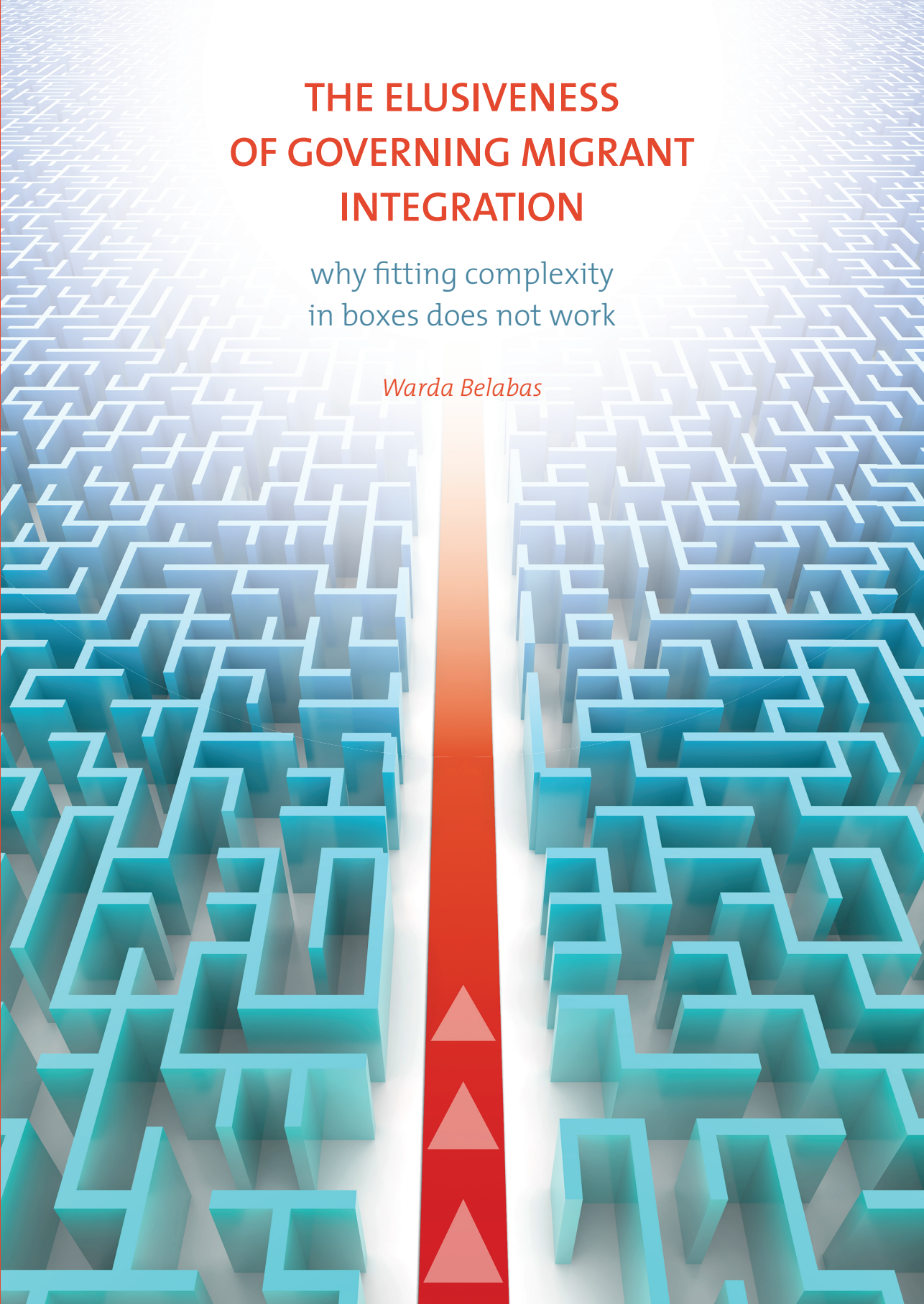
THE ELUSIVENESS OF GOVERNING MIGRANT INTEGRATION

why fitting complexity in boxes does not work

Warda Belabas



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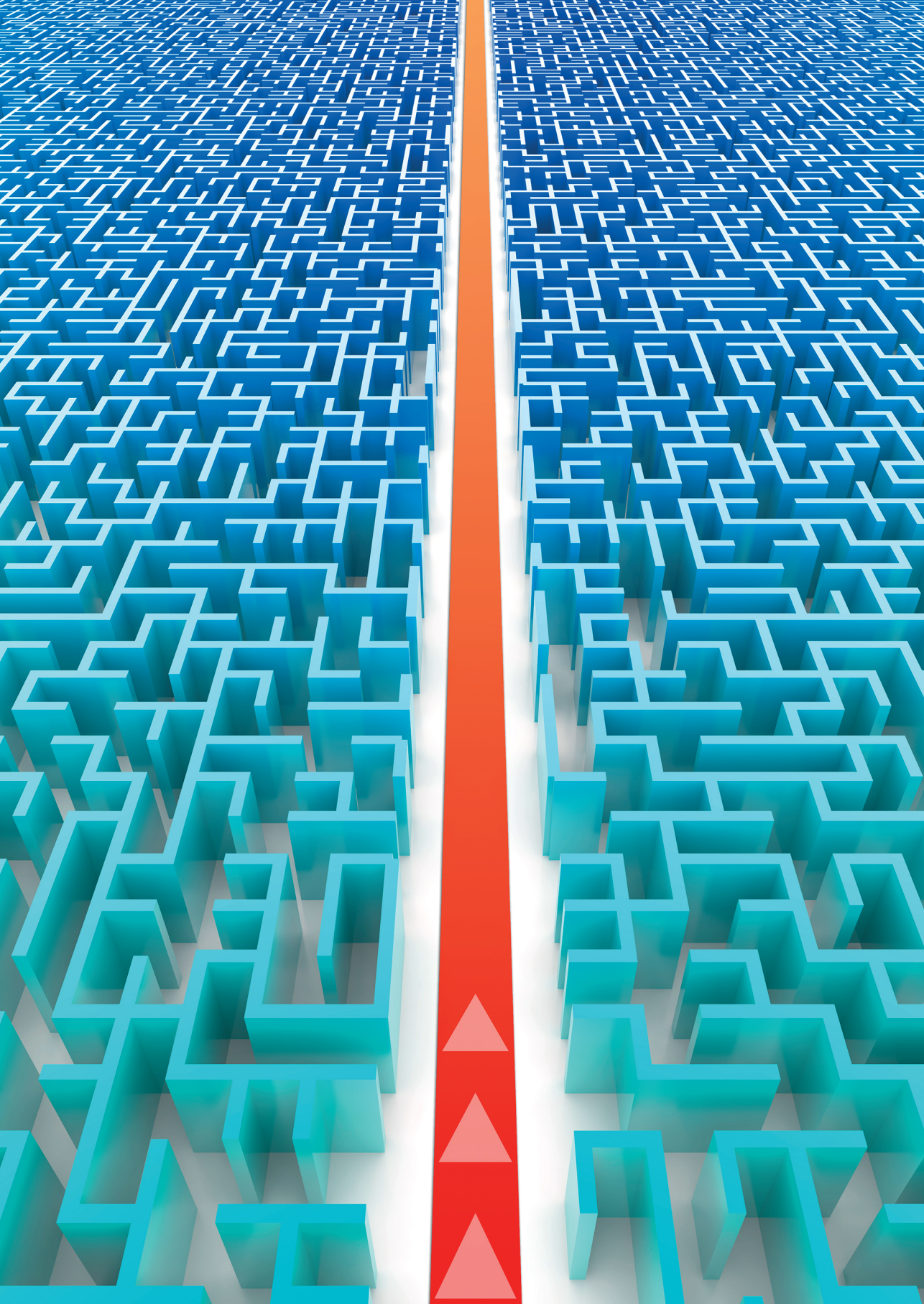

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

1. PUTTING MIGRANTS IN BOXES

> *"I feel very uncomfortable when I have to call – on behalf of the municipality - an older migrant, let's say an illiterate who's in his 60s and has a lot of other problems on his mind – telling him that he is obligated to participate in the integration course. I know that he will get exemption in case that he is suffering from health problems, so in such cases I deliberately ask them about their health so I can find a more appropriate way of dealing with their specific situation."*

(Source: Client-manager, working at the Municipality in The Hague).

This quote by a client-manager working at the municipality in The Hague is a profound example of the many situations that street-level workers encounter in implementing integration policies. While governments – both on a local, national and even on a European level – are concerned with *developing* integration policies in order to to deal with the settlement of migrants that are part of society, it is on the *local level* of street-level workers that such policies actually are implemented in *real-life decisions* that impact on immigrant's lives. In making these decisions, street-level workers are dealing with local complexities of migrant integration that often are not grasped in broader integration policies. Moreover, the example of this client-manager shows that the individual cases that they are assigned to deal with, do not fit the 'boxes' that are presumed in policy guidelines. In this example, the aged migrant, has been living in the Netherlands for more than 40 years and until now had very little interaction with Dutch government. The migrant worked for most part of his live in a factory and spoke a bit Dutch to communicate with his colleagues. The physical work in the factory impacted heavily on his health and financial situation, which led him to live a very simple life in the midst of his family and neighbours. The more the client-manager learned about the pathway of the migrant, the more difficult it became for her to classify him in the box of 'settled migrants' (in Dutch: oudkomers), who were recently called by the municipality to participate in Dutch integration courses. The street-level worker in this case learned her ways of dealing with local complexity and found creative ways of dealing with the frustration and discomfort that she experienced. She was convinced that this specific incentive of forced participation would not lead to a better integration of her client in society.

This example shows that migration and integration are in essence examples of policy fields that are complex, which means that there is not one clear problem definition nor a one-way solution that is accepted by everyone involved. Moreover, it shows how governments are confronted with several factors that may limit societal steering in practise. This stands in sharp contrast with narratives of policy-makers and politicians that presume a great

influence of state's or governments to actually control migration and integration. A recent example concerns a Dutch politician - leader of the Liberal Parties – who called for several measures to improve migrant integration in the Netherlands, such us forcing migrants to participate in courses on democratic values and obligating migrant parents to send their children to day-care centres to improve their language skills. In addition, and even more contested, was his plan to double crime penalties for migrants in 'disadvantaged parts of the city', as a way of combatting what he calls 'failed integration'. This exemplifies how in the debate on immigrant integration policy interventions are tended to simplify reality. It does not take in account the complex stories of migrants, which street-level workers are confronted with. Boswell (2011) argues that the simplified narrative on migrant integration eventually will lead to failing the expectations of the public. These expectations are high, especially given the politicized and sensitive debate regarding migrants, which has harshened in recent years and in which the stay and integration of migrants in society has become more and more problematized by politicians in several European countries (Entzinger, 2006). More importantly, such narratives do not fit the reality of street-level workers, who interact with migrants on a more structural basis and who – as we will see in this dissertation – are struggling with the complexities of governing migrant integration.

My dissertation focuses on migrant integration as a governing problem and approaches the issue from an empirical point of view. I will focus on governing responses by local actors, and unlike many other studies – my starting point lies with *those* who are actually confronted with migration-related challenges, i.e.: migrants themselves and local governments, such as street-level bureaucrats and other public professionals working c.q. confronted with migrants in the policies that they implement or design. I use a qualitative approach, which means that the main data that was generated in this thesis has been collected by systematically extracting causal structures from the data, while keeping very close to the world that migrants, policy makers and –implementers are experiencing, and the decisions or actions that follow the logic of these subjective perceptions of reality. There are many studies focusing on the workings of migrant integration and integration policies, using different (national) integration models to understand immigrant integration. Some of these studies have focused on the national level, others on the local level – and some on the interaction or divergence between the two (Jorgensen, 2012). As Bertossi (2011), and others, have stressed: the problem with these models is that "social actors, from politicians to veiled Muslim women, are portrayed as simply inheriting these ideas, using them and adapting them" (p. 1562). In my view, many of the research that underlies these studies is hence characterized by a top-down approach that does not sufficiently take in account the perspective of *local reality*. A reality which often conflicts with political or policy rationalities, which – the opening quote shows - assume a certain linearity in various causal factors and policy interventions. An implication of such assumptions, brings

us to the belief that governments are very much able to control migration and integration related issues. *I disagree.* This dissertation will show the reality of dealing with complexity on a local level. It will do so by showing the complex and rich integration trajectories of migrants on the one hand, and the responses of governing actors that directly or indirectly work with migrants on the other hand. In concrete, this means that my research question breaks down in several questions that focus on reconstructing the series of bureaucratic contacts that migrants had during their integration trajectories, unravelling how these street-level workers deal with the dilemmas of their work, and understanding how and why migrants and local governing actors try to manage their identity in this new era of superdiversity. Following Wagenaar (2007), I argue that these governing actors may not have the analytical understanding that researchers or policymakers possess, but they do have "a ready understanding of the complexity of the issues that affect them" (ibid, p. 26). *How do they then make sense of and deal with this complexity?*

In sum, this thesis uses the *perspectives* and *interactions* from both migrants and local governing actors that are closely involved in responding to the complexities of migration-related diversity to grasp the bigger picture of governing migrant integration. This picture is more complex than existing political narratives are showing us. More importantly, such a picture adds to our understanding of the social reality which governments are dealing with and about the effects that their actions have "on the ground".

2. GOVERNING MIGRANT INTEGRATION ON THE LOCAL LEVEL

This section will provide some background on governing steering literature in general, and connects it correspondingly to the issue of governing migration-related integration in particular.

2.1 Migration-related diversity in cities

The need to manage diversity is felt more than ever before– in particular on the local (city) level. Cities are impacted by migration patterns, because these are the places where immigrants arrive and settle, thus shaping the cities' economy, ethnic composition, cultural and religious landscape as well as city's politics and government (Bolt & van Liempt, 2018; Saunders, 2011). Subsequently, this means that cities are confronted with questions regarding cultural diversity, but also regarding linked policies such as education, urban planning, health and social services (Wood & Landry, 2008). How city governments respond with regards to the challenges and opportunities that cultural diversity brings *matter*s because it determines whether cities will succeed or be overwhelmed "in the conditions arising out of the new global interdependence" (ibid). But even though there are cities that perceive

the migration-related diversity as a promising asset or strength, "local governments […] are seldom prepared to cope with the ad hoc policies needed to integrate people with different cultural, social and religious traditions into the urban society" (Balbo & Marconi, 2005: 706).

Adding to the challenge of governing diversity is the reality of global migration flows that consist of "newer, smaller, transient, more socially stratified, less organized and more legally differentiated immigrant groups" (Vertovec, 2007). Some authors – e.g. Vertovec (2007) and Tasan-Kok, van Kempen, Raco & Bolt (2014) – speak of "superdiverse" or " hyper diverse" cities, implying that diversity has become so intense that one can no longer speak of minority issues connected to specific groups, but rather a transformation of urban life in general. This diversification that Vertovec (2007;2010) – and others - point to hold not only true for the migrant's country of origin, but also applies to the socio-economic, cultural, religious and linguistic backgrounds of immigrants as well as their migration channel and their legal status (ibid.). This has implications for how cities deliver local services to its residents, how they use and (re)create public spaces, (Pestieau & Wallace, 2003), but also for how cities engage in identity building and how they deal with social cohesion related concerns. Consequently, it is only fair to expect that social discussions and political cleavages will be provoked as a result of such policy decisions, which are often connected to broader dilemmas as "how to manage religious questions, language diversity and the cultural practises of immigrants" (Zapata-Barrero, 2015: 3). This is especially true for European cities, in which "urban management responsibilities have generally been shifted from central to local governments" (Balbo &Marconi, 2006: 707), making local authorities key actors in urban decision-making (see also Ponzini, 2014).

At the same time though, local governments have to take in account national policies and cannot respond autonomously, as governing complex social problems such as migrant integration involves not only local, but also national governments. Moreover, the attention of national governments for migration integration has only increased, especially after the millennium. The increasing attention for migrant integration is reflected in the many changes that this policy field has undergone in the last two decades, which on its turn also indicates its contested nature. More and more political parties have expressed their concerns regarding migrant integration, placing the issue in the broader context of national identity and social cohesion in Dutch society. This discourse was accompanied by stricter policies regarding migrant's integration, which is mainly expressed in civil integrations tests for migrants aiming to promote of Dutch values and norms (Joppke, 2007). On a local level, integration policies of a city as Rotterdam have taken very different shapes, depending on the composition of the political coalition in which right-wing parties were represented during some time period while absent in others (Dekker & van

Breugel, 2018). In Amsterdam on the other hand, we witnessed some changes in the realm of minority policies, but in general the promotion of intercultural dialogue and diversity policy remained strong throughout the years (Uitermark, Rossi & van Houtum, 2005).Local integration policies sometimes hence differ from national guidelines, are interpreted differently in local policy practices or even contradict with the national level (e.g. Alexander, 2007; Caponio and Borkert, 2010 and Penninx et al, 2004). In any case, integration policies are influenced by multilevel interactions that lead to mutual exchanges between local and national level governments (Dekkers et al, 2015). Moreover, key to these policy making processes is the deliberate choice of certain problem definitions, target groups and policy tools. In the case of migrant integration, a policy field that is constantly changing in the midst of a polarized debate, the pressure to simplify and categorize migrants into a 'manageable' number of boxes is more evident in these choices and processes than in other policy domains. The question then is, how do (local) governments respond and which instruments are there to *appropriately* and *effectively* deal with migrant integration? In the next section, this question is hence addressed.

2.2 How to respond: classic command and control versus laissez faire?

City governments face the task of developing and (re)designing policies that on the one hand suit the urban transformations that the city is experiencing and on the other hand their policies need to take in account national guidelines, which are often the result of a politicized debate that is characterized by a harshened tone regarding migrants (Crul & Schneider 2010; Entzinger, 2009). Traditionally, governments had a range of tools "at their disposal for exercising their influence over the economy and society" (Linder & Peters, 1989). The distinction between legal, economic and communicative instruments that Van der Doelen developed is widely used by many authors (Peters & Van Nispen, 1998), whereas Howlett (2009) speaks about "resources" that governments have at their disposal to counter societal issues, distinguishing between the traditional use of coercive authority, financial incentives, the use of government staff and organization, but also information and deliberation as a way to guide societal behaviour.

The degree in which governments apply such specific governing tools or mechanism to achieve policy goals varies and is often connected to more abstract preferences for certain 'governing conceptions' (Bekkers, 1993) or 'government modes' (Kooiman, 1999), ranging from a more command-and control way of interfering to a more laissez-faire attitude in which governments lean on the capacity of society to reach social goals. Kooiman (1999) in this respect distinguishes a) 'hierarchical governing', which corresponds with the classical mode of steering, assuming that governments are very much capable to exercise social control; b) co-governing, in which "parties co-operate, communicate 'sideways', without a central or dominating governing actor"; and c) 'self-governing', based on the idea that

societal actors in modern societies are capable of governing themselves. In particular the 'command and control' way of approaching societal problems has been criticized and "accused of being costly and inefficient, of stifling innovation, inviting enforcement difficulties and focusing on 'end of pipe' solutions" (Sinclair, 1997: 530). Alternative ways of government interference have hence been object of interest more than ever before. Among many other scholars, Salamon (2002) has argued that governments can no longer rely on their own resources to solve societal problems, rather due to the complex nature of many problems they are forced to consider collaborative problem solving, characterized by "its reliance on a wide array of third parties in addition to government" (p.). Howlett (2009) argues that the coordination and management of these complex networks of interorganizational actors is becoming more and more problematic (Howlett, 2009). The immense body of literature on the shift from government to governance, demonstrates the awareness of the need to govern, steer and guide developments in society differently.

Consequently, many scholars have analysed governance networks in order to understand the role of these networks in articulating, developing and implementing public policies (see e.g. Kickert, Klijn & Koppenjan, 1997; Klijn 2008; Pierre & Peters, 2000). In our current societies, governments face far more demands from a broad scale of actors, while at the same time being more dependent of parties in- and outside of government to address social problems. Koppenjan & Klijn (2015) stress that these patterns of interactions are not always harmonious or cooperative, because there are many different interests and perceptions of policy problems and policy measures that can solve these problems. Klijn (2008) points out that governance process remain political, as in essence they are about "reconciling different values as well as the different actors representing those values" (p.509). This change towards a network society makes societies less governable, which on it turn leads to limitations in government steering. Some authors have questioned if these practises are indeed a late twenty-century response to complexity, or whether "what is changing is not so much the practise of government but the accounts that are given of this practise" (see amongst others Colebatch, 2009: p. 65,). Another part of the debate concentrates on the question if governments indeed are losing power. Some scholars have questioned this and claim that governments are still very much in charge, acting directly or indirectly, "but nevertheless continue to act significantly in every mode of governing, from hierarchical to market and network forms" (Capono, Howlett and Ramesh, 2015). Zehavi (2012), for example, has argued that critiques on classical approaches of government steering are hence not necessary leading to policies that acknowledge the boundaries of governmental interference.

This proves to be true for immigrant integration policies as well. When, for instance, we take a closer look at integration policies in many European countries - in particular in

places where right-wing populist voices reached governing positions – dominant policy discourses reflect the belief that governments are capable of solving issues of immigrant integration (Favell, 2003; Boswell, 2011). As a reaction to hostile public attitudes towards immigrants, Western European governments have developed policy solutions that are grounded in regulative and coercive force to incorporate immigrants in the 'new' society that they are now part of. Countries such as the Netherlands, France and Germany, have for example introduced restrictive legislation that necessitates settled and new immigrants to pass their integration tests (Joppke, 2007).

Subsequently, Favell (2003) argues that discussions in Western Europe on immigrant integration show the dominance of what he calls a "nation-state integration-paradigm" that promotes the idea that governments are actually able to achieve immigrant integration through systematic intervention of collective political action. Examples of such policy interventions include naturalization and citizenship rights, anti-discrimination laws, redistribution of socioeconomic funds for minorities in deprived areas as well as policies on housing, law and order and on tolerating cultural practises of immigrants. Much of these strategies demonstrate the belief that integration is something that a state can 'do', which on its turn precludes "the idea that a society might achieve an integrated state of affairs without the state's intervention" (ibid, p. 3). After all, immigrants are subject to many other social interactions and social powers at the local labour market or at the city-community level, which cannot necessarily be 'governed' by public authorities.

This is especially true for present-day societies that are characterised by their "diversity, complexity and dynamics". In such contexts, Kooiman (1999) argues that "to be effective – that is to say, up to standards such as efficiency, legitimacy and fairness – social-political governing itself has to reflect the diverse, dynamic and complex character of the challenges it faces." (p. 75). In reality though, many governing attempts prove to be inefficient, unjust or weak, because "problem definitions are too simple, policies too static and audiences too generalized" (ibid.). It are especially local governments that are confronted with these oversimplified, static and too generalized policies, especially since the shift from government to governance does not only entail a horizontal, but also downward vertical shift from national to sub-national, regional and local levels. Governments are not necessarily only 'steering' (setting policy goals), but also implementing those goals in actions through selection and use of instruments on the local level ('rowing', see e.g. Osborne & Gaebler, 1992).

In this context, Hupe & Hill stress the fact that deregulation and decentralization "strengthen the discretion of public organizations to make binding decisions, presumably leading to more efficient and effective results (In Bekkers, Dijkstra and Fenger, 2016). This of course

corresponds with the broader literature on policy implementation, in particular those studies that compare prescribed policy instructions to the practice of policy implementation. Works on 'street-level bureaucrats' or 'frontline-workers' recognizes the role and impact of these workers and the discretionary room that they possess on the one hand and the struggle and coping that this brings with it on the other hand (see for example Lipsky, 1980, Freidson, 2001; Tummers et al, 2012). Street level bureaucrats, frontline workers or implementers are not simply "a vehicle for giving effect to the choices of political leaders", but need to be treated as distinctive identities within governments (Colebatch, 2009: p. 59). More recent work by Zacka (2017) profoundly shows how 'the street' is not only passively implementing policies, but is actively contributing to what these policies actually *mean*. In doing so, street-level workers "are moral agents in their own right with distinctive moral dispositions" (ibid, p. 249).

For the study of migrant integration, this means that one needs to use different lenses to the same situation to really grasp government actions. Governments are rational actors, have a variety of disconnected specialisations to their disposal *and* function in an arena of rivalry and conflict *all at the same time* (Allison 1971, as paraphrased by Colebatch, 2009). Special attention is required for implementation practices by street-level implementers, which in the field of migrant integration are under-researched. When shedding light on these implementation practises, one can finally understand - as Pressman & Wildavsky (1984) already pointed out almost half a century ago – why great expectations of politicians on the national level are dashed at the local level. In this dissertation, we will unravel how the high expectations of politicians that presume that an aggressive approach to migrants will lead to better outcomes, is downplayed by the complexities of local reality which these workers encounter.

2.3 'Selling' migration-related diversity in an area of diminishing collective identities

While national governments more and more are adopting restrictive policies – that intend to 'control' successful migrant integration – local governments are put in a much more difficult position when it comes to deciding 'where they stand'. Local governments, who are often directly confronted with the social tensions as well as the economic benefits that result from the cultural diversification of city populations, are forced to respond to the needs of both native residents as immigrants. This exposes them to serious policy dilemmas.

On the one hand, cities can choose to show an explicit societal or community commitment to respect and accommodate diversity. However, if cities decide to respond in this manner, it becomes important for them to "legitimise spending money on 'soft' policy areas such as

diversity by their connection to 'hard economic profits'" (Hoekstra, 2015: 1800). Some cities have followed this particular narrative on diversity and have hence used their multi-ethnic resident composition as a way of strengthening their international competitiveness on the world stage, for example by using diversity as a key selling point in their branding strategies. In addition to their own attempts to 'sell' migration, city governments are also faced with the task of understanding the interests that other actors have in encouraging or rejecting migration-related diversity, which means that they need to set up "a system of governance focusing on these actors, as well as on urban migrants"(Balbo & Marconi, 2005: 715).

On the other hand, explicitly accepting or embracing diversity – regardless of the question of if this is done for economic or social purposes - comes with the necessary risks, because investing *too much* in the needs of new residents can also decrease the attractiveness of the city to property owners or potential investors (Frisken & Wallace, 2003). More importantly, the latter authors argue that local authorities are reluctant to explicitly embrace cultural differences and investing in the needs of immigrants, given the hostile attitude of old city residents who "view immigrants as competitors for scarce public amenities or as drains on local tax bases" (ibid, p. 176). This is in line with the general observation that arrival and settlement of migrants is experienced by (some) native-residents as a threat for national identity, social cohesion and community building. Local governments are thus forced to constantly rethink and redefine their responsibilities towards many interests and actors – "institutions and individuals, public and private, legal and illegal" (Balbo & Marconi, 2005: 715) - that are not necessarily in favour of approaching diversity as an asset, but which city governments – *especially* in the new reality of governance - can't ignore.

At the heart of this balancing act of local governments lies a specific question that really underlies the dilemma: how do (local) governmental responses to migrant integration *impact* on identity and feelings of belonging? Inevitably choices that cities and national coalitions eventually make, prove to impact feelings of identification and belonging of both natives and migrants. Political discourses as well as actual policies are accompanied by a narrative, a storyline, a message on who "we" as a nation or a city "are" – which inherently includes and excludes people in society. National identity only becomes meaningful by the fact that nations distinguish themselves from significant 'others' (Triandafyllidou, 2013). The political and societal discussions on migrant integration are clearly characterized by attempts to define what the Dutch identity entails and especially: what (and hence who) is *not* perceived as *"Dutch"*. The many references to the national history by politicians, which is translated in concrete interventions as newcomers are expected to learn about the national history and Dutch values that are highly valued in society - marks the heat of the issue (see also Entzinger, 2006).

The negative discourse regarding migrants on the national level has proven to impact negatively on migrants, as they identify less with the Netherlands or the Dutch culture at large than their native-peers (Crul & Heering, 2008; Entzinger 2009). Furthermore, the heated political and social discussions also impact on natives: the settlement of migrants in society is becoming experienced more and more as threatening to Dutch culture, especially the visible presence of Muslim migrants in public space. The building of mosques, the use of religious symbols such as headscarves or statements of orthodox imams – are all feeding these feelings of anxiety, threat and insecurity among the Dutch (Tonkens, Hurenkamp and Duyvendak, 2010). Interestingly, research shows us that even though migrants feel less at home in the Netherlands, they can identify more strongly with the cities that they are living in and this identification seems to be less effected by the politicized debate on migrants in the Netherlands. Collective identity-building on the local level has hence the potential of becoming an important means or 'tool' in dealing with migration-related diversity, or more concrete: a means for enhancing migrant integration. In the midst of this contested policy field, governments are expected to make choices regarding their identity.

Local governments have hence to find *ways* to govern, steer and guide migration-related diversity, *within* the limited capacity that they actually possess to influence or manage the complexities of diversities. The loss of governance control in the urban context led some authors to claim that "public policies can be no more than experiments inserted into the 'relational ensemble' of the city" (Kearns & Paddision 2000, p. 846), whereas others have a more optimistic view when it comes to the impact of government policies on urban complexity (p. 847). In deciding how to respond, cities are confronted with many interests and values that they need to consider and take in account. Identity and building a collective sense of belonging is one that is hardly to be ignored in the new context of growing migration. This necessitates a constant weighing up of the pros and cons of alternative government choices, which demands the art of carefully balancing standards such as efficiency, legitimacy and fairness. Surprisingly though, not many studies have investigated the range of local policies and political choices available to large cities in the globalized context in a comparative manner (Polese & Stren, 2000: p. 12). "Fewer still have attempted […] to sketch out the structural basis of local policies in relation to the challenge of cultural and ethnic diversity" (ibid). This dissertation therefore revolves around the question of how local governments are making sense and are responding to the challenges of increasingly diverse societies. In the next sections I will further explain the focus of this research, including its methodological, theoretical, and practical relevance.

3. RELEVANCE AND CONTRIBUTION

Integration of migrants in receiving societies have been object of study for many years now. The body of literature on migrant integration is immense, even though the whole concept of 'integration' has also been criticized and questioned by many authors (e.g. Schinkel, 2018; Favell, 2019; and many others). Instead of abandoning the concept of immigrant integration as a field of research, some authors advocate it as a governance technique that can be critically studied (see for example Hadj-Abdou, 2019). Existing studies on (the governance of) immigrant integration however, are often based in a top-down approach with little attention for the behaviour of immigrant groups themselves (see e.g. Favell, 2001) or with little focus on governmental workers that actual work with migrants on a frequent basis (van der Leun, 2006). With exception of a few studies there is not much research regarding street-level bureaucracy and migrant integration. Focusing on street-level bureaucrats is hence in line with recent calls to recognize the agency of local actors and their power and influence (Forrest and Wissink, 2017). This corresponds with the claim of Bertossi (2011, see section 2.1) that the focus on national models leads to neglecting of migrants - and I would also claim street-level workers - as social actors that are not only simply inheriting, using and adapting to ideas. This dissertation goes beyond the limited narratives of these top-down models by unravelling the governing of migrant integration, using the perspectives of local actors, with a detailed account of where there ideas take power from, and the processes and mechanism through which they shape social reality. The theoretical relevance of this research thus lies in in offering a more comprehensive and contextualized understanding of the governing of migrant integration, by using the perspectives of those that are most closely involved. In doing so, I bring together various theoretical bodies of literature, in a way that has not been conducted before. In chapter 2, I apply a complexity theory perspective on migrant integration, which to my knowledge has not been applied before in the field of migration and integration. In chapter 3, a street-level bureaucracy approach has been adapted to understand the dilemmas and coping strategies of integration coaches, integration teachers and client managers working with migrants on a frequent basis. As I wrote in the above, there is a strong call to recognize the agency of local actors – such as street-level bureaucrats - and their power and impact. In chapter 4, I use inter-ethnic contact literature to understand under what conditions and with which aims migrants use social media. Lastly, in chapter 5 – I connect literature on city branding with the literature on intercultural governance.

Findings of this dissertation have societal relevance as well. The issue of migrant integration is at the heart of local, national and European debates and proofs to play a key role in how citizens evaluate government performance. Part of this evaluation is reflected in the rise of right-wing populist parties in many European countries, exemplifying the belief

that migrant integration should be handled differently by governments. My research contributes to this debate, by going further than only claiming that governing migrant integration is a 'complex' problem. Instead, my research shows *how* and *why* governing migrant integration is elusive in nature and will in addition plead for alternative tools to deal with the issue. It provides a better understanding of governing migrant integration which can help citizens and policy makers to critically examine the narratives that politicians apply to this matter, a narrative that presumes a great influence of state's or governments to actually control migration and integration. In addition, inclusive city branding can play a role in building an alternative narrative to the current one, a narrative that creates a shared sense of belonging for both natives and migrants. By doing so, this research contributes to the development of more considered practises of governing migrant integration.

4. METHODS AND CONCEPTS

This research used a number of different data sources, theories and methodologies to address the different sub-questions. While each chapter specifies the data and methods specifically, this section offers a brief introduction to the overall methodology.

All research questions were answered by using qualitative methods, which means that I have used mainly interviews and document analyses to unravel the perspectives of both migrants and local governing actors. The main ambition was to capture stories of migrants and those working with migrants or directly confronted with migration-related diversity, as a way of unravelling the black boxes of governing immigrant integration. For answering sub question 1 (see chapter 2) I have conducted 52 semi-structured interviews with migrants, who migrated to the Netherlands from over 21 countries. For answering sub question 2 (see chapter 2), I have conducted 28 interviews with street-level bureaucrats, ranging for integration coaches, integration teachers and client managers, the latter work on behalf on the municipality monitoring civil integration trajectories. Subsequently, answering sub question 3 meant that I conducted over 52 semi-structured interviews with second-generation migrant youth in Rotterdam to inquire about their motivations and considerations concerning social media use (chapter 3). Lastly, sub question 4 allowed for both interviews with 12 branding professionals as a document analysis for the period of 2005-2015 (chapter 4). In all studies that were conducted, my focus was specifically on urban areas in the Netherlands – focusing on cities as Amsterdam, Rotterdam, The Hague and Dordrecht (which altogether are known as 'De Randstad). In addition, I have focused on governing attempts in the last 10 years – which need to be understood in the context of a harshened political climate regarding migration and integration related issues.

The mixed qualitative methods in this dissertation reinforced one another as all analysed data offered a rich glimpse of the subjective reality of migrants, local governing actors and the interactions between both. The interview questions were hence all directed to get a better understanding of the decisions, actions, motivations and experiences of these actors. In addition, each of the studies in this dissertation used a different theoretical lens, which allowed me to approach my main question from many different angles. The qualitative character of my research is reflected in the fact that my work is not a purely inductive or deductive process: in all studies, I have used theoretical concepts to come to certain expectations. However, the data itself was also intensively examined to systematically extract causal patterns that led to several conclusions. A final remark here is concerned with the fact that one needs to be aware that the arguments introduced in this dissertation, the research questions, the conduct of the research and the report of the research all have been shaped throughout the research *process*. This means that my work represents the ongoing development of thinking about the presented topics. In terms of methodology, this means that some critical reflection of the choices that I have made is necessary. Such reflection will be addressed in chapter 6.

Lastly, I would like to reflect briefly on some key concepts that I use throughout this dissertation. I use the term *migration-relation diversity*, referring to what in social science literature has been used as a descriptive concept, "to recognize increasing heterogeneity in today's societies along ethnic and cultural lines (among others), especially in larger urban areas" (Boccagni, 2015). In recent years, terms as 'super diversity' and 'hyper diversity' have become common in use, again describing what is called the "diversification of diversity", which refers to the intensity of this demographic development that – according to some authors – has transformed urban life in general. Local governments respond differently to migration-related diversity: while some acknowledge diversity explicitly as an important characteristic of the urban economy and identity, others are more reluctant (WRR, 2018). In this thesis I focus on local government *responses* to the reality of migration-related diversity, which urges governments to (re)act. In researching this, I approach 'migrant integration' as a key element in these responses, as integration has been absolutely central in debates in Western- European countries such as the Netherlands (Martieniello & Rath, 2014; Yanow & van der Haar, 2013). The response to migration-related diversity in this context is hence closely related to integration policies.

Secondly, I use the term *local governing actors* as an umbrella term for all local actors that – on behalf of governmental authorities - directly or indirectly deal with migration-related diversity, varying from policy implementers working at the municipality to the local health agency, the local integration course providers and the refugee centre. Based on my fieldwork with migrants (chapter 2), I have identified central local actors that are

interacting on a more frequent basis with migrants. These local actors – that in the minds of migrants are representing Dutch bureaucracy on a local level - were subsequently contacted and interviewed as a way of comprehending their dealings with local complexity (chapter 3). All these actors have several tasks and responsibilities regarding migrants. In concrete this means that I have interviewed integration coaches, integration teachers and client managers working at the municipality to enforce integration instructions. Chapter 5 approaches 'local governing actors' in a specific policy field, namely branding policies. Branding professionals working at the municipality, are both developing and implementing city branding policies on behalf and in collaboration with the city's administration and have relatively high autonomy in developing their branding strategies based on their professional expertise. Nevertheless, the brands are being developed in a highly politicised context, which these professionals can't ignore. They are on the one hand operating based on their professional expertise, but are on the other hand restricted by the political and policy context regarding migration-related diversity. In the remaining of this thesis, I will refer to this group – of street-level workers and branding professionals - as 'local governing actors', meaning that directly or indirectly they are interacting with migrants while representing the Dutch government.

5. RESEARCH QUESTION AND STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS:

This dissertation revolves around the question of how local governments are making sense and are responding to the challenges of increasingly diverse societies. I thereby focus on the empirical reality of government workers and migrants. My research question is as follows:

How do local governing actors make sense of and respond to migration-related diversity and how can these responses be explained?

In order to answer my main question, I have formulated 4 sub-questions that are answered in the following 4 chapters:

- What effect do series of bureaucratic contact have on the integration of immigrants in the Netherlands? (R1)
- Under what conditions are street-level bureaucrats working with immigrants likely to transcend the boundaries of their discretionary space in order to deal with the dilemmas in their work? (R2)
- How can we understand the varying uses of social media for interethnic contact by second-generation migrant youth's motivations of social media use? (R3)

- How and why do cities manage their identity through place branding – in the face of migration-related diversity? (R4)

This dissertation is constructed around these questions and is structured as shown in table 1. As my sub-questions show, I am interested in the role of local governing actors, that are confronted with migration-related diversity on the one hand and policy instructions that need to be implemented on the other hand. This means that I have interviewed many integration teachers, integration coaches and client managers (sub question 2), but also branding professionals that on behalf of the municipality are responding to the urban transformation of the city and are deciding if and how to incorporate migration-related diversity in their brand narrative (sub question 4). My aim was to capture how these workers 'on the front' are dealing with the complexities of governing migrant integration, which are not always addressed in the policy narrative regarding integration or in integration policies itself. On the other hand, these questions also show that I am also interested in the stories of migrants' themselves. With sub question 1, I have used these stories to reconstruct the interaction patterns between migrants and governing actors. And whereas sub

Research question: *How do local governing actors make sense and (re)act to migration-related diversity and how can these responses be explained?*

Research Theme	Chapters	Sub Questions	Published
Governing responses to immigrant integration: micro and macro-level.	2 and 3	1. What effect do series of bureaucratic contacts have on the integration of immigrants in the Netherlands?	W. Belabas & L. Gerrits (2017). Constraints and Facilitators for Successful Integration: How Bureaucratic Contacts Affects Migrants' Pathways. *International Journal of Social Science Studies*.
		2. Under what conditions are street-level bureaucrats working with immigrants likely to transcend the boundaries of their discretionary space in order to deal with the dilemmas in their work?	W. Belabas & L. Gerrits (2015). Going the Extra Mile? How Street-level Bureaucrats Deal with the Integration of Immigrants. *Social Policy and Administration*.
Migrant identity and belonging: impacts on second generation youth	4 and 5	3. How can we understand the varying uses of social media for interethnic contact by second-generation migrant youth's motivations of social media use?	R. Dekker, W. Belabas & P.W.A. Scholten (2015). Interethnic Contact Online. Contextualizing the Implications of Social Media use by Second Generation Migrant Youth. *Journal of Intercultural Studies, 36* (4), 450-467.
Governing responses to immigrant integration in a specific policy field: branding policies.		4. How and why do cities manage their identity through place branding – in the face of migration-related diversity?	Belabas, W., Eshuis, J. and Scholten, P. (2019). Branding diversity in Amsterdam and Rotterdam: How political discourses and marketing logic pushes migration-related diversity to the background in place brands. *European Planning Studies.*
Conclusions	6	Answering main research question	

Table 1: structure of this dissertation

question 4 focuses on place identity of local governing actors, sub question 3 first sheds some lights on identification processes of migrants themselves.

In this section, I will present the outline of the dissertation in more detail. Table 1 schematically summarizes the article titles, the research questions central to these articles, the basis for the empirical work, and where it is published.

Sub question 1 addresses the interaction patterns between migrants and bureaucracies. Subsequently, chapter 2 presents how bureaucratic contacts between migrants and governments take place in a chain of reinforcing or dampening feedback loops that eventually influence the attitude and willingness of migrants to comply and adapt to Dutch society. Here, I reasoned that immigrant integration is directly connected to the (new) reality of migration-related diversity, and thus constantly engages local governing actors. The research shows the dampening and reinforcing reactions of bureaucracy and its importance in explaining attitudes of immigrants as well as their chances to succeed in the country of destination. While it cannot be expected from individual policy makers to oversee the systematic whole of interrelated situations and actions, our work does invite one to challenge existing mental models, in which failure of integration policies is reduced to a problem of migrants (unwillingness to comply) or a government problem ("too soft" policies).

Sub question 2 addresses the dilemmas, decisions and the coping strategies of street-level bureaucrats. Whereas chapter 2 shows the importance of understanding the *system-dimension* in which policies are deployed c.q enacted, chapter 3 zooms in on "what it is that the individuals who comprise the system seem to be doing and how it is that their actions in the large, produce the patterns we see" (Schelling, 1978: p.): how do policy implementers – such as integration coaches, integration teachers and client managers - deal or cope with the complexities of diversity? What are their motivations and considerations in their decision-making? It is only on the micro-level of street-level implementation that the confrontation between the complexities of diversity and actual policy making or policy decisions takes place. It is only at the micro-level of street-level implementation, that weighing up of standards such as efficiency, legitimacy and fairness take place. Chapter 3 hence shows that deliberate government manipulation is even *more complicated* by micro-level choices that implementers make on a daily basis. Here we need to keep in mind that the group of immigrants with whom these street-level workers interact – is very diverse, in terms of country of origin, socio-economic, cultural, religious and linguistic background as well as their migration history and legal status. Moreover, many immigrants are afflicted with multiple (e.g. financial, psychological, health etc.) problems – which sometimes affect their ability or willingness to comply with formal (bureaucratic) requirements re-

garding the integration trajectory. This complex context in which public policies need to be implemented – produces a variety of (re)actions on the part of street-level workers. (Re)actions characterized by a constant weighting up of the pros and cons of alternative behavioral choices, *and* which are very difficult to control by policy makers and politicians. I believe that, in light of this overwhelming complexity and diversity of immigrants lives, the process of how these street-level workers "develop and maintain mental models from which they reason and act" (Gerrits, 2012: 52) has become even more relevant for research regarding governance capacity of (local) governments.

Sub-questions 3 and 4 focus on questions of belonging and identity, and governing strategies that closely relate to identity and belonging. Chapter 4, using the perspective of migrant youth, zooms in on migrant identity in the context of social media, and shows that intra-ethnic social media use is not necessary problematic for integration, but is in many cases also motivated by a struggle with identity and lifestyle. The online reality of migrant integration needs to be considered together with the online reality, as migrant's youth's online and offline lives are very much integrated and online communication deals with very similar complexities as offline interactions. Our work shows that while ethnicity remains a relevant factor online, not all social media use is ethnically orientated as it mainly dependent on the needs and motivations of the users. This indicates the complexity of experienced identification of migrants, which cannot merely be reduced to ethnicity or home country, but reflects a variety of topics and contacts.

Chapter 5, using the perspective of local governing actors, zooms in on city branding, a "softer" policy strategy, which more and more cities are using (Eshuis, Klijn & Braun 2014). It can be defined as a strategy which attempts to influence perceptions about the city, in a more indirect manner. In this respect, it can be classified as a 'soft' policy instrument, which is based on persuasion instead of coercion. It is argued that local governments are more and more involved in branding policies, often driven by the context of interurban competition in which cities try hard to "sell" themselves (Kearns & Paddison, 2000: 845). However, the use of diversity in branding policies by in particular local governments can be initiated with different underlying philosophies or intentions. City branding is thus hypothesized by some authors to not only be a means for optimizing the economic opportunities and the social, cultural and political networks that arise from these relations (see e.g. Schiller & Caglar, 2009), but also to be a key strategy for defining a new shared sense of belonging that can bond citizens to the city (Wood & Landry, 2008; Cantle, 2012). Creating such a new shared sense of belonging in the new urban context is a major challenge for many local governments. Chapter 5 investigates branding policies, as they are hypothesized to play a key role in stimulating or enhancing identification of migrants with the country and city that they live in. In essence, the political and public debates on migrant integration

revolve around questions of identity and belonging – which is exactly the struggle of migrants themselves. Chapter 5 shows how local governments struggle with diversity in their branding and positioning of the city, which reflects the broader struggle of the city in dealing with migration-related diversity. Given my main conclusions in chapter 2, 3 and 4 – showing the constraints of governing migration-related diversity and the need for new ways of governing– the relevance of exploring the potential of such governing tools goes without saying.

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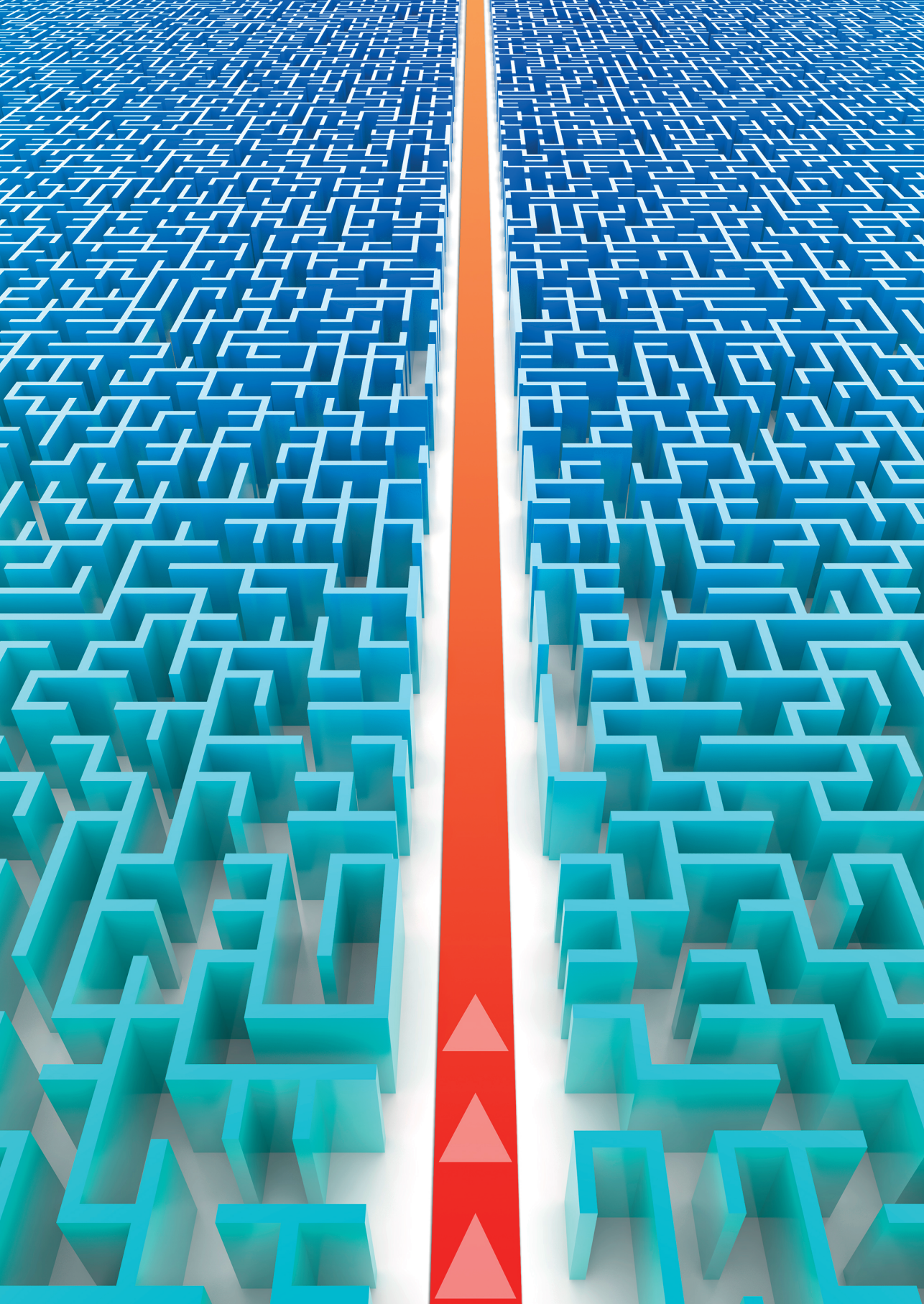

CHAPTER 2

Study 1

Constraints and Facilitators for Successful Integration: How Bureaucratic Contacts Affects Migrants' Pathways

Warda Belabas and Lasse Gerrits

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ABSTRACT

Integration of migrants in Dutch society is a continuous political concern. The regulations governing the immigrant integration processes, and the formal demands to the migrants have been revised several times. Inevitably, the process requires the immigrant to engage in bureaucratic contacts. We postulate that these bureaucratic contacts have a *reinforcing* or a *dampening* effect on the integration process, hence on its success. We deployed a grounded research approach in order to investigate this assumption. Semi-structured qualitative interviews were conducted with 51 migrants. We conclude that bureaucratic contacts have considerable impact on many aspects of the migrants' lives. The observed patterns of positive and negative loops with both favorable and unfavorable consequences for migrants demonstrate the systematic reality in which integration processes develop. The bureaucratic contacts – or lack thereof – are constantly used by migrants to evaluate their situation and to decide on new actions. This in turn sets off a chain reaction that impacts both bureaucratic contacts later on and the way migrants integrate in Dutch society.

Keywords: migration, integration, complex systems, bureaucratic contacts, feedback loops

1. INTRODUCTION AND MOTIVE

The perceived successes or failures of migrant integration in Dutch society is a continuous concern of politicians and policy-makers. Consequently, the relevant regulations and the formal demands to migrants have been revised several times over the past decades (e.g. Penninx Garcés-Mascarenas & Scholten, 2006; Vasta, 2007; Entzinger, 2006). These changes signal attempts to find an all-encompassing administrative system to deal conclusively with all types of migrants. Immigrants all have very diverse backgrounds and motives for migrating to a country such as the Netherlands. In the process, they will inevitably engage in bureaucratic contacts, in particular when admitted to the country. Central to this regulatory system is the classification of immigrants in certain categories, e.g. asylum seekers or family members reuniting with their families. Each category is linked to distinct sets of bureaucratic procedures. The legal obligations, the possibilities for education and for work all depend on this categorization.

As elsewhere in Europe (e.g. Joppke, 2007), recent policy debates centered the perceived failure of immigrants to successfully blend in the Dutch society (Scholten & van Nispen, 2008). This perceived failure is often attributed to immigrants' unwillingness to adapt to their new situation. Consequently, newer policies have a stronger focus on punishment and reward for achieving integration. However, we postulate that the extent of successful integration can be traced back to patterns of interactions between immigrants and bureaucracy rather than just the willingness at the current moment. While most literature focuses on the attributes of individual immigrants, the local conditions under which they integrate matters considerably (see e.g. Berry, 1997; Berry Phinney Sam & Vedder, 2006; Crul & Schneider, 2010; Kasinitiz Mollenkopf Waters & Holdaway, 2008; Koopmans, 2003). In this paper, we will focus on the effects of the interactions between immigrants and bureaucrats on the extent of integration. We will do this in terms of feedback loops.

Our postulate stems from a systemic understanding of immigration and integration. In this view, immigration and integration are heavily contextualized phenomena that are subject to feedback loops. This point of departure helps understanding why the simplistic cause-and-effect relationships as assumed by current policies are only marginally successful. Therefore, our research question is: what effect do *series* of bureaucratic contacts have on the integration of immigrants in the Netherlands?

We will first outline our theoretical approach. It is rooted in systems' theory, from which follows a grounded research approach in order to map the elements and causal structure of immigration and integration. This culminates into a more detailed overview on how we have structured our data and how we conducted the analysis. We will present our empirical

findings in subsequent sections, with a focus on the systemic nature of the issue and the feedback loops that arise from interaction between migrants and bureaucracy. Finally, we present the patterns discovered and the conclusions that can be derived from those patterns.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

Central to our research approach is the idea that immigrants engage in a series of bureaucratic contacts over a longer time span. These contacts constitute feedback loops that may reinforce (i.e. positive feedback) or dampen (i.e. negative feedback) integration attempts. Since integration processes – to our knowledge - have not yet been analyzed in terms of feedback loops, we need to deploy an inductive research approach.

Feedback loops are strongly contextual (e.g. Byrne & Ragin, 2009). Understanding the interaction between migrants and bureaucracy requires understanding of the particular settings in which the interaction takes place (cf. Byrne, 2005). In other words: each observed instance shows a specific assembly or configuration of generic elements or properties (i.e. something that appears elsewhere in similar cases) and specific elements or properties (i.e. something that only occurs in this particular instance) (ibid.) It means that observations of causal relationships are specific to certain situations because they are formed by the interaction between generic developments and local conditions (Buijs, Eshuis & Byrne, 2009; Mjøset 2009).

In addition to this contextual nature, we need to point out that semiotics matter in understanding feedback loops (Churchman, 1979; Ulrich, 1988; Checkland, 1981; Flood, 1999a). Feedback loops are established through the mental models of people who try to understand the systemic whole they find themselves in and the consequent actions they undertake to reach their goals (e.g. Clark & Crossland, 1985). It implies that immigrants and bureaucrats build a mental model of the system they find themselves in, which helps them to arrive at decisions to undertake a certain action. For example, an immigrant may reason "I have a better chance of finding a good job and getting help with that, when my integration counselor sees that I'm doing everything in my power to learn Dutch". This constitutes a mini-theory (e.g. Wagenaar, 2007). In undertaking this action, they in fact further define the systemic whole and confirm its operation.

In the present study, such feedback loops are based on the occurrence and nature of the bureaucratic contacts that alter or reconfirm the situation of the migrants and their subsequent behavior. In other words: following the intention and actions of the migrants, the contacts may bring about a change or lack thereof in the situation of the migrants. Both

outcomes can be perceived favorably or unfavorably by the migrants, which is important in understanding their subsequent actions. Sometimes, loop effects can also be based on the expectations that something will work out in a certain way, upon which the expectation is responded on with a corrective action, i.e. without an actual contact between bureaucrat and migrant.

The gist of these points of departure is that the research had to follow an inductive, grounded method (see e.g. Strauss & Corbin, 1990). The presented thoughts and findings in this study are hence the result of "a continuous interplay between analysis and data collection" (Strauss & Corbin, 1994: p.273). Firstly, because such an approach allows researchers to *systematically* extract causal (feedback) structures from interview data, in our case: these causal structures helped us to reconstruct the subjective mental models of migrants living in the Netherlands. People assign very different meaning to the world that they experience, and decisions or actions follow the logic of these subjective perceptions of reality. Following Kim & Andersen (2012), we believe that making these mental models more explicit, is indispensable in explaining and understanding system behaviors and thus in improving policy-making. Grounded research fits the interpretative nature of system dynamics, because it allows for the discovery of concepts and their relationships from raw data (ibid.).

Secondly, uncovering mental models forces one to look beyond exogenous factors. It shifts the focus to what Forrester calls "endogenous dynamics" (Richardson, 2011). It allowed us to generate insight in the feedback loops, thus in explaining the success or failure of immigrant integration and even in understanding the sometimes counterintuitive and unpredictable workings of public policies, which too often are based in mental models that are "static, narrow and reductionist" (Sterman, 2006). In order to go beyond the truism that - like many other policy issues - immigration and integration are complex, we argue that such a grounded method approach is more than needed, especially because there are very few articles that "have been related to elicitation of mental models and its empirical rigor" (Kim & Anderson, 2012: 313).

On an operational level, this approach called for semi-structured interviews around a set of topics. We sampled 51 respondents, divided in two categories. The first category concerned migrants who had arrived and settled in the Netherlands under previous legal regimes, the group of so-called *oudkomers* ('already arrived') in policy jargon. Data from this group allowed us to assess the long-term impact of bureaucratic contacts because those immigrants had settled in the Netherlands for decades. The second group concerned migrants who had recently arrived and were subject to the current legal regime, the so-called *nieuwkomers* ('newly arrived'). Data from this group allowed us to tap into the fresh experience of migration and the changes between the home country and host country.

Most respondents were found through a large educational institution where they followed integration courses. We sent a general call for participation to a contact person at the institution. She dispersed the call among potential respondents and we contacted those willing to be interviewed. In addition, some respondents were approached through our personal network. Through snowballing, the migrants that we personally knew brought us into contact with more respondents. We minimized sample-selection bias by utilizing several different networks of individuals. Subsequently we selected on diversity in origins and motives for migration. 'Diversity in origins' was subdivided into the following three themes: perceived socio-economic status, education, and occupation. The respondents were coming from 21 countries: Morocco (11), China (6), Turkey (4), Iran (2), Poland (2), Portugal (2), Thailand (2), Vietnam (2), Afghanistan (2), Albania (1), Argentina (1), Bangladesh (1), Bulgaria (1), Cape Verde (1), Ghana (1), India (1), Italy (1), Malaysia (1), Pakistan (1), Somalia (1), and South Korea (1). A number of respondents came to the Netherlands via an intermediary country: Cape Verde (two via Italy and one via Portugal), Algeria (via Spain), Colombia (via Spain), and Peru (also via Spain). A full list of the respondents and their personal details are available from the authors upon request.

Most of the interviews were conducted in Dutch; a smaller number was conducted in English, Berber or Arabic. One of the authors speaks both English and Berber, so that most of the interviews could be conducted by the authors themselves. In the case of three Arabic speaking respondents, it was necessary for an interpreter to be present. After each of the interviews, we reflected with her on the respondent's story in order to ensure a common understanding of that story. Interviews were then transcribed, and translated to Dutch by the researchers if necessary.

The data was open coded, using AtlasTI, in order to exhaustively map the various occurrences, events, processes, and behavior in relation to bureaucratic contacts. The data were re-coded over a number of interviews to improve accuracy (e.g. Berg & Lune, 2004). The coding of data allowed it to be systemically related, e.g. that some piece of data was found to 'be part of the other' or 'occur in the context of', or other such groupings. Although in itself coding doesn't generate an interpretation, it helped us to rethink the data and to arrive at interpretations. In particular AtlasTI, a technique of computer-assisted qualitative data analysis, has facilitated us in developing such interpretations. The interviews focused in particular on the following topics: a) what the lives of the migrants were back in the countries of origin b) how they lived their lives now (in the host society) c) which bureaucratic contacts they encountered, and d) how these bureaucratic contacts affected their lives. The topic-list as used by the researchers is available upon request. We attempted to create a comfortable situation in which respondents felt free and safe to share their stories. Therefore we started the interview by asking the respondent to first tell us something

about his or her home country and the type of life he/she was living. Using the data, we reconstructed the individual pathways of the migrants according to their characteristics and the steps they had undertaken when moving from the country of origin to settling in the Dutch context. The resulting patterns are discussed in the next sections.

3. HISTORY OF IMMIGRANT POLICY IN THE NETHERLANDS

The Dutch approach to immigrant integration in society has been labeled the 'multi-cultural approach', for which it has gained much attention (Duyvendak & Scholten, 2011). Central to this approach was the belief that recognition and accommodation of cultural, ethnic and religious diversity would lead to successful emancipation of immigrants into society. But more recently, immigration and integration policies have undergone major changes. It was only in the early 1980s that the Dutch government developed an actual policy for immigrant integration. This was because of the realization that migrants were going to stay permanently instead of temporarily as was always assumed. Integration policies in this period were targeted at specific ethnic minorities and tried to improve their social-economic position in particular by stimulating them in preserving their cultural identities.

The 1990s brought a change of thought: social-economic participation of immigrants was now put at the heart of the new policy, "by stimulating individual migrants to live up their civic rights as well as their duties and to become economically independent participants in society" (Poppelaars & Scholten, 208: 340). Preceded by a heated national debate about the perceived failure of ´the multicultural society´, even greater changes took place in the Dutch integration policy after the turn of the millennium. Led by populist politician Fortuyn, the perceived failure of migrants to integrate 'properly' became one of the central political issues. In addition: preserving cultural identities of immigrants was now considered a hindrance to integration and abiding to basic Dutch norms became the standard. The Netherlands is a good example of a Western nation-state that replaced its multicultural policy of the 1990s and mid-1990s by a policy aimed at individual integration. Since 2006, the obligations of immigrants have become stricter, for example regarding the exams that certain types of migrants have to pass in the country of origin *before* they can apply for a residence permit. Migrants are expected to take a much greater responsibility in order to successfully integrate into the Dutch society (Boom, Weltevrede, Seidler, Wensveen, Snel & Engbersen, 2010).

A consequence of the shifts in the integration approaches is that the question of what 'integration' exactly entails is constantly subject to change. In addition, 'integration' itself is a very multi-layered concept with many different meanings. Entzinger & Biezeveld (2003), for example, argue that one should at least make a distinction between the institutional

and the normative dimension of integration: "The former refers to an increase in immigrant participation in the major institutions of a society (e.g. labor market, education and health care system), the latter to changes in the immigrants' cultural orientation and identification (ibid, p.8)." Following Benish-Weisman & Horenczk (2010) this study proposes an emic conceptualization and measurement of 'integration', which assesses both constructs in terms of the immigrant's own criteria and not according to standardized external parameters. 'Successful integration' is hence conceptualized in terms of *perceived* success, as this is something that suits well with the grounded approach we followed. Following Korac (2003), we argue that such an approach is necessary because the majority of studies on migrant settlement tend to use a 'top-down' perspective on the concept of 'integration', which reflects in the lack of taking in account perceptions of immigrants on what integration is and how it is actually facilitated or counteracted. This is problematic, because migrant experiences are proved a significant indicator for adaptation to the new society (Montgomery, 1996). Consequently, the latter author contends that "more thought should be devoted to the distinction (self-report or perceived measures) and objective adjustment" (ibid, p. 696). As the data below will show us, self-reported integration can both involve feelings of belonging to place and people in the new society, as well as professional achievement, acquiring status and economic independence.

4. DIVERSITY AMONG IMMIGRANTS

Naturally, immigrants constitute a highly diverse group of people. Each respondent had a very personal and unique story to tell. This diversity concerned their backgrounds, their motives for moving to the Netherlands, the way they were approached by bureaucrats, the rules and regulations they had to comply to and the situation they now found themselves in. The differences in origins and current situation may be self-explanatory, but the bureaucratic diversity deserves some explanation.

The first difference is in the shifts in policies over the years, as already discussed above. Previous regimes were more relaxed regarding the obligations of immigrants, e.g. to follow certain courses or to have someone vouch for them. More recent policies are much stricter due to contemporary understanding that immigration is a permanent social process. A second difference is in the legal obligations. For example, an EU citizen is free to move in or out of the country without many bureaucratic hurdles but for a non-EU citizen, things are more complicated. The third difference is in the willingness of bureaucrats to use their discretion to make a decision that is tailored to the immigrants' situation (see e.g. Belabas & Gerrits, 2016). Lipsky (1980), for example, argues that bureaucrats always have this discretion wherever the effective limits on his power leaves him free to make a choice among possible courses of action and inaction. The fourth difference concerns the

immigrants' willingness to comply. Despite heavy regulations and associated fines, it still happens that immigrants chicane around certain obligations. We took these differences into account when reconstructing the feedback loops.

5. PATHWAYS OF IMMIGRATION

All immigrants have gone through specific pathways when trying to establish life in the Netherlands. Using the data, we reconstructed specific immigration and integration pathway for each respondent. We then used the diagrams to identify archetypical feedback loops. Whilst it is impossible to explain each individual occurrence in this text, we want to highlight three exemplary pathways first in order to give readers an understanding of the diversity we encountered.

The first example is of an Iranian refugee, who arrived in the Netherlands in 1995. Being apolitical activist against the ruling regime meant that her safety and that of her family was no longer guaranteed. However, the decision to migrate was difficult because of what she had to leave behind: family members and friends, a well-paid job and a good home. Once arrived in the Netherlands, the first contacts with the Dutch authorities made her realize that she had to start all over. The (often repeated) interviews with officials working at the Center for Refugees were experienced as stressful and emotionally draining. The continuous transfer between various Refugee Centers reinforced this negative impact on her emotional wellbeing and that of her family. On top of that, the Centers counselor put pressure on her to find a job immediately. In conversations with her, he emphasized that in the new society it was expected from her that she found a job as soon as possible and that *"there was no time to waste"*, meaning: she should accept jobs that in no way reflected her professional accomplishments. Whilst she preferred to learn the language first, she eventually accepted a low-skilled job at a factory.

This type of contact, with an advisor at the Center for Refugees, was mentioned more often. It appears to have a great impact on the life of the migrants who followed this pathway. In this particular case: the choice to focus on work and not on learning the language made it harder for the migrant to be eligible for high-skilled work. After a couple of years, she decided to search for a better job. In the meantime, she also had undertaken action by completing several courses (e.g. to improve her computer skills) that could increase the chance to find a high-skilled job. She applied for one that matched her degrees and professional experience. Whilst the prospective employer was very enthusiastic about her profile, she wasn't qualified for the job because her language skill was insufficient. Also, her diplomas obtained in Iran were not recognized by the Dutch authorities. After

several attempts she gave up and kept working at the factory. This situation impacted her financial condition, happiness and health conditions. Many years of factory work caused a back injury and she still needs to undergo treatment. As a result of her disappointing experiences, she developed an aversion and mistrust towards Dutch bureaucracy.

The second example concerns a Moroccan couple, who migrated in the late 1970s. This was mainly for economic reasons. They were not extremely poor but life in the Moroccan countryside was exhausting. The male respondent migrated first. His first contact with the Dutch government was with the Immigration Department in order to obtain a residence permit. After filling in several documents – with help of friends who migrated before – he gained his residence permit quickly. Shortly after, the migrant was obliged to participate in a health test, carried out by a local health agency. After that, he had hardly any contact with the authorities. No substantial demands were placed on his residence. He quickly found a job in a factory, with help of the same friends.

He applied for family reunification after a couple of years. With help of his employer he migrated his wife and child to the Netherlands within a couple of weeks. None of them was obliged to learn Dutch or to gain knowledge about Dutch society. The focus on 'work' instead of 'learning' impacted the life of this family significantly because they developed little understanding of the Netherlands. They found it difficult to fill in tax forms or to understand how things worked at their child's' school. They also had little knowledge of their rights and obligations towards the government or their employer. The respondent worked 16 hours a day without knowing that labor law forbade this. It was only 5 years ago that municipal authorities send an official letter to say that they were obliged to participate in a civic integration course. While this demand is a consequence of policy changes, they were not willing to participate. According to them, the Dutch government has no right to demand anything from them, given the fact that they have never invested in them in the first place.

The third example concerns a Moroccan migrant, who migrated more recently (in 2009) because of family reunification. Under the then-current regime, the emphasis is on mastering the language prior to arrival in the Netherlands. The Integration Abroad Act requires migrants to take an exam about knowledge of the Dutch language and society before being eligible for a residence permit. This respondent's first bureaucratic contact therefore took place before departure from Morocco. Because of the legal requirements regarding her income, employment and living situation, his wife filled out numerous documents in order to vouch for him. When they finished the procedure, he registered for the so-called 'Basic Integration Examination'. He experienced the period prior to the exam as very stressful because he knew how much depended on it. He spent months to prepare himself, and it was only after passing the exam, that he could migrate.

One of the first bureaucratic contacts after his arrival was with the Educational Center for Integration where he was obliged to participate in the integration course. Again, he felt stressed because of the additional exams that he had to pass in order to obtain a residence permit. However, he was very positive regarding his bureaucratic contacts. He attributed this mainly to his so-called 'integration coach' who was assigned to him by the municipal authorities. This coach informed him constantly about 'how things work here'. The motivation of the migrant to learn the language and to find a job as soon as possible struck the coach, who helped him as much as he could. His motivation reflected for example in the fact that he daily practiced the Dutch language with his wife and made a lot of progress in a short period of time. In addition, even though he was not able to speak the Dutch language flawlessly, with the help of his wife he would write many application letters. Consequently, his coach responded by introducing him to various potential employers and he even managed to convince the municipality to reward his motivation and commitment by granting him training as a security guard. The support of his integration coach had a positive impact on the migrant, especially in terms of his opportunities on the labor market. Moreover, the fact that the authorities adopted a flexible attitude towards the times at which the migrant could attend his classes made it possible for him to develop a healthy work-life balance. In this case, the contact with the bureaucracy has thus led to more commitment and motivation from the migrant to integrate.

While we have presented a number of pathways that appear more frequently in our data, we want to caution the reader for assuming that these particular pathways apply to the whole population. Each immigrant had to deal with a series of bureaucratic contacts. Some of those contacts were follow-ups on the immigration and integration process but in other instances the contacts concerned different matters, e.g. a legal dispute about the permits required to run a Chinese restaurant. Ostensibly, such contacts appear outside the realm of immigration and integration but in the eyes of the respondents, this was not the case. They considered *all* bureaucratic contacts as part of their process of immigration and integration. We consider these strings of contacts as part of the same feedback loops we aim to uncover because the respondents appear to regard them as such and act accordingly.

6. FEEDBACK LOOPS IDENTIFIED

We used the reconstruction of the various pathways to identify feedback loops. We will discuss the archetypes here. Again, the examples are not exhaustive but serve as an illustration of such loops. First of all, we found that various effects can be traced back to the period when the migrant just settled in the Netherlands. Bureaucratic contacts in that first stage are very important for the attitude, perception and behavior of the migrant towards

the government and its policies for the remaining period of time. In other words, this period is often decisive for the 'successful integration' of migrants, meaning the *perceived* success as defined by migrants themselves. We refer to this period as 'the reset-phase', when migrants try to find their new ways of life in the host society whilst at the same time retaining or discarding elements associated with the country of origin.

The data shows unambiguously that the lives of migrants in their home country differ greatly from their lives in this particular period. Feedback loops occur when the migrant experiences a form of opposition of bureaucrats in the reset-phase. The (perceived) bureaucratic adversity can lead to little change in the situation of the migrant despite considerable effort to build a life in the Netherlands. The relationship between the Iranian refugee and the counselor working at the Center for Refugees, mentioned above, serves as a good example. The migrant tried her best to succeed in Dutch society, but she felt her counselor, didn't support her in these ambitions and advised her to find an arbitrary job as soon as possible. In the eyes of this particular migrant, integrating in the new society was more than 'finding an arbitrary job': it was about working to your *full potential*. And this was actually what she felt was being counteracted by the public officials she engaged with. More importantly, the migrant lost her trust in the Dutch authorities, and hence in the bureaucratic system as a whole. That her diplomas weren't being recognized by the Dutch government reinforced these negative feelings. She therefore chose to resign in her fate. The following quote exposes part of the migrant's mental construct regarding the workings of the bureaucratic system:

> *"I tried my best to learn the language and to contribute to and engage in Dutch society…I did everything I could to find a good job, but nobody really cared about my ambitions, the only thing they did is throw obstacles in my search for a better life.* (Interview Iran refugee, 2012)."

Eventually, it was her adaptation to (her understanding of) the workings of the bureaucracy, that led to little change in her work and life. Other cases also show that the bureaucracy is perceived as a major obstacle to rebuild a life, for example when legislation prevents migrants from working. For example, an Albanian migrant obtained a residence permit because of a job transfer. After a number of years, he decided to start his own business. However, legislation put demands on starting businesses that the migrant thought were unrealistic and that he could not meet. The first years, he nevertheless attempted to follow his ambition by actively engaging with local government officials to discuss the situation. At a certain point however, the migrant felt that no one was willing to facilitate what he felt 'successful integration' is about: contributing to society by finding a job that suits your talents. As a result, he gave up and developed much resentment towards the bureaucracy. In both cases, we witness a negative feedback loop with an unfavorable effect because it nullifies attempts to get through the reset phase and build a new life (figure 1).

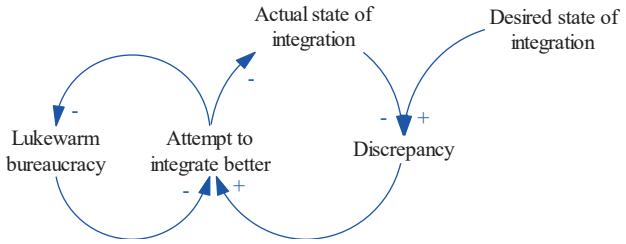

Figure 1. Set of negative feedback loops where the actual state of integration *doesn't change* due to perceived lukewarm responses from the bureaucracy when migrants try to integrate

The simple loop shown in figure 1 only applies to the reset phase. Obviously, the polarity of the feedback loops can shift between negative and positive, depending on the time frame taken into account. In some cases, it may take a long time to emerge. A good example of this is a Turkish respondent who migrated in the 1970s. For most of his residence in the Netherlands, the government didn't contact him at all. This lack of contact now makes him feel indifferent towards the recent position of government when it comes to integration issues. In his view – just as in the view of the earlier mentioned Moroccan couple that migrated in the 1970s - the same government that never had invested in them is now putting demands on them to become 'full' citizens and participate more actively in society. For this migrant – as for many others – he succeeded in integrating into society by "taking his responsibilities" and finding a job to provide for his family. He emphasizes that he is the one who made the efforts to build a "home" in the Netherlands: he did not lean on the government to help or support him in any way– and as a result he believes that the government should not suddenly interfere with his current live. As the following quote shows, this led to resentment and eventually to withdrawal:

> *"As a son of a "guest worker", nobody placed any demands on my stay in this country. I was invisible for them. Everything that I have accomplished is a result of my own hard working. I don't really blame the government, but in those days nobody guided you in the new society that we were part of. So now, I'm just focusing on my own life, my children, my work…I don't really care about what they have to say about us* (Interview Turkish respondent, 2012)."

Lack of contact with the Dutch bureaucracy in the reset-phase seems thus to be used by migrants to evaluate the current integration policies, and the obligations that result from them. Here, a positive feedback loop returns unfavorable effects and no change in the migrants' lives (figure 2).

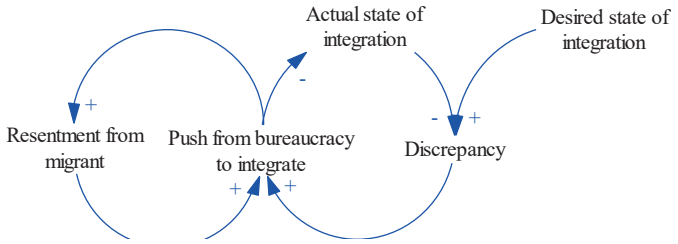

Figure 2. Set of feedback loops where lack of engagement from bureaucrats in the past leads to resentment on behalf of the migrant, in turn leading to a stronger push from the bureaucracy, which leads to more resentment; in other words: a self-reinforcing loop resulting in no change to the actual state of integration as a result

We also identified positive feedback loops that lead to both unfavorable and favorable changes, i.e. loops that cause major changes in the migrants' situations. In the cases of favorable effects, we noticed that there often was a counselor or coach involved, who helped the migrant in his attempts to participate the host society. The reasoning of the Moroccan migrant –who we mentioned before -exemplifies this very well:

> *"I noticed that my coach really was impressed by my attempts to settle in the Netherlands, especially in finding a good job and learning about how things work in this country…I wanted to participate in my new home land in all possible ways, and I'm so happy that I got rewarded for that, It only stimulates me to work even harder"*(Interview Moroccan respondent, 2012).

The process was hence self-reinforcing where effort lead to success, in turn leading to more efforts and consequent success (figure 3). Interestingly, also in this particular case the migrant referred to successful integration as "making a living", "taking care of your family" and by doing so "one is contributing to a healthy society".

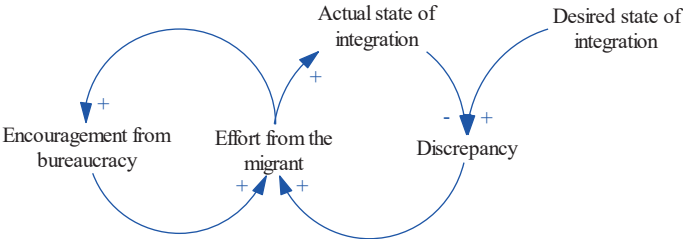

Figure 3. Set of positive feedback loops that where efforts from the migrant to integrate are met with encouragement and facilitation from the bureaucracy, which leads to more efforts from the migrant, resulting in better integration, which again leads to more encouragement from the bureaucracy

In other cases, however, we noted major change due to contacts inside and outside of the immigration bureaucracy but with unfavorable implications for migrants. This unfavorable change in turn influenced the willingness of migrants to integrate in Dutch society and

their complete lives. For example, a migrant from Bangladesh had to fill in several documents in order to obtain a permit for his wife. Because this couple had started their own restaurant –and therefore had to arrange their own tax-related matters –they couldn't gather and provide the information within the prescribed period. As a result, the Immigration Department started a lawsuit against them, in which it demanded that the residence permit would be revoked. The lawsuit lasted for years before finally the court ruled in favor of the migrants. However, the costly lawsuit meant that they had to fire most of the restaurant staff. Consequently, the migrant could no longer be a stay-at-home mother but was forced to work on a full-time basis. As the following quote illustrates:

> *"After everything that happened, I just wanted to live my life in peace…running my own business with my husband, spending time with my family…I no longer feel at home here and don't want to invest any time in learning about this new society that robbed me from a lot of time and money…and even more important my peace of mind."*(Interview Bangladeshi respondent, 2012).

The uncertain legal situation had a major impact on the emotional wellbeing of the migrant, eventually leading to much resentment towards the Dutch government (figure 4).

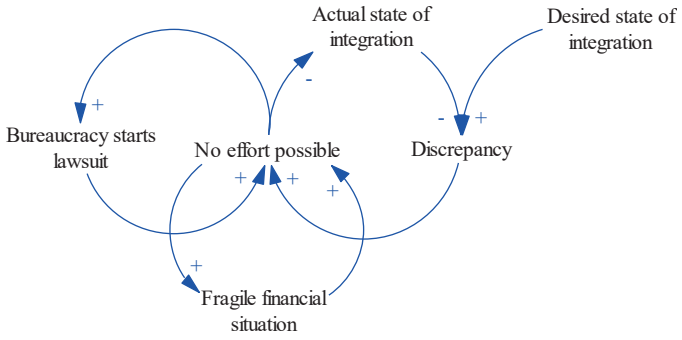

Figure 4. Example of set of two positive feedback loops with an unfavorable result where environmental conditions (such as a fragile personal or financial situation) reinforce resentment and inability to comply with bureaucratic demands

Another example, concerns a Moroccan migrant, who entered the country in the 1990s, in the context of family reunification. After a couple of years he divorced his wife. Because he did not possess a permanent residence permit yet, the Immigration Department informed him that his residence in the Netherlands had lost its legal basis. The migrant started a lawsuit against the Department that lasted for almost 8 years. Eventually, the court ruled in his favor. Nevertheless, the situation had already impacted his life. Because he was (legally) not allowed to work for 8 years, he decided to do undeclared work in different factories.

Furthermore, he no longer felt connected with the host country and lost all his trust in the authorities. In other words: the relationship between response and input seems to be disproportional. These examples again prove that "successful" integration for these migrants is not that complicated: it simply is about being able to make a living, take responsibility for your family, and "standing on your own feet". As appeared in most of the previous examples, bureaucratic contact can affect the attitude towards the Dutch government or society as well as the actual willingness of the migrant to conform to integration demands from the government. This in turn impacts the way bureaucrats are approached, who will respond accordingly. A reinforcing loop emerges as a consequence.

7. PATTERNS IDENTIFIED

The data shows a wide variety of feedback loops with both expected and surprising, favorable and unfavorable outcomes. Surprises encompass the fact that some loops cross the very raison d'être of specific integration policies (cf. policy resistance, Meadows & Wright, 2008). For example, some migrants choose to participate in an integration course on a voluntary basis. A little later, the integration policies changed and the municipality then attempted to let them pass the integration exam. This well-intended incentive to change something in the integration system set-off a chain of unintended effects including mutual distrust and unwillingness to put further effort in the integration process. Conversely, the support of a counselor or coach could cause a self-reinforcing cascade of successful adaptations to the new situation. Each individual story thus embodies a set of feedback loops that help explaining the constraints and catalysts of successful integration.

In more than half of the individual stories of respondents, there exists at least one negative feedback loop with an unfavorable impact on the life of the migrant. One of the most common negative feedback loops occurs when the migrant has had little contact with the bureaucracy. In other cases, migrants showed much commitment and motivation to participate in the new society, but the lack of bureaucratic involvement or support led to strong resentment towards the government. Again, we would like to emphasize that the reset-phase is very important for migrants in setting the foundation for further integration. They seem to use this period to evaluate the current integration policies and the obligations that result from them. In understanding the constraints and catalysts of successful integration (policies), we therefore should be aware of the effects that stem from this particular phase. It seems that those effects -on both the willingness as the chances of migrants to succeed in the new society -can persist in the long-term because of self-reinforcing or self-defeating loops that follow from that stage.

We would like to point out that positive and negative feedback often co-occur in the stories of the migrants. An example is that of the above-mentioned bureaucratic contact between the Moroccan migrant and the integration coach, who eased his entry in Dutch society. The migrant developed a mini-theory about how the systemic whole works and about what he needed to do to get more help. Eventually, his contact with the coach led to more motivation and commitment. At the same time, the driver's license that he used in his home country wasn't acknowledged by the Dutch authorities. Consequently, the chances of work at a greater distance from home diminished. This in turn led to feelings of resentment towards the government, which could have slowed down his efforts. In this case, the support of his coach out-weighted the dampening effect of other bureaucratic contacts. In addition, it sometimes appeared that the *same* bureaucratic contact triggered different feedback loops with both favorable and unfavorable effects. For example, a Ghanaian migrant experienced her integration course as emotionally very stressful. As a result of the pressure to pass the exams, she felt resentment towards the bureaucracy. At the same time, she was very glad that the municipal authorities paid for her courses, thereby reducing the financial burden and giving her the opportunity to increase her independency.

Looking at all the different individual pathways of migrants one thus notices that each of them is embedded in a specific context with specific local conditions. These *differences* constitute the main pattern here. In other words: where regulations are built on the assumption that there is a strictly limited set of pathways or bureaucratic trajectories and that each immigrant will follow one of them, leading to predefined outcomes, reality shows that each migrant follows an entirely specific pathway that is shaped by local conditions and that may to a bigger or lesser extent be different from the pathways of other migrants, even from those that are seemingly in the same category. Furthermore, the integration pathways that we identified were independent of the time period that migrants settled in the Netherlands. This downplays the simplistic cause-and-effect relationships that frequently are used to explain the failure or success of immigrant integration and that assume certain outcomes based on specific policies. Altogether, we note that bureaucratic decisions regarding integration policies will trigger different feedback loops, producing intended and unintended results that can be both favorable and unfavorable for successful migrant integration.

8. CONCLUSIONS

We aimed to explain the relative successes and failures of integration policies in the Netherlands by reconstructing the sets of feedback loops between immigrants and bu-

reaucracy. We interviewed 51 immigrants from different backgrounds. The data showed that bureaucratic contacts or lack of such contacts reinforce or dampen the extent of integration. A couple of contacts with favorable results will lead to a positive attitude of bureaucrats because the migrant seems to do well, which in turn gives them an incentive to go the extra mile for this person. However, we also noted the occurrence of a vicious circle of disappointment and unfavorable consequences, sometimes leading the immigrants to completely give up their attempts to integrate in the Dutch society. Other combinations of positive or negative loops with favorable or unfavorable consequences have also been observed.

If we accept that the extent of integration of migrants in society is reinforced or dampened through bureaucratic contacts of any kind, we start to get an idea of the systemic properties of the issue and its resilience against attempts to have an influence on it. Policies, by their very nature, address a single component of the systemic whole and risk isolating the current attitudes and behaviors of migrants from their indispensable past. Or as Sterman (2006) correctly observes: "policy resistance arises because we do not understand the full range of feedbacks surrounding –and created by –our decisions" (p. 507). The importance of the 'reset phase' illustrates this. Bureaucratic contacts –or lack thereof –that take place in this particular period are used by migrants to evaluate their position in the new situation and the obligations and right arising from it. Dampening and reinforcing reactions of the bureaucracy impact both the willingness as well as the chances of the migrant to succeed in the host society. Changing a particular policy will therefore not necessarily change the system as a whole. Eventually, the *willingness* of migrants to take the necessary steps to successful integration is the result of the cumulative effects of all these feedback loops. Moreover: for many migrants 'successful integration' mainly revolved around 'making a living', 'stand on your own feet', and 'building a new life for your family'. It was not necessarily connected to specific government demands regarding language or social-cultural norms, rather it was linked to a mission of finding a new 'home'. Bureaucratic contacts that were experienced as an obstacle or facilitator to this mission were hence used at a later stage to evaluate specific obligations that derive from integration policies.

This study has attempted to go beyond the truism that migration and integration –like as many other policy fields –are complex. We have attempted to show the feedback mechanisms that drive integration processes. While for scholars well-versed in system dynamics it may be obvious that the feedback structures –linking previous and current actions and decisions –are pivotal in understanding social reality, only few studies actually unravel the actual dynamics of feedback in implementing public policies. As Sterman (2006) argues: scientific methods are necessary to expose our hidden assumptions and biases that underlie systems. This is in particular true for the literature on migration and

integration, which has paid very less little attention to the systemic reality in which willingness and resentment towards bureaucracies develop, in turn preventing full understanding of migrant attitudes as well as their chances to succeed the country of destination. Our system approach has hence enabled us to see the underlying structure that produces certain behavior, in this case: the behavior of immigrants towards bureaucracy and vice versa. While it cannot be expected from individual policy makers to oversee the systematic whole of interrelated situations and actions, our work does invite one to challenge existing mental models, in which failure of integration policies is reduced to a problem of migrants (unwillingness to comply) or a government problem ("too soft" policies). In addition, policy implementers –often: street-level bureaucrats –should be aware that their clients are the result of result of the cumulative effects of many reinforcing and dampening interactions with bureaucracy (e.g. Belabas & Gerrits, 2016). Hence, implementers should be cautious in evaluating behavior or actions from migrants only based on the 'isolated' piece of reality that they are seeing.

As a final reflection, the research also calls into the question whether a truly systemic policy or a policy that manages to factor in *all* elements of integration would be feasible. The history of policy-making has shown that attempts at cybernetic policies have failed to deliver the proverbial 'control switch that was expected to control society (see e.g. Klijn & Snellen 2009, for an extended discussion). We concur. The data shows such a wild variety of issues and such a complex entanglement of feedback loops that it would be naïve to expect there to be one set of relations that govern society. If anything, immigrants and bureaucrats act local in place and temporal in time. Each contact and decision bears a certain degree of randomness that comes with bureaucratic delegation and that means that policies are not applied mechanically anyway (cf. Belabas & Gerrits,2016). As Lipsky (1980) argues, bureaucrats are in a constant search between compassion and flexibility on the one hand and impartiality and rigid rule-application on the other, resulting in a number of conscious or subconscious coping strategies. As such, these dynamics defy the possibility of an all-encompassing, systemic policy. We would argue that an effective policy approach to integration would have to center on tailor-made decisions that take as much situational information into account as possible. This is quite the opposite of the drive towards simplified policies and protocols that is now popular in the Netherlands. At the same time, we can imagine that more situational information can make it harder for those working with migrants to arrive at their decisions. Resolving these tensions perhaps requires some degree of balancing between both extremes.

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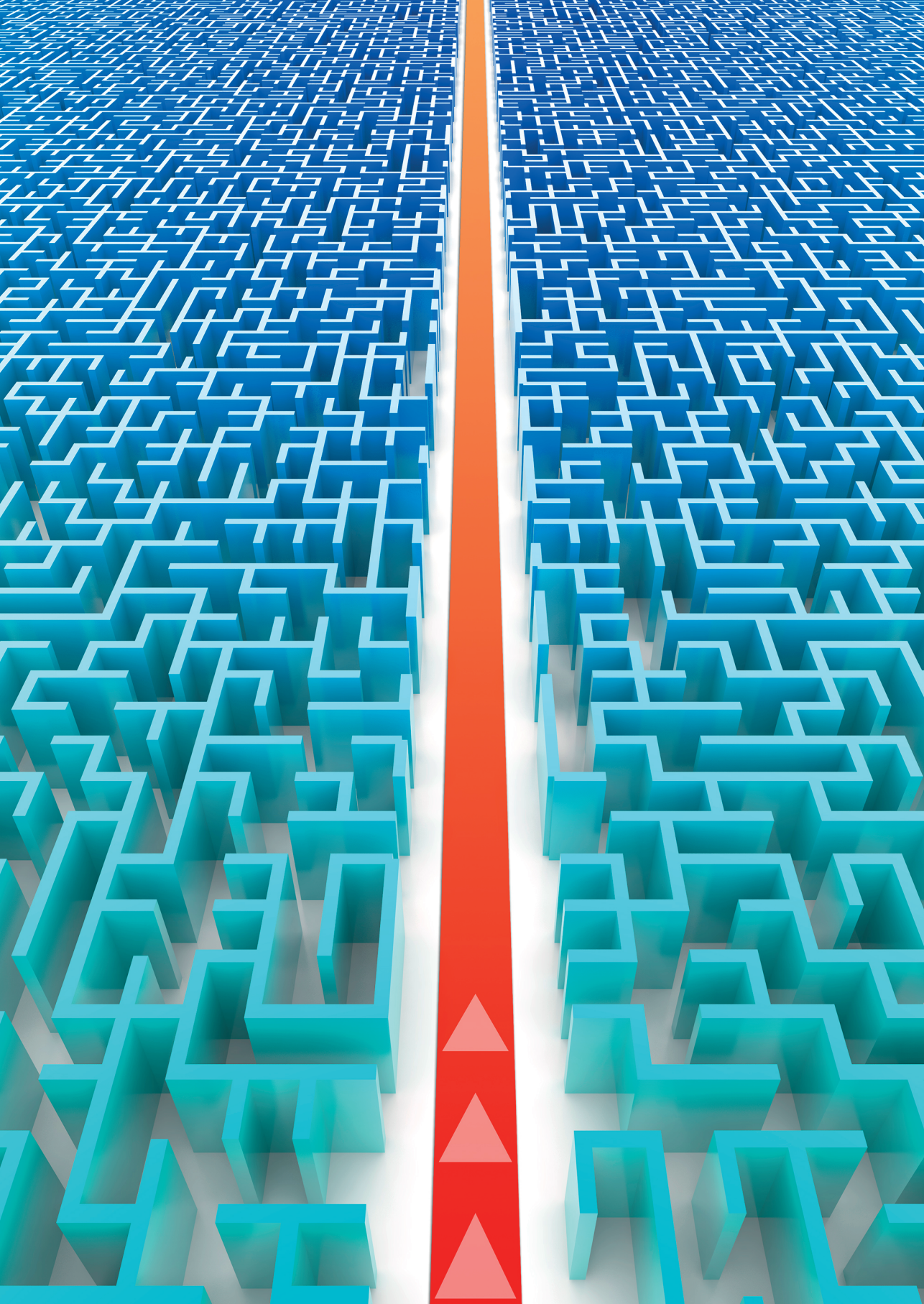

CHAPTER 3

Study 2

Going the Extra Mile? How Street-level Bureaucrats Deal with the Integration of Immigrants

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ABSTRACT

Dutch immigration and integration policies are being interpreted and implemented by local street-level bureaucrats. We carried out 28 semi-structured interviews with integration coaches, integration teachers and client managers in order to understand the dilemmas they face, and to explain their subsequent behavior. The results show that although organizational characteristics such as the bureaucratic burden made street-level bureaucrats reluctant to enlarge their discretionary space at the expense of policy rules, their willingness to help clients often transcends these boundaries under a combination of three conditions: high client motivation, extreme personal distress of the client, and negative assessment of existing policies and policy instruments (both in terms of fairness and practicality). Furthermore, street-level bureaucrats were found to be constantly reinterpreting and revising their roles.

1. INTRODUCTION

This study investigates how street-level bureaucrats implementing integration policies in the Netherlands deal with their discretionary power to make decisions that impact both the lives of immigrants and the original policy goals. In a recent study about the effects of bureaucratic contacts on the lives of migrants, we found that such contacts reinforce or dampen the extent of immigrants' integration into Dutch society. For example, contacts which lead to outcomes in favour of the immigrant will lead to a positive attitude on the part of the immigrant, which in turn will make the bureaucrat go the extra mile for this person. However, bureaucratic contacts with unfavourable results for the immigrant can bring about a vicious circle of disappointment (Belabas and Gerrits 2015, forthcoming). Bureaucrats are being confronted with uniform bureaucratic rules on the one hand, and the diversity of immigrants on the other. Street-level bureaucrats will therefore have to negate the tensions between migrants and the standardized bureaucracy. Integration processes can thus be reinforced or dampened through bureaucratic contacts, which may lead to resilience against such policy attempts or more willingness to participate in the host society (Belabas and Gerrits 2015, forthcoming).

It is important to know more about the motives behind bureaucrats' decisions. These decisions not only involve coping strategies that limit work efforts but also expand official job descriptions and client involvement. Following Lipsky (1980), we are interested in street-level bureaucrats who interact directly with immigrants on a daily basis and who have substantial discretion in the execution of their tasks. In particular, we are interested in street-level bureaucrats who work with immigrants *after* they have obtained a residence permit. This leads to the following research question: Under what conditions are street-level bureaucrats working with immigrants likely to transcend the boundaries of their discretionary space in order to deal with the dilemmas in their work?

Little attention has been paid to the relationship between formal policies and actual implementation of integration policies (Van der Leun 2006). With the exception of a few studies (see Bouchard and Carroll 2002; Armenta 2012; Hagelund 2009; Van der Leun 2003; Ellermann 2005; Lewis and Ramakrishnan 2007; Fuglerud 2004; Marrow 2009; Graham 2002), there is not much research regarding street-level bureaucracy and integration policy implementation. A limited number of studies focus on entry and exit officials, while research in the Netherlands mainly focuses on how bureaucrats implement national policies towards unauthorized migrants (e.g. Van der Leun 2003). Therefore, we aim to reconstruct the dilemmas that street-level bureaucrats are confronted with in their daily interaction with *authorized* immigrants, focusing on the issues they face and explaining the variation in their behaviour. In addition, because the street-level bureaucracy literature focuses on

how street-level workers deploy coping strategies to deal with the overwhelming nature of their work to effectively limit their efforts, we also aim to analyze the other side: When and why do street-level bureaucrats chose to go the extra mile for a client? We present the theoretical background in the second section, and the data collection and methods in the third section. Our empirical findings concerning the dilemmas, behaviour and motives of street-level bureaucrats are presented in the fourth section, and the conclusions and discussion in the fifth section.

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Our work builds on Lipsky's research into the behaviour and motives of street-level bureaucrats who interact directly with citizens when implementing and delivering public policies (Lipsky 1980). Because street-level bureaucrats always have some kind of discretion, which they are often forced to use, their decisions and behaviour not only help them to implement public policy, but *are* public policy (Lipsky 1980). However, limited time and resources means that frontline workers are frequently making decisions, not only about which clients they will and can help but also about how they will help them. In doing so, they are searching for the right balance between compassion and flexibility on the one hand, and impartiality and rule-application on the other. Lipsky and others argue that such bureaucrats develop coping strategies – e.g. rationalizing, automating and reducing the demand of service/activity – as ways of achieving a fair and manageable workload.

Aside from the practical limitations that force street-level bureaucrats into such coping strategies, they also hold their own ideas and practices of being professional. Evans (2011), for example, criticizes the street-level perspective, because Lipsky's account of discretion within street-level bureaucracies paid 'insufficient attention to the role of professionalism and the impact on the relationship between frontline managers and workers and the nature of the discretion' (Lipsky 1980: 368). The notion of professionalism hence influences street-level bureaucrats' ideas of discretion, values and practice, and construction of service users as clients. In line with Evans (2011), Kallio and Kouvo (2014: 331) argue that the notion of 'street-level bureaucrats' has its limitations because those with a professional background seem to have different ideas about deservingness than those with a non-professional background. Therefore, it is important to examine how street-level workers view policies and procedures and whether they feel that they are bound by these rules (Evans 2012: 8).

There is a substantial body of knowledge about street-level bureaucratic behaviour that pays attention to identifying patterns of behaviour, including coping behaviour and – as

the work referred to in the above shows – *explaining* them. However, according to Winter (2002: 5) explaining the behaviour of street-level bureaucrats is much more difficult because Lipsky did not offer such explanation himself, but rather focused on similarities in behaviours. Nonetheless, attempts have been made to identify causal mechanisms that drive street-level bureaucratic behaviours. Some authors observe a tendency to find a uniform implementation theory that applies *across* different policies, while it seems more productive to conduct research as a means of 'developing partial theories and hypotheses about different and more limited implementation problems and on putting these to serious empirical tests' (Winter 2007: 136). For example, Loyens and Maesschalck (2010: 73) argue that '[…] because of the complex environment that street-level bureaucrats are embedded in […], neither one single factor nor one single theory can fully explain the exercise of street-level discretion'. Consequently, there is a 'need to develop more […] theories on how individual, organizational and situational factors channel street-level discretion into *specific* directions' (Loyens and Maesschalck 2010: 73). Although existing literature lists relevant factors, it does not seem to fully succeed in explaining how and under which circumstances these factors have impact on bureaucratic behaviour (Loyens and Maesschalck 2010: 73).

The challenge identified by Loyens and Maesschalck (2010) had also been noted earlier by Scott (1997) who – in accordance with Prottas (1979) and Hasenfield (1983) – categorized previous studies around three broad sets of determinants that influence street-level bureaucratic behaviour: (1) individual characteristics; (2) organizational characteristics; and (3) the importance of client attributes in influencing decision outcomes. Loyens and Maesschalck (2010) use these categories in their work and offer the following overview of empirical studies: (1) *the role of individual decision-maker characteristics* (see e.g. Miller 1967; Brehm and Gates 1997; Kroeger 1975; Meyers and Vorsanger 2003, Sandfort 2000; Winter 2001); (2) *the influence of organizational characteristics* (see e.g. Wasserman 1971; Peyrot 1982; Aiken and Hage 1966; Vinzant and Crothers 1998); and (3) *the importance of client attributes in influencing decision outcomes* (see e.g. Goodsell 1980, 1981; Hasenfield and Steinmetz 1981; Smith 2003). Loyens and Maesschalck also mention the work of Vinzant and Crothers (1998) in which a fourth category is distinguished, namely: (4) *extra organizational factors*, such as the broader community, laws and regulations, the media, other service agencies, and general situational variables.

Scott (1997) argues that the question of *how* the different factors relate to each other largely remains unanswered. In his research on newly-hired case workers in a local public assistance agency, he operationalized different factors among the three categories and found that the level of organizational control and client characteristics had a bigger influence on the awarding of benefits and services to clients than individual decision-maker

attributes. Since then more studies on the relative importance of factors among the three categories have been conducted, but because of the mixed and sometimes even conflicting empirical findings many questions are still left unanswered. Loyens and Maesschalck (2010) contend that research on the category of 'client attributes' in particular reveals an ambiguity in the findings on its importance, especially compared to the other categories.

The contribution of this study lies in providing a better understanding of the relative importance of different factors by *contextualizing under what conditions* street-level bureaucrats show specific behaviour towards immigrants, a policy field that has been under-represented in the literature on implementation practices of street-level bureaucrats. Instead of focusing on existing literature to define and operationalize factors within the broad categories, the data itself was used to understand and reconstruct the stories of street-level bureaucrats who frequently interact with immigrants during their integration trajectory. Our qualitative approach is therefore grounded in the street-level bureaucrat's own images in concrete contexts, meaning: their *self-perceived* understanding of why they act as they do. We argue that such an approach is necessary to portray a more encompassing picture of the self-perceived motives for street-level behaviour. Tummers, Bekkers, Vink and Musheno (2013: 29), for example, note that too many scholars in the field of street-level bureaucracy continue to draw on the existing literature, which according to grounded theory approaches, runs the risk of overlooking social phenomena by focusing only on those issues that were previously identified in the literature. This is problematic, not least because of various major developments that are influencing the work of street-level bureaucrats (Tummers *et al*. 2013: 29). For this reason, we approached the three categories – 'individual-decision maker characteristics', 'organizational characteristics' and 'client-attributes' – as sensitizing concepts, which gave us a 'general sense of reference and guidance' in approaching our empirical field (Bowen 2006: 14), while offering us enough flexibility to generate some systematic reflections upon the actual data. The next section presents the methods used in this study

3. MATERIALS AND METHODS

Against this theoretical background, 28 semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted with street-level bureaucrats working with immigrants: 'integration teachers' (12; Dutch: *docenten inburgering*), 'integration counsellors' (six; Dutch: *trajectbegeleiders*) and 'client managers' (four; Dutch: *klantmanagers*). In addition, we interviewed five respondents who worked both as a teacher and as counsellor.

The teachers are responsible for the language and integration courses. They interact with immigrants on a regular – and in some cases on a daily – basis, while at the same time implementing the actual *content* of integration programmes. The integration counsellors are responsible for the migrant's integration *process*. Their main task is to ensure that the migrant passes the civic integration exam. Immigrants need to pass certain exams in order to receive a permanent residence permit. The programme is characterized by integration tests, courses and contracts as a means of promoting individual autonomy and common values among immigrants. The client managers are responsible for *monitoring* that immigrants comply with the terms and conditions that the authorities have imposed upon them.

We conducted our interviews in two major cities (Rotterdam and The Hague) and two small cities (Gorinchem and Dordrecht). The teachers and integration counsellors were identified through three large educational institutions, in Rotterdam, Dordrecht and Gorinchem. The client managers were working for the municipalities in Dordrecht, Gorinchem and The Hague.1

We sent a general call for participation, which our contact persons dispersed among potential respondents. We minimalized sample-selection bias by assuring our contact persons full anonymization and then individually contacted respondents who were willing to be interviewed. The low number of client managers in the sample can be explained by the fact that, since January 2013, municipalities no longer have (formal) tasks regarding immigrants' civic integration. The number of client managers working at municipalities therefore decreased rapidly.

The interviews were semi-structured and comprised the following themes: (1) the dilemmas street-level workers encountered in their work; (2) the way they dealt with these dilemmas; and (3) the motives for dealing with the dilemmas.2

The length of the interviews varied between 30 and 60 minutes. Respondents were free to elaborate regarding the main topics and could also narrate related relevant experiences. The wide range of topics was to enable us to map the various reasoning and decision-making patterns of the participants. The interviews were hand-coded using a standardized topic book, which our 'sensitizing concepts' had provided the basis for. The resulting patterns are discussed in the following sections.

4. RESULTS

We describe the dilemmas, behaviour and motives of street-level bureaucrats in this section. Subsequently, we reflect on several factors – such as role interpretation, policy change and learning behaviour – that further complicate the decision-making of teachers, counsellors and client managers.

Dilemmas: stuck between obedience and compassion

Dealing with personal distress of immigrants

The dilemma mentioned most often by all respondents concerned the difficult personal circumstances of immigrants. A great number of participants in the integration courses are dealing with all kinds of financial, psychological and health problems that in some cases are the result of the immigration itself. Refugees, in particular, are often confronted with multiple problems, which sometimes affect their willingness or ability to comply with formal requirements. While seeing the difficulties that immigrants have to deal with on a daily basis, the respondents have to implement policies concerning the immigrants' status. Some examples are that immigrants have to attend at least 80 per cent of the integration course and absence may be fined; they have to pay for their own exams after failing them three times; and not passing the exam may have consequences for obtaining a residence permit. Most respondents argue that being aware of the daily struggles of immigrants makes it more difficult to actually carry out the integration policies. The following quote illustrates this in a profound way:

> *'When he told me why he had been absent for such a long time – he had gone to solve some serious family problems – I found it very difficult to inform social services about it, because I knew this would result in severe financial problems for him.'* (teacher, Dordrecht, 2013)

In such cases, respondents found themselves in a difficult position, because they know that their actions and decisions can affect the lives of immigrants negatively. The dilemma hence encompasses weighing the importance of strictly implementing policy rules on the one hand, and matching those rules with the needs and circumstances of the immigrant on the other hand. In the latter case it means finding some kind of other (official or unofficial) solution for the situation. Responding to these distressing personal circumstances and needs necessitates a constant weighing up of the pros and cons of alternative behavioural choices. Teachers, counsellors and client managers working at different locations *all* mentioned encountering this dilemma in their work.

Drawing the 'right' boundaries

Being one of the few contacts that some immigrants have with the 'outside-world' makes it especially hard for teachers and counsellors to decide exactly how far their help and assistance can and should go, because they are constantly being asked by their clients to solve the various kinds of problems that they are dealing with. These problems often affect their performance in the integration course, which makes the decision whether or not to intervene even more difficult. As a result, the street-level bureaucrat – regardless of to which professional group he or she belongs – is faced with the question of how far the coaching and helping of the migrant can and should go. The following statement illustrates this:

> *'When they bring letters with them – letters that they don't understand because of their language deficit – and they expect you to help them understand the information in it, it's very hard to say "no that doesn't fit in with my tasks as a teacher". You are their only connection to society and the only resource to understand the Dutch system, so they share with you that which they are struggling with in their daily lives'* (teacher, Dordrecht, 2013)

Reinterpreting tasks, roles and responsibilities beyond the formal position, assignment and tasks, appears inherent to the job but this makes it necessary to determine how far the client should be assisted, considering the bureaucrat's formal task description on the one hand and the extensibility of that description on the other hand. Moreover, the data show that this process of reinterpreting the limits of acceptable help – especially in the context of the difficult personal circumstances that clients often find themselves in – is distressing for the street-level bureaucrat.

Opposing versus supporting 'harsh policies'

The public debate about immigration and integration in the Netherlands has changed, leading to stricter demands on immigrants. Often, our respondents mentioned the 'hostile' societal and political atmosphere towards immigrants, which raises the question to what extent the new policies can be considered reasonable and just. We found the respondents reflecting constantly on this question when implementing policies, wondering if and how they can and should correct unintended and unwanted effects. Because of their close interaction with immigrants, these effects are often very real and clear, particularly to teachers and counsellors. When the legal possibilities to correct such effects are restricted, the question of whether or not and how to deal with the situation becomes even more important. The following quote illustrates this point:

> *'It is mandatory for clients to arrive on time in class, but I can imagine that it isn't that easy for a single-parent mother who has to bring her children to school in the morning. The*

question then arises of how to deal with the situation, because I am obligated to register their absence … I find that very difficult.' (teacher, Gorinchem, 2013)

Here, the expectations and requirements that immigrants have to meet during their integration programme do not seem to fit well with the reality of immigrants' lives. Street-level bureaucrats are insistently pressed to consider the question of whether existing integration policies are 'just' and 'fair'. Likewise, some of the teachers argued that the way Western society is portrayed during the course should be less idealistic, because immigrants are being forced to accept Western values as superior to their own. Again, the respondents would mention the public debate about immigration, national identity and the need for integration, as a way of emphasizing how this atmosphere impacts the specific content of the civic integration programmes. This in turn presents them with situations in which they are confronted with policies intended to stimulate immigrant integration that they often do not feel comfortable with. The dilemma thus lies in deciding whether to respond to the trends in policy that *urge* immigrants to accept 'Dutch norms and values' or to rely on a more flexible interpretation of what it means to be a Dutch citizen. Thus, the content of the integration courses sometimes puts street-level bureaucrats in a difficult position.

Patterns of behaviour: finding ways to deal with the dilemmas

We found that all our respondents – regardless of their profession and location – showed some consistent behaviours in dealing with the pressures resulting from the dilemmas. In this section, we examine the ways in which they cope with their tasks.

Tendencies to obey the rules

All respondents argued that they were operating within a limited discretionary latitude. However, some also mentioned the high potential for personal stress. The limited possibilities to deviate – leading to fewer opportunities to respond to the needs of immigrants – reinforces feelings of discomfort and failure among the respondents. Nevertheless, a substantial part of the respondents felt that there is no alternative to obeying the rules set by the authorities. Frequently, respondents would describe situations in which the authorities ordered them to act according to certain rules that they did not understand or agree with. Yet, when asked how they dealt with this, most of them would respond that they had no choice other than to implement the rules as ordered by the authorities. As one client manager argued:

'It's not so much a question of how we deal with such things … it is as it is, and we have to adapt to the choices that the municipality made about how to offer assistance to newcomers' (client manager, The Hague, 2013)

Caution was thus observed in increasing discretionary power at the expense of policy, because all respondents felt that it was impossible to diverge from the clearly defined instructions and laws. It should be noted that each street-level bureaucrat mentioned the amount of paperwork that is incorporated in their daily work. Authorities request strict registration and monitoring of clients. Filling in forms, preparing reports and arranging documentation are all part of their daily activities. Teachers, counsellors and client managers all argued that the bureaucratic burden – combined with the strong tendency of the municipality towards transparency – reinforced the pressure to implement policies strictly. In addition, these administrative obligations also affect the time that they could spend on interacting with the migrant on solutions, which lead to respondents feeling dissatisfied about the assistance that they could give. In other words: bureaucratic work counterbalanced discretionary power.

Beyond formal duties: injecting personal meaning

The requirement to register and inform authorities about the decisions taken seems to make street-level bureaucrats reluctant to go against formal compliance standards. At the same time most bureaucrats would extend their involvement and commitment to clients, sometimes as a means of compensating for the 'damage' done by strictly following the rules. Showing an interest in the migrants' personal stories, explaining to them their legal rights and obligations as Dutch citizens, keeping an eye out for possible job vacancies, and motivating them to pass the exams by enhancing their self-esteem, are all examples of this. Here we observe a tendency on the part of bureaucrats to follow the rules, while at the same time injecting personal meaning in their role when it comes to the contribution they can make in the process of incorporating immigrants into their new society. The following quote illustrates this behaviour:

> *'When I know that a client has his third re-sit, I really try to motivate them, sometimes I even invite them to join one of my lessons that formally speaking they can't participate in … just to give them a helping hand, because that is what they need.'* (counsellor, Rotterdam, 2013)

Some respondents would even use their personal resources in an attempt to resolve some of the clients' problems. Sometimes these problems were only indirectly related to the integration requirements. For example, one of the counsellors wrote an application letter for his client. One of the teachers would occasionally pay the travel costs for clients who had major financial problems. Here, we observe that such behaviour leads to a broader role-interpretation that, in turn, gets street-level bureaucrats actively involved in immigrants' lives. This applies especially to teachers and counsellors, less so to client managers who interact with immigrants less frequently.

Respondents would often go beyond their formal duties to make sure that a client would get help or treatment suitable for their individual needs. Rather than getting involved in personal matters, bureaucrats would commit to providing the client with the best possible solution, even if this meant that they had to invest far more time and effort than was expected of them. Some of the counsellors made urgent and repeated calls to client managers in order to convince them to make exceptions for clients, for example, asking them overlook their absence or arranging exemptions from the integration exam. While it is debatable whether this behaviour directly violates the main goals of integration policy, it does suggest a deep personal involvement, which expresses itself in pursuing others to 'fairly bend the rules'.

Drawing your own plan: breaking the rules

A small number of respondents deliberately made decisions that clearly contradicted policy goals. Some of them would intentionally ask clients about their personal circumstances, in order to use that information to bend the rules in the client's favour. For example, a client manager said that before imposing a fee on a client, she would explicitly explain to the migrant that the information he was about to give is critical for her decision. While listening to the client, she would look for reasons that could provide justification for delaying financial measures. Here we observe a tendency whereby street-level bureaucrats put the interests and well-being of their clients above policy rule, even if this means acting against the spirit of those rules. The following quote illustrates this:

> *'The national government decided that clients who started the integration course in 2010 had to take an exam in 2012. (…) This decision was the result of a political game that I don't want to be part of … so instead of pressuring my clients – that is what they want you to do – I told them that the exam is insignificant, and that it was just a bureaucratic procedure that they had to endure.'* (counsellor, Gorinchem, 2013)

Another observation is that of teachers who do not register clients who arrive too late in class, even though they are formally obliged to inform the client managers. In addition, one of the respondents organized an intensive one-on-one integration course for his client. Instead of the official two-days-a-week programme that the migrant had to participate in over a six-month period, the teacher decided to arrange a personal course that lasted only two months. Here, we observe that there is a small group of workers who intentionally break policy rules.

Self-protection: creating distance

Lastly, and contrary to the findings above, we observed that a minority of the respondents tried to create distance between themselves and clients. As noted earlier, being informed about an immigrant's personal situation makes it harder for bureaucrats to comply with existing policies. The statement below illustrates this:

> *'Frankly, I just don't want to know about all their problems … I really try to avoid such conversations as much as I can, because I know that I can't help them. Just keep it formal, it's the only way to do your job properly.'* (teacher, Gorinchem, 2013)

Avoiding conversations about personal circumstances is considered the only way bureaucrats can implement the rules and prevent themselves from getting emotionally involved. Some respondents would therefore stick to formal means to meet the needs of the client. In other words, their support would always be exclusively related to the formal criteria of the civic integration course. Instead of using their personal resources or trying to search for creative ways to bend the rules, they would, for example, redirect clients to social agencies that could provide suitable aid for them.

Although most respondents felt uncomfortable in sticking to rules, they would still conform to formal standards, for example, by consistently registering absent clients. This way of coping is more prominent in client managers and teachers than in counsellors. Building a close relationship with the immigrant and being fully informed of his or her personal situation is part of the counsellor's job and can hardly be avoided. It should be noted that this way of coping with the dilemma leads both to more rule application *and* to less exposure to other dilemmas. The formal relationship with immigrants prevents them from asking for help outside the classroom. While this is precisely what those respondents aim at with this attitude, it also seems to make them feel uncomfortable and dissatisfied with their work. Before drawing conclusions though, we first need a better understanding of the arguments that teachers, counsellors and client managers give for their own behaviour. The next section explains why these bureaucrats act the way they do.

Explaining bureaucratic behaviour: underlying motives

As shown above, the daily use of discretionary powers often reflects tension between competing demands, 'the need for standardized treatment of clients versus the need to consider the unique circumstances of each client' (see also Scott 1997: 19). The question then is: How do these street-level bureaucrats view, explain or justify their own behaviour? The previous sections showed that the organizational context in which street-level bureaucrats operate influences the level of discretion and subsequently the choices that they

made: the workload in terms of bureaucratic formalities and monitoring by authorities made them reluctant to *deliberately* deviate from existing policy rulings. Despite these organizational restrictions, the willingness to increase discretionary power or to reject policy rules could transcend those restrictions *under some conditions*. Four motives are most decisive in doing so, and combinations of those motives reinforce the effect. In the following sections, we further examine these motives and their relative importance for the choices made by street-level bureaucrats.

Perceived willingness to learn: motivated clients

First, all respondents mentioned that the motivation of immigrants to learn and follow the rules has a strong influence on both the attitude that they would adopt towards them and the decisions they would make. Respondents were more likely to be attentive towards clients who demonstrated a strong *willingness* to conform to the demands – even when they were not actually conforming. In such cases, they would go beyond formal duties, which in turn led to their becoming actively involved in their client's life; and, finally, they would make more effort to arrange for or to pursue others to search for alternative solutions. In other words: there is a strong reciprocal relationship between clients' motivation and bureaucrats' willingness. One important aspect of this 'motivated attitude' is whether bureaucrats really feel that clients are honest and sincere in their attempts to comply. As the following quote shows, the respondents also acknowledge that it is an intuitive consideration, based on class-room observations:

> *'Determining the extent of motivation of the client, often it is based on the feeling you get from them. The client that I just told you about … she hardly spoke Dutch, but I felt she was in need and it wasn't her lack of effort that stopped her from passing the exam'* (counsellor, Rotterdam, 2013)

The way most street-level bureaucrats assess clients' attitude and how they subsequently respond to client demands is thus primarily based on the personal connection that they feel or have with immigrants.

But immigrants' motivation alone is not enough. Although it does explain how personal favours are granted, being motivated to fulfil the civic integration requirements is often not enough reason to actually disobey policy rules and goals. Only when this motivation of the migrant was *combined* with *at least one of the three motives* described below, would bureaucrats actually go the extra mile by deliberately violating the rules and perhaps undermining policy.

Perceived distress and anxiety of clients: deservingness

When migrants are faced with extremely distressing situations, street-level bureaucrats are more willing to increase their discretion in order to relieve the pressures on their clients. This suggests that bureaucrats not only consider whether the client is *deserving* of help – which mostly seems to be determined by clients' motivation as discussed previously – but also the extent to which he *needs* the help. A teacher, for example, explained that she did not inform social services about a client who did not attend the course for three weeks because she went to visit her sick mother in Turkey. She found this client's situation so tragic that she did not want to be responsible for adding a financial burden to it. Informing social services about her absence would have meant severe financial consequences. In particular, street-level workers would use the client's severe personal circumstances to justify deviation from the existing policy rules in the case of clients who showed a strong willingness to comply. Similar motives were voiced by others, as the statement below shows:

> *'I had a client who ended up in a centre for women, who experienced domestic violence, and once when her husband got aggressive with her again, she asked for my help … I'm not a social worker, but it was such a tragic situation, I decided to assist her as much as I could.'* (counsellor, Rotterdam, 2013)

Moreover, most of them felt that knowing about their client's distress had forced them to behave in the way they did. Especially in cases where immigrants did not have a social network, they felt there was no other choice than to adopt that role themselves. The perception of distress and anxiety of clients in the personal sphere therefore influences the decisions and attitudes of street-level bureaucrats, whereas the self-reliance of immigrants also affects their assessment of the severity of the situation and the extent to which further assistance is needed.

Perceived fairness and effectiveness of policies

The third motive influencing the willingness to help clients beyond the formal task description is the assessment of actual integration policies and the subsequent rules and obligations. Respondents were more likely to use their discretionary power in favour of motivated clients when the goals that clients were expected to meet were considered ineffective, unrealistic or unfair. As one teacher explained:

> *'The rules regarding integration changed in January 2013 (…) migrants have to pay for their own integration course, which is ridiculous in my opinion (…). Sometimes I direct them to websites where copyrighted materials are shared, or teaching materials, so that*

they can practice at home, although that's not allowed of course.' (teacher, Gorinchem, 2013)

The same goes for rules regarding sanctions attached to non-compliance of clients or the content of the integration course if it is inconsistent with the bureaucrats' views regarding effective, just and reasonable policies. A good illustration of this is the client manager who did not feel comfortable with the fact that immigrants over the age of 65 are obliged to participate in integration courses. Forcing someone of this age to attend the classes did not correspond with her ideas of a just system. Therefore, she found a creative way of dodging the rule: because health problems could be accepted by the authorities as a legitimate reason for not participating in the course, she would explicitly ask each of her clients over the age of 65 about their medical background. These examples show the importance of the assessment of whether the integration policies – and the requirements and rules that follow from them – are 'fair' and 'reasonable'.

Perceived practicality of policies

We also observed that evaluations made by these workers are not solely based upon whether or not they agree with integration policies. Rather, in some cases, they are based upon how realistic the demands are. A good illustration comes from the many teachers who did not register some clients for evening classes when they entered too late. They said that the authorities are being unrealistic in the demands imposed on immigrants: if a client has a full-time job and responsibilities towards his or her family, it is almost impossible for that person to attend four evening classes a week. The same goes for counsellors who consider the period assigned to pass the exam as 'highly unrealistic' and who try to extend that period. It is not that bureaucrats disagreed with immigration policies in general, rather they showed concerns about specific instruments and rules that derive from them. It is important to note that respondents would not act upon these concerns about unrealistic demands when they felt that the client in question had not made sincere efforts to succeed. This shows once more that a judgment about fairness, effectiveness or achievability of policies *in combination* with the perception of the clients' motivation plays an undeniable role in their utilization of discretionary power.

So far, we have demonstrated that street-level bureaucrats tend to deviate from formal requirements when dealing with motivated clients who are in extreme personal distress or who are considered as being treated unfairly by 'the system'. When integration policies and the rules deriving from them reflected the individual values of the respondents, they were far more eager to implement them, *regardless* of the attitude of clients. In fact, some of them even would go beyond their formal task description to achieve underlying policy goals. For example, when it was felt that their clients' behaviour in the classroom was

inconsistent with the content of the integration course, they would not only correct them, but sometimes even spend a significant part of their time educating and motivating them to embrace 'the Dutch way of life'. As one client manager explains:

> *'Once I had a client whose husband didn't want her to go to her integration classes, because he wanted her to stay at home and take care of the children and cook for him. That really made me angry and I invited them to discuss this, and I did everything I could to convince him to change his mind, even though formally I can't force them to do anything.'* (client manager, The Hague, 2013)

In other cases, teachers firmly refused requests by female clients to sit separately in class from the male clients, in order to make a point about 'how things work in the Netherlands'. In one case, a counsellor even went as far as personally advising her client about birth control, because she felt that the husband in question forced his will upon his wife. When asked about their motives, all mentioned their own individual values concerning equal rights and the emancipation of women in society. Both motivated and unmotivated clients would qualify for these kinds of advice and encouragement. Hence when policies were in line with their personal views, street-level bureaucrats took this as a justification of broadening their task description, thereby increasing discretionary power. Here we conclude that value systems of street-level bureaucrats seem to matter considerably.

Complex patterns: role interpretation, learning behaviour and the changing political reality

In the previous section we examined the main dilemmas and motives driving bureaucratic choices. We specified the conditions under which certain behaviours occur. However, when reconstructing behaviour and motives, we also noticed that street-level bureaucrats constantly revise their role, tasks and responsibilities. Initially, we argued that the more teachers, counsellors and client managers constricted their job interpretation, the less likely they were to search for official (or unofficial) solutions to the problems their clients were encountering. However, role definitions turned out to be changeable: respondents would often use previous experiences to redefine their role, which in turn affected the choices that they made later on when confronted with new situations. For example, some of the teachers and counsellors had clients who found themselves in life-threatening situations, sometimes as a result of domestic violence. Most of them decided to intervene by advising the clients to leave their partner or by actually providing them with the means to leave. In some cases, this made the situation even worse, leading to an escalation between clients and their partners. Learning from this, the respondents would decide to no longer become overly involved in the personal life of immigrants. It could also go the other way:

> *'Once I had a client with many problems, eventually he committed suicide. (…) You can imagine how that can affect you. Since that incident, when someone asks for my help, I really ask myself: have I done everything that I can?'* (counsellor, Gorinchem, 2013)

Such examples reinforce our earlier conclusion about the process of role adaptation. In addition, we noticed that the dynamic political context also impacted behaviour towards clients. The lenient immigration and integration policies of the past are being replaced by stricter ones. Monitoring and accountability rules have become more important. All respondents argued that this reduced their discretionary space. The changing policies mean that discretionary power is being both restricted and enhanced relatively often. Consequently, respondents are reluctant to make promises to their clients.

These findings suggest that bureaucratic behaviour is not static or immutable, but is – as a result of learning behaviour and a dynamic political context – subject to constant change. Furthermore, while sometimes a change in role interpretation is the result of self-reflection and learning of the implementer himself, in other cases the shift in policies – an external factor – was the main cause of reinterpreting and reflecting one's position and tasks.

5. CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

We started with the observation that the implementation of integration policies in the Netherlands relies on street-level bureaucrats. We aimed to find out under what specific conditions street-level bureaucrats were willing to stretch the boundaries of their discretionary space in relationship to the dilemmas they face in their day-to-day work with immigrants. This study shows that, although organizational characteristics such as the workload in relationship to bureaucratic formalities and monitoring by the municipality made street-level bureaucrats reluctant to deliberately deviate from existing policies, their willingness to help clients could transcend these boundaries when the following conditions are *combined*: high client motivation, extreme personal distress of the client, and negative assessment of existing policies and policy instruments.

Most of the motives that drive street-level practices can also be found in other studies, albeit in a less-contextualized way. The present study shows both the client's *motivation* and perceived *need* – 'the worthiness of clients' – to stretch boundaries. This concurs with Maynard-Moody and Leland (2000), who argue that client motivation forms the primary dimension of moral worth (Brudney *et al*. 2000). The same goes for our findings concerning judgment of integration policies – and the rules and instruments that derive from them – which are based in the value systems of street-level bureaucrats. Our findings support the

conclusions by Bouchard and Carroll (2002: 254) that immigration policy is partly shaped by 'internal forces, in particular by the attitudes and values of those implementing it'. Individual values of street-level bureaucrats matter more than close supervision by superiors and existing rules, especially when the client in question is motivated and in need of assistance. Furthermore, our study shows that personal views of policies and procedures were not limited to particular professional groups. The dilemmas and considerations were not exclusively limited to teachers, counsellors or client managers, although it seemed harder for teachers and counsellors to maintain social distance between themselves and their clients. This finding confirms Evans' (2012: 15) position that 'it is valuable to consider the participants' *own* accounts of why a particular approach to organizational rules is important to them'. This study shows how different conditions can play an influential role in the attitude that street-level workers adopt towards those rules. It also shows how a participant's reasons for acting in a particular way are not static or immutable but rather subject to constant change.

We want to stress the importance of the combination of factors – a particular configuration – that drives bureaucrats to transcend their discretionary space in helping immigrants. When speaking about 'transcending discretionary power', our work proves that in dealing with the dilemmas that they encounter, street-level bureaucrats are prepared to 'go the extra mile' for clients, and that they 'are not necessarily simply concerned with making their work tolerable in ways that have negative impacts on users of their services' (Evans and Harris 2007). According to, for example, Musil *et al*. (2010) and Joffe (1981) and Perlman (1981) – as paraphrased in Evans and Harris (2007: 456) – Lipsky and other students of street-level bureaucracy have hardly focused on the efforts of such workers to develop better services despite difficult circumstances. However, whereas such authors point to the culture of social work services as an explanation for avoidance behaviour by street-level bureaucrats, we propose that the various conditions specified in this study are more important, at least for the situations in which the integration teachers, counsellors and client managers find themselves. We believe that such contextualized research is needed to better understand street-level workers' behaviour and the *various* ways in which they tackle the dilemmas that they experience in their work (Evans and Harris 2007; Harris and Kirk 2000; Evans 2006).

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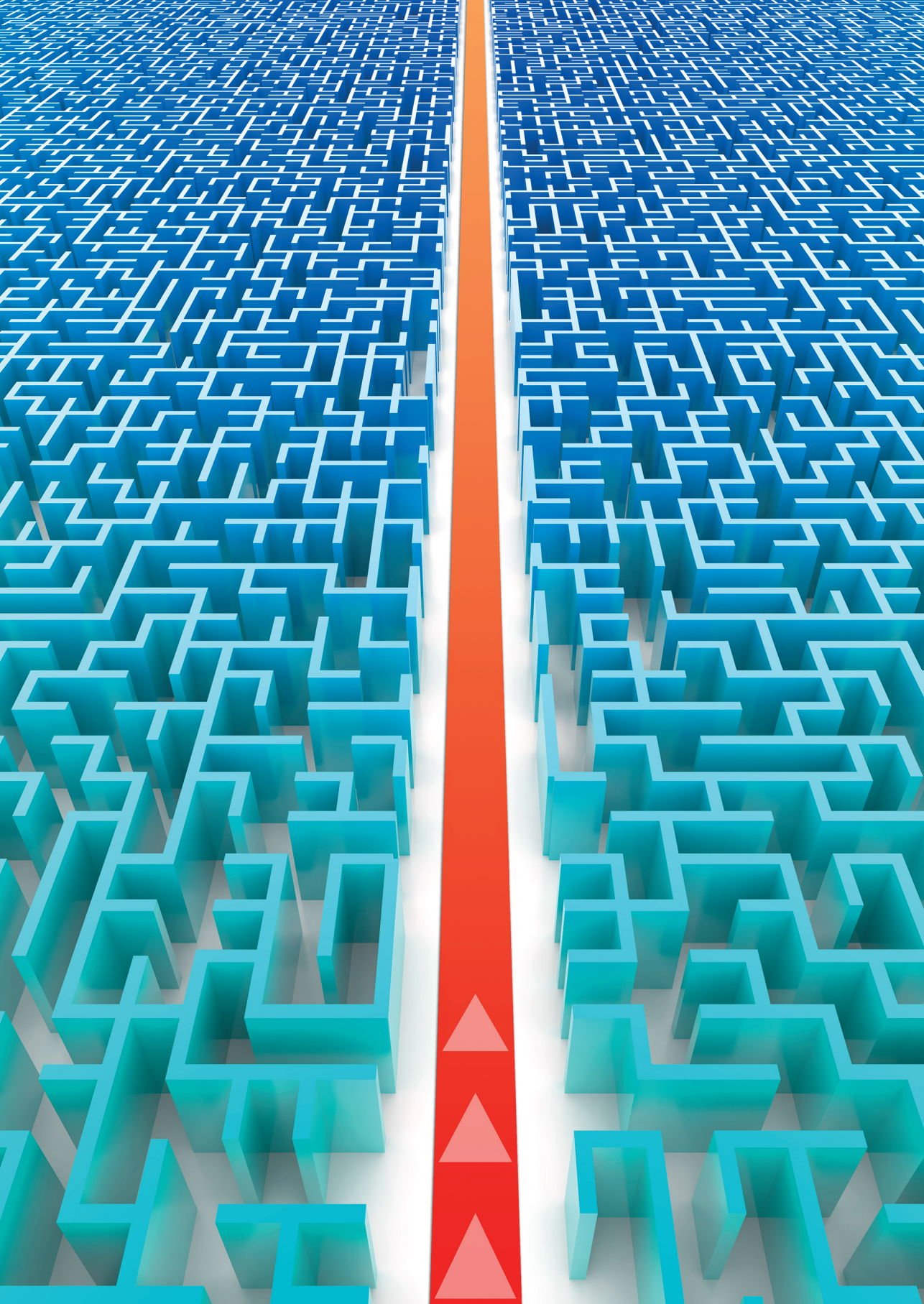

CHAPTER 4

Study 3

Interethnic Contact Online: Contextualising the Implications of Social Media Use by Second-Generation Migrant Youth

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ABSTRACT

Some studies suggest that social media encourage interethnic contact by removing social and spatial boundaries between ethnic communities while offering new spaces for communication and redefinition of ethnic identities. Others contend that social media add an online dimension to intra-ethnic bonding, either within the ethnic community or transnationally. This paper aims to understand such mixed findings by contextualising under what circumstances social media facilitate bridging and bonding behaviours. We conducted 52 semi-structured interviews with second generation migrant youth in Rotterdam to inquire about their motivations and considerations concerning social media use. Results show that social media offer a new space for different orientations of interethnic contact. Interethnic contact as such is rarely deliberately pursued online but it is often constituted in venues organised around common interests. Engagement in intra-ethnic online communities is motivated by struggles with identity and lifestyle. Migrant youth's online and offline lives are very much integrated and online communication deals with very similar complexities as offline interactions.

Keywords: Social Media; Interethnic Contact; Intra-Ethnic contact; Second-Generation Migrant Youth; Online Ethnicity; Social Capital; Migration; Social Inclusion

1. INTRODUCTION

The debate on migrant integration tends to focus primarily on the social and spatial dimensions of inter- and intra-ethnic contact, such as spatial dispersion, mixed schools and interculturalisation. Yet, in contemporary society, social contacts are increasingly established and maintained online. Social media, characterized by user generated content and interaction (Boyd and Ellison2007), provide new opportunities for contact with various communities. They provide ethnic minorities with new ways to relate to their ethnic communities, to people in their country of origin and to other groups in their country of residence (Elias and Lemish 2009). Some scholars have argued that online communication has the potential to overcome spatial and social boundaries that are inherent to offline social contact (Ellison et al. 2007, Hampton et al. 2011). Empirical studies have found mixed results regarding the implications of social media for interethnic contact. Social media may foster interethnic contact by providing new social network infrastructures that give access to bridging social capital that waspreviouslyunattainable.Thiswouldempowerethnicminoritiesthroughexchange of information and resources on life in the country of residence and by providing a sphere in which they can negotiate their position in the multi-ethnic society (Amichai-Hamburger and McKenna 2006). As such, social media would facilitate integration of ethnic minorities in their host societies. Others contend that social media strengthen intra-ethnic contact and impede interethnic contact by connecting ethnic minorities to their countries of origin within socalled 'transnational communities' or facilitating virtual parallel lives in the host country. Komito and Bates (2009) even describe the latter as 'virtual ghetto's' or 'enclaves'. Instead of bridging social capital, social media would only be used for bonding social capital – solidifying migrants' marginalised position. Such varying and sometimes contradicting findings concerning the implications of social media use by ethnic minorities create a need to contextualise interethnic contact theory in today's digital age. In this paper, we explore the implications of the widespread use of social media among minorities for interethnic contact. While not engaging in the discussion about the consequences of interethnic contact for migrant integration, this study aims to gain a better understanding of the varying and sometimes contradicting research findings with regard to the uses of social media use for interethnic contact. We focus on the circumstances under which social media foster interethnic, intra-ethnic or transnational contact, by asking second-generation migrant youth to motivate their choices in social media use. To this aim, we have formulated the following research question: How can we understand the varying uses of social media for interethnic contact by second-generation migrant youth's motivations of social media use? In order to contextualise online interethnic contact, we conducted semi-structured interviews with second-generation migrant youth in the Dutch city of Rotterdam about their social media use. We explicate how social media use relates to their ethnic identity. In what follows, we

first elaborate on the interethnic contact hypothesis and existing findings with regard to social media use by ethnic minorities. As will be shown, studies have raised very general conclusions that need contextualisation and theoretical interpretation. We use the sensitising concepts of social media affordances (Gibson 1979, Hutchby 2001) and inter- and intra-ethnic contact in order to evaluate under what circumstances migrant youth engage with different ethnic identities.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Interethnic Contact Theory in the Context of Social Media

Interethniccontactisgenerallyconsideredtobeanimportantprerequisiteformigrant integration. In the literature on contact theory that originates from social psychology (Allport 1954, Pettigrew 1998), two arguments can be distinguished that entail, respectively, socio-cultural and socioeconomic integration: the contact hypothesis and the isolation hypothesis. The contact hypothesis asserts that a lack of interethnic contact will enlarge socio-cultural differences between groups and will lead to ethnic polarisation or even conflicts. At the same time, it claims that acquaintance lessens prejudice and stereotypes of the other. Thus, it supports socio-cultural integration. A competing hypothesis in this regard is the conflict hypothesis that states that interethnic encounter leads to competition and conflict between different groups over resources or values (Coser 1956, Dovidio et al. 2005, Esses et al. 2011). The isolation hypothesis holds that ethnically segregated neighbourhoods are an obstacle for the socioeconomic integration of migrants in society (Park 1926, Lewis 1969, Wilson 1987). Ethnic minorities have a marginalised position in society because their social networks are primarily ethnic and their access to resources is limited (Massey and Denton 1993, Musterd 2005). Ethnic segregation hinders the existence of ethnic bridges – the informal ties between ethnic minorities and the majority population or other minority groups (Van der Laan Bouma – Doff 2007). It is argued that this leaves minorities in a disadvantaged position. Interethnic contact is therefore also a condition for socioeconomic integration. Social media reduce the importance of spatiality for interethnic communication by making 'communities without propinquity' possible (Van Doorn 1955, Webber 1963, Castells 1996, Wellman 2001). The internet has afforded this well before the emergence of social media during the 2000s, so this debate is not new. Yet social media have made online social networking more popular and for a majority of people it is now an integral part of everyday life. Social media can be conceptualised as internet applications in which user-participation, content-sharing and social networking in (semi-open) network infrastructures is central. This adheres to a necessary condition for interethnic contact according to Allport (1954): an equal status of participants. Therefore, social media seem particularly suited to facilitate contact between people who would

otherwise not have had the opportunity or inclination to meet. Social media users organise themselves in a plurality of networks that are shaped non-hierarchically and are not bounded by geographical borders (Haythornthwaite 2005). Social media are not limited to social networking sites such as Facebook. Weblogs, forums and many other webspaces can also be considered as social media in the sense that they allow users to contribute and interact with each other. Social network sites are organised around personal networks and other social media such as forums, weblogs and YouTube channels are organised around interest groups (Boyd and Ellison 2007, p. 219). Social media applications are commercial products and their design partly determines their use. A social constructivist approach, however, allows us to see a variety of appropriations within these technological boundaries: such as the affordances of social media that emerge in relation to their social context (Gibson 1979, Hutchby 2001). Characteristic for social media is that they lay down an infrastructure of latent ties – ones that exist technically but have not yet been activated – and make weak ties more easily approachable (Hiller and Franz 2004, Ellison et al. 2007). Social media activity creates a continuous virtual co-presence of others and their social capital (Vitak and Ellison 2013). Users can selectively create communities based on interest or acquaintance rather than geography or social status (Haythornthwaite 2005, p. 140). These affordances are relevant with regard to interethnic contact theory. Social media may enable bonding as well as bridging social capital; either locally rooted or spanning geographical distances. In the next section, we outline the divergent views found in scholarly discussions on the implications of social media use for interethnic contact.

Hypothesised Roles of Social Media for Ethnic Identification

As social networking and the allocation of resources in the network society increasingly take place in online networks, it is important to consider the online dimension of ethnic identification. The implications of social media for interethnic contact have been subject of scholarly debate in the field of migration and integration studies (Peeters and D'Haenens 2005, Van den Broek and De Haan 2006,D 'Haenens et al. 2007, Elias and Lemish 2009, Lin et al. 2011). Before we turn to the hypothesised roles of social media for ethnic identification, it is important to first offer a more elaborate theorisation of the main concepts of this research: ethnicity and interethnic contact. In this paper, ethnicity is conceptualised as a dimension of identification. Identity is constituted along multiple dimensions of identification, such as gender or class. For second-generation migrant youth, having parents who were born for example in Morocco, this does not automatically mean that one's ethnicity is 'Moroccan'. Sometimes it is predominantly Berber, Arabic, African, Dutch or European. Also hybrid identification occurs: Moroccan-Dutch, Dutch-Moroccan or Moroccan-Rotterdam. Ethnic identification is socially constructed in daily interactions (see Parker and Song 2006, Mainsah 2011, Marotta 2011). For ethnic minorities – who are often confronted with questions about their ethnicity – this dimension of their identity

can become more prominent than it is for members of the majority population. Sameness or Otherness in case of minorities is often framed along ethnic lines. For some, ethnic identification proves more prominent than for others. For example, some identify more strongly along religious lines.

We should be wary of essentialist ethnic categories operating in notions of inter-and intra-ethnic contact; as ethnicity is a part of one's identity that is constructed in daily interactions. What entails interethnic and intra-ethnic contacts is therefore dependent on someone's ethnic identification and should not be presupposed based on, for example, nationality. In some cases, nationality and ethnic identification correspond, in other cases, one's construction of ethnicity differs from their nationality. Inter- and interethnic contact is however a useful heuristic distinction that is often used in the literature on social media, social networking and social empowerment (AmichaiHamburger and McKenna 2006, Franz and Götzenbrucker 2012). We therefore chose to use the categories of interethnic and intra-ethnic contact as heuristic devices in this study as well to point at different modes of ethnic identification that are supported by social media use. Inter-ethnic communication denotes communication of migrants with other ethnic groups in the country of residence – including the native population. Intra-ethnic communication is communication within the ethnic community. A first strain of literature claims that social media remove spatial boundaries and thereby facilitate interethnic contact. Amichai-Hamburger and McKenna (2006, p. 838) conclude that the internet has great advantages for intergroup contact over traditional face-to-face communication. Hampton et al.(2011) conclude that the use of newmediacontributestopersonalnetworkdiversityandaccessto-socialcapitalthatis available through those networks. Lin et al.(2011) found that Facebook use is positively related to international students' online bridging capital and social adjustments. It is argued that ethnic minorities will establish online interethnic contact in their attempt to organise and facilitate their transition into society. Kahne et al.(2012) found that most youth visit online venues that expose them both to opinions that align to their own and to views that diverge from their own. Interethnic contacts and information helps ethnic minorities to make life choices and contribute to improving their position in the society of residence. Social media provide a secure environment for gradual social learning (Nedelcu 2012, pp. 1348–1349). Althoughethnicitydoesnothavetobedisclosedin onlineinteractions,studieshave shown that ethnicity remains a relevant factor (Nakamura 2002, Leung 2005, Marotta 2011). Some studies point out that youth use the social media to negotiate their identities (Valkenburg et al. 2005, De Leeuw and Rydin 2007, Elias and Lemish 2009). As migrant youth are embedded in multiple social contexts, they often struggle with discordedandsometimescontestingidentities.Viasocialmediause,ethnicmin oritiesare looking for compromises between different dimensions of their identity. They do this, for example by creating personal profiles on social network sites or keeping a diary on

a blog, or by exploring alternative identities in virtual gaming worlds or on online forums (Mainsah 2011, Franz and Götzenbrucker 2012). In online communities, migrant youth can reflect on their own opinions by comparing them to those of their peers. Parker and Song (2006) refer to the processof negotiating ethnic identities as 'reflexive racialisation'. Ethnic identities still matter but they are redefined rather than erased or strengthened by

Other scholars hypothesise that social media are primarily used by ethnic minorities to relate to their country of origin and their own ethnic group instead of for interethnic contact. For example, Komito and Bates (2009, p. 243) reach a remarkable conclusion with regard to social media use by labour migrants in Ireland: 'while these migrants may no longer live in physical ghettos, since they reside in dispersed locations in cities, they now live in "virtual" ghettos or enclaves, as they use new technologies to create separate lives within the wider society in which they work and live'. Social media are places where ethnic minorities can create their own communicative spaces and withdraw from society. Here, immigrants preserve their cultural heritage and strengthen the sense of intra-group solidarity within the ethnic community and broader diaspora. Rydin and Sjøberg (2010) argue that the internet has become a virtual substitute for migrants' homelands. Establishing intra-ethnic contact via social media adheres to the 'homophilia thesis' – also referred to as 'cyberbalkanisation' or 'echo chambers'–arguing that people will avoid being exposed to alternative opinions and meeting Others online (Sunstein, 2001, 2007, Pariser 2011). With regard to interethnic contact theory, this would mean that minorities do not use virtual spaces to expand their networks over ethnic bridges, but rather to reinforce their ethnic identity among like-minded peers. When the social context of the country of residence is estranging, social media provide possibilities for minorities to explore their ethnic belonging. The claim that intra-ethnic social media use by ethnic minorities would be problematic for integration is disputed. Some scholars point out that interethnic social media use can function as a source for social empowerment of minority groups (Elias and Lemish 2009). Ethnic homogeneous online venues can have empowering and emancipating consequences (Mehra et al. 2004). Parker and Song (2006) describe how online interaction has had offline consequences in the form of social gatherings, charitable donations and campaigns against adverse media representations. Intra-ethnic social media interactions can give a voice to ethnic minority groups, thus performing a central integrative function (Kissau 2012, Spaiser 2012). Social media that are intra-ethnic online, can thus lead to more interethnic interactions offline. These mixed findings and conclusions regarding the implications of social media use for interethnic contact indicate that social media might serve different constructions of different ethnic identities and that inter- and intra-ethnic contact is not mutually exclusive. This creates a need to contextualise under what circumstances social media support interethnic contact, under what circumstances they facilitate intra-ethnic contact and the theoretical mechanisms that account for these differing outcomes.

3. METHODOLOGY

To study the implications of social media use for interethnic contact, this research focuses on (second-generation) migrant youth. We focus our study on this group because they generally are avid social media users – like comparable non-migrant age cohorts. The internet is, next to television and telephone, the most favourite technology for Dutch migrant youth, who are spending an increasing number of hours per day online and have access to internet via their PCs, laptops, tablets and/or smartphones(VanSummeren2007).Nexttothis,itisparticularlytheyouthwhoareexploring and establishing their position in society. It is asserted that this second-generation of immigrants is navigating between two ethnic identities: that of their country of origin and of their country of residence (Parker and Song 2006, p. 198, D'Haenens et al. 2007). Migrant youth need to find their way in the host society based on resources beyond the traditional authorities of parents and family as the latter did not grow up in the host society (Van Summeren 2007). A total of 52 qualitative interviews were held with second-generation migrants in the city of Rotterdam. We count as second-generation migrants those respondents that indicated to have at least one parent born outside The Netherlands. Recognising the socially constructed nature of ethnicity in everyday life and in cyberspace in particular, we had respondents define themselves in ethnic terms. The interviews did not depart from an essentialist notion of ethnicity but allowed respondents to outline different aspects of their (ethnic) identity online. Conclusions on second-generation migrant youth engaging in interethnic or intra-ethnic contact online, are based on respondents' own definitions of their ethnic identity that they brought forward in the interviews. This focus on second-generation migrants, sampled in the city of Rotterdam, does have implications for analytical generalisation based on this research. First, we can only draw inferences about second-generation migrant youth as this was our research population. The choice of this group is a consequence of social media use that is primarily popular amongst youth. Yet, we believe that findings regarding this population may have a broader meaning that, in the future, may apply to more age cohorts. The focus on the second-generation also speaks to the importance of this category in current integration debates, where especially in The Netherlands much attention has been attributed on the 'failure' of the second-generation to establish interethnic contacts. We sampled interviewees from Rotterdam because this city is one of the most ethnically diverse in The Netherlands and it has a relatively young population. Research does not pinpoint significant differences in socio-cultural orientation or socioeconomic position between second-generation migrant youth in Rotterdam when compared to another city like Amsterdam (Crul and Heering 2009). Yet there is no comparable research from smaller or less diverse cities – which may involve factors that could not be controlled in this research – available with which to compare. Additional research would be need to identify the impact of variables such as size of communities and 'density' of diversity on our inferences on the relation between social media use and interethnic

contact. Within these restrictions, we pursued a diverse sample in terms of gender, age and ethnicity (Table1).The interviews took place in the period from May to October 2012. Instead of recruiting respondents via social media, we chose to approach them in an offline setting. As a result, we were able to speak to a large variety of social media users as well as non-users, in order to be able to analyse differences in access to and use of social media (only one respondent reported to be a non-user). For this sampling, we visited different types and levels of local educational institutes and approached potential respondents for an interview. The interviews took place in appropriate places in the school where the interview could be conducted without anyone overhearing. Sometimes we interviewed two or three friends at once, whenever the respondents would prefer this. As the respondents who wanted to be interviewed together were friends, they were generally open in responding to our questions. The presence of friends however may have prevented some from disclosing socially undesirable information. Because we interviewed second-generation students, all respondents were proficient in Dutch and the interviews took place in Dutch. Before each interview, we ensured the respondents' anonymity. With permission of the respondents, the interviews were recorded and transcribed ad verbatim. Other interviews were transcribed based on notes of the interviewers directly after the interview. All interview transcripts were anonymised and stored separately from personal information. References in this paper cannot be traced back to individual respondents. The semi-structured interviews allowed the interviewees to elaborate on the interviewtopicsandanyotherrelevantexperiences. Ourinterviewtopicsandcodebookare informed by expectations from the literature on social media use and interethnic contact. We asked all respondents about the intensity of their internet use, the online sites and applications that they are using, what activities and topics they are exploring there and what purposes and effects this had according to them. We purposely asked our respondents about their internet use in general and not about social media use specifically because it cannot be assumed that our respondents have a similar understanding of what social media are. It proved difficult to ask respondents about something as habitual as internet use. Respondents sometimes had difficulties remembering what activities they employ online and what online venues they visit. We solved this by asking about their daily life in general (school, work, hobby's, social contacts and interests) and then prompting whether the internet plays a role in this. We did not presuppose a certain ethnicity while asking respondents about inter- and intra-ethnic communication. The respondents' own definition of their ethnic identity was coded during the analysis. We conducted thematic content analysis of the interview transcripts using ATLAS. TI software. The main code-groups were entitled: (1) Intensity of social media use; (2) Type of media used; (3) Reasons/purposes of social media use; (4) Reasons for restricted use; (5) Strength of social ties; (6) Topics discussed online; and (7) Modes of communication(Interethnic/intra-ethnic). Viasubcodesandfurtherinterpretation and discussion of the data, we found several patterns in the data with regard to interethnic contact that will be described in the next section.

Table 1: Overview of basic characteristics of our sample:

Respondent №	Gender	Age	Parents' country/ countries of origin
1	v	21	Morocco
2	v	21	Suriname/Morocco
3	v	21	Suriname/Colombia
4	v	25	Suriname
5	v	24	Morocco
6	v	18	Morocco
7	v	21	Morocco
8	v	21	Morocco
9	v	27	Morocco
10	v	18	Morocco
11	m	23	Morocco
12	v	23	Morocco
13	v	25	Cape Verde
14	v	17	Morocco
15	v	17	Morocco
16	v	18	Pakistan
17	v	25	Antilles
18	v	24	Antilles
19	v	26	Antilles
20	v	17	Turkey
21	v	17	Morocco
22	m	23	Turkey
23	m	26	Suriname
24	m	25	Turkey
25	v	26	China
26	m	23	Afghanistan
27	m	21	Guinea
28	v	23	Morocco
29	v	23	Suriname
30	m	21	Suriname/Ghana
31	v	35	Colombia/Aruba
32	m	21	Morocco
33	v	23	China
34	m	29	Cape Verde
35	m	23	Cape Verde
36	m	27	Antilles
37	v	22	Morocco
38	m	26	Morocco
39	v	21	Morocco
40	m	22	Morocco
41	m	24	Suriname
42	m	18	Suriname
43	v	17	Morocco
44	v	18	Morocco
45	v	20	Morocco
46	v	16	Morocco
47	m	20	Cape Verde
48	v	26	Morocco
49	v	25	Morocco
50	m	24	Turkey
51	m	23	Iran
52	v	19	Suriname

4. RESULTS

In this section, we describe under what circumstances second-generation migrant youth are appropriating social media for inter- or intra-ethnic contact. Before we address social media use with regard to different modes of interethnic contact in subsequent subsection, we first provide some basic insights on the extent and ways in which our respondents are using social media.

Social Media Use by Second-Generation Migrant Youth

All second-generation migrants that we interviewed are internet users. The majority of our respondents uses internet in multiple settings (home, school, work, etc.) and on different technologies (PC, smartphone, tablet, etc.). Only one respondent indicated that he had no internet access at home but used it at school and friends or families house: 'I used internet quite a lot in the past but not anymore. At home we have no internet and now I am not in school any more I have to go to the library to go online' (Hindustan Surinamese male, 24). We did not find evidence for a digital divide based on internet access. On the contrary:

most of our respondents are avid internet users. Due to the ease and frequency with which our respondents are using internet, they do not really distinguish between their online and offline activities. For many, going online to contact friends or look up information has become a habit and it plays a central role for all kinds of needs and purposes. Many prefer internet sources over traditional sources such as books, newspaper or television. All of our respondents are familiar with social media but they display different patterns of use. Most respondents named Facebook and Twitter as social media they were – or were not – using. Next to this, respondents mentioned using LinkedIn, Hyves (a Dutch social network site similar to Facebook) and online forums. These proved to be the most popular social media among our respondents. Our respondents vary in the types of social media they are using, their frequency of use and the way they are using social media(activelyorpassively). Incorrespondencewiththe90–9–1principle of participation inequality in online communities (Nielsen 2006, Brandtzæg and Heim 2011), the active users constitute the smallest group. This group of users is involved in (multiple) social networking sites and/or posts content on weblogs, forums or news sites. The group of passive users is what Nielsen(2006) in the typology defines as 'lurkers'. They regularly visit social media and read content but hardly ever contribute to it. This group constitutes the largest group in our sample. Within this group of passive users, we can distinguish respondents who know about social media but actively choose to use it as little as possible. They are for example not a member of social networking sites and rarely visit forums or weblogs. Their choice is based on either privacy concerns, disliking the banal characteristics of social media communication or a lack of time. The following statement of a Turkish respondent illustrates the concerns of passive users very well: I don't like Facebook and other social media. No-one calls each other anymore. Everyone is using Ping and Whatsapp. I think it diminishes mutual respect. You don't hear each other's voice and I find it very important to have real contact with my friends. Facebook messages are very superficial, pictures of people's lunch and such. Social media are for people who are alone and who are only focused on themselves. (Turkish male, 24)

Interethnic Contact

We found that social media use under certain circumstances indeed entails interethnic contact. When we asked our respondents whether they had used social media to meet new people (of their own ethnic group or other ethnicities) online, the answer was most of the times 'no'. In cases where new contacts were established, they were rarely continued offline. However, bridging (interethnic) contacts were established for instrumental reasons such as finding a job or seeking information. In these cases, some respondents did report using social media:

I am not looking for friends online. I don't visit sites where you can meet new people or something. No, that's not for me. For job applications I do establish contacts with people I didn't know before of course. But that is a different thing. (Turkish male,23)

With regard to interethnic contacts specifically, most of our respondents remarked that in case they would want to, social media provide opportunities to meet peers from other ethnic groups. They say it is up to themselves to decide whether to establish interethnic contacts online or not.

I think it is one of the purposes of social media to be able to meet new people, also Dutch people or Moroccan people. But if you do this or if you don't, depends on what you want. If you think, I want to stick to my Hindustan group of friends, you can. Many of my Hindustan friends do this on Facebook or Twitter – they only follow fellow-Hindustanis. It all depends on what you want to do with social media. (Hindustan Surinamese female, 23)

Such citations show that migrant youth are appropriating social media according to different needs that they may have. While interethnic contacts are hardly purposefully established, we encountered that interethnic contacts via social media often arise from common goals or interests. Respondents for example told us that they have discussions on forums about gaming or cooking.

I visit general news forums and forums about gaming. I play an online soccer game. There is a lot of different people on this forum, an international public even. (Iranian male, 23)

In such online venues, organised around interests rather than personal networks, interethnic contacts are established unintentionally (Wellman 2001, Haythornthwaite 2005, p. 140, Boyd and Ellison 2008, p. 219). In these cases, ethnicity is not a relevant factor and often remains implicit. Even though online interethnic encounters are not actively sought, often remain implicit and are rarely continued offline, we found that online interethnic encounters can strengthen interethnic understanding and solidarity. Many respondents indicated that they like to read and discuss other people's opinion in social media venues where news and public opinions are discussed. For example, this respondent explains that she sees opinions of people with different (ethnic) backgrounds as enriching:

I like that on the forum you find people with different backgrounds. When you ask a question, you will get different answers. I think that it is interesting to know different viewpoints. (Moroccan female, 22)

Many of the respondents were interested in other people's opinions and ways of life and mentioned that it changed their image of the other.

> *[…]a big plus of such a forum is that you can find experiences and lifestories from a variety of people. Young, old, male, female, Moroccan, Turkish or Dutch, religious. What attracts me is the variety of opinions and experiences that you find on the forum. You can learn from others and their experiences. I try to do so, I take into consideration and I hope to learn from what I read there. (Moroccan female, 24)*

In such cases, social media support interethnic understanding. Even if interethnic contact is not purposefully sought for, it is sometimes established when actors from different groups seek similar information or interest online. It is not always the case that interethnic contact leads to more understanding and solidarity between groups. We encountered some evidence of online contact that involved interethnic tensions. This respondent for example describes how Dutch people sometimes visit a Moroccan-Dutch forum to express negative views of the Moroccan minority and provoke a fight ('flaming'):

> *OnMorocco.nl there are often Dutch people expressing themselves negatively about Moroccans. They visit Morocco.nl just to provoke. Sometimes I am inclined to think that all autochthonous Dutch people think this way, but that is not true. Then I need to put it in perspective that they are just these five people or so. (Moroccan-Surinamese female, 21)*

In such cases, interethnic encounters online may reiterate interethnic tensions that also exist in other settings. The online setting and intentions of the visitors thus explain whether and how interethnic contact is established.

Intra-ethnic Contact

Our interviews show that migrant youth are also reinforcing intra-ethnic bonding contacts online. Ethnic, cultural and religious background is sometimes one of the purposes or goals of social media activities of migrant youth. The following quote exemplifies how migrant youth purposefully search for one another in the online world:

> *I like to talk to fellow Moroccans online. I understand them. It is nice to read their opinions and experiences. Stories on Marokko.nl are recognizable. I think: oh, I experienced the same thing! You meet each other there. Even though you do not know the others, you have the same culture, the same norms and values. (Moroccan female, 17)*

Via the interviews, we encountered a number of different intra-ethnic forums, Facebook communities and other online venues. About half of our respondents indicate that they

use social media to establish or maintain intra-ethnic contact. As the Moroccan girl describes, many youth find recognisable stories from ethnic peers online. They learn how to deal with daily issues by comparing others' experiences and advice. This is particularly relevant in case of taboo subjects. For example, two respondents told us that they like to read forbidden love stories of others.

> *On Turkishplace.nl people write their love stories. It makes you very curious whether it will all end well. They are personal stories of what happened to people in real life. (Turkish female, 17)*

Another respondent mentioned a story entitled 'Yassin and I' and she described how boys would place calls on the forum Morocco.nl about girls they met and would like to get in contact with. Furthermore, ethnic use of social media keeps our respondents up to date with the latest news about the country of origin and the ethnic community in the Netherlands. For example, Antillean parties are announced, Ramadan experiences are exchanged and information and events regarding Surinamese 'keti-koti' are shared through social media. One respondent described how vacancies for jobs are published on Moroccan forums. As such, advantages of the ethnic labour market are maintained (Portes and Rumbaut 1990). There were also respondents that mentioned the added value of ethnic social media when living in a multi-ethnic society such as Rotterdam. As a Moroccan-Dutch girl explains:

> *We are already integrating, aren't we? We meet Dutch people everywhere. We live here in Rotterdam with nothing but other cultures. That is why it is good that Moroccans have their own spot on Marokko.nl. A place for ourselves. As Moroccans, you just understand each other. It is this we-feeling, a feeling of community. (Moroccan female, 17)*

Such statements of respondents would suggest that intra-ethnic bonding online is more relevant for people living in a multi-ethnic context. Other respondents however indicated that their ethnicity is more important for them in a less multiethnic setting. This respondent for example indicated that ethnic social media use became less important when she moved to Rotterdam:

> *At the time when I lived in Brabant I was discussing my Chinese background on the internet much more than now when living in Rotterdam. Rotterdam is very multicultural and therefore I do not feel the need to do so. In Brabant, I was the only Asian girl. I was surrounded by nothing but Dutch society. But now I live here I do not feel the need to go online for this because you meet other Asian people anyway. (Chinese female, 26)*

Underlying both citations is however the ability to discuss and inform themselves about their ethnic background offline. This is in accordance with Chen and Choi's (2011) finding that migrants with a high availability of offline (ethnic) social support, are less likely to seek online social support of co-ethnics. Another group of respondents mentioned that they avoid intra-ethnic social media use because they fear that it will hinder interethnic contact. For example, this Turkish respondent thinks that instead of retreating to intra-ethnic social media communities, it is important to learn how to engage with people from different backgrounds:

> *I am really against forums such as Hababam.nl or Marokko.nl where people will only meet people with a Turkish-Dutch or Moroccan-Dutch background. I think you need to learn to engage with different people. You need to be able to talk to people with different backgrounds. (Turkish male, 24)*

All in all, we found that ethnicity is only one amongst many topics that migrant youth discuss on social media, next to, for example, religion, sports or school. In some situations or life phases, when a respondent's ethnic identity becomes prominent, they engage in intra-ethnic online communities; and they can relate to co-ethnics in their country of residence. At the same time, many respondents still invest in transnational intra-ethnic contact, with friends and family in the origin country. Social media facilitate these kinds of contact, as the next citation shows:

> *It is very convenient to keep in contact with my family abroad through Facebook. When my aunt in Thailand posts something at four o'clock at night, we can read it the next morning. My brother just had a baby so everyone is curious to see what he looks like. Because of time differences Facebook is more convenient than telephone. Everyone answers when they can. Sometimes we use Skype as well. (Surinamese/ Colombian female, 21)*

Our respondents thus used social media to connect with family and friends in the country of origin, but they did not establish new transnational contacts through social media nor were they very interested in news and information about life in their (parents') countries of origin. They were primarily interested in general culture, traditions and religion. They indicated that in this, their transnational contacts and engagement is different than that of their parents who often read newspapers from the country of origin.

> *I don't often look for information about Morocco online. Only very general information about the region where my family originates from because we travel there regularly. I am not interested in what's happening in other parts of Morocco. (Moroccan male, 26)*

Intra-ethnic social media use of migrant youth does not often concern the homeland but rather their homeculture. They are interested in cultural and religious traditions from their country of origin but not so much in the daily news. The second-generation shows a more cosmopolitan outlook on their ethnic identity that goes beyond national categories (see, for example, Nedelcu 2012). Agglomerate identities such as 'Asian' or 'Islamic' were referred to. When using social media to read or discuss this, respondents preferred to interact with others from their ethnic community in the country of residence than with people from their country of origin. For our respondents, intra-ethnic contact on social media is not a retreat to a virtual representation of the homeland of their parents. Instead, they are engaging with other migrant youth in exploring their ethnic identity as one of many topics they are exploring on social media.

5. CONCLUSIONS

Prior studies have reached varying conclusions regarding the implications of social media use for interethnic contact. This is remarkable and urged us to contextualise these findings in an empirical study into the conditions under which social media contribute to different orientations of interethnic contact. We asked how varying uses of social media for inter ethnic contact can be understood. Our results show that interethnic and intra-ethnic contact in social media use results from the needs and motivations of the users. The type and purpose of social media use differs for youth and intra- and interethnic social media use is not mutually exclusive. While ethnicity remains a relevant factor online, not all social media use of migrant youth is ethnically oriented. Online communities of interest can result in unintended interethnic encounters. As Pettigrew (1998) posits, common goals are an important prerequisite for interethnic contact. Users selectively visit social media based on interests rather than prior acquaintance or (ethnic) background (Wellman 2001, Haythornthwaite 2005: 140, Boyd and Ellison 2007, p. 219). In some instances, ethnicity is the common interest that motivates and determines social media use. Many of our respondents valued intra-ethnic social media activities such as discussing cultural traditions on forums or hearing about upcoming ethnic events via social networking sites. Yet, in contrast to the intra-ethnic bonding thesis, the fear that ethnic minorities would retreat in virtual ethnic enclaves seems unfounded. Our research shows that migrant youth are using various types of social media and visit them for various purposes. Migrant youth visit certain social media venues when they have questions about their school or work, others when they want to discuss the latest soccer results and again others when they want to explore their own ethnic background. Speaking to the broader literature on interethnic contact and migrant integration, our study shows that social media has indeed become a relevant sphere for the study of interethnic contact, supporting different ethnic orienta-

tions. Our analysis rejects the thesis that social media would only support intra-ethnic bonding (cf. Putnam 2000). By contacting respondents offline, and studying the broader range of their social media activities, we found that social media support both inter- and intra-ethnic contact. Interethnic contact was mostly established in interest-based online venues. Intra-ethnic online contact was established when the interest guiding migrant youth's online behaviour was their ethnic ethnicity. Studies sampling respondents through ethnic online communities (for example ethnic forums or Facebook groups) or looking at content of such media, risk overemphasising the scale and effects of intra-ethnic social media use. Furthermore, we found that bonding with migrant communities by second-generation migrant youth via social media is less oriented at the home-country than the homeculture; the transnational dimension of social media activities appears very limited. These findings add an important dimension to the current academic (and policy) debate on interethnic contact that often stresses the spatial (dispersal, gentrification) dimension rather than the virtual dimension. We should however avoid talking about online and offline life in binary terms. These lives are very much integrated and they co-construct notions of ethnicity and belonging (see, for example, Marotta 2011). Thus, it becomes clear that online communication deals with very similar complexities as offline interactions.

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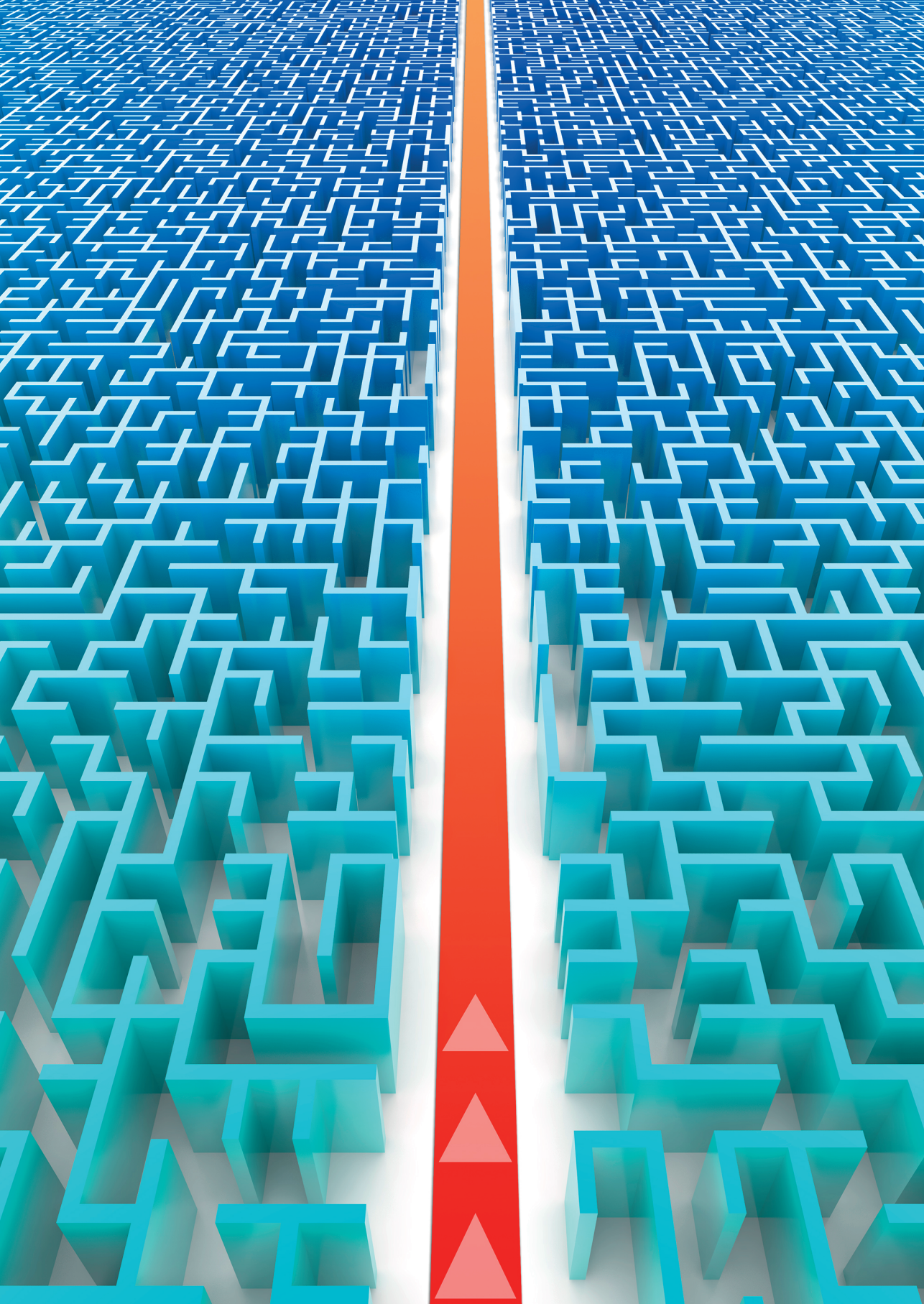

CHAPTER 5

Study 4

Branding diversity in Amsterdam and Rotterdam: how political discourses and marketing logic pushes migration-related diversity to the background in place brands.

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ABSTRACT

This paper aims to unravel how superdiverse cities re-imagine themselves in response to migration-related diversity. Based on a double case study on the branding strategies of two superdiverse Dutch cities, Amsterdam and Rotterdam, this paper shows that although diversity is part of the brand identity in both cities, it is not used prominently in brand communications or in urban planning. Place brands are constructed in wider discursive and political settings that affect whether and how migration-related diversity is used in the symbolic representation of places as well as in urban planning. Migration-related diversity is re-defined strategically (as 'cosmopolitan' and 'international') for two reasons: (1) to turn it into an asset that enhances the brand, and (2) to align the brand with existing policies and political discourses on migration and accommodate political pressures. City marketers have depoliticized place branding. Marketing logic pushed migration related-diversity to the background, because according to the city marketers diversity does not help a city to stand out.

Keywords: place branding, cities, migration-related diversity.

1. INTRODUCTION

International migration contributes to the diversification of cities. Cities are often the first locations where migrants arrive, settle, and make contact with the host society. This is nothing new, as migration has been a driving force behind urban transformations for centuries (Saunders, 2010). Nowadays, however, an increasing number of cities have become so-called superdiverse cities (Crul, 2016), where more than half of the population has a first or second generation migration background. Diversity has also increased within urban migrant populations, which now contain a broader range of national backgrounds, cultural and religious orientations and social and economic positions.

Migration is changing the identity of superdiverse cities and posing a strategic challenge to urban planners. Cities respond differently to migration and their changing place identities. Some cities (such as Barcelona, New York, London or Leicester) have re-imagined themselves as happy superdiverse cities, defining migration and diversity as an asset that strengthens their economy and global positioning (Glick Schiller and Çağlar, 2009; Hassen and Giovanardi, 2017). They use their 'superdiverse' features to create images of the city as being inclusive and therefore invest in the development of a city identity that transcends national, faith and ethnic boundaries (see Foner et al., 2014). Other cities (such as Paris and Liverpool) define migration as a challenge and are more reluctant to acknowledge migration-related diversity as part of their identity.

Differences in how and why cities re-imagine themselves under the influence of migration and migration-related diversity are little understood. The differences cannot simply be explained by the scale or composition of migration as these 'superdiverse' cities face rather similar migration processes (Glick Schiller and Çağlar, 2009; Zapata-Barrero et al., 2017). Therefore, this article addresses how and why superdiverse cities re-imagine themselves and construct their identity in response to migration-related diversity. More specifically, it examines how superdiverse cities brand themselves in the face of migration-related diversity and unravels the marketing logics and political and administrative processes that engender selective representations of a city in place brands.

Place brands have become important marketing instruments that are used to create images for external audiences, such as potential investors, but also as strategic instruments in urban planning (Eshuis and Klijn, 2017; Greenberg, 2008; Oliveira, 2016; Pasquinelli, 2013). Cities may align their policies and planning with the brand to position themselves in certain ways and develop particular identities (Eshuis and Klijn, 2017; Greenberg, 2008; Hassen and Giovanardi 2017; Kavaratzis, 2008). Spatial planning may inform and influence city branding activities, for example when city marketers incorporate the visions of the

future that are emplotted in spatial plans into the identity of the city brand. Both spatial planning and branding are about envisioning an aspirational 'imagined future' (see Ashworth et al., 2015; Oliveira, 2016). Thus, they may potentially strengthen each other (Van Assche and Lo, 2011), but they may also clash if not aligned.

This paper aims to unravel how cities manage their identity through place branding in the face of migration-related diversity. It explicitly considers how spatial planning informs the place brand and how migration-related diversity is included in place branding. Place brands contain the associations that cities invoke about the place and particular cultural, ethnic and religious groups. In some cases, migration-related diversity is treated as a great asset in branding and urban planning (see and Fincher et al., 2014). However, institutionalized ideologies, discourses and policies on migration can also favour other responses, blocking inclusive place brands in which diversity plays a prominent role and enhancing identity narratives of a dominant existing culture. This study examines how migration-related diversity is treated in branding through an in-depth qualitative analysis of city branding in two superdiverse Dutch cities: Amsterdam and Rotterdam.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

How cities respond to migration-related diversity in their place branding strategies is a result of city policies on migration and diversity, as well as place branding policies. Planning may also play a role when city marketers take planning aspects into account. Drawing on literatures from migration studies, urban studies, planning and place marketing, this section first conceptualizes place branding and then explores the role of superdiversity in place branding.

2.1 Place Branding

City branding is more than designing logos and slogans. It is also about developing a vision that fits the city's identity and local circumstances (Kavaratzis, 2008). Thus, city branding is about selecting certain benefits and values of a city to tell a story about what it stands for. This is not easy because cities are complex 'products' that fulfil many different functions such as being a tourist destination, residential area or transport hub. In practice, cities commonly simplify their narratives and present brands that ignore much of the complexity of cities and the role of local government (Kavaratzis & Hatch, 2013; Andersen & Matthiessen, 1995; Zenker et al., 2017 and Andersson, 2016). Several authors point to the importance of consultation between planners, branding professionals and residents to assure that the brand's selected assets are aligned with spatial reality and spatial plans for the future, and also supported by local residents (e.g. Van Assche and Lo, 2011).

Place branding literature shows that place branding can be used for various strategic purposes, particularly economic and social purposes. London, for example, has been criticized for using the superdiverse element in its brand, not to achieve social inclusion, but as a superficial and strategic proposition to attract narrowly-defined target groups, such as creative workers, international tourists and other elites (Harvie 2013: 489, Winter, 2013; Falcous & Silk, 2010). In this paper, we distinguish between economic place branding policies and social place branding policies. Cities commonly apply economic place branding policies that are dominated by an economic rationale. These place branding policies aim to boost the economy and make the city more attractive than its competitors. Here, place branding is about creating images that attract investors, businesses, tourists and new residents. Social place branding policies, on the other hand, aim to shape a sense of place among citizens and contribute to a common urban identity (Ashworth, 2009). Instead of aiming at competition and differentiation, as economic place branding does, the primary purpose of social place branding is identification, social cohesion and creating collectivity (cf. Mommaas, 2002).

As with other policies, the institutional embedding of place branding influences policy goals and content. For example, if place branding is developed within an economic department this may result in a different policy than if it is developed within a spatial planning department or by an independent marketing body. Moreover, scholars have shown that place branding policies are shaped in interaction between various public, private and societal parties (Andersson, 2016; Boisen et al., 2018; Eshuis and Klijn, 2012). City branding policies involve many stakeholders and various institutional arrangements. City marketing is often delegated to specialized marketing organizations such as quasi-autonomous non-governmental agencies (Zavattaro and Adams, 2015) or private organizations (Kotler, 1993). City branding policies are hence not solely developed by local governments, but by various organizational bodies with more or less autonomy vis-à-vis the local municipality (Boisen et al., 2018). Thus, on the one hand, place branding is shaped by city marketers in city marketing bodies, and on the other hand by wider urban policies that touch on various policy domains, such as economics, social affairs, communication and planning. The interaction between a municipality's migration policies and the place branding policies of its marketing agency shapes how a sensitive policy subject such as migration-related diversity is included within the place brand. In addition, place marketers shape place branding policies in processes wherein they try to align the place brand with wider municipal policies. If city marketers have a relatively autonomous institutional position vis-à-vis the municipality, it is easier for them to determine their own course of action and be less influenced by local migration and diversity policies or spatial planning policies.

As the literature on autonomous and semi-autonomous agencies in the public sector (e.g. Overman, 2016; Yesilkagit and Van Thiel, 2008) has emphasized, the degree of autonomy of various organization bodies varies, and this influences how much room for manoeuvre agencies have to develop their own policies, i.e. to choose their own target groups and policy instruments and to lead the policymaking process (see Yesilkagit and Van Thiel, 2008). For place branding this means that the degree of autonomy of the city marketing organization vis-à-vis the city council determines the extent to which city marketers are pressured to follow specific municipal planning or migration policies, or whether they can follow their own marketing-driven preferences regarding place branding policies.

2.2 Superdiversity and City Branding

What role does superdiversity play in place branding? Superdiversity marks a transformation in the scale and nature of migration-related diversity. It involves an increase of 'newer, smaller, transient, more socially stratified, less organized and more legally differentiated immigrant groups' (Vertovec, 2007; Crul, 2006). This holds true not only for the immigrant's country of origin, but also applies to the socio-economic, cultural, religious and linguistic profiles of immigrants as well as to their migration channel and legal status (ibid). Migration-related diversity is conceptualized as any form of ethnic, social, political, cultural, religious, racial diversity within urban populations resulting from first or second-generation migrants.

Superdiversity is, as scholars have shown, primarily an urban phenomenon. It is the result of generations of migration changing the urban landscape (see, for instance Caponio a.o., 2017). In superdiverse cities it has become difficult to distinguish distinct 'minorities', as singular identities have become the exception rather than the rule. In fact, an increasing number of superdiverse cities can also be described as majority-minority cities in which the majority of the population has a migration background (Crul, 2006).

However, the fact that cities have become more superdiverse does not necessarily mean that this diversity is reflected in their place branding. Various reasons can be found in the literature for why migration-related diversity is not always directly reflected in place brands. First, place branding does not only fulfil an 'internal' function of representing the entire urban population and helping all residents to identify with their city, but also an 'external' function, oriented, for instance, towards businesses and tourism. Branding policies often function as a tool to increase economic development and international competitiveness instead of enhancing social cohesion or providing a shared sense of belonging amongst residents. The use of diversity as a brand value, often in combination with values such as creativity and cosmopolitanism, could be a strategic approach to enhance the attractiveness of a city for investors and tourists (Hassen and Giovanardi, 2016; Goess, de

Jong and Meijers, 2016). Local governments are then confronted with the challenge of combining issues of consumerism and citizenship all at once. Paganoni (2012) even argues that 'the discourse of social inclusion […in branding] is frequently subsumed within that of corporate rhetoric and is consequently domesticated to the point of obfuscating the most critical aspects of urban life' (p. 26).

Secondly, cities can (and do) respond very differently to the rise of superdiversity. Some cities embrace diversity as a part of being a 'happy superdiverse city', and use superdiversity prominently in their place brand (Hassen and Giovanardi, 2017; Caponio, Scholten and Zapata-Barrero, 2018). Branding superdiversity as part of the urban identity can provide a narrative of a 'shared sense of belonging' that helps people to identify with their city. Such an embracing of superdiversity is likely to come together with multiculturalist or interculturalist policies towards diversity. Multiculturalist policies emphasize cultural differences and encourage citizens to 'acknowledge and embrace each other's multi ethnic customs' (van Breugel et al., 2015: 14). Interculturalist policies abandon the idea of stable and fixed minority groups entirely. They revolve around the promotion of equal opportunities, fostering inter-ethnic contact and developing a shared sense of belonging within superdiverse communities (Cantle, 2012; Scholten et al., 2017; see also Collins and Friesen, 2011). Both are likely to see diversity in itself as a value, whereby multiculturalists are more likely to emphasize the diverse backgrounds within a population, and interculturalists are more likely to emphasize what diverse populations have in common.

Conversely, some cities may be more reluctant to concede to the rise of diversity. This is likely to be the case in cities that have adopted more assimilationist or even differentialist approaches to diversity. Assimilationist policies are built on the belief that assimilation improves inter-ethnic relationships by sublimating them, whereby ethnic groups take on the identity of the dominant group and dissolve into it. Differentialist policies aim to keep social boundaries between groups in place, for instance by keeping open the possibility of return migration or repatriation. Both assimilationists and differentialists are unlikely to value diversity and will seek to develop place brands that emphasize the need for a common cultural framework or the dominant position of a specific (probably native) part of the population.

To understand if and why certain cities either utilize or ignore assets such as diversity in their brands, one needs to take deeper look at the institutionalized ideologies, policies and planning, as well as the community narratives that often underlie such choices. Fincher et al. (2014) argue that the highly political national debates on multiculturalism (and other approaches to migration-related diversity) have shaped various aspects of planning at the local level, including physical infrastructure, planning for social mixing,

including migrants or ethnically defined groups in local government strategies, planning contested urban landscapes (e.g. contested mosques) and multicultural encounters (such as festivals). Fincher et al. (2014) highlight that planning may engage with diversity in three ways: a) redistribution: managing social differences, including balancing competing interests and sharing public goods; b) recognition of specific needs of different individuals and providing services, and; c) encounter: responding to people in diversified settings. Thus it is relevant to consider the institutionalized ways in which cities have dealt with migration-related diversity – not only in their integration policies, but also more broadly reflected in, for example, planning strategies – because this may in turn influence how cities use diversity in their place brands. Lastly, we need to address that there are different ways of dealing with diversity in branding: cities can explicitly highlight it as a part of the selected qualities of a place, but it can also function as background. It is even possible to highlight this quality separately, but not as part of the discussion on what is distinctive in the brand. In this study, we want to unravel and understand the choices that cities are making, while clearly acknowledging that there is no objective need to include diversity in a city brand. Furthermore, cities that decide not to include diversity may do so for a variety of reasons that are not necessarily less justifiable or effective than those of cities that use an inclusive city brand.

3. METHODS AND DATA ANALYSIS

This study aims to understand why cities respond differently to migration-related diversity in terms of city branding. To analyze this, a double case study was conducted on place branding in Amsterdam and Rotterdam. In line with the logic of qualitative research, we deliberately selected two cases rich in information about the research subject (e.g. Creswell and Poth, 2017). We selected two superdiverse cities (see table 1) that apply city branding actively through targeted city branding policies and campaigns. We deliberately selected two cities that differ in terms of the political discourse on diversity so that we could assess how wider ideologies and discourses influence the place brand. Rotterdam, which has been ruled by populist municipal governments for several periods, is known for its harsh rhetoric regarding migrants (Uitermark and Duyvendak, 2008; Dukes and Musterd, 2012). Amsterdam is characterized by a stronger pro-diversity discourse and even, according to some, by a 'counter-discourse in which ethnic minorities are not *a priori* seen as a problem and where assimilationism is explicitly rejected' (Uitermark et al., 2005: 628).

In terms of data collection methods, we conducted 12 in-depth interviews with key actors involved in the formulation and implementation of city branding policies in the period between 2015 and 2016. We conducted 6 interviews with *city branding advisors,*

policy advisors and policy makers in the municipality of Amsterdam, including executive departments involved in implementing strategic choices with regard to city branding policies. Similarly, we interviewed 6 respondents within the municipality of Rotterdam and stakeholders working closely with the city on its identity. Respondents were selected based on their involvement with city branding policies or their expertise in the diversity domain. In both cities the core city branding officers were interviewed and selection was based on respondents' knowledge of who were crucial players in the field of branding. By conducting these 12 interviews we were able to cover the main actors and perspectives and produce a detailed picture of how and why migration-related diversity is either included in or left out of branding policies.

Rotterdam	**Total Population**	**641,326**
	Number of nationalities	148
	% of the city population with a migrant background	52%
Amsterdam	Total Population	859,732
	Number of nationalities	162
	% of the city population with a migrant background	52%

Table 1 Statistics on Rotterdam and Amsterdam

We used a topic list focusing on a) 'general' branding policies; b) if and to what extent migration-related diversity was part of brand identity and brand communications and c) reasons for incorporating or ignoring migration-related diversity in branding. As both cities' branding policies only go back to 2005, we asked our respondents to reflect on the situation from 2005 onwards. The interviews were transcribed and hand-coded. The data then helped us to refine our codes and reconstruct how and why Rotterdam and Amsterdam have included migration-related diversity in their branding strategies. In addition, we analyzed local policy documents for the period 2005-2015 that explicitly focus on city branding in Rotterdam and Amsterdam to reconstruct these branding policies. We analyzed 5 key texts on city branding (policy documents and expert reports) for Amsterdam and 6 for Rotterdam. Both interviews and documents were hand-coded using a standardized topic book. Here too, a semi-open coding approach was used, taking the theoretical concepts as the basis for the codebook. Following our research question, the first part of the codes is related to the elements that form the city brand. These include codes identifying key brand values, symbols/images of the city, slogans, personalities or campaigns. The second part of the codes concerned cities' considerations on incorporating diversity in their brand, which for example, could be based on economic or political motives[1]. The resulting patterns are discussed in the following section.

[1] The codebook is available from the authors on request.

4. RESULTS

4.1 City Branding in Rotterdam

City branding plays an important role in Rotterdam's policy attempts to improve the city's image. In 2003-2004 the municipality of Rotterdam decided to develop a 'brand' that fitted the 'new Rotterdam' (Interviews with the municipality of Rotterdam). The new Rotterdam, which was rebuilt after the Second World War, could be characterized as a city with modern and innovative architecture, various cultural facilities and meeting places, a changing population composition, a growing service economy, and a port that still seemed somewhat distant from the rest of the city (Riezebos, 2014). The main ambition was to rectify Rotterdam's image as a 'cold and unsociable port city' (Municipality of Rotterdam, 2008a).

The municipality initiated a branding campaign, 'Rotterdam Dares', to emphasize Rotterdam's identity as 'a young international city on the water, with a straightforward and hands-on mentality', focusing on the city's long tradition of 'sleeves rolled up' and 'daring approaches'. 'Ambition, change and engagement' were chosen as the brand values and formed the building blocks of the 'new' imagery that was being created to promote Rotterdam (Riezebos, 2014; Interviews with municipality). The 'Rotterdam Dares' campaign aimed to support projects, festivals and initiatives that embodied the city's 'hands-on' mentality and 'daring actions'. To obtain more exposure, the municipality financially supported some of these projects (Municipality of Rotterdam, 2008b). While emphasizing Rotterdam's innovative, sensational and daring attitude, the city's 'international' and 'multicultural' character was acknowledged in city branding documents. For example, Rotterdam's 'multi-cultural capital' was framed as a 'source of creativity' (Municipality of Rotterdam, 2005). The brand value 'international' not only referred to Rotterdam's historical context as an international trade centre and port, but especially to Rotterdam's harbouring 'more than 160 nationalities' *and* its cosmopolitan atmosphere. The municipality of Rotterdam communicates feelings of pride when stating that this diverse population makes Rotterdam a bit 'un-Dutch' (ibid.).

A key factor driving Rotterdam's place branding strategy was the international economic ambition to become a global port city. In 2007, Rotterdam launched a new brand tag that reflected this economic driver even more strongly. The 'Rotterdam Dares' campaign no longer fitted the international orientation that the municipality was specifically targeting (Riezebos, 2014; Interviews with city marketing advisors). The many nationalities and 'the wealth of cultures and ethnicities from all over the world' (Municipality of Rotterdam, 2008c) fitted the clear international focus that Rotterdam was pursuing and this was presented as a great *economic* asset for the city:

'About 50% of the population has their roots in the rest of the world. The language skills, and knowledge of these international citizens, give access to overseas contacts and links to foreign markets. […]' [Rotterdam World Story, 2008: 9].

This means that the municipality recognized Rotterdam's diversity as an important *selling* point to reinforce its international image, which in turn, would attract foreign investors and entrepreneurs. With a main port that functions as an international junction, it is important to consider the expat community for whom a diverse city composition is appealing (Interview with Rotterdam Partners, 2015). City marketing activities to 'strengthen the (inter) cultural identity of Rotterdam, by treating the various nationalities as a strength of the city' were hence strongly connected to the international positioning of Rotterdam (Municipality of Rotterdam, 2007). However, this 'economic emphasis' on Rotterdam as a World Port, World City was criticized for being 'too business-orientated'. Here, we can clearly see that very few stakeholders within the community were involved in deciding on the community's values, needs and assets. Consequently, many stakeholders (especially residents) did not feel represented by the brand. This prompted the municipality to develop a new communication strategy under the new slogan 'Rotterdam, make it happen' (Interviews with municipality of Rotterdam). The brand aimed to improve Rotterdam's image by emphasizing the 'mentality' that is so typical of Rotterdam (Municipality of Rotterdam, 2014). Rotterdam's 'DNA' has been redefined, with 'international, worldly, groundbreaking, entrepreneurial, no-nonsense and raw' being the key values that underlie its brand identity (ibid.). The city chose to highlight its 'cosmopolitan' character as an advantage, but in more recent years the term 'multicultural' has largely been replaced with terms such as 'cosmopolitan' and 'international'. Furthermore, Rotterdam's cosmopolitan outlook is framed as part of the 'international' atmosphere that it aims to convey (Municipality of Rotterdam, 2014; Interviews 2015).

Whereas Rotterdam chose to incorporate diversity into its brand *identity*, diversity is barely translated into brand *communication*. Rotterdam chose not to emphasize cultural diversity in its city branding strategy. This does not mean that Rotterdam does not acknowledge diversity as being central to its DNA; rather it means that the city believes that it is not up to the municipality to put it explicitly on display. For example, the municipality's city branding hardly features events that celebrate cultural diversity, nor does it draw on ethnic quarters or the multicultural background of many businesses in the city. The following statement by one of the city's brand officers illustrates this:

'We have the West-Kruiskade as a multicultural street with its own Chinatown, and for our city branding it would be great if we could name it and put a label on it. But the entrepre-

neurs don't do that themselves, so why would we? (Interview with Chief Marketing Office, 2015).'

According to respondents, the underlying rationale is that Rotterdam's cultural diversity 'speaks for itself' (Several interviews, 2015). Treating it as a 'given fact' shows acceptance of the city's identity. The city branding professionals consider that involving diversity explicitly in the brand strategy would feel as if they are problematizing the issue. Moreover, it would also feel as if they were making a political statement, which according to one of the respondents, *'is not desirable, given that branding is about promoting our city and not necessarily about solving and getting engaged in political debates'*. This shows how branding professionals prefer to focus on promotional activities that improve Rotterdam's economic situation and not extend their roles and ambitions to social policies and planning. In the next subsection we will elaborate on the way in which planning – particularly planning related to diversity – is taken into account in the brand.

During our interviews, two exceptions were mentioned. Firstly, there is the events policy that Rotterdam has implemented since the start of Rotterdam Dares, in particular the 'Dunya Festival' and 'Summer Carnival', which have recently been combined in the Rotterdam Unlimited Program. These festivals celebrate Rotterdam's cultural diversity 'by providing a stage for music, art and cuisines from countries and cultures all over the world' (Rotterdam Unlimited, 2013). Although these festivals were initially started by residents of Rotterdam, they have become an important part of the city's events policy. The municipality of Rotterdam gives both festivals structural financial support. Secondly, the city aims to stimulate an image that fits well with Rotterdam's cultural diversity, by the selective use of photos in communications about Rotterdam. According to our respondents, the Rotterdam 'image-database' that individuals and companies can use for promotional purposes, is one of the few (and recently introduced) ways in which the municipality attempts to include diversity when positioning the city.

How planning-related aspects of diversity are taken into account in branding

The municipality's idea is that citizens, visitors, companies and students will *experience* Rotterdam's cosmopolitan atmosphere and streetscape when they enter the city. The municipality believes that *others* than the municipality itself will communicate these experiences with and about Rotterdam, and that these stories 'are far more powerful and meaningful' (Interview with Rotterdam Partners, 2015). Moreover, the municipality argues that *because* diversity is so visible in Rotterdam's architecture and streetscape, it is not necessary to make it a core concept of the branding strategy. At the same time though, we observe that other aspects of planning which are also highly visible in the city, particularly Rotterdam's *modern* architecture, are key to the general branding strategy. While

the general branding strategy is hence connected to planning, in the sense that the major architectural investments are used to promote Rotterdam as a modern city, planning aspects related to migration-related diversity are hardly used at all in branding. This can be explained by the fact that city marketers in Rotterdam approach branding mainly from an economic perspective, thus barely integrating aspects that in their view do not contribute to this, such as certain social or spatial aspects of the city. Moreover, city marketers do not formally have to answer to planners (due to their position in the municipality). While our interviews revealed interaction with the economic and communication departments in the local government, there was no interaction with planners.

Planning related to diversity in terms of social mixing has been part of Rotterdam's strategy to deal with housing issues and social problems. In 2005 the municipality initiated the 'Rotterdam Law' that was used as a planning instrument to spread lower and higher incomes more equally throughout the city. According to critics, the Rotterdam Law mainly served to get rid of certain 'disadvantaged' groups, migrants in particular. Strikingly, the city branded the Rotterdam Law as an exemplar of the city's daring and innovative character. The Rotterdam Law is framed in non-sensitive terms. City marketers evoked pride in the attempts to spread migrants throughout the city, while carefully avoiding highlighting Rotterdam's multicultural features and the politically sensitive debates on housing and social issues.

Our data hence shows that planning elements in the city are selectively used by city marketers. Thereby, migration-related planning elements are not a specific matter of focus for city marketers, even though they are aware of those elements and occasionally use them in specifically framed ways.

How the political context affects branding

The empirical data further shows that the local political situation influences the rather implicit relation between migration-related diversity and city branding. Since the early 2000s, right-wing populism has occupied a prominent place in local politics, with the populist party 'Liveable Rotterdam' becoming the major party in the local elections of 2002 and 2014. This party draws on an assimilationist discourse regarding migration and promotes anti-migration policies. Furthermore, this implicit relationship is also related to the position of marketing organizations within the city. The Chief Marketing Office is embedded within the municipality, and therefore has to take existing policies and political discourses into account. This implies that it is difficult for the CMO to ignore this assimilationist discourse which does not favour migration-related diversity. At the same time, the CMO is relatively autonomous from other municipal departments as he or she is not part of a specific department, but reports directly to the mayor. CMOs can therefore work

according to a marketing logic instead of having to work in alignment with departmental policies such as welfare or spatial policies. Our interviews with both parties show that the 'professional' logic of marketers – which is merely an economic perspective – clearly prevails in branding choices. Promoting diversity from a social agenda point of view is far removed from the marketers' perspective. The institutional distance between the municipality (e.g. city council) and the city branding bodies hence influences the extent to which the CMO is able to develop the Rotterdam brand.

Even though the content of the city brand is developed without much direct interference from local political parties – represented in the city executive – marketers are influenced by the broader political discourse in Rotterdam. The political discussions on migration-related diversity – which have harshened – have made marketers more careful in their choices, because *'we don't want to get involved in politics'* (Interview with city branding officer, 2015). Part of guarding the distance between political players and their own organization, is accomplished by taking the political environment into account on a more 'strategic' level. The marketers emphasize that even though specific choices for certain brand communications are not directly influenced by the governing coalition of political parties, they are aware of the sensitivities surrounding diversity, especially since the emergence of Liveable Rotterdam.

We conclude that the present political discourse influences to what extent and in which form diversity is included in branding. By avoiding an explicit way of incorporating diversity in brand communications, city marketers prevent political debates on immigration prevailing in choices regarding the Rotterdam brand and thereby avoid pronounced political involvement. However, this does not mean that the entire brand content is directly determined by politics: rather, the broader political discourse on diversity influences the strategic choices made by marketers and promotes a more implicit incorporation of diversity.

Finally, even though the municipality has chosen this particular way of integrating the diverse character of the city in its branding, all interviewees indicated that Rotterdam *'is not yet using diversity to its full potential in branding the city*' (Several interviews in Rotterdam, 2015). Under the 'Make it happen' campaign, Rotterdam is exploring new ways of including these aspects of its identity in its communication about the city. As our findings show, this search for more ways to include diversity has mainly been affected by the pursuit of economic development and efforts to attract and bind investors and trade partners to the city.

4.2 City Branding in Amsterdam

Amsterdam has developed an image of being a city with a long tradition of culture, innovation, creativity and a deeply-held entrepreneurial spirit (Gehrels et al., 2003). In 2003 Amsterdam felt the necessity to reform its branding strategy, mainly because Amsterdam's competitive position was under pressure (Amsterdam Partners, 2004; Interview with Amsterdam Marketing). The municipality decided to rethink and redevelop its strategy, which first became visible in the restructuring of the branding on an organizational level. In 2003, Amsterdam Partners was established, a platform for communication and collaboration between local government, businesses and other organizations in this region that were involved in marketing or promotion. All partners committed to collectively working on a distinctive brand for Amsterdam (Gehrels et al., 2003).

Amsterdam – supported by a consultancy agency - defined 16 dimensions of Amsterdam as a means of identifying the key values on which to base marketing and branding: residential city, hub function, meeting place, city of canals, capital, business city, sex, drugs, R&R, people, liveable city, architecture, compact city, artistic, nightlife, shopping city, city of events. These dimensions were fundamental to developing the city brand and provided insight into Amsterdam's priorities, opportunities and blank spots (Gehrels et al., 2003). Amsterdam's *vitality* – which is expressed in these dimensions – was celebrated as a main strength of the city. The dimensions were also translated into three key brand values, which still form the basis of the Amsterdam brand: creativity, innovation and the spirit of commerce. A final branding element was the 'I Amsterdam' campaign, which according to the municipality, expressed the city's 'diversity, collectivity and the individuality of its residents'. (ibid.). The campaign intended to stimulate a sense of collective identity, by fostering pride and solidarity among its citizens.

More recently, Amsterdam Marketing – established in 2013 to conduct city marketing for the Amsterdam Metropolitan Area – has attempted to distinguish itself from other cities more emphatically by focusing on what is considered as its main DNA: Amsterdam's trade history, which has always facilitated entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation. In particular, it is argued that Amsterdam's spirit of commerce and tradition of trade is a major aspect of the city's identity (ibid.). As in Rotterdam, planning is an instrument for branding, even though it still seems to be focused on communicating the city's 'gadgets'. There seems to be little scope for any real spatial consciousness.

How planning-related aspects of diversity are taken into account in branding

In Amsterdam, clearly the city is aware of its spatial qualities, but reframes the issue in terms of its core brand values: trade and innovation. The same goes for migration-related diversity. According to the respondents, the city's history of trade and commerce has

contributed greatly to Amsterdam's renowned culture of tolerance and openness. The culturally diverse city composition that typifies Amsterdam is perceived as the *result* of its bustling economic activities, which have attracted migrants since the seventeenth century. Diversity is merely a result of Amsterdam's core values: therefore although it is acknowledged as a quality, it is not part of the discussion on what is *distinctive* to the brand. This argument is used frequently in deciding whether to include diversity more or less explicitly in the city brand.

Amsterdam – in contrast to Rotterdam – is known for its discourse of inclusion and city policies that often resemble a pro-diversity attitude (Scholten, 2013). This is reflected in its brand values, which implicitly refer to the multi-cultural roots of many of its residents. Even though diversity is not mentioned explicitly, respondents said that 'creativity' doesn't only manifest itself in technology, the canal belt or the wide range of creative education programmes on offer, but is also closely associated with the city's multi-cultural composition. Similarly, Amsterdam's 'spirit of commerce' refers to both the trading houses in the city, Schiphol airport and the VOC mentality as well as to Amsterdam's culture of openness, international orientation and the multi-linguistic skills of many of its residents (Municipality of Amsterdam, 2004).

Similar to Rotterdam, the municipality acknowledges the city's cultural diversity as a part of its identity that brings many merits. Terms such as 'cosmopolitan', 'world-orientated', 'openness', and 'diversity' are used frequently. Amsterdam's cosmopolitan character is therefore mentioned as a source of strength: its diverse population exudes an open ambience that encourages encounters and exchanges between people, while also providing residents with useful skills such as multilingualism (ibid.). Our interviews also show how the economic value of diversity is constantly put forward as an argument for embracing this part of the city's identity. In contrast to Rotterdam, Amsterdam explicitly places diversity within the broader context of 'an open, tolerant society', which corresponds with the city's reputation of having an urban culture where liberal freedoms are highly celebrated. Such a society offers room for diversity in all its forms, not least because openness and tolerance are so strongly intertwined with the city's history and identity (Interviews in Amsterdam, 2016).

Nevertheless, the inclusive message that Amsterdam has acknowledged in its brand identity is not structurally reflected in brand communications. Similar to Rotterdam, the municipality chooses to only use migration-related diversity in its brand in an implicit manner. Diversity is acknowledged in terms of brand identity, but is less present in actual brand communications, even though it is still more evident than in Rotterdam. Promotional photos and videos are carefully selected to represent the many ages, sexes, cultures,

religions, ethnicities that the city accommodates, because *'we don't only want to show the "white" and highly educated part of the city'* (Interview municipality Amsterdam, 2016). In 2004 – when the branding strategy was revived – the city published a campaign booklet, in which the residents of the city were portrayed *'in all their diversity'.* The booklet was used as a means to connect many different people to the city (Interview with Municipality of Amsterdam, 2016). *Connecting* Amsterdam's residents to the city has been a constant ingredient in Amsterdam's branding strategy. This is not only driven by an economic argument, but also by a *social agenda*. In particular, in the first few years after 2004, attempts to revive the Amsterdam brand were accompanied by socially-driven motives to connect and involve residents with the city. The underlying message was an inclusive one: individual people – in all their diversity – could choose to become part of Amsterdam. The 'I Amsterdam' city slogan, which was initiated in 2004 was based on this idea. As one respondent explains:

> *'I Amsterdam was about people, about a diversity of individuals that all are part of Amsterdam. (…). We tried to explicitly show that you are not judged based on "the group" that you belong to, not at all. It is about individuals – that all have different backgrounds – but who all feel proud to be part of the city and who are all willing to commit themselves to this city, to bind themselves to Amsterdam, because they identify with us. In the beginning it was really a social campaign'* [Interview with municipality of Amsterdam, 2016].

However, our interviews also show that this motive gradually faded to the background. Over the past years, the use of the 'I Amsterdam' slogan has been commercialized and more explicitly used as a way of positioning the city more strongly on the world stage (Interview municipality of Amsterdam, 2016). Even though the political setting in Amsterdam allows for a focus on inclusiveness and openness towards diversity, Amsterdam's economic position has led to a shift towards a more marketing-driven focus.

The pressure that the city felt to improve its marketing performance has drawn attention away from branding as a way of identity building at the local level. This is reflected in the way in which diversity has been made apparent in the Amsterdam brand in more recent years. Firstly, incorporating diversity in the city brand is driven more by an *economic* logic, which approaches diversity as a necessity for economic growth. Statements such as '*If you want your city to prosper in terms of employment, entrepreneurship and quality of life – you will need diversity*. *You need to make people aware of this economic value*' show how the city has come to emphasize this approach to diversity. As will become clear later on in this section, this 'economic' perspective of marketers is able to dominate brand choices because of the relatively high degree of autonomy of the city marketing bodies. In addition, this economic frame is able to dominate the brand as city marketers mainly communicate

with the municipal economic and communication departments and do not have much connection with other policy fields, such as the diversity or planning departments.

Secondly, and intertwined with the above: in addition to the shift towards a more economic narrative on diversity, there is also an increased reluctance to give diversity a *too* prominent place in the branding of the city. According to Amsterdam Marketing, the culturally diverse city composition does characterize Amsterdam, but is primarily approached as the *result* of the city's DNA (Interview with Amsterdam Marketing, 2016). Amsterdam's strong entrepreneurial spirit has traditionally warranted a certain sense of tolerance and openness, which in turn has attracted migrants from all over the world. It is this entrepreneurial spirit that makes Amsterdam unique, not diversity in itself. In line with this, city marketers in Amsterdam acknowledge that other cities are even more diverse than Amsterdam, which makes emphasizing this characteristic not very useful in distinguishing the city on a world stage (ibid.).

How the political context affects branding

As in Rotterdam, we observed a tendency to avoid giving diversity too much prominence in the Amsterdam brand. Marketers felt that 'branding should not involve political statements' (Interview with Amsterdam Marketing, 2016). If political players are allowed to intervene 'the brand will be left to the whims of the short-term assessments of politicians', who often don't have a consistent long-term vision (ibid.). Moreover, such political statements make a city vulnerable from a marketing perspective, especially when other policies – for example regarding refugees or immigrants in general – contradict the message that one is explicitly communicating (ibid.). Diversity is therefore approached as an economic asset, avoiding emphasis on political discussions regarding diversity-related themes. It was important for brand marketers in Amsterdam to maintain a distance from political discussions on diversity and they were hesitant to join in too much with the positive, pro-diversity discourse that is typical of Amsterdam.

Taking a more subtle approach, the city preferred a strategy which enabled migration-related diversity to flourish without making it central to its planning efforts, whereby deliberate efforts are made to create opportunities for people from different backgrounds to engage in shared activities to address prejudice and foster new identifications and solidarities across differences (see e.g. Fincher et al., 2014). One example is the 24-hours-magazine published by the city council. Its aim is to encourage residents of Amsterdam to visit other parts of the city to experience all kind of initiatives, festivals and encounters that they did not yet know about. This does not only involve small festivals in which cultural heritage plays a central role, but many other encounters that do not necessarily highlight ethnic communities or quarters. The underlying idea is for the municipality to encourage

its residents to engage in all kinds of activities to develop a feeling of 'pride' as a resident of Amsterdam. This fits with the idea that 'the planning of the urban realm more broadly will have profound impacts on the nature of intercultural encounter and solidarity in multicultural cities' (ibid. p. 45).

In contrast to Rotterdam, the economic logic of marketers appears to collide with a more social positioning of the city that is encouraged by other stakeholders. Led by the municipal diversity department, Amsterdam labelled 2016 as the 'Year of Diversity' and a large campaign was rolled out to celebrate the 180 nationalities that the city is home to. The 180 nationalities campaign was, however, only initiated after the diversity department of the municipality intervened and insisted on doing so. As one respondent said: *'There is more to the city than its rich white side, with the big icons such as the Rembrandt museum and Schiphol. We have so many festivals, concerts and sports events that show the cross-relations between all ethnicities that the city houses and which show a very exciting part of who we are.'* This quote illustrates the sentiment that we observed among municipal employees that branding professionals were not aware of all of the narratives within the community. Interestingly, in Amsterdam we do not necessarily see much competition between narratives on diversity in the political sphere; rather any competition seems to exist more between departments within the city council that encourage more inclusive branding and brand professionals who take a different view on how politics and branding should relate to each other. In their eyes, incorporating a political stance into branding makes it almost impossible to create a sustainable, long-lasting brand.

Another sentiment that was observed within the municipality was that 'a city like Amsterdam can no longer deny the superdiverse city that it is, because the city can't survive without it' (Interview with municipality of Amsterdam, 2016). Moreover, the current political context – in which populism and anti-migration standpoints are gaining in popularity – leads some respondents to believe that emphasizing an inclusive message on how residents are connected to the city and should take pride in their citizenship, is needed more than ever. In line with this, the mayor's cabinet initiated a social media communication campaign to get across the same message (Interview with Mayor's cabinet, 2016). The campaign is intended to create a sense of belonging among 'vulnerable' migrant youth, who do not seem to identify with the city and society at large and who are therefore at an increased risk of radicalizing. Even though we observed that marketers are cautious about using branding communications for socially-driven purposes prompted by politicians or policymakers, we can see how branding is intertwined with social policies in the case of Amsterdam.

5. CONCLUSIONS

This study examines how cities re-imagine themselves through place branding in response to superdiversity. This addresses a broader debate in the literature on the strategic and selective representations that place branding creates of urban identities, emphasizing and strengthening certain developments over others and becoming a strategic instrument in urban planning (e.g. Greenberg, 2008; Lucarelli, 2015; Oliveira, 2016; Paddison, 1993). Our study focused on two superdiverse cities: Amsterdam and Rotterdam.

Our analysis shows that both cities indeed acknowledge migration-related diversity as a main characteristic of their brand identity. Diversity is approached as part of their historical tradition and is therefore treated as part of their DNAs. However, an important strategy in both cities when dealing with migration-related diversity was not to use diversity prominently in brand communication.

This study provides several explanations as to why migration-related diversity is acknowledged, but hardly communicated in the place brand. Firstly, the study highlights that marketing logic pushed 'diversity' to the background in brand communication because city marketers consider that 'diversity' does not help the city to stand out from its competitors.

City branding bodies in Rotterdam approach diversity as 'a given fact', something that does not need much emphasis. This is also manifest in how city marketers draw selectively on planning elements: they highlight the city's modern architectural accomplishments, but not the multicultural streetscape that is also an authentic feature of the city. The same goes for Amsterdam, which treats diversity as 'a natural result' of the city's trading history and entrepreneurial spirit; city marketers stress that it is not diversity that makes the city unique, but the entrepreneurial spirit that has produced the city's cosmopolitanism.

Thus marketers did not view diversity as an asset that differentiates their city from other cities: reasoning from their professional marketing logic they wanted to communicate the unique selling points of the city, i.e. Amsterdam's entrepreneurial spirit and Rotterdam's hard work mentality, rather than diversity in itself. The rise of superdiversity was not denied, but considered irrelevant in marketing terms.

Secondly, this political and discursive contextuality of place brands means that cities with similar forms and degrees of migration-related diversity (such as Amsterdam and Rotterdam) may differ in how diversity is included in place branding. In Rotterdam, with a contested political climate regarding migration-related diversity, terms like 'multicultural' were replaced by 'cosmopolitan' and – more recently – 'international'. Rotterdam's brand

communication changed under the influence of the harsh political discourse regarding immigration issues and the upsurge of an assimilation discourse in the municipality. This discourse gave city marketers less scope to actively include migration-related diversity. In Amsterdam, terms like 'cosmopolitan', 'world-orientated', 'diversity' and 'openness' were frequently used, connecting diversity to the city's long standing discourse of 'an open tolerant society' where liberal freedoms for people from all sorts of backgrounds are celebrated. However, under pressure to support economic policies to improve Amsterdam's competitive position, city marketers focused more on the economic than the social agenda. Diversity became subsumed under the notion of the entrepreneurial spirit.

Thirdly, both cities revealed a clear preference for depoliticizing their place branding strategies and distancing them from the broader public and political debates on migration-related diversity. In Rotterdam, the city branding bodies responsible for the brand were searching for new ways to utilize the potential of diversity, but were cautious about mixing branding policies with broader political discussions on migration and integration. In Amsterdam we found similar attempts by marketers to avoid interference by particular administrative departments or politicians. In Amsterdam, however, it was difficult for branding agencies to distance themselves from the strong pro-diversity discourse in municipal government. Thus, the Integration department influenced the Amsterdam brand in a campaign. Regarding the relationship between planning and branding, this paper shows that spatial planning is selectively used by city marketers in their place branding efforts. City marketers are aware of the city's planning elements and spatial qualities and use these aspects strategically in the brand. Hereby, the spatial manifestation of migration-related diversity is not considered very valuable for the brand, and other spatial manifestations are considered more important. Because city marketers have sufficient autonomy vis-à-vis spatial planners, they can use specific spatial qualities and particular aspects of spatial plans in the brand, while neglecting others. This results in city marketers neglecting elements of migration-related diversity that may be present in spatial developments or visions. In addition, we found that there is limited interaction between city marketers and planners. City marketers interact more intensively with the economic and communication departments within the municipality. At the same time there seems to be 'mimetic alignment' between spatial planning and branding regarding diversity, rather than interaction. This means that spatial planners and city marketers are both guided by the same dominant discourses on migration-related diversity because both show similarities in how they frame, use or neglect diversity.

Connecting our analysis of place branding to the literature on migration-related diversity, this study helps us to understand that place branding is a more complex process than merely reflecting objective social transformations in the city, such as the rise of superdiver-

sity. It reveals the resilience of political and discursive filters through which this diversification is perceived and portrayed. Place brands represent dominant marketing logics, as well as broader discourses and political preferences with regard to diversity.

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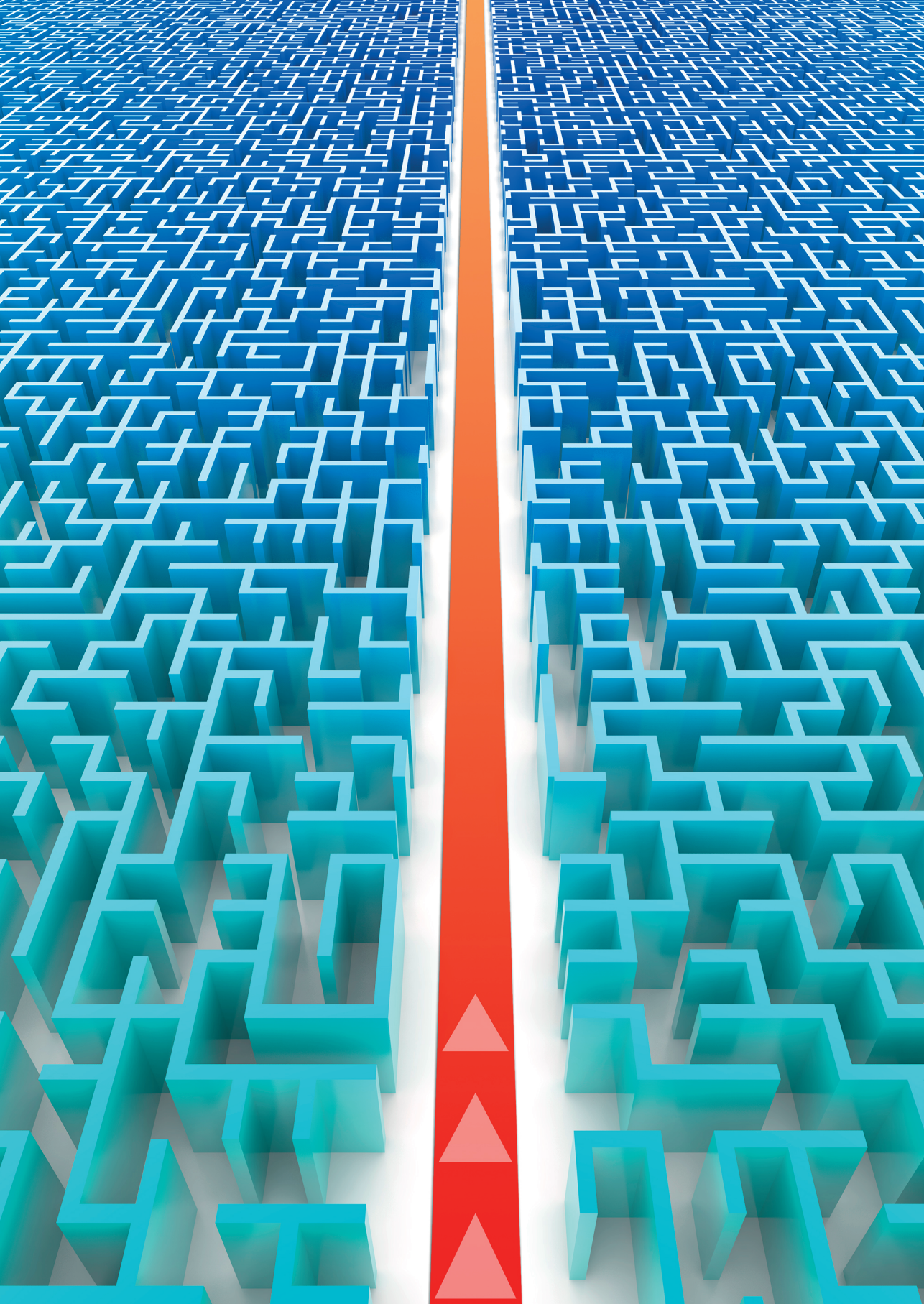

CHAPTER 6

Conclusions

6. CONCLUSIONS

6.1 Understanding the Elusiveness of Governing Migrant Integration

Immigrant integration is a complex social problem, which has attained much attention in public and political discussions (Entzinger, 2006; Koopmans, 2013; Goodman, 2010). In the Netherlands, we have witnessed a policy change towards a stricter and more aggressive approach to influence behavior of migrants (Joppke, 2007). As in many other European countries, this policy change is accompanied with a harshened tone regarding migrants, and a strong rhetoric by both right-wing parties and mainstream parties - that connect integration policies to the broader concern regarding the preservation of national identity and social cohesion in Dutch society (ibid). In order to encounter integration of immigrants, governments – both on a national and local level – attempt to intervene in the behavior of migrants, using a simplified narrative that exudes the belief in government steering by command and control. New migrants are, for example, obligated to pass civic integration courses, in which the content is focused on explaining Dutch history and prevailing norms and values in society that one needs to respect and adopt. Moreover, many politicians have attempted to impose policy interventions that are also intended for 'old' migrants and their children – as a way of forcing acceptation of the Dutch culture and loyalty to the new society.

This thesis has shown how local governing actors– working on different levels - are struggling with the complex nature of immigrant integration. Furthermore it has revealed how and why this struggle is in contrast with the narrative that integration can be linearly influenced by harsher policies.

The research question addressed in this thesis is:
How do local governing actors make sense of and respond to migration-related diversity and how can these responses be explained?

The research question breaks down in the following four sub-questions, that will be answered in this section. The cumulative answers to these four sub-questions form the answer to the main research question:

- What effect do series of bureaucratic contact have on the integration of immigrants in the Netherlands? (RQ1)
- Under what conditions are street-level bureaucrats working with immigrants likely to transcend the boundaries of their discretionary space in order to deal with the dilemmas in their work? (RQ2)
- How can we understand the varying uses of social media for interethnic contact by second-generation migrant youth's motivations of social media use? (RQ3)

- How and why do cities manage their identity through place branding – in the face of migration-related diversity? (RQ4)

6.1.1 What effect do series of bureaucratic contact have on migrant integration? (RQ1)

Chapter 2 has shown how bureaucratic contacts between migrants and governments take place – on a macro level - in a chain of reinforcing or dampening feedback loops that eventually influence the attitude and willingness of migrants to comply and adapt to Dutch society . The major variation in pathways of migrants is the result of the cumulative effects of all these feedback loops, which are shaped in a specific context within specific local conditions. The successful integration of migrants is hence not merely a result of one single and isolated interaction with the government or a certain policy intervention that migrants "undergo"; rather it is strongly connected to a full range of interactions distributed over a long period of time in which different governments – from the local health agency to the municipality and the Refugee Centre or Education Centre for integration - all *can* play a distinctive role. By reconstructing the mental models of migrants, we got a better understanding of how these different bureaucratic encounters work and how they impact on immigrant integration. Moreover, I found that these different encounters come together differently in almost every story, because each pathway may exist of a combination of encounters, with different consequences and different specific local conditions. As a result, integration policies are followed by both expected and surprising, favorable and unfavorable outcomes.

Nevertheless, there were some pathways that were perhaps more typical and illustrate how governmental responses do follow a certain "policy line" that is typical for its period. We saw for example that "older" migrants – who migrated in the '70s and '80s – experienced far less bureaucratic contact during their arrival and in the first years of settlement. When the municipality contacted them in recent years about obligated integration courses to learn the Dutch language, many of these migrants felt resentment and were not willing to comply by content. Furthermore, we also saw several stories of migrants who were eager to learn the Dutch language, but were pressured by governmental officers – working at the Refugee Centre or at the municipality – to prioritize finding a job instead. (Integration) policies relevant at that time, focused merely on participation on the labor market. While these incidents are not isolated from a broader context of more bureaucratic encounters, this tendency to focus on 'jobs' first instead of 'learning the language' - did as well brought about a lot resistance from migrants later on in their lives. On the other hand, we saw how individual attention and notice of migrants by street-level bureaucrats who were willing to go the extra mile for particular migrants, was always a major impact on the motivation and hence the willingness of migrants to participate in society. In particular, the first years in which migrants arrive and settle in the country of destination – what we previously called

"reset-phase" - was an important moment for the further steps that people took on their pathway, as this time was often used as a measure to evaluate obligations that follow from more recent integration policies.

6.1.2 Under what conditions are SLB likely to transcend their discretionary power to deal with the dilemmas of their work? (RQ2)

On a micro-level, it were the street-level bureaucrats – who are actually responding to migrants in their day-to-day confrontations. In doing so they can have a distinctive impact on the lives of their clients – especially in terms of their motivation and willingness to comply to integration rulings and adaption to Dutch society. Sub-question 2 hence focused on decision-making by street-level workers who frequently work with migrants, as presented in chapter 3. The chapter showed the complexity of such decision-making by street-level workers, who on the one hand are deemed to obey the uniform rulings from integration policies, but on the other hand see the diversity of migrant' stories. These workers are hence constantly confronted with all kinds of dilemmas: should I strictly follow the rules or is there any discretionary room to take in account the personal distress of migrants which is blocking their compliance? Where does the responsibility of me as a government-worker begins and stops? And what if the policies that I am implementing are evidently having undesirable effects or do not fit the reality of immigrant's lives and become unfair or unrealistic? Do I still implement the rules? The competing demands press heavily on the shoulders of street-level workers, who are in general reluctant to deviate from existing policy rulings, but are actually willing to do so under specific conditions. Despite organizational restrictions, workers would increase their discretionary power or reject policy rules in the case of motivated clients, who were going through difficult circumstances in their personal lives. However, this was only the case when the perceived policy rulings would be judged by the street-level workers as unfair and unpractical. This combination of conditions were important in explaining how street-level workers *respond*, while at the same time these patterns were further complicated by the fact that workers are constantly rethinking and revising their role, tasks and responsibilities – as their experiences and the dynamic political context are no given fact. What do we hence learn from this in terms of government steering of migration-related diversity?

Firstly, it downplays again the idea of a 'one-size-fits-all'-approach to control how migrants adapt to Dutch society. Policies are eventually implemented by street-level workers, who have some extent of discretionary power – which in practice means that many different choices are being made by these workers, for each individual case that is presented to them. These street-level workers represent the "face" of the Dutch government – and interact with migrants directly, sometimes strictly implementing policies, sometimes expanding their formal job descriptions by going the extra mile for a client, and sometimes

deliberately breaking the policy rules. In addition, the study reveals that in a context of a complex, politically laden and changeable approach to migration integration, the application of these policies to individual cases can be chaotic, improvised and sometimes arbitrary, again contrasting the straightforward stories of cause and effect which are nowadays evident in the political discourse surrounding immigrant integration. This obviously leads to a simplification of reality, which result in unrealistic expectations about the government's capacity to steer and also in "clumsy policy interventions failing to capture the complexity of the objects they are seeking to influence" (Boswell, 2011: 12). Secondly, our work has not only captured feelings of resistance of migrants, but also feelings of discomfort of street-level workers who more than ever before feel uncomfortable in implementing policies towards the vulnerable group of migrants that they encounter on a more structural basis than the politicians and policy-makers that actually develop these policies. The 'boxes' that policies offer to deal with different types of migrants are often not doing justice to the real-life cases that these street-level workers are confronted with. Independent of the question if workers hold on to 'these boxes', the data showed a growing feeling of resistance, discomfort, and frustration amongst street-level workers, which will be further discussed in section 6.2.

6.1.3 How can we understand the varying uses of social media for interethnic contact by second-generation migrant youth? (RQ3)

In this dissertation, I have not only studied the offline-reality but also the *online*-reality of migrant's behavior, which again exemplifies the elusive character of steering towards 'migrant integration'. This proves Favell's (2001) point on how different societal developments (in this case: the increased use of the internet, and social media in particular) confront governments with less foreseeable and manageable problems. Furthermore, as I discussed in the introduction of this thesis, a main issue in responding to migrant-related diversity revolves around the question of identity and feelings of belonging of both natives as migrants. The *socio-cultural* dimension of the issue is at the heart of the public and political debate. Until now governmental responses consist mainly of attempts "to reinforce their view of national identity through such measures as the teaching of national history and promoting national citizenship" (Cantle, 2012), which is mainly a way of combatting the increased sentiment of anxiety, threat and insecurity regarding migrants in society. Studies have shown though that the negative discourse on a national level have negatively influenced feelings of belongings from migrants, who feel less at home in the Netherlands (see e.g. Ghorashi, 2006; Dukes & Musterd, 2012 and Slootman & Duyvendak, 2015). Identification and belonging go beyond the offline world of migrants. My work as presented in chapter 4 has shown that ethnicity is only one of the many topics that migrant youth discuss on social media. However, engagement in intra-ethnic online communities is partly motivated by *struggles with identity and lifestyle,* which is in line with

other studies that have shown that youth use social media to negotiate their identities (Valkenburg et al, 2005; De Leeuw and Rydin 2007; Elias and Lemish 2009). My work also showed that bonding with migrant communities by second-generation youth via social media is less orientated at the come-country than the home *culture*. This fits the more known findings of studies that show how migrants try to find ways of combining multiple identities, feeling both strongly connected to their own ethnic group as for example with the city of residence, hence identifying to different and more cultural characteristics (Berry et al 1997, Bourhis et al 1997, and Navas et al 2007). Again this indicates that the tendency in public debate - to reduce identification process to only the 'box' of ethnicity - is invalid: the experienced identification of migrants is multi-dimensional and transcends boundaries of home-country or ethnicity. These findings give us direction in the discussions on how to deal with migration-related diversity – namely as a question on how to create a shared sense of belonging that connects both natives and migrants to Dutch society. Unfortunately, current measures are instead challenging "the commitment of migrants and the coherence of the national community into which they are require to integrate" (Goodman, 2010: 22).

6.1.4 How and why do cities manage their identity through place branding – in the face of migration-related diversity? (RQ4)

Not only discourses but also policies are becoming more negative and are leading to exclusion of migrants in many aspects of society (Ghorashi 2006; Entzinger 2009; Ersanilli and Saharso 2011). In chapter 5, I have focused on branding policies, as an alternative 'tool' of responding to migration-related diversity, as more and more local governments are using branding tools to create images for both external as internal audiences. Branding policies are a way of influencing perceptions of the city, based on persuasion and storytelling instead of coercion. In essence branding is about selecting elements of your identity and putting these on display, confirming the narrative of the city that you are and want to be. When taking in account that migrants often strongly identify with the city that they are living in, this shows the great potential of branding policies as a way of responding to issues regarding migration-related diversity. This thesis – see chapter 5 shows – how two Dutch cities acknowledge migration-related diversity as a key characteristic of the city's DNA. However, due to the political and discursive setting around migration-related diversity – cities are reluctant in using diversity in actual brand communications. Diversity is treated as a 'given fact' or 'a logical result of city's trade history', and is mainly used in the background or is depolitized away from the broader public and political debates on migration-related diversity, by using mainly an economic perspective to diversity. Branding professionals feel they need to avoid interference of politicians and policy makers by not getting involved too much in "politics". Even in Amsterdam, where the pro-diversity discourse is historically imbedded in the administration, marketers were hesitant to in-

clude diversity prominently in their branding strategy. Eventually we saw that these markets could not ignore the administrative pressure to do so. Our study – chapter 5 – hence shows how the new reality of increased migration-related diversity is not *one-on-one* translated in branding policies, because of the resistance of political and discursive filters through which this diversification is perceived and portrayed . These findings again stress that the simplifying narrative regarding immigrants and migrant integration of politicians and policy makers does not only lock public debates in a negative cycle, but also impact on other policies apart from integration policies itself. Branding professionals are aware of the highly contested and politicized nature of the issue and try to stay away from it. City branding policies hence do not only seek to reduce urban complexity, but also try to *avoid* urban political contestation.

At the same time though, chapter 5 also shows that local governments are really struggling with this issue. In Rotterdam, I found the sentiment that the potential of migration-related diversity is not yet fully used in branding policies and that promoting diversity more prominently would be a future-direction that is interesting, both from an economic and social perspective. Currently, the city is exchanging information with the city of Antwerp, which is a forerunner in including diversity into the brand strategy. In Amsterdam, the discomfort and struggle with the current brand was more existing *within* the municipal administration, where one beliefs that migration-related diversity can no longer be ignored as the new reality, hence urging the city to use it in building a collective city identity for all 'Amsterdammers'. The remaining question hence is: does including diversity in the city brand actually impact on how migrants identify and relate to the city of residents? Can migration-related-diversity in city brands really compensate for the negative impact of the negative discourse on migrants? In the last section of this chapter, I will reflect more on these questions.

6.2. The argument against simplification

6.2.1 Dealing with or avoiding the local complexities of migration-related diversity?

The narrative of a coherent policy development that could directly counter the failure of immigrant integration, pushes us to lose sense of the historical processes out of which the current integration of migrants has arose. My research disputes the idea that integration is fully dependent on state's intervention (Favell, 2001). On the contrary, it supports the idea that "migrant integration depends on a wide and changing range of factors and can take place, in spite of, just as much as because of integration policies and initiatives" (see also Gray, 2006: p. 1). This brings me to the following two main conclusions:

Firstly, the highly oversimplified narrative that politicians use to "short-cut" the complexity of integration processes clearly does not fit reality. In this narrative, migrants are often blamed for their "failed" state of being, while one assigns great capacity to governments to steer and influence migrant's behavior. Stone (1989) refers to this as a 'causal story', that construct causality in a way that is simple and convincing, for example by clearly attributing blame to certain (f)actors for examples: 'migrants' or 'governments'. In addition, such causal stories often also point to certain policy interventions, which are believed to tackle the problem (Fischer & Forster 1993). For example the obligated 'democracy' classes for newcomers or the double crime penalties for city citizens with a migrant background, as mentioned in the introduction. Another part of the narrative which we find in public debate, is one that ascribes 'failed' integration, to existing integration policies, blaming governments (instead of migrants) for 'too soft' policies, that lead to little effects on migrants integration processes (see also van Reekum and Duyvendak, 2012). Moreover, the latter authors argue that in public debates the central cause of failure is being attributed to "inhibited relations with newcomers, vagueness about what is expected from them, and not least: a hesitation to speak publically about the issue" (p.462). According to these authors the narrative here is that a more successful policy approach – one that is more uninhibited and more explicitly - is needed to overcome the problems of failed migrant integration (ibid).

My research shows differently. Immigrant integration policies are not failing, because migrants are necessarily *unwilling* or *incapable* to adapt to the new society. Immigrant policies are not necessarily failing, because policies are *too soft*, *too inhibited* or *too implicit*. Integration policies are 'failing' (or: are not always effective), because the governing of migrant integration in essence is an **elusive phenome**, which means it cannot be 'steered' effectively by isolated policy measures that do not do justice to the fact that integration concerns a dynamic system that responds to many incentives, while the outcomes are sensitive to various (mutual) relationships that are changeable over time (Gerrits, 2012). Policies or policy decisions always assume a certain causal relationship "between the steering incentive and its possible consequences", while in reality it is not always clear which conditions or factors are leading to specific situations (ibid, p. 25). In the case of immigrant integration, we saw how interactions between local governmental actors and migrants are *cumulative* in their effects, and cannot be interpreted in an *isolated* manner. The decision-making of street-level workers working with migrants could not be explained in terms of one or two factors, but it was rather *a combination of conditions* that led implementers to transcend their discretionary power in favor of certain migrants. Similarly, the decision-making of branding professionals was not a merely an objective reflection of the social transformations in the city, such as the rise of increased migration-related diversity. It was highly intertwined with other elements – such as the broader discourse

on migration-related diversity. Lastly, identification processes of migrant youth were not necessarily focused on ethnicity, but on multiple dimensions of their identity – were home *culture* was more prominently occupying migrant youth then solely their home country. The behavior of migrants, implementers and policy makers can't be *linearly* traced back to a simple a-leads-to-b-reasoning. This linear thinking and reasoning is not congruent with (local) reality. This complexity "requires patience, reflection and incremental piecemeal adaptations, [whereas] migration and diversity policies and governance are often under pressure to come with quick, simple and clear solutions" (Scholten 2018: 3). Obviously, this pressure leads governments to simplify and reduce rather than grasp complexity. This does not mean that integration policies are necessarily bound to fail, however it shows the importance of an *awareness* that developing policies requires a deep understanding of the intricate workings of integration as a system, and that policy makers and implementers are part of a system of causes and consequences that shape change (Gerrits, 2012). This is especially important in policy fields such as migrant integration, which is characterized by a highly politicized context where the urge to simplify local reality is even more intensively experienced by politicians.

Secondly, the overall observation that I would like to stress here is *the struggle* that local governing actors - in all their different shapes - are experiencing. In all the interviews that I conducted with migrants and with local governing actors that are confronted with migrants or migration-related diversity there was a sense of discomfort, frustration or even resistance with how one (is forced) to respond to migration-related diversity.

On the one and of the struggle we have local governing actors: both street level workers such as integration coaches, integration teachers and client managers as branding professionals in and together with municipalities, experienced the dealings with migrant-related diversity as a heavy dilemma. In many cases, they did saw the complexity of the situation, but were unable to find solutions that really fitted the complex nature of the situation. A clear example here, are the many street-level bureaucrats that implemented the policy instructions (such as passing on information to social services on absence of migrants during classes) – but felt very uncomfortable that their clients would suffer negative consequences (be cut on social benefits). A coping strategy that often followed was that implementers would avoid too much confrontation with migrants, *holding on* to the policy instructions, which structure and simplify the complexity of the situations that they encounter into "boxes". Nevertheless, this feeling of discomfort would not leave them. Similarly, branding professionals that explicitly chose to treat migration-related diversity as a recognized brand value, but were reluctant in involving it in actual brand communications – were struggling with this decision, as they knew that avoiding the sensitized and political discussion on diversity was probably not congruent with the social transforma-

tions that the city has experienced in the last decades. Again, one *avoided* the discussion by not incorporating the migration-related diversity characteristics too prominently – but the feeling of discomfort, frustration and an unsatisfied feeling of failure would remain. This tension and coping was hence the *same* for the street level implementers as for branding professionals that operate on the interface of policy design and policy implementation.

On the other side of this struggle, are migrants themselves who are acting and reacting to those working on behalf of local government and who hence represent the Dutch government in their mind. My research has shown that many stories of migrants eventually show the same feeling of discomfort, frustration and alienation, as bureaucratic interactions often led to a vicious circle of disappointment and unfavorable consequences, which on it turns led to giving up attempts to integrate in Dutch society. Migrants in many cases feel that their reality is not being understood properly: it is *their understanding* of the workings of bureaucracy that eventually influences their decisions and actions. In particular negative interactions or the *lack* of interactions that take place during the first years of settlement (what we previously called "reset phase") – can impact heavily on their behavior years later, when the government confronts them with new requirements regarding their integration trajects. Hence, the evaluation of such behavior should not only be based on the 'isolated' piece of reality which shows an unwilling or skeptical migrant, but one needs to understand how these pathways arose – producing intended and unintended results, that – on its turn - can explain why the governing of migrant integration is such an elusive phenome. In addition, these feelings of discomfort and frustration clearly effects on feelings of belonging, as my research also showed how migrant youth is constantly negotiating their identity and position in the multi-ethnic society, both offline and online – and in which intra-ethnic contact often was motivated by a struggle with identity and lifestyle.

6.2.2 The problem of ignoring complexity thinking in research and policies

My research has shown that attempts to govern migration-related diversity – and migrant integration in particular - have failed to deliver the proverbial 'control switch that was expected to control society' (see e.g. Klijn & Snellen 2009, for an extended discussion). I concur. The main reason for this failure is the *elusiveness* of governing migrant integration, such as many other social phenomena or 'problems' that society encounters. The data shows such a wild variety of issues and such a complex entanglement of interactions between migrants and governments that it would be naive to expect there to be one set of 'instruments' that can govern society. If anything, immigrants and bureaucrats act local in place and temporal in time (Belabas & Gerrits, 2018).

Many scholars have written on this quest for governmental control, and in particular on how governments respond to the complex nature of many social problems. Dror (2001), for example, argues that governments need to "upgrade their capacity to steer, guide, and 'weave' the future" (as paraphrased in Parsons, 2004: p.65). He stresses that governing is about "the capacity to map the complex shifting realities confronted by policy-makers and impose an 'architecture' on a reality which is perceived to be essentially messy and chaotic [..] and is thus in need of being steered in the right direction and designed" (as paraphrased by Parsons, 2004: ibid). Many other scholars find the solution for structuring the messy reality in rationality and knowledge, arguing that governments need and *can* achieve 'greater control over a runaway world', by a better use of policy knowledge as matter to combat the complexities of social problems (see e.g. Giddens 1999; Mulgan, 2003, and Sanderson, 2002). Others (see eg.g Schon 1973 and 1983; Hajer and Wagenaar 2003) are more critical about this instrumental approach and turn to approaches in which knowledge is treated as more "tacit, emergent and embedded in specific contexts, practices and local experiences" (Parsons, 2004: p. 49). Such an approach has its basis in facilitating a process of public learning, which allows for a wider process of innovation, adaptation and creativity, which on its turn leads to messy and incoherent but more effective outcomes (Schon, 1973 and 1983). Core of the discussion here is whether complexity – in the words of Parsons (2004) - calls for increased or decreased capacity to map steer and weave. According to Scott (1998, and others) –in reality governments have embraced the instrumental rationality approach or still relies heavily on central steering, "ignoring practical and local knowledge, informal processes and the role of improvisation in an uncertain, complex and unpredictable world" (as paraphrased by Parsons, 2004: 54). Scott speaks about ''metis' referring to localized and embedded experience, which institutions are not aware of, and which according to Rooney et al (2003) does not allow "micro diversity to flourish" (p.136).

My work has shown how the understanding and experiences of local actors – such as policy implementers, policy makers and migrants themselves – are central to the comprehension of migrant integration. However, this localized and embedded experience is not known (n)or used or considered in policymaking. Traditionally national integration policies in the Netherlands have been characterized by a belief in strong central policy coordination, which has led to a strongly national and state-centrist mode of problem framing (Poppelaars & Scholten, 2008). In addition, this highly centralized policy structure led to a prominent role of national politicians and central administration in how immigrant integration was framed (ibid). The policy narrative and the policy measures that follow, hence ignore the local complexities of crucial local actors and disregards the relationships between them and migrants. In addition, *studies* on how local governments are dealing with migrant integration rarely use a systematic view that zooms in on interrelated inter-

actions patterns. A few studies have focused on the simplified narratives that politicians and policy makers use (e.g. Boswell 2011, more recently Scholten, 2018) - however the literature on migration and integration in general seems to miss a complexity perspective that attempts to actually unravel the black boxes of causality. Insights in complexity are also very little used in public administration and hence in governance-related issues (Klijn & Snellen, 2009). The perspective used in this dissertation proofs the importance of using complexity and system thinking in studying social problems. In addition, based on my findings I argue that as long as politicians and policy makers are not aware or ignore the systematic whole of interrelated situations and actions, it will keep producing failing integration policies, that don't do justice to social reality.

This obviously correspondents with the large body of knowledge on system thinking and complexity (see great scholars such as e.g. Parsons, von Bertalanffy, Luhman and Forrester), but more specifically also with those who connect complexity thinking with public administration (Van Gunsteren, 1976; Kickert, 1991, Teisman 2005; Teisman, van Buuren and Gerrits, 2009; Gerrits, 2012). In particular, the acknowledgement that "coordination is not a designed and stable mechanism but much more an evolving process because of the dynamic interactions between self-organizing participants in governance processes, management interventions and unmanageable internal and external dynamics" (Teisman, van Buuren & Gerrits, 2009: p. 232) fits the conclusion of my work: (failed) migrant integration is not necessarily the result of ineffective policies or non-complying migrants. The process of governing migrant integration is elusive in its nature, because of the dynamic interactions between many different actors.

6.3 Break open persistent narratives: branding & belonging as alternatives

Even though that my work has shown the boundaries of governance "steering" by unravelling the complexities of the systematic whole of migrant integration, I do not argue that all governmental efforts to respond to migration-related diversity are deemed to fail. In contrary, I argue that governments should first become aware of the systematic reality in which migrant integration develops: there is no such thing as un ultimate cause and the causes that are indicated as constraining or facilitating migrant integration are many times resistant by attempts to control it (Teisman, van Buuren & Gerrits: 2009). Governments will never have full control, but are able to be effective, firstly by letting go of both policy *discourse* and policy *measures* that are merely based in a command-and-control-way of acting. Following complexity governance literature, an alternative direction would start in policy measures or policies that "not necessarily fit within pre-existing institutional categories or levels", because policy problems often involve various institutional government levels as well as various institutionalized policy fields or subsystems (Scholten 2018). Because processes of integration follow different paces, forms and outcomes, governments

need to enquire an approach to migrant integration that allows to respond with a much broader range of *ideas* and *instruments*, which are not necessarily situated in the domain of integration policies – but can develop even beyond.

Based on my research, I think that current governing attempts should be more informed by what is happening "on the ground": the practical and localized knowledge and experience which is imbedded on many different places and levels within the government. Embracing this localized knowledge and experience is necessary to avoid 'the "struggle" or alienation – as described in the last section - that both local governing actors and migrants are experiencing. Here, I do not suggest that 'more knowledge' will eliminate the elusive nature of migrant integration, but I do think that using localized knowledge *and* experience, will help to understand the local reality of those working most closely with migrants. More research is needed to understand how this knowledge is helpful in developing effective policies. Moreover, by using this localized knowledge and experience one could also *break open* the simplified narrative on migrant integration and offer alternative modes of responding to the local complexity that local actors are encountering. Research has shown that "in areas of policy that have become highly politicized and are the object of intensive media scrutiny, governments are likely to resort to rhetoric and symbolic decisions in order to meet public approval" (Boswell, 2011, p.21, paraphrasing Edelman, 1999 and Brunsson, 2002). In addition, my research shows that the highly-politicalized character of migrant integration which further reinforces the simplified narrative, *even* impacts on other policy fields, such as branding policies. I would argue that breaking open this narrative, is the first step in developing policies that really grasp the complexities of migrant integration instead avoiding those complexities. Opening up the narrative would allow us to explore other instruments, which perhaps could help us in dealing with – instead of avoiding – the complexities of migration-related diversity.

Building on the findings of this thesis, I would argue that branding policies are an example of 'soft' instruments – an alternative to harsher in command-and-control based instruments - which possibly can help to develop an alternative narrative, which offers a language that speaks both to natives as migrants. As van Gunsteren (1976) stressed, planning by governments only makes sense "if it provides, or improves, a language, a communication structure, within which citizens can discuss the present, the future, their relation to each other, and thereby arrive at common and rational decisions. (p.X)". This requires a *holistic* approach to migrant integration, which will lead to more appropriate interventions. Branding policies have the potential of playing a role in such a holistic approach, as more and more cities are developing policies that go beyond promotional campaigns, but revolve around repositioning the city as a whole, as a way of reconciling both leisure, business and community demands and inspirations, in a narrative that speaks both to

natives as migrants (Garcia, 2004). In addition, branding in essence is about identity, community building and belonging, a central aspect of the political and social debates on migrant integration. Research – including my thesis – shows that migrants are actually struggling with identity related questions, and that the negative national discourse on migrants negatively impacts on the identification with the Dutch nation but does *not* automatically extend to the local level. Breaking the simplified narrative regarding migrant integration would *allow* to explore such softer and more holistic policy instruments that potentially can improve feelings of belongings of migrants. More research on the impact of how branding policies impact on community building and identification processes of migrants is needed to see if such an alternative approach makes sense. In the following selection I will reflect more on directions for future research.

6.4 Reflection and for Future Research Agenda

In the previous sections, I have reflected on my research findings and on how these findings relate to existing bodies of knowledge. The conducted research also has some limitations, which I will briefly address in the section below. As a reflection on findings and limitations of this study will point to avenues for future research, I will subsequently present three directions for future research on migrant integration.

6.4.1 Reflection and Limitations

First of all, my main research question has focused on how local governing actors make sense of, and (re)act to migration-related diversity, and how these responses can be explained. My research has addressed mainly governing actors on the implementation level, focusing on migrant integration policies and branding policies. It is important to note that my research does not cover all governing actors on the local level nor all policy fields that are related to migration-related diversity. I have focused on two types of local governing actors. On the one hand, the classical street-level workers, who work with migrants on a frequent basis. On the other hand, branding professionals, that work on the interface of policy design and policy implementation. More research is needed to reaffirm my findings in other frontline-contexts, as the generalizability of these findings is only limited to similar governing actors around migration-related diversity and identity related policies.

Secondly, I believe that the main strength of my work lies in the richness of my empirical work, which has offered a deeper understanding of the world of both migrants and governing actors "on the ground". In doing so, I have used different theoretical lenses in each of the presented studies, which has resulted in the combination of different theoretical ideas that contributed to answering my main research question. Nevertheless, the difficulty of using such a wide range of theoretical bodies lies in how to bring together the different pieces of findings to a meaningful coherent contribution to the understand-

ing of the governance of migration-related diversity. Given the breadth of the disciplines in which the studies are based, this dissertation does not necessarily offer a coherent theory of causation, but rather the separate studies together add to the empirical study of governing migration related diversity. More importantly, the contribution lies in the fact that each of the studies separately allowed to give voice to the perspectives of groups in society that usually are portrayed as passive actors that only inherit and adapt to existing ideas (see section 2.4 of introduction chapter).

Lastly, it is important to recognize and acknowledge that the qualitative research databases that were collected compose of mainly interviews with migrants and local governing actors. For the studies that focused on the migrant's perspective, I have gathered over 100 in-depth interviews with both first and second generation migrants, originating from more than 20 countries (see chapter 1 and 3). The studies that have focused on governing actors count a total number of over 40 in-depth interviews with both 'regular' street-level workers as key stakeholders in diversity and branding related policy fields. While the strong reliance on qualitative interviews suited the aim of this dissertation, I would recommend other (qualitative and quantitative) methods in reconstructing the governance of migrant integration. In the last section of my dissertation, I will reflect on this when I speak about the future agenda for the governance of migrant integration.

6.4.2 Future Research Agenda

Throughout this chapter, I have presented my research findings and conclusions. In doing so, I have also mentioned different points of attention for future research regarding the governance of migrant integration. I will end this dissertation by discussing some of these directions for future research more elaborately. The following ideas should therefore not be viewed entirely different from all paragraphs as presented in this chapter, but are merely a straightforward summary of ideas that were already hinted at in all the above:

First of all, future research on the governance of immigrant integration should focus more on what is happening on the frontline of implementation of integration policies. The call to give voice to social actors in this level playing field is not new. This dissertation was a first attempt to offer these "on-the-ground"-perspectives. Nevertheless, I argue that more research is needed to get a broader view on other governing actors or non-governing actors that are crucial in integration trajectories of migrants. Migrants have many encounters with governments during their arrival and settlement in the receiving societies, in order to develop an holistic and effective approach to migrant integration. We need to kow more to know more about how these encounters and interactions effect of migrant's lives. My call would be to broaden the focus of governing actors that we are taking in account, as many migrants view all governmental contacts, even those that appear outside the realm

of migration and integration, as part of their process. Following Kim & Andersen (2012), I believe that we should try to make the mental models of these (social and governing) actors more explicit, because they are highly necessary in explaining and understanding behavior and thus in improving policy making. In doing so, I would support the use of a mixed method approach, as my work has heavily leaned on interviews.

A second point of attention for future research on the governance of migrant integration is the potential of more holistic policy approaches. Identity building in the context of super-diversity is core to the discussion on migrant integration. Both migrants and local governments are struggling with this issue. Based on my conclusions, I strongly believe that city branding has the potential of playing a crucial role in creating collective identities in super diverse societies. This is especially important given the simplistic political narrative on migrants that has achieved the opposite. There is very limited research on the effects of city brands on community building. My call is to develop research that focuses on how second and third generation migrants experience communication from local governments and if inclusive brands can play a role in positive city- and country identification of migrants.

Finally, my last point on future research regarding migrant integration focuses on valorization of current research on migrant integration. The public and political debate on migrant integration in Europe is heated and remains very focused on the question of how to deal more strict with migrants to assimilate them in society. How can research in this context become relevant for policy makers and the broader public? How can research that sheds light on the nuances and complexities of migrant integration have an impact on a more generalized audience? In my view, there is a task for researchers in the field of migration and integration to get a better understanding of why current narratives on the governance of migrant integration remain persistent in the idea that the failure of migrant integration lies in unwillingness of migrants or too soft policies, and in finding ways to get more attention and comprehension of the complexities of dealing with migrant integration.

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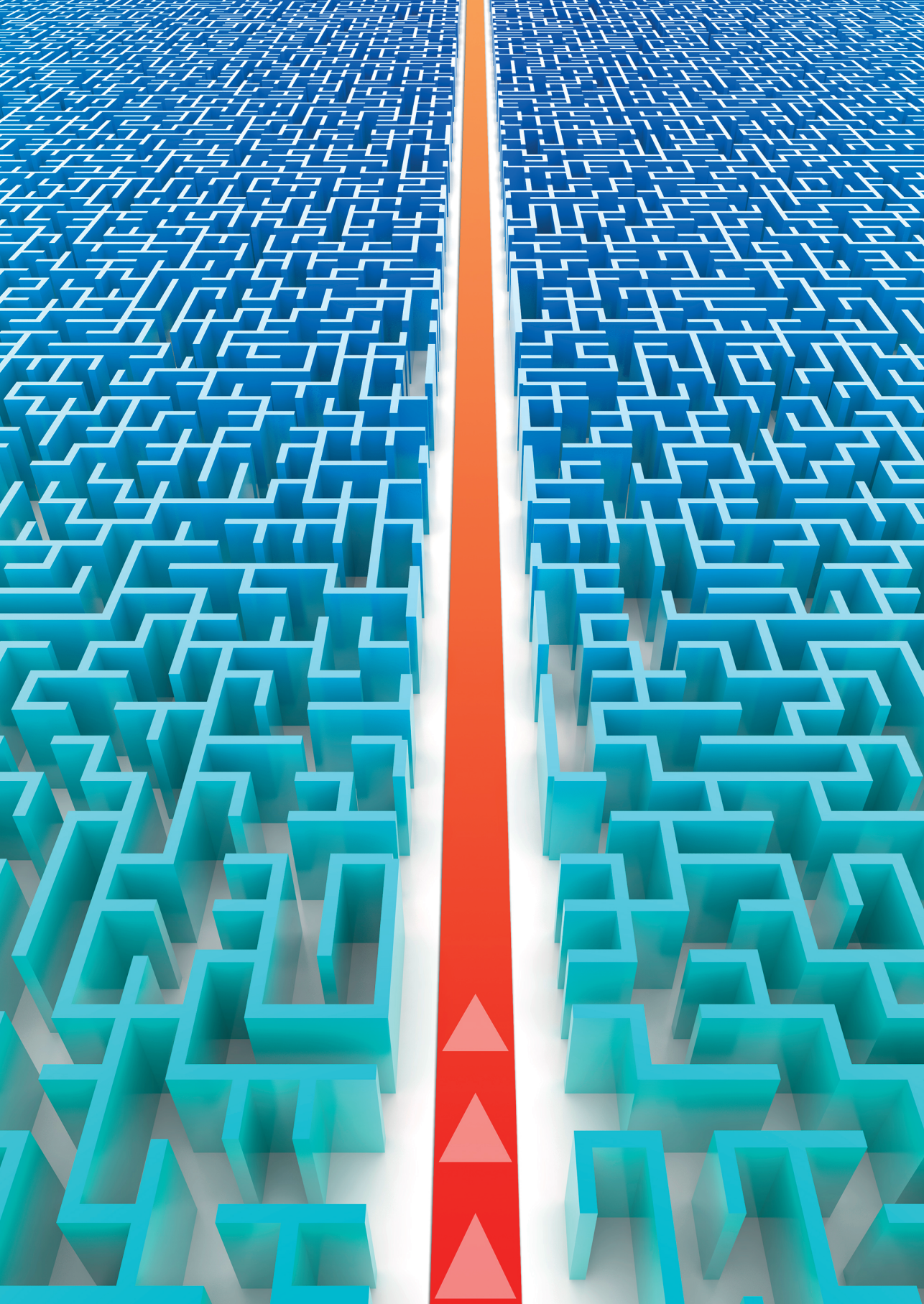


English summary

THE ELUSIVENESS OF GOVERNING MIGRANT INTEGRATION: *WHY FITTING COMPLEXITY IN BOXES DOES NOT WORK*

Immigrant integration has attained much attention in public and political discussions. In the Netherlands, we have witnessed a policy change towards a stricter and more aggressive approach to influence behavior of migrants. This policy change is accompanied with a harshened tone regarding migrants. In order to encounter integration of immigrants, governments – both on a national and local level – attempt to intervene in the behavior of migrants, using a simplified narrative that exudes the belief in government steering by command and control. This narrative contrasts with the empirical reality in which integration of migrants develops. My dissertation focuses on migrant integration as a governing problem and approaches the issue from an empirical point of view. Many existing studies are characterized by a top-down approach that do not sufficiently take in account the perspective of local reality. I will focus on governing responses by local actors, and unlike many other studies – my starting point lies with those government workers who are actually confronted with migration-related challenges. Such an approach is needed in order to understand the elusive nature of governing migration-related diversity and subsequently to come to policies that respond to this local reality.

In chapter 2, I show – on a macro-level - how bureaucratic contacts between migrants and governments take place in a chain of reinforcing or dampening feedback loops that eventually influence the attitude and willingness of migrants to comply and adapt to Dutch society. The successful integration of migrants is hence not merely a result of one single and isolated interaction with the government or a certain policy intervention that migrants "undergo"; rather it is strongly connected to a full range of interactions distributed over a long period of time in which different governments all *can* play a distinctive role. I found that these different encounters come together differently in almost every story, because each pathway may exist of a combination of encounters, with different consequences and different specific local conditions. As a result, integration policies are followed by both expected and surprising, favorable and unfavorable outcomes. In addition, I found that mainly the first years in which migrants arrive and settle in the country of destination, is an important moment for the further steps that people take on their pathway. I found that individual attention and notice by a street-level bureaucrat, who was willing to go the extra mile, was always a major impact on the motivation and hence the willingness of migrants to participate in society.

In chapter 3, I hence focus on the micro-level of these street-level bureaucrats: integration coaches, integration teachers and client managers, who are actually responding to migrants in their day-to-day confrontations. These street-level workers are on the hand

expected to obey the uniform rulings from integration policies, but on the other hand see the diversity of migrant' stories. These workers are hence constantly confronted with all kinds of dilemmas: should I strictly follow the rules or is there any discretionary room to take in account the personal distress of migrants which is blocking their compliance? Despite organizational restrictions, workers would increase their discretionary power or reject policy rules in the case of motivated clients, who were going through difficult circumstances in their personal lives. However, this was only the case when the perceived policy rulings would be judged by the street-level workers as unfair and unpractical. This *combination* of conditions were important in explaining how street-level workers respond, which again contrasts with the simplified narrative dominant in debates on migrant integration.

In chapter 4 of this thesis, I have focused on the question of how second generation youth are active on the web and under which conditions this leads to inter-ethnic contact. I show that ethnicity is only one of the many topics that migrant youth discuss on social media. However, engagement in intra-ethnic online communities is partly motivated by struggles with identity and lifestyle, which is in line with other studies that have shown that youth use social media to negotiate their identities. My work also showed that bonding with migrant communities by second-generation youth via social media is less orientated at the home-country, but is rather focused on the home *culture* and on how to combine that with everyday life in the Netherlands Again this indicates that the tendency in public debate - to reduce identification process to only the 'box' of ethnicity - is invalid: the experienced identification of migrants is multi-dimensional and transcends boundaries of home-country or ethnicity.

Lastly, in chapter 5, I zoom in on the question of how and why two Dutch cities are dealing with migration-related diversity in their city branding policies. My research shows how both Rotterdam and Amsterdam acknowledge migration-related diversity as a key characteristic of the city's DNA. However, due to the political and discursive setting around migration-related diversity – cities are reluctant in using diversity in actual brand communications. It is hence mainly used in the background or is depolitized away from the broader public and political debates on migration-related diversity, by using mainly an economic perspective to diversity. Branding professionals feel they need to avoid interference of politicians and policy makers by not getting involved too much in 'politics'. These findings show how the negative discourse on migrants does not only lock public debates in a negative cycle, but also impact on other policies apart from integration policies itself. Nevertheless, branding professionals are aware of the highly contested and politicized nature of the issue and try to stay away from it.

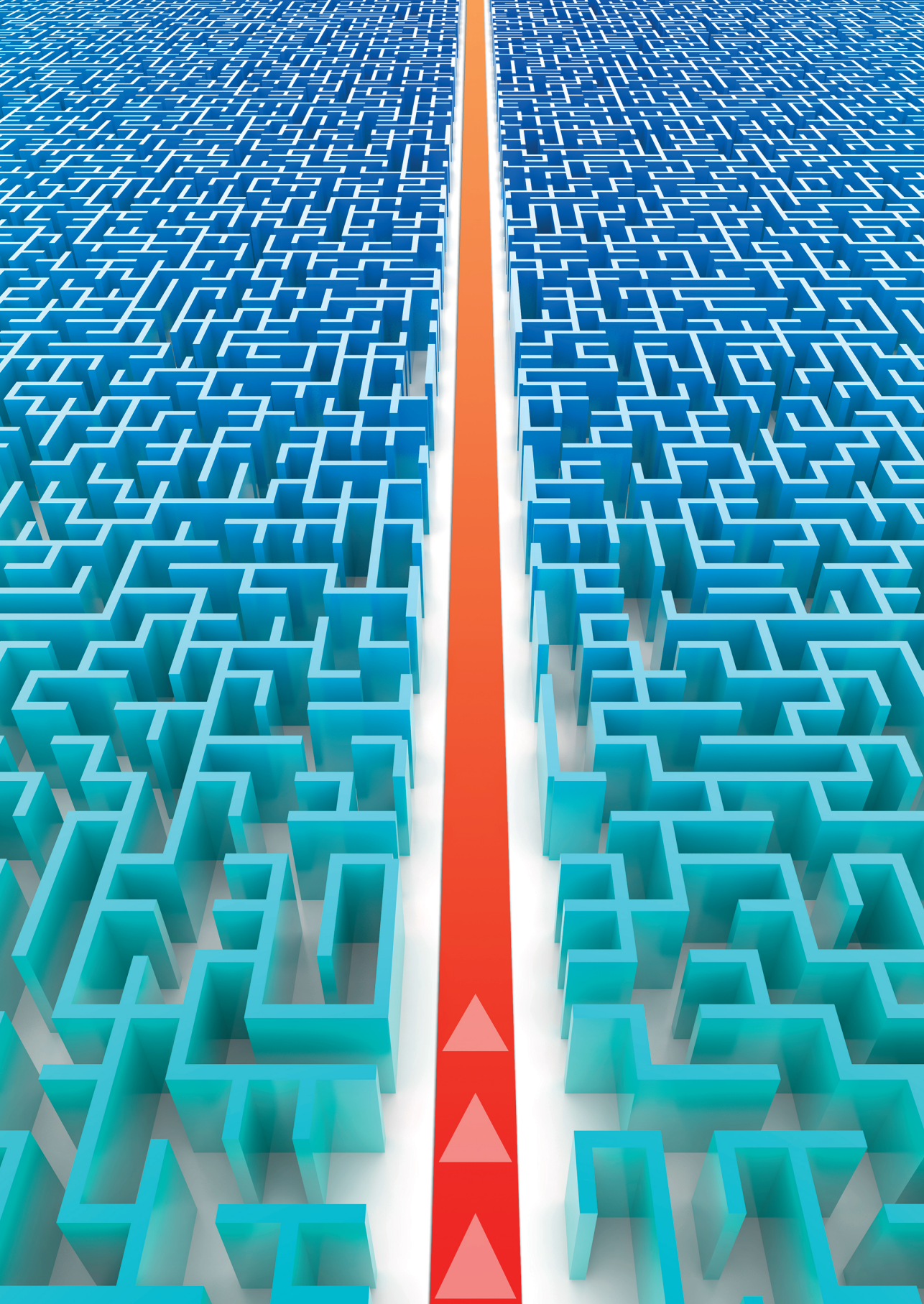
Based on my 4 studies I come to the conclusion that the highly oversimplified narrative that politicians use to 'short-cut' the complexity of integration processes clearly does not fit the reality of how integration develops in everyday life. In this narrative, migrants are often blamed for their "failed" state of being, while governments are blamed for applying too soft policies. Immigrant policies are not failing, because of unwillingness of migrants nor because of policies that are too soft. Rather, the governing of migrant integration in essence is an elusive phenome, as it is a dynamic system that responds to many incentives, while the outcomes are sensitive to various (mutual) relationships that are changeable over time. Interactions between local governmental actors and migrants are hence cumulative in their effects, and cannot be interpreted in an isolated manner. This does not mean that integration policies are necessarily bound to fail, however it shows the importance of a deep understanding of the intricate workings of integration as a system.

In addition, this thesis also shows the struggle that local governing actors are experiencing, which best can be described as a sense of discomfort, frustration or even resistance with how one (is forced) to respond to migration-related diversity. A coping strategy that often followed was that implementers would avoid too much confrontation with migrants, holding on to the policy instructions, which structure and simplify the complexity of the situations that they encounter into "boxes". Nevertheless, this feeling of discomfort would not leave them. Similarly, branding professionals that were reluctant in involving diversity in brand communications – were struggling with this decision, as they knew that avoiding the sensitized and political discussion on diversity was probably not congruent with the social transformations that the city has experienced in the last decades.

In conclusion, I argue that governments should become aware of the systematic reality in which migrant integration develops: there is no such thing as an ultimate cause or one ultimate set of instruments which will bring about migrant integration. This downplays the idea that governments are able and necessary to fully influence integration of migrants. Secondly I argue that the understanding and experiences of local actors – such as policy implementers, policy makers and migrants themselves – are central to the comprehension of migrant integration. This localized and embedded experience is not fully known (n)or used or considered in policymaking. In addition, studies on how local governments are dealing with migrant integration rarely use a systematic view that zooms in on interrelated interactions patterns.

Building on the findings of this thesis, I would argue that branding policies are an example of 'soft' instruments – an alternative to harsher in command-and-control based instruments - which possibly can help to develop an alternative narrative that speaks both to natives as migrants. The potential of branding lies in the fact that branding policies require

a holistic approach. In addition, branding in essence is about identity, community building and belonging, a central aspect of the political and social debates on migrant integration. Research – including my thesis – shows that migrants are actually struggling with identity related questions, and that the negative national discourse on migrants negatively impacts on the identification with the Dutch nation but does not automatically extend to the local level. Breaking the simplified narrative regarding migrant integration would *allow* to explore such softer and more holistic policy instruments that potentially can improve feelings of belongings of migrants.



Nederlandse Samenvatting / Dutch Summary

THE ELUSIVENESS OF GOVERNING MIGRANT INTEGRATION: *WHY FITTING COMPLEXITY IN BOXES DOES NOT WORK*

Migratie en integratie zijn onderwerpen die de gemoederen flink bezig houden. Het politieke en sociale debat over migranten wordt de laatste decennia dan ook met een hardere toon en een sterkere retoriek gevoerd. Zowel nationale als lokale overheden proberen te sturen op integratie van migranten, maar de praktijk laat zien dat dit niet altijd zonder problemen gaat. In het politieke debat over integratie daarentegen heerst het idee dat integratie direct te beïnvloeden is door strengere maatregelen in te zetten. Dit staat in sterk contrast met de empirische realiteit waarin de integratie van migranten zich ontwikkelt. In dit proefschrift is deze empirische realiteit van de sturing op integratie door lokale actoren dan ook onderzocht. Dit is relevant omdat in maatschappelijke en wetenschappelijke discussies te weinig aandacht is voor hoe integratie zich daadwerkelijk ontwikkelt op het niveau van de interacties tussen overheden en migranten. Het is belangrijk om deze lokale belevingswereld in kaart te brengen, omdat het ons zal helpen het ongrijpbare karakter van deze problematiek te begrijpen en vervolgens tot beleid te komen wat meer recht doet aan die lokale realiteit.

In hoofdstuk 2 van dit proefschrift kijk ik op macroniveau naar de interacties tussen bureaucratieën en migranten. Het hoofdstuk illustreert hoe succesvolle integratie van migranten lang niet altijd het gevolg is van één of twee geïsoleerde beleidsmaatregelen, maar juist een dynamisch proces is waarbij alle interacties tezamen richting geven aan integratie van migranten. Elk integratietraject kenmerkt zich daarbij door een combinatie van contacten met de Nederlandse overheid, met elk verschillende implicaties en specifieke omstandigheden. Integratiebeleid leidt daarom in de praktijk tot zowel verwachtte en verrassende uitkomsten die zowel gunstig als ongunstig kunnen uitpakken voor migranten. Ook bleek dat vooral de eerste jaren na vestiging belangrijk zijn, omdat migranten de verplichtingen uit het huidige integratiebeleid beoordelen op basis van ervaringen in deze specifieke periode. Het contact met een *street-level* bureaucraat die de migrant in deze jaren op sleeptouw neemt, leidde vaak tot extra motivatie bij migranten om actief mee te doen in de samenleving.

Hoofdstuk 3 van dit proefschrift zoomt verder in op het microniveau van deze *street-level workers*, te weten: integratiecoaches, inburgeringsdocenten en klantmanagers, die in hun dagelijks werk veel te maken krijgen met migranten. Hoe gaan zij om met uniforme beleidsregels die ze moeten toepassen aan de ene kant en de diversiteit aan migrantenverhalen die niet altijd in hokjes te vatten zijn aan de andere kant? Over het algemeen zagen we een tendens van vasthouden aan de beleidsregels door deze street-level workers. In het geval van gemotiveerde migranten, die zware persoonlijke omstandigheden hadden

en waarbij de regels ook als oneerlijk of onpraktisch werden ervaren, waren street-level workers wel bereid om hun beleidsvrijheid te vergroten of om soms zelfs tegen de regels in te gaan. De reacties van deze workers zijn dus gebaseerd op een *combinatie* van omstandigheden, wat wederom in contrast staat met het versimpelende idee over integratie wat in het politieke debat domineert.

In hoofdstuk 4 van dit proefschrift heb ik mij gefocust op hoe de tweede generatie migranten zich bewegen op sociale media en onder welke omstandigheden dat al dan niet leidt tot interetnisch contact. Dit is relevant gezien een groot deel van het politieke en maatschappelijke debat zich focust op de sociaal-culturele integratie van migranten. Het negatieve discours over migranten in dat debat zorgt er echter voor dat deze migranten zich minder thuis voelen in Nederland. Dit komt ook terug in online-activiteiten van de jongeren, waarbij een deel van hen zowel *offline* als *online* bezig was met de worsteling rondom 'identiteit' en '*belonging*'. Deze jongeren waren niet zozeer bezig met het land van herkomst, maar meer met de cultuur van herkomst en hoe deze te rijmen is met andere aspecten van hun dagelijkse leven in Nederland. Belangrijker nog, dit hoofdstuk laat zien dat tweede generatie migranten lang niet alleen met hun etnische identiteit bezig zijn, maar zich, net zoals autochtone jongeren, online bezighouden met allerlei vragen rondom school, werk en vrije tijdsbesteding. Identiteit is dan ook als zodanig niet in één hokje te stoppen.

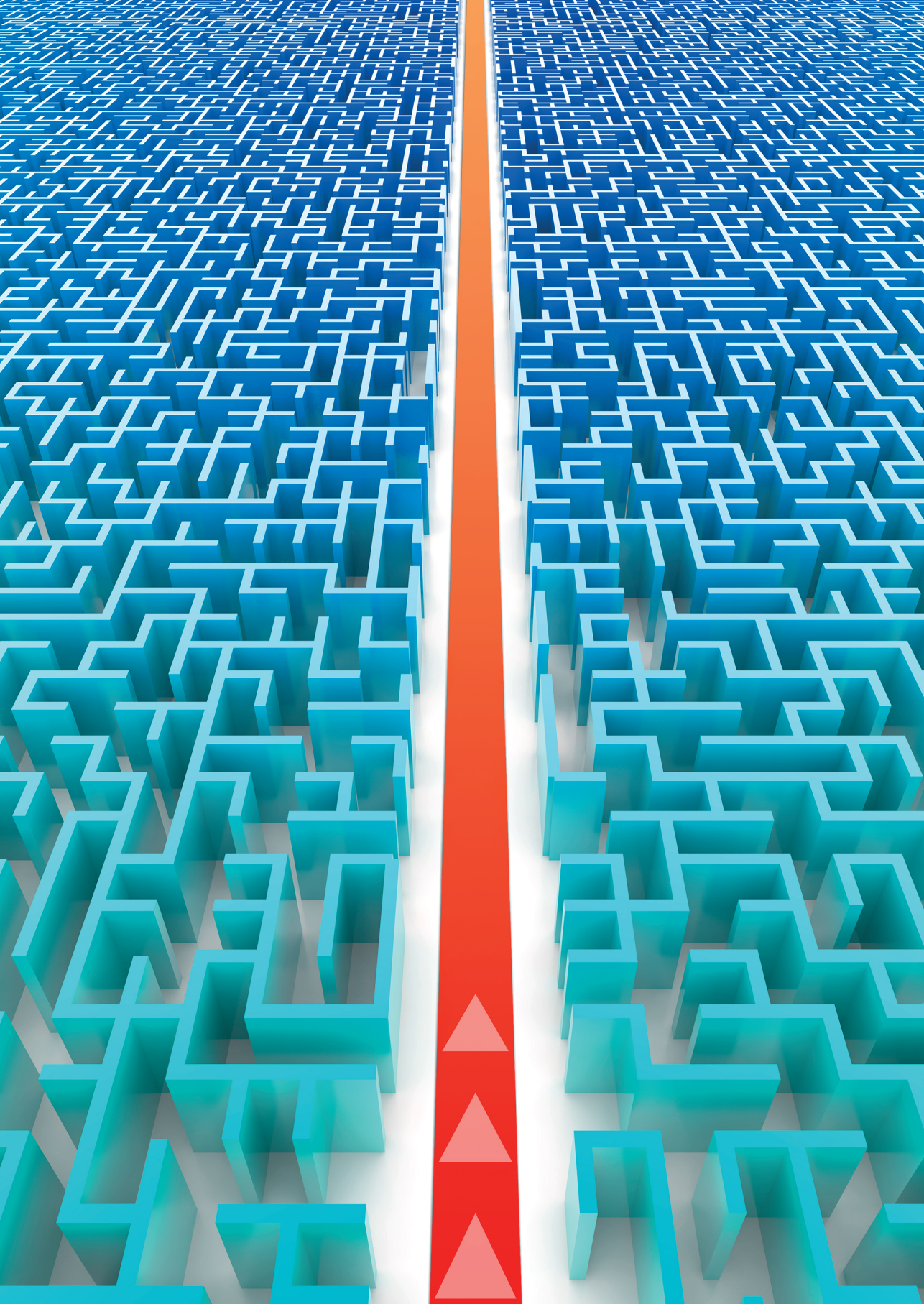
In hoofdstuk 5, ten slotte, zoom ik in op het *city branding* beleid van twee Nederlandse gemeentes, en de vraag of en waarom zij migratie-gerelateerde diversiteit gebruiken in de *branding* van hun stad. Mijn onderzoek toont hoe de steden Rotterdam en Amsterdam diversiteit erkennen als een belangrijk onderdeel van het DNA van de stad. Die erkenning vertaalt zich echter weinig in de *branding* van de steden. Mijn onderzoek laat zien dat het politiek-gevoelige karakter van migratie-gerelateerde diversiteit er voor zorgt dat de *branding professionals* diversiteit liever niet prominent gebruiken in de *city branding*. Desondanks worstelen *branding professionals* wel met dit onderwerp, omdat ze zich er goed van bewust zijn dat het superdiverse karakter van de stad niet langer te ontkennen is. Dit toont hoe het negatieve discours omtrent migratie en integratie ook invloed heeft op de keuzes die gemaakt worden in een ander beleidsveld, namelijk brandingsbeleid van lokale overheden.

Gebaseerd op de vier studies die ik heb uitgevoerd, kom ik tot de conclusie dat het versimpelde narratief van politici over integratie van migranten geen recht doet aan hoe integratie of de sturing daarop werkt in de praktijk. Hoewel in het politieke narratief over 'falende integratie' de schuld vaak wordt gelegd bij onwelwillende migranten of beleid wat te '*soft*' zou zijn, laat dit proefschrift zien dat dit soort a-leidt-tot-b redeneringen helemaal

niet opgaan. Integratie van migranten is ongrijpbaar, omdat integratie een dynamisch systeem is bestaande uit een optelsom van interacties tussen overheden en migranten. Een proces dat niet lineair te plannen of te beïnvloeden is. Dit betekent niet dat overheden niet kunnen sturen op integratie, maar het onderstreept wel het belang van beleid dat gestoeld is op een dieper begrip van de systematische werkelijkheid waarin integratie zich ontwikkeld. Daarnaast laat dit proefschrift zien dat degenen die direct of indirect te maken krijgen met migratie-gerelateerde diversiteit een sterk ongemak ervaren met beslissingen die zij moeten nemen. In sommige gevallen zagen we dat *street-level workers* intensiever contact met migranten vermeden, zodat het makkelijker werd om vast te blijven houden aan de 'regeltjes' of 'hokjes' die voortvloeiden uit beleid. In andere gevallen zochten ze naar manieren om recht te doen aan de complexiteit van de specifieke gevallen. In beide gevallen bleef het gevoel van ongemak bij de *street-level worker* bestaan. Dat geldt ook voor de *branding professionals* die de migratie-gerelateerde diversiteit niet prominent in de *city brand* gebruiken, maar daar ook mee worstelden.

Gebaseerd op het bovenstaande kom ik tot de conclusie dat het sturen op migratie-gerelateerde diversiteit een ongrijpbaar karakter heeft en dat er daarom niet zozeer één set van instrumenten of maatregelen is die de gewenste effecten teweeg zal brengen. Dat relativeert – ten eerste – het idee dat overheden in staat zijn om de integratie van migranten volledig te beïnvloeden. Ten tweede, stel ik dat de lokale kennis en ervaring van street-level actoren nodig is in het maken van beleid, om zo recht te kunnen doen aan de context waarbinnen integratie plaatsvindt. Studies naar integratie van migranten zouden dan ook profijt hebben bij het opzetten van een systeem-bril. In bestaande integratiestudies maar ook in *governance*-studies is er nu nog te weinig oog voor systeemdenken.

Ten slotte doen de uitkomsten van dit proefschrift vermoeden dat *city branding* een rol kan spelen in het integratievraagstuk, gezien branding een meer *holistische* aanpak biedt in het creëren van nieuwe en potentieel meer inclusieve verhalen over de stad. Daarnaast gaat *branding* in essentie over identiteit, wat goed past bij het publieke en politieke debat waarin de sociaal-culturele integratie centraal staat. Het is hierbij belangrijk dat het huidige restrictieve narratief over integratie doorbroken wordt, zodat er meer ruimte komt voor hen denken over andere type beleidsinstrumenten in de sturing van integratie.



Dankwoord, Words of Thanks

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