Changing Views of Tolerance: A Dutch Case Study

Introduction

This study examines the concept and history of tolerance in the Netherlands within the current context. By tracing the historical elements which have shaped tolerance in the Netherlands starting from its rebellion from Spain through World War II, the study analysis tolerance and its present influences on social life. Due to the large immigrant population largely from Morocco, Turkey and Surinam there are increasing cultural tensions as Dutch society confronts its transition to a nation of immigration instead of one of emigration. A discourse analysis is used to evaluate current debate through the examination of Dutch newspaper articles. The recently rising Party for Freedom (PVV) features in the analysis as the party exemplifies the rise of the right-wing in politics. The primary reasons discovered for the rise intolerance include in a fear of economic encroachment, and an inability for the historic system of social structure to deal with differences. In analyzing the trends for government policy on integration and social cohesion, while in the past decade there has been a largely politicized national discourse, most cities with significant non-Western populations are enacting pragmatic programs to promote social cohesion and tolerance to varying degrees of success.

However, before continuing, some terminology must be clarified. While the term *allochtone* will be consistently used to refer to someone who has one parent of a non-native Dutch background (and particularly non-European), while *autochtone* is used to refer to someone who was themselves and both parents were born in the Netherlands. However, at times in media and social life this is not strictly adhered to and may be used to refer to third or fourth generation as well. What must also be noted up front is that this term is seen by many as a sensitive phrase due to the negative and offensive connotations it is increasingly gaining, largely

due to the anti-immigrant trend coming up discussed later. Since much of the literature in the Netherlands has used the term *allochtone* to discuss the issues of immigration and multiculturalism, this paper will do so also while aware of the politicization of its use. While this paper focuses largely on the effect of the Muslim population and immigrants in Dutch society, the terms used to frame the debate were (and to an increasing extent are) focused on ethnicity and origin in general.

Historically, tolerance in the Netherlands has been that alone, and not necessarily implying acceptance. While the majority of groups are now at least tolerated by society, the Muslim immigrants (including the third generation) have challenged the tolerance of society. This tension likely comes not only from the visibility of the minority its rapid increase as a proportion of the population, but also due to the idea that tolerance is not a sufficient goal, but rather acceptance should be the target. Portions of the population belief that accepting the people would mean accepting their 'less enlightened' beliefs as well.

How Tolerance became a Dutch Value

What is Tolerance?

Key to understanding the evolution of tolerance and the relations between different segments of Dutch society is an understanding of what is meant by 'tolerance'. Broadly it implies a degree of acceptance of people who are different, however the nuances and implications are often debated. Other words that are also used to discuss openness in a society are acceptance, equality, multiculturalism, integration, pluralism and non-discrimination, all of which have different connotations. While there is now debate in Dutch society on how to frame the debate, for purposes of clarity I will examine the concept of tolerance as that is what Dutch society is

commonly thought of as having.   In this context, the most relevant definition of tolerance exists in the Oxford English Dictionary as "[T]he action or practice of tolerating; toleration; the disposition to be patient with or indulgent to the opinions or practices of others; freedom from bigotry or undue severity in judging the conduct of others; forbearance; catholicity of spirit."[1] The equivalent word in Dutch is the verb 'tolerentie' meaning literally 'the way that one behaves and carries themselves around someone who is different from them'. ('verdraagzaamheid tegenover andersdenkenden')[2] By teasing out the elements of these definitions, the nuances of toleration become more apparent. The word 'indulge' implies that even though the one doing the tolerating knows what the other is doing, or believes, is wrong, they will be patient and allow them to continue either through pragmatism or ideological beliefs. It also can imply that the one doing the tolerating is in a dominate position within the society.

In his article "A Critical Theory of Multiculturalism", Rainer Frost writes that although tolerance can be used in an arbitrary way, there are three components which it involves: "objection, acceptance, and rejection."[3] The tolerated idea also has to be undesirably under his understanding, as otherwise words such as indifferent or affirmation would be used to describe the relation rather than an indulgent relation. Since most definitions at least imply a degree of implicit undesirability, it follows that if either a group or idea is being tolerated, that the group doing the tolerating sees it as a negative and would alter the negative part if they could, but choose not to, for reasons such as pragmatism, morals or religion. This is the objection and acceptance portion of Frost's definition. While rejection implies that there must reasons for rejecting ideas that would mark the outer limit of a person's (or society's) tolerance, implying they are undesirable.

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1   "tolerance" OED online, accessed 11-2-09
2   *Van Dale*. December 30, 2009
3   Frost, Rainer. "A Critical Theory of Multicultural Toleration"

Thus tolerance is framed as a minimum for allowing distinct groups with sincere disagreements to work and live near to each other and avoid conflicts in the long term. This type of acceptance is what the Netherlands has developed. An acceptance that the others beliefs are different and that they have a right to hold on to those beliefs, but not that those beliefs have any validity. Also, as previously discussed, tolerance of different religious groups was initially contingent on the group being discreet. Furthermore, Frost identifies toleration as "a normatively dependent concept,"[4] meaning that a desire for toleration there must be a separate moral system, such as religion in this case, to which to attach the value of the principles. However, this level of interaction was not often increased. Under pillariztion, a means of social organization practiced in the 20th century and discussed further later, a social distance between religious groups still exist through sets of parallel institutions. This is an example of a system built with tolerance rather than acceptance and integration as a way of allowing various groups to live together.

Tolerance followed Frost's conceptualization for the majority of Dutch people up through the 20th century, although as generations grew their was an increasing acceptance, however only since after World War II has the 'live and let live' style change to a more interactive one.

The History Framing Tolerance

The history of the modern Dutch state begins in the 16th century with the Eighty Year War (also called the Dutch Rebellion or Revolt). The need to separate from the Spanish Hapsburgs, who had gained the territories through marriage, was in part due to the attempt to take power from the Provinces and centralize it in Spain and the strict religious intolerance which King

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4 Frost, Rainer. "A Critical Theory of Multicultural Toleration" p. 79.

Philip II was pursuing throughout his realm.   Aggravated by the increasingly harsh and distant enforcement policies which alienated many who might otherwise have supported him as the Netherlands did not contain a large Protestant movement before this time.[5] While the level of religious prosecution in the Netherlands never reached that of the Spanish Inquisition, it was very disruptive to society causing large and sometimes violent splits. In the 1500s as tensions grew a large portion of the Dutch population began converting to Protestantism.[6] The tensions grew so that the Counts of Egmont and of Hoorn, both Catholic, went to Philip II in year to plead for clemency for their countrymen as the turmoil was tearing at the people and they were summarily executed. This incited William of Orange (the Silent) to rally the Seven Northern Provinces (out of the 17 Provinces of the Low Countries) to rebel[7] and fueled the pressures against the Spanish rule. Furthermore, while this revolt did have religious characteristics, it was equally as much a war over politics and freedom and ones religious convictions did not necessitate which side one was on.[8]

The majority of the literature puts supports the hypothesis that tolerance in the Netherlands following the war was not due to a egalitarian belief that all forms of Protestantism and Catholicism were equal, but rather that after having existed in a state of conflict for so long, finding a state of peace and coexistence was paramount. While the idea of tolerance and acceptance as good for their own sakes was supported by many secular elites, such as William of Orange even during the war, in part as a way to make sure that the Catholics remained, or became, sympathetic to the new republic rather than the Catholic Spanish Kingdom.   In 1578

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5   Nierop, H.F.K. van. 1995.
6   Nierop, Henk van. 1999.
7   This is not to say that everyone in the provinces were united. In fact, far from it. There was much contention with at times certain parties switching sides either on religious or political grounds. The other 10 provinces of the Low Countries remained in Spanish hands and became what is now Belgium and Luxemburg.
8   Spaans, Jo. 1999. p. 2.

William issued an appeal for free practice of religion by both Protestants and Catholics not only

to foster unity among all sections of the populace, but also for the large merchant class

originating from throughout Europe who were essential in allowing the economy to thrive as the

urban and trade center it had become.[9]

Catholics had been largely alienated by the Calvinist congregations, in1566 in the

western provinces the Catholic churches were stormed and sculptures destroyed and sacred

objects desecrated.[10] The Dutch Republic consisted of the Northern Provinces, while the

southern provinces by this time who were more heavily Catholic since most protestants had fled

north remained under Spanish rule. The Calvinist Reformed Church officially became the state

church in 1648 with the Peace of Westphalia (although it had been adopted much earlier during

the war), though largely due to the lead role of its members in the revolt rather than their

numbers, as its members remained in the minority despite attempting to convert the population.

Other prominent Protestant sects included Lutherans, Anabaptists, Spiritualists, and the

Armenians that were forced to split from the Calvinist Reformed Church. Furthermore, while

the Catholic Church was banned, its members were not persecuted (at least physically) nor

forced to attend non-Catholic worships, as was common practice in other states at the time, such

as England. However, other religious groups were not officially permitted to hold their own

services (if they were caught, the punishment was a fine), although gradually the secret meetings

were privately acknowledged and as practical matter were tolerated as long as they remained

discrete.[11] Since the official Calvinist Reform Church remained a minority, this meant that the

majority of the population was discriminated against. What made it truly distinct from other

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9   Zagorin, How the Idea of Religious Toleration Came to the West. p. 149, cites primary source "Paix de religion
      dans Les Bays-Bas"; "[he] quotes an excerpt from this document in English translation from" … (p. 338).
10   Andeweg, Rudy B., and Galen A. Irwin. 2002. p. 7.
11 Zagorin, p. 150.

states was the complete lack of religious violence after 1579.

The treatise on tolerance on the Netherlands were written largely in the context of competing Protestant sections, both within the Calvinist Reform Church and more broadly. The Calvinist Reform Church proved to be intolerant to theological disputes, and in 1618, approximately 200 ministers who followers of Jacob Arminius, a Calvinist minister critical of the Reform Church's dogmatism and strictness, were condemned as heretics at the Synod at Dort when they refused to agree to the reaffirmation of the strictness interpretation of the Calvinist Doctrine. Although after Prince Maritus, the son of William of Orange and a staunch Protestant, died in 1625, the Armenian Remonstrants gradually began to reenter the country and were able to begin worshiping again, but all thought of rejoining in the State Church had to be abandoned.[12]

Furthermore, the significance of the establishment of a Church which was sponsored by the State and relied on the *Stadsraad* (the national governing body at the time) for funding and support is that it set a model of a strong connection between Church and State. As a consequence, when other religions gained acceptance and equality, they also received money from the state for their own institutions. This developed into the concept of pillarization discussed later and has led to some controversies on the level of state support for Muslim institutions.

Pillarization

The practice of pillarization in the Netherlands began to form in the 19th century after the Catholics had been given equal rights under the state, and began to fade in strength after WWII although did not dissolve until the 1980s.[13] There were three primary pillars (*zuilen*): Protestant,

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12   Zagorin, p. 170-171
13   Andeweg, Rudy B., and Galen A. Irwin. 2002. p. 18

Catholic, and Social-Democratic. The Social-Democratic pillar included mainly less

conservative Protestants, the Jewish community and non-religious people. In addition, there was

a general, loosely-organized, 'Liberal' pillar for upper and middle class liberal Protestants and

non-religious individuals.

Each pillar had influence and control over many different organizations across different

aspects of social life, including separate political parties, newspapers, schools, universities,

unions, hospitals, and as technology increased, broadcasting and television organizations and

stations. Each pillar received state support for the organizations in the different pillars, as did the

Church. A person's interactions were thus focused within their own pillar, which created a stable

society, not an integrated one. Interaction between the pillars went mainly through the leaders,

to whom there was strong loyalty and trust. This creating what is now called as a consociational

government. Pillarization was therefore tolerance at a basic level, all segments coexisting and

acknowledging the presence of rights of others.

The cause of this framework of governance, according to Arend Lijphart in his study of

pularilsm and democracy in the Netherlands, can be attributed to the fact that the country has

historically been made up of minorities. For example, since universal suffrage in 1919, the

highest percentage of the vote received by any party was 35.3% (in 1989). This is due to the

multiple types of segmentation within the society. As discussed above, the religious divide

remained significant, with the Southern two provinces being majority Catholic while the other

Provinces were majority Protestant, although of several different affiliations. The other is

social class. Since these two factors did not run parallel overall, parties which may be

compatible along one spectrum of the ideology may be significantly less so on another.[14] Thus a

tradition of cooperation and compromises through the depoliticization of potential controversial

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14   Andeweg, Rudy B., and Galen A. Irwin. 2002. p. 17, 27.

topics has dominated almost every aspect of Dutch politics until the 1990s, when politicization

increased.

The Current Situation: Muslim Immigrants

Development of Immigration and Integration Policy

Until the guest worker programs and decolonization migrations, the Netherlands had very

little immigration and considered itself an emigration country, and an overpopulated one due to

its high population density.   It was only in 1998 that it was officially reported that the

Netherlands was an immigration country when the in-migration during the 1990s averaged

113,000 annually, even though a 1983 white paper described the Netherlands as a "de facto

immigration" country.[15] This view of their country as an emigrant nation contributed to the

delay in addressing issues of immigration. Furthermore, since most Dutch see their country as

overpopulated, some question why immigrants would be beneficial. In examining the recent

history of immigration, immigration from former colonial nations provides a comparison point to

the more recent groups of guest worker and asylum immigrants, especially those from Turkey

and Morocco. This section will discuss the history of immigration after World War Two and lead

into the modern political climate related to immigrants.

The first post-WWII wave started in 1949 when Indonesia gained its independence and

Dutch citizens returned as well as a significant population of Indo-Dutch (those who had one

Dutch parent). The policy at the time was that these two groups would maintain Dutch

citizenship if they choose to while the rest of the population would automatically become

Indonesian citizens upon Indonesia's independence. Although the fear at the time was that these

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15   Muus, Philip. p. 264

Indo-Dutch would not be able to integrate into Dutch society, they are one of the biggest integration success stories.[16] However, this migration was presented as a repatriation as opposed to immigration. The second influx of immigrants through 'repatriation' came from Suriname (until then known as Dutch Guiana) in 1975 when Suriname gained its independence. Although most Dutch politicians hoped there would not be a large influx, a large portion of the Surinamese population did migrate to the Netherlands. In one estimation, almost a third of the Surinamese population migrated to the Netherlands.[17] While they may represent an equally visible minority, the Surinamese adapted quickly into the population. One difference with the economic migrants id that these two groups already possessed Dutch citizenship upon migration.

Presently the largest ethnic groups are from Turkey and Morocco, and although the first wave of immigration coincided approximately with the Surinamese influx, the waves have continued to bring in the home culture and encourage those already in the Netherlands maintain their cultural heritage. The original immigration in the 1960's and 1970's came because the Dutch economy was booming, complete with available jobs. Both the migrant workers and the Dutch authorities saw their presence as temporary and assumed the so called 'Mediterranean Migrants' would return. These Mediterranean Migrants also included workers from Spain and Portugal, and all four major guest worker origin countries touched the Mediterranean. Because of the assumption the migrants would eventually return home, no effort was made to help them integrate into Dutch society, unlike the Indonesians and Surinamese immigrants. In fact, to encourage a smooth transition back to the country of origin, the workers and their families were encouraged to continue household traditions of their native countries. For example, in 1974 primary schools started teaching native languages to help children for when they and their

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16 Muus, Philip. p. 266-7.
17 Ibid, 267

families returned to their parents' home country, though now most still remain in the

Netherlands.   This was part of what has been described as the "two-track" for Dutch

immigration policy at the time; one track being integration and assimilation for those from

colonies and the other being for the guest workers.[18] Within the framework of pillarization,

allowing immigrants to form their own institutions seemed logical, especially as they were a

minority that would not be staying, according to both popular and political belief.

In the 1980s, starting with local and national administration officials working with

immigration related issues Dutch society began to realize that the 'Mediterranean Migrants' were

not going to return home, and therefore provisions on ways to expand the migrants' participate in

society emerged in the public discourse. The Minorities Policy was enacted in the early 80s,

granting the migrants with the term 'ethnic minorities,' which allowed them parallel institutions

that benefited from large amounts of public funding under pillarization. Although the term was

not used at the time, this period is now considered the 'multicultural' phase of the integration

policy.[19] Segments of the Dutch community did express their reservations believing these types

of policies only pushed the groups away and hurt their chances of participation, but the

Department of Interior believed that this policy would combat discrimination and social-

economic deprivation.[20] By the 1980's pillarization in mainstream Dutch society had almost

completely faded due to due to the secularization of society and a loss of cohesion within the

pillars. And by 1989, unemployment remained high among the immigrant population, having

not recovered from a restructuring of the industrial sector which had occurred earlier in the

decade.

The next policy, the 1994 Integration Policy, focused on raising social participation.

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18   Poppelaars, Caelesta, and Peter Scholten. 2008. p. 341.
19 Entzinger, Han. p. 125.
20 Minderhedennota. 1983.

Culture was still seen as a private matter, but classes for all immigrants on Dutch language and civic awareness were launched and made required for all new immigrants. In addition, native tongue primary education was all but eliminated. However, throughout this period, the Turkish and Moroccan minorities still stood out in the public consciousness as being particularly different. The focus became on treating the immigrants as new citizens rather than as a part of a specific group and encouraging them to understand and use their civic rights and duties. There was also a corresponding increase at this time for social-economic support programs, including in education, housing and labor.[21] One further difference with this policy and the ones that came before was that it was the first to be formed in an atmosphere of politicization around the issue, as before this time, immigration remained purposefully depoliticized.

The official policies of the past half century on immigration began as a depoliticized issue dealt primarily within the bureaucracy, moving into a gradually more public and politizsied sphere leading to the present contentious debate on the issue.

Demographics

Because of the large presence of first generation Moroccans, Moroccans in general are seen as one of the least integrated communities. This is especially true after van Gogh's murder. However in the beginning of the 1990s only 4.5% of the population living in the Netherlands did not hold a Dutch passport, which speaks to the ease and accessibility of becoming a naturalized citizen.[22]   Through interviewing many Muslims in public policy, Jyette Klaussen noted the trend that those who came in through asylum were more likely to be in the places of power than

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21 Poppelaars, Caelesta, and Peter Scholten. 2008. p. 341.
22 Rothenbacher, Franz. p. 598.

second generation Muslims who grew up in the Netherlands.[23] An additional contrast is how (mostly economic) migrants are viewed from Eastern Europe who have immigrated since the EU's Single Labour Market was enacted through the Maastricht Treaty and in accession agreements with Eastern European states, especially Poland, Romania, Bulgaria and the Czech Republic.

Other demographic issues which do not play a large part in the immigration issue but form the surrounding context include population density, internal migration, and an aging population. The effect of these three factors has resulted in many communities which do not fall in the Amsterdam-Rotterdam-Utrecht-The Hague circle, known as the *Randstad* and containing almost half the countrie's population, and are not large cities face a decreasing population.

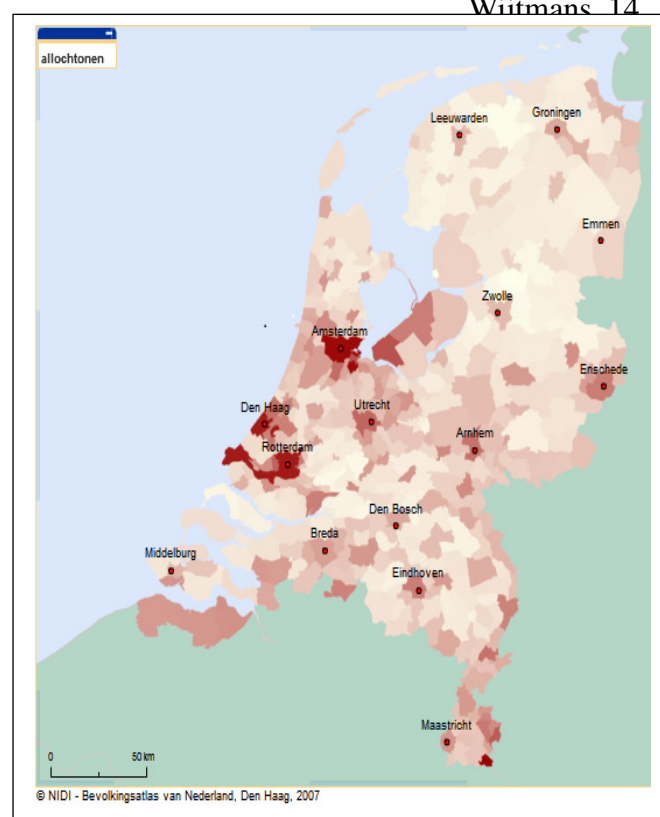| Origin (groups of)	2008	% 2008
Total population	16 405 399	100.00%
Natives	13 189 983	80.4
Non-western total	1 765 730	10.76
Western total (excluding natives)	1 449 686	8.84
Morocco	335 127	2.04
Netherlands Antilles and Aruba	131 841	0.8
Suriname	335 799	2.05
Turkey	372 714	2.27

Younger people are moving towards the cities while the older generations remain in many towns resulting in an average ratio of those over 65 to those between 25 and 65 at approximately 25%, leading to many towns needing to close services for lack of numbers, but having an increasing percentage needing to draw upon those services.[24] However, the overall population of the country continues to increase, resulting in the growth of city networks (for example, The Hague and Rotterdam have grown so that they have the same suburbs) and even higher population densities. These trends all create pressure on the political and social system, which aggravate and decrease room to maneuver around issues of *allochtonen*.

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23 Klausen, Jytte. 2005.
24   Nederlands_Interdiscipliary_Demographic_Institute. 2006.

Table 1[25] includes the countries that have a significant presence in the Netherlands, leaving out near by West European countries. While there clearly is a significant population of Eastern Europeans, the total reaching around 108,000 immigrants, almost all of whom are first generation, the degree of impact in comparison is not as concerning to *autochtonen*, due in part to the fact that there has been less politicization of their presence and they blend in slightly better than the Moroccan and Turkish immigrants, who, in conjunction with the Surinamese, are sometimes referred to as "visible minorities." Map 1 below shows the distribution of *allochtonen* throughout the country. The large cities of The Hague, Rotterdam and Amsterdam all contain between 45-50% *allochtonen*, and while this map does include foreigners from European countries as well, many of those people tend to live near the border. However, counting for that factor, non-western *allochtonen* would make up at least 20-25% of the population in those cities, resulting in areas in each city which look more like other nations than the Netherlands. Nationally, the percentage of non-western first and second generation *allochtonen* amounted to17.5% in 2005.[26]

Besides economic immigrants, the Netherlands also receives the third highest number of refugees and asylum seekers, often from Eastern Africa, of the European Union countries. Often those against immigration policies would point to this number as too high, especially since the

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25   Centraal Bureau Statistique. 2010. Table 1.
26   Centraal Bureau Statistique, "The Netherlands in Figures".

Netherlands is one of the smaller countries. Within the past decade, the acts have attempted to clamp down on those entering on asylum visas and somehow staying in the country. For example, in 2003 there was already a decrease in the total number of new immigrants (who did not have Dutch citizenship) to the Netherlands to around 75,000 people.[27]

The concentration of immigrants in cities adds to the economic factors feeding back into a trend of a significant number of Turkish and Moroccan youth engaged in criminal activities, and schools rated lower than many other places in the country (Rotterdam's average score for students entering secondary education has traditionally been approximately five points lower than the national average of 50[28]) leading to diminished options and increased unemployment in the future. One local program to address the issue of rigorous schooling in Rotterdam that met with decent success will be discussed later.

Politics Surrounding Immigration and Integration

Shapers of Political Figures

In framing the recent debate, there have been three politicians who have stood out in furthering or changing the nature of the debate over the role of Muslim immigrants in Dutch society. Pim Fortuyn, Ayaan Hrsi Ali and Geert Wilders have all challenged and shaped the status quo.

In 2002, Pim Fortuyn, a right-wing politician captured the momentum of the anti-immigration, anti-Islam sentiment released by the events of September 11th, 2001. He also helped make immigration and culture a topic of discussion in politics that would not be tiptoed around and kept polite or politically correct, making integration a center piece of his campaign

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27 Fleeting Refuge: The Triumph Of Efficency Over Protection in Dutch Asylum Policy. 2003.
28 Treep, Olga, and Inge Ginjaar. 2006.

against the political establishment. The term *allochtone* became pejorative at this time.[29] Despite

his murder right before the Parliament elections in 2002, his party significantly helped CDA to

form a coalition to regain the majority with an impressive 26 seats out of 150. Though at first

many believed that his murderer was motivated by his anti-Islamic statements, in reality he

turned out to be an animal rights activist. While Fortuyn's party did not have a significant

longterm impact, due largely to cohesion problems, his most significant contribution to the

debate was the open way he discussed what were formally delicate and taboo topics creating a

more confrontational political culture.[30] Later politicians (such as Geert Wilders) have since

gone even farther with their language, but without the opening Pim Fortuyn provided, the tone

of Wilder's debates would have been received very poorly .

Ayaan Hrsi Ali came to the Netherlands as an asylum case from Somalia, through Kenya.

She had been raised a religious Muslim and was on her way to marry the husband found for her

in Canada when she stopped in Europe effectively running and breaking ties with her family.

She became politically active and ran for the conservative liberal party VVD, at their request.

She became an outspoken advocate about the pressures and cruel treatments Islam encouraged

towards women. She soon renounced her own religion and stated that Islam is incompatible with

Dutch society. Hrsi Ali wrote a script for the ten-minute film, *Submission, Part I,* depicting the

story of abused Muslim women with text from the Koran written on their bodies.[31] She meant to

raise awareness for and combat practices of Islam which hurt and/or degraded women. She

worked on the film with Theo van Gogh, a notorious outspoken and belligerent film maker. The

film was very controversial, and it was for that film and previous racist comments he made

towards Muslims that he was murdered in November 2004 while biking in a crowded street in

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29 Eyerman, p. 102
30 Poppelaars, Caelesta, and Peter Scholten. 2008. p. 345.
31 Gogh, Theo van. 2004. Submission, Part I. The Netherlands.

Amsterdam. As a side note, van Gogh had previously been taken to court by a Jewish

organization for racist comments as well. The impact of this murder were immediately felt by

the Dutch public, and although most did not approve of the racist and offensive things he had

been saying about many different groups, this was the second politically motivated murder in

two years. Furthermore the Netherlands was a country where everyone should be able to speak

their piece and express themselves. Particularly difficult for the Dutch about this murder was

that Mohammed B., the murderer, was a second generation Moroccan who had grown up within

the Netherlands and done well in the school system and somehow still become a radical. This

called for another re-evaluation of policies across the nation to find out what was going wrong

since clearly the Muslims were not integrating properly.

The third important politician in the sequence of extreme right-wingers Islam is Geert

Wilders who also formed his own party, de Partij voor Vrijheid (PVV), or in English: the Party

For Freedom, after breaking with the VVD (Party for Freedom and Democracy). Due to his

extensive control in running the party (more so than most leaders of other parties), this paper will

often refer to it as Wilders' party if his personal role and politics are being emphasized.

Journalist Karen Geurtsen infiltrated the party and confirmed the strict control Wilders

maintained over all aspects of the party. The PVV party vision "Agenda voor Hoop en

Optimisme" ('The Agenda for Hope and Optimism'), states that they "choose rights for women,

homosexuals, and for 'the traditional Judaic-Christian and humanistic values that have given the

Netherlands its present success", and that the Islamiztion of the cities must be stopped.32 Note

that while this is the Party of Freedom, Wilders picks and chooses who should have right to that

freedom, and immigrants and Muslims do not fall into that group. His party did well in the 2006

parliamentary elections, gaining 9 seats. The support he has received indicates a real uncertainty

32 Wilders, Geert. 2010. Agenda voor Hoop en Optimisme. In *website*, edited by P. v. d. Vrijheid. Den Haag.

and fear of the unknown element of immigrants and what it might do to change Dutch society and discontent with the efforts of the political establishment on the matter. And as he frames himself as only being intolerant of those who are intolerant, he makes sure his constituents do not feel like they are supporting an intolerant person contrary to many people's ideas about what Dutch Society should be like. He has been gaining political power recently as he is seen as one of the only candidates who is addressing the issue of the problems created by immigrants. His party won the second largest proportion of the votes in the summer 2009 European Parliament Elections. However, these elections may not be taken as seriously by the electorate as national elections (turnout was 37% as compared to the last national elections at 86%[33]), so a portion of this could be as part of a protest vote over the current government's policies on multiple issues. However, he has more acclaim when he and his issues feature in the news, which is often as his comments are seen as inflammatory and creating more problems. He created a short film *Fitna* with great fanfare, with the express purpose of provoking debate and outrage. The film consists of a seventeen minute montage pairing Koran verses with images of people in terrorist attacks and clips from radical Islamic speakers. His increase in popularity can also be attributed to the worsening of economic conditions in the country as much of his popularity basis is not in areas with significant concentration of immigrants, hence it is unlikely that his supporters fear that Muslim immigrants are directly competing with their jobs. To connect e the issue economically to those who may not personally know or live near many immigrants he made a demand as a member of parliament for all the ministries to publish a report on exactly what *allochtonen* are costing the state in each of their departments, in terms of the social support system. Many ministries refused this request as they refused to separate one portion of society out and that it would be a long and time consuming process for a move meant to stir up further discrimination.

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33 *Verkiezingen -de Volkeskrant*. 2010.

After van Gogh's murder, September 11th and 7/7, these two groups were increasingly lumped together as 'the Muslims,' and the media did nothing to dispel the idea that there was something inherent in Islam that prevented Muslims from fully participating in Dutch society. Funda Mujde, a well-known Dutch-Turkish actress who writes a weekly column in the newspaper *De Telegraaf*, notes the changes caused by these politicians and their influence when she noted "[i]n 2000 I was called a 'filthy Turk.' After 2001, and the rise of Pim Fortuyn, it was a 'filthy foreigner [allochton].' After Hirsi Ali, it was 'filthy Muslim.'"[34]

The Implications of Recent Elections (and what, if anything, immigration means for the upcoming election)

Three topics with immigrants exist relevant to the electoral politics in the Netherlands: (1) the increasing role that immigrant or *allochtone* communities are having on Dutch political elections and the reasons behind it; (2) an analyze the European Parliament elections of Summer 2009 and the PVV's success followed by a discussion on the of the local March elections; and (3) the implications for the upcoming national Parliamentary elections this summer due to the premature fall of the cabinet due to unrelated issues and the possibility of coalition forming containing strongly anti-immigration/anti-*allochtone* tendencies. In fact, it was theorized in many articles that the pressure over Wilder's popularity created pressure for the former coalition partners, the Center-Right Christian Democratic Party (CDA) and the social-democratic Labour Party (PvdA), causing the Balkende IV cabinet to find compromises throughout a series of contentious issues as they would likely do worse than their present position in new elections. This also shows that the popularity of Wilders and the issue of *allochtone*s within Dutch society

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34 Eyerman, p. 102

have the potential to influence the sphere of Dutch politics.

The role of *allochtone*s in Dutch politics is increasing, not only due to increasing individual personal leadership by some community members and the increasing number of *allochtone* citizens in many key regions, but also due to the rules regarding local voting by non-citizens. While voter turnout was overall not very high, and also not especially high among *allochtonen* for this election, local elections are unique in that some non-citizens are permitted to vote. As of the 1983 minority policy, if an immigrant has lived (legally) within the Netherlands for five years and within the *gementee* (city/county) for one year, the immigrant is permitted to vote in the local council elections regardless of citizenship. While they do not have the right to vote within national elections, this policy can make a significant difference in local elections. Not only can it increase enfranchisement and community participation among migrants, these votes have the potential to tip the balance in some elections. The NRC Handelsblad (the leading centrist-right newspaper) predicted a week before the local elections in March published an article entitled "In The Hague, Migrants make the Difference" predicting that migrants, and non-western *allochtonen* in general, would significantly impact the outcome of the elections, especially as they were a targeted demographic by the struggling PvdA. One citizen, with a Turkish background, running for the city council under the PvdA commented "The immigrants will make the difference [for our party] … But we are for everyone."[35] This enthusiasm for the role *allochtonen,* and especially those of Turkish backgrounds, can play within Dutch politics is increasingly becoming evident and as increasing number of *allochtonen* already hold significant political positions.

One important *allochtone* in politics presently with a prominent role is Rotterdam's

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35   Bol, Brian van der. 2010. In Den Haag maken de migranten het verschil. *NRC Handelsblad*,

Major, Ahmed Aboutaleb.   Aboutaleb moved to Amsterdam from Morocco with his family as a

child and now retains dual citizenship. Active in Muslim multicultural issues, and became

director of the FORUM Institute for Multicultural Development until he was appointed to the

Amsterdam City Council.   He quickly became the *allochtone* face of the PvdA after Theo van

Gogh's death in 2004 when he was involved in aiding the party locally. Before being appointed

major, he was State Secretary for Social Affairs and Employment for almost two years in the

Balkenende IV cabin[36] Therefore his two upper level political positions have not been elected

and he has not been up for an elected post. His influence has partly been as he is an example of

what an immigrant who is active in Dutch politics in a positive/constructive way. However,

unlike Hrsi Ali discussed previously, while being involved in the debate Aboutaleb has not had a

large influence in framing debate on how Islam as a religion and philosophical practice relates to

Dutch society. In fact, Hrsi Ali remains unique in gaining such a level of acclaim, influence, the

correspondingly dislike, acclaim and influence, Hrsi Ali's voice in the debate is evidence that

even recent migrants will not speak with the same voice are a complex demographic that are

alike because of their differences, and through that how they are treated, rather than because

they all share the same set of intrinsic beliefs.

The 432 *gementeen* in the Netherlands held elections for local city/county councils on

March 3rd, 2010. Most national parties, depending on their size, run in most regions (PvdA and

CDA in practically all), and local parties capture a good portion of the electorate, this March

27% of the seats went to non-national parties.[37] Wilders initially decided after the European

Parliament election that his party would run candidates in four cities where he had a good chance

of winning a significant amount of seats. At the time this was widely discussed and although not

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36   *cv of mr.a ahmed aboutaleb-mayor -Cityportal Rotterdam.* 2010. August 14, 2009
37   *Verkiezingen -de Volkeskrant.* 2010. de Volkeskrant, March 28, 2010

especially surprising, it was unexpected for a party to have done so well nationally to not capitalize and run more broadly. However, Wilders said that he could not find more qualified candidates that he was willing to put on the election lists for his party. However, in March, the PVV had put up candidates only in cities of The Hague and Almere, Wilder's hometown. In Almere, the PVV gained the most seats as predicted, totaling 21.6% of the total council, and in The Hague they gained the second largest amount of seats at 8, behind PvdA who held on to 10 council seats.[38] In neither city did the PVV become a part of the governing coalition due to an inability yo find an acceptable compromise with other parties. The implication of this relatively strong showing is the way immigrants/immigration are being handled by the present government is not deemed sufficient. Since the platform of the PVV does not only contain issues related to immigration but also other conservative issues such as decreasing the state budget, a limited success does not imply that the country is becoming completely intolerant, but since immigration is emphasized it does imply that many people are at least willing to not think about and disregard the 'racist' (depending on who is asked) elements of his world view. However, Wilders has goals of being the next Prime Minister, and with the next national elections coming soon in June, he has an advantage as continuous publicity has always helped his poll numbers.

The right parties in general are not friendly to immigrants, in the Netherlands, and while the PVV is an extreme right wing party, the VVD (People's Party for Freedom and Democracy), the mainstream conservative party (presently the fourth largest in the Second Chamber) is also not friendly towards the present immigration system. However, while the PVV would like to institute a complete halt of immigration for five years, and institute legislation to discourage migrants from taking Dutch citizenship or from staying in the country (such as by trying to further restrict regulations or remove the options for dual citizenship, something he already filed

38 http://www.nrc.nl/binnenland/article2308140.ece

legal suits regarding trying to make some politicians to give up their dual nationality. The VVD

by contrast, instead of referring to the issue as 'mass-immigration', mentions Integration as one of

their priorities. While they also wish to decrease the amount of new immigrants, the tone is very

different, especially concerning those who are already in the country legitimately. Their concern

is phrased in terms of increasing integration which would result in a shared citizenship ("*gedeeld*

burgerschap") and primary goals would involve that immigrants would have to know the Dutch

language and know and respect Dutch norms. Hence, while both parties see a problem with the

present place of many migrants in the Netherlands, especially those from Moroccan or Turkish

background, the policy implications and tone of debate are extremely different. While the VVD

looks for solutions to better incorporate immigrants (re:Muslims) who are isolated from the

Dutch mainstream culture, the PVV seems much more interested in stigmatizing all those with a

Muslim background and pushing them completely out of Dutch society. This tone not only

hence not only affects the flows of migration but the relationship between 'traditional' Dutch

society and Islam, and consequently what people think this shift means.

Even though the PVV has significant support, this may not be enough to allow the party

to be a part of the governing coalition in Parliament after the June 9th elections. Especially since

some parties have
publicly announced that
they will not include the
PVV in any coalition,
including PvdA and D66,
both of which have been
polling on average over

the past year in the top 5 parties.   Also as evidenced from weekly polling done by Maurice de

Hond, a prominent poller the PVV has actually begun to decrease its popularity. Furthermore, as

the PVV was founded as a protest party there may be further difficulty actually running as part of

a governing coalition and Wilders will likely decide unless he is able to be a strong center of a

coalition to remain on the outside so he may continue to criticize and gain popularity in that way.

Going off present polling numbers (which show a loss, but that mostly went to the VVD who

would also be in the coalition), a party containing the PVV would likely contain CDA, VVD,

PVV and CU (a right Christian party). Since two of the larger parties (CDA and PvdA) were just

in a conflict which caused the collapse of the last coalition, it is unlikely (the not impossible) that

they would be willing to form a coalition together, the main competition for polling is the

'Purple+Green' coalition: PvdA, VVD, D66 and GroenLinks. However, a coalition containing

PvdA and CDA would likely only need one extra party (likely D66), instead of a PvdA and VVD

base, and may be more stable since PvdA and VVD have often contradictory economic policies.

What changing popularity means vis-a-vis immigration: The results of the polls do

prominently display the feelings of discontent with the present handling of many issues. The rise

of PVV reflects largely on the dissatisfaction specifically with the immigration situation. Now

that people are beginning to think about what they actually want nationally and as an overall

representation of the nation, the increase of VVD at the expense of PVV is significant.   This

may be due to many factors including the broader range of issues it is seen to represent, similar

immigration stances, but without the racism, and an increase in news over the VVD as they are

organizing themselves for elections.

Backlash From PVV

There has been significant backlash from the populist rhetoric of the PVV. There have been grassroots campaigns, a court case accusing Wilders of hate speech, and political opposition. The main party which has proclaimed itself against the methods and positions is D66. D66 is a center-left party, and has risen in part as a response to the rise of the PVV. The party leader, Alexander Pechtold, has consistently stated that "Geert Wilders is a racist and extremist."[39] Pechtold's strong statements against the atmosphere Wilders creates appeals to many people, while not going as far as the recently demoted leader of the Green-Left party, Femke Femke Halsema. Therefore, there is a large probability that some of these improvements in the polls around the same time as the PVV do not only come because of feelings against the incumbents, but also as they were seen as a middle party and a counter-radicalism party. Although the increase in the polls was not as strong as that of the PVV, the increase represented a strong comeback as they have not been a major party for a couple decades.

On de Volkskrant's website attached to the article noting Pechtold and Wilder's personal disagreement, the majority of respondents said that they did view Wilders as being on the extreme-right. The exact wording was "Geert Wilders calls Alexander Pechtold an accomplice from Mohammed B., since Pechtold in his turn called Wilders an extreme-right politician. Do you also think that Wilders is an extreme-right politician?"[40] Out of 11,305 voters, 59.5% agreed that he was. While these results may not represent the nation as a whole since those who took the survey were self selected and it was hosted on what is seen as a left and layman's paper, the margin is large enough to see that the majority of people who regularly read there news online thinks that Wilders, and maybe the entire PVV is extremist, which is further evidence that most Dutch do not agree with and are strongly against Wilders positions.

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39 "Pechtold: Wilders Is Extreem-Rechts - Binnenland - De Volkskrant:". 2009., translated by paper author
40   Ibid

Wilders has had to face two other challenges recently, (1) a court case prosecuting him personally for hate speech and (2) a report stemming from the Ministry of Interior Affairs that initially implicated the PVV in undermining social cohesion and democracy within the Netherlands.[41] Initially the court case brought against him was thrown out as his statements were meant not to incite hatred but in the context of the public debate referring largely to a decision by the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) allowing for shocking and offensive statements in the public debate.[42]   While the Ministry eventually changed elements of the report for political reasons, the researchers, Hans Moors, Bob de Graaff and Jaap van Donselaar, strongly support their initial conclusions and word choices. (Qualifying something as 'extreme-right' is still very politically sensitive as it implies closeness with totalitarian.) What was especially controversial was the implication that Wilders himself was a threat to the safety of the state. The report about radicalization in the Netherlands is not yet published, but the argument centers on how the party "mobilizes islamophobia and systematic hatred against the government."[43] He mobilizes and validifies anxieties within people and agitates others both within and outside of the country. When the Volkskrant published this article on October 31st, 2009 before anything official about the report were released, the reactions to it were strong and immediate. Wilders angrily denied the claims of the reporters, insisting his party followed all democratic principles and that this sort of report was ridiculous and was evidence that the left-wing elite and Islamitization were the true causes of any threats to democracy in the country.

Also there have been some private campaigns which attempt to prove that Wilders does not represent the nation. When the Fitna movie was released amid great controversy, a grassroots 'sorry' campaign started involving short clips of Dutch people apologizing for the

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41   Groen, Janny, and Annieke Kranenberg. 2009.
42   2008 Human Rights Report: Netherlands. 2009.
43   Groen, Janny, and Annieke Kranenberg. 2009.

racist and populist rhetoric. While a decently large number were posted and are still hosted on

various websites such as You Tube, it cannot be said that such an act was largely embarrassed

even by those who dislike Wilders ideas. This exemplifies the large range of reactions to Wilders

within the Netherlands: some gradually accepting his notions, others against him completely,

while many more are against his ideas but believe he also has the right to say what he wishes

under free speech.[44]

Why Society Accepts Increasing Intolerance

Factors which are shown to affect tolerance include education and income. However the

recent regular newspaper reports on criminality in immigrant youth, Islam in schools and

neighborhood segmentation has fostered reasons why it might be legitimate to be intolerant.[45]

In Jochem Tolsma's 2008 study looking at reasons for ethnic hostility in the Netherlands,

he found evidence that not only the predicted factors of age, education attainment, position in the

labor market, and degree of religiousness make a difference in how a Dutch person views those

in different ethnic groups but also their own social/educational mobility and the local living

environment. His main conclusion was that in general when moving to a different

social/educational groups, tolerance is a 'sticky' value, i.e. if ones parents were in a generally

less tolerant class but one moves to a more tolerant class, than one will tend towards

acculturation to the destination groups level of tolerance. But if ones parents were from a

generally more tolerant class, and one moves to a less tolerant class then while your tolerance

level will likely be lower than that of your parents, it will remain be higher than the rest of your

new class. However, Tolsma cautions against equating this to a necessary gradual increase

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44 Velthoven, William. 2010.
45 Avci, Gamze. 2006. p. 2.

towards a more tolerant society as there are exceptions as there are exceptions to "upper" classes being more tolerant and "hostile attitudes may become more prevalent among all social classes because of shifts in macro-sociological conditions such as public events linked to ethnic conflict (e.g. hate crimes), large scale immigration fluxes, or economic recessions."[46] This was in support of the tolerance dominance hypotheses which stated that "acculturation to the level of ethnic hostility of the achieved social position will be stronger when these attitudes are more in congruence with the dominant culture of tolerance within society.[47] Implying that it is because of the general support of tolerant attitudes in the broader framework of Dutch society that tolerance tends to be a 'sticky' value among the socially mobile.

Tolsma also finds that some methods of expressing intolerance may be more socially acceptable than others, specifically that intermarriage is a more charged issue. Between the three measures used to judge a person's tolerance (stereotypical attitudes, feelings of ethnic threat, and opposition to ethnically mixed marriages), opposition to ethnically mixed marriages were much higher among all groups.[48] Causes may include historical trends in pillarization and separation, and a general culture that expressing (though not holding) stereotypes is negative for society in addition to conservative family lives. Under pillarization, religious and social groups did not have much contact, and religious intermarriage remained uncommon, hence this mindset against ethnic intermarriage cannot be seen as anything new towards immigrants, but rather as an extension of an existing trend. However, stereotypes and feelings of threats from other groups have not existed in a visceral sense throughout the last few generations between groups who traditionally lived in the Netherlands, and furthermore due to the experiences of WWII singling groups out within the country who were problematic was something that was just not done,

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46 Tolsma, p. 44,45
47 Ibid
48 Ibid

although with Pim Fortuyn's radical speeches in the 1990s some of the mental barriers around the language usage began to fade.

The perception of high criminality among young (urban) *allochtonen* has added to the negative impression and led to a feeling that something must be done to fix the rising crime rates. Also, the fact of violence such as honor killings which do occur, and although there are no statistics on the number of killings, in 2006 there were 437 cases of reported honor related violence in The Hague and Amsterdam.[49] This adds to concerns over Muslims ability to integrate into a culture which abhors this kind of violence. This also adds to the cost of maintaining a social order and justice, as the program on prosecution and prevention of honors killings received approximately 13 million euros,

Another reason for the growing intolerance is lack of knowledge about the other ethnic groups. For example Tolsma found support for the contact theory as individuals have "less negative views on ethnic out-groups when the percentage of such groups in municipalities is higher" and is valid across education levels.[50]

Government Efforts on Toleration

The Dutch government along with society has traditional fostered an atmosphere of tolerance and acceptance of others within society. This section will note a few recent measures the government has taken to encourage tolerance, either by tackling the underlying issues, or creating an atmosphere which encourages tolerance. In his theories on tolerance, Heyd shows that "a modern liberal state can and should promote the value of interpersonal tolerance in society" and that through education and institutional support has the theoretical capacity to

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49 2008 Human Rights Report: Netherlands. 2009.
50   Ibid p. 68.

influence degrees of tolerance.[51] The Netherlands follows this logic, and while the actual results

may be arguable, the view of this type of attitude has and still is a foundation of Dutch inter-

cultural relations. The importance placed on the issue is evidenced in part by the 25 million

Euros for a four year neighborhood and school grants as part of an comprehensive outreach

campaign.[52] While most policies are set at a national level, several local governments have

started their own programs tailored to their situations.

The largest difference between local and the national government's approaches to

integration is that while the national government is focused on a "citizenship approach" to

integrating immigrants, local governments seem more accomodative in working with migrant

organizations. In the article "Two Worlds Apart," Dutch scholars Caelesta Poppelaars and Peter

Scholten argue that the difference is not purely the result of a gap in policy transposing, but "a

result of divergent institutional logic on problem framing."[53] Because of this consistent

divergence in actions due to perceived differences nationally and locally, it becomes difficult to

test if an overall policy approach is working. The conflicting methods have contributed to the

issue of immigration and integration becoming an intractable political problem.

The range of policies include those restricting public speech inciting hatred or

discrimination, for which a few court cases are prosecuted a year, equalizing educational

opportunities, outreach programs, and language and cultural integration programs.

Requirements under the Newcomer Integration Act

The Newcomer Integration Act of 1998 required a contract between immigrants and the

government requiring immigrants to attend and the government to provide courses on the

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51 Heyd, David. 2008. p. 181
52 2008 Human Rights Report: Netherlands. 2009.
53 Poppelaars, Caelesta, and Peter Scholten. 2008. p. 336.

Netherlands and other integration programs, which totaled on average 600 hours per immigrant. The benefits that the immigrant would be eligible for would be severely cut if they did not attend.[54]

Education

Education level strongly impacts minority groups abilities and perceptions of the groups in the future and therefore education policy which address migrant issues work towards goals of equality and exemplify the values which the government is attempting to spread and promote. Since Rotterdam is one of the cities with a large proportion of migrants, examining the effectiveness of Dutch public policies in tackling educational challenges here represents a good barometer of policy in general.

From a government administrative standpoint, two large issues for handling immigrants especially in regards to the central issue of education are (1) language assimilation, and (2) equivalently high standards for all schools allowing successful integration into the job market. The CITO test is one measure which can be used to look at the strength of primary education as it tests which level of secondary education they may enroll into. One problem Rotterdam faces, which is in part influenced by the high percentage *allochtone,* is a high unemployment rate and low levels of schooling on both the part of the *allochtone* and the *autochtone* parents due to the economic situation of the area. A 2001 survey reports that about half of all students in Rotterdam have low –educated *allochtone* parents and another sixteen percent have low-educated *autochtone* parents, representing a clear disadvantage to these children. One program the Rotterdam has implemented that has had a positive impact on primary school education is

54 Avci, Gamze. 2006. p. 68.

increasing the involvement off their parents and providing Dutch lessons to the parents to engage them in their children's education process. The overall umbrella plan that all the issues discussed herein are a part of is the *Rotterdams Onderwijs Achterstandenplan* 2002-2006 (ROAP-II) (or Rotterdam's Educational Plan for the Educationally Disadvantaged for 2002-2006). The naming of the program is interesting though typical, even though a large part of the program is aimed at *allochtone* students, the program title refers only to economic status. Efforts to raise the score have met with success, although the target rate is still below the national average. Also, these children seem to have a double disadvantage in regards to starting school at the same level, and normally need on average twice as much help as those who are *autochtone* come from parents with low-skilled jobs. One major problem, and a cause behind the high unemployment rate, was that a lot of students were graduating with a low ability level from the Rotterdam school system so that they were not hireable for the jobs available in the market, creating further disenfranchisement. Parent involvement was measured to impact children's scores and comes in two different forms: (1) formally helping out at the school, at events and talking to the teachers and other parents, and (2) being personally involved in and supportive of their child's individual academic career. Furthermore, with parental involvement comes a buy in not only into the educational process but also to the different types of futures their family can have as part of the Netherlands, or at least as part of their community. A reason for the classes to help teach parents Dutch as a more specific initiative then the normal country wide push for Dutch classes is that if the parents do not know Dutch, children will be less likely to speak it, especially since compulsory education begins at five years old, by which point it is already becoming more difficult for children to absorb languages.

The conclusions of a previously mentioned study looking at the roots of intolerance

concluded that among local changes to the environment of neighborhoods, raising the mean level

of income most increased the social cohesion of a neighborhood, although the effect differs

among residents and localities.[55] However, his examination primarily used hard factors in the

analysis, and therefore excluded effects such as media and programming based on directly

effecting peoples understanding of each other.

Conclusion

Tolerance in the Netherlands has not decreased, rather the issue of immigrants has

exposed the limits of the type of tolerance present within the society. The tolerance of 'live and

let live' forming in the consocial government working together as separate entities. The entrance

of a large minority who is significantly different than any of the societal splits which previously

divided the populace at a time when these difference where becoming less significant, in part to

the secularization of the country. However, while there is still need for significant adjustment to

the new demographics of the Dutch populace and thus significant impact in short-term politics,

the long-term belief in the Netherlands as an open, tolerant and modern society will drive a

greater acceptance of those of different backgrounds.

The upcoming June Parliamentary elections will be influenced by immigration and

integration policies, but will not be controlled by the issue do to the other prominent issues

caused primarily by the economic crises. The VVD and PVV will keep the issue within the press

and the voters minds and the economic problems will likely only enhance the issue. However,

while the PVV will get more seats than they did at the last election (at 9 seats), they may not

even make the top three parties looking at the present trends. And while the VVD will likely be

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55   Tolsma, p. 90.

large enough to play a significant role in several coalition governments, with their primarily

liberal economic focus, the issue of immigrant integration will not be their focus. If the VVD is

part of the coalition government, than integration of *allochtonen* into society will still be

important, but it will not be so much perceived as a race issue, and dealt with more

bureaucratically as is the tradition for issues where coalition partners disagree.

A final short-term indication of discontent is that while the government is now more

prepared to deal with an attack than they were when Mohammed B. stabbed van Gogh,

according to the report on radicalization by the Ministry of the Interior, an attack now would

cause much greater social damage.[56] This increase in volatility is largely due to suspicions and

media promotion. While feelings of distrust may continue in the short term and have a lasting

impact, the public national and local programs on increasing the social cohesion of the nation are

having an impact, and as a greater spread of voices are heard and the public becomes used to

their significance.

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56   Groen, Janny, and Annieke Kranenberg. 2009.

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