

Transnational Family Ties of Immigrants in the Netherlands

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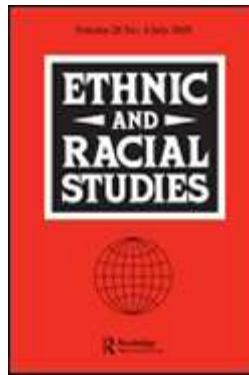
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Transnational Family Ties of Immigrants in the Netherlands

For Peer Review Only

Abstract

Inspired by recent efforts in the United States to quantify the degree of transnational ties that immigrants possess, this article explores and analyses the prevalence and determinants of transnational family ties of immigrants in the Netherlands. Using data from a representative survey of four immigrant groups in the Netherlands, this paper also aims to fill the gap in knowledge regarding the effects of incorporation into an immigrant's host society on transnational family ties. Findings show that while the vast majority of immigrants with relatives in the country of origin have frequent contact with these relatives, only a third of respondents contribute to the livelihood of family members in the homeland. Incorporation characteristics show distinct patterns over different types of involvement. While incorporation variables have a negative effect on the frequency of contact, they show little effect on remittances.

Keywords: transnationalism; family; immigrants; integration; ethnic minorities; remittances

Introduction

In January, 1906, Walery Wroblewski wrote from Poland to his family in America,

Your letter of October 29th I received on December 30. It travelled for about two months, and perhaps it lay in the post offices, because there has been a strike. All the trains stopped for more than a week, and afterward in the post and telegraph service there was a strike for 3 weeks (Thomas and Znaniecki 1984 [1918]; p.101).

The irregular mail correspondence and long journeys overseas by boat with which the Polish peasants had to cope less than a century ago stand in sharp contrast with the communication and travel practices of recent migrants who have telephone or (e-) mail contact with relatives abroad on a weekly basis and often fly home at least once a year. While back-and-forth immigrant movement and transnational ties among immigrants have always existed (Waldinger and Fitzgerald 2004), the ready availability of air transport, long distance telephone and electronic mail, which provides the technological basis for increasing opportunities for close transnational family ties, fundamentally differentiates Polish peasants from their contemporary migrant counterparts (Baldassar and Baldock 1999; Baldock 2000).

The transnational perspective on migration specifically explores the possibilities for sustaining meaningful relationships with people and institutions in countries of origin (Glick-Schiller, Basch, and Szanton-Blanc 1992).

Transnationalism was defined by these authors as “the process by which transmigrants, through their daily activities, forge and sustain multi-stranded social, economic, and political relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement, and through which they create transnational social fields that cross national borders” (Basch et al. 1994: p. 6).

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Originally, most studies in the field provided in-depth, ethnographic analyses of transnational phenomenon in one particular home country and one specific host country (Levitt 2001; Smith 2006). While the contributions of such studies are manifold, they do not show how widespread transnational practices are among the immigrant population as a whole or how these practices vary among immigrant groups (Levitt and Jaworsky 2007). Recently, a limited number of systematic surveys and comparative case studies have been carried out in the United States that confirm the existence of economic and political transnational activities, but they also demonstrate that participation in these activities is not as widespread as previously assumed (Portes, Haller and Guarnizo 2002; Guarnizo, Portes and Haller 2003). These quantitative studies, however, neglect transnational family ties, even though sending remittances to family members and contacts with them are possibly the most prevalent transnational activities and are likely to be more widespread than economic and political transnational practices. Waldinger (2008) started to fill this gap by quantifying cross-border exchanges and activities, including remittances and travel, among Hispanic immigrants in the United States while testing hypotheses about determinants of such transnational activities. He found that while travel to the country of origin was frequent, most immigrants did not send remittances.

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While most systematic surveys on immigrant transnationalism focus on Hispanic immigrants in the United States, the current study will use a large, representative sample of the four largest immigrant groups in the Netherlands to investigate the prevalence and determinants of transnational family ties. Specific attention will be given to the question of how integration into the Netherlands is associated with sending remittances to and having contact with family members in the country of origin.

Theoretical background and previous studies

Transnational families

After Thomas and Znaniecki's (1984 [1918]) landmark study, transnational family ties generally have been neglected until recently by family sociologists and transnationalism scholars alike. Family sociology typically emphasises proximity as a prerequisite for interaction and exchange within families, thus ignoring family ties that cross borders. And although Faist (2000) identifies the emergence of transnational kinship groups as one of three types of transnational social spaces arising from international migration, empirical research in this area is presented more as supplemental information rather than as the focus of research. For example, although Levitt (2001; 74-89) and Smith (2006) discuss the challenges that come with raising children transnationally, this is not the main focus of their books. Bryceson and Vuerela (2002) do highlight transnational families as the central focus of research, and the studies in their compilation show that transnational families have to cope with multiple national residences, identities and loyalties. Like other families, transnational families are not biological units *per se*; rather, they are social constructions or even "imagined communities." And like other families, transnational families must mediate inequality among their members, including differences in mobility and resources as well as various types of capital and lifestyles (Bryceson and Vuerela 2002:3-7).

Earlier studies focusing on transnational family separation, such as Hondagneu-Sotelo and Avila (1997) were followed up with in-depth studies of immigrant parents with children and other relatives in the country of origin (Schmalzbauer 2004; Parrenas 2005; Zontini 2004). They highlight emotional consequences, problems with managing decision-making and power-sharing between

1
2
3 parents and grandparents, and problems that occur if parents start a new family in the
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5 host country.
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8 Bauer and Thompson (2006) and Fog Olwig (2003) add an important
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10 dimension to the study of transnational families by moving beyond a single
11
12 destination country. They show how Caribbean family members maintain a network
13
14 of contacts and support even when they migrate to different continents. Based on in-
15
16 depth interviews with both migrants and non-migrants, they describe the fluid
17
18 extended family networks that exist and the key role of women in maintaining such
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20 networks.
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25 Yet there are still two significant gaps within transnational family studies. The
26
27 first is that studies are small-scale and do not systematically collect data on the topic.
28
29 It is thus difficult to assess, verify, and generalise the information found in these
30
31 studies. The second relates to a criticism made more generally of transnationalism
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33 studies. Scholars within this discipline tend to study cases of the phenomenon itself,
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35 so it is difficult to say anything about the extent of the phenomenon and whether its
36
37 prevalence is increasing (Portes et al. 1999).
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43 *Transnationalism and integration*

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45 The question of whether integration into the host society impedes or supports
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47 transnational activities has only recently received some attention. Already, opposing
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49 views exist. A traditional assimilation perspective assumes that transnational practices
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51 are incompatible with integration, assimilation, and incorporation and that ties to the
52
53 home and host countries are mutually exclusive. However, some recent studies argue
54
55 that transnational involvement and incorporation can coexist and might even mutually
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57 reinforce each other (Marcelli and Lowell 2005). Portes, Haller and Guarnizo (2002),
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3 for example, show that transnational entrepreneurs are better educated and more
4 economically successful than either domestic entrepreneurs or wage-workers. In
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8 addition, their results indicate that transnational entrepreneurs are more likely to be
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10 US citizens and to have resided in that country for longer periods of time. Therefore,
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12 well-integrated immigrants, rather than recently arrived and downwardly mobile
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14 immigrants, appear most likely to be involved in transnational activities, especially
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16 with regards to entrepreneurship and political activities (Portes 2003).
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20 A similar analysis with respect to political transnationalism by Itzigsohn and
21
22 Saucedo (2002) found that the process of incorporation does not weaken transnational
23
24 political participation. Neither citizenship nor time spent in the United States had a
25
26 negative effect on transnational political participation. They also show that different
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28 immigrant groups have different determinants for involvement in transnational
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30 practices, which related to differing contexts of reception within the host country and
31
32 various modes of incorporation.
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36 Less is known about the effects of integration on transnational family ties.
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38 Snel, Engbersen and Leerkens (2006) found that while integration affected
39
40 transnational activities and identifications for immigrant groups in the Netherlands,
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42 sending remittances and having frequent contact with family members in the country
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44 of origin were not influenced by integration characteristics. However, their rather
45
46 small number of respondents per ethnic group (N=50) renders their conclusions
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48 tentative.
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53 In the remainder of this article, I will explore the determinants of transnational
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55 family involvement for immigrants in the Netherlands, with a focus on characteristics
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57 associated with integration into the host community.
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Data, Measures and Method

Data

The data used for the present study come from a large-scale study of family relations, namely, the Netherlands Kinship Panel Study (NKPS) (Dykstra et al. 2005). The NKPSⁱ is a nationally representative survey in which the four largest immigrant groups in the Netherlands are oversampled, thereby yielding data on migrants of Turkish, Moroccan, Surinamese and Antillean origin (N=1402). Together, these four groups make up around 7 per cent of the Dutch population and 66 per cent of the approximately 1.5 million non-Western migrants in the Netherlands (Central Bureau of Statistics 2008).

Migration streams to the Netherlands differ socially and historically. The initial guest workers from Mediterranean countries like Turkey and Morocco who entered the Netherlands in the 1960's were mostly unskilled, predominantly Muslim male labourers who arrived without their family, did not speak the Dutch language, and planned to return to their country of origin. However, many of these guest workers brought their families to the Netherlands in the 1970's and 80's, and thus, settlement became more permanent. Today, family reunification has become much harder due to harsher Dutch immigration rules, but family formation through marriage with a partner from the country of origin is still a common practice, even for second-generation Turks and Moroccans (Vermeulen and Penninx 2000).

Migrants from Surinam and the Dutch Antilles exhibit much more diversity. The first waves of migrants were often students or more highly educated people, including women. Due to the colonial ties with the Netherlands, they already spoke Dutch, were considered to be more culturally similar to the Dutch, and had access to

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3 Dutch citizenship (Vermeulen and Penninx 2000; Gowricharn 2004). Nevertheless,
4
5 more recently, many young, lower-educated migrants from the Antilles have arrived.
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7 They show high levels of unemployment and are perceived as less integrated. Taking
8
9 into account these different migration trajectories, I expect different ethnic groups to
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11 display distinctive patterns of transnational family ties. Nevertheless, other
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13 determinants of transnational ties, such as years of residence, nationality and socio-
14
15 economic status, are crosscutting factors that might decrease the impact of ethnic
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17 differences. Therefore, a central question of this paper is whether ethnic differences
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19 persist after controlling for background characteristics.
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25 All respondents were interviewed at home by an interviewer from the same
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27 ethnic background as the respondent in either Dutch or the respondent's native
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29 language. During the survey, detailed questions were asked about the relationships of
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31 the respondent with family members, irrespective of whether or not these family
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33 members were living in the Netherlands or in the country of origin. The survey
34
35 included a large number of standard control variables. The response rate among
36
37 migrants is comparable to that of the Dutch, ranging from 41 percent among the
38
39 Surinamese to 52 percent among Turks (see Dykstra et al., 2005, for an extensive
40
41 overview of non-response issues in the NKPS). In general, the response rates in the
42
43 Netherlands are low as compared, for example, to the US, but this response rate is
44
45 comparable to that of other large-scale family surveys in the Netherlands (De Leeuw
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47 and De Heer 2001). The data reported in this paper pertain to foreign-born
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49 respondents (N=1270). All results, except Table 1, are based on weighted data.
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58 *Dependent variables*
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3 Respondents were asked whether they contribute to the livelihood of family members
4 in their country of origin by sending money or goods. Response categories were *no* (0)
5 and *yes* (1). Respondents were also asked whether or not they had close relatives
6 living in their country of origin. Close relatives were defined as parents, siblings and
7 children. Subsequently, respondents reported on the amount of contact by phone, mail
8 and (e-) mail between the respondent and these relative(s) in the past 12 months and
9 on the amount of face-to-face contact in the past 12 months. Seven response
10 categories were used; never, once a year, several times a year, at least once a month,
11 at least once a week, several times a week and daily).

26 27 *Independent variables*

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29 The ethnic background of respondents is defined according to their country of birth.
30 For each group, a separate dummy variable was created for regression analysis,
31 leaving the Turks as the omitted category.

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33 Educational attainment was included in the regressions by using four
34 categories from no education at all (0) to university educated (3). Since educational
35 differences might exist between the Netherlands and the country of origin, a dummy
36 variable was created to indicate whether the respondent received at least part of
37 his/her education in the Netherlands. Income was measured using a variable for net
38 family income and recoded into four categories ranging from low (<500 Euros a
39 month) to high (>3000 Euros a month). A dummy variable indicating whether the
40 respondent is currently employed is also included.

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42 Years of residence is a continuous variable that measures the number of years
43 a respondent has lived in the Netherlands. However, since transnational family ties are
44 likely different for immigrants who came to the Netherlands as children, I added a
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3 dummy variable for persons who came to the Netherlands after age 12. Two more
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5 indicators of integration were added. Dutch language ability was estimated by
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7 including a variable indicating if the interview had taken place in the respondent's
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9 native language, in Dutch or in a combination of both. Three categories indicating a
10
11 respondent's nationality were included: native nationality only, double nationality or
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13 Dutch nationality only.
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17 Regressions also included control dummy variables for sex (1 if female) and
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19 marital status (1 if married). Finally, the analysis regarding frequency of contact
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21 included a dummy for the type of relative (father, mother, child or sibling), with
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23 sibling being the omitted category.
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29 Table 1 presents means and standard deviations of the independent variables.
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34 [Table 1 about here]
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38 *Method*

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40 Besides descriptive statistics indicating the prevalence of remittances to and contact
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42 with family members in the country of origin, I use binary logistic regression and
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44 OLS regression models to analyse the determinants of transnational family practices
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46 in the sample. Whereas I present findings using the complete sample (N=1270) with
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48 regards to remittances to and prevalence of close family members in the country of
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50 origin, only those who actually have close relatives in the country of origin are
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52 included in the analysis of contact with relatives in the country of origin (N=879).
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Findings

Remittances

Bivariate results indicate that 33 per cent of respondents contributed to the livelihood of relatives in the country of origin in the past year. Cross tabulations show large ethnic differences. Figure 1 shows that whereas almost 43 per cent of Surinamese and 41 per cent of Turks send money to relatives in the country of origin, only 7

Figure 1. *Percentage of respondents supporting family members in their country of origin (N=1270).*

[Figure 1 about here]

per cent of Antilleans do so. Moroccans contribute more often (36 per cent) than Antilleans but less often than Surinamese and Turks. Separate ANOVA analyses indicated that Surinamese and Turks are slightly ($p < .1$) more likely to contribute to their relatives than Moroccans, while Antilleans are significantly ($p < .01$) less likely to do so as compared to other groups. Multivariate results from a logistic regression analysis in Table 2 show that Antilleans are less likely to contribute as compared to Turks even when other background variables are taken into account, while other groups do not significantly differ from the Turks.

[Table 2 about here]

Higher income increases the chance that immigrants send remittances, although the effect seems non-linear. Those with middle-high incomes are the most likely to send remittances as compared to respondents with low incomes. Moreover, people who have a job are significantly more likely to send remittances than those who do not have a job, even when income is controlled. Contrary to conventional assimilation

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3 theory, the duration of stay does not have a negative effect on the likelihood of
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5 remittances. However, respondents who migrated as children are much less likely to
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7 send remittances to the country of origin as compared to those who moved after age
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9 12. Married respondents are more likely to contribute than are non-married
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11 respondents. No significant differences are found for language ability and nationality.
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14 15 16 17 *Close relatives in the country of origin*

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19 While the analysis of remittances focuses on supporting *any* family member in the
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21 country of origin, some specific questions were asked about ties with *close* family
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23 members, defined as parents, siblings and children. To analyse such ties, it is
24
25 important to first know how many respondents actually have close family members
26
27 and how many of them are living in the country of origin. Table 3 gives an overview
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29 of the number of respondents with close relatives as defined by this study and the
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31 number of these relatives living in their country of origin.
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39 [Table 3 around here]
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44 The bracketed numbers represent the percentage of respondents who have a specific
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46 type of relative living in the country of origin. For example, while in 894 cases,
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48 respondents reported that their mother is still alive, in 429 cases (or 48 per cent), these
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50 mothers are living in the country of origin. Mothers are most likely to still live in their
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52 country of origin for Turks (56 per cent) and are least likely to do so for Surinamese
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54 (31 per cent). For fathers, 52 per cent of respondents who reported their father is still
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56 alive indicated that he is living in their country of origin. Moreover, 39 per cent of
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58 respondents with siblings (N=1178) have at least one sibling living in the home
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3 country. Only 6 per cent of respondents have a child living in their country of origin
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5 of the 900 respondents who reported having children.
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10 *Contact*

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12 Contact with close relatives living in the respondent's country of origin is next
13 investigated. Only respondents who have close relatives in their country of origin are
14 included in this portion of the analysis. Results indicate that immigrants in the
15 Netherlands have extensive contact with relatives in the home country through phone,
16 (e-) mail and face-to-face communication. A majority of all respondents in all ethnic
17 groups had had face-to-face contact with close relatives in the previous 12 months.
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19 Less than 8 per cent of respondents reported having no contact at all with their
20 relatives in the country of origin in the previous year, and more than 60 per cent of
21 respondents indicated having contact with their close relatives at least once a month.
22
23 Turks and Moroccans in particular report frequent contact, with 38 per cent in touch
24 with close relative through either (e-) mail or phone at least once a week.
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39 To determine which factors account for the amount of contact immigrants
40 have with their relatives living in the country of origin, an OLS regression analysis
41 was performed using the frequency of telephone and (e-) mail contact as the
42 dependent variable. The results are shown in Table 4.
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50 [Table 4 about here]
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55 Surinamese and Antilleans have significantly less contact with their relatives abroad
56 as compared to Turks in our study, while Moroccans do not differ from Turks.
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59 Separate analyses indicate that this difference is due to the fact that Surinamese and
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3 Antillean respondents are much less likely to be in touch with their fathers as
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5 compared to Turks and Moroccans. For example, 17 per cent of Antilleans had not
6
7 had any contact with their fathers in the previous year as compared to only 4 per cent
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9 of Turks. These results are likely an indication of the different family structures
10
11 among immigrant groups in the Netherlands.
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15 Unlike remittances, contact by (e-) mail or phone is not influenced by
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17 economic resources or employment status. A higher level of educational attainment,
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19 however, increases the level of contact. While integration characteristics did not affect
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21 the likelihood of remittances, they have a negative effect on the frequency of contact.
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23 The frequency of contact with mothers living in the country of origin is lower for
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25 people who had lived longer in the Netherlands. Moreover, respondents who possess
26
27 double nationality reported less contact with their relatives in the country of origin as
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29 compared to those who only have nationality in their country of origin.
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34 Whereas migrating to the Netherlands before age 12 decreased a respondent's
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36 likelihood of sending remittances to family members, it increases the amount of
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38 contact with relatives in the country of origin, especially in the case of contact
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40 between adult children and elderly parents. This might indicate that in these cases,
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42 parents who brought their young children with them when they migrated to the
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44 Netherlands moved back to their country of origin when their children became older;
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46 meanwhile, their children remained in the Netherlands. Finally, in line with
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48 sociological research on families, women reported more contact with relatives in their
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50 country of origin than did men, and the frequency of contact is significantly higher
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52 with mothers.
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Discussion

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3 To date, most studies on transnationalism are either theoretical or based on qualitative
4 empirical research, with quantitative work currently limited to Hispanic immigrants in
5 the United States (Guarnizo et al. 2003; Portes et al. 2002)ⁱⁱ. Moreover, most
6 quantitative studies focus on transnational entrepreneurship and political involvement,
7 ignoring transnational family ties, even though these might be important for much
8 larger percentages of immigrants. This study is based on a survey of 1,270 immigrant
9 respondents from Turkish, Moroccan, Surinamese or Antillean background who
10 immigrated to the Netherlands. It specifically examines transnational family ties, such
11 as remittances to and contact with family members in the country of origin. An
12 additional objective of this study was to start to answer the question of whether
13 integration into the host society impedes or supports transnational activities.
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30 Thirty-three per cent of respondents claim to have sent remittances to family
31 members in the country of origin in the past 12 months. This is a much lower
32 percentage than the 47 per cent of Hispanic immigrants in the United States who
33 claimed to send remittances (Waldinger 2008). However, the difference is mostly due
34 to the fact that Antillean immigrants are far less likely to send remittances to family
35 members (7 per cent) than other ethnic groups. A large percentage of Antillean
36 immigrants arrived rather recently in the Netherlands due to the declining economic
37 conditions in the Antilles. Unlike earlier immigrants from the Dutch Antilles, they
38 often possess a relatively low level of education and have no existing social networks
39 in the Netherlands. This group also has a relatively high proportion of teenage
40 mothers and one-parent families. The unstable economic and family situations of at
41 least part of the Antillean sample may explain the lower proportion of respondents
42 who reported sending remittances.
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4 In general, respondents with higher incomes were more likely to send
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6 remittances than those with low incomes. Moreover, having a paid job also
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8 significantly increased the likelihood of sending remittances. These findings are
9
10 consistent with a resource-based transnationalism perspective (Itzigsohn and Saucedo
11
12 2002), which suggests that the more immigrants are economically incorporated into
13
14 the host society, the more they engage in transnational practices. These findings also
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16 indicate that having limited resources can impede engagement in transnational family
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18 practices.
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22 Indicators of integration, such as years of residence, language ability and
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24 nationality, do not significantly affect the likelihood of remittances. This result differs
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26 somewhat from results in the United States, for which there seems to be a general
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28 understanding in the literature that remittances are likely to decline over time as
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30 migrants become more committed to their host country. Clearly, migration to the
31
32 Netherlands followed a different pattern and has attracted different groups of migrants
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34 than did the United States, but modes of incorporation into these host societies differ
35
36 as well. Recently, it has been suggested that although Western European countries
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38 like the Netherlands have more generous welfare policies open to immigrants, socio-
39
40 economic and cultural integration is more difficult as compared to the United States.
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42 Sending remittances to family members in the country of origin could be a source of
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44 status and prestige for immigrants in their home country, a status difficult to obtain in
45
46 the Netherlands. Moreover, family reunification policies between the United States
47
48 and the Netherlands differ. Family reunification has become much more difficult in
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50 the Netherlands in recent years and is mostly limited to biological children of
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52 immigrants. This might force immigrants to support family members, such as elderly
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54 parents, in their country of origin rather than bringing them to the Netherlands.
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Whereas most studies on transnational family ties sample on the dependent variable, the data used in this paper also allowed me to quantify the number of respondents who have close relatives, defined as parents, siblings and children, in their country of origin. Although only a minority of respondents reported no such relatives in their country of origin, percentages differ by relative and by ethnic group. Immigrants in the Netherlands are unlikely to have children in the country of origin (6 per cent). Since the immigrant groups studied in this paper are so-called ‘old’ immigrant groups, most had already made use of previously generous family reunification policies. While such policies have recently become stricter, this policy shift primarily affects the ‘new’ immigrant groups in the Netherlandsⁱⁱⁱ. About half of the respondents whose parents are still alive reported them living in the country of origin, and close to 40 per cent of the sample had at least one sibling abroad. These results show that whereas many immigrants have at least one close relative in the country of origin, some respondents have all their close relatives in the Netherlands. This does not necessarily mean, though, that they do not send remittances to other family members abroad or are not in frequent contact with aunts, uncles, grandparents, nephews and nieces. In fact, one of the limitations of the current survey is that it collected data only on the nuclear family, whereas family relations among immigrant groups often include a large number of extended family members as well. Future research should extend its focus to the extended family to achieve a more inclusive overview of transnational family relations. Moreover, family composition is not stable. Although some respondents might have all their close relatives in the Netherlands at the time of the survey, family members might migrate back to the country of origin, or respondents might marry someone from their country of origin whose family remains behind.

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3 More than 90 per cent of the respondents reported having contact with their
4 relatives in the country of origin in the previous 12 months. However, the level of
5 transnational family ties differs by type of relative and by ethnic group. Antillean
6 respondents were least likely to have had face-to-face contact with their relatives in
7 the last year, followed by Surinamese respondents. Since, unlike Turkey and Morocco,
8 Suriname and the Antilles can only be reached by airplane from the Netherlands, this
9 might indicate that the costs of travelling back home on a yearly basis are too high for
10 many respondents. Surinamese and Antilleans also showed lower levels of contact
11 with their relatives. Part of this difference can be explained by the fact that the
12 Surinamese and Antilleans are less likely to be in frequent touch with their fathers,
13 with up to 17 per cent not having had any contact with their father in the previous year.
14 Surinamese and Antillean children are more likely to have grown up in single-parent
15 families as compared to the other groups, which may account for this difference.
16 However, the high frequency of contact with relatives among Turkish and Moroccan
17 immigrants can also be interpreted as what Itzigsohn describes as 'reactive
18 transnationalism' (2002: 772). This perspective views transnational practices as a
19 reaction to negative experiences of incorporation in which immigrants engage in
20 transnational practices as a result of their lack of satisfaction with their life in the host
21 country. In the last decade, Turks and, in particular, Moroccans in the Netherlands
22 have faced increasingly negative perceptions regarding their culture and religion.
23 Under such circumstances, family ties and identification with their country of origin
24 may remain or even become more important.

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26 Waldinger (2008) has shown that different types of migrants engage in
27 different types of trans-state social action. Moreover, his results indicate that
28 determinants of transnational activities differ by type of transnational activity. This is
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3 true even within transnational family ties. Regarding the relation between integration
4 and transnational family ties, I find that although the sending of remittances did not
5 decline as years of residence in the Netherlands increased, the frequency of contact
6 with relatives in the country of origin did. Living in the Netherlands longer is likely to
7 change immigrant opinions and behaviours to some extent, which could make contact
8 with family members who stayed behind in the country of origin less comfortable.
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10 Sending remittances does not necessarily require close contact and could therefore
11 become a sustained obligation, even when contact becomes less. In addition to years
12 of residence, double nationality also decreases the frequency of contact. Since
13 obtaining double nationality can also be seen as an indicator of integration, the same
14 argument can be made for double nationality as for years of residence.
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30 Age at migration has significant yet opposite effects. Children who migrated
31 before age 12 are less likely to send home remittances than those who migrated after
32 that age, yet those who migrated at a young age report more frequent contact with
33 parents in the country of origin. A plausible explanation for this could be that children
34 who came to the Netherlands at a young age were accompanied by their parents, who
35 later returned to their country of origin, for example, after retirement. Meanwhile,
36 their now-adult children remained in the Netherlands. Such children would have
37 fewer ties with family in the country of origin, decreasing the likelihood to remit. In
38 addition, their parents would likely receive some welfare or pension from the
39 Netherlands, decreasing the necessity to send remittances to them. Nevertheless, since
40 these children grew up with their parents in the Netherlands, contact between them is
41 likely to be high even after their parents return to their country of origin.
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58 Results from this study offer some suggestions for future research. The survey
59 used in this paper, as most other surveys on transnational issues, does not take into
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3 account the perspective of relatives in the country of origin. No information is
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5 available on the preferences for contact or the need for remittances of family members
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7 in the home country. Future research would benefit from a methodological approach
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9 in which both immigrants in the host countries and relatives in the country of origin
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11 are incorporated (Mazzucato 2008).
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15 Moreover, by focusing only on transnational family ties, I was able to explore
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17 the type of transnational activity that is most common. Although it is likely that at
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19 least some of the respondents who send remittances and are in touch with relatives
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21 back home are also involved in transnational entrepreneurship and political activity, it
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23 seems less likely that those who are involved in political and entrepreneurial
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25 transnational activities have no transnational family ties. Nevertheless, including other
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27 types of transnational activities in subsequent research on immigrant transnational ties
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29 in the Netherlands can expand the comparative perspective on immigrant
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31 transnational activity to contexts outside the United States.
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35 Finally, there is no evidence at present that transnational practices are
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37 transmitted inter-generationally. Nevertheless, Haller and Landolt (2005) found that
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39 whereas most second-generation migrants in Miami feel more at home in the United
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41 States than in their parents' home country, their visits to their parents' country of
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43 origin were frequent. Future research would benefit from longitudinal data to explore
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45 how transnational practices change over time and whether or not they remain salient
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47 beyond the first generation.
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Table 1. *Descriptive statistics*

Independent Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation
Ethnic Background		
Turkey	.26	.44
Morocco	.25	.43
Suriname	.24	.43
Dutch Antilles	.24	.43
Years of Residence	25.5	9.98
Child migrant	.19	.40
Nationality		
Native only	.20	.40
Double	.27	.45
Dutch only	.53	.50
Language ability		
Native language only	.30	.46
Dutch and native language	.08	.28
Dutch only	.62	.49
Education		
No education	.17	.37
Primary	.22	.41
Secondary	.44	.49
College	.17	.38
Education in the Netherlands	.50	.50
Employed	.53	.49
Income		
Low	.22	.41
Lower Middle	.57	.49
Higher Middle	.17	.37
High	.05	.21
Male	.50	.50
Married	.55	.49

Source: NKPS 2002

Table 2. *Logistic regression model for contributing to livelihood of family members in country of origin (n=1270)*

	Model 1	Model 2
	Exp (B)	Exp (B)
Ethnicity (Turks)		
Moroccan	.78	1.09
Surinamese	1.04	1.13
Antillean	.11***	.10***
Educational level (none)		
Primary		1.04
Secondary		1.04
College		1.20
Income (low)		
Middle low		1.74**
High low		3.11***
High		2.84**
Having a job		1.59**
Duration of stay		1.00
Migrated >12 years old		2.40***
Nationality (native only)		
Double		.96
Dutch only		1.44
Language (native only)		
Dutch and native		.98
Dutch only		.76
Education in Netherlands		.91
Female		.98
Married		1.37*
Constant	.71	.11
Nagelkerke Pseudo R ²	.13	.24
-2loglikelihood	1424	1360

Source: NKPS 2002 * $p < .1$, ** $p < .05$, *** $p < .01$.

Table 3. *Number (%) of respondents with close relatives in the country of origin and frequency of contact with relatives in the country of origin by phone or (e) mail and face to face in the past 12 months.*

Number of respondents with relatives in the country of origin (N=1270)					
	Turks	Moroccans	Surinamese	Antilleans	Total
Mother (N=894)	140 (56)	106 (48)	60 (31)	123 (53)	429 (48)
Father (N=682)	102 (53)	83 (44)	58 (43)	110 (65)	353 (52)
Sibling (N=1178)	169 (53)	127 (44)	66 (24)	99 (35)	461 (39)
Child (N=900)	21 (8)	11 (6)	9 (4)	11 (6)	52 (6)
Frequency of contact with relative abroad in past 12 months in percentages					
Never	3	2	11	16	8
Once a month	60	60	74	57	63
Once a week	37	38	15	27	29
Percentage of people who had face to face contact with their relatives abroad in the past year					
At least once	74	85	69	62	71

Source: NKPS 2002

Table 4. OLS Regression of frequency of contact by phone or (e)-mail with relative in country of origin on selected independent variables: Unstandardized coefficients

	Model 1	Model 2
	B (se)	B (se)
Ethnicity (Turks)		
Moroccan	.03 (.14)	.04 (.16)
Surinamese	-.43 (.16)**	-.63** (.33)
Antillean	.07 (.13)	-.17 (.29)
Educational level (none)		
Primary		.07 (.17)
Secondary		.33* (.18)
College		.58** (.29)
Income (low)		
Middle low		.20 (.14)
High low		-.03 (.20)
High		-.05 (.32)
Having a job		.17 (.12)
Duration of stay		-.01** (.01)
Migrated >12 years old		-.50** (.24)
Nationality (native only)		
Double		-.12* (.13)
Dutch only		-.05 (.24)
Language (native only)		
Dutch and native		.08 (.21)
Dutch only		-.11 (.18)
Education in Netherlands		.14 (.14)
Female		.32*** (.11)
Married		-.16 (.14)
Type of relative		
Child		.19** (.15)
Father		.05 (.11)
Mother		.24*** (.31)
Constant	4.41 (.09)***	4.88 (.38)***
R ²	.04	.19

Source: NKPS 2002 * $p < .1$, ** $p < .05$, *** $p < .01$.

Notes

ⁱ A full report on the survey, describing methodology and responses, can be found at www.nkps.nl/Codebook/Codebookframe.htm.

ⁱⁱ Notable exceptions are Snel et al. (2006) and Burholt (2004), but since their samples per ethnic group are quite small their results remain tentative.

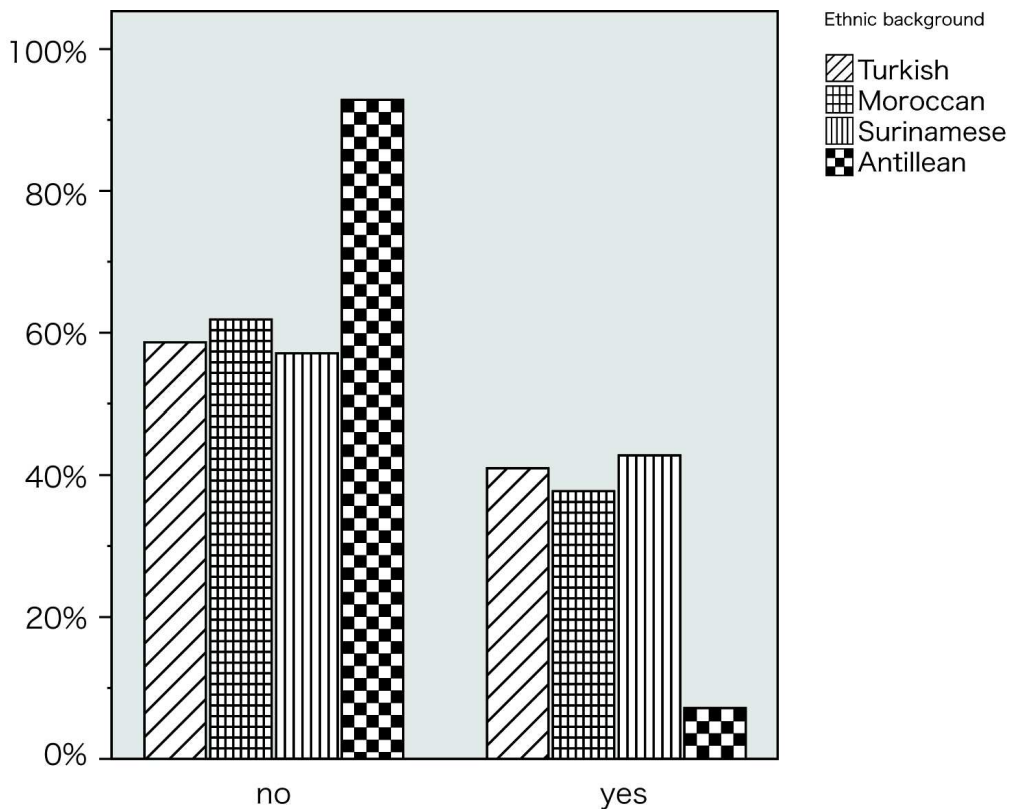
ⁱⁱⁱ 'New' immigrant groups include those immigrants from Somalia, Iraq, Afghanistan and Iran.

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