

Fact book

THE POSITION OF MUSLIMS
IN THE NETHERLANDS:
FACTS AND FIGURES

2008



About FORUM

The Institute for Multicultural Development FORUM is the largest non-governmental actor in the field of integration policy in the Netherlands. The institute focuses on developments and issues relating to the Dutch multicultural society in general, and to the integration of (ethnic) minorities in particular. FORUM is a national centre of expertise that stands for a society in which people from various communities live together as fully recognised citizens.

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THE POSITION OF MUSLIMS IN THE NETHERLANDS: FACTS AND FIGURES

FORUM, Instituut voor Multiculturele Ontwikkeling

PREFACE

For a couple of years now the position of Muslims in the Netherlands has become subject of a fierce debate, both in the Netherlands and abroad. A lot can be said concerning its characteristics, its causes or the factual and perceived problems that underpin this debate. We note that the debate concerning Muslims has mostly been based on image-forming and perceptions that hardly have a connection – if any – with the actual reality. The created and perceived image does not mirror the actual social situation of Muslims in the Netherlands.

We consider the debate in a democratic society that upholds the rule of law of crucial importance. Yet in order for that debate to remain constructive in the future as well, it is important that the debate leaves room for facts. Unfortunately, we are observing discussions in the media which are rarely put into the perspective of facts.

Geert Wilders' intention to issue the film 'Fitna' currently is subject of furious debate in the Middle East, in which particularly varied positions are taken. In the reports as we have come to know so far, we yet again encounter few facts. We think it is of the utmost importance that those involved, and those interested, are properly informed when it comes to the actual social situation of Muslims in the Netherlands. That is why this factbook has been edited. It is our hope that news redactions that want to set off for the Netherlands or want to draw a report on the situation will take account of the actual figures that are available. In doing so we hope to bring the public perception concerning the Netherlands and Dutch Muslims closer to the actual situation. The debate on the position of Muslims should no longer solely be addressed based on opinion polls or remarks in the media.

The factbook contains data concerning Muslims and immigrants (persons who themselves are born abroad or one of their parents has been) in important sectors of the society. We do not pretend to be all-embracing, but we do think this factbook is an important asset to the current public debate. We are distributing the factbook to representatives of the media in the Middle East and other countries in which the film of Geert Wilders is widely discussed. In addition, many other persons, organisations and institutions have indicated to value the factbook. If people might wish so or deem it necessary, FORUM is always prepared to clarify the factbook.

Sadik Harchaoui
Chairman of the board of directors
FORUM

THE POSITION OF MUSLIMS IN THE NETHERLANDS: FACTS AND FIGURES

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THE NETHERLANDS: A GENERAL OVERVIEW

The Netherlands is located in continental Western Europe. It is bordered by the North Sea in the north and west, by Germany in the east and by Belgium in the south. Amsterdam is the capital and The Hague is the seat of the government. The Netherlands is divided into twelve provinces. The Netherlands, the Dutch Antilles and Aruba collectively form the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

Figure 1,

Map of The Netherlands



(source: Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs)

Brief history

In 1581, several northern provinces in the Netherlands declared themselves independent from the Spanish Crown and formed the Republic of the Seven United Netherlands. In the 17th century the Republic experienced a Golden Age with an increasing economic wealth, a central role in international trade and renowned cultural accomplishments. In 1795, the French conquered the Republic and incorporated it into the French Empire. In 1814 it regained independence under the name United Kingdom of the Netherlands. During the First World War the Netherlands remained neutral, in the Second World War the Netherlands endured a five-year occupation by Germany.

At present the Netherlands is an open and affluent country with strong ties to international cooperations. The Netherlands was one of the founding members of the European Economic Community (predecessor to the European Union) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO). Since 2002 the national currency has been the Euro.

Population

The Netherlands has a population of 16.372.715 (2007). The population density of 394.3 inhabitants per square kilometer is one of the highest in the world. Compared to the rest of Europe, the Dutch population has increased rapidly: 3 million in 1850, 5 million in 1900, 10 million in 1950 and 16 million in 2000.

Economy

The Netherlands is an affluent country with an open economy and a reliance on international trade. Industrial relations are stable, inflation is low and government finance is conservative. The Netherlands is an important transport hub for the rest of Western Europe. Other important economic sectors are those of agriculture, foods and beverages, chemicals and financial services.

Government and administration

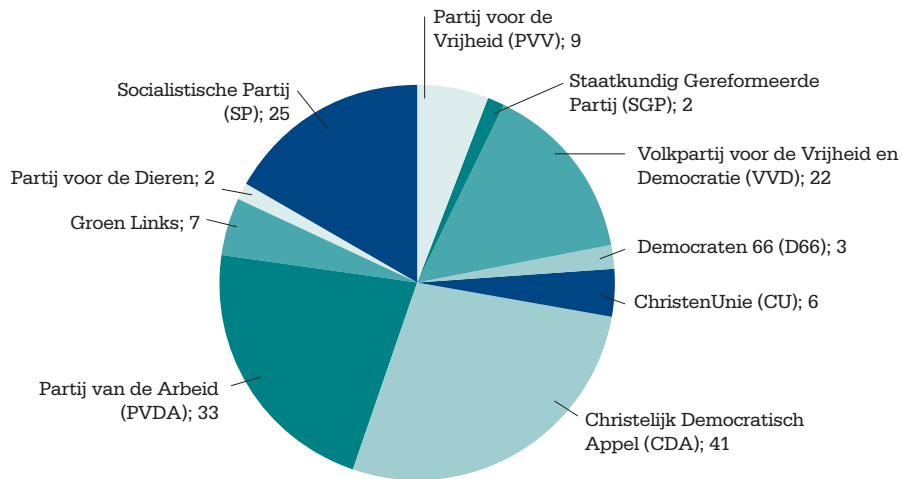
The Netherlands is a constitutional monarchy and parliamentary democracy. The Cabinet forms the executive branch of government and is formed by the political parties which make up the Second Chamber of Parliament. As no single political party has ever held a majority, it is always necessary to form a coalition government. The Cabinet consists of ministers and state secretaries and is headed by the Prime Minister.

The current Prime Minister is Jan-Peter Balkenende (cabinet Balkenende IV), who leads a coalition government consisting of the Christian Democratic Party, the Labour Party and the Christian Union.

The States-General forms the legislative branch of government and consists of two Chambers: the First Chamber with 75 seats and the second Chamber with 150 seats. The members of the Second Chamber are elected in direct elections that are held at least every four years. The members of the First Chamber are elected by provincial assemblies, which in turn are elected by direct election every four years.

Figure 2,

Distribution of seats in the Second Chamber



(Source: www.parlement.com)

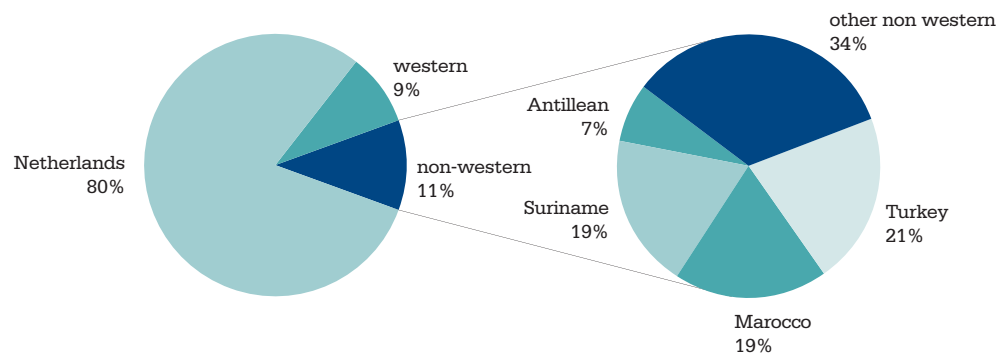
The Monarch, at present Queen Beatrix, is the head of government. She does not wield any formal government powers and her role is predominantly ceremonial. Queen Beatrix' eldest son, Willem-Alexander, Prince of Orange is the heir apparent to the throne. He is married to Princess Máxima.

THE NUMBER OF ETHNIC MINORITIES IN THE NETHERLANDS

Currently the Netherlands has a population of 16.4 million. The Netherlands is renowned for its open and tolerant society with ample opportunities for immigrants. At present 1.7 million people in the Netherlands originate from or have parents from non-Western countries. Turks, Moroccans, Surinamese and Antilleans/Arubans make up nearly two-thirds of these non-Western ethnic minorities.

Figure 3,

Number of non-Western ethnic minorities in the Netherlands



(Source: CBS 2008)

The four major immigrant groups have lived in the Netherlands for decades:

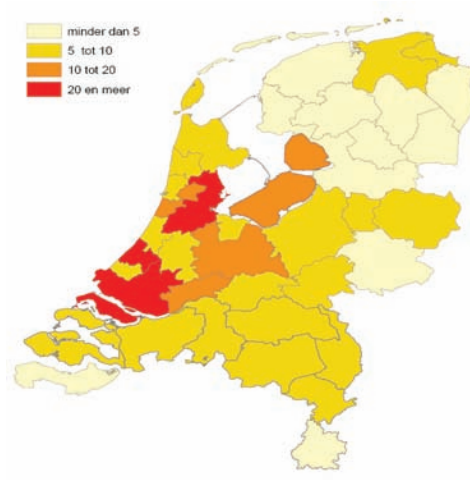
- Turks and Moroccans came to the Netherlands in the 1960's and 1970's as guest workers in Dutch industries. In the Netherlands they started their own families or brought in relatives or marriage partners from their respective countries of origin;
- Suriname is a former colony of the Netherlands which declared its independence in 1975. Many Surinamese emigrated to the Netherlands and there are still strong cultural ties between both countries;
- The Dutch Antilles and Aruba are still part of the Royal Kingdom of the Netherlands, but have a large degree of administrative freedom. There are strong cultural ties between these regions and the Netherlands.

Currently, most non-Western immigrants coming to the Netherlands are political refugees. Important countries of origin are Iraq, Somalia, Afghanistan and Iran. Another important source of immigration is formed by family reunification or marriage migration.

Non-Western ethnic minorities have mainly settled in the four largest Dutch cities: Amsterdam, The Hague, Rotterdam and Utrecht. One out of three inhabitants in Amsterdam, Rotterdam and The Hague is a member of a non-Western ethnic minority. In Amsterdam and Rotterdam respectively 55% and 54% of the youth are members of a non-Western ethnic minority. At the other end of the scale, smaller villages in the countryside hardly have any non-Western ethnic minorities.

Figure 4,

Regional distribution of non-Western ethnic minorities



(Source: SCP Annual Report Integration 2007)

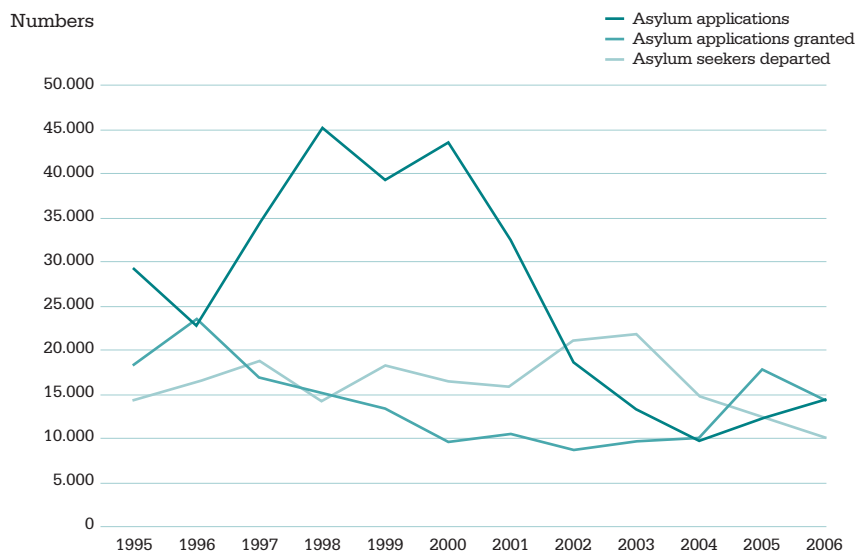
THE NUMBER OF ASYLUM SEEKERS IN THE NETHERLANDS

Every year approximately 10,000 – 15,000 persons apply for political asylum in the Netherlands. The major trends regarding the number of applicants are:

- In the first half of the 1990's there was a large increase in the number of applicants due to the fall of the Berlin Wall and the war in former Yugoslavia.
- After 1996 the number of applicants increased due to civil unrest in Afghanistan and Iraq and the war in Kosovo.
- After 2001 the number of applicants dropped due to the declining number of applicants from Afghanistan and former Yugoslavia.
- In 2001 a new Immigration Law was introduced which aimed to reduce the processing time for an individual asylum procedure and limit the number of opportunities to appeal decisions.

Figure 5,

Number of asylum seekers and grants of asylum



(Source: CBS 2008)

In 2007 the largest refugee groups were from Iraq, Somalia and other countries in Africa (such as Sierra Leone, Sudan and Liberia).

Table 1,

Top 10 countries of origin for refugees to the Netherlands

	2001		2007
Angola	4.110	Iraq	2.450
Other African countries	3.760	Somalia	2.010
Afghanistan	3.630	Other African countries	1.760
Sierra Leone	2.410	Afghanistan	520
Other European countries	2.530	Unknown country of origin	490
Iran	1.520	Iran	360
Guinea	1.470	Other Asian countries	340
Turkey	1.400	China	270
Irak	1.330	Other European countries	260
Somalia	1.100	Guinea	260
Other countries	9.330	Other countries	1.680
Total	32.590	Total	9.760

(Source: CBS 2008)

INTEGRATION OF ETHNIC MINORITIES IN THE NETHERLANDS

Immigrants who live in the Netherlands are required to learn the Dutch language and integrate into Dutch society by following a Dutch integration course and by successfully completing a Dutch integration exam. This requirement is a result of a law implemented in 2007 with the aim to change the non-binding and non-committing nature of previous policies. The requirements are specifically aimed at speeding up the integration of non-Western immigrants.

Persons who already live in the Netherlands (called “Oudkomers”) are required to submit to the Dutch Integration Policy when they:

- do not hold a Dutch passport;
- are between the ages of 16 and 65 years;
- have settled in the Netherlands before January 1st 2007;
- have lived less than eight years in the Netherlands while being legally required to attend school;
- cannot show diplomas or certificates which show that they are proficient in the Dutch language and are acquainted with Dutch society.

An estimated 250,000 persons fall within the outlined criteria.

Persons who wish to emigrate to the Netherlands, who wish to marry a Dutch national or who want to be united with family (called “Nieuwkomers”), are also required to complete an Integration course before they are allowed to settle in the Netherlands.

The new Dutch Integration Policy is partially aimed at increasing Dutch language proficiency. Successful completion of the course should enable the immigrant to participate in a small conversation in a familiar setting and to understand radio and television news broadcasts. In addition, the immigrant must be able to read brief, unambiguous texts and to write small notes. The integration course also contains modules on Dutch society, norms and values.

A novel element in the integration courses is the inclusion of tracks which aim to teach work-related skills and improve access to the labour market. The policy goal is that by 2011, 80% of all integration courses will contain these work-related tracks.

The government's aim is that 60,000 integration courses are completed every year from 2008 onwards. Most participants are likely to be female: in some municipalities this percentage will be as high as 80%.

MUSLIMS IN EUROPE

In Europe, Islam is the second largest religion after Christianity. In large parts of the Balkans and Eastern Europe Muslims have been living for centuries. In Western Europe, the majority of Muslims are migrants and their offspring from predominantly Muslim countries. These migrants were either recruited in the 1960s and 1970s as guest workers from the Mediterranean (Turkey and Morocco) or were part of the large post-colonial migration waves (i.e. Pakistan, Algeria and Surinam).

Following family reunifications, large Muslim communities started to emerge from the second half of the 1970's onwards. In the 1980's their descendants (the second generation of Muslim youth raised in Western Europe) entered the education system and the labour market.

At present new inflows of Muslims to Western Europe are predominantly political asylum seekers from Muslim countries like Iraq or Afghanistan.

The share of Muslims in the population of Western European countries is highest in France, followed by The Netherlands, Denmark, Switzerland and Germany.

Table 2,

Share of Muslims in various Western European countries

France	The Netherlands	Denmark	Switzerland	Belgium	Germany	United Kingdom	Spain	Italy
6,4%-9,6%	5,8%	2,8%-5,0%	4,2%	3,8%-4,0%	3,6%-4,2%	2,8%	0,9%-2,3%	1,4%

(Source: National Statistical Bureau)

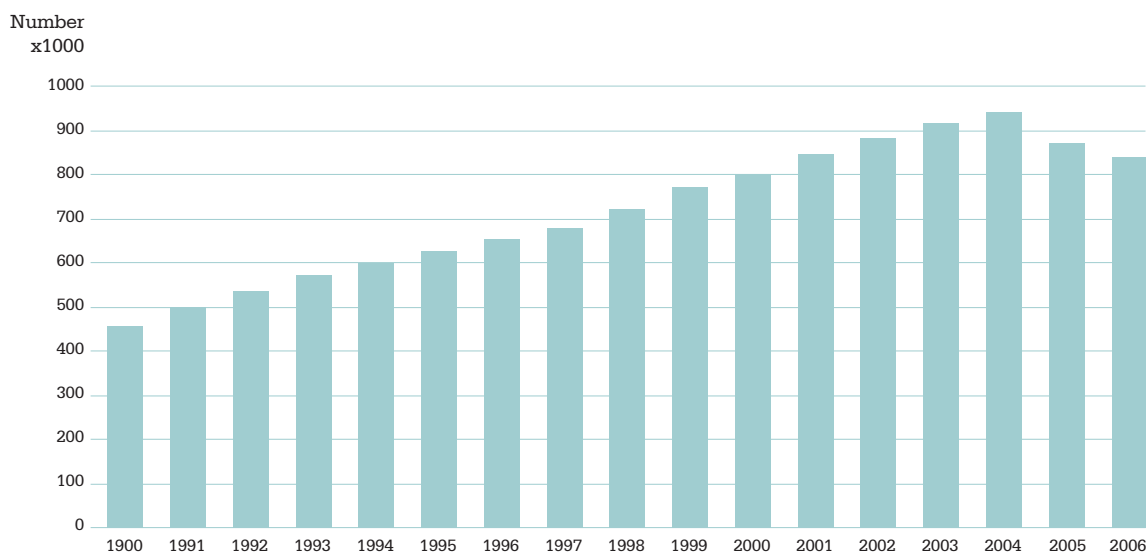
Note: these figures are compiled from the different national statistical agencies. As no country has statistics of the religious faiths adhered by their citizens, these figures are mostly estimates based on samples.

THE NUMBER OF MUSLIMS IN THE NETHERLANDS

After France, the Netherlands has the highest percentage of Muslims within its borders. Long-term research by the Dutch Statistical Bureau puts the figure at 944.000 Muslims in 2004. More recent research has revised this figure downwards to 877.000 in 2005 and 837.000 in 2006.

Figure 6,

Number of Muslims in the Netherlands



(Source: CBS 2006¹)

Islam plays a very important part for people of Turkish and Moroccan descent in the Netherlands: 95% of Turks and 96% of Moroccans see themselves as Muslims. In comparison: only 50% of all native Dutch call themselves religious. Islam equally plays an important role in the Afghan, Iraqi and Somali communities. Native Dutch are almost never Muslim: their number is estimated to be 6,000.

Table 3,

Country of origin of Muslims in the Netherlands

	1998	2001	2004	2007
Afghanistan	11	26	36	31
Iraq	22	37	42	27
Iran	20	24	28	12
Marocco	236	264	296	264
Somalia	26	30	25	20
Surinam	29	30	32	34
Turkey	281	299	328	323
Other	82	96	116	139
Total	707	806	903	850

(Source: CBS 2007 & SCP Annual Report Integration 2007)

¹ After 2007 CBS, Dutch central office for statistical research, adjusted the method by which it calculated the number of Muslims in the Netherlands. This can explain the decrease in the estimated number of Muslims in the Netherlands between 2004 and 2007.

Within these ethnic groups further socio-political, cultural and religious subdivisions can be discerned. The majority of Turks in the Netherlands are Sunni Muslim, but a minority of 50.000 or one sixth of all Turks in the Netherlands are Alevis.

Most Moroccans are Sunni Muslims, but amongst particular segments of Moroccan youth 'political Islam' is gaining popularity. These young Moroccans become members of various forms of Salafiyya Islam, which embodies orthodox views and has the aim to restore traditional norms and values which were prevalent during the lifetime of the prophet Muhammad. Parts of the Surinamese-Hindustani Muslim community adhere to the Sunni Islam, while others are Alevis, a form of Islam which also attracts a large number of Pakistani and Indian Muslims.

DUTCH PERCEPTION ON ETHNIC MINORITIES AND MUSLIMS

The perceptions of the native Dutch on ethnic minorities are not overly positive. There is a feeling among the average Dutchman that immigrants should better integrate into Dutch society. Some key figures which support this claim are:

- 80% of the native Dutch have a positive attitude towards political asylum seekers. With 40% in favour, the Dutch are far less keen on immigration for economic reasons or due to marriage;
- 95% of the native Dutch are in favour of immigrants learning to speak and understand Dutch. This overwhelming percentage has been stable since the mid-1990's;
- 66% of the native Dutch support the opinion that immigrants should not adhere to their own customs and beliefs, while more than half thinks that immigrants are not integrated sufficiently in Dutch society. Especially the lower educated native Dutch are pessimistic about the integration of immigrants;
- approximately half of the native Dutch think that there are too many immigrants living in the Netherlands. Here too, the lower educated Dutch are more pessimistic.

The perception of the native Dutch on Muslims is – generally speaking – quite negative. Events like the terrorist attacks by Muslim fundamentalists in New York, Madrid and London and the assassination of Dutch filmmaker Theo van Gogh are contributing factors.

Table 4,

Perceptions of native Dutch adults on Muslims in 1998, 2004 and 2006

Percentages indicate the share of people who agree with a statement

	1998	2004	2006
Muslims can contribute greatly to Dutch culture	45	34	36
Most Muslims in the Netherlands respect the culture and customs of others	51	36	35
The Western European and the Muslim way of life are incompatible	53	50	52
Muslim men are domineering towards their women	89	91	92
Muslims in the Netherlands raise their children in a authoritarian manner	76	81	81

(Source: SCP Annual Report Integration 2007)

A majority of Turks (60%) and Moroccans (70%) thinks that the native Dutch perceive Islam too negatively.

A large majority of the population (native Dutch and ethnic minorities) thinks that tensions between different groups have increased.

Fear of potential violence either perpetrated by Muslim fundamentalists or directed at Muslims is prevalent amongst all groups in Dutch society. Fifty-five percent of Surinamese, Antilleans and native Dutch and forty-three percent of Turks and Moroccans fear violence committed by Muslim fundamentalists.

RELIGIOUS FREEDOM IN THE NETHERLANDS

Article 6 of the Dutch Constitution grants all Dutch citizens the right to practice their religion or faith. Muslims enjoy this right just like everybody else.

The most visible practice of Islamic faith is the number of mosques; in 2003 there were a total of 453 registered mosques in the Netherlands.²

Table 5,

Number of mosques in the Netherlands 2003

Turkish	Diyanet	151	
	Milli Gorus	42	245
	Suleymanli's	38	
	Other Turkish mosques	14	
Moroccan	Union of Moroccan mosques in the Netherlands	90	
	Union of Moroccan mosques in Amsterdam	20	150
	Other Moroccan mosques	40	
Surinamese	World Islamic Mission	25	
	Ahmadiyya	4	33
	Other Surinamese mosques	4	
Other mosques			25
Total number of mosques			453

(Source: IHSAN)

In addition, there are facilities in Dutch society to accommodate Islamic beliefs and customs like the Ramadan or the Sacrifice Feast.

Table 6,

Adherence of Muslims, from the age of 15, to Muslim traditions and customs

	Turken	Marokkanen
Prayer five times a day	29%	69%
Fasting every day of the Ramadan	66%	90%
Eating Halal food every day	83%	89%

(Source: SCP Annual Report Integration 2007)

There is a debate in the Netherlands as to whether existing Western European basic rights can be upheld in a multicultural society. Basic rights include the right to free speech, religious freedom, laws against discrimination based on race, sex, sexual orientation and other grounds and the separation of church and state.

The Dutch government holds the position that derogatory or insulting remarks about one's faith or religion, honour killings or articles of clothing which express one's religious identity, like a head scarf or 'niqaab', touch the pluriform society. The Dutch government has concluded³ that existing laws or reported judicial opinions can help to reconcile conflicting rights. It is, however, necessary that all different groups within Dutch society are aware of the rules, laws and values of a democracy.

In this perspective one is permitted to show one's faith or religion by means of articles of clothing or headdresses. Yet wearing face-obscuring clothing is not permitted when one is working in a public capacity, or when public safety is likely to be threatened. Consequently, on 8 February 2008 the government decided to legally ban face-concealing clothing from government offices, public schools and the civil service.

² IHSAN

³ Ministry of Interior. nota *Grondrechten in een Pluriforme Samenleving*. 2004

PARTICIPATION OF MUSLIMS IN DUTCH SOCIETY

Ethnic minorities differ greatly in the extent to which they identify themselves as being members of Dutch society or members of their own ethnic group. Fifty-eight percent of the Turks in the Netherlands identify themselves as Turks and only 12% of them would regard themselves as being part of Dutch society. Moroccans are more inclined to identify themselves as both Moroccan and Dutch.

In comparison, Surinamese and Antilleans are far more inclined to regard themselves in whole or in part as Dutch. This direct comparison is, however, not entirely fair. Most Surinamese can speak Dutch and have had some Dutch influence in their upbringing due to old colonial ties. The Antilles are a distinct region of the Kingdom of the Netherlands and the Antilleans are Dutch nationals in a legal sense.

Table 7,

Identification of ethnic minorities with their own group and/or with native Dutch

	Feels part of his own ethnic group	Feels part of ethnic group and Dutch society	Feels part of Dutch society
Turks	58%	30%	12%
Moroccans	46%	40%	14%
Surinamese	20%	40%	39%
Antilleans	35%	32%	33%

(Source: SCP Annual Report Integration 2007)

The extent to which Turks and Moroccans identify themselves with their own ethnic group is dependent on age, country of birth and education level. Older, less educated Turks and Moroccans who were born in Turkey and Morocco are far more likely to identify themselves as Turkish or Moroccan. This pattern is not the same in the case of Surinamese or Antillean people

Table 8,

Share of ethnic minorities who identify themselves with their own group

	Turks	Moroccans	Surinamese	Antilleans
Total	58%	46%	20%	35%
Males	55%	46%	21%	34%
Females	61%	47%	20%	37%
15-24 year	45%	35%	20%	35%
25-44 year	57%	44%	19%	36%
45-64 year	73%	63%	21%	33%
> 65 year	85%	65%	28%	34%
First generation	66%	50%	24%	42%
Second generation	36%	33%	11%	9%
Primary school education	72%	60%	19%	42%
Prevocational education	56%	36%	23%	38%
Vocational education	48%	37%	22%	31%
Higher or university education	34%	37%	16%	35%

(Source: SCP Annual Report Integration 2007)

Social interactions between ethnic minorities and native Dutch

In general, Turks are more likely to have frequent social interactions with members of their own group than with the native Dutch. In their spare time two-thirds of all Turks have more contact with other Turks and one-third never has interactions with Dutchmen.

Moroccans are more inclined to interact with native Dutch: approximately 20% of Moroccans mainly interact with native Dutch in their spare time, while 30% of Moroccans have a circle of Moroccan and Dutch friends and acquaintances.

Young Turks and Moroccans are more inclined to have frequent interactions with the native Dutch, but a majority still spends more time with their own group than with the Dutch.

MUSLIM ORGANISATIONS

The Netherlands has several organisations that strive to promote the interests of Muslim communities with the Dutch government. The main organisations are listed in this chapter.

The Dutch Consultation of Ethnic Minorities (Landelijk Overleg Minderheden or LOM)

The LOM is a collective of seven individual organisations that conduct talks with the Dutch government on policies concerning ethnic minorities. The government and the collective of organisations have the right to put topics on the agenda.

Every organisation promotes the interests of the ethnic minority they represent. These organisations are:

- Contact Body of Muslims and the Government (CMO);
- Consultation Organisation for the Chinese (IOC);
- Consultation Organisation for the Turks (IOT);
- Consultation Organisation for the Southern European Communities(Lize);
- Consultation Organisation for Caribbean Dutch (OCaN);
- Surinamese Consultation Organisation (SIO);
- Collective Organisation for Moroccans in The Netherlands (SMN);
- Refugee Organisations the Netherlands (VON).

Contact Body of Muslims and the Government (Contactorgaan Moslims en Overheid – CMO)

The CMO is a national umbrella organisation that is comprised of seven sunni (Turkish, Moroccan and Surinamese) organisations and one shia group (Iraqi). In 2004 the CMO was acknowledged as an official partner of the government. The CMO periodically discusses topics related to Islam and society, integration, et cetera with the minister of Housing and Integration. At this moment the inclusion of youth and women's associations in the CMO is being explored.

Contact Group Islam (Contactgroep Islam CGI)

The CGI is a second Dutch Islamic umbrella organisation that consults with the Dutch government on behalf of the different Muslim communities in the Netherlands. The CGI includes, addition to Sunni movements, several smaller Islamic currents such as the Alevis and the Amhadiyya. In 2005 the CGI was acknowledged as an official partner of the government Consultation is centered on topics concerning faith and social issues.

The Netherlands Muslim Broadcasting Service / The Netherlands Islam Broadcasting Service (Nederlandse Moslim Omroep NMO / Nederlandse Islamitische Omroep NIO)

The Netherlands has two broadcasting services catering to Muslims. These organisations receive government funding and have access to public TV and radio channels. They enjoy editorial independence. On a managerial level NMO and NIO are intended to cooperate closely together. In the future this cooperation could then result in a complete merger.

PARTICIPATION OF MUSLIMS IN DUTCH POLITICS

The participation of ethnic minorities in politics is presented on the national, provincial and municipal level.

The Cabinet

No members of ethnic minorities have been made minister in the period 1982 – 2008. However in the Cabinet of Balkenende I of 2002 the political party 'Lijst Pim Fortuyn' supplied two state secretaries with a non-Western background: Philomena Bijlhout and Khee Liang Phoa. In the current Cabinet Balkenende IV (2007 – present) the political party 'PvdA' supplied two state secretaries with a non-Dutch background: Ahmed Aboutaleb and Nebahat Albayrak.

The Second Chamber

The Second Chamber and the First Chamber form the States-General. The Second Chamber monitors the Cabinet's performance, it can initiate or amend new legislation and it represents the general population. The members of the Second Chamber are elected directly by popular vote.

At present, 8% - 9% of the 150 members in the Second Chamber are of non-Western origin. During the last election in 2006 four members of ethnic minorities garnered enough preferential votes to be voted directly into the Second Chamber: three of them would have joined the Second Chamber anyway. Fatima Koser Kaya of 'Democrats 66' was elected specifically on the basis of the high number of preferential votes she attracted vis-à-vis Dutch candidates. In the course of last year a parliamentarian of Afghan descent has entered the Second Chamber.

Table 9,

Ethnic background of non-Western Second Chamber members

	Turkey	Morocco	Suriname	Antilles	Other	Total
2003	3	2	4	1	3	13
2006	4	3	3	2	0	12

(Source: Instituut voor
Publiek en Politiek
2006)

First Chamber

The First Chamber of the States-General has the authority to accept or reject new legislation, but does not have the right to initiate new legislation or propose amendments. At present 4% of the 75 First Chamber members have a non-Western background.

Provincial Councils

The Netherlands is subdivided into twelve provinces which are administered by a provincial governor. Health care, spatial planning or public transport are administered at this government level. The provincial councils monitor the performance of the governor and the members of this council are elected by popular vote every four years. At present 4.4% of all council members have a non-Western background.

Municipalities

The Netherlands has 443 municipalities that administer the most visible aspects of everyday life. The municipality is governed by a mayor and several aldermen or 'wethouders'. They are monitored by a city council and the council; members are elected by popular vote every four years.

The number of council members with a non-Western background has increased significantly after the last election on March 7th 2006. In comparison to the elections in 2002, the following developments have occurred:

- 302 of the 9500 council seats (3%) are claimed by non-Western council members;
- the number of non-Western council members has risen more than 50%;
- the number of female non-Western council members has doubled;
- a Turkish background is most prevalent amongst the non-Western council members;
- there is hardly any popular support for political parties with an overtly ethnic or Islamic profile - nor among native Dutch, neither among ethnic minorities.

Voting behaviour of non-Western voters

In 1986, the right to vote or to be elected for public office was awarded to non-Western ethnic minorities who did not hold a Dutch nationality. The aim was to improve the integration of minorities in Dutch society, as they had an opportunity to bear responsibility for local government. The municipal council elections of 2006 have shown a large turnout of 69.7% of eligible non-Western voters. This compares favourably with the general turnout of 58.2%.

TURKISH AND MOROCCAN MARRIAGE CANDIDATES

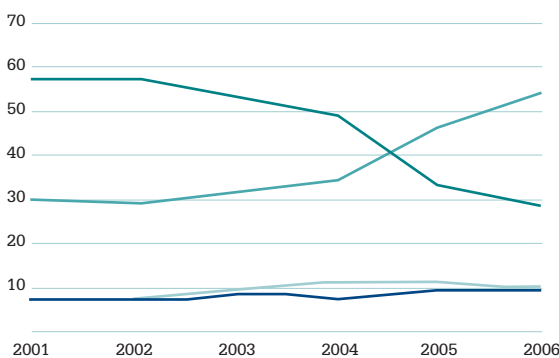
Eighty percent of Turks and Moroccans select a marriage partner with the same ethnic background as themselves. The first generation of Turks and Moroccans tends to look for a suitable partner in their country of origin, while the second generation tends to look for partners in the Netherlands.

As the second generation increases in number, the number of partners who come from Turkey or Morocco is expected to decline. Another factor is that new legislation introduced in 2004 has made it more difficult to bring a partner over. People wishing to bring in a marriage candidate must earn well above minimum wages, both partners must be over 21, waiting periods are longer, administrative processing fees have increased and the period of marriage before the partner can apply for Dutch citizenship has increased. In 2006, a new law was enacted requiring that marriage partners learn the Dutch language and pass the Dutch integration test before they are allowed to travel to the Netherlands.

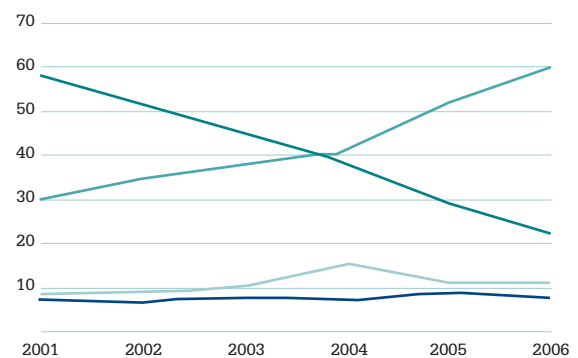
Figure 7,

Turkish and Moroccan marriage candidates

Marrying Turkish men, origin of bride



Marrying Moroccan men, origin of bride



— Native Dutch marriage candidate
 — Turks of Moroccan marriage candidate from the Netherlands
 — Turks of Moroccan marriage candidate from Turkey or Morocco
 — Marriage candidate from other countries than the Netherlands, Turkey or Morocco

— Native Dutch marriage candidate
 — Turks of Moroccan marriage candidate from the Netherlands
 — Turks of Moroccan marriage candidate from Turkey or Morocco
 — Marriage candidate from other countries than the Netherlands, Turkey or Morocco

(Source: CBS 2007)

PARTICIPATION OF MUSLIM WOMEN

Non-Western women are less well-educated than native Dutch women or men with the same ethnic background.

Eighty percent of Turkish women and 90% of Moroccan women over 40 years old have only completed primary education and many of them never learned to read or write. These women belong to the first generation of immigrants who were born in Turkey or Morocco.

Surinamese and Antillean women are better educated than Turkish or Moroccan women, but still do not attain the same level of education as native Dutch women. While the second generation has made great improvements in the education performance, a large percentage of women does not hold minimum qualifications to attain a viable position on the labour market.

Table 10,

Share of different groups who do not have a minimum acceptable qualification

(Source: SCP, Emancipatie in estafette: De positie van vrouwen uit etnische minderheden, 2004)

Turkish and Moroccan women	Turkish and Moroccan men	Native Dutch women	Native Dutch men
67%	60%	20%	24%

One of the consequences of the low level of education of non-Western women is their handicap in learning the Dutch language in comparison to non-Western men. An estimated one-third of the first generation is functionally illiterate (neither being able to read nor write) and a large share of this group is female. The PaVEM commission on the emancipation has estimated that in 2004 roughly 240.000 first generation females severely lack Dutch language skills.

Another consequence of the low level of education of the women is their reduced position on the labour market. 38% of non-Western women participate on the labour market compared to 56% of native Dutch women. Here there are large differences between different ethnic groups. Surinamese women compare favourably to Dutch women, while the participation of Iraqi, Somali and Afghan women is very low.

Table 11,

Participation on the labour market of non-Western women

(Source: SCP, Sociale atlas van vrouwen uit etnische minderheden, 2006)

Surinamese women	56%
Iraqi, Somali and Afghan women	10-15%
Moroccan women	27%
Turkish women	31%

Factors which hinder non-Western women in participating on the labour market are:

- their lower level of education;
- more traditional attitudes towards the role of women in the family;
- the tendency of non-Western women to have children at an earlier age than native Dutch women;
- the tendency of non-Western families to have more members;
- biases and discrimination against non-Western women in the workplace.

When non-Western women get a degree in secondary education, they are more likely than native Dutch women to continue their education and to choose the highest attainable level, based on their diploma. The position of women in higher education has improved considerably. In addition, non-Western women tend to choose less gender-specific studies than native Dutch women and they tend to favour studies that are in demand on the labour market.

ISLAMIC EDUCATION

All religions in the Netherlands, including Islam, have the right to start up faith-based primary and secondary schools. This right is based on Article 23 of the Dutch Constitution. Apart from the regular curriculum, Islamic schools have the right to devote attention to the Turkish or Moroccan language and culture or religious education. Islamic schools have considerable leeway in maintaining specific cultural rules and norms, like for instance separate physical education classes for boys and girls.

The central government funds the Islamic schools, but does uphold standards on the educational quality of the regular curriculum. Teachers must be qualified and students are required to pass minimum aptitude tests. Schools are also required to teach civic duty and improve social cohesion.

At present there are 40 Islamic primary schools and 2 Islamic secondary schools. The primary schools have roughly 7.500 students.

In recent years a controversy has spread about mismanagement in several Islamic schools. The Department of Education has found cases of fraud in Islamic schools in Amsterdam, Rotterdam and Eindhoven. In these cases the fraud centered around the misuse of government funds and lacking education standards and not on the practicing of the Islamic identity or faith.

There has also been an increasing debate about the need for Islamic education. Opponents argue that Islamic schools hinder the integration of Muslim children and promote segregation.

The last two years several negative stories have been reported in the media about Islamic primary and secondary schools. It is assumed that this has led to a decline in the number of students in the school year 2006-2007.⁴

EDUCATION PERFORMANCE OF TURKISH AND MOROCCAN YOUTH

Turkish and Moroccan children start their educational careers with a deficiency in language and mathematics. In the last ten years their performance level in the final year of primary education has improved tremendously. In 2004/2005 the mathematics skills of Turkish and Moroccan pupils were nearly on the same level as those of the Surinamese and native Dutch pupils with parents with a lower level of education. Language skills are still lacking compared to the native Dutch or Surinamese, and Turkish pupils are particularly vulnerable

Table 12,

Education performance of children in the final year of primary education

	Language		Mathematics	
	1994/1995	2004/2005	1994/1995	2004/2005
Turks	36,4	40,3	42,8	46,1
Moroccans	38,8	42,8	42,5	45,7
Surinamese	42,1	44,4	42,6	45,4
Antilleans	40,9	41,9	41,5	41,5
Native Dutch – lower educated parents	48,1	47,1	47,7	46,3
Native Dutch – higher educated parents	53,4	52,5	52,8	51,8

(Source: SCP, Annual Report Integration 2007)

This lack of language skills will cause Turkish and Moroccan pupils and other non-Western pupils to enter into lower forms of education.

An important bottleneck for non-Western students is the high degree of dropouts from vocational training. These dropouts do not hold a valid educational qualification and will be at a severe disadvantage on the labour market.

Table 13,

Dropout rates for different ethnic groups in secondary education and vocational education

	Dropout rate from secondary education	Dropout rate from vocational training
Turks	3%	15%
Moroccans	2%	15%
Surinamese	3%	16%
Antilleans	4%	16%
Other non-Western	3%	17%
Native Dutch	2%	10%

(Source: SCP Annual Report Integration 2007)

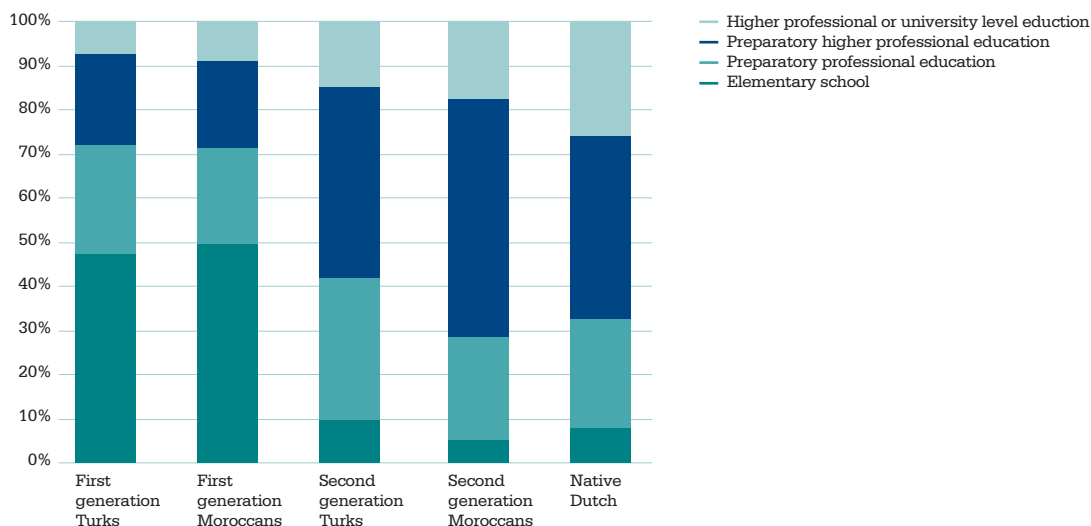
EDUCATION LEVEL OF TURKS AND MOROCCANS IN THE NETHERLANDS

On average, Turks and Moroccans have a lower level of education than the native Dutch. For first generation immigrants this can be explained by the fact that they were recruited as low-skilled manual labourers and almost never had any follow-up education in the Netherlands.

The education level of second generation Turks and Moroccans has improved considerably. Still, members of this generation are less likely to proceed to higher or university education than the native Dutch.

Figure 8,

Level of education of different ethnic groups, 15-64 years, 2006



(Source: SCP Annual Report Integration 2007)

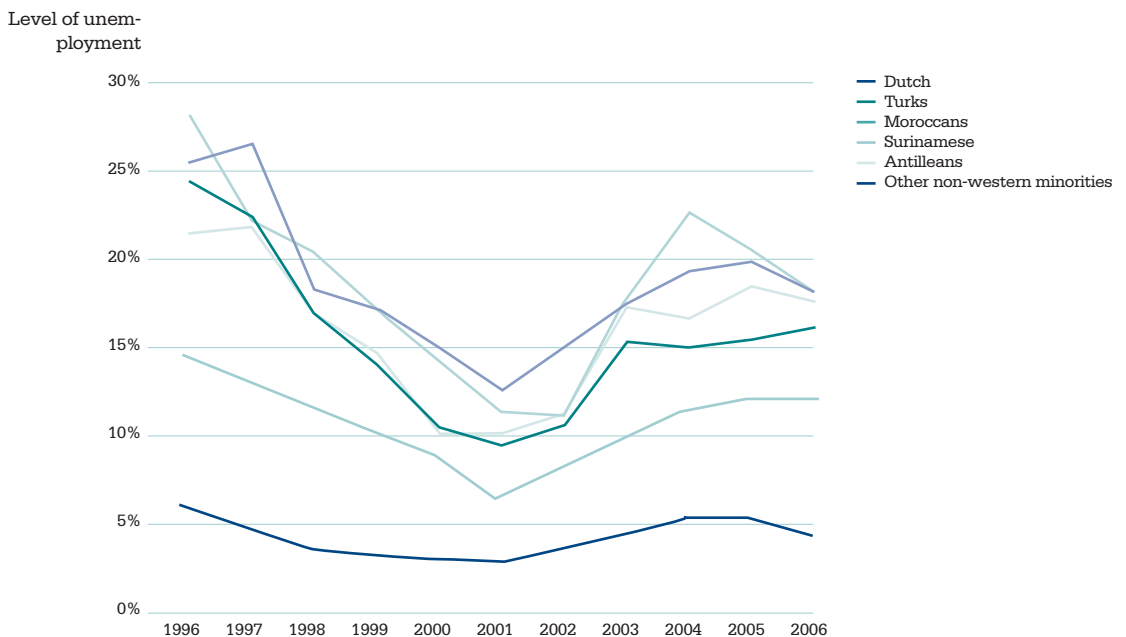
The level of education of Muslims from countries like Iraq, Iran and Afghanistan is high. Many of them are political refugees who had a high social standing in their country of origin. Due to their lacking command of the Dutch language, however, many of them cannot translate their past education into a favourable position on the Dutch labour market.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC POSITION OF TURKS AND MOROCCANS IN THE NETHERLANDS

Turks and Moroccans have a worse socio-economic position than native Dutch. They have a lower annual income and experience higher unemployment rates. Their dependence on social benefits is high.

Figure 9,

Figure 9: Unemployment rates for different ethnic groups, 1996 - 2006



(Source: CBS 2006)

Table 14,

Average standardised annual income for different ethnic groups

	Turks	Moroccans	Surinamese	Antilleans	Other non-Western	Native Dutch
Annual income (2005)	€ 13.800	€ 14.100	€ 16.200	€ 14.500	€ 13.900	€ 21.000
Degree of youth unemployment (15-24 year-olds)	20%	26%	27%	-	17%	9%

(Source: SCP Annual Report Integration 2007)

The higher unemployment rate can be attributed to the high occurrence of youth unemployment within non-Western communities. Second generation Turks and Moroccans are as likely to be unemployed as Surinamese or other non-Western youth. Statistical analysis has shown that Muslims are not more or less prone to be unemployed as for example Antilleans. Relevant characteristics causing unemployment are:

- low education or an education which was enjoyed abroad;
- command of the Dutch language;
- in the case of women: whether or not there are young children involved.

REMITTANCES TO COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN

The total volume of remittances by ethnic minorities to families and relatives in their countries of origin has increased steadily: from 300 million Euros in 1995 to 670 million Euros in 2005. This raise is due to the growing number of minorities in the Netherlands (+70% in the period between 1995 and 2005) and an increase in the amounts transferred.

Remittance patterns differ between ethnic groups. The Surinamese, Turks, Moroccans, Antilleans, Ghanaians and Somalis collectively transfer 365 million Euros per year⁵. An immigrant from Ghana transfers an average of € 1.144,- per year, whereas an Antillean is likely to transfer 'only' € 638,- per year.

Table 15,

Estimates of amounts remitted to countries of origin

	Number of immigrants (x 1.000)	Number of benefactors (x 1.000)	Total amount transferred (x million €)	Average amount per immigrant (x €)	Average amount per benefactor (x €)
Surinamese	329	148	115	350	777
Turks	359	140	112	312	800
Moroccans	316	107	84	266	788
Antilleans	131	56	36	275	638
Ghanaians	19	9	11	579	1.144
Somalis	22	8	7	318	776
Total	1.175	468	365	311	778

(Source: Ministry of Finance 2006)

⁵ Research Consumentenbond 2005.

TURKISH AND MOROCCAN ENTREPRENEURS

An increasing number of Turks and Moroccans choose to become entrepreneurs; at present Turks are more likely to be self-employed than the native Dutch.

Table 16,

Entrepreneurship within ethnic communities as percentage of the labour force

	1998	2005
Turks	7,6%	13,5%
Moroccans	3,4%	7,3%
Surinamese	3,9%	6,4%
Antilleans	3,4%	4,7%
Native Dutch	10,5%	11,5%

(Source: Van der Tillaart, CBS 2007)⁶

First generation non-Western entrepreneurs tend to start up small retail and restaurant businesses. Second generation non-Western entrepreneurs start up businesses in roughly the same industries as native Dutch entrepreneurs. In addition, second generation entrepreneurs choose to start up more knowledge intensive businesses: they are more inclined to start up consultancy or IT- firms, whereas the first generation is more likely to start up cleaning firms or job agencies.

Reasons to start up a firm are the same for non-Western immigrants and the native Dutch: the will to succeed, the desire to exploit market opportunities, gain financial independence and develop one's own personal talents.

In addition, first generation entrepreneurs cite motives like discrimination on the labour market, the unrecognised value of education qualifications they acquired abroad and the desire to attain social standing. Second generation entrepreneurs cite the limited career possibilities with native Dutch firms as a reason to start up their own firms.

⁶ The figures over 1998 only include first generation immigrants and can therefore underestimate the total number of entrepreneurs

TURKISH, MOROCCAN PEOPLE AND CRIMINALITY

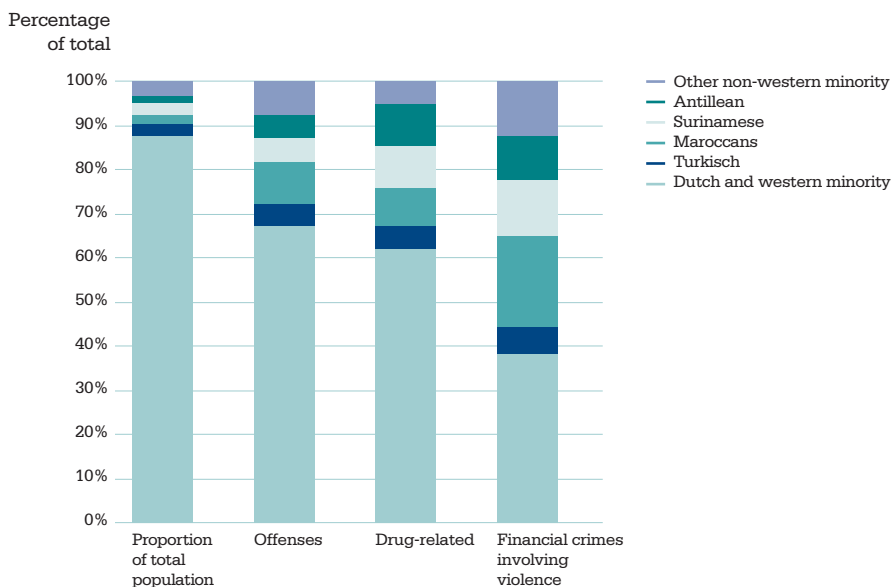
Statistics indicate that non-Western ethnic minorities are more often involved with crime. This has a negative influence on their image with Dutch natives.

Figures show that:

- Antilleans and Arubans are most likely to commit felonies, especially involving drugs and violent thefts and assaults. Important contributing factors are the illicit drugs trade from South America and the Dutch Antilles to the Netherlands and the increased policing by the Dutch authorities.
- Moroccans show the second highest crime rates. Violent and non-violent thefts, verbal abuse, vandalism and disturbance of the peace are the most common charges. They are less likely to commit sexual offences.
- Of the largest non-Western communities, Surinamese and Turks are least likely to commit crimes. Their crimes tend to be traffic or firearms related and, in the case of the Surinamese, drugs related.

Figure 10,

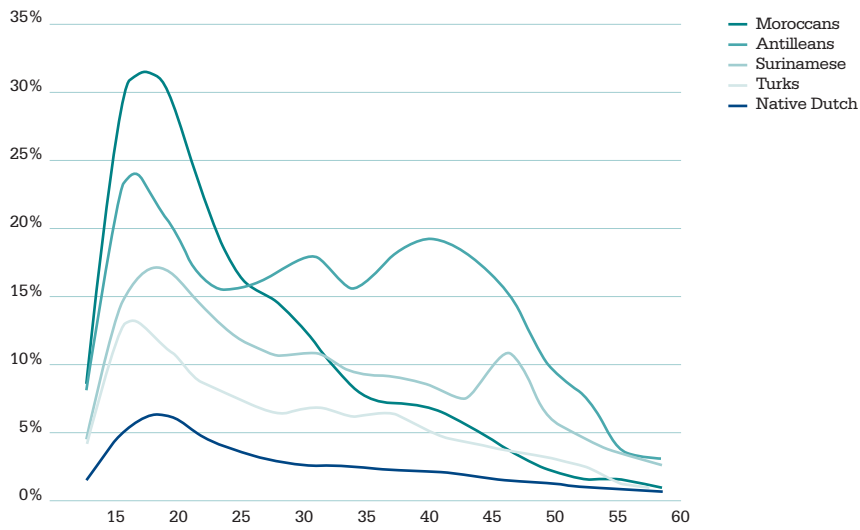
Ethnic background of offenders in 2003



Muslims are not implicitly associated with crime. Antilleans are more frequently suspected of crimes than Moroccans or Turks. The image of Moroccans is influenced negatively as the crime incidence of Moroccan youth is disproportionately high and crimes are committed in specific areas in a city.

Figure 11,

Age crime curves for several ethnic groups in 2004



(Source: SCP Annual Report Integration 2007)

In addition, the native Dutch specifically appeal to the Moroccan community to take on a collective responsibility to chastise and discipline Moroccan youth who commit crimes. This appeal to a whole community is rarely made towards Turks and not at all towards native Dutch, Antilleans and Surinamese.

DISCRIMINATION AGAINST ETHNIC MINORITIES

The number of reported cases of ethnic or race discrimination has remained relatively unchanged in the Netherlands, but since 2005 there has been a slight increase. Sex and age discrimination have increased far more in the same time period.

The following developments limit these encouraging figures somewhat:

- After the assassination of the politician Pim Fortuyn by an animal rights activist in May 2002, and after the assassination of Theo van Gogh by a Muslim fundamentalist in November 2004, the number of cases involving ethnic discrimination and defamations of Islam increased. This increase was short-lived in both cases and after a month the number of reported cases returned to previous levels.
- The general and political attitudes in debates surrounding migration, integration and Islam have changed in the Netherlands. Statements that would have been considered discriminatory in 2000 have ceased to be regarded as such in 2008.
- Reported cases of anti-Semitic and anti-Islamic texts on the internet have increased from 2005 onwards. The number of insults addressed to native Dutch and homosexuals has increased as well. These discriminatory texts are posted on a limited number of interactive websites and online discussion boards. The vast majority (97%) of web masters and moderators do delete these messages when they are reported, but it has been proven unsuccessful to keep these messages out.
- On February 12th 2008 the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI), a non-governmental organisation set up by the Council of Europe, published a report about the extent of discrimination in the Netherlands. The ECRI has concluded that the tone in the debate has changed for the worse in recent years. In addition, the Dutch integration policy has been targeted mainly towards immigrants. The ECRI has appealed to the Dutch government to limit discriminatory remarks in the public debate and to change the Integration Policy. There were several different reactions on this report.

THE ATTITUDES OF ETHNIC MINORITY YOUTH IN THE NETHERLANDS

In 2008 FORUM published a research on the attitudes of ethnic minority youth (between the ages of 15 and 35 years old) about the Netherlands. The main conclusions are summarised below:

Youth happiness

Seventy-two percent of non-Western ethnic youth call themselves happy. Young Antilleans and Arubans are most happy (79%). Seventy-one percent of the young Moroccan feel themselves happy. Young Turks are least happy (67%). Non-Western ethnic youth are more likely to call themselves unhappy than native Dutch: Moroccans consider themselves to be most unhappy (12%).

Housing and neighbourhood

The majority of Non-Western youth is satisfied with their own home (68% - 73%) and their neighbourhood (69%-75%). A large majority (78%-88%) feels a strong sense of belonging in their neighbourhood.

Social interactions

In the four largest cities 66% of native Dutch youth have non-Western friends; in the rest of the country this figure drops to 34%. Nearly 50% of non-Western youth have native Dutch friends.

Contentment with Dutch society

A surprising finding is that young non-Western youth are more content with Dutch society than native Dutch youth (circa half of non-Western youth versus 1/3 of native Dutch youth). While the contentedness with Dutch society is quite low in the case of all ethnic groups, the majority still feels at home in the Netherlands; the lowest percentage being for young Moroccans, as 78% of them feel at home in the Netherlands.

A remarkable number of youth (1/7th to 1/5th of the total) does not feel at home in the Netherlands.

42% of the youth feel that social interactions between ethnic groups will deteriorate in the following 10 years; the Moroccans are the most pessimistic, as 49% feels relations will worsen.

THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK AND THE RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS OF ETHNIC MINORITIES

This fact sheet gives an overview of the main legal framework which is cited in the public debate on Integration of ethnic minorities in The Netherlands.⁷

Freedom of expression (Article 7 of the Dutch constitution)

Freedom of expression is the freedom for citizens to express their opinions without fear of persecution by the government. This freedom is considered an integral part of democracy. It is an explicit part of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In the Netherlands, freedom of expression is guaranteed by article 7 of the constitution, which states:

- (1) No one shall require prior permission to publish thoughts or opinions through the press, without prejudice to the responsibility of every person under the law.
- (2) Rules concerning radio and television shall be laid down by Act of Parliament. There shall be no prior supervision of the content of a radio or television broadcast.
- (3) No one shall be required to submit thoughts or opinions for prior approval in order to disseminate them by means other than those mentioned in the preceding paragraphs, without prejudice to the responsibility of every person under the law. The holding of performances open to persons younger than sixteen years of age may be regulated by Act of Parliament in order to protect good morals.
- (4) The preceding paragraphs do not apply to commercial advertising.

Dutch criminal code places limits on this freedom. Derisive statements or hateful speech, insults aimed at figures of authority and the spreading of untruths (slander and libel) are not allowed. Obscenities, profanities and licentious statements are partially disallowed or allowed. The internet has increased the opportunities to practice one's freedom of expression without being accountable to the law. Online screen names, data havens (like Freenet) and other technologies ensure that infringing material cannot be traced to a specific person or organisation or be suppressed or removed from the Internet. On occasion Dutch citizens are tried and convicted for material they publish on the internet and infringing sites are brought offline. Sites do practice self-censorship as they moderate user generated content. Organisations like the Dutch Complaints Bureau for Discrimination on the Internet (MDI) follow up on complaints about discriminatory remarks on the internet and attempts to get them deleted.

Freedom of the press (Article 7 of the Dutch constitution)

The Dutch freedom of the press is part of a constitutional article on the freedom of expression. It grants everybody the right to use the printing press to express feelings or thoughts without having to ask permission from anyone. One is only accountable under the criminal code limiting defamation, slander, liability etc., and only after one has published his or her thoughts or feelings.

Discrimination (Article 1 of the Dutch Constitution)

Article 1 of the Dutch constitution states that "All who are in the Netherlands will be treated in an equal manner. Discrimination on the basis of religion, faith, political affiliation, race, sex or any other ground is not permitted".

Articles 137c to 137g of the criminal code cite more and more specific grounds which are considered discriminatory. For all these articles, intent to discriminate needs to be proven:

- 137c: intentionally insulting a specific group of people;
- 137d: stirring up hatred or discrimination of or incites violence towards a specific group of people;
- 137e: publishing a statement of which he or she knew or could have known would be insulting towards a specific group or would incite discrimination, hatred or violence towards a specific group of people;
- 137f: participating in or assisting discriminatory activities;
- 137g: intentionally discriminating based on race when working in a professional setting.

In addition, articles in civil law prohibit specific forms of discrimination, but do not carry a criminal sentence (i.e. voiding a labour contract or granting civil damages).

⁷ Dutch Constitution: De Grondwet, tekst en commentaar, Kortmann e.a. (1998)

Religious freedom (Article 6 of the Dutch Constitution)

Religious freedom the oldest basic right in the Netherlands. It was laid down in as early as 1579 in the Union of Utrecht, which unified the northern provinces against the dominance of Spain. This treaty can be considered to be the foundation of the then Dutch Republic.

Freedom of religion is a part of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Article 6 of the Dutch Constitution states:

- Everyone has the right to freely practice one's religion or faith, individually or with others. This is only limited to one's accountability before the law.
- Outside buildings and non-common spaces, the law can limit this right in the interest of public health and traffic regulation or to prevent disturbances to the peace.

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