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Tolerance and Cultural Diversity Discourses in the Netherlands

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Tolerance, Pluralism and Social Cohesion: Responding to the Challenges of the 21st Century in Europe (ACCEPT PLURALISM)

ACCEPT PLURALISM is a Research Project, funded by the European Commission under the Seventh Framework Program. The project investigates whether European societies have become more or less tolerant during the past 20 years. In particular, the project aims to clarify: (a) how is tolerance defined conceptually, (b) how it is codified in norms, institutional arrangements, public policies and social practices, (c) how tolerance can be measured (whose tolerance, who is tolerated, and what if degrees of tolerance vary with reference to different minority groups). The ACCEPT PLURALISM consortium conducts original empirical research on key issues in school life and in politics that thematise different understandings and practices of tolerance. Bringing together empirical and theoretical findings, ACCEPT PLURALISM generates a State of the Art Report on Tolerance and Cultural Diversity in Europe, a Handbook on Ideas of Tolerance and Cultural Diversity in Europe, a Tolerance Indicators' Toolkit where qualitative and quantitative indicators may be used to score each country's performance on tolerating cultural diversity, and several academic publications (books, journal articles) on Tolerance, Pluralism and Cultural Diversity in Europe. The ACCEPT PLULARISM consortium is formed by 18 partner institutions covering 15 EU countries. The project is hosted by the Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies and co-ordinated by Prof. Anna Triandafyllidou.

The **Institute for Migration and Ethnic Studies** (IMES) is an interdisciplinary research institute that focuses on *international migration* and the *integration* of immigrants and their descendants in host societies in a comparative perspective. Research projects revolve around themes such as transnationalism, religious diversity, multicultural democracy, radicalization, labour and entrepreneurship, generational change and urban public space. The IMES is a part of the Amsterdam Institute for Social Science Research (AISSR), which is one of the main research schools of the Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences at the University of Amsterdam.

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Executive Summary

This report on diversity 'challenges' in the Netherlands examines Dutch institutional arrangements, strategies of governance and practices of toleration. It analyses issues concerning both native and immigrant minority groups, explores the ways boundaries are drawn between majorities and minorities, and discusses how cultural differences are socially constructed and contested. Contemporary debates and institutional arrangements need to be understood in the light of the appropriate historical, societal and political background. The first part of the report explores the formation of the Dutch nation and state. It pays particular attention to the history of religious pluralism and the ways civil authorities have handled this form of pluralism in various ways. A process of state formation began in the second half of the 16th century, but the drawing of boundaries between religiously defined groups and the crystallisation of institutional relations between organised religions and the state continued until the 20th century. We explore the ways shifting relations between majorities and minorities have shaped institutional arrangements and everyday practices for the handling of diversity. We look at Dutch traditions of citizenship and nationality, the Dutch position in the EU and how policy responses to immigration were developed since the mid 1980s.

In this report we explore how various images of 'Dutch tolerance' developed, how they relate to different legitimisations of acceptance and the ways these emerged in relation to different minority groups, both native (including religious and linguistic minorities) and immigrant (including post-colonial and labour migrants). An important focus will be to explain how the image of the Netherlands as a 'guiding country of tolerance' has changed so dramatically over the past decade or so. We analyse distinctive elements of Dutch political culture and institutional arrangements through which the Netherlands seeks to govern pluralism. In many ways institutions in the domains of education and church-state relations have been shaped by the history of 'pillarisation'. We explore tensions between these institutional legacies and new ideas about secularism and equality, which have become especially acute in the debates on immigrant integration and Islam. One important change in Dutch political culture over the past decades is the emergence of strong voices in public and political debate who defend 'secular' and 'progressive' values and who are increasingly unwilling to accept transgressions and exceptions to key liberal norms.

In the second part of the report we introduce the main minority groups and discuss issues that have arisen around their cultural, linguistic, ethnic and religious 'difference'. Native minorities include both religious and linguistic groups and the immigrant minorities include post-colonial migrants, labour migrants and asylum seekers. We discuss major events and issues that have structured contemporary public debate on diversity in the Netherlands. We argue that in the Netherlands 'diversity challenges' cannot be neatly linked to set groups. Instead, there are three major sets of issues that are discussed in relation to different combinations of groups. Usually the focus is on religious minorities and/or immigrant groups that are perceived as religiously orthodox or conservative and/or as culturally different. The first set of issues is about the question whether or not special ethnic and religious institutions (faith based schools, ethnic organisations) undermine societal cohesion and form obstacles to immigrant integration. A second set of debates concerns the balancing of, on the one hand, the associational and collective autonomy of religious and cultural groups, and, on the other hand, legal and liberal norms with regard to gender equality and equality of sexual orientations. The third set of debates is mainly about the boundaries of speech and whether or not vulnerable minorities such as Muslims should be protected against discriminatory speech.

In the final section of the report we discuss five different conceptualisations of tolerance, acceptance and respect that structure the Dutch debate. These include (1) the need to tolerate minorities, even if their religion and practices are disapproved of by the majority, (2) principled tolerance of other groups based on ideas about pluralism and of the Dutch nation as composed of various minorities, (3) pragmatic toleration or 'condoning' (*gedogen*) of practices and forms of behaviour that transgress social and legal norms, in order to create a 'live and let live' climate, (4) multicultural recognition, based on the idea that immigrant communities can retain and develop distinctive cultural practices and identities and on normative principles such as equal treatment and non-discrimination, (5) Dutch liberal intolerance, focusing on the need to identify clearly the non-negotiable core of liberal values and principles, and arguing that religious groups and immigrants should respect these values in their daily lives as well as in their cultural and religious practices and institutions. In the conclusion we focus on the main distinctive characteristics of the Dutch situation in comparison to other countries.

Keywords
Tolerance, toleration, pluralism, diversity, religious diversity, diversity challenges, immigration, minorities, native minorities, immigration minorities, the Netherlands.

1 Introduction

On September 11 2010 the Dutch populist politician Geert Wilders gave a speech in New York in which he declared his solidarity with local groups protesting against the building of an Islamic centre near Ground Zero. He said New York was 'rooted in Dutch tolerance' and observed that 'A tolerant society is not a suicidal society. It must defend itself against the powers of darkness, the force of hatred and the blight of ignorance. It cannot tolerate the intolerant and survive'. Opposing the construction of a mosque was thus represented as a necessary measure to uphold a tolerant society. This event was paradoxical in many ways. The leader of a recently established populist party in the Netherlands, who has become internationally known for his outspoken anti-Islam statements, defends 'liberal tolerance' in the United States. In the Dutch context Wilders has similarly argued that the defence of Dutch liberal values requires a stop of 'Muslim immigration' and a curb on the building of mosques and other Islamic institutions in order to halt the 'Islamisation of Europe'. Whereas the Netherlands used to have a reputation as a country welcoming other cultures and respecting the rights of immigrants, it is now often mentioned as an example of the ways the critique of Islam and multiculturalism dominate public debates on immigration and integration issues in Europe. A panel at an international political science conference held in Budapest in 2005 was meaningfully entitled 'What the hell happened to the Netherlands. Public culture and minority integration in the country of (in)tolerance'. This reports aims to shed some light on these paradoxes with regard to the current conceptualisations of tolerance and the events pertaining to cultural diversity in the Netherlands.

The Netherlands has a reputation of being a country which has played a vital role in developing the ideas and practices of tolerance. During the period of the Dutch republic (1588-1795) the Low Countries offered a safe haven to religious dissenters that were persecuted in other European countries. At different moments in the history of early modern Europe Jews from Spain or French Huguenots sought and found refuge in the Netherlands. Cities such as Leiden and Amsterdam were home to the major thinkers of tolerance, including Baruch de Spinoza and Pierre Bayle. John Locke wrote his *Letter concerning toleration* (1689) while in exile in Holland. Another well-known aspect of Dutch history which is traditionally related to its approach to pluralism and tolerance is 'pillarisation'. During this period, from approximately the 1900s until the 1960s, religious and other denominational groups – Catholics, Protestants, Socialists and Liberals – lived 'parallel lives' in separate institutions and organisations. Elite agreements and avoidance of sensitive topics in public and political debate ensured societal stability between the different groups. The 'rules of the game' belonging to pillarisation and the related Dutch consensus democracy have often been represented as important lessons on how to organise stability top-down in deeply divided societies (cf. Lijphart 1990). A third historical period in which Dutch practices of toleration became internationally renowned was in the wake of the cultural revolutions of the 1960s. New forms of permissiveness and openness to life-styles associated with youth culture of the 1960s were tolerated in the public sphere. Especially Amsterdam was seen as one of the most 'tolerant' or 'permissive' cities in the world. This openness to different life-styles and the decline of religious adherence also resulted in new liberal legislation in domains such as medical ethics (euthanasia, contraception, and abortion), gender equality and equality of sexual orientation (gay rights, gay marriage). Finally, a Dutch reputation of tolerance was established when in the 1980s and 1990s, it was one of the first countries to adopt a form of 'multiculturalism' in response to large scale immigration. A policy slogan such as 'integration with retention of cultural identity' served to demonstrate that also in the domain of immigrant

integration the Dutch would pursue strategies of governance that were grounded in respect for cultural difference and equal treatment of minority groups. Governments responded positively to emerging separate institutions and organisations that catered to the needs of ethnic minorities, believing these would allow newcomers to integrate fully in a culturally diverse society.

In the course of this report we will argue that in the past 20 years or so, there are two categories of communities which are most outspokenly challenged in debates on cultural pluralism. These are religious groups and immigrants. We analyse public debates on Orthodox Calvinist groups, which often concern principles such as gender equality, religious freedom and associational autonomy, especially in the domains of education and politics. We discuss the ways Catholic leaders were challenged around issues of equality of sexual orientation. In the report we also include analysis of the main immigrant groups and how their cultural and religious differences have given rise to public contestation. In debates on migrant groups the focus is usually on specific ethno-religious practices, on the need for 'integration' and on a wide range of societal problems that are associated with cultural difference and socio-economic areas, such as unemployment, social isolation and crime. The group that is most outspokenly seen as both ethnically and religiously 'different' are Muslims and in the course of the report we will extensively discuss issues and events in which Islam and Muslims dominate the public discourse concerning toleration and diversity challenges.

Throughout this report we constantly aim to analyse the ways in which ideas of acceptance, respect, recognition and tolerance, developed in tandem with institutional arrangements and practices. We begin with a review of the major elements of Dutch nation state formation and then proceed to discuss the main diversity challenges and how they relate to different minority groups. In the final part of the report we analyse different conceptualisations of tolerance and acceptance which structure the debates in the Netherlands.

2 National identity and state formation

Understanding contemporary diversity challenges in the Netherlands requires a thorough analysis of history, and in particular of the history of religious pluralism and the ways civil authorities have handled this form of pluralism in various ways. In the first place, as we will show in this section, the process of state formation in the Netherlands, which began in the second half of the 16th century, was closely related to the development of religion, shifting relations between majorities and minorities and changes in the institutional relations between church and state. In the second place, some important standing institutional arrangements for handling diversity, notably in the domains of education and politics, have been profoundly shaped by ideological struggles and social and political processes that date back to the late 19th and early 20th century. In the third place, religion and migration are at the centre of contemporary debates about diversity.[1] In what follows we focus on inter-faith strife and its settlement and in particular on the ways they left their imprints on Dutch institutions, political culture and strategies of governance. We then, more briefly, look at Dutch traditions of citizenship and nationality and on the role the Netherlands has played in the European Union.

2.1 State formation

The Netherlands emerged as an independent political entity out of the Dutch Revolt. The repressive reactions of Catholic Spain to the Reformation greatly fuelled anger and unrest in the Northern parts of the Low Countries, and local nobility and urban patricians believed the unrelenting Spanish decrees to be an undue imposition of power (Knippenberg 2006: 318). The 1579 Union of Utrecht was imposed as a defensive unity against Spanish rule but also came to form the basis of the Dutch Republic (Stuurman 1998: 168). Through the Union of Utrecht the Inquisition was renounced and each province of the new federal state could now decide for itself the status and practical exercise of religion in the public realm.

The Dutch Republic was praised throughout the seventeenth century by foreign visitors for its comparative freedom of religious organisation. The Dutch Republic differed from other European states in its lack of uniform imposition of religion. Although religion and politics were heavily intertwined, power ultimately lay with the civil authorities. The tolerant stance by the civil authorities towards religious pluralism resulted from concerns with social stability in the highly pluralistic society, instead of noble convictions regarding individual freedom (Price 1994: 183-185, 203-204).

The Calvinist Reformed Church dominated the public sphere where other denominations were excluded from. Its leaders often pressed for persecution of protestant dissenters and the extirpation of Catholicism. However, the civil authorities were not inclined to answer this request out of concern for the disruption of commercial and social stability. This did not mean the civil authorities could simply tolerate all forms of religious activity in the public realm. In practice civil authorities would choose to look the other way as long as the tolerated religious practices did not cause any social disturbance (Price 1994: 190, 203-204). Illustrative hereof are the clandestine churches (*schuilkerken*), buildings in which churches were operated behind closed doors by religious dissenters. Throughout the

[1] Seen in this light, it makes sense that in this section we attribute less attention to the history of Dutch colonialism and to issues of race (which play a major role in other European former imperial powers such as Great Britain and France).

eighteenth century membership of the Reformed Church was increasingly becoming a prerequisite for obtaining public office (Stuurman 1998: 172-173).

The Patriot revolution leading up to the Batavian Republic of 1795 was in part directed against the lack of virtue amongst the ruling class and the Reformed Church. The revolution was completed by invading French revolutionaries who contributed to the centralisation of the republic (Van Rooden 2010: 64-66). In 1813 after the fall of Napoleon, William I, heir to the last *stadtholder* of the Dutch Republic, was proclaimed sovereign head of state of the Netherlands and in 1815 king of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, which included the former Austrian Netherlands, present-day Belgium. Encouraged by the state, the new nationalism of the nineteenth century became heavily intertwined with Protestantism with the aim of providing Dutch citizens with a moral upbringing (Van Rooden 2002: 122).

This emphasis on education and upbringing led to feelings of discontent amongst some Protestant ministers who questioned the heavily intertwined relationship between religion, individual piety and citizenship. The central government also attempted to turn the Roman Catholic Church, which was dominant in the southern part of the Kingdom, into an institution that could support the process of nation-building. However, these attempts provoked resentment among Catholics and contributed to the Belgian revolt of 1830. In 1839 the new Kingdom of Belgium was internationally recognised as a sovereign state. After the separation with Belgium, the northern part of the Netherlands above the Rhine-Meuse delta was a Protestant dominated area. The southern part of the Netherlands below the Rhine-Meuse delta consisted of strong Catholic majorities. In 1839 35% of the Dutch population was Catholic (Van Rooden 2002: 123).

After the 1848 constitutional reform, liberals such as Thorbecke and Kappeyne van de Coppello were strengthened in their conviction that it was the task of a modern nation to create modern citizens. Modern for liberals entailed agnosticism and an emphasis on the natural sciences. In the 1870s the liberals argued for obligatory education throughout the nation, so children could be brought up to become modern citizens. In practice this would entail that in places where confessional schools were absent, children would be sent to public schools. Therefore confessional politicians heavily opposed these proposals. From then on, the political strife between confessional and liberal politicians was channelled through the question of education (De Rooy 1998: 183-184).

In opposition to the liberal modernisation campaign, Protestant politicians under the leadership of Abraham Kuyper organised themselves as a political party with popular support. Although anti-modernists, the Protestants thereby in fact introduced modern mass-politics in the Netherlands (De Rooy 1998: 188-189). The dispute over education was settled with a political agreement that has become known as ‘the pacification’ or ‘the Great Compromise’ of 1917: privately founded confessional schools were entitled to equal state financing as were public schools. In return for conceding this confessional demand, the liberals obtained general male suffrage (Lijphart 1990: 105-106). The 1917 law for equal financing for confessional and public schools is still part of the Dutch constitution.

Since the early decades of the 20th century until the mid 1960s, the Netherlands was a ‘pillarised’ nation, meaning that most areas of human activity were marked by separate organisations representing the different religious and secular points of view (Monsma and Soper 2009: 11). Each pillar was defined by religious conviction or the lack thereof. There was a Catholic, a Protestant and a general pillar (Lijphart 1990: 28). Within the general pillar socio-economic cleavages resulted in the formation of a Socialist and a Liberal pillar (Lijphart 1990: 34). In pillarised Dutch society, individuals’ allegiance to the nation was effected through the group membership of their pillar. Also, because religion had become inextricably linked to a specific part of the population, religion had in fact become ‘ethnicized’ (Van

Rooden 2010: 70). People lived in relative isolation from those who did not belong to their pillar. Only the pillars' elites were in regular contact with each other (Lijphart 1990: 106). These elites endeavoured to reach consensus on issues that were controversial between, but not within, the homogenous pillars. The resulting politics of pacification led to noticeable democratic stability during the period of pillarisation (Lijphart 1990: 110).

Two comments have to be made concerning the phenomenon of Dutch pillarisation. First, instead of being uniquely Dutch, pillarisation should rather be seen as a national version of an international phenomenon (Kennedy and Zwemer 2010: 260). Second, the emphasis on Dutch society as a pillarised society obstructs attention to occurrences of disharmony within the pillars. For instance, the divisions between Dutch Protestants not only led to different church organisations but also to different Protestant political parties. Within the Catholic pillar there was strife between the working class wing and the bourgeois wing (Kennedy and Zwemer 2010: 257, 259). Since 1917 the political coalition between the Catholics and Protestants managed to retain an electoral majority until the mid 1960s (Van Rooden 2010: 69).

In the period following World War II Dutch society and politics have undergone significant changes. These societal transformations occurred especially in the period following the cultural revolution of the 1960s. In the first place, the rise of a modern welfare state meant that the state would take over many tasks and services that were carried out by different organisations belonging to the various pillars until then. In the 1980s the welfare state receded again and neo-liberal policies of reform were implemented. In the second place, a widespread process of secularisation and decline of religious participation set in, which brought an end to the authoritarian character of pillarised Dutch society (Van Rooden 2010: 71). Gradually a society developed that conceived of morality in secular terms which resulted in legislation of abortion, euthanasia and same-sex marriages. In many respects, the Dutch came to think of itself as a progressive 'guiding nation' that set an example for other countries with liberal legislation on gender, sexuality and drug use. The emancipation of the voter from the confines of the pillars resulted in a changing political landscape. In the 1970s the three confessional parties merged into the Christian Democratic Appeal (*Christen-Democratisch Appèl, CDA*). From 1994 to 2002 the Netherlands were governed by the 'purple' coalition governments composed of the Labour Party (*Partij van de Arbeid, PvdA*), Liberal Party (*Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie, VVD*), and Liberal-Democratic Party (*Democraten 66, D66*). This was the first time that the Netherlands was governed solely by non-confessional parties. The current coalition government is a minority government, a novelty for the Netherlands, consisting of the Christian Democrats (*CDA*) and the Liberal Party (*VVD*), condoned in parliament by Geert Wilders' Freedom Party (*Partij voor de Vrijheid, PVV*). Finally, over the past 60 years successive waves of immigrations have changed the religious and cultural composition of Dutch society. In later sections of this report the main diversity challenged that are related to post-war immigration will be discussed extensively.

2.2 Citizenship

Until 1892 Dutch nationality was acquired on the basis of birth on Dutch territory (*ius soli*). In 1892 this principle was substituted through the first Dutch Nationality Act with the principle of *ius sanguinis*: Dutch nationality was now acquired when being born to a Dutch father. In 1953 the principle of *ius soli* was partly reinstated, mainly with regard to Germans living in the Netherlands. In 1985 a new Dutch Nationality Act was enforced with the aim of minimising the differences in legal status between immigrants and Dutch nationals. Immigrants were given voting rights on the European and local level. Also, second generation

immigrants could now opt for Dutch nationality instead of having to go through the more complicated procedure of naturalisation. First generation immigrants however became required to pass a language test if they wanted to obtain Dutch nationality, although enforcement of this requirement was less stringent towards illiterates and elderly people. Also, Dutch nationals now received both their father and mother's nationality (Van Beek et al. 2010: 16-17). In 2003 an adjustment was made to the Nationality Act making opting and naturalisation more difficult. This reflected overall policy changes by the Dutch government, which tried to develop immigrant integration policies with a much more assimilatory character (Van Beek et al. 2010: 16).

With the aim of designing policies specifically for immigrant minorities, the Dutch government has chosen to keep detailed statistical records concerning ethnic identities. In statistical terms all Dutch nationals with at least one parent born abroad are labelled allochthonous (*allochtoon*). Dutch nationals of whom both parents are born in the Netherlands are labelled authochthonous (*autochtoon*). It follows that third generation immigrants are counted as authochthonous. Although these statistical categories were introduced without any bad intent, the term *allochtoon* has come to denote all non-Western immigrants in popular speech (De Zwart and Poppelaars 2007: 387, 389). In practice, the debate on immigrant integration has become structured around the place of allochthones in Dutch society.

In recent years there has been increasing debate concerning citizens with multiple nationalities. A second passport is seen as an impediment to integration into Dutch society. In 2009 over one million Dutch nationals were in possession of a second passport. Of them 282,000 also held a Turkish passport, 260,000 a Moroccan passport and 237,000 a passport from an EU member state, although the political debate rarely mentions the latter. In 1992 the principle of *renunciation of the original nationality* when acquiring Dutch nationality, introduced with the 1985 Dutch Nationality Act, was abolished. This led to a considerable rise in requests for Dutch nationality especially by Turkish nationals living in the Netherlands. A side-effect was a steep rise in new Dutch nationals partaking in local elections. However in 1997 the renunciation principle was reinstalled and in the 2008 changes to the Dutch Nationality Act it was accentuated. An implication was that second generation immigrants too are required to give up their non-Dutch nationality. Also, an individual who has committed a crime against the state can now be deprived from his or her Dutch nationality (Van Beek et al. 2010: 17-18).

2.3 The Netherlands and the EU

The Netherlands is one of the founding members of the EU and driving forces of the European project. During the Second World War plans were made for an economic union between Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxemburg. In 1946 the Benelux was created and two years later customs duties were removed and a common external tariff was created. During the 1950s economic harmonisation was perfected, resulting in an economic union in 1960 (Urwin 1997: 79). In 1952 the Netherlands was the first nation to raise the idea of a common European market and the only country in which there existed a broad consensus between the different parties on the notion of economic integration (Urwin 1997: 99, 104). The Benelux served as a working experiment whilst serious consideration was given throughout Western Europe to a pool of coal and steel resources (Urwin 1997: 83). The Netherlands was one of the six original members of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) and the European Economic Community (EEC) (Urwin 1997: 101).

With this role of the Netherlands as protagonist of the European project in mind, it is especially surprising that the Dutch voted with 62% against the European constitution in the

2005 referendum, which had a noticeable high turnout of 63%. This surprise is strengthened when taking into consideration that the Dutch have been the most enthusiastic of the European project when compared to the peoples of the other five founding members. Also, 128 out of 150 seats in parliament favoured ratification of the European constitution showing a large gap between popular and elite sentiments (Aarts and Van der Kolk 2006: 243).

The Dutch 'no' can be explained by growing feelings of discontent with the rapid pace of European integration. The EU has increasingly come to be seen as costing money instead of ensuring what it was designed for, namely economic growth. There is an overall feeling that the introduction of the Euro has made life more expensive. Also, the vast expansion of the EU has led to expectations that the wealthier nations will have to contribute more than they already do. The rapid eastward expansion of the EU, and the question of Turkey's accession, was seen as a threat to Dutch culture and Dutch jobs because they would possibly be relocated to cheaper member states. Also, with increasing expansion it was feared the Netherlands would lose its political influence within the EU (Aarts en Van der Kolk 2006: 244-245).

3 Cultural diversity challenges

To outside observers it sometimes seems as if at present cultural diversity challenges in the Netherlands are exclusively related to immigration and Islam. However, as we will show in this section, diversity challenges continue to concern both native minorities and post-war immigration minorities. In addition, the way the Netherlands has dealt with diversity challenges concerning post-war immigration minorities is in part influenced by notions stemming from diversity challenges concerning native minorities in the past. For each minority we briefly mention its historical background, its current position in Dutch society and events around which religious, linguistic, ethnic and cultural differences become public issues. We present relevant statistical information on the minority groups in separate tables.

In the last part of this section we analyse in greater depth different challenging events that have taken place in recent years. The reason we proceed in this way is because diversity challenges in the Netherlands are usually discussed in relation to different combinations of minority groups. Mostly they focus on more conservative or Orthodox religious groups and on immigrant groups. We distinguish between three different clusters of events. These are events and discussions related to (1) the existence of special institutions catering to different ethnic and religious groups (faith-based schools, ethnic organisations) and whether or not these enhance segregation and feelings of alienation between different groups in Dutch society; (2) gender equality and equality of sexual orientation versus religious autonomy, especially in relation to conservative religious and immigrant groups; (3) free speech and its limits, especially with regard to vulnerable groups and Islam. We discuss crucial events in these clusters and the ways in which Dutch institutions and society have dealt with them. Hereby we aim to identify the relevant practices, norms, and institutions at play, and, if relevant, the various usages of concepts such as tolerance, acceptance, respect, pluralism, national identity and national heritage.

3.1 Minority groups and cultural diversity challenges in the Netherlands: an overview

For the Netherlands it makes sense to make a rough distinction between 'native minorities' and 'post-war immigration minorities'. The first category contains those groups that continue to be seen by others (and continue to define themselves) as different from the mainstream

society, mostly for linguistic, cultural or religious reasons. These include religious groups, some of which are (at least to some extent) geographically concentrated (Catholics in the Southern provinces of Brabant and Limburg, Orthodox Protestants in the 'Bible belt' from the South West province of Zeeland to the North East part of the country) and some of which are less clearly geographically concentrated (Jews). The category of native groups also contains two regional-linguistic minorities: the Frisians, who have their own language (Frisian), and a political party, the Frisian National Party, which seeks and actively promotes regional autonomy, and the Limburgers, who share a dialect and have a somewhat ambivalent relation to the western provinces of Holland. The second category contains post-war immigration groups. Here we make a distinction between colonial migrants (Indonesians, Moluccans, Antilleans and Surinamese), labour migrants (Turks and Moroccans) and Asylum seekers. Given the prominent role issues around Islam has played in public debate over the past decade we briefly discuss Muslims as a separate group.

Table 1: Religious Minorities in the Netherlands in % of the population

	1990	**2000**	**2009**
None	38	40	44
Roman-Catholic	33	32	28
Dutch Reformed	17	14	9
Orthodox Reformed	8	7	3
Protestant Church Netherlands	n/a	n/a	6
Other religious (including Islam)	5	8	10

Source: Statline - Central Bureau for Statistics (CBS 2010)

Table 2: Native Regional-Linguistic Minorities in the Netherlands

	2006	**2009**
Inhabitants of the province Friesland	642,230	644,811
Inhabitants of the province Limburg	1,131,938	1,122,604

Source: Statline - Central Bureau for Statistics (CBS 2010)

Table 3: Dutch population and main post-war immigration minorities

		1996	2000	2005	2010
	Total	15,493,889	15,863,950	16,305,526	16,574,989
	Autochthonous	12,995,174	13,088,648	13,182,809	13,215,294
	Allochthonous	2,498,715	2,775,302	3,122,717	3,359,603
	Western Allochthonous	1,327,602	1,366,535	1,423,675	1,501,309
	Non-Western Allochthonous	1,171,113	1,408,767	1,699,042	1,858,294
Main post-war immigration groups	**Indonesian**	411,622	405,155	396,080	382,411
	Moluccan	n/a	40,000*	n/a	n/a
	Surinamese	280,615	302,514	329,430	342,279
	Antillean and Aruban	86,824	107,197	130,538	138,420
	Turkish	271,514	308,890	358,846	383,957
	Moroccan	225,088	262,221	315,821	349,005
Immigrants from CEE countries	**Polish**	5,910	5,645	10,968	43,083
	Bulgarian	550	713	1,924	12,340
	Romanian	1,466	1,397	3,020	7,118
	Hungarian	1,133	1,385	2,029	5,294
	Slovakian	205	579	1,239	2,844
	Czech	350	887	1,707	2,602
	Lithuanian	127	338	970	2,126
	Latvian	63	146	361	1,143
Main asylum seekers	**Former Soviet Union**	13,485	22,625	44,419	55,896
	Former Yugoslavian	56,220	66,947	76,301	70,119
	Somali	20,060	28,780	21,733	27,011
	Sudanese	943	3,919	7,285	6,329
	Iraqi	11,278	33,449	43,708	52,102
	Afghanistani	4,916	21,468	37,021	38,664

Source: CBS Statline 2010

*estimate, see Smeets and Veenman 2000: 41

Table 4: Minorities and Dimensions of Difference

Dimensions of difference	Citizenship	Racial	Ethnic	Religious	Cultural	Linguistic
Native religious						
Catholics				X		
Orthodox Protestants				X		
Jews			X	X		
Native linguistic						
Frisians			X			X
Limburg						X
Immigrant colonial						
Indonesians		X	X	X	X	
Moluccans		X	X	X	X	
Surinamese		X	X	X	X	
Antilleans		X	X	X	X	
Immigrant labour						
Turks	X	X	X	X	X	X
Moroccans	X	X	X	X	X	X

3.2 Cultural diversity challenges concerning native minorities

The native minorities we will discuss in this section are religious minorities: Catholics, Jews, orthodox Protestants, and regional minorities: Frisians and Limburgers.

Catholics

In 2009 Catholics were by far the largest religious group in Dutch society with 30% of the population belonging to the Roman Catholic Church (CBS 2010). Regular church visits in this group are in decline, with 23% of all Catholics visiting church at least once a month in 2008 (CBS 2009: 23). Catholicism remains dominant in the provinces south of the Rhine-Meuse delta, North Brabant and Limburg (CBS 2009: 42). For a long time in Dutch history Catholics were a tolerated but marginalised minority in the Netherlands and they played only a secondary role in the nation state. Catholics only managed to become a minority partaking in the power sharing structure of Dutch society in the late 19th and 20th century (Sengers 2004: 131). One can argue that Catholics thus emancipated from being a group that was merely tolerated into a group demanding recognition and equality. Key to dealing with their marginalised position in society was organisation: a wide array of Catholic social organisations were founded like schools, charity organisations, labour unions and sports organisations. In these organisations Catholics were socialised in Catholic values, strengthening their attachment to the Catholic movement. Throughout the nineteenth and twentieth century preservation of Catholic unity was emphasised by authoritative figures in the Catholic community (Sengers 2004: 132-133). Dutch Catholics created a Catholic pillar which could not be marginalised in society anymore. The Catholic Peoples' Party (*Katholieke Volkspartij, KVP*) became a permanent member of Dutch coalition governments since 1917

(Van Praag 1998: 295-296). At present Catholics hold prominent positions in the governing Christian-Democratic Appeal (*CDA*).

Illustrative of the ways Roman Catholics were marginalised until quite recently is the fact that until 1972 local authorities had the possibility to forbid Catholic processions if these were not a familiar and established practice in the local community. In local communities that were dominated by Protestants, processions thus remained outlawed until the constitutional revision of 1972. The nature of the emancipation of Catholics in Dutch society has changed since the 1960s, because secularisation and the diminishing of the adherence to church life were especially strong in the Catholic sub-culture (Kennedy and Zwemer 2010). Since the 1980s many Catholic social institutions, such as newspapers, media and also schools, have chosen to no longer advertise their confessional identity in a prominent way. In the 1980s Dutch bishops sought to re-emphasise the Church's role by combating secularism and the permissive trend in sexual morality. This conservative policy remained largely without effect both within the Catholic community and in Dutch society as a whole (Sengers 2010: 91).

One set of issues around which Catholics and especially the leaders of the Catholic Church tend to be exposed and criticised in public debate concern ethical issues (euthanasia, abortion) and sexual morality (contraception, gay rights). This demonstrates how the norms of liberal-secular 'tolerance' can be perceived as a form of intolerance by Catholic groups. Actually, the more secularism and progressive values with regard to gender equality and sexual morality have gained the upper hand in Dutch society, the more the Catholic Church is criticised. Not surprisingly the recent scandals around sexual abuse of children in Catholic institutions have contributed to this as well. Recently the values of the Catholic Church clashed with values dominant in Dutch secular society, when in February 2010 the parish priest from Reusel refused to give communion to an openly homosexual parishioner. The incident led to a protest by gay interest organisations at the church service of the diocese in Den Bosch. At the service the priest stated that 'correct' sexual conduct forms part of the preconditions for taking communion, whereupon the protesters loudly left the service. The diocese has settled the matter by deciding that from now on it is up to the parishioners' own conscience if they can accept communion or not. In practice this means that the priest will not refuse communion, but that the individual believer should understand that being openly gay and being a devout Catholic do not go well together (*NRC Handelsblad*, 4 March 2010).

Jews

In the second half of the twentieth century the Jewish presence in the Netherlands had declined considerably due to the Holocaust. When compared to other European countries, a relatively high number of Dutch Jews were murdered in the Holocaust. From the 107,000 Jews that were deported only 5,200 survived. In 1941 the Jewish population in the Netherlands counted more than 160,000 people. In 1966 this number was a small 30,000 (Knippenberg 2001: 196-197). In 2009 there were almost 52,000 Jews in the Netherlands, less than 1 percent of the total population (Solinge and Van Praag 2010).

Where Calvinists and Catholics developed their own pillar within Dutch society, Jews developed along the opposite route of assimilation. Areas with a large presence of Jews were the cities of Amsterdam, The Hague, Rotterdam and Groningen. Although Jewish organisations did exist within these cities, they were also the places where socialism, liberalism and the process of secularisation prospered. Through their dominating presence in sectors as the diamond industry, commerce, banking and clothing, Jews were continuously brought into contact with liberals and socialists and their ideas and organisations. It is

therefore no surprise that there are many Jews among the founding members of various Socialist and Liberal organisations (Knippenberg 2001: 202-203).

Several factors can explain why, on the whole, there is little public concern about the Jewish community and its distinctive religious and cultural practices. The Jewish community in the Netherlands is relatively small, and because of secularisation and the fact that mixed marriages are more common than marriages with Jews the number of religious (as opposed to ethnic) Jews has been declining (De Vries 2006). Besides, the Jewish community is well integrated in Dutch society and the memory of the events during the Second World War and of anti-Semitism in Europe constitute a barrier to public criticism of Jewish practices and institutions. Although there has been contestation around specific Jewish practices, such as ritual slaughtering. In February 2011 the Dutch parliament discussed a proposal by the Animal Party (*Partij voor de Dieren*, *PvdD*) to ban ritual slaughtering without pre-stunning. In June 2010 the existence of a hidden synagogue in Amsterdam became national news and led to an emergency debate in parliament. The congregation of thirty orthodox Jews feels unsafe to present themselves as Jews in public. Jews are harassed and bullied in public and Jewish organisations like schools, but also family celebrations, are in need of protection (*Het Parool*, 19 June 2010). This is not a mere incident and the rise of anti-Semitic violence has been a concern for several years in the larger Dutch cities. The Centre for Information and Documentation on Israel (CIDI) reported that there have been 167 anti-Semitic incidents in 2009, a sharp increase of 55% compared to 2008 (CIDI 2010). In October 2010 one city district in Amsterdam decided to allocate 135,000 Euro a year for the protection of Jewish institutions such as schools and synagogues. In December 2010 former EU commissioner Frits Bolkestein stated that orthodox Jews, who are recognisable as Jews in public, are better off emigrating to Israel or the US. Bolkestein sees no future for them because of the rapidly growing anti-Semitism among especially Moroccan youths (*De Pers*, 6 December 2010). There was criticism towards Bolkestein's remarks which some considered being one-sided given the role of scapegoat that has been attributed to Muslims and the Moroccan youth, and the accompanying widespread instances of criticism towards them.

There is also a repeated debate upon the growing difficulties to teach about the Holocaust in Dutch schools, especially because of the growing polarisation around the Israel/Palestine conflict and the increase of anti-Semitism among pupils.[2] Incidents with Moroccan youth (who disturbed the annual commemoration of the Second World War in 2003 in Amsterdam) resulted in special programs to teach tolerance and include children of immigrant background in the commemoration of the Holocaust. A related project was called 'radicalisation in the classroom'. Several cities, including Amsterdam, have developed initiatives to also involve migrant organisations in ceremonies of commemoration of the Second World War.

Orthodox Protestants

One native religious minority that figures repeatedly and prominently in public debates on diversity challenges in the Netherlands are Orthodox Reformed Calvinists, who live mostly in a 'Bible belt' from the South West province of Zeeland to the North East part of the country. Orthodox Reformed Calvinists adhere to a strong version of neo-Calvinism and seceded from

[2] A study among 339 history teachers in secondary schools held in April 2010 showed that one in five teachers has experienced Muslim students objecting to classes on the holocaust. See "Muslim pupils have difficulties with Holocaust class" in *Elsevier* April 27 2010.

the mainstream Dutch Reformed Church in the 19th century. Within this group the so-called pietistic Dutch Calvinists (*bevindelijk gereformeerden*) adhere even more strictly to the Bible as the word of God and they are characterised by conservative teachings, opposing abortion, euthanasia and work on Sundays, rejecting modern amenities such as television or cinema and opposing mandatory vaccination (Schuster 2009: 157). Of the Dutch population in 2009, 9% sees itself as Dutch Reformed, 3% as Orthodox Reformed and 6% as belonging to the Protestant Church Netherlands (CBS 2010).[3] In these communities of pietistic Dutch Calvinists, the Political Reformed Party (*Staatkundig Gereformeerde Partij, SGP*) finds most of its voters. The party program of the SGP is founded on the Bible as the word of God and states that the political aim of the party is a political order based on the word of God. Since the election of 1922 the Political Reformed Party has consistently obtained between 1 and 3 out of 150 seats of parliament and is the oldest Dutch political party.

In Dutch public debate several events have been raised over the past decades concerning Orthodox Reformed Calvinist groups. Often these debates are about drawing boundaries between what is tolerable and what is intolerable. An important set of issues involve the boundaries of the forms of associational and collective autonomy that Orthodox groups can legitimately claim. In the domain of education, for example, the debate has been about whether or not Orthodox Reformed schools can discriminate against gay teachers, either by refusing them or by asking them not to be explicit about their homosexuality. Another set of issues relates to the associational autonomy of schools with regard to the curriculum, for example whether these schools can refuse to teach about evolution theory or whether they can refuse to distribute educational material on homosexuality. The refusal, on religious grounds, of parents to have their children vaccinated also leads to debate. Also in the political domain Orthodox Calvinists are challenged, notably around the position of the Political Reformed Party. In the final part of this section we will discuss more elaborately the diversity challenges that involve Orthodox Reformed Calvinists.

Frisians

Next to religious minorities, there are also cases of diversity challenges concerning geographical minorities in the Netherlands, even though we hasten to add that these challenges appear less often in the newspaper headlines than those involving religious groups or immigrants. In 2009 the province of Friesland inhabited 644,811 people (CBS 2010). Frisians used to inhabit a larger area of the northern part of the Netherlands and Germany than the present-day province of Friesland. In 1945 the Frisian Movement published its program emphasising the inseparability of Frisians from the Kingdom of the Netherlands, but also arguing, without any resonance on the national stage, for decentralisation (Hemminga 2006: 144). In 1962 the Frisian National Party (*Fryske Nasjonale Partij, FNP*) was founded as a federalist regional party. In 1966 the FNP obtained one out of 55 seats of the provincial assembly. In 2003 the FNP obtained 7 seats of the provincial assembly (Hemminga 2006: 143).

The FNP's slogan is 'Frisian and Federal'. The FNP favours the principle of subsidiarity in a European context, arguing for governing powers for the lower administrative

[3] In 2004 the Dutch Reformed Church merged with the orthodox Reformed (Calvinist) churches and the Evangelic-Lutheran churches into the Protestant Church Netherlands (*Protestantse Kerk in Nederland, PKN*). The first two find themselves reunited since the 1834 secession. The new congregation has 2,5 million members (*Trouw*, 1 May 2004). However the merger was not welcomed by everyone and led to secessions between those who favoured it and those who opposed it. (*Trouw*, 2 July 2004).

units. Governing power should belong to higher administrative units only when lower units are incapable of fulfilling them. Towards this end the FNP argues that municipalities should be placed above provinces and the state in the Netherlands, but also in the wider European context (Hemminga 2006: 149).

There have been various international initiatives to protect regional and minority languages. For instance, in 1996 the Universal Declaration of Linguistic Rights was accepted in Barcelona. In 1998 the European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages was ratified which functions as a binding international treaty (Gorter 2003: 3). Notwithstanding these initiatives to protect regional and minority languages and the fact that Frisian has officially been recognised as the second language in the province of Friesland, the Frisian language is increasingly under pressure in contemporary society. First, internal migration has caused increasing blending of Frisian and Dutch speaking people. Second, external migration has led to the presence of non-native languages in the Frisian cities and due to the government's allocation policy of asylum seekers throughout the country, in the smaller towns too. Third, English has become a dominant language in everyday life, especially in the household through television, but also in areas of information technology, advertising, tourism, commerce and education. The rise in non-native Dutch languages in Friesland had been accompanied by a decline of Frisian dialects (Gorter 2003: 32-33). This process is likely to continue in the near future even though the current Minister of the Interior is proposing plans to strengthen the use of Frisian in the public sphere, for instance by using Frisian on governmental forms and by using it as the first language in Frisian schools.

Limburgers

A province with a distinct regional dialect is Limburg, the southernmost province of the Netherlands bordering Belgium and Germany. After its once prospering mining industry came to a halt, Limburg has been characterised by social and economic deprivation. At present, Limburg still lags behind the rest of the Netherlands concerning socio-economic issues. Unemployment in Limburg is higher than the nation's average and the average household income in Limburg belongs to the lowest of the country. The people of Limburg have a relatively low education level. Since 2000 drug related crime has risen explosively in Limburg. The population in Limburg is shrinking, a trend that will continue throughout the coming decades (Aarts and Schmeets 2010: 56). In 2000 the population of Limburg was 1,141,192 and in 2009 it was 1,122,604 (CBS 2010).

In the 2010 national elections one in four Limburgers voted for the Freedom Party (*PVV*), whose leader Geert Wilders is a Limburg native. In almost all municipalities of Limburg the Freedom Party gained the majority vote. With its support of the Freedom Party, the electorate in Limburg differs markedly from the national voting pattern. Wilders' success in Limburg can be partly attributed to his being a Limburg native seen as other parties had no or a very limited Limburg representation. Regional minorities who have their own dialect, such as the Limburgers, do not cause major diversity challenges in Dutch society. Nonetheless, the recent support in Limburg for Geert Wilders does illustrate there continues to exist a feeling of discrimination among them. Also other regional groups have protested against what they perceive as the cultural dominance of the Western provinces of Holland and how this is reflected in politics and the media. In the recent provincial elections of 2011 the Freedom Party sought to position itself as a party defending regional autonomy by loudly proclaimed that 'Limburg should belong to the Limburgers' and 'Twente [a region in the Eastern part of the country] to the people from Twente'.

3.3 Cultural diversity challenges concerning post-war immigration minorities

As we have mentioned above, migration has over the past 60 years contributed to the forming of new identities and forms of cultural diversity in Dutch society. In the period following the Second World War there have been different forms of immigration to the Netherlands. Between 1946 and the early 1960s immigrants mainly came from the former Netherlands East Indies (Indonesia). In the 1960s and 1970s immigrants were mostly 'guest workers' from the Mediterranean region and post-colonial immigrants from the Caribbean region (Surinam and the Dutch Antilles). Even though labour recruitment policies were ended in the mid 1970s, immigration from Turkey and Morocco continued throughout the 1980s and 1990s because of family reunification and family formation. Finally, asylum seekers constitute an important group of immigrants, especially since the 1990s (Bruqeutas-Callejo et al. 2007: 9-11). The Dutch government has pursued different policy approaches to deal with post-war immigration; these will be alluded to in this section.

In this section we distinguish between post-war immigration minorities resulting from colonial immigration, labour immigration, and asylum seekers. We also discuss the position of Muslims in the Netherlands.

Colonial immigrants – Indonesians and Moluccans

Colonial immigrants to the Netherlands consist of migrants from the former Netherlands East Indies, from Surinam and from the Netherlands Antilles. Migration from these former colonies occurred in this order. From 1946-1962, as many as 300,000 repatriates from the Netherlands East Indies migrated to the Netherlands (Vermeulen and Penninx 2000: 5-6). This group consisted of people who had a relation with the former colonial regime, amongst them a significant portion was of Indonesian-Dutch decent. The prevailing feelings of resentment within this group regarding the dissolution of the colonial regime and their demands for retribution to the Dutch government were largely ignored (Oostindie 2010: 25-26). Still, this group of immigrants managed to integrate rapidly into Dutch society because of a number of factors, including their relatively high level of education, familiarity with the Dutch language and culture, the dispersion of immigrant families over the country and the growing of the Dutch economy in the second half of the 1950s.

The successful and rapid integration of the Indonesians is usually contrasted to the very painful and difficult incorporation of another group of post-colonial migrants who came to the Netherlands in the wake of the independence of Indonesia. In 1951 around 12,500 inhabitants of the Moluccan Islands, a part of the Indonesian Archipelago, migrated to the Netherlands. This group consisted mostly of soldiers from the former colonial army and their families. Both the Dutch government and the Moluccans believed their stay in the Netherlands would be temporary. They expected the Moluccans could one day return to a Free Republic of the Moluccas (*Republik Maluku Selatan, RMS*), an independent state that was proclaimed in 1950 but which was not recognised by the Indonesian government. Therefore the Dutch government's policy towards the Moluccans was aimed at isolating them from wider society (Vermeulen and Penninx 2000: 6). In 1959 Moluccans were located in regular quarters in various cities spread over the Netherlands. In the 1970s Moluccan youths undertook violent actions against Indonesian diplomatic institutions in the Netherlands to demonstrate their discontent with Indonesia's policy towards the Republic of the Moluccas. They also tried to force the government to alter its stance towards the position of Moluccans in Dutch society. Through the Memorandum on Moluccans (*Molukkersnota*) of 1978 the Dutch government clarified that the government would now view the Moluccan presence in the Netherlands as permanent (Smeets and Veenman 2000: 44-45). Measures were taken to

enhance Moluccan participation in Dutch society, in particular in the domains of education and the labour market (Van Amersfoort and Niekerk 2006: 332). The debates on the situation of Moluccans have often revolved around the need of giving genuine recognition to Moluccan communities, both with regard to their distinct ethnic identity and with regard to their political goals. Often Moluccan leaders have insisted that mere 'toleration' was not enough and they have blamed the Dutch state for their marginal position.

It is estimated that in 2000 there were almost 40,000 Moluccans in the Netherlands (Smeets and Veenman 2000: 41). Experts agree that the second generation of Moluccans made a great leap forward when compared to the first generation, yet this trend seems to have lost some of its momentum among the third generation (Van Amersfoort 2004: 168). Resulting from their initial isolation from wider Dutch society, homogeneous Moluccan neighbourhoods still exist today. These communities are threatened by new policy from the social housing corporations who believe homogeneous neighbourhoods are an impediment to integration (*Trouw*, 5 January 2010). In January 2010 violent riots occurred in a Moluccan-Moroccan neighbourhood in Culemborg. The former Moluccan dominated neighbourhood mainly consists of social housing for the lower segment of the market, causing an influx of lower class Moroccan families in recent years. The social housing corporation has answered the riots with a policy towards creating more diversity in the neighbourhood in terms of the socio-economic background of the residents (*Trouw*, 15 March 2010). These recent incidents have made it clear to the wider public that separate Moluccan neighbourhoods still exist. Simultaneously there is a debate within the Moluccan community and within Dutch society at large on whether this form of segregation is desirable. In this process the Moluccan identity is being negotiated, both between generations and in relation to the wider social contexts. It demonstrates how boundary drawing occurs in the context of shifting power relations.

Colonial immigrants – Surinamese and Antilleans

The Netherlands' other colonies, Surinam and the Netherlands Antilles, remained part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands after the Second World War. The 1954 Charter for the Kingdom of the Netherlands created one nationality within the Kingdom. Citizens from these overseas parts of the Kingdom had free access to the Netherlands. From 1965 onwards unskilled workers from Surinam moved to the Netherlands (Vermeulen and Penninx 2000: 7). Because of this influx of Surinamese and the growing economic support of the Netherlands to both Surinam and the Netherlands Antilles, the Dutch government around 1970 came to favour independence for its former colonies (Oostindie 2010: 34). The Netherlands proposed independence to both former colonies, which Surinam accepted but the Netherlands Antilles rejected. In the years leading up to its independence, immigration from Surinam reached its peak from 1973-1975 and again from 1979-1980 towards the end of the transitional phase. Immigration continued after 1980 but on a smaller scale (Vermeulen and Penninx 2000: 7). In the late 1970s and throughout the 1980s many Surinamese faced difficulties in integrating into Dutch society. Unemployment was high and Surinamese were frequently associated with drugs, crime and violence (Van Niekerk 2000: 72). However, Surinamese also often encountered discrimination and racism. At present about 40 per cent of all Surinamese people live in the Netherlands (Oostindie 2010: 33), a total of 329,279 people in 2010 (CBS 2010).

Because the Netherlands Antilles has remained part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, the Antilleans can still move freely throughout the Kingdom (Oostindie 2010: 37). Immigration from the Netherlands Antilles grew considerably after 1985 due to crises in the local oil industry, and has remained high ever since (Vermeulen and Penninx 2000: 7). Only recently, on October 10 2010, have the Netherlands Antilles been dissolved with some

islands becoming independent nations within the Kingdom, and the others becoming municipalities of the Netherlands. In 2010 there are 138,420 Antilleans living in the Netherlands (CBS 2010).

The vast majority of Surinamese and Antilleans have Dutch nationality. Although there is still a gap between Surinamese and native Dutch in socio-economic terms, Surinamese find themselves in an upward trend of social mobility. Compared to other immigrant groups the Surinamese were less dependent upon low-skilled labour making them less vulnerable (Niekerk 2000: 90). Concerning Antilleans in the Netherlands there is less reason for optimism. A large majority of Antillean families are single mother households, often dependent upon benefits. Among Antilleans unemployment is three times higher than among the Dutch. Furthermore many Antilleans find themselves at low levels of socio-economic rankings and criminality among Antilleans is high (Van Hurst 2000: 106, 119).

Because of their skin colour Surinamese and Antilleans have been confronted with racism in Dutch society. Especially the murder of the Antillean teenager Kerwin Duinmeijer in 1983 by a young neo-Nazi sent a shockwave through Dutch society and led to massive manifestations against racism. Another issue that has been of great concern to the Surinamese and Antillean communities in the Netherlands is the history of slavery. In 2002 a monument to commemorate the history of slavery in the Dutch colonies was opened in a park in Amsterdam.

Labour immigrants – Turks and Moroccans

After the Second World War the education level of the Dutch grew rapidly, resulting in a shortage of low-skilled labourers. This was especially felt during the economic boom from the 1960s until the first oil crisis in 1973 (Vermeulen and Penninx 2000: 10). To fill these labour shortages so called ‘guest workers’ were recruited from Italy, Spain, Portugal, Greece and Yugoslavia. After the oil crisis of 1973 immigration from these nations declined significantly. Due to economic growth in these nations a sizeable portion of immigrants returned throughout the seventies (Vermeulen and Penninx 2000: 6). Recruitment agreements were also set up with Turkey (1963) and Morocco (1969). Where migration from Southern Europe declined after 1973, it grew from Turkey and Morocco mainly due to family reunification (Vermeulen and Penninx 2000: 6-7). Moroccan migrants mostly come from the rural Rif, where it was common that men would work elsewhere for periods of time and then return to their families (Nelissen and Buijs 2000: 178-178). However, guest workers from Morocco but also from Turkey did not return to their country of origin, as was anticipated by the Dutch government, but instead became permanent residents.

The economic crises in the Netherlands of the 1970s led to a thorough restructuring of the Dutch economy. The industrial sector was decimated whilst the service sector expanded. Labour migrants who previously worked in industry did not meet the requirements needed to work in the service sector, like communicative skills and being able to speak fluent Dutch (Vermeulen and Penninx 2000: 10-11). After 1983 employment in the Netherlands increased but unemployment among immigrant groups remained high (Vermeulen and Penninx 2000: 12-14).

In 2010 there were 383,957 Turks in the Netherlands (CBS 2010). Turks in the Netherlands form tight-knit communities wherein traditional norms and values are upheld. However the adherence to traditional values forms an impediment for Turkish youths to fully participate in Dutch society and climb the social ladder. The relatively low socio-economic position of most first generation Turks is very unlikely to change. On the other hand, Turks have set up a wide network of ethnic organisations and there is a relative high turnout of

Turks at local elections (Böcker 2000: 173-174). An issue that is sometimes discussed in relation to Turks in the Netherlands is honour related violence (Korteweg 2005). In January 2011 a group of prominent Dutch-Turkish professionals published a manifest urging Turkish youths to focus on the Netherlands instead of on the Turkish community that lives in the Netherlands. The manifest stressed the importance of integration within the wider Dutch society in order to avoid a future of segregation (Ozdil 2011).

In 2010 there were 349,005 Moroccans in the Netherlands (CBS 2010). Around 40% of Moroccans are born in the Netherlands (Nelissen and Buijs 2000: 189). The role of teenage Moroccan men often dominates the debate on integration in the Netherlands, more so than Turks and other ethnic minorities. Their integration into Dutch society is perceived as especially problematic partly due to recurring negative reports on certain Moroccans' deviant behaviour. This has resulted in blindness towards behavioural diversity among Moroccans in the Netherlands (Nelissen and Buijs 2000: 192). Even though in public perception the situation of Moroccan migrants is worse than that of Turkish migrants, they are nowadays often subsumed under the category of 'Muslims'.

Labour immigrants from EU member states

In May 2007 the Netherlands opened its labour market to citizens from new EU member states in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE). By far the most labour immigrants from these CEE countries come from Poland. A period of transition is in place for citizens from Bulgaria and Romania who still need a permit to work in the Netherlands (Engbersen et al. 2010: 115-116). However, because it has become easier for Bulgarians and Romanians to travel to the Netherlands, their number too has increased since the EU enlargement of 2007 (Engbersen et al. 2010: 128, 130).

In 2010 there were 40,083 Poles, 12,340 Bulgarians and 7,118 Romanians in the Netherlands (CBS 2010). Engbersen et al. suggest that because irregular migration, whereby migrants do not report their leave to the authorities, cannot be measured, these statistics underestimate the actual number of labour immigrants from CEE countries (Engbersen et al. 2010: 116, 127). It is estimated that in 2008 there were at least 100,000 nationals from CEE countries working on a temporary or permanent basis in the Netherlands. Most of them found work in agriculture and horticulture. Other forms of labour for CEE nationals include industrial production, chauffeurs and various forms of unskilled work (Engbersen et al. 2010: 130).

Especially local authorities show concern for the steep influx of Poles. The municipality of Rotterdam organised a 'Poles summit' in 2007 to discuss with other municipalities how to handle problems resulting from Polish immigration, such as the increase of Polish children attending Dutch schools whilst they barely speak Dutch, or deviant behaviour from Polish men resulting from alcohol abuse. Seen as especially problematic was the fact that most Poles move to troubled urban areas that already have an overrepresentation of immigrants who barely speak Dutch and are insufficiently integrated into Dutch society. Lastly, many Poles live in inadequate housing, mostly overcrowded, with lack of sanitation and fire-hazards. Such living conditions are unsatisfactory to both the immigrants and the wider community (Engbersen et al. 2010: 134-135).

In November 2010 an alderman for the Labour Party (*PvdA*) in The Hague, Marnix Norder, called on the government to take a stand in Brussels against the growing problems concerning CEE immigrants in Dutch municipalities. Norder spoke of a 'tsunami' of CEE immigrants in the Netherlands, a term often used in the past by Geert Wilders whilst addressing immigrants from Muslim countries. Norder wanted to make clear that the real

problems concerning integration evolve around immigrants from CEE countries instead of around immigrants from Muslim countries. According to Norder it is naive to think that immigrants from CEE countries will one day return home. Norder pleads for European legislation whereby, for instance, EU citizens who move to a member state for four years are required to learn the language of the host country (*De Volkskrant*, 2 November 2010). In December 2010 Norder pleaded for forced repatriation of unemployed CEE immigrants (*De Volkskrant*, 11 December 2010).These ideas have now found some resonance at the national level. In February 2011 the Minister of Social Affairs, Henk Kamp (Liberal Party, VVD) suggested that Poles who are unemployed should be sent back to Poland. Several parties in the Dutch Parliament and the Polish embassy in the Netherlands have raised questions concerning these plans, which seem to violate EU regulation on free movement of EU nationals.

Asylum seekers

From the mid-1980s the number of asylum seekers in the Netherlands has risen considerably. The first asylum seekers mostly came from Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. In the 1990s the Netherlands experienced an influx of asylum seekers from the war-torn former Yugoslavia and from Somalia. In 1994 a record number of 53,000 asylum seekers entered the Netherlands (Nicolaas and Sprangers 2007: 41). In 1998 the Netherlands obtained the second largest percentage of refugees, after Switzerland, relative to its population size. Governmental policy towards asylum seekers is increasingly directed on the European level (Vermeulen and Penninx 2000: 8). In 2008 the EU experienced a 6% increase of asylum seekers, whilst asylum seekers to the Netherlands almost doubled when compared to 2007. In total 13,400 first requests for asylum were made in the Netherlands in 2008, mostly by Iraqis and Somalis (Sprangers et al. 2009: 22-24). Asylum seekers in the Netherlands face different challenges. For example, in the mid 1990s there were often protests against the founding of new collection centres for asylum seekers. In 2005 a fire in a detention centre for illegal migrants and asylum seekers who were to be expelled at Schiphol Airport caused the death of 11 migrants. The incident provoked a wide debate on the inhumane character of Dutch asylum policy. One group of asylum seekers that is seen as highly vulnerable are Somali refugees. A recent report indicated that unemployment among this group is very high and that Somali families ‘cumulate risk factors’ (Regioplan 2010)

Muslims in the Netherlands

Over the past decade the discussions on immigration and integration in the Netherlands has more and more focussed upon the situation of Muslim migrants and the role of Islam in society. At present one finds many references to the situation of ‘Muslims’, which are now seen as a distinct group, whereas until the mid 1990s the main focus was on different ethnic groups. In this light it makes sense to at least briefly introduce Muslims as a minority group in this section.

It is estimated that in 2009 there were 907,000 Muslims in the Netherlands, which is about 5.5% of the population. Of all Muslims in the Netherlands 73% is of Turkish or Moroccan decent (FORUM 2010: 7). Only small minorities of Turks and Moroccans in the Netherlands, 3% and 5%, see themselves as non-religious. Muslims in the Netherlands experience religion in very different ways. However, religious identity is connected to ethnic identity, resulting in a form of ‘religious ethnicity’ which is shared with members from other

ethnic groups. Moroccan youths identify stronger with their ethnic-religious identity than with their ethnic-national identity: being a Muslim means more than being from Moroccan decent. Younger generations of Muslims are more inclined towards religious individualism than older generations. Also, Moroccans and Turks who enjoy higher education or have stable employment are less religiously involved (Demant et al. 2007: 7-8).

Political discourse concerning Muslims in the Netherlands has become markedly harsher in the last decade. In public debates a variety of societal issues, like domestic violence and deviant behaviour by Moroccan youths, are presented as stemming from Islam. Islam in the Netherlands is not seen as part of a developing Dutch society, but as coming from outside, resulting from immigration (Maussen 2006: 18). In the past decade the politicians Ayaan Hirsi Ali and Wilders have featured most prominently in this changing discourse, although various other politicians too have unequivocally condemned Islamic practices and a perceived 'Islamisation' of the Netherlands. In her autobiography entitled *Infidel* (2007) Hirsi Ali, former Member of Parliament for the Liberal Party (*VVD*), uses the experiences of her childhood years in Somalia, Ethiopia, Saudi-Arabia and Kenya to illustrate Islam's oppressive character especially towards young girls and women. On 2 November 2004, movie director Theo van Gogh was assassinated by a young Moroccan Muslim radical for directing Hirsi Ali's movie *Submission I*. Herein Van Gogh portrayed a naked Muslim woman wearing only a see-through veil with phrases from the Quran written on her body.

In the wake of the murder of Van Gogh, mosques and Islamic schools were set on fire and Muslims were called on to distance themselves from radical Islam, also by leaders from minority communities (Penninx 2006: 250-252). More recently, Wilders argued for the deportation of all suspects of Islamic radicalism in the Netherlands (Demant et al. 2007: 32). In 2007 Wilders called for a ban on the Quran, comparing it with Hitler's *Mein Kampf*. According to Wilders a moderate Islam does not exist, there is only a fascist Islam (Wilders 2007). In December 2010 Labour Party (*PvdA*) leader Job Cohen remarked that Muslims in Dutch society are being excluded in a similar way as Jews were being excluded from Dutch society prior to the Second World War. Cohen blames this mostly on Wilders and his Freedom Party's agenda of sowing fear of Muslims (*De Volkskrant*, 16 December 2010a).

Three major issues dominate the almost continuous debate on Islam and Muslim in the Netherlands. First, there is a wide debate on the degrees of collective autonomy that should be given to Muslim communities and Islamic organisations and on whether or not religiously motivated forms of behaviour should be tolerated or not. These debates usually focus on widely mediatised individual cases of Muslims who refuse to shake hands with members of the opposite sex, who refuse to stand up in court or who want to wear specific forms of dress (headscarf, face-veil). Second, especially since the murder of Theo van Gogh, there has been a wide debate on the dangers of radicalisation among young Muslims in the Netherlands. Many local governments have developed special programs to prevent radicalisation. Simultaneously programs have been set up to create combat discrimination of Muslims and create more understanding and tolerance between different communities living in the Netherlands. Finally, there is a more general debate on whether or not 'Muslims' are sufficiently 'integrated'. This debate primarily focuses on the need for cultural assimilation. Some politicians claim that Muslim immigrants lead 'parallel lives' and they argue that the conservative values that are dominant in Muslim communities clash with the norms and values of a liberal and secular Dutch society. In the latter context political leaders of the Freedom Party (PVV) repeatedly demand 'less Islam', meaning both a curb on 'immigration from Muslim countries' as well as creating obstacles for the creation of Islamic institutions, such as mosques, ritual slaughtering and faith-based schools. Overall the present debate on

Muslims in the Netherlands is more focussed on defining the boundaries between what is tolerable and intolerable than on moving from tolerance to genuine recognition and equality.

3.4 Three clusters of events related to diversity challenges of the last decade

Whereas in some other European countries 'diversity challenges' can be neatly related to distinct minority groups, in the Netherlands it makes more sense to focus on clusters of events around which forms of ethnic, cultural or religious difference are challenged and which bring different groups into the picture.

We distinguish between three different clusters of events. These are events and discussions related to (1) the existence of special institutions catering to different ethnic and religious groups (faith-based schools, ethnic organisations) and whether or not these enhance segregation and feelings of alienation between different groups in Dutch society; (2) gender and sexual equality; and (3) free speech and its limits, especially with regard to vulnerable groups and Islam. We discuss crucial events in these clusters and the ways in which Dutch institutions and society have dealt with them. Hereby we aim to identify the relevant practices, norms, and institutions at play, and, if relevant, the various usages of concepts such as tolerance, acceptance, respect, pluralism, national identity and national heritage.

Special institutions and parallel societies

A major issue in Dutch public debates on diversity relates to the relationship between, on the one hand, the cultural and institutional legacies of pillarisation and, on the other hand, immigrant integration policies and the ways ethnic organisations and institutions have been recognised by Dutch authorities. In public debate Muslims are on centre stage, but depending on the events or issues that set off debates, other religious groups (Orthodox Calvinists or Jews) or other immigrant groups enter the picture. A major concern is whether the existence of special religious institutions and networks of ethnic organisations will not result in a highly segregated society in which different groups lead 'parallel lives'. Another major concern is whether there is not too much room for conservative religious groups and immigrants in the Netherlands to adhere to extremely illiberal ideas and values and to uphold forms of behaviour and cultural practices that violate liberal norms of equality and individual freedom. Some people argue that at present the Dutch context provides too many associational freedoms and grants too much collective autonomy to conservative religious and immigrant groups. These debates are therefore concentrated on what practices and ideas should *not* be tolerated in a liberal society. In order to understand the distinctively Dutch context of these debate we need to return briefly to, on the one hand, the legacy of 'pillarisation' and, on the other hand, the impact of Dutch multicultural policies of the 1980s and 1990s.

In many respects the institutional structure stemming from pillarised society is still in place today. A fundamental part of the institutional inheritance of pillarisation is the Dutch educational system which is built on the pacification of 1917. Hereby confessional schools are granted equal material resources as public schools, and it ensures confessional schools are not administered by the state. Most pupils in the Netherlands are enrolled in confessional schools. However, the differences between confessional and public schools have diminished because all schools are obliged to follow the same curriculum. The confessional character of a school can be expressed through extra-curricular activity and additional religious education (Sunier 2010: 119). For religious minorities arriving in the Netherlands after the high point of pillarisation, this institutional opportunity meant that they could claim facilities in the same manner as established groups in Dutch society had done (Penninx 2006: 243-244). Thus religious newcomers, including Islam and Hinduism, have founded many faith-based institutions that now exist alongside Catholic, Jewish and Protestant institutions. In the

domain of education, for example there were 43 Islamic primary schools and two Islamic secondary schools in 2010 (FORUM 2010: 41).

Alongside the legacies of pillarisation and the institutional opportunities for newcomers to set up religious institutions, there exist Dutch governmental immigrant integration policies and the ways the Dutch embarked upon policies of 'multiculturalism' in the 1980s and 1990s. Early Dutch immigrant integration policies of the 1980s, known as Ethnic Minorities Policies, showed a structural similarity to the foundational ideas of pillarisation. Ethnic Minorities Policies were based on the distinctions between cultural minority groups and the approach was driven by the twin ideals of equal opportunities and respect for cultural differences. A flourishing multicultural society could develop if immigrants would be enabled to participate fully and equally in society and if discriminatory talk and behaviour were not permitted. The slogan 'integration with retention of cultural identity' became the motto of Minorities Policies. Emerging ethnic elites rapidly picked up this policy slogan to argue that successful integration did not require cultural assimilation and to justify their attempts to create community based institutions (Maussen 2009: 192). Part of this policy was encouraging the creation of immigrant organisations through government subsidies (Penninx 2006: 243-244). For the government these organisations had a bridge function between the migrant and Dutch society. It was thought that group membership would have integrating effects on its migrant members (Sunier 2010: 122). However, to be considered for subsidy, activities needed to be presented as 'cultural' and 'authentic', leading immigrant organisations to reproduce stereotypical notions about themselves. Also, groups were assumed to be homogeneous, ignoring diversity within groups and overemphasising differences between them. This system of subsidisation led to the fossilisation of views about minority groups (Schrover 2010: 335, 345, 348).

Towards the end of the 1990s, public discourse on multiculturalism became more critical (Penninx 2006: 252). Multiculturalism was criticised for leading to a 'multicultural tragedy' (Scheffer 2000). National and international events like September 11th 2001, the murder of anti-establishment parliamentary candidate Pim Fortuyn allegedly for his firm stance on multiculturalism, and the slaying of Theo van Gogh, contributed to a more critical public and political stance towards the integration of 'Muslim-ethnic' minorities in Dutch society. A policy memorandum of 2003 entitled *Integration Policy New Style* intended to develop more assimilatory immigrant integration policies. The leading concepts became 'citizenship' and 'individual responsibility' and the emphasis is on the cultural adaptation of immigrants to Dutch society (Bruquetas-Callejo et al. 2007: 20).

State funding for confessional schools is still in place but over the past decade there is more and more debate on the structure of the Dutch educational system in relation to diversity challenges. There is a discussion on secularism and whether or not the state should finance faith-based schools and there are discussions about the degrees of associational autonomy of denominational schools, for example with regard to curriculum, the hiring and instruction of teachers and the right to refuse pupils who do not support the school's ideological profile. Especially the will to see immigrant Muslim minorities assimilate into Dutch society has led to questions on the desirability of state funded confessional education. Instead of benefiting integration, Islamic schools are seen as instruments of segregation. According to philosopher Paul Cliteur, contemporary society is foremost grappling with a lack of social cohesion and state funded confessional education does not contribute to its re-strengthening (Cliteur 2004: 14).

A second, and related, debate is about the ways the Dutch history of pillarisation and policies of multiculturalism continue to hinder, rather than facilitate, immigrant integration. For instance Sniderman and Hagendoorn conclude their book on identity politics and conflicts

of values in the Netherlands by writing: 'Multiculturalism has helped to make it unclear whether Muslim immigrants will commit themselves as a community to a liberal society like the Netherlands, precisely because it has made it unclear whether they should' (Sniderman and Hagendoorn 2007: 138). The integrative effect of institutional practices associated with 'pillarisation' will not take place with the creation of a Muslim pillar, so critics argue. The institutions that support such a pillar would sooner disconnect its members from wider Dutch society due to the lack of a specific Dutch history among its members. Then, Dutch Muslims would not have the same opportunity as for instance the Catholics in the nineteenth century had, to bind themselves to the Dutch state. However, Jewish and Christian minorities strongly oppose changing the institutional structure of state funded confessional education and introducing a uniform public education model. The general thrust of these debates is to define the limits of tolerance in a liberal state that operates in a context of a society of immigration.

Gender equality and equality of sexual orientation

Different incidents have occurred in the last decade wherein religious and immigrant minorities conflicted with dominant societal norms of gender equality and equality of sexual orientation. These debates often focus on events related to religious diversity and especially confrontations between progressive values and principles and Orthodox religious groups. These debates focus on the boundaries between what is tolerable and what is intolerable.

With regard to gender equality various issues arise. In the above, we have already discussed the Political Reformed Party's stance towards women in politics. In 2003 the Clara Wichmann Institute and other advocacy groups for women's rights, filed a court case against the state for subsidising the Political Reformed Party. In the Netherlands all political parties elected to parliament receive state subsidy. According to the Clara Wichmann Institute the Political Reformed Party discriminates against women because its statutes prohibit women from becoming members of the party, a practice which the state should not allow let alone subsidise. Because women cannot become members of the Political Reformed Party they also cannot be elected into public office. The judge ruled in favour of the complainant motivating that there should be a level playing field for men and women in politics and that political parties should ensure this is the case. The Political Reformed Party has failed to do so and the state has failed to do anything about this, on the contrary, it is subsidising the Political Reformed Party (Dölle 2005: 110-114). Hereupon subsidy for the Political Reformed Party was cancelled for 2006. Taking this into consideration and under pressure from some of its members, the Political Reformed Party decided to allow membership for women, although women are still excluded from obtaining political office. Both the state and the Clara Wichmann Institute have filed several appeals in reaction to the 2005 ruling. In 2007 the Council of State (*Raad van State*) argued that in practice women are not discriminated against in Dutch politics because they can become members of other parties and can be elected into office through them. Due to this verdict the Political Reformed Party was re-allowed its 2006 subsidy. However, in 2010 the Supreme Council (*Hoge Raad*) ruled that the state should take appropriate action to ensure that female members of the Reformed Party can also be elected into office (*Reformatorisch Dagblad*, 14 April 2010). This debate is exemplary of ongoing discussions in the Netherlands on the scope of associational autonomy of Orthodox Calvinist institutions such as schools and political parties and attempts to define the boundaries between what is tolerable and what is intolerable.

Another major issue concerns how principles such as equal treatment and equal respect for people with a different sexual orientation relate to principles such as the associational autonomy of religious organisations. In April 2001 the Netherlands was the first

nation to allow gay marriage. Equating marriage between people of different and the same sexes was seen as a logical next step in Dutch libertarian social practices. However, there has been debate on whether or not civil servants can refuse on religious grounds to bind a gay marriage. Another example is the one we have mentioned above, namely the polemic around the recent stance of the Catholic Church towards homosexuals receiving communion. In relation to Islam, the political presence of Pim Fortuyn fuelled the debates around gay rights and homophobia. Pim Fortuyn fiercely opposed Islam for its rejection of homosexuality. According to Fortuyn, who was openly gay himself, Muslims view homosexuals as inferior beings. Fortuyn emphatically remarked that he did not want to 'have to re-do the emancipation of women and homosexuals all over again' (*De Volkskrant*, 9 February 2002). However, with public and political discourse concerning multiculturalism becoming more critical, this achievement was thought to be under threat from orthodox Muslims. In May 2001 Moroccan born Imam Khalil El-Moumni condemned homosexuality and labelled it as a contagious disease which threatens Dutch society (*De Volkskrant*, 4 May 2001). In April 2004 it became known that the Amsterdam El Tahweed-mosque sold Dutch translations of Islamic publications which stated that homosexuals should be killed by throwing them from high buildings with their 'head first' followed by stoning (*Trouw*, 21 April 2004). The alderman for Amsterdam at the time, Ahmed Aboutaleb (Labour Party), Moroccan born and at present the mayor of Rotterdam, declared that the mosque's leaders need to be aware that such works have no place in a mosque (*Trouw*, 21 April 2004).

The tensions between, on the one hand, gay rights and equality, and, on the other hand, conservative values and religious convictions do not only concern high held principles. Intolerant behaviour and violence against homosexuals continues to be a problem as well, in the Netherlands as well as in other European countries. Reports of violence against homosexuals had risen by a quarter in 2009 when compared to 2008, meaning that such incidents occur on a daily basis (*De Volkskrant*, 19 January 2010). It is clear that attention to homophobic violence has been given more media attention in light of multiculturalism debates (Buijs et al. 2009: 43). Young Moroccan men are overrepresented among the perpetrators of violence against homosexuals (Buijs et al. 2009: 30): in Amsterdam, 16% of the population aged 24 and below is Moroccan and 36% of physical acts of violence against homosexuals can be attributed to them. Religious culture and religious education do influence opinions on homosexuality but this does not cause acts of violence against homosexuals (Buijs 2009: 129-130). Moroccan born Ahmed Marcouch, at the time chairman of the district Slotervaart of Amsterdam, argued in 2009 that the annual gay-pride boat parade should start from Slotervaart because it has a large population of Moroccans. According to Marcouch 'imported traditions should not negate Dutch achievements' (*Het Parool*, 31 March 2009). Marcouch's proposal stranded on logistical problems.

In sum, violence against homosexuals has centred prominently in the changing public and political discourse on multiculturalism. Incidents like the El-Moumni and El-Tahweed mosque strengthen the notion that after being freed from Christian conservatism, the Dutch are now threatened by Islamic fundamentalism (Mepschen et al. 2010: 966). Openly gay men have come to represent Dutch neoliberal modernity versus Muslim-ethnic minorities who represent traditionalism (Mepschen et al. 2010: 970). Islam is often labelled as the cause for violence against homosexuals in political discourse. Especially Geert Wilders' Freedom Party (*PVV*) sees a direct connection between anti-homosexual violence and Islam (Buijs et al. 2009: 31).

The incidents and discussions mentioned under this heading show an increasing awareness in Dutch society of the tensions between liberal values concerning sexual morality, gender equality and equality of sexual orientation and the values and opinions of conservative

religious groups. In the case of religious organisations and faith-based organisations this often leads to debates on the limits of associational autonomy. In society in general tension may result in discrimination and even violence. In these debates the focus is often on distinguishing between what is tolerable and what is intolerable.

The limits of free speech

Over the past decade 'free speech' has become a key issue in debates on cultural diversity in the Netherlands. Whereas in the 1980s and 1990s the focus was on the need to prohibit discriminatory and racist speech, in recent years the main thrust of discussions is that freedom of speech should not be curtailed, especially not out of the will to protect the 'sensibilities' of religious or immigrant groups. These debates on free speech usually evolve around defining what is tolerable and what is intolerable.

One of the most prominent figures in the debates on free speech is the late Pim Fortuyn who was assassinated in 2002. In that year he had remarked in an interview that Islam is a 'backward culture' and that there is no shame in showing pride and preference for 'our Western culture' (*De Volkskrant*, 9 February 2002). With his motto 'I say what I think and I do what I say', Fortuyn claimed to say what many people, including politicians, thought, but did not dare to say. This fear for coming across racist is, according to the American/Dutch journalist Ian Buruma, in part informed by a feeling of guilt stemming from the horrors of the Holocaust, which 'hangs over Dutch life like a toxic cloud' and 'the shame of it poisons national debates to this day' (Buruma 2006: 19). For Fortuyn the only limit to what can be said is a call to violence (*De Volkskrant*, 9 February 2002).

The polarisation accompanying the immigration and integration debates in the Netherlands since the Fortuyn revolt has been characterised by a libertarian attitude of being in your right to simply say 'what is on your mind'. In 2008 the vice-premier and leader of the Labour Party (*PvdA*) Wouter Bos feared his party was returning to the political correctness of before the Fortuyn revolt. Bos called for more polarisation in the debate on immigration. According to Bos, integration cannot be achieved without strong polarisation and simply 'telling it like it is' (*De Volkskrant*, 1 March 2008). This kind of arguments resemble the defence of a more 'intolerant liberalism' that is present in other European countries as well.

Over the past years there have also been debates on the need to revise the Dutch rules and legislation that regulate free speech and its limits. Some have argued that religious sensibilities and vulnerable groups should be protected. However, the predominant view is that a more libertarian view on free speech is preferable. Illustrative is a debate in 2008 when the minister of justice, Ernst Hirsch Ballin, was asked by a parliamentary majority to revoke article 147 of Dutch criminal law which prohibits blasphemy. The majority of secular parties in Dutch parliament reasoned that religious citizens do not need more protection than non-religious citizens. Hirsch Ballin, prominent member of the Christian Democratic Appeal (*CDA*), initially opposed the parliament's request. However Hirsch Ballin later agreed to the request but at the same time proposed an alternative: he wanted to revoke article 147 but strengthen the anti-discrimination measures that protect a group as stated in article 137c. According to secular parliamentarians a strengthening of 137c would entail the same as leaving 147 in tact (*De Pers*, 31 October 2008). A consequence of strengthening 137c would be that indirectly insulting a group of people on the basis of their religion would be prohibited. Secular parliamentarians feared that freedom of speech would hereby be severely curtailed. However, an attorney-general of the High Court (*Hoge Raad*) ruled that criticising a religion is not at the same time also a critique directed to adherents (*De Pers*, 13 January 2009). Hirsch Ballin's proposal was unsuccessful due to lack of parliamentary support.

Another illustration of the way the issue of the limits of free speech figures prominently in Dutch debates on diversity is the trial of Geert Wilders. In 2008 Wilders made the anti-Quran movie Fitna and he has made numerous other controversial statements on Islam and Muslims. In January 2009 the court of Amsterdam demanded the National Prosecution follow up on charges made against Wilders by several anti-racist organisations. The court is of the opinion that Wilders is prosecutable because of the content of his utterances and his presentation style. The latter is characterised by one-sidedness, generalisations and increasing harshness which, according to the court, comes down to inciting hatred. The court believes Wilders does insult individual Muslims because he attacks their symbols and affects them in their religious dignity. The court believes Wilders' comparisons of Islam to Nazism are especially insulting and that such utterances do not serve the general interest. The court believes its stance is in line with the norms of the European Convention on Human Rights which values freedom of speech but also rejects inciting hatred (*Gerechtshof Amsterdam*, 21 January 2009). In September 2009 the National Prosecution decided to prosecute Wilders for insulting a group of people and inciting discrimination and hatred. Wilders is now prosecuted for articles 137d for inciting hatred and discrimination and 137c for his comparisons of Islam to Nazism. The trial against Wilders took place in October 2010. According to Wilders the freedom of speech was on trial. Wilders' lawyer has rebuked the judges for lack of objectivity twice, the last time being successful. The trial will be done again in 2011 with different judges. The National Prosecution is still not convinced of the case, during the trial it demanded no sentencing if Wilders was to be found guilty. This case illustrates how the regulation of (political) speech is a crucial arena in which cultural diversity challenges in the Netherlands are discussed.

4 Conceptualisations of tolerance and practices of toleration in the Netherlands

In this section we discuss definitions of tolerance that figure in the media, books and scholarly articles.[4] We distinguish five conceptualisations that, so we argue, structure the discursive space in which ideas about toleration and acceptance are being articulated in the Netherlands. We discuss each by looking at what conceptualisation of tolerance and acceptance it consists of and what the historical contexts, social practices and institutional arrangements are that are primarily associated with it.

4.1 Toleration of minorities

A first approach speaks of toleration in the relations between a majority and minorities. The values, beliefs and norms of the majority are represented as normal, whereas those of minorities are seen as deviating and as inferior for moral, religious or cultural reasons. Diversity becomes an issue when minorities claim recognition for their position in society and demand a more equal say in affairs of the state. The reasons invoked for not actively suppressing or persecuting minorities or practices are primarily pragmatic: maintaining public order, upholding peaceful relations with other countries, or protecting the interests of commerce.

[4] For this section we used a number of books by academics and journalists on the themes of tolerance and immigrant integration. Notably those by Ten Hooven (ed.) 2001, Scheffer 2007, Cliteur 2002, Buruma 2006, Sniderman and Hagendoorn 2007. We also collected essays that appeared in the quality newspapers on the issue of tolerance.

Historically, ideas about toleration initially concerned relations between the dominant Calvinist group and religious minorities. In the Dutch Republic of the 16th and 17th century, dissenting protestant groups, among which were the Anabaptists, Mennonites, and Lutherans, but also Catholics and Jews, were publicly tolerated (Aerts 2001: 63). An important social practice illustrative of toleration was the clandestine church (*schuilkerk*) which allowed dissenters to worship in spaces demarcated as private, thereby preserving the monopoly of the official church in the public sphere (Kaplan 2007: 176). Their existence was not a secret because many people openly visited them. However, there were no symbols on the exterior of the buildings marking them as churches, nor did they have towers or crosses or bells calling everyone to come to service. This symbolic invisibility sufficed for the civil authorities to look the other way (Kaplan 2007:172-197). Another characteristic was the fact that all groups, including Catholics, would choose a relatively reticent and introvert style of presenting themselves in the public realm. All would share in a puritan public order which disapproved extravagant behaviour (Aerts 2001: 69). There was little open debate and criticism between the different groups. The governing elites of the cities were mainly concerned with maintaining peace and public order in a religiously divided country, motivated in part by the interests of commerce and industry.

The practices and virtues associated with toleration are sometimes presented positively. For example, despite the fact that religious minorities were often discriminated against they were not violently persecuted in the Netherlands. In contemporary debates one comes across the notion that 'deviating' minorities have to be tolerated, but that this also entails obligations on the side of these minorities. For instance in discussions concerning the presence of Islam in Dutch society, some argue that Islam should not be too visible in the public realm and that Muslims should not cause 'offense'. To that end Muslims should express their differences in a 'more reticent' or 'modest' style.[5]

There are also more critical perspectives concerning toleration of minorities. These basically argue that toleration alone is not enough, and that minorities are entitled to full recognition and equal treatment in society. Here we find an illustration in the Dutch case of situations in which mere tolerance is not enough and some form of recognition is demanded. Illustrative is the case of Catholics who since the mid 19th century demanded a more equal position in Dutch society and protested against rampant 'anti-Papist' sentiments. Their demands consisted of the right to hold processions, institute Catholic schools and build Catholic churches. Another illustrative case is that of homosexuals who since the 1960s demanded equal rights and recognition for their sexual orientation as equal to heterosexuality. Both these examples show how toleration of deviance from the perspective of the tolerated, can be unsatisfactory. The tolerated demand acceptance and equality from the majority, instead of being seen as merely a deviant group whose practices are to be 'tolerated'.

4.2 Principled acceptance

A second conceptualisation sees tolerance as a matter of reciprocity between established minorities. This approach is more principled because it builds on the assumption that there are different religious and non-religious 'philosophies of life' (*levensovertuigingen*) that should respect one another. Also these philosophies of life should have equal positions in society and within the state. The aim is a society wherein these different views can be visible and

[5] See for example the discussions on mosque architecture and Islamic dress (Maussen 2009).

institutionalised, whilst keeping sufficient distance between them to allow separate communities to develop themselves.

This second conceptualisation developed in tandem with a changing social imagery of the Dutch nation as composed of people belonging to different groups. These groups could agree to give one another equal rights allowing everyone to live peacefully together (Van Rooden 2010).[6] The various groups presented themselves as sovereign moral communities within the nation-state. One of the main theorists of this approach to difference was the neo-Calvinist Abraham Kuyper, founder of the Orthodox Reformed Party (*Anti-Revolutionaire Partij*, *ARP*) and the Free University of Amsterdam. Kuyper spoke in support of 'parallelism' by which he meant 'the right and freedom of differing religious and philosophical perspectives and movements to develop freely on separate, parallel tracks, neither hindered or helped by the government' (Monsma and Soper 2009: 59). This implied that all the different groups and communities were entitled to visibility and institutionalisation in the public realm. This can be seen as a form of group recognition.

The ideas associated with principled acceptance have found a strong institutional base. General suffrage and proportional representation allowed each group to be represented in Parliament, leading to a situation in which coalition governments have to be formed and therefore demands must be moderated (Ten Hooven 2001: 291). In the domain of education these are equal funding of public and confessional schools and the freedom of education. One of the major institutional features of pillarisation was proportional public financing of institutions that allow a subculture to exist, e.g. in media or education. During the period of pillarisation toleration was primarily a tool used by the pillars' elites to discourage their rank and file from intolerance against members of a different pillar. Each pillar formed a separate minority and toleration of other minorities guaranteed toleration of their own pillar. However, in practice this form of toleration resulted in a lack of contact with members of other pillars. As Aerts observes: 'The communities recognised one another as national partners but rejected one another's ideas and subculture. They combated one another continuously but without much passion. Tolerance came down to avoidance at best, but without positive recognition' (Aerts 2001: 77).

The more positive perspectives on principled acceptance view it as a way of organising a deeply pluralistic society with profound differences. Communities should respect one another's sovereign spheres and the state should aim to be equi-distant to all citizens. Thus the state needs to guarantee the associational freedoms which allow cultural and religious communities to live-out their respective conceptions of the good life. These conceptualisations are still important for ideas articulated by Christian Democrats and orthodox Christians.[7] In the 1980s and 1990s this model of acceptance was also applied to notions concerning the cultural incorporation of immigrants. The now notorious phrase 'integration with retention of cultural identity' and the notion that ethnic and religious subcultures should be accommodated and should be allowed to institutionalise in society, reflect the approach of principled acceptance (Maussen 2009).

[6] It was not the case, as it was in the USA or in France, that there was an established majority which had to decide whether or not to tolerate a (new) minority.

[7] This position is articulated both by confessional political parties such as the broad Christian coalition party CDA, the orthodox reformed minority party SGP and minority party Christian Union, by prominent legal scholars who are Christian (including Hirsch Ballin, Van Bijsterveld, Vermeulen) and by theologians/scholars/opinion leaders affiliated with more orthodox institutions (Free University of Amsterdam, University of Kampen) and newspapers such as the *Reformatisch Dagblad* and *Nederlands Dagblad*.

However, in the past decade or so these views have been criticised in the context of discussions on immigrant integration, Islam and Orthodox Christian demands. Critics argue that 'parallel societies' and 'pockets of backwardness' that have come into being should disappear. Furthermore, it is believed that too much respect for the 'moral sovereignty' of groups stands in the way of the need to protect individual rights and freedoms.[8] It is also questioned what levels of 'parallelism' are viable in the context of societies that are highly individualised and obtain large numbers of immigrants. Social goals such as economic participation and integration require a more firm socialisation into one dominant culture, so critics argue.

4.3 Pragmatic toleration or condoning (gedogen)

A third approach to acceptance is seen as illustrative, or even unique, for the Dutch situation, but is also more difficult to distinguish from what we have called toleration of minorities. These are the conceptualisations of tolerance around the concept '*gedogen*', usually translated as 'condoning' or 'pragmatic toleration'. Gordijn describes acts of pragmatic toleration as consisting of a declaration in advance, that under certain specific conditions offenders against a particular norm do not need to fear punishment (Gordijn 2001: 230-231). Well known examples include the use and possession of (soft)drugs, prostitution, the existence of brothels, euthanasia and medically assisted suicide, squatting, or parents taking their children out of school for prolonged holidays. The motivations for such practices of condoning are multiple: for instance the material or social costs of upholding a legal norm are said to outweigh the societal damage when it is being violated. Or, an official ban on paper combined with toleration in practice, provides room to balance and respect the sensitivities of different social groups.

Condoning is often seen as a continuation of the social practices associated with toleration of minorities, meaning that the state and dominant groups would seek to avoid sharp confrontations by 'looking the other way' when minorities or individuals would engage in acts that were formally illegal. However, in post-war times the Netherlands' model of pragmatic toleration smoothened the transition from a society dominated by Christian norms to a progressive and secular society. Formally legalising acts and practices that violated Christian norms, such as drug use, homosexuality or prostitution, would provoke fierce resistance by Christian groups. But the effective persecution of individuals and the active suppression of these practices would lead to strong protest from liberal factions. Pragmatic toleration serves as a tool to upset as few people as possible. Since the 1960s new life-styles of younger generations which were still seen as offensive to many in the Dutch petty bourgeois society, could nevertheless be accommodated through condoning.

In recent years condoning is less and less seen as a virtuous style of governance. Some argue that legal norms should be upheld and that pragmatic toleration will only result in erosion of the legal system (Gordijn 2001: 239). The debate on pragmatic toleration took a new turn when it became associated with the debate on immigrant integration. The notion of 'looking the other way' was now represented as functioning as an escape route when

[8] Already in 1996 a senator of the Christian Union (*CU*) argued that (orthodox) Christians, Hindus and Muslims in the Netherlands shared the experience of a growing intolerance because they lived as religious minorities in a majority culture, in which they felt more and more alienated (Ten Hooven 2001: 26). Especially the first Purple Coalition Government between 1994-1998, which was the first coalition government without a confessional party, is seen as intolerant towards religious factions (Ten Hooven 2001: 288).

immigrants were violating legal and cultural norms.[9] The concept came to be linked with so-called strategies of social avoidance which were seen less as a virtue and more as a sign of a lack of social cohesion. Paul Scheffer attributes the failure of immigrant integration to pragmatic toleration because immigrants who were confronted with a Dutch state that was unwilling to uphold the law, began to believe that Dutch law does not need to be taken seriously at all (Scheffer 2007: 169).

4.4 Multicultural recognition

The guiding concepts in a fourth approach to the handling of diversity are recognition and equal respect for cultural, ethnic, religious, and linguistic differences in a society of immigration. This corresponds to a conceptualisation of acceptance that emphasises full recognition, respect, normality and equality as values. These concepts build on the notion that inter-group relations in a multicultural society require both virtuous citizens who are open-minded, free of prejudices and want to embrace difference, and institutional guarantees to protect vulnerable newcomers, both individually and collectively. Examples of the latter are anti-discriminatory and anti-racist legislation, subsidies to maintain and develop ethnic identities, and institutional guarantees allowing for cultural and religious practices and associational and collective autonomy. Dominant in multicultural recognition is the notion of 'acceptance' by the host society which should be willing to change its ethnocentric views, primarily on national identity and cultural norms. Also, the host society should make a principled choice to allow newcomers to participate on equal footing in society and affairs of the state.

These notions of multicultural recognition have been developed in post-war the Netherlands and remained dominant throughout the first immigrant integration policies of the 1980s and early 1990s (see Buruma 2006). Horrors of the war were used to draw lessons from in terms of dealing with rightwing extremism, racism and vulnerable minorities like Jews, gypsies, and homosexuals. Also, the notion became dominant that the Netherlands should become a 'guiding nation' in the process of building a democratic Europe, advocating human rights and developing liberal legislation in domains such as medical ethics, gender and sexuality, and differing life-styles. The Netherlands also became one of the leading countries in creating institutions to monitor and combat racial discrimination in Europe.[10] The Netherlands were among the first countries in Europe to pick up on ideas about multiculturalism and the need to develop policies of integration that were supportive of ethnic diversity (Penninx 2006).[11]

These conceptualisations of acceptance have had several institutional counterparts. One concerns the legal arrangements to combat discriminatory and racist speech and the extreme right. The creation of the Equal Treatment Commission in 1994 served to demonstrate the importance of upholding article 1 of the Dutch constitution, which prohibits discrimination and guarantees equal treatment. Other measures associated with multicultural

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[9] This theme is articulated for example by Hirsi Ali in her autobiography *Infidel* (2007)

[10] Notably the European Monitoring Centre in Vienna that was chaired by the former Mayor of Amsterdam, Ed van Thijn. In the early 1990s Dutch radio stations organised a protest campaign when asylum seekers centres in Germany were attacked by extreme right wing activists and youths. Dutch listeners sent postcards to the German government with the text 'I am furious'. In 2000, the Dutch were also frontrunners in demanding sanctions against Austria because of the accession of the extreme right *Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs* (*FPÖ*) to the Austrian coalition government.

[11] This kind of conceptualisations of multiculturalism became especially dominant in progressive parties in the 1990s, including the Labour Party (*PvdA*), the Liberal Democrats (*D66*) and the Green Party (*GroenLinks*).

recognition include the scrutinising of Dutch legislation in 1983 to see whether it contained elements of discrimination on the basis of nationality, race or religion, the introduction of migrants' native language in schools, and the creation of local and national representative councils for ethnic groups. Another set of social practices were the attempts to create more understanding between communities. To illustrate, attempts to teach children about other cultures, revisions of curricula to include more references to issues such as slavery and colonialism, and initiatives such as the 'day of dialogue'.

Despite the fact that in contemporary public debate the ideas associated with multicultural acceptance have come under heavy fire, there are still articulate defenders of it. First, there are those who argue that a principled choice in favour of equality and pluralism combined with the notion that immigration and the existence of culturally diverse societies are a fact of life, inevitably resulting in a manner of engaging with difference that goes beyond mere toleration and entails respect, recognition and equal opportunities. Second, some argue that multiculturalism provides a more sensible approach to deal with differences in societies that are highly individualised and in which migration has resulted in far deeper forms of cultural diversity than ever before. The notion of a unified, singular and stable 'Dutch culture' which will re-emerge is portrayed as unrealistic.

However, the more critical voices towards multicultural recognition dominate the debate. One of the main critiques is that multicultural acceptance results from an unhappy marriage between excessive subjectivism and cultural relativism. Subjectivism has resulted in the notion that being tolerant or 'having an open mind' means refraining from judging others. Here we see an example of the wider debate on value relativism in Europe. The argument is that cultural relativism has led to the notion that all cultures are of equal worth and that it is inappropriate to impose Dutch or European cultures on immigrants. Critics also point to the forms of intolerance that the strong norms of anti-racism and multiculturalism have introduced in the Netherlands. Forms of speech or behaviour that could be seen as offensive to minorities or hurting the feelings of immigrants were banned from the public sphere.

4.5 The divide between the tolerable and the intolerable: Dutch liberal intolerance

A fifth and final approach entails conceptualisations of acceptance arguing that true toleration can only be achieved when it is very clear where the boundaries are between the tolerable and the intolerable, and when different groups and individuals spell out very clearly where they stand and what their differences are. A distinction is made between toleration which requires engagement, disagreement and disapproval, and toleration as a form of ignorance, relativism or disinterest. In a part of his book entitled meaningfully 'The Netherlands, country of avoidance' Scheffer explains that toleration is undermined by a *laisser-faire* attitude. Scheffer pleads for a stronger adherence to core values, like the foundational principles and values that support the legal-democratic order. Otherwise the conditions for a peaceful and free society will be gravely undermined: 'upholding the norms of an open society is one of the main tasks of the state' (2007: 167). The dissatisfaction with multiculturalism focuses on the contradictions in the multicultural dogma 'toleration of the intolerant' by pointing to the position of vulnerable minorities, notably women. The critics motivate that one of the main reasons not to tolerate specific ideas or practices is to uphold progressive values, notably with regard to gender equality, gay rights, and liberal education and science (Sniderman and Hagendoorn 2007).

In terms of institutional arrangements these conceptualisations entail a firm protection of free speech. This includes the right to offend and to critique religious dogmas, religious

practices, and cultural practices. It also entails an obligation for minorities to justify their acts and worldviews, entailing the risk that these will not be tolerated. Thus, certain moral or legal norms, such as non-discrimination and gender equality, can result in the limitation of associational autonomy, notably of religious institutions such as confessional schools and political parties, but also of social practices in communities and families. In *Empty tolerance. On freedom and lack of commitment in the Netherlands*, Ten Hooven argues that the notion of respecting the sovereignty of specific groups does no longer work and that in contemporary times toleration is an individual virtue and an element of good citizenship. In terms of social practice, interactions between groups should not be based on avoidance and 'looking the other way', but rather on identifying, if not amplifying, differences, and exposure and confrontation (Ten Hooven 2001).

In a more positive evaluation this way of thinking about tolerance entails the opportunity of maintaining a free society in which liberal rights and individual opportunities are guaranteed. To some it also means that there should be a willingness to challenge conservative groups, especially if they violate the rights of vulnerable minorities. One issue that appears on the agenda repeatedly is the refusal by some Orthodox Christian groups, including Jehovah's witnesses, to let their children be vaccinated against polio. Others frame the issue as concerning the need to maintain a threshold of cultural norms that are recognisably Dutch and argue, for example, that these should be taught in schools by creating a canon of Dutch history and civic orientation classes.

More critical perspectives entail, first, that despite the fact that this is presented as a conceptualisation of tolerance, the main thrust of the discussion is to point out what is *not* to be tolerated and to ban specific practices or limit associational freedoms. Especially in the case of Islam and immigrants the category of intolerable practices and symbols becomes larger and larger and the ways in which disapproval is expressed becomes more and more violent. Thereby the notion of toleration as 'putting up with what one disapproves of' becomes an empty signifier. Secondly, the process of exposing differences in order to discuss them through a 'healthy confrontation' is usually dominated by gross stereotypes. The alarming tone of public outcries about, for instance, ritually prepared food, lawyers who do not stand up in court or imams who refuse to shake hands, results in far more social conflicts than strategies of avoidance do. Some argue, therefore, that this way of thinking about tolerance as requiring confrontation and open debate hinders rather than facilitates societal cohesion and peace.

5 Concluding Remarks

In contrast to dominant notions, debates concerning cultural diversity and minority acceptance in the Netherlands do not exclusively focus on the position of Muslims and the role of Islam in society. There is also an ongoing discussion on the position of native religious minorities, notably Orthodox Calvinist groups. The history of the Netherlands is not the history of a distinct development of toleration. It is important to emphasise this point because portrayals of the tumultuous political developments in the first decade of the 21st century are often contrasted to a supposed 'Dutch tradition of tolerance'. It would be wrong to maintain the image that until recently the Netherlands was an exemplary tolerant country and that it recently has become 'intolerant' and has fallen victim to a 'backlash against multiculturalism'. In practice, however, as we have argued in this report, each time is confronted with its own specific challenges which are met with their own specific answers.

From the above we want to extract some conclusions and major issues that require further examination and empirical research.

First of all, it is clear that since about ten years, notably since the Fortuyn revolt in 2002 and the following stable presence of populist parties in Dutch politics, the discourses of 'liberal intolerance' have become particularly influential in the Netherlands. The main thrust of this shift in public debate is that there is a need to identify the core values that characterise 'Dutch culture', 'liberalism' and 'secularism' and that these should become 'non-negotiable'. As a result, so it is argued, there is a need to confront immigrant communities to enforce full respect for these values and principles. One effect of this shift in discourse has been a renewed interest in Dutch history, including attempts to identify the essence of 'the Dutch canon', the creation of a 'national museum' and efforts to instruct immigrants about 'Dutch culture' during compulsory 'civic orientation lessons'. Citizenship, national solidarity and respect seem to require a renewed enthusiasm about 'Dutch culture and Dutch values'. Politicians have also demanded that schools should teach tolerance and respect in the form of 'citizenship education'. Another aspect of this shift in the dominant discourse on diversity issues is a widely advocated need to strengthen the principles of the separation between church and state. In the Netherlands people who position themselves as modern, liberal and progressive speak out loudly to defend values such as equality, individualism and secularism. Often this is taken to mean that religious groups and organisations should no longer be allowed to use their collective and institutional autonomy to divert from core values and norms. According to these voices, liberal values are under siege, mainly from religious groups and immigrant communities.

One striking feature of contemporary cultural diversity challenges and discussions in the Netherlands is the focus on *religious* minorities. Orthodox Calvinist groups, Catholic institutions and Muslims are publicly challenged with respect to their beliefs and practices, which are often perceived as crossing the boundaries of the 'intolerable'. Especially around issues related to gender equality and equality of sexual orientation, many believe that principles such as non-discrimination, that have already been established legally, should also function as shared values across Dutch society. They reason that this means that exceptions to the rule should no longer be accepted. This provides opportunities for populist politicians to camouflage more general feelings of hostility towards Islam and Muslims as well-intentioned attempts to contribute to the emancipation of Muslim women. Nonetheless, in a society that secularised in rapid pace since the 1960s and that has come to define itself as 'liberal and progressive', there is a genuine concern about the ways conservative immigrant groups undermine norms that have become well established over the past decades. The focus on Muslims and Orthodox Christians also results in the fact that other minority groups, such as the Frisians or regional groups, are far less exposed and criticised. The same applies to many other immigrant minorities. For example, there is hardly any debate on the position of the Surinamese community in the Netherlands.

A third aspect of diversity challenges and discussions on tolerance in the Netherlands that merits attention is that there appears to be a radical change in prevailing Dutch conceptualisations of tolerance. For a long time, 'principled acceptance' has been crucial to Dutch governing traditions. Its philosophical foundations were developed in the second half of the 19th century, amongst others by Abraham Kuyper. It was institutionalised in the course of the 20th century, especially in the form of church-state traditions, in the model of consensus-democracy and in the educational system. However, at present, secular voices demand less room for religious schools, a ban on ritual slaughtering and less accommodation of religiously motivated demands with regard to dress. Other elements of Dutch traditions of tolerance are also criticised. The notion that a majority in society may well disapprove of the

ideas and practices of a religious minority whilst still 'tolerating' them, has lost much of its appeal in public discourse. The same applies to the idea that 'pragmatic toleration' or 'condoning' is an adequate governing strategy in a deeply plural society. At present public discourse on toleration centres around the ideas that tolerance should not mean value relativism and avoidance, but confrontation, defining what is acceptable and combating that which is intolerable. Interestingly, the autochthonous majority often expresses its unwillingness to 'put up with' or 'tolerate' other cultures and religions. A recurring topic in the national elections throughout the last decade has been the call to severely curb flows of immigration to the Netherlands. Although instigated by populist parties, traditional parties too have advocated the need for a highly selective immigration policy. Overall, the notion of the Netherlands as an immigrant nation has become supplanted by the notion of the Netherlands as a nation rooted in a distinct European Judeo-Christian tradition. A tradition that needs to be 'defended' from external influences stemming from immigration.

Finally, it is remarkable how the overall concern about 'societal cohesion' and 'immigrant integration' result in demands to restrict pluralism, for example in the form of ethnic subcultures, special institutions and the accommodation of religiously motivated demands. In public debates there are often outcries about 'multiple loyalties' of immigrants with dual nationality, about the existence of ethnic 'parallel societies' or about religious orthodox groups that isolate themselves from mainstream society. This is paradoxical, because at the level of individualised life-styles the embrace of 'diversity' is paramount. Also, according to popular culture everyone should be as 'different' and 'unique' as possible. It appears that the Netherlands is still trying to strike a balance in accommodating various forms of pluralism in a depillarised society of immigration.

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