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
# Citizens and Citizenship. The Rhetoric of Dutch Immigrant Integration Policies in 2011

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# Citizens and citizenship: A study of the rhetoric of Dutch immigrant integration policy in 2011



*Interpretive Policy Analysis Conference  
De Montfort University, Leicester  
5 July 2017*

**DANA REM** [ERIMIS, THE HAGUE]  
**DES GASPER** [ISS, ERASMUS UNIVERSITY ROTTERDAM]

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2. The Netherlands immigration context and debates
3. The 2011 Policy Note: ‘Integratie, binding, burgerschap’
4. The **problem formulation** in the Policy Note
5. The discursive **construction of actors : categories**, nomination, predication
6. **Key concepts**: communities, connectedness, citizenship, integration
7. The overall **rhetoric and framing** of immigrant integration policy

# The 2010-12 ruling trio

## Christian Democrats – People's Party for Freedom and Democracy – Party for Freedom

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## Sections 1-3: The study

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- 2011 Netherlands government policy paper ***Integratie, Binding, Burgerschap*** (Integration, Connectedness, Citizenship)
  - Stance of a coalition government of the right-wing Liberal party (VVD), centre-right Christian Democrats (CDA), & --as consultation partner-- the right populist Freedom Party (PVV) of Geert Wilders.

We focus on:

- How were (non-Western) migrants presented and framed - 'as problem' - by the Dutch Government.
- What does citizenship mean, and how it is used as governmental mechanism for (migrants) integration



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**Kenmerk**  
DGW 18J 2011038140

**Datum** 16 juni 2011  
**Betreft** Aanbieding visie op integratie

Hierbij treft u aan de visie op integratie "Integratie, binding en burgerschap".

Het integratiebeleid gaat met deze visie een nieuwe fase in. Dit kabinet gaat er van uit dat inburgering en het verwerven van de kennis en vaardigheden die nodig zijn om zich zelfredzaam in de Nederlandse samenleving te handhaven, de verantwoordelijkheid zijn van ieder die zich hier duurzaam wil vestigen. Uitgangspunt daarbij is integratie in een Nederlandse samenleving zoals die zich in de loop van de tijd tot op heden heeft ontwikkeld. Het kabinet neemt daarmee afstand van het relativisme dat besloten ligt in het concept van de multiculturele samenleving. Het beleid gaat uit van een samenleving die weliswaar, mede onder invloed van de migranten die zich hier vestigden, verandert, maar die niet uitwisselbaar is voor welke andere samenleving dan ook.

Samen leven gaat niet vanzelf. Evenmin is een samenleving waarvan ieder die hier woont of zich duurzaam vestigt een thuis kan maken het vanzelfsprekend resultaat van het samenleven. Een meer verplichtend integratiebeleid is nodig en gerechtvaardigd omdat anders de samenleving geleidelijk uit elkaar groeit, burgers langs elkaar heen gaan leven en uiteindelijk niemand zich meer thuis voelt in Nederland. Van mensen die zich in Nederland willen vestigen wordt verwacht dat zij hun bijdrage leveren aan versterking van de maatschappelijke samenhang en betrokkenheid en burgerschap tonen. Het stellen van eisen aan immigranten die zich duurzaam in onze samenleving vestigen is gerechtvaardigd omdat de samenleving die eisen ook stelt aan de eigen burgers. Een meer verplichtend integratiebeleid impliceert daarom een meer algemene inzet van het kabinet op versterking van maatschappelijke samenhang, het bevorderen van burgerschap en bevestiging van de Nederlandse samenleving. Integratie, zelfredzaamheid, verantwoordelijkheid en versterking van solidariteit en burgerschap hangen dan ook nauw samen en vormen gezamenlijk de uitdrukking van de waarde van een samenleving waarin men zich wil herkennen.

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# Minister Piet Hein Donner & his view of integration to NL



# The 'policy note' (policy paper)

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A substantial document of almost 10,000 words, in six sections:

1. A NEW PERSPECTIVE
2. AN OBDURATE REALITY
  - Ongoing immigration
  - Continuing problems
  - Gradual integration
3. SAFE, STABLE AND INVOLVED: [the picture of] DUTCH SOCIETY AS BASIS FOR INTEGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP
4. INTEGRATION POLICY
  - Qualifications and self reliance
  - Integration via general policies
5. PARTICIPATION AND CITIZENSHIP [of all citizens]
  - Cohesion and citizenship
  - A grounding of unity and citizenship
  - Strengthening and extension of concerned citizenship
6. CONCLUSION

# How we approach the Policy Note via interpretive policy analysis

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- Using **tools** from discourse analysis, including analysis of:  
4. problem formulation, 5. categories & characterization,  
6. key concepts, and 7. overall rhetorical crafting (emphases,  
metaphors, &c → frame)
- Our **questions** derive in part from the perspective of  
governmentality studies, including with attention to the  
hypothesis that neo-liberal communitarianism is the form of  
governing that now characterizes Dutch society (Schinkel &  
van Houdt 2010)



# ‘Neoliberal communitarianism’

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Marriage of a neoliberal stress on individual responsibility with a communitarian stress on active membership in local and national ‘community’.

- The good citizen is good in terms of both these dimensions.

The paper considers and tests such ideas. Using discourse analysis as close text analysis, we aim to **test** ideas from governmentality studies and from discourse studies as social theorizing. (See e.g. Schrover & Schinkel 2013.)

## 4. The problem formulation is simultaneously the presentation of others/problems and of self/solutions

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- *The identified/formulated problems : lagging integration, multiculturalism, crime, dependence, cultural disquiet, Islam...*
- Self-presentation:  
A government of awareness, acknowledgement; a government that shares popular dissatisfaction & expressed concerns
- 1-2.'The government **is aware of the negative effects of immigration and lagging integration** (ph1.3) and it **combats** it with a range of **measures** and **acts forcefully against norm-breaking behavior. ....**"
- 3.The cabinet **is aware of the fact that Islam...**in a short time became one of the largest religions in [NL] and **has raised concerns** in some parts of the population. In their perceptions the democratic state could come under threat.
- The Cabinet **acknowledges** these **concerns** and **takes up the task of taking away concerns** where possible, **as they threaten social cohesion.**

Story line in the government discourse:  
Awareness → Acknowledges → *Believes* → Promotes  
*Lagging Integration* → *need for Citizenship*

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**AWARENESS  
OF:**

- Ongoing immigration
- Lagging integration
- criminalization
- Rejection of 'multicultural society'

**ACKNOWLEDGES /  
SHARES  
CONCERN :**

Task to take away  
the concerns;  
Islam as  
(perceived/  
potential) threat

**BELIEFS:**

Dutch society is  
NOT inter-  
changeable with  
any other society;  
national identity  
& constancy  
affirmed

**PROMOTES:**

**Rearticulated  
notion of  
citizenship →**

**Promote**  
welfare  
prosperity,  
security

**Stands for**  
freedom,  
tolerance  
equality and  
security.

## *The perceived problem of Islam, and the defence/reconstruction of a notion of society*



- THE FEARS OF RADICALISATION - acknowledged as a PROBLEM for SOCIAL COHESION. The paper sees a **society coming ‘under threat’** – a society **in need** for **strengthening its internal cohesion**.
- **The discourse divides communities:** ‘Dutch society’ and ‘the Muslim community’ are polar concepts; one is the **insider society**, the Dutch one, the other is alien.
- **[Dutch] SOCIETY is re-conceived by reference to its perceived THREATS:**
  - a CONSTITUTIONAL SOCIETY that does not tolerate deviation from the rules, and that is a threatened society that must be PROTECTED.
  - SOCIETY’s norms & values must be secured. SOCIAL COHESION serves as a connecting frame, for the sake of which necessary measures are taken.



## 5. The discursive construction of actors - categories, nomination, predication



The text proceeds through *different levels*:

- It talks of ***individuals*** (designated as citizens, responsible, accountable)
- ***groups***: often with negative connotations – portraying ‘the others’- such as ‘known groups of criminals’- the groupings being seen as locking people inside, isolating them from society
- ***organizations***: - with formal roles, supporting the social order and ‘social cohesion’; often with role of watching ‘the others’, the potentially deviant migrants
- ***society***: meaning *Dutch society*, ‘our own citizens’, the *Dutch constitutional state*.

# Levels of organizations and meanings

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We distinguish in the document

- **1. Policy actors:** [**dominant non-migrant actors**] formally vested and in charge with making and applying the policy, for others: they are nominated as Government, Cabinet, municipalities, organizations. We saw how Government is aware / acknowledges / believes / expects / assumes tasks / will do / but also limits itself to...
- **2. Subjects of the policy design** (**migrant actors**). At this level, we read of *various types of migrants, refugees, for whom the policy is meant*
- *Identities are constructed in the document (by interaction of 1 & 2)*

# Who are 'the others'? How are they portrayed?

## Emphasis on **problem groups**:

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- People who [intend to] live permanently in The Netherlands [but:]
- who have little chances and perspective to participate and create a self- standing existence
  - who diminish their chances [in the labor market] by their code of dressing
  - who do not master Dutch language at all or not enough to find a paid job
  - ....

*Approach to category analysis - Groups follow rules for categorization that are incomprehensible to non-members 'but [intuitively] known and even self-evident to the members of the communities who create them'. (Yanow 2003)*

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To make explicit what is tacit, one tries to identify:

- ***The defining point of view.***

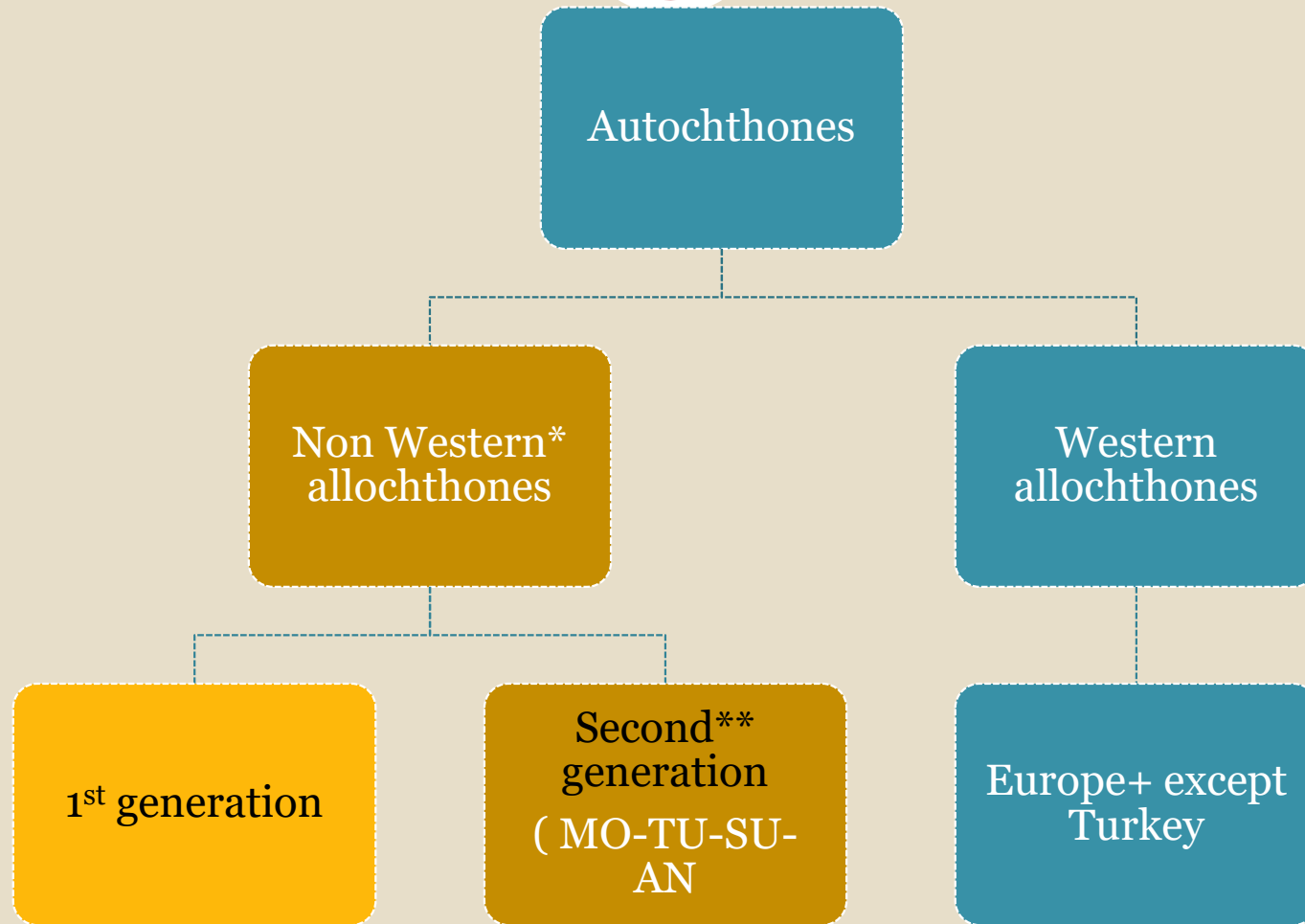
‘The logic according to which the category set is constructed and named reflects .. the point of view of the group creating the categories, naming them, and classifying elements within them’.

- *Marking.* ‘Within a category, one element – the prototype... – may be considered the usual case, the norm, against which **deviating-- ‘marked’ [inferior]-- cases** are [identified and] assessed.’
- *Occluded features, silences.* Category analysis considers which features are employed as the basis for category-making, but also **which traits are neglected.**



# Who are they?: selective focus on non-western allochthones (target 1); **binary categories**

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# What are their problems? What problems do they cause?

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## Narrative 1: lagging integration (Morocco-Turkey-Surinam-Ant)

Crime/Security

School dropout/unemployment

Labor participation and social benefits

## Narrative 2: Steady integration (China, others from Ant & Sur)


education

language

Identification with  
the country

Other problems amongst **newcomers who are:**  
**1. family reunification members** (target 2) NARRATIVE 3

18

- 
- mostly **young women**
  - continuing flow of people insufficiently prepared for their new life in our society
  - most of them end up in a highly dependent position.
  - Some of them face honour-related violence, polygamy and forced marriages;
  - Practices unacceptable to the democratic constitutional state of the Netherlands.

## Other threats amongst **newcomers**:

### 2. Labor migrants from EU (target 3) NARRATIVE 4

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the flow of **temporary migrants from Central & East European countries** puts a burden on inner cities

People are often poorly housed, do not speak the language and expect to leave the Netherlands soon

a growing number of them finally settle permanently in the Netherlands

it must be prevented that new seriously disadvantaged groups are formed



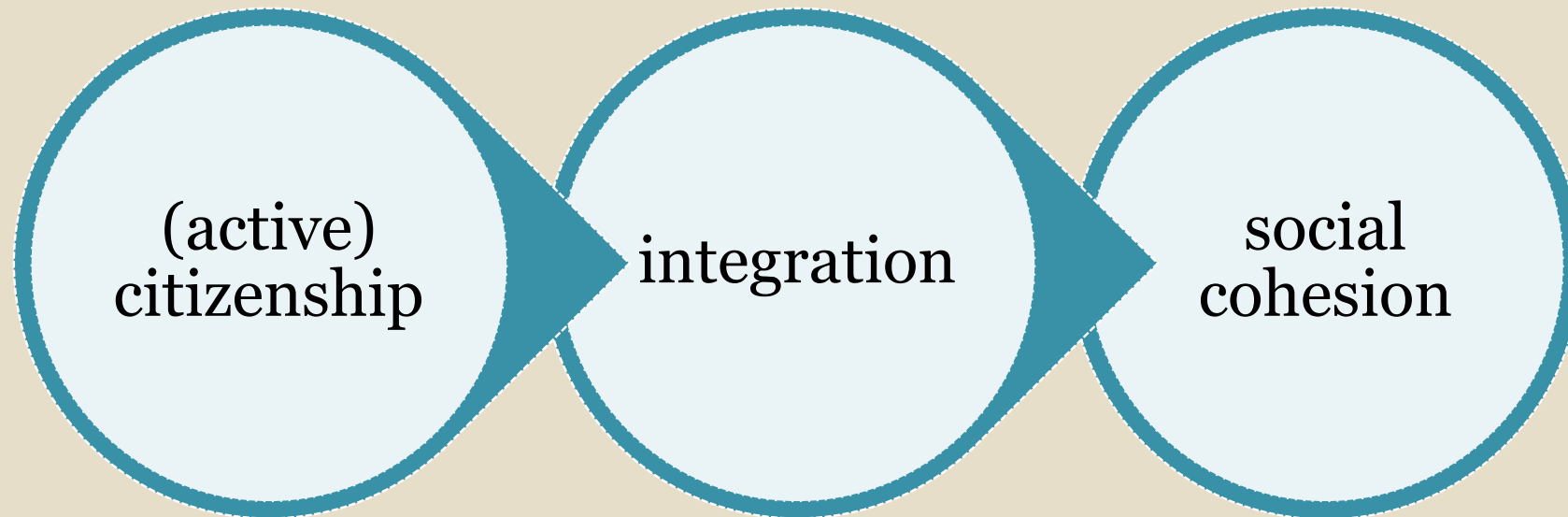
## 6. Key concepts: communities and connectedness, citizenship, integration



- *The triad: citizenship-integration-community*
- ‘Integration’ of migrants – to what? Should it not be to a society of self-reliant individuals with rights and responsibilities ?
- Yes, but more: - **not just mutual non-harm, but shared values, shared identity, solidarity.**
- Integration policy becomes assertion of the responsibility of migrants to absorb and affirm the predominant values and identity.
- Need to assert this for everybody, in order to make it plausible, and to try to hold together increasingly individualized, differentiated societies
- “*...integration became defined as citizenship and later as active/moral citizenship*” (van Houdt 2014: 174)

Reconceived citizenship → integration → social cohesion

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# *The proposed elements of 'burgerschap', citizenship*

– as **not (just) the right to be different, but the duty to be similar**

- **Participation**, “in the labour market, in education, in one’s own neighbourhood and social environment,
- ...by being involved with fellow citizens [&c.]”,
- “building up an **independent** existence,.. being self-standing,
- ...knowing and applying **the rules of the Dutch society**” [5.2.1].

Necessary conditions for citizenship include:

- “Mastering the Dutch **language**”
- and “that the citizen considers himself a citizen of the society, **identifies** with the society, feels himself responsible for it and wants to belong to it”.

## *Integration – conceived as the path to citizenship and cohesion*

- **‘Integration’ = integration into Dutch society as defined by the dominant culture, its norms and values.** The phrase ‘the Dutch society’ is used 19 times.
  - Maintaining the existing character of Dutch society is the central value in this idea of integration.
  - It is considered to contribute to social stability.
- Lack of integration is seen as wilful.
  - So actual citizenship or fully acknowledged citizenship can be withheld from those who fail to integrate.
  - This happens only for non-western allochtoons (van Houdt 2014).



# National identity

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- Central to the reconceived notion of citizenship is a notion of distinctive Dutch national identity. Citizens must have absorbed and accepted it.
- Integration means the corresponding process/achievement.

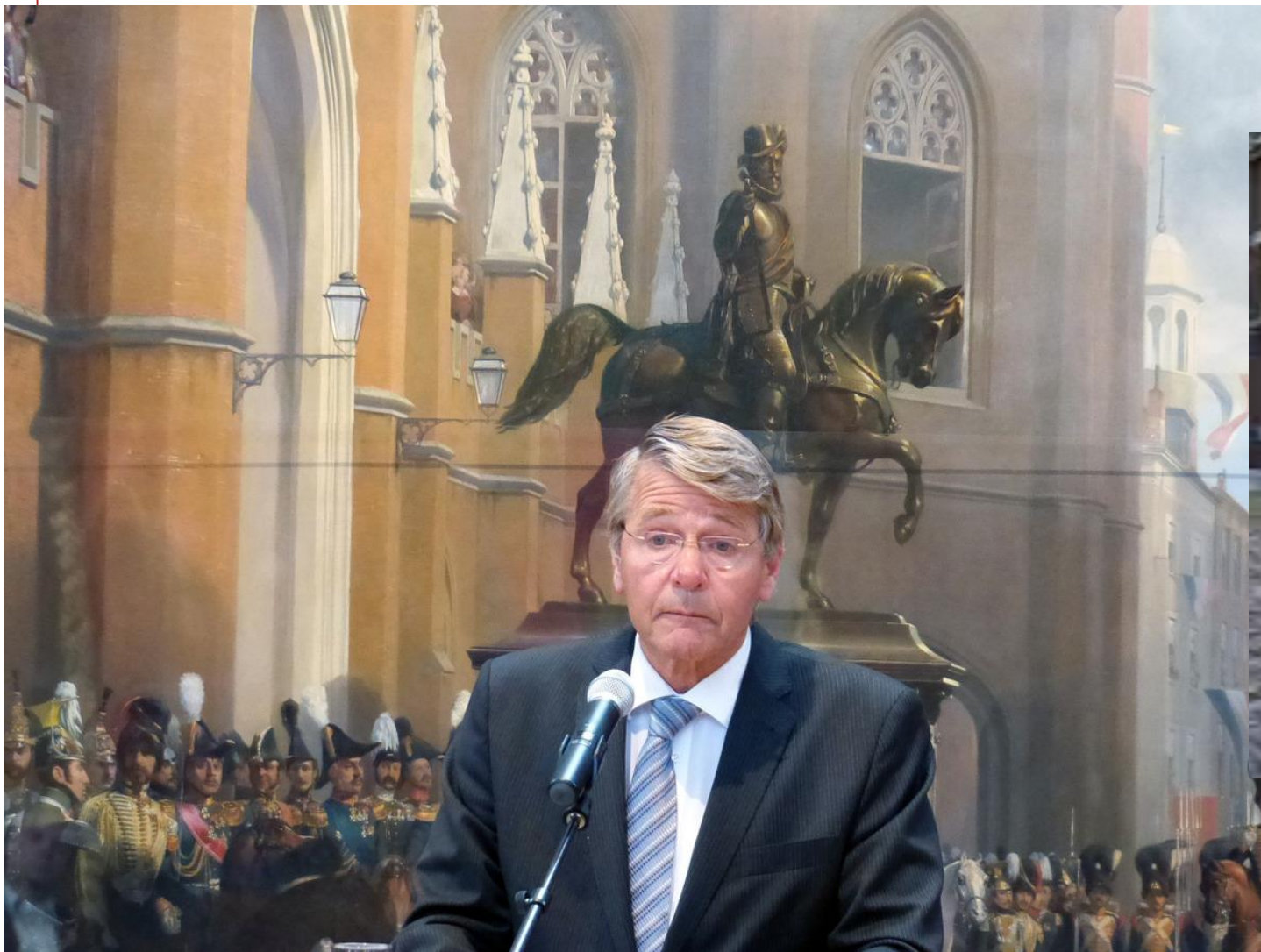
The Policy Note seems to contain:

1. ***strong commitment to a relatively simple notion of Dutch identity;***
2. ***an assumption that identities must/should be simple;***
3. ***a tacit insecurity about the resilience of such a Dutch identity.***

## 7. The rhetoric & framing of immigrant integration policy



- **Rhetoric** -- all the means of attempted persuasion; and study of them
  - Arguments; Authority; Emotions
- **Framing** (in its narrow meaning) = inclusions and exclusions; foregrounding and backgrounding
- Framing (in its bigger meaning) = construction of a system of meanings, by use of the whole range of methods, including those already mentioned,
- plus metaphor, and various means of allocating attention and emphasis



# ***Metaphors:- dangerous flows; securing the national home; but not ‘building bridges’***

- **Migration as a disruptive flow**

- Migration “flows” [1.1, 1.2, 2.1.1, 2.1.2, 2.2.1, 2.2.5] include “influx of [the] disadvantaged” [1.4], the products of the “dissolution” of colonial empires [2.1.1], and those “uprooted” [2.1.1] by war.
- The flows are ongoing [2.1], difficult to control, and create ongoing problems [2.2].
- The fear is that Dutch society “gradually drifts apart” [3.6].

- **Integration as building and securing personal and national homes**

- Migrants’ duty to “**build** an independent existence in the Netherlands” ; ability to “build a **home** by [their] contribution to that society”; “building a new existence” in a new country; choosing to “build a life in the Netherlands”; knowledge and ability “to build an (independent) life (/existence)” in the Netherlands.
- It repeatedly uses also the language of ‘**home**’: a future in which “nobody feels at home in the Netherlands any more”



## *Foregrounding & backgrounding that reflect (and fan) insecurity about resilience of the simplistic notion of Dutch identity*

- The Policy Note employs rhetorical constructions that **downgrade positive integration steps made by immigrants and focus on negative perceptions and fears.**
  - This focus is adopted from the second paragraph onwards:
- “**Although integration is undoubtedly visible** and many migrants have found their way successfully in the economy, culture, politics and education, **the concern over those migrants** who fail to build an independent existence in the Netherlands dominates.” [1.2; emphasis added].
  - Further, the government then commits itself to prioritizing those concerns and fears.

# What was new in the 2011 policy note/paper?

## Preliminary conclusions

Despite its claim to provide a new perspective, nearly all the principles and concrete practices enunciated in the Policy Note were present in policy documents of earlier governments.

But it did add some significantly new elements, that moved here from media statements and political speeches into a government policy document.

1. **A conceptualization of citizenship** which now more strongly includes involvement in a shared **Dutch community** conceived as marked by distinctive inherited Dutch values
2. A classification and characterization of potential and actual citizens which is in tension with the declared principles of equal respect; including recurrent implied **criticisms of Islam**
3. A notion of community, integration connectedness and which is in **tension with contemporary global systems and cultural individualism**



# Affirmation of (one vision of) national identity & Dutch society as the frame for citizenship & integration

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- ‘**Integration** means **integration in Dutch Society**’
- ‘**Dutch society** - even if changing under the influence of migrants -- **is not interchangeable for any other society**’; it is the product of **EFFORTS, commitments, BELIEFS** and continuing **values over many GENERATIONS**
- **Danger: if this idea of SOCIETY** is constructed by stress on its **own past, traditional roots, memories, and features**, are these are fully shared and **recognizable only by those who have contributed to this tradition?**
- *Danger of being a self-defeating vision ? An integration policy that can prevent integration processes.*