing the Dutch language, for instance:

Receiving support from a neighbour

R: Yes [he] helps me. For example he visits me for giving advice about which webpages I Could read. In order to practice for the language level b1. . . .
I: So he shows you a webpage with which you can practice your Dutch skills
R: Yes, in order to practice with reading, and listening, yes.

(Selected context, single household, man, 34 years old, from Iran)
[translated to English]

Both respondents seem to feel positive about their neighbour. They regard the neighbour as a 'good guy' or use the word 'friend'. The respondent quoted above also offers support to his neighbour, whereby the support is reciprocal, which possibly makes him to feel positive about his neighbour:

Appreciation of interaction with a neighbour

I: And why do you like that encounter so much?
R: I do not know. But that neighbour is a good guy. He supports me a lot and I support him. [He is] a good guy. He is decent. I do now know why I interact much with him, but …
I: You feel like it is a good person
R: Good person, yes. I do not feel stressed much [with him]

(Selected context, single household, man, 34 years old, from Iran)
[translated to English]

4.2.2 Regular context

Only nine out of nineteen respondents in this context build a tie with one or more neighbours. Therefore, this paragraph only discusses these nine respondents. All nine respondents meet their neighbour(s) repeatedly and all of them pay a visit to/are paid a visit from their neighbour(s). What the respondents receive from or offer to the neighbour(s) differs. Four of the respondents receive support from at least one neighbour, next to that they pay/are paid a visit. One of them, and three other respondents, offer support to (another) neighbour. Support is only received or only offered among these six respondents; support is never reciprocal. Besides, one can find three other respondents who do not receive and do not offer support to their neighbour(s). These three respondents 'only' visit their neighbour(s). Although a difference is found in what respondents receive or offer to the neighbour, a similarity is that many respondents seem to feel positive about at least one neighbour. This applies to eight out of nine respondents. The ties are discussed in more detail below, discerned into ties with fellow refugees and ties with Dutch neighbours.

Respondents that build ties with fellow refugees
Six respondents developed a tie with (mostly) one or a couple of fellow refugees. Three of them build a tie with fellow refugees only; they did not build a tie with a Dutch neighbour. All six respondents pay a visit to/are paid a visit from their neighbour(s). Nearly all of them visit each other at home. They chat together and at least two drink coffee together. Two respondents go for a walk together sometimes. How often they visit each other varies. For example, one has met her neighbour only two or three times so far, one has met during Ramadan (two weeks prior to the interview) and one other meets 'sometimes during the weekend'. Only one respondent receives support from his neighbour. He turns to his neighbour when he does not understand the Dutch language. Two others only offer support to their neighbour, and do not receive help from him or her. This support seems to be practical: lending a product, and, helping with improving interaction in the neighbourhood. Three other respondents do not receive and do not offer support to their neighbour; they 'only' visit the neighbour. Many respondents seem to feel positive about at least one neighbour (four out of six), even though almost no one do not receive support from him or her. They mention their neighbour 'a friend' or said they like their neighbour, such as the following quotation makes clear:

Appreciation of a neighbour

R: My friend is living there. . . . In front of the water
I: A friend of yours lives nearby the water
R: Yes, a friend
I: . . .
R: . . .
I: And what kind of things do you conduct with him?
R: We visit another friend sometimes during the weekend. We talk together at home, in the night.

(Regular context, family household, man, 40 years old, from Syria)
[translated to English]

Respondents that build ties with Dutch neighbours

Six out of nine respondents build a tie with one more Dutch neighbours. All respondents and neighbours visit each other. They drink coffee and chat together. Respondents and neighbours mainly meet at home. Two respondents have prolonged encounters at the street with one neighbour. How often respondents meet their neighbour(s) varies, for example: a couple times a week (two), a couple times a month (one), or not often (one). Three out of six respondents receive support from their neighbour; in all these cases they are supported with jobs in or related to the house. One respondent illustrates this in the following way:

Receiving support from neighbours

R: Yes, [name of neighbour] lives here. He visited us sometimes every day, but he has a job in Norway now. Before he got this job, he visited us every day or two or three times a week. It varied. And also another neighbour lives here. [I meet her] one or two times a month. But we meet each other in the street. When we meet, we talk for half an hour.
I: And do you also visit this neighbour [woman]?
R: Yes but not that often. I visit her. Sometimes, she supports me. For example, when I have a problem with the toilet. She gets in touch with the housing association Portaal to fix this problem. When I have a problem, she helps me, talks to … and [other neighbour, who is mentioned above] the same.
I: He has supported you ?
R: Yes.

(Regular context, family household, woman, 43 years old, from Syria)
[translated to English]

Two other respondents only offer support to their Dutch neighbour and do not receive this. The support is of a practical kind: helping with a job in the house, or emotional kind. One other respondent only visits her neighbours. She does not receive and does not offer support to her neighbours.

Many, five of the six respondents seem to feel positive about their neighbour(s); they said they like their neighbour(s) or mention him/her as a ‘friend’.

4.3 Overview: comparison of contexts

This paragraph compares the selected and the regular context with regard to the number of and strength of ties. It was expected that respondents in the selected context would interact more, and more intensively, with their neighbours. They were hypothesized to have developed more ties and stronger ties with neighbours than respondents in the regular context. Can this be found? Apart from summarizing the number and strength of ties in both contexts, the paragraph summarizes with whom respondents build ties.

In the selected context, respondents interact more with neighbours than respondents in the regular context. All respondents in the selected context developed one or more ties with their neighbour(s). Only nine out of nineteen respondents in the regular context build tie(s) with one or more neighbour(s). The other ten respondents only greet or talk briefly with their neighbours. No large difference between the contexts was found in the number of ties among the respondents that build ties; these are mainly formed with one or two neighbours in both contexts.

The contexts differ in with whom respondents build a tie. Relatively many respondents in the selected context build a tie with only fellow refugees (five out of seven). In the regular context, three out of nine developed a tie with only fellow refugees. Three other respondents that interact with fellow refugees also build ties with Dutch neighbour(s). Ties with Dutch neighbours are found among few respondents in the selected context. In this context, only two respondents build a tie with a Dutch neighbour, while six out of nine respondents in the regular context developed a tie with a Dutch neighbour.

The selected and the regular context have in common that ties are generally rather strong. Nearly all respondents and neighbours meet each other for some time, as nearly all visit each other. By visiting each other, they keep each other company. This can be argued to indicate a relatively strong tie, as companionship is often found in stronger ties (Tersteeg, 2017, p.106). In addition, that many respondents in both contexts seem to feel positive about at least one neighbour also indicate that these ties are rather strong.

The contexts differ in the extent to which support is received from and offered to neighbour(s). Relatively many respondents in the selected context receive support from at least one neighbour, compared to respondents in the regular context. In the selected context, six out of seven respondents receive support from at least one neighbour. In the regular context, four out of the nine respondents receive support from at least one neighbour. A difference can also be found in how many respondents receive support from (a) *fellow refugee(s)*. Only one respondent in the regular context receives support from a fellow refugee, while four out of six respondents (that interact with fellow refugees) in the selected context receive support from a fellow refugee(s). Thus, in the selected context, relatively many respondents in the selected context receive support from fellow refugee(s) compared to respondents in the regular context. Besides receiving support, some respondents also *offer* support to a neighbour in both contexts. This is found for relatively many respondents in the selected (five out of seven), compared to respondents in the regular context (four out of nine). In the selected context, relatively many

respondents offer support to *fellow refugee*(s) (four out of six respondents that interact with fellow refugees), compared to the regular context (two out of six). Another point that differs between the contexts is that, support *is reciprocal* among three respondents in the selected context, which is never the case in the regular context. In short, ties in the selected context are somewhat stronger in terms of support, as relatively many respondents in the selected context receive support from at least one neighbour, relatively many offer support to a neighbour(s) and support is reciprocal in three cases.

The strength of ties does not only differ between the contexts, but also *within* each context. For example, in each context, one can find respondents that meet their neighbour for some time, receive support and feel positive about him or her. However, respondents that meet for some time, but only offer support (do not receive support) and do not feel positive about their neighbour were also found in each context.

In conclusion, the following can be stated. In the selected context, all respondents build a tie with one or more neighbours, which is not found for all respondents in the regular context. Another difference is that relatively many respondents in the selected context developed a tie with only fellow refugee(s) and relatively few developed a tie with Dutch neighbours, in comparison with respondents in the regular context. A third difference is that ties in the selected context are somewhat stronger in terms of support than in the regular context, though ties are generally rather strong in both contexts.

4.4 Importance of neighbour- versus non-neighbour ties

This paragraph discusses the importance of ties with non-neighbours. The research showed that nearly all respondents in both contexts build ties with one or a few non-neighbours. Non-neighbours seem to be rather important for many respondents.

Fifteen out of the twenty-six respondents mentioned one or a few non-neighbours when they were asked which of all the persons mentioned during the interview, they like the most. This includes five out of seven respondents in the selected, and ten out of nineteen respondents in the regular context. Only two respondents said they like their neighbour much. Only for one, a reason for the appreciation is known; he receives and offers support to his neighbour and feels the neighbour is a good person. It should be noted that the preference among nine respondents in both contexts is unknown. This is due to the fact that six respondents do not have any preference for a specific person and three respondents, in the regular context, did not understand the question.

Many, twelve out of the fifteen respondents who prefer one or a couple of non-neighbours identify these as ‘a friend’ or relative. Respondents are kept company by these non-neighbours or call them. Examples of activities they conduct are: visiting each other at home, visiting spaces in the city together, shopping together, chatting about their partner and children. How often they meet differs. For example, some meet once in one/two weeks, or one time a month and a few keep in touch via phone calls/Whatsapp. In the latter cases, the physical distance

may force the respondents to interact with their non-neighbours in this way. They mentioned that their non-neighbours live outside Leiden.

Where did the respondents met the preferred non-neighbours? This varies; for example, some (five) have met them in the asylum centre and in fewer cases they are relatives, language buddies, persons they met in the church or mosque or in culture class. Most of the preferred non-neighbours are fellow refugees (among ten respondents). Some preferred one or a couple of Dutch persons.

Some respondents mentioned a reason(s) why they like their non-neighbours much. Some (four) related this to a feeling. This can be illustrated with the following remark of one respondent in the selected context, who have met the preferred non-neighbours in the asylum centre:

Appreciation of non-neighbours

> R: 'Yes yes we [have spent] so much time with each other. I think it is something that you know, but you do not know why. But we are really close
> I: It is a feeling?
> R: It is a feeling. We understand each other. . . . It is really your friend'

(selected context, single household, woman, age 37, from Yemen)
[translated to English]

A few other examples of reasons why respondents like non-neighbours the most are: they receive support from their non-neighbours, they can interact more easily with them because they speak the same language/have the same culture, or they can practice Dutch with them.

In short, apart from ties with neighbours, nearly all respondents have developed ties with one or a few non-neighbours. Often, neighbours are not the only persons in the network of the refugees. Non-neighbours seem to be rather important for many respondents in both contexts. They like these persons the most, mention these persons 'a friend' or they are relatives, and they are kept company or interact with them via their phone. These three findings suggest that, when studying ties with neighbours of refugees, many refugees possibly developed ties with non-neighbours and these ties could be quite important to them.

4.5 Possible explanations

This paragraph explores which role contextual factors might have had in the findings of neighbour ties in both contexts, described in paragraphs 4.1 to 4.3. It tries to explain the following specific findings, by reviewing each contextual factor separately:

- The lack of a tie among ten respondents in the regular context
- The relatively high number of respondents in the selected context that build a tie with only fellow refugees
- The relatively low number of respondents in the selected context that build a tie with Dutch neighbours
- The finding that ties in both contexts are generally rather strong.

4.5.1 Attitude of neighbours

One of the factors thought to lead to more and stronger ties in the selected context is the attitude of neighbours towards refugees. It was expected that Dutch neighbours in the selected context generally would have an open attitude towards refugees, while Dutch neighbours in the regular context may be more negative. This assumption was based on the fact that the young Dutch residents in the selected context had to be motivated to live among refugees and had to make clear how they could support them. This paragraph tries to answer two questions:

- Do the interviews indicate that Dutch neighbours in the selected context have a negative instead of an open attitude towards refugees? Could this explain the relatively low number of respondents that build ties with Dutch neighbours in the selected context?
- Could the lack of a tie among ten respondents in the regular context be explained by a negative attitude of Dutch neighbours towards refugees?

Important to note is that this research did not involve Dutch neighbours. Solely the experiences of the refugees with regard to the attitudes of the neighbours are known.

The finding that only few respondents in the selected context build a tie with a Dutch neighbour might not be related to the attitude of Dutch neighbours. None of the respondents in this context indicate that their neighbours have a negative attitude towards refugees. Four of the respondents in this context think their neighbours are nice. The quotation of the following respondent is an example:

Feeling about neighbours

> R: I do not know, but they are ok. My experience… No one says something negative to me. I think they are all nice. I do not have a bad experience.

(Selected context, single household, woman, 37 years old, from Yemen)
[translated to English]

The lack of a tie among nine of the ten respondents in the regular context, might not be related to a negative attitude of Dutch neighbours. Only two respondents mentioned that their Dutch neighbours possibly have a negative attitude towards foreigners. They felt their neighbours do

not like foreigners. The lack of a tie with neighbours of one of them could be explained by a negative attitude of neighbours. The other respondent, also faces a negative attitude of Dutch neighbours, but build ties with other neighbours. These latter neighbours asked the respondent whether she could help a Syrian family with improving the interaction with their Dutch neighbours:

Negative attitude of neighbours

> I: You have said that a Syrian family moved to your neighbourhood
> R: Yes, over there
> I: And do you meet them [Syrian family] sometimes?
> R: No. two or three times. They have a problem with their neighbours, first contact. So my neighbours [nearby] asked me whether I could help them. In order to improve the interaction [between them and their neighbours]. I think these neighbours do not like foreigners. It seems they are negative about Muslim people. . . . And my neighbours here [nearby] like us much, me and my husband. . . .

(Regular context, pair household, woman, 38 years old, from Syria)
[translated to English]

Thirteen other respondents in the regular context said they like their neighbours, including some that only greet their neighbours, when they were asked about their opinion about their neighbours. Many said their neighbours are ‘nice’. For example:

Positive feeling about neighbours

> I: ‘You said [name of the respondent] likes his neighbourhood. Why does he like it?
> T: [respondent] says that his house is located close to the city centre. Nice people, [they are] always ‘relaxed’. None of the neighbours cause problems. The neighbours are not unfriendly’

(Regular context, single household, man, 34 years old, from Syria)
[translated to English]

The finding that six respondents in the regular context build ties with Dutch neighbours show that at least these neighbours want to interact with refugees. It seems that they do not have a negative attitude towards refugees. They might have an open or neutral attitude towards refugees; at least they want to interact with them. This willingness to interact with refugees among these neighbours could be (one of the) explanation(s) why ties in both contexts, and not only the selected context, are generally rather strong.

4.5.2 Similarities and differences

The second factor that was expected to lead to more ties and stronger ties of respondents with neighbours in the selected context is the level of similarity between respondents and neighbours. In the selected context, respondents and neighbours are rather similar in their age, and to a less extent in their country of origin. In the regular context, respondents live next to all kinds of, mainly Dutch, neighbours.

This paragraph tries to find explanations for the following findings:

- Could the population composition of the *selected context* explain why relatively many respondents developed ties with only fellow refugees?
- Could the population composition of the *regular context* explain why relatively many respondents developed ties with Dutch neighbours?
- Could the population composition of the *regular context* explain the lack of ties among ten respondents in the regular context?

It is likely that the high number of respondents that developed ties with fellow refugees only (five out of seven) in the *selected context* can be explained by the population composition of the selected context. The proportion of refugees to Dutch neighbours is relatively high; one refugee lives next to thirteen refugees and sixteen Dutch neighbours. Refugees have the opportunity to meet relatively many fellow refugees with whom they could interact.

Respondents might turn to fellow refugees because they are more similar than the Dutch neighbours. Three out of six respondents who developed ties with fellow refugees speak the same language, one of which has the country of origin in common with his neighbours. Another factor that might stimulate interaction of respondents with fellow refugees, instead of Dutch neighbours, is the similar position in which they find themselves; they are all refugees. This offers the opportunity to exchange support related to settling in a new city/Dutch society in general. This kind of support was offered to fellow refugees in three cases (see paragraph 4.2.1). Respondents have possibly less in common with their Dutch neighbours; only few respondents (two) were interviewed in Dutch. The other respondents have ‘only’ their age and household type in common.

The population composition of the *regular context* could possibly also explain the composition of ties in this context: the relatively high number of respondents that build ties with Dutch neighbours (six out of nine, compared to two out of seven respondents in the selected context). Respondents have a high chance to meet Dutch neighbours and to interact with them, because many neighbours have the Dutch nationality. The six respondents that developed a tie with Dutch neighbour(s) show that a similarity in country of origin is not a ‘prerequisite’ for interaction for these respondents. Although not similar in country of origin, many of the respondents (four out of six) have the language they speak in common with their Dutch neighbours; these respondents were interviewed in Dutch. The ability to speak Dutch facilitates interaction with their Dutch neighbours.

Ties with fellow refugees were also found in the regular context. Six respondents build ties with fellow refugees. Many of them (four) came from the same country of origin and in one case the respondent and his neighbours speak the same language. Three out of the six respondents build ties with *only* fellow refugees. It seems that they prefer to interact with neighbours who are similar in country of origin and/or the language they speak, even though the context offers them the opportunity to interact with Dutch neighbours.

Another finding that could be linked to the population composition of the context is the lack of ties among respondents in the regular context. Five out of the ten respondents that did not develop any tie with a neighbour only speak their own language. They do not speak Dutch and English. They are not able to interact with any neighbour in the case that the context does not consist of fellow refugees who speak the same language.

4.5.3 Meeting opportunities

The third contextual factor thought to lead to more and stronger ties in the selected context, compared to the regular context, is the opportunity to meet neighbours. Respondents in the selected context were thought to have a high chance to meet neighbours, instead of non-neighbours. They could eventually meet neighbours repeatedly and for some time in the collective indoor space, owned by the University of Leiden. What can be said about the opportunities to meet neighbours and the use of the collective indoor space? And could this explain one or more of the findings, described in paragraphs 4.1 to 4.3?

Neighbours in the selected context leave the neighbourhood relatively often. Four respondents in the selected context mentioned that their neighbours are busy or they leave the neighbourhood often. In the regular context, two out of nineteen respondents said their neighbours are busy. That neighbours in the selected context leave the neighbourhood relatively often possibly applies to both fellow refugees and Dutch neighbours, as the four respondents referred to their neighbours in general (one respondent), a Dutch neighbour (one respondent) or fellow refugees (two respondents). For example, one of them says his Dutch neighbour is busy:

Busy schedule of a neighbour

> R: ‘Yes, she is living downstairs. So most of the time, when she has time, she comes here. At the weekend or at the weekend night, or in the morning. Sometimes she comes, she ‘forces’ me do not talk English with me. [She says] ‘talk Dutch with me’. She is my good friend. But she is very busy’.

(Selected context, man, single household, 32 years old, from Afghanistan)

The experience that neighbours are busy or leave the neighbourhood often is likely to be related to a contextual factor. The selected context does not provide residents with shopping facilities and public social amenities, such as cafés or sport clubs. Residents are forced to leave the neighbourhood for all kinds of activities.

It can be said that it is more difficult to have repeated and prolonged encounters with neighbours, when neighbours leave the neighbourhood relatively often. Yet, the findings showed that all respondents in the selected context build ties with one or more neighbours. It was also found that only few respondents build ties with Dutch neighbours. This might be related to the contextual factor as described above (lack of shopping facilities and public social amenities), and to activity patterns of these neighbours. Many Dutch neighbours have a job and ties outside the neighbourhood, whom they visit. All young Dutch residents finished or almost

finished their studies at the moment they settled in the context. Many of them, and some of the persons that were homeless before, are likely to have a job, and thus will leave the neighbourhood relatively often.

The hypothesis about the opportunities to meet neighbours also mentioned that residents in the selected context have the possibility to use a collective indoor space. Remarkable is that none of the respondents mentioned anything about this collective indoor space. Possibly they do not use the space for their repeated encounters. This might be related to the specific characteristic of the indoor space; it is not specifically designed as a meeting place for the context. It is owned by the University of Leiden, and located in a building of the University of Leiden, at a distance of about 100 metres from the houses. The indoor space, thus, does not seem to play a role in encountering neighbours and continuation of encountering neighbours.

4.6 Individual factors

This paragraph reviews the (possible) role of individual factors in the development of ties with neighbours, as certain individual factors could affect the number of, strength of and composition of neighbour ties. Which links can be found between the findings, described in paragraphs 4.1 to 4.3, and individual factors of refugees?

The results of this research suggest that a link exists between length of residence and the presence or lack of ties with neighbours. As will be argued later in this paragraph, the assumption is that the longer a refugee lives at his current address, the higher the chance he developed a tie with a neighbour. The length of residence is possibly related to the language capabilities of refugees. The longer the refugee lives at his current address, the higher the chance that he/she is able to speak Dutch. These assumptions are based on the following findings.

- None of the three respondents who live at their current address for about 3 to 9 months in the regular context build a tie with a neighbour. Two of them solely speak their own language; they do not speak Dutch and English. The other respondent was interviewed using the English language.
- All respondents who live at their current address for nearly one year developed ties with neighbour(s). These are all respondents in the selected context. Two out of the seven respondents speak Dutch: they were interviewed in Dutch. Three others were interviewed in English. Two others solely speak their own language.
- Many of the respondents who live at their current address for somewhat or much more than 1 year to almost 3 years build a tie with a neighbour; this applies to nine out of sixteen respondents. Many of the respondents with this length of residence were interviewed in Dutch (ten respondents). Three out of sixteen respondents solely speak their own language.

The lack of a tie among respondents in the regular context is possibly related to an inability to speak Dutch and English; five out of the ten respondents are only able to speak their own language. It is highly likely that an inability to speak Dutch and English constrains respondents to interact with Dutch neighbours: none of the five respondents in the regular context that solely

speak their own language build a tie with any neighbour. The two respondents in the selected context that solely speak their own language, both build ties with fellow refugees. Three of the seven interpreters literally mentioned that the inability to speak Dutch constrains the refugees to interact with Dutch neighbours, for example:

Language barrier when interacting with Dutch neighbours

T: His [Dutch] neighbours are all kind to him. Always outside, try to talk with him. He is not able to speak Dutch well. But always 'hello, hello, how are you. Are you ok?'. They are kind.
I: Ok. So they would like to talk to [respondent]
T: Yes Yes.
I: It is difficult because he does not speak Dutch
T: Difficult, that is right.

(Regular context, single household, man, 34 years old from Syria)
[translated to English]
T = Interpreter

The findings also suggest that respondents do not necessarily have to speak Dutch, in order to interact with Dutch neighbours. Three out of seven respondents that are able to speak English, besides their own language, build a tie with a Dutch neighbour. It seems that respondents who speak the English language are able to interact with Dutch neighbours

Another factor that could influence with whom people develop ties is cultural norms, as explained in paragraph 2.5.2. The research showed that cultural norms for only two respondents could play a role in the development of ties. Both of these respondents live in the selected context. It does not seem an important factor that influences the development of ties with neighbours, as it is only found among two respondents. One of the respondents is used to behave modestly and might be constrained to interact with people in general (not only neighbours). The other respondent did not visit a place where activities as consuming alcohol and dancing took place, as she was not used to this.

Household type was mentioned as another factor that could play a role in the number of neighbour ties. The research does not point out that household type plays a role in the development of ties with neighbours. Within both respondents with children and single respondents, differences can be found in whether they build ties with neighbours. Half (seven) of all respondents with children developed tie(s) with neighbours; the other half did not. Many of the single households build a tie with neighbours (eight), three others did not. These results do not support the finding that people with children generally have a higher number of neighbours in their network than people without children, which was found by Van den Berg & Timmermans (2015, p.61). Important to note with regard to single households, is that the majority of the single households that developed a tie live in the selected context. Only one single household that lives in the regular context, build a tie with neighbours. Whether the household type plays a role in the lack of ties among the other three singles in the regular context is not clear.

In conclusion, the following can be stated. The paragraph showed that two individual factors seem to play an important role in the development of ties with neighbours: length of residence and an inability to speak Dutch or English. It seems that a link exists between the length of residence and ability to speak Dutch; the longer the respondent lives at his/her current address, the higher the chance that he/she speaks Dutch. Respondents that are unable to speak Dutch *and* English are found to be constrained to interact with Dutch neighbours. This might explain why five out of ten respondents in the regular context did not develop any tie with neighbours.

The research did not point out that other individual factors, besides the length of residence and language capabilities, play a role in the development of ties with neighbours. The lack of a tie among the five other respondents in the regular context might be explained by other (individual) factors, which are not mentioned by respondents themselves. For example, respondents might feel little need to interact with neighbours, for example because they are kept company and/or receive support from non-neighbours. It seems that non-neighbours are rather important for many respondents, as explained in paragraph 4.4. Another example could be that respondents are not inclined to interact with neighbours, because of their personality.

4.7 Summary

The main findings of this chapter are as follows. In the selected context, all respondents build one or more ties with neighbour(s), while this does not apply to all respondents in the regular context. The composition of ties also differs. Relatively many respondents in the selected context developed ties with only fellow refugees and few build ties with Dutch neighbours, in comparison with respondents in the regular context. Also, ties differ somewhat in strength between the contexts. In the selected context, ties are somewhat stronger in terms of support than in the regular context. Though, in each context ties are generally rather strong.

What explanations can be found? First of all, the lack of a tie among ten respondents in the regular context could be explained by an inability to speak Dutch and English among five respondents. They are not able to interact with any neighbour in the case the context does not include neighbours who speak the same language. There is a chance that other (individual) factors play a role in the lack of ties among the other five respondents. There are no indications that a negative attitude of Dutch neighbours played a role in the lack of a tie among most of the ten respondents. For only one respondent, this might explain the lack of a tie with neighbours.

The second finding, that relatively many respondents in the selected context developed ties with only fellow refugees, is likely to be related to the high numbers of refugees who live in this context. Respondents might turn to fellow refugees, because they are more similar than the Dutch neighbours. The finding that few respondents in the selected context build a tie with a Dutch neighbour might be related to the activity patterns of all, but mainly, the Dutch neighbours. All residents have to leave the neighbourhood often, because it does not provide shopping facilities and public social amenities. Apart from this, many Dutch neighbours have a job and ties outside the neighbourhood, which makes them leave the neighbourhood often. In this way, it is difficult to have repeated and prolonged encounters with Dutch neighbours.

Finally, the third finding, that ties in both contexts are rather strong, instead of only the selected context, could be explained by the attitude of Dutch neighbours and the language capabilities of respondents in the regular context. It seems that, at least the Dutch neighbours of the six respondents in the regular context that interact with Dutch neighbours, do not have a negative attitude towards refugees. These neighbours want to interact with refugees. The six respondents are enabled to interact with these Dutch neighbours, as many speak Dutch (four) and two speak English.

5 Conclusion and discussion

This thesis concerns the question to what extent the residential environment for refugees affects the development of ties with their neighbours. Two type of residential environments, or 'housing contexts', have been compared, which originate from the policy of the housing association Portaal in charge of providing suitable housing for refugees.

The first type of context consists of 30 newly-built studios at the edge of Leiden, which have been built in 2017. Fourteen studios are allocated to refugees, eight to young Dutch residents and eight to Dutch persons that were homeless previously. All residents were *selected* on the basis of, amongst others, *their age* (rather young) and household type (all singles). For refugees specifically, their *country of origin* was taken into account; seven different backgrounds were chosen. A concentration of refugees coming from one country of origin was prevented. The young Dutch residents had to point out their *motivation* to live next to refugees and persons that were homeless before, including ways how they could support these persons. This type of housing context is called the 'selected context'. In this context, residents are able to use a collective indoor space, located at some distance from the context. The second type of housing context is called the 'regular context'. It consists of existing dwellings in different areas in Leiden, where refugees reside next to non-selected neighbours, i.e. Dutch and other citizens. All refugees in this research were allocated a dwelling by housing association Portaal in Leiden. Portaal decided to allocate dwellings to refugees in both type of contexts, as this enabled them to house larger number of refugees at the same time. In addition, the selected context could provide housing for two other groups of residents (young Dutch residents and persons that were homeless before) that are in urgent need of finding a place to live nowadays. By mixing these three groups together, support with finding the way in society could be exchanged among the residents.

Interviews with twenty-six refugees have been conducted. Seven of them live in the selected context and nineteen in the regular context. All refugees in the selected context are single households. Fifteen refugees in the regular context are head of a household; nearly all of them (fourteen) have children. Four are singles. In the selected context, the seven participants came from seven different countries. Refugees in the regular context mainly came from Syria (thirteen); others came from five other countries.

The three aforementioned characteristics of the selected context (similarity in age and, to a less extent, country of origin, positive attitude of neighbours and possibility to use a collective space) give rise to the expectation that it offers 'good' conditions for resident refugees to interact with their neighbours. The expectation is that refugees in the selected context interact more, and more intensively, with their neighbours than in the regular context. This creates the hypothesis that ties with a higher number of neighbours are developed and that ties are stronger in the selected context than in the regular context.

5.1 Findings

The first finding is that refugees in the selected context interact more with neighbours than in the regular context. All refugees in the selected context (seven) developed one or more ties with their neighbour(s), which means in this thesis that they meet repeatedly and that the meetings take some time. In the regular context, nine out of nineteen refugees developed ties with their neighbours. The others only greet their neighbours or have a short conversation with them. In both contexts, in most cases the number of ties is restricted to one or two. In the selected context, the ties are mostly with fellow refugees. Many refugees build ties with only fellow refugees (five out of seven). Only two refugees developed a tie with a Dutch neighbour. In the regular context, six out of the nine refugees who developed ties with neighbours build a tie with one or more Dutch neighbour(s). Six refugees developed a tie with fellow refugee(s); three of them interact with only fellow refugee(s). This can be summarized as follows.

Table 2: Number of ties with neighbours in various contexts
In absolute numbers and in percentages (between brackets)

Context	**Number of refugees**	**With ties**	*with Dutch neighbours*	*with fellow refugees*	*with only fellow refugees*	**Without ties**
Selected	7	7 (100)	2 (29)	6 (86)	5 (83)	0 (0)
Regular	19	9 (47)	6 (66)	6 (66)	3 (50)	10 (53)

The second finding is that in both contexts the ties generally are relatively strong, as nearly all refugees and neighbours meet regularly and for some time. Besides, many refugees feel positive about their neighbour(s). However, in the selected context ties are somewhat stronger than in the regular context in terms of support. In the first mentioned context, nearly all refugees, six out of seven, receive support from at least one neighbour. Five refugees also offer support to their neighbour(s). Both receiving and offering support was found among three refugees. This support is reciprocal. In the regular context, only about half of the respondents (four out of nine) receive support. Four refugees offer support to a neighbour, and do not receive support from this neighbour. Support is never reciprocal. In both contexts the support is mostly of a practical kind.

Importantly, in both contexts non-neighbours are important for many refugees. When refugees were asked whom they like most, in both contexts many of them mentioned one or more non-neighbours. In most cases these are friends or relatives. The people that they prefer most are often fellow refugees, though some preferred a Dutch person. Given the importance of non-neighbours, these ties should also be taken into account in studies of ties of refugees.

The findings give rise to the question why relatively many refugees in the selected context have developed ties with only fellow refugees. The following factors play a role. The chance to meet and interact with fellow refugees is high in this context. Since one individual resides next to

thirteen other refugees. It is likely that refugees turn to these neighbours, because they are more similar than the Dutch neighbours. Three out of the six refugees that interact with fellow refugees speak the same language, one of which has the country of origin in common with his neighbours. Besides, the similar position in which they all find themselves (being a refugee) might stimulate that many refugees developed ties with fellow refugees.

Only two refugees in the selected context have developed ties with their Dutch neighbours. Although not substantiated by the respondents, activity patterns might be in the way. Many Dutch neighbours have a job and ties outside the neighbourhood whom they visit. Moreover, the lack of shopping facilities and public social amenities make all residents to leave the neighbourhood often. In any event, although a context has been created with people similar in age and household type, this does not automatically mean that refugees interact with Dutch residents. This is relevant, because Dutch neighbours were supposed to support refugees in finding their way in the city and in society in general, for example by helping with understanding the Dutch language and showing Dutch values.

In the regular context, there is a relatively high number of refugees without ties with neighbours (ten persons). The question arises how this could be explained. At least one factor seems to play a role, the inability to speak Dutch and English: five of the refugees without a tie only speak their own language. A contextual factor could have been a more negative attitude of Dutch neighbours than in the selected context. However, many interviewees feel rather positive about their neighbours in general. Only two refugees mentioned a negative attitude of neighbours towards foreigners. Besides, six out of nine refugees developed a tie with a Dutch neighbour. There are no indications that the attitude of the Dutch neighbours played a role in the lack of ties among most of these ten refugees. Possibly other factors play a role in the lack of a tie, such as that respondents feel little need to develop a tie with neighbours, because they have non-neighbours of whom they receive companionship and/or support.

5.2 Discussion

What are the pros and cons of allocating dwellings to refugees in the two housing contexts: concentrated in a more tolerant environment among people from the same age-group, or dispersed in a regular neighbourhood?

The most important conclusion is that the selected context offers refugees ‘good’ opportunities to interact intensively with neighbours, but mostly with fellow refugees. This may be beneficial from the perspective of refugees themselves, especially when they do not speak Dutch and English yet, because they are offered the opportunity to interact with similar others in the enclave. However, refugees in the selected context interact less with Dutch neighbours and therefore miss the type of support these could give them. The careful selection of Dutch neighbours with respect to their attitudes towards refugees might have been instrumental in avoiding conflict, but does not automatically contribute to more than superficial contacts.

The advantage of the regular context is that it gives a more representative image of society: refugees live next to all kinds of residents, young-old, with varying activity patterns and socio-economic positions and different attitudes. Learning to deal with this diversity might be beneficial. This comes, however, at a loss of developing ties with neighbours for many, but not the majority of refugees. There is little evidence that this lack of ties is caused by negative attitudes towards refugees. The most prominent barrier for the lack of ties is the lack of language capabilities. It should be noted that many refugees (also) developed ties with non-neighbours, of whom they receive companionship and sometimes support. Non-neighbours are (also) part of the social network of many refugees.

These findings chime in with the more general literature on migration. Enclaves might be beneficial to 'newcomers' with limited capabilities to find their way in the host society. Support from fellow refugees that share these experiences can provide a useful step in this process. However, at a later stage this bonding capital might be in the way of adopting Dutch norms and values. The recommendation is that cities should preferably offer both types of contexts. The selected context seems to be a 'good option' for the (young, single) refugee who has just arrived. He or she is able to meet fellow refugees, who eventually speak the same language and who could support him or her with finding the way in the society. The regular context is more beneficial to others because it offers more opportunities to meet and develop ties with a variety of Dutch neighbours**.** Important in this respect is that housing associations allocate dwellings to refugees in different areas in the city; a concentration of refugees is ideally prevented in the regular context. By offering both types of contexts instead of only a regular context, cities and housing associations are also better equipped to house larger numbers of refugees. Allocating social housing to refugees when waiting lists are large necessarily creates tensions. Providing temporary extra accommodation is an efficient and effective way to provide affordable housing, for refugees, but also for others like (former) students and homeless people, that are in urgent need of finding a place to live.

It should be taken into account that the research has some limitations. Firstly, the findings are solely based on the experiences of refugees themselves. It would have been interesting to involve Dutch neighbours, in order to ask them how they think about their refugee neighbours. Secondly, the research does not provide much information about the encounters and interaction among single refugee households with neighbours in the regular context. Only four singles in this context participated. Three of them did not develop any tie with a neighbour.

Some recommendations for further research can be mentioned, given these limitations. Future studies should involve Dutch neighbours. How do they really think about their refugee neighbours? What motivations can be found for the development of or lack of a tie with refugee neighbours? And how important are the refugee neighbours to them, in relation to their other neighbours and ties with non-neighbours? Studies that investigate social ties of refugees with neighbours in the regular context, should involve sufficient single households. The following question should be answered: to what extent does the regular context provide single refugee households the opportunity to develop ties with neighbours? Another theme that seems interesting to investigate is the role of physical characteristics of the selected context, such as

collective indoor or outdoor spaces. The research does not provide insight into the role of the current collective indoor space in the selected context. Refugees might not use this space; none of the interviewees mentioned anything about the space. Studies should shed light on the question whether refugees and other residents use these spaces, and for what kind of purposes. More specifically, it seems interesting to question: could these collective spaces facilitate interaction between refugees and especially Dutch neighbours?

In short, both contexts seem to have its own advantages, looking at what kind of neighbours can be met. When offering both types of contexts, cities and housing associations are better able to house larger numbers of refugees and other specific groups, such as (former) students and persons that were homeless previously, that are in urgent need of finding a place to live. Besides, building accommodation for refugees and other selected residents has the advantage that it does not add to the waiting list for the regular, affordable housing. This seems important in light of the high demand for social housing these days.

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Appendix 1: Node structure

Legend

Sources (column)	Number of interviews in which text fragments are appointed to this node
References (column)	Number of text fragments appointed to this node
Neighbour encounters	Main node consisting of several subnodes
Dutch learning important	Main node not used
Ties	Sub node consisting of several sub-subnodes
r-do not prefer anyone	Node created for the Regular context
s-it's a feeling	Node created for the Selected context

Complete overview of main nodes

	Name	Sources	References
2	Dutch learning important	9	21
7	Like this tie the most	26	50
24	Meeting places	26	145
65	Neighbour encounters	26	270
153	Non-neighbour ties	26	369
246	Norms	7	11
249	Opinion about house	24	28
257	Opinion about neighbourhood	26	58
270	Personal characteristics	26	152

Like this tie the most

	Name	Sources	References
7	Like this tie the most	26	50
8	r-do not prefer anyone	5	6
9	r-it's a feeling	2	4
10	r-like to practice Dutch with them	1	1
11	r-neighbour and not-neighbour	1	1
12	r-not neighbour	10	13
13	r-they help me	3	3
14	r-unknown	3	3
15	r-we have same culture	2	2
16	r-we understand	2	2
17	s-do not prefer anyone	1	1
18	s-it's a feeling	2	3
19	s-like to practice Dutch with them	1	1
20	s-neighbour	1	1
21	s-not neighbour	5	6
22	s-same culture	1	1
23	s-they help me	2	2
24	Meeting places	26	145

Neighbour encounters

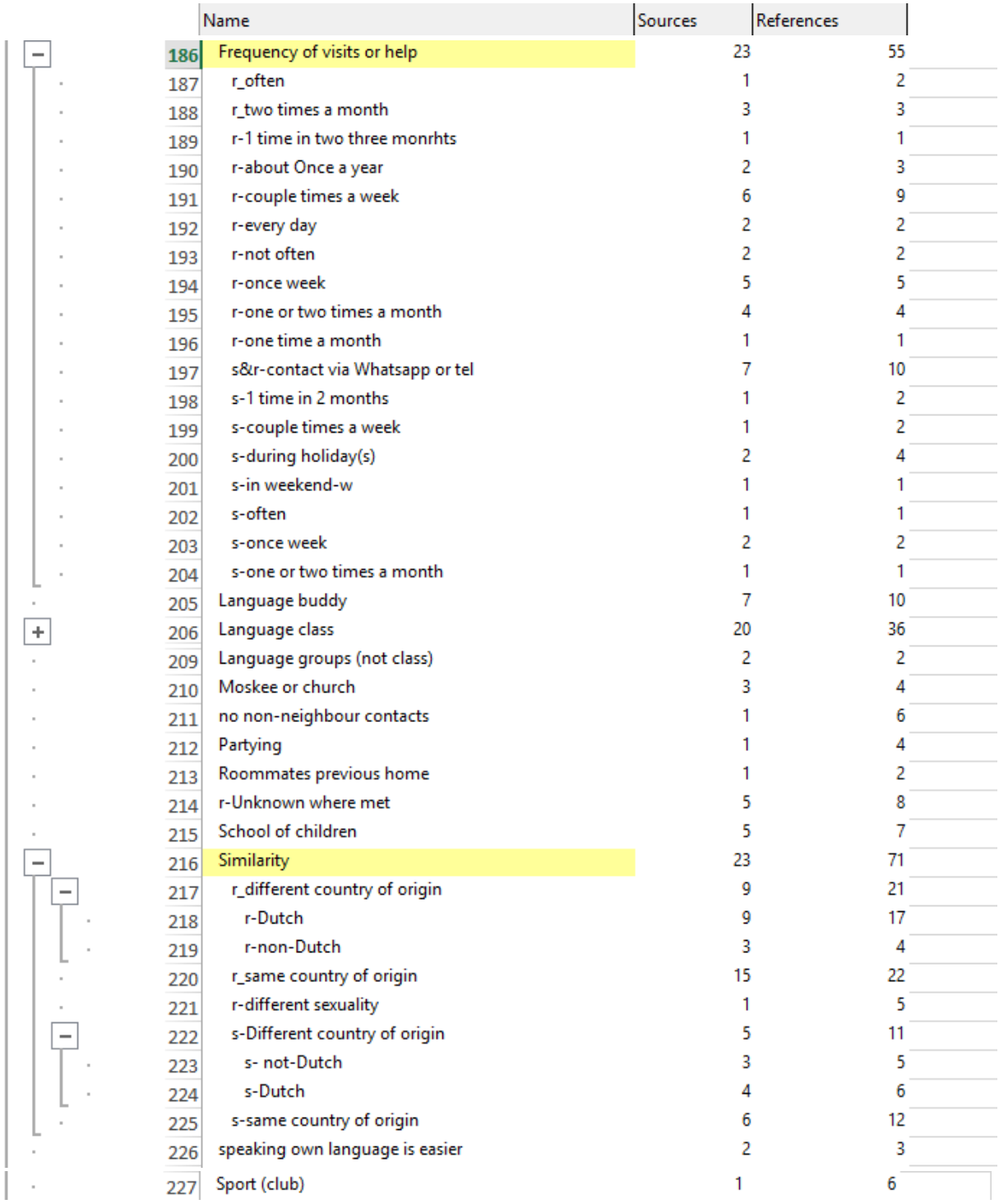
	Name	Sources	References
65	**Neighbour encounters**	26	270
66	by chance	4	6
67	invitation	1	1
68	just hi	25	53
69	'just hi' nice neighbours	5	5
70	r-attitude to foreigner	2	3
71	Ties	26	201
72	(Practical) support	13	30
73	r_receiving help job in house	2	3
74	r-going to appointment together	1	1
75	r-helping neighbour job in house	1	2
76	r-helping neighbour with contact neighbourhood	1	2
77	r-lending car to other	1	1
78	r-receive groceries	1	1
79	r-receiving help with Dutch(letters)	1	1
80	r-supporting with illness	1	1
81	s-advice about shops	2	2
82	s-help neighbour with buying stuff internet	1	1
83	s-i help neighbour post	1	1
84	s-i help neighbour with language	1	1
85	s-i helping with internet	2	2
86	s-lending item to neighbour	2	2
87	s-receicing help job in house	2	2
88	s-receive advice Dutch webpages	1	1
89	s-receive groceries	1	1
90	s-receive help when buying stuff from internet	1	1
91	s-receiving help from neighbour(s)	1	1
92	s-receiving help with Dutch letters	1	2
93	Companionship	15	34
94	r having dinner	2	2
95	r_drinking coffee	4	5
96	r_going walk	2	2
97	r-chatting	4	4
98	r-visit	5	6
99	s-chatting together	5	5
100	s-chillen	1	1
101	s-drinking coffee	2	4
102	s-going together city centre	2	2
103	s-visit	3	3

104	Feeling	13	18
105	r-I like my neighbours	2	3
106	r-neighbour mentioned friend	5	6
107	r-neighbour nice	2	3
108	s-he is good person	1	1
109	S-like a sister	1	1
110	s-neighbour is mentioned as friend	3	3
111	s-trust	1	1
112	Frequency interaction	16	28
113	r_1 or 2 times per month street	1	1
114	r_couple times week	2	2
115	r-meet outside	1	3
116	r-not often-b	1	1
117	r-Ramadan	1	1
118	r-sometimes weekend	1	1
119	r-two or three times	1	1
120	r-unknown	4	8
121	s-1 or 2 time per month	2	2
122	s-2 or 3 times a month	1	1
123	s-contact via Whatsapp	1	1
124	s-every week	1	2
125	s-not often	1	1
126	s-sometime outside	1	1
127	s-unknown	2	2
128	neighbour is busy	6	9
129	Number of ties	26	43
130	r-one neighbour	3	4
131	r-three neighbours	1	2
132	r-two neighbours	3	5
133	r-zero neighbours	10	15
134	s-five neighbours	1	1
135	s-one neighbour	3	3
136	s-three neighbours	1	1
137	s-two neighbours	2	4
138	uknown number-r	2	8
139	Similarity	16	35
140	Country of origin of neighbour	16	27
141	r same country of origin	4	6
142	r_different country	7	9
143	r_Dutch	6	6
144	r_not Dutch	2	3
145	s-different country	6	11
146	s-Dutch	2	2
147	s-Not dutch	5	9
148	s-same country of origin	1	1
149	r-Similar household type	4	6
150	r-Similart sexuality	1	1
151	r-Unsimilar sexuality	1	1
152	speaking English neighbour	3	4

Non-neighbour ties

This node includes text fragments linked to non-neighbour ties that are liked the most, and text fragments linked to non-neighbour ties that were not mentioned as 'liked the most'.

	Name	Sources	References
153	**Non-neighbour ties**	26	369
154	Asylum centre	11	22
155	At the street	1	1
156	Buddy (more general)	1	2
157	Buying products second hand	1	1
158	Cafe	1	4
159	Class labour market	1	1
160	Colleagues	7	14
161	companionship	1	1
162	r_drinking coffee	5	7
163	r_going city centre	5	5
164	r_going park	1	1
165	r_just visit	7	8
166	r_sharing problems	1	1
167	r_shopping	3	5
168	r_talking	5	6
169	r-going to lake	2	2
170	r-having dinner	7	7
171	s-biljart	1	1
172	s-drinking coffe	1	1
173	s-going to beach	1	1
174	s-going to city centre	2	4
175	s-having dinner	2	4
176	s-just visit	1	1
177	s-playing football with friends	1	2
178	s-smoking together	1	1
179	talking	1	1
180	to other cities	1	1
181	Culture klass	6	8
182	Discussion group	1	2
183	Facebook	1	2
184	Family (part of household)	14	16
185	Family or via family (not part of household) Leiden	7	18



	Name	Sources	References
186	Frequency of visits or help	23	55
187	r_often	1	2
188	r_two times a month	3	3
189	r-1 time in two three monrhts	1	1
190	r-about Once a year	2	3
191	r-couple times a week	6	9
192	r-every day	2	2
193	r-not often	2	2
194	r-once week	5	5
195	r-one or two times a month	4	4
196	r-one time a month	1	1
197	s&r-contact via Whatsapp or tel	7	10
198	s-1 time in 2 months	1	2
199	s-couple times a week	1	2
200	s-during holiday(s)	2	4
201	s-in weekend-w	1	1
202	s-often	1	1
203	s-once week	2	2
204	s-one or two times a month	1	1
205	Language buddy	7	10
206	Language class	20	36
209	Language groups (not class)	2	2
210	Moskee or church	3	4
211	no non-neighbour contacts	1	6
212	Partying	1	4
213	Roommates previous home	1	2
214	r-Unknown where met	5	8
215	School of children	5	7
216	Similarity	23	71
217	r_different country of origin	9	21
218	r-Dutch	9	17
219	r-non-Dutch	3	4
220	r_same country of origin	15	22
221	r-different sexuality	1	5
222	s-Different country of origin	5	11
223	s- not-Dutch	3	5
224	s-Dutch	4	6
225	s-same country of origin	6	12
226	speaking own language is easier	2	3
227	Sport (club)	1	6

	Name	Sources	References
228	Support of non-neighbour relations	22	49
229	r_i help non-neighbour repairing products	1	1
230	r_help resume or job	4	4
231	r_support job house	3	3
232	r-ask advice shops	2	3
233	r-contact babysits	1	2
234	r-going to appointment together	4	4
235	r-help from Vluchtelingenwerk	3	3
236	r-help others to navigate society	1	2
237	r-receive advice dr license	1	2
238	r-receive help administrative issues	2	2
239	r-receive help Dutch letters	8	9
240	r-receive help when ill	1	1
241	s-help from Vluchtelingenwerk	5	9
242	s-receive help Dutch letters	1	2
243	Vluchtelingenwerk	9	13

Norms

	Name	Sources	References
246	**Norms**	7	11
247	Behavioral norms neighbour	5	8
248	Cultural norms	2	3

Opinion about the neighbourhood

	Name	Sources	References
257	**Opinion about neighbourhood**	26	58
258	r- do not know many neighbours	2	2
259	r_neighborhood nice	11	14
260	r_people nice	13	22
261	r_want to stay this area	2	2
262	r-location good but want move	1	2
263	r-unknown opinion people	1	1
264	s-neighbourhood is ok	2	3
265	s-no amenities nearby	1	3
266	s-not many people	2	2
267	s-people nice	4	4
268	s-uknown opinion people	1	1
269	s-unsafe beginning of residence	1	2

Personal characteristics

Age and country of origin of all respondents are available in the database of housing association Portaal. For that reason, these characteristics were not touched upon in each interview.

	Name	Sources	References
270	**Personal characteristics**	26	152
271	Age	20	20
272	at home a lot yes	4	7
273	Country of origin	22	24
274	Family household	14	18
275	length of residence	26	30
276	more than 1 year to nearly 3 years	16	18
277	nearly one year	7	7
278	some months this address	3	5
279	not at home a lot	1	1
280	Pair (household)	1	2
281	Personality	7	8
282	r-i am busy	7	10
283	s-i am busy	3	3
284	Single household type	10	14
285	Speak Dutch (interviewed in Dutch)	12	14

End of the Appendix