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8 The Netherlands

From Consensus to Contention in a Migration State

Willem Maas

Introduction: The Netherlands as a Migration State

The Netherlands has always been a migration state.¹ Immigrants played crucial roles in the formation of the Dutch state and its subsequent Golden Age in the seventeenth century, when many were drawn to the country for its relative religious tolerance. At least 150,000 people, primarily Calvinists and other Protestants—merchants, artists, and others—fled Flanders and Brabant during the war of independence from Spain (1568–1609) and settled in the northern Netherlands, where they constituted one tenth of the new country's population (Maas 2013a). As the new Dutch Republic overtook northern Italy as Europe's most urbanized region, immigrants quickly outnumbered locals in many cities.² Immigrants from present-day Belgium and northern France were joined by Sephardic Jews from Portugal and Spain, Germans, Scandinavians, Scots, Ashkenazi Jews from central and eastern Europe, Huguenots from France, and others, who helped transform the Netherlands from a mostly rural and agricultural backwater into an urbanized society, a world center of economic, industrial, intellectual, financial, artistic, and scientific activity (*Algemene Geschiedenis Der Nederlanden* 1977). Immigration continued more slowly in the eighteenth century (see Table 8.1) and then gradually decreased in the nineteenth century, increasing again in the twentieth century (Lucassen and Penninx 1997). Only in the twenty-first century has the proportion of immigrants in Dutch society surpassed the previous peak reached during the Golden Age: by 2018, people born outside the

Netherlands accounted for around 12 percent of the total resident population of the Netherlands (see Table 8.2), while they and individuals with at least one parent born outside the Netherlands accounted for almost one quarter of the population (see Table 8.3). As Leo Lucassen (whose commentary follows this chapter) noted at the launch of a website about migration to the Netherlands, the image of a stable Dutch population which was transformed by immigration only in the past half century demonstrates a lack of historical insight and is in dire need of correction.³

Almost as important as immigration has been large-scale emigration. Over half a million persons born in the Netherlands—over 5 percent of the country's population—emigrated between 1946 and 1969, not counting the many who emigrated and subsequently returned (Elich 1983, 1987), encouraged by government emigration subsidies. Emigration of the Dutch-born population slowed slightly in the 1970s and 1980s but then once again increased, driven by free movement within the EU which allows individuals to more easily relocate to other EU countries; Belgium and Germany are particularly popular with the Dutch because of lower taxes and house prices, and there is also significant retirement migration to southern Europe (Maas 2009). Between 1995 and 2017, there was net emigration of some 437,445 individuals born in the Netherlands (see Table 8.4), roughly the same number (averaging around 20,000 annually) as during the postwar emigration boom.⁴ Of course the postwar emigration of people born in the Netherlands was proportionately more significant, as the resident population has increased from approximately 10 million in 1950 to over 17 million by 2019. Because of a significant increase in the emigration of foreign-born Dutch residents (whether returning to their countries of origin or moving elsewhere), however, there is now more emigration than ever before: 0.89 percent of the total population emigrates every year. Immigration is even more significant than emigration, however, with annual inflows equivalent to 1.36 percent of the population. Taken together, the population of the Netherlands is increasingly mobile.

Dutch public opinion is not more hostile to immigrants than public opinion in other European states and the political salience of immigration in the Netherlands is generally below the EU average. For example, the Fall 2019 Eurobarometer survey asking Europeans to choose the two most important issues facing their country showed that only 13 percent of Dutch respondents chose immigration, below the EU27 average of 17 percent and far lower than neighboring Belgium (where immigration was the most mentioned issue, chosen by 26 percent of respondents) and Germany (where likewise 26 percent of respondents chose it and immigration was the second-most mentioned issue). In that survey, Dutch respondents ranked immigration behind the environment, energy, and climate change (chosen by 66 percent of Dutch

respondents as one of the two most important issues facing the Netherlands; by far the highest in the EU), health and social security (31 percent), the education system (25 percent), housing (15 percent), crime (15 percent), and pensions (14 percent).⁵

In another survey conducted in October 2017, asking Europeans whether they would feel comfortable or uncomfortable having an immigrant as a family member or partner, Dutch respondents were the most open of all EU28 member states, with 78 percent saying they would be totally comfortable and only 5 percent saying they would be uncomfortable, far more open than the EU28 average of 40 percent comfortable and 23 percent uncomfortable.⁶ On questions of whether immigration from outside the EU is more of a problem or more of an opportunity, on whether integration of immigrants is successful, and on the impact of immigrants on society Dutch respondents similarly were more positive than the EU28 average.⁷ Nevertheless, immigration by individuals from non-Western societies aroused a mixture of responses, and by the end of the twentieth century the Netherlands could be described—along with many other western European states—as a reluctant immigration country (Entzinger 2004). In the same survey as above, Dutch respondents were the most likely of all EU28 member states to say that successful integration of immigrants requires being able to speak Dutch (87 percent versus the EU28 average of 68 percent for being able to speak the country's language) and being committed to the way of life in the Netherlands by accepting the norms and values of society (79 percent of Dutch respondents, compared to the EU28 average of 56 percent). As detailed below, the political situation in the Netherlands in the first decades of the twenty-first century challenges immigration advocates, though policies and their implementation were not as restrictionist as in some other European states.

The Dutch tradition of consensus-building, where all views are carefully considered and the result is generally middle-of-the-road policies and bureaucratic inertia, coupled with the purely proportional electoral system, allowed anti-immigrant parties not only to enter parliament but also to affect government policy. In the twenty-first century, the depoliticization of migration and citizenship policy that had been the norm in the Netherlands was shattered by populist parties, most famously those led by Pim Fortuyn (LPF), Geert Wilders (PVV), and Thierry Baudet (FvD)—for descriptions of all recent Dutch political parties see below, and especially Table 8.8. The shift from consensus-building to factiousness or discord characterizes recent Dutch politics and undermines a key assumption of the gap hypothesis. As discussed elsewhere in this book, the gap hypothesis holds that the gap between the goals of national immigration policy and actual policy outcomes is increasing. But this assumes that the goals of national immigration policy can be defined and are relatively fixed. The Netherlands provides a context in which this does not hold, because there is lack

of consensus about almost every aspect of migration politics and policies, and this lack of consensus is translated into shifting national immigration policies.

The Migration Tradition

Whether caused by geography, political culture, economic links, or other factors, migration has been a central issue in the Netherlands since its foundation as a state. In the seventeenth century Golden Age, the Netherlands was an economic and cultural magnet, with Dutch cities drawing the best and brightest from far and wide. This role waned during the eighteenth century, and during the nineteenth century the Netherlands was a country of emigration. Like other colonial states, the Netherlands exported people abroad during the colonial period, but it also imported highly skilled immigrants.

In the first quarter of the twentieth century (1900–1924), the Netherlands became a net immigration country, drawing roughly the same proportion of immigrants as in the third quarter (1950–1974). Only from the late 1920s until the early 1960s was the Netherlands a net emigration country—until the country briefly became an emigration country again during a period of five years from 2003 to 2007, a situation unique in western Europe until the economic crisis, as Ireland also once again became an emigration country. Immigration outpaced emigration strikingly in the final quarter of the twentieth century, as net immigration averaged 0.20 percent of the population

TABLE 8.1. Average Annual Migration, 1796–2017

	<i>Immigration</i>	<i>Emigration</i>	<i>Net</i>	<i>Immigration</i>	<i>Emigration</i>	<i>Net</i>
	<i>(thousands)</i>			<i>(per 1,000 population)</i>		
2000–2017	148.9	123.6	25.2	9.0	7.5	1.5
1975–1999	98.4	69.4	28.9	6.7	4.7	2.0
1950–1974	63.9	59.8	4.1	5.4	5.1	0.3
1925–1949	41.3	45.7	–4.5	4.8	5.3	–0.5
1900–1924	35.6	34.1	1.5	5.7	5.5	0.2
1865–1899	12.5	15.8	–3.3	2.9	3.7	–0.8
1796–1864	1.6	3.0	–1.4	0.6	1.1	–0.5

SOURCES: Data adapted from Nicolaas and Sprangers 2007, except for 2000–2017, which is calculated from Statistics Netherlands figures.

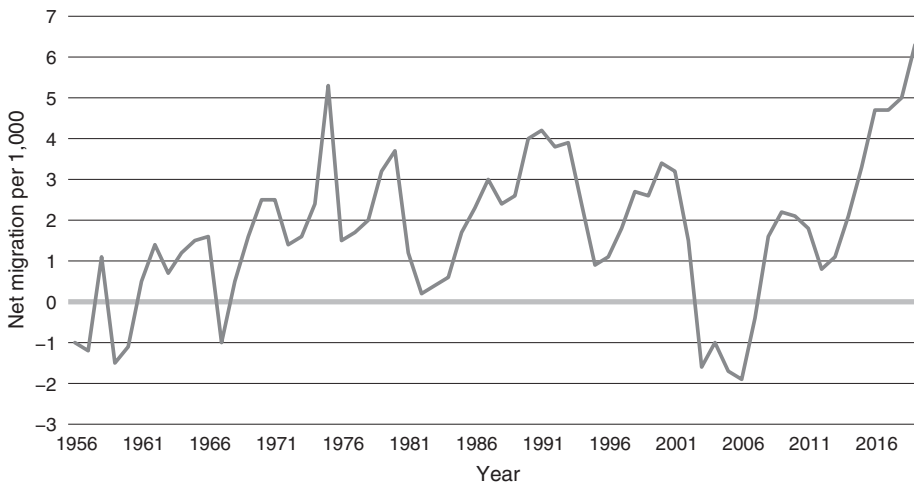


FIGURE 8.1. Net Migration to the Netherlands, per 1,000 Population, 1956–2019

annually. Since 2000, both immigration (averaging 0.90 percent of the population annually) and emigration (averaging 0.75 percent of the population annually) are the highest ever, as the Netherlands joins the trend across western Europe of increasing mobility.

Figure 8.1 shows net migration to the Netherlands between 1956 and 2019. Despite substantial postcolonial and labor immigration, the Netherlands was essentially an emigration country from the late 1920s until the 1960s. Peak net immigration years included the 1970s (labor migration and the independence of Suriname), the late 1980s and early 1990s (asylum and family reunification), 1998–2001, and the period since 2014.

Postwar Emigration

In the immediate aftermath of World War II, the Dutch government started exploring the possibility of encouraging emigration. In order to build a welfare state, the government wanted to promote industrialization and export industries and reduce the reliance on farming. As a result, agricultural workers—who also had a very high birth rate—were considered surplus. In his New Year’s address on January 1, 1950, Prime Minister Willem Drees famously announced that “part of our people should venture, as in previous centuries, to seek their future in larger realms than our own country.”⁸

To encourage emigration, the government offered information and courses, facilitated transportation, signed international agreements such as the Netherlands Australian Migration Agreement (1951), and offered financial subsidies to those willing to leave. Farmers' associations, women's groups, and Protestant and Catholic emigrant organizations assisted emigrants in their journey, and the government established a Netherlands Emigration Service.⁹ From 1950 to 1959, roughly 350,000 Dutch emigrants settled in Canada (127,900), Australia (106,100), the United States (59,900), South Africa (29,100), New Zealand (19,900), and elsewhere. The peak year was 1952, when 52,000 Dutch emigrants left (Nicolaas and Sprangers 2007).

The war had devastated the country's infrastructure, there were worries about the Cold War and insufficient work and food, and a prevailing pessimism. A novelist captured the bleak mood: "The Netherlands is overpopulated. Every child that is born sets back civilization and makes us poorer. In ten years we will be bankrupt." (Hermans 1951, my translation). Severe storms on February 1, 1953, destroyed dykes and flooded large parts of the provinces of Zeeland, South Holland, and North Brabant, killing roughly 1800 and causing the evacuation of approximately 72,000 people. The tragedy galvanized government spending on infrastructure and laid the groundwork for the Delta Plan, intended to prevent future disasters. The rise of social programs introduced by the social democratic government headed by Willem Drees stabilized the situation. The standard of living started to rise, industrialization increased, and the 1959 discovery of natural gas in Groningen added to the economic resurgence. Emigration slowed and by the 1960s there were efforts to recruit workers, first from southern Europe (especially Italy, Spain, and Portugal) and then elsewhere (see section on Labor Migration, below).

Postcolonial Immigration

The Netherlands had postcolonial immigration from Indonesia, Suriname, and the Netherlands Antilles. I will examine the effects of this immigration in the following sections of the chapter.

Indonesia

The largest immigration to the Netherlands was the movement of over 400,000 people from the former Dutch East Indies following the independence of Indonesia and its subsequent annexation of Netherlands New Guinea from 1945 to 1968. Many of these immigrants were among the roughly 300,000 people who had moved there from the Netherlands between 1900 and 1940 (and thus were simply returning emigrants), but others were born in what became Indonesia (Beets, van Imhoff,

TABLE 8.2. Foreign-Born Residents of the Netherlands, by Country of Birth (thousands)

	<i>Germany</i>	<i>Indonesia</i>	<i>Suriname</i>	<i>Turkey</i>	<i>Morocco</i>	<i>Other countries</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>% of total population</i>
2018	105.4	100.9	176.4	191.5	169.0	1336.1	2079.3	12.1
2015	104.8	107.5	179.2	192.3	168.5	1108.6	1861.0	11.0
2010	120.5	140.6	186.8	196.7	167.4	1020.5	1832.5	11.1
2005	117.7	155.9	190.1	195.9	168.5	907.9	1736.1	10.6
2000	124.2	168.0	185.0	178.0	152.7	748.4	1556.3	9.8
1996	130.1	177.7	181.0	167.5	140.7	610.1	1407.1	9.1
1971	128.9	204.4	29.0	28.2	20.9	194.9	606.3	4.6
1960	129.2	203.2	12.9			103.3	448.6	3.9
1947	135.5	79.9				76.6	292.0	3.0
1930		32.6				245.1	277.7	3.5

SOURCE: Calculated from Statistics Netherlands figures and Nicolaas and Sprangers 2007 for the pre-1996 numbers. “Indonesia” figures for 1930 and 1947 include Suriname and the Netherlands Antilles. Poland has now joined the historically five most important sources, as shown in Table 8.3.

and Huisman 2003). The Indonesian-born group quickly became the largest group of foreign-born residents in the Netherlands.

Of particular note within the Indonesian-born population are the Moluccans, who are mostly Christian, Dutch-speaking, and were part of the Dutch colonial elite.¹⁰ In 1950, Moluccan soldiers who had served with the Royal Netherlands Indies Army (KNIL) declared an independent Republic of the South Moluccas (Republik Maluku Selatan, RMS). Within six months, most of the RMS forces were defeated by the troops of the new Republic of Indonesia. The RMS leadership retreated to the Netherlands, where they established a government-in-exile, accompanied by some 12,500 soldiers and their families. Initially housed in camps, many Moluccans never adopted Dutch citizenship, expecting that they would be able to return to an independent South Moluccan state. Frustrated with the inaction of successive Dutch governments, some Moluccan exiles engaged in violent action in the 1970s, including occupations, hostage-takings, and the hijacking of two trains (“Moluccan exiles will settle for autonomy” 2009).¹¹ By 2017 the Moluccan community numbered approximately 45,000, of whom approximately 40 percent live in special residential districts reserved for Moluccans, although many of these districts were disappearing (“Nog 45 gemeenten hebben aparte Molukse wijk” 2017).

The total Indonesia-born population also remained significant although aging fast: by 2018, approximately 100,900 people born in Indonesia resided in the Netherlands, down by about half from the 1960s and 1970s. Subsequent generations are

much larger: by one estimate from 2001 there were over 280,000 second-generation Indonesians (a person with at least one parent born in Indonesia) resident in the Netherlands (Beets, van Imhoff, and Huisman 2003, 65). More recent estimates put the number of second-generation Indonesians at around 260,700 in 2018, for a total first- and second-generation population of 361,500 Indonesians (Table 8.3), although almost three-quarters of the second generation have only one parent born in Indonesia. Statistics Netherlands does not count individuals with foreign heritage beyond the second generation, but many second-generation Indonesians now have children,

TABLE 8.3. Residents with a Migration Background, 2018

	<i>Total (thousands)</i>	<i>First Generation (thousands)</i>	<i>Second Generation</i>			<i>Percentage of Those with Migration Background</i>	<i>Percentage of Total Population</i>
			<i>Total (thousands)</i>	<i>One Parent (thousands)</i>	<i>Two Parents (thousands)</i>		
Turkey	404.5	191.5	212.9	51.9	161.0	10.2	2.35
Morocco	396.5	169.0	227.5	46.2	181.3	10.0	2.31
Indonesia	361.5	100.9	260.7	191.9	68.8	9.1	2.10
Germany	354.1	105.3	248.8	229.9	18.9	8.9	2.06
Suriname	351.7	176.4	175.3	68.3	106.9	8.9	2.05
Poland	173.0	135.0	38.0	19.8	18.2	4.4	1.01
Antilles and Aruba	156.2	84.5	72.6	40.9	31.6	3.9	0.91
Belgium	118.7	45.5	73.2	67.5	5.7	3.0	0.69
Syria	90.8	81.8	9.0	1.0	7.9	2.3	0.53
United Kingdom	88.4	49.4	39.0	34.7	4.3	2.2	0.52
Former Yugoslavia	83.0	49.7	33.2	14.2	19.0	2.1	0.48
China	74.2	51.5	22.7	4.9	17.8	1.9	0.43
Former USSR	64.6	44.0	20.6	10.8	9.7	1.6	0.38
Iraq	61.3	43.9	17.4	2.6	14.8	1.5	0.36
Italy	53.7	31.4	22.3	18.9	3.4	1.4	0.31
Afghani- stan	47.8	35.0	12.8	0.96	11.8	1.2	0.28
France	45.6	25.1	20.5	17.4	3.1	1.1	0.26
Others	1046.2	659.3	387.0	239.7	146.5	26.7	6.63
Total	3971.8	2079.3	1892.5	1061.6	830.7	100.0	22.92

SOURCE: Calculated from Statistics Netherlands.

grandchildren, and great-grandchildren, while only the original immigrants and their children appear in the statistics.

Suriname

The other significant spurt of postcolonial migration occurred around the 1975 independence of Suriname. One of the Dutch government's motivations for granting independence (neighboring French Guiana was never granted independence and remains an overseas department of France) had been to reduce the immigration of Surinamese to the Netherlands (van Amersfoort 1999, 143). This plan backfired spectacularly, as many Surinamese moved to the Netherlands in anticipation of independence, fearing that independence would have negative consequences and wanting to make use of their Dutch citizenship rather than lose it. Soon after independence, over one third of Suriname's population had moved to the Netherlands, where they rivalled the Indonesians as the largest group of foreign-born residents.

Suriname's population is ethnically diverse. The four largest groups are the Hindustani or East Indians (descendants of nineteenth century contract workers from northern India), the Creoles (of mixed African and European, mostly Dutch, heritage), the Javanese (descendants of contract workers from the former Dutch East Indies), and the Maroons (descendants of West African slaves who escaped to the interior). One estimate placed the proportions at 37 percent Hindustani, 31 percent Creole, 15 percent Javanese, 10 percent Maroon, 2 percent Amerindian, 2 percent Chinese, 1 percent white, and 2 percent other.¹² In particular, the Chinese community in Suriname has grown since the 1990s (Tjon Sie Fat 2009). The size of the Surinamese community resident in the Netherlands has also continued to grow, though more slowly after 1980, when visa restrictions were introduced. By 2018, approximately 176,400 individuals born in Suriname resided in the Netherlands (Table 8.2) along with a similar number of second-generation Surinamese (Table 8.3), for a total of around 351,700 Surinamese resident in the Netherlands, compared with a total population in Suriname of around 600,000.

Netherlands Antilles

Dutch settlers colonized various islands in the Caribbean in the seventeenth century, running slave plantations and engaging in trading. After the 1814 Anglo-Dutch Treaty, the Dutch retained control of two sets of islands: Aruba, Bonaire, and Curaçao (off the coast of Venezuela) and Sint Eustatius, Saba, and Sint Maarten (in the Leeward islands). Following the postwar decolonization, the Netherlands Antilles became one of three constituent units of the Kingdom of the Netherlands (along with Suriname and the Netherlands). Aruba separated from the rest of the Netherlands Antilles in 1986 and Curaçao and Sint Maarten followed in 2010, when Bonaire,

Sint Eustatius, and Saba became Dutch municipalities. The islands had a combined population of around 335,000 (approximately 150,000 on Curaçao; 117,000 on Aruba; 42,000 on Sint Maarten; 20,000 on Bonaire; 2900 on Sint Eustatius; and 1800 on Saba). Antillians hold Dutch citizenship and migration to the Netherlands is unrestricted, although several islands limit migration from the Netherlands by requiring residence permits and establishing quotas. Migration from the Antilles to the Netherlands was for a long time chiefly temporary, as local youth sought opportunities to work or study in the Netherlands before returning. In the late 1990s, however, the economic situation in the Caribbean deteriorated and many Antillians moved to the Netherlands: there was net migration of over 28,000 between 1997 and 2002, before the migration flow reversed. By 2018, there were an estimated 84,500 first-generation Antillians residing in the Netherlands, alongside another 72,600 second generation.

The increase in the number of Antillians and the fact that some Antillian youth in the Netherlands became involved in criminal activities prompted the Dutch government in 2006, under immigration minister Rita Verdonk, to propose regulations allowing for the repatriation of Antillian youth between the ages of sixteen and twenty-four who were unemployed and had no good employment prospects. Later proposals specified that only individuals who were convicted of a crime or who threatened national security could be repatriated. There were other public discussions advocating restricting the migration rights of *all* Antillians to the Netherlands (Emmer 2007). But these ran into the fundamental problem that Dutch citizenship is unitary, with equal status and no distinctions between any of the constituent units of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.¹³ In 2010, the disjuncture between the Antilles being able to limit migration from the Netherlands without the reverse resulted in a draft law on free movement within the Kingdom (Rijkswet Personenverkeer 2010), but this was abandoned. The relationship between the European and Caribbean Netherlands remains politically sensitive (Sharpe 2014). As detailed in Sharpe's commentary following this chapter, there are significant migration issues in the Caribbean Netherlands, particularly relating to Venezuela. The integration of three of the Caribbean islands as special municipalities of the Netherlands also led to more immigration from the European part of the Netherlands, and the mostly white immigrants are relatively well off compared with their local fellow citizens.¹⁴

Labor Migration

In common with other western European states such as Germany, the Netherlands in the 1960s signed several labor recruitment agreements with foreign countries, intended to bring workers to the Netherlands who would work for some period of time and then return to their home countries. Such agreements were signed with Italy

(1960), Spain (1961), Portugal (1963), Turkey (1964), Greece (1966), Morocco (1969), Tunisia (1970), and Yugoslavia (1970). Free movement within the European Community (Maas 2007) soon made obsolete the agreement with Italy and later the ones with Greece (which joined the EC in 1981) and Spain and Portugal (which joined in 1986). The labor migration that resulted from these agreements was first mostly circular: the mostly young, male workers would work and then indeed return. The 1973 oil crisis altered this pattern significantly. Following the Egyptian and Syrian attack on Israel in October 1973 (the Yom Kippur War), the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) first raised the price of oil and then set a total embargo on oil exports to the United States and the Netherlands, later extending the embargo to other west European states and Japan. The resulting oil crisis, coupled with a stock market crash and high inflation, resulted in recession across Europe and rising unemployment. Rather than returning home, however, many of the labor migrants who had moved to the Netherlands decided to stay.

The Netherlands during this time had relatively liberal family reunification and formation policies, allowing labor migrants to bring their families to the Netherlands. For example, a comparison of the growth of the Turkish populations in the Netherlands and Germany since the informal end of the guestworker system in 1974 shows that the Turkish population grew much faster in the Netherlands, mostly because of Germany's more restrictive family reunification and formation policies and Germany's relative success during the 1980s at enticing unemployed Turkish workers to leave (Muus 2004, 269).

The legacy of pillarization—known as *verzuiling* in Dutch, meaning the vertical segregation of society into distinct, usually denominational, social pillars each with its own social, cultural, and political institutions, and even sports leagues—resulted in publicly-funded Muslim and Hindu denominational schools and broadcasting facilities. The welfare state provided high benefits and low unemployment while promoting cultural diversity, meaning that the Netherlands was widely perceived as one of the few clear examples of multiculturalism, alongside Canada and Australia (Maas 2010, 227–8). But as discussed in the Sharpe commentary following this chapter, the commitment to multiculturalism has arguably been replaced by an “ethno-republican” nationalism that undermines respect for diversity and inclusion.

By 2018—as shown in Tables 8.2 and 8.3—the largest group of residents of the Netherlands born outside the country were born in Turkey, followed by Suriname, Morocco, and then Poland, ahead of Germany. Indonesia, which had been the largest source country until the 1990s, dropped to sixth place as the first generation died: most immigrants from Indonesia had arrived by the mid-1950s, while most postcolonial and labor immigrants arrived twenty or more years later.

One way of examining the relative size of immigrant groups is to look at the statistics on the background of immigrants and their children. Until 2016, these statistics employed the term *allochtoon*, in use since the 1970s and taken from the Greek roots *allos* (other) and *chthon* (land or earth), the opposite of the word *autochtoon* (autochthonous, in English). Statistics Netherlands defined an *allochtoon* as someone born abroad with at least one parent who was born abroad (first generation *allochtoon*) or someone born in the Netherlands who had at least one parent born abroad (second generation *allochtoon*). For adopted children, the birthplaces of the adoptive rather than genetic parents counted. In the debate about terminology, it was sometimes remarked that because Geert Wilders' mother was born in the Netherlands Indies (now Indonesia), he is a second-generation *allochtoon* with a western background, because Statistics Netherlands defines Western background as Europe (excluding Turkey), North America, Oceania, Indonesia, and Japan. The Dutch royal family, too, are *allochtonen*: King Willem-Alexander's father and grandfather were born in Germany, and because Queen Maxima was born in Argentina, the crown princess and her sisters are second-generation *allochtonen* with a non-western background. Such examples highlight the difficulties with statistics, and is one reason (following advice from a government thinktank in 2012) the Dutch government introduced new terminology in 2016, ending the use of the term *allochtoon* and the western and non-western distinction and suggesting many alternatives, including persons with a migration background (Bovens et al 2016).

Table 8.3 shows the top sources of persons with a migration background resident in the Netherlands. By 2020, almost one-quarter of residents of the Netherlands (24.1 percent) had a migration background either directly or through one or both parents, roughly half first generation and half second generation, a total of 4.2 million people. Just under half of this population originated in five countries of origin: Turkey, Morocco, Indonesia, Germany, and Suriname. Noteworthy are the intermarriage rates in the second generation: 80 percent of Morocco-background, 76 percent of Turkey-background, and 61 percent of Suriname-background residents of the Netherlands born in the Netherlands are the children of two parents both born in that country of origin, compared with less than 8 percent of those with a background in Germany or Belgium.

Recent Migration Patterns

Examining annual immigration and emigration statistics by the citizenship (Dutch or non-Dutch) of the migrant shows stable immigration of Dutch citizens (return migration and immigration of those who acquired citizenship abroad, such as by

marriage or birth to a Dutch citizen) from the 1970s to the 1990s and growing immigration of Dutch citizens since then. Emigration of Dutch citizens has grown, particularly after 2000. For non-Dutch citizens, the immigration trend is considerably more varied (with many ups and downs), while the emigration trend is stable and growing, particularly after 2002; in 2009 more than 57,000 non-Dutch citizens emigrated, the highest number ever.

Figure 8.2 shows net immigration not by citizenship status but by country of birth for the period of 1972 to 2017. Suriname and the Antilles, which were the most important source of immigrants throughout the 1970s (postcolonial immigration), were joined by Turkey and then Morocco (labor immigration). The ever-growing importance of immigration from European Union member states is noteworthy, particularly since the 2004 enlargement—most notably from Poland (Pool 2011). The most dramatic rise in recent years is immigration from Syria: while in 2010 there were only 6916 individuals born in Syria living in the Netherlands, by 2018 that number had jumped to 81,811.

Figure 8.3 shows net immigration (immigration minus emigration) by country of birth for the top ten sources, ranked by total net immigration over the 1995–2019 period (shown beside the country name). Most striking is Poland, by far the largest source of recent immigrants settling in the Netherlands, followed by Syria (spiking due to the civil war; it is unclear whether these people will stay or return to Syria), and then the former Soviet Union and China, ahead of Turkey and Morocco. Germany, the second EU country after Poland, appears ninth, while other EU member states are even further down the list—but this is only because of high emigration compensating for high immigration. The numbers for net immigration mask the

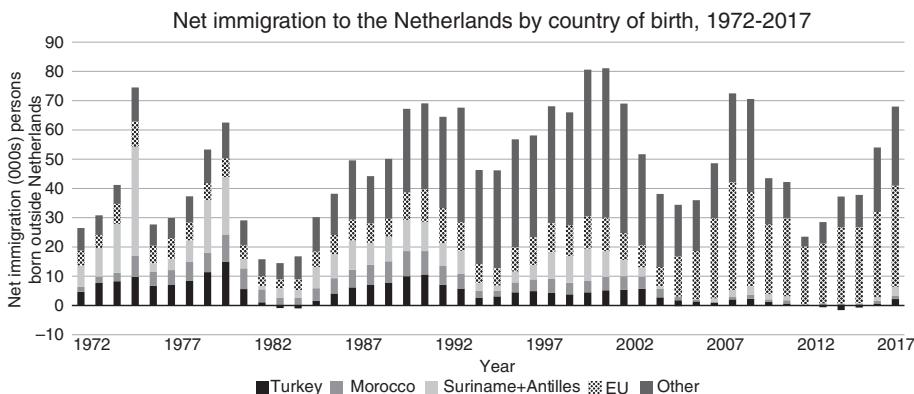


FIGURE 8.2. Net Immigration (in 000s) by Country of Birth, 1972–2017

SOURCE: Calculated from Statistics Netherlands.

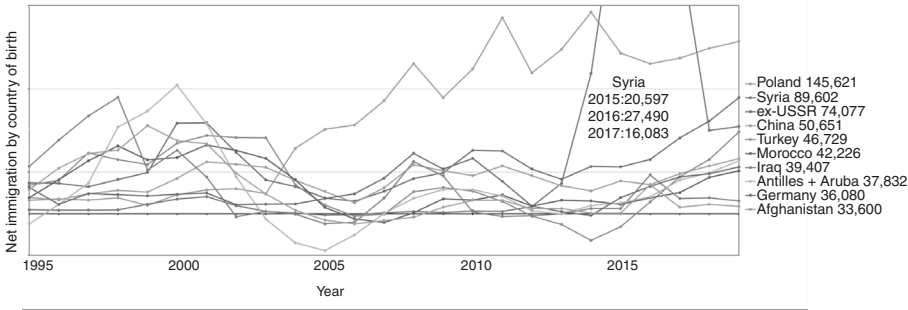


FIGURE 8.3. Net Immigration by Country of Birth, Top Countries, 1995–2019

TABLE 8.4. Emigration of Persons Born in the Netherlands, by Destination, 1995–2009 (thousands)

	<i>Emigration</i>	<i>Return</i>	<i>Net Emigration</i>	
Belgium	102.5	50.3	52.2	23.6%
Germany	80.8	44.8	36.0	16.3%
Other Europe	82.8	48.3	34.6	15.6%
United Kingdom	45.5	22.0	23.5	10.6%
France	30.8	15.0	15.7	7.1%
Spain	30.8	18.2	12.6	5.7%
United States	37.4	25.9	11.6	5.2%
Canada	13.1	5.2	7.9	3.6%
Antilles and Aruba	35.4	27.7	7.7	3.5%
Australia	17.0	9.3	7.7	3.5%
Other	94.1	82.5	11.6	5.3%
Subtotal	570.4	349.2	221.2	100.0%
Unknown	92.2	0	92.2	
Total	662.6	349.2	313.4	

SOURCE: Calculated from Statistics Netherlands figures.

growing circular migration within the European Union, as Europeans move within the EU in a “churn” pattern resembling internal migration within federal states such as the United States and Canada, something that EU institutions have long promoted (Maas 2007; 2017).

Immigration by individuals born outside the Netherlands dipped in the middle of the first decade of the twenty-first century (especially 2002–2006) at the same time that emigration of those born in the Netherlands increased. Table 8.4 shows

the most important destination countries of these Dutch-born emigrants. The significant “churn” in migration within the European Union is evident, as thousands of Dutch-born individuals both emigrate to and return from other EU member states. The top five destinations of net emigration (emigration minus immigration) are all European, in contrast to postwar emigration overseas. Indeed, net emigration to European destinations now accounts for almost four-fifths of all emigration by persons born in the Netherlands.

Free movement within the EU has always been key to European integration (Maas 2020, 2021a, 2021b), but recent Dutch People’s Party for Freedom and Democracy or VVD-led governments have been among the most vocal proponents of restricting intra-EU free movement rights, and have pursued restrictive interpretations of what constitutes “sufficient resources” for economically inactive EU citizens while adding higher income and working hours conditions to qualify for residence rights as a “worker” under EU law (Mantu 2021; Schrauwen 2021).

Citizenship

Within the wide range of citizenship and naturalization policies in Europe, the Netherlands was long situated at the liberal end of the spectrum. For example, a 1998 study of foreigners’ rights in France, Germany, and the Netherlands found that the Netherlands had provided foreigners the most rights, because foreigners could vote in local elections and their cultural rights were guaranteed under the minorities policy (Guiraudon 1998, 274). In addition, the Netherlands has had one of the highest naturalization rates among European states.

Table 8.5 shows the percentage of residents who were born abroad and the percentage who have foreign nationality for nine European states in 1998, 2003, and 2007. The ratio is inexact because birth abroad does not necessarily mean foreign citizenship—for example a child born abroad of citizen parents usually acquires citizenship automatically through *jus sanguinis*, acquisition by descent. However, the relative ratios are illustrative of the difference in naturalization rates; the Netherlands emerges as having the lowest proportion of foreign-born residents who do not naturalize (conversely, the highest proportion of foreign-born who do naturalize).

In the Netherlands, the 1990s witnessed a debate about whether granting citizenship should be seen as a means of encouraging integration or rather as the statement of its successful conclusion. Political parties on the left tended to promote the former view; those on the right the latter, arguing that naturalization should be seen as the “crowning moment” at which a completely integrated person finally achieved

TABLE 8.5. Percentage of Residents Who Are Foreign Born and Have Foreign Nationality

	1998			2003			2007		
	Foreign Born	Foreign Nationality	Ratio	Foreign Born	Foreign Nationality	Ratio	Foreign Born	Foreign Nationality	Ratio
Netherlands	9.6	4.2	44%	10.7	4.3	40%	10.7	4.2	39%
Sweden	11.0	5.6	51%	12.0	5.3	44%	13.4	5.7	43%
United Kingdom	7.4	3.8	51%	8.9	4.7	53%	10.2	6.5	64%
Germany	12.2	8.9	73%	12.9	8.9	69%			
France	7.3	5.6	77%	8.1	5.6	69%			
Belgium	10.0	8.7	87%	11.4	8.3	73%	13.0	9.1	70%
Denmark	5.4	4.8	89%	6.3	5.0	79%	6.9	5.5	80%
Switzerland	21.4	19.0	89%	23.1	20	87%	24.9	20.8	84%
Spain	3.2	1.9	59%	8.8	7.2	82%	13.4	11.6	87%

source: Calculated from OECD figures. Figures for France are for 1999 and 2005; for Germany, 1998 and 2005.

complete legal equality. The right-wing leaders argued that that granting citizenship too easily would cast doubt on the recipient's loyalty, while others argued that naturalization inherently provided a source of loyalty (Groenendijk 2005, 194).

Between 1992 and 1997, the view of the parties of the left held sway: "Nationality is an expression of connection, not of indivisible loyalty. Because that connection can be of many kinds, it is possible for an individual to have connections to more than one country. Nationality should therefore no longer be seen as an exclusive link with a single country; dual nationality not a phenomenon that should automatically be opposed" (Driouichi 2007, 123, my translation). The toleration of dual nationality that resulted from this kind of argument resulted in large-scale naturalizations, peaking at over 80,000 acquisitions of Dutch nationality in 1996 (Figure 8.4).

Subsequently, however, the openness towards dual nationality waned, and policies once again became more restrictionist (Penninx 2005). By 2007, the far-right politician Geert Wilders was proposing that dual citizens should not be cabinet ministers, a jab at two new cabinet members, one Turkish-Dutch and the other Moroccan-Dutch. His proposal was defeated, but the government did propose making it harder for those who naturalize as adults to retain their other nationality, and new laws made it easier to strip individuals of their Dutch citizenship.

Despite the perceived "restrictive turn in Dutch citizenship policy" (Van Oers 2008, 40) the demographic data paints a more nuanced picture. The proportion of the Dutch population with a nationality other than Dutch has been growing while the proportion of the population with only Dutch nationality has declined. The number of individuals resident in the Netherlands holding both Dutch and one or

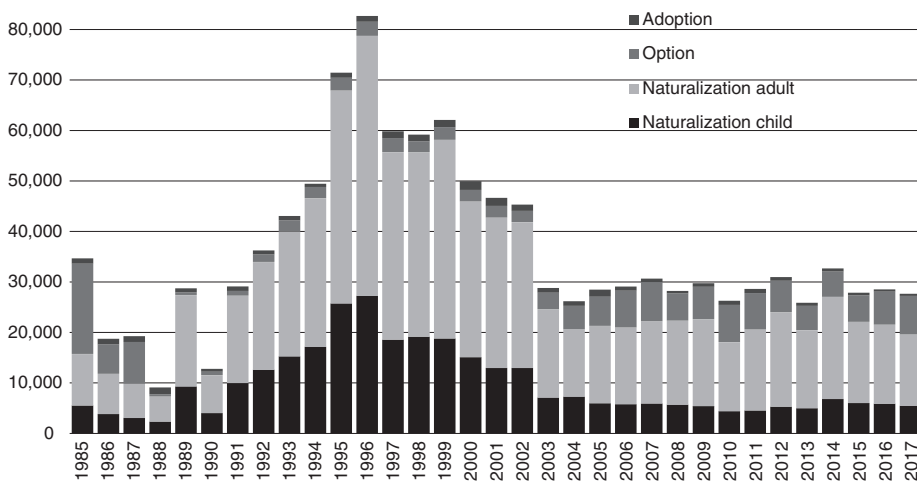


FIGURE 8.4. Acquisition of Dutch Nationality Other than by Birth, 1985–2017

TABLE 8.6. Nationality of Foreigners Resident in the Netherlands
(twelve largest nationalities, in thousands)

1998		2008		2020	
Moroccan	135.7	Turkish	93.7	Polish	155.9
Turkish	114.7	Moroccan	74.9	German	79.5
German	53.9	German	62.4	Syrian	79.5
British	39.2	British	40.2	Turkish	77.0
Belgian	24.4	Belgian	26.2	British	47.9
Italian	17.4	Polish	26.2	Italian	43.3
Spanish	16.6	Italian	19.0	Chinese	39.4
Bosnian	14.6	Spanish	16.5	Indian	37.4
Somali	13.6	Chinese	16.2	Bulgarian	36.8
Iraqi	13.0	French	15.1	Belgian	35.9
American	13.0	American	14.5	Moroccan	35.8
Surinamese	11.8	Portuguese	12.9	Spanish	35.6

SOURCE: Calculated from Statistics Netherlands data.

more other nationalities increased from just over 400,000 (2.6 percent of the total Dutch population) in 1995 to just over 1.3 million (7.7 percent of the total population) in 2014, tripling in less than two decades. At the same time, both the number and proportion of residents of the Netherlands who do not hold Dutch nationality declined from 749,061 individuals (4.9 percent of total population) in 1995 to 677,795 individuals (4.1 percent of total population) in 2007, growing again subsequently but not to previous levels; the story here is one of stability.

Table 8.6 shows the twelve largest nationalities of the residents of the Netherlands who do not hold Dutch nationality. The most striking change is the decline in the number of citizens of Morocco and Turkey, from over 250,000 (approximately 37 percent of all foreign residents) in 1998 to around 117,700 (just over 13 percent of all foreign residents) by 2016 and around 112,800 (9.5 percent of all foreign residents) by 2020. This reflects the acquisition by Turkish and Moroccan individuals of Dutch nationality, so that they no longer appear in these statistics. The contrast with the numbers of citizens of other EU member states in the Netherlands is stark: with some fluctuations, the numbers of citizens of other EU countries keep increasing. Noteworthy here is the rise in the number of citizens of Poland resident in the Netherlands, but more generally this reflects an outward migration from eastern and southern EU member states to states where there is more economic opportunity, including the Netherlands.

TABLE 8.7. Dutch Citizens Resident in the Netherlands with Dual Nationality, 2014 (by country of second nationality, top fifteen nationalities, in thousands)

1	Morocco	320.8	24.6%
2	Turkey	312.1	23.9%
3	Germany	61.0	4.7%
4	United Kingdom	45.1	3.5%
5	Belgium	34.0	2.6%
6	Italy	25.0	1.9%
7	Poland	20.4	1.6%
8	France	19.8	1.5%
9	Iran	19.1	1.5%
10	Surinam	17.7	1.4%
11	Bosnia	16.7	1.3%
12	Spain	15.8	1.2%
13	Egypt	15.3	1.2%
14	United States	15.0	1.1%
15	Vietnam	13.3	1.0%
	Other EU	47.7	3.7%
	Other	212.1	16.2%
	Unknown	95.4	7.3%
	Total	1306.3	

That the declining number of Dutch residents who are citizens of Turkey or Morocco but not citizens of the Netherlands is due to naturalization is evident from the data in table 8.7, which disaggregates Dutch citizens resident in the Netherlands who hold dual nationality by the country of their second nationality. Roughly half of all citizens of the Netherlands resident in the Netherlands who held dual nationality in 2014—over 630,000 people—had Turkish or Moroccan nationality. Those who, besides Dutch nationality, also hold an EU nationality account for roughly another quarter of all dual citizens residing in the Netherlands.

The reason the data is from 2014 is that a change to the civil registry in January 2014 stopped new registrations of other nationalities for Dutch citizens. This followed years of debate, including an attempt in 2009 to stop registering dual or additional nationalities for Dutch citizens, which ultimately resulted in the 2013 law that enacted the stop.¹⁵ There had been political commotion following the news that the

tax authorities had targeted individuals on the basis of dual citizenship.¹⁶ Later some parties raised doubts about whether it was in fact a good idea to stop registering second nationalities, as subsequent policies intended to deprive citizens of their Dutch citizenship for engaging in terrorism depended on ensuring they have another nationality, to avoid statelessness.¹⁷ In the benefits scandal that caused the fall of the Rutte government in 2021, dual citizens in particular were targeted for extra attention from the tax authorities. As of this writing, an estimated 26,000 parents responsible for 80,000 children were incorrectly accused of fraud and had their child benefit payments revoked, with the forced repayment leading to stress and lost jobs and homes.

Dutch laws regarding dual citizenship remain restrictive, though several parties and interest groups support broadening dual citizenship, and the coalition agreement for the government that served from 2017 to 2021 had promised to “modernize nationality law” by broadening the possibilities for dual citizenship. Despite the agreement, no such law was passed. A different law passed in June 2020 would temporarily allow dual citizenship for Dutch citizens residing in the UK if parliament later determined that their rights were being infringed. As of this writing, that has not yet occurred.

Meanwhile, in February 2021 MPs approved motions to pressure Morocco to interpret its Code de la nationalité to make it easier for Dutch citizens of Moroccan background to renounce Moroccan citizenship, and more broadly for all Dutch citizens to be able to renounce undesired second or other citizenship (only the PVV voted against),¹⁸ to set up a register for Dutch citizens wishing to renounce Moroccan nationality (only VVD and PVV voted against),¹⁹ and to coordinate in implementation of the policy with the governments of Belgium, France, and Germany and report back by summer 2021 (only PVV voted against).²⁰ This followed a 2020 parliamentary initiative²¹ inspired by a 2019 manifesto from Dutch citizens of Moroccan background: “we Dutch citizens with a second nationality, Moroccan, which we have not chosen of our own free will, turn to Dutch society and the Dutch government to help relieve us of the fear and lack of freedom inseparably connected with that second nationality.”²² Salima Belhaj, a Dutch-born D66 Rotterdam city councilor with Moroccan background led a similar initiative in 2008: “we are citizens of the Netherlands and disapprove of any interference by the Moroccan government in our lives.”²³ Belhaj became an MP in 2016, and led the 2021 parliamentary motions above.

Immigrant Integration and Dutch Norms and Values

Immigrant integration in the Netherlands is coupled with the question of ethnic minorities. Dutch minorities policy became formalized with a parliamentary report

drafted in 1981 and finalized in 1983, when it had become clear that both postcolonial migrants and labor migrants were going to remain in the Netherlands rather than returning to their countries of origin. The report recognized that the Netherlands had become a “de facto immigration country” (Netherlands 1981, 1983). Since then, a multitude of policies have aimed to integrate immigrants and ethnic minorities.

Immigration is an area of policy where the desires of the national government and those of the municipalities and other decentralized authorities tasked with executing national policy do not always coincide. Consider the case of asylum. In the decade between 1992 and 2001, the Netherlands was the third largest recipient of asylum applications in Europe, behind Germany and the United Kingdom. Per capita, this made the Netherlands (along with Switzerland and Sweden) one of the most popular destinations in the world, at 2.27 applications per thousand inhabitants. (By comparison the rate for the United States was 0.45 and Canada’s was 0.94.) By the end of the decade, however, asylum policy had become decidedly less welcoming (Van Selm 2000).

At least some of this change can be attributed to a former sociology professor who styled himself as the leading Dutch advocate of the “clash of civilizations” thesis, Pim Fortuyn. In his book *Against the Islamicization of our Culture*, first published in 1997, Fortuyn warned that Muslims living in the Netherlands threatened traditional Dutch values: “Because of their advanced individualization, Dutch people are not aware of their own cultural identity and the rights they have gained: the separation of church and state, the position of women and of homosexuals. Their indifference makes the Dutch an easy and vulnerable prey” (Fortuyn 2002, my translation).

At first dismissed, then vilified, Fortuyn could no longer be ignored after his party won the March 2002 Rotterdam municipal elections. Nine days before the May 2002 national elections, he was assassinated by an ethnically Dutch environmental activist. The 2002 elections were among the most volatile in European history, leading commentators to argue: “after many years of stability and predictability, it is more important than ever to understand the nature of the increasing volatility of the Dutch electorate and the sudden changes in the Dutch political landscape” (van Holsteyn and Irwin 2003). Fortuyn’s party won a landslide, going from zero to twenty-six seats in the 150-seat lower house of parliament, becoming the second-largest party. The List Pim Fortuyn (LPF) formed a governing coalition with the Christian democratic CDA and the conservative VVD. Without Fortuyn, however, the party imploded. An LPF deputy minister resigned within hours of being sworn in after it emerged that she had lied about her involvement in the Surinamese militia.²⁴ After further tensions within the LPF, the entire cabinet resigned within three months and new elections were called. The LPF dropped to 8 seats in the January 2003 elections before disappearing.

Fortuyn's harsh line towards immigration was taken up by others, including Geert Wilders, a former protégé of conservative politician (later European Commissioner) Frits Bolkestein.²⁵ As VVD leader, Bolkestein had published a book in 1997 on Muslims in the Netherlands that advocated cultural assimilation.²⁶ Wilders was a municipal councilor for the VVD in 1997 and then a VVD member of parliament from 1998 to 2004, when he left the VVD to campaign against the EU constitution (which was defeated in a June 2005 referendum by a vote of 61.5 percent against, with 63.3 percent turnout) and then formed his own party, Partij voor Vrijheid (PVV), which won 9 seats in the 2006 elections and then grew spectacularly to 24 in the 2010 elections, becoming the third-largest party. The government formed after the 2010 elections was a coalition of the VVD (31 seats) and CDA (21 seats) who, because they lacked a majority of over 75 seats, required the parliamentary support of Wilders' party. This arrangement, whereby the government depended on Wilders' support but did not include ministers from his party was criticized for giving Wilders influence but no responsibility.²⁷

The success of anti-immigration politicians had effects on policy. One observer noted that "the supposedly difference-friendly, multicultural Netherlands is currently urging migrants to accept 'Dutch norms and values' in the context of a policy of civic integration that is only an inch (but still an inch!) away from the cultural assimilation that had once been attributed to the French" (Joppke 2007, 2). One example of more stringent immigration policy was a new citizenship exam coupled with the requirement that applicants for a residence permit pass an integration test before admission. The test was required of all applicants with the exception of citizens of Australia, Canada, Japan, Monaco, New Zealand, South Korea, Switzerland, the United States of America, and Vatican City. The United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination warned the Netherlands that this was discriminatory.

Yet it would be a mistake to portray the harder line that emerged starting in the late 1990s as a seismic shift. There were earlier examples of restrictionist policies and contrasting examples of more open ones. For example, in mid-2007 the government granted amnesty to approximately 28,000 individuals who had been living in the Netherlands without authorization, and many mayors and municipal councils asked organizations working with illegal migrants to forward only those applicants who fulfilled the requirements, thereby tolerating the continued presence of "illegal" residents. Other large-scale efforts include a petition to allow children who had lived at least eight years in the Netherlands to stay, together with their families.²⁸

Despite such open tendencies, the Netherlands emerged as one of the most restrictive states in Europe regarding benefits for migrants, with immigrants barred

from many benefits for lengthy periods after arrival (Koning 2020). Furthermore, a series of laws on benefits levels coupled with restrictive enforcement practices made it more difficult for non-citizens and mixed status families (where one partner is a non-citizen) to meet residence requirements; and because residence permits are withdrawn retroactive to the moment when the right of residence was lost, prior benefits received may need to be paid back (De Jong and De Hart 2021).

Political Fragmentation and Fractiousness about Migration and Citizenship

The 2021 elections (discussed further below) resulted in a postwar record of seventeen parties entering parliament. Such fragmentation was possible because the Netherlands electoral system applies pure proportional representation with no threshold: only 0.67 percent of the vote suffices for a party to win one of the 150 seats in the lower house. Unlike in other countries, where constituencies or thresholds make it harder for new parties to emerge, this means that new parties can quickly find representation in parliament, including those based on the issue of immigration. The Dutch People's Union (Nederlandse Volks-Unie) won 2.2 percent of the vote in the 1974 municipal elections in The Hague (Their slogans were: "The Hague must stay white and safe" and "Free our city from the plague of Surinamese and Antillians") and 0.4 percent in the 1977 national elections, but this was not enough for a seat (Van Gorp 2012). Hans Janmaat of the anti-immigrant Centriumpartij (Center party slogans included: "Neither left nor right," "Full = full," and "Resist mass immigration to our overpopulated country") was first elected to parliament in 1982 with 0.8 percent of the vote. Despite the party winning 2.6 percent of the vote in the 1984 European Parliament elections (almost enough for a seat) and strong showings in some municipal elections, the party was divided and expelled Janmaat, who formed the slightly more moderate Centrum Democraten (Center Democrats, CD). The two anti-immigrant parties split the vote in 1986, but Janmaat returned to parliament in 1989 with 0.9 percent of the vote. Opinion polls in 1993 placed the CD at 5.5 percent nationally, and the party's result in the 1994 municipal elections was strong, but divisions and scandals within the party kept its score in the 1994 parliamentary elections to 2.4 percent of the vote and three seats. This was the party's zenith, as further scandals, divisions, and convictions for incitement to racial hatred kept the CD to 0.6 percent in the 1998 parliamentary elections, just below the 0.67 percent needed for a seat. As discussed above, the next parliamentary elections, in 2002, resulted in a landslide twenty six seats for the List Pim Fortuyn, but this included a large sympathy vote for Fortuyn's murder nine days previously.

Geert Wilders' twenty four seats (15.5 percent) in the 2010 elections rivaled Fortuyn's result, but the 2010–2012 governing coalition under new VVD prime minister Mark Rutte, which became the government only with PVV support, was unstable. Several elements of the coalition agreement would contravene European Union treaties and legislation if enacted. They would require agreement from some or all other EU member states and, in some cases, the European Parliament, and so were infeasible. Wilders withdrew his support from the coalition in April 2012. During the subsequent election campaign, he attempted to blend Euroskepticism and anti-immigration sentiments, but this strategy did not succeed: in the September 2012 elections, his party lost over one third of its votes, dropping to 10.1 percent of the vote (15 seats) and making its support no longer necessary for the new governing coalition of VVD and PvdA.

This two-party coalition served for its entire term, only the second time in the postwar period that this occurred.²⁹ But in common with the decline of social democratic and labor parties elsewhere in Europe, the 2017 elections were a disaster for the PvdA: it dropped from 24.8 percent of the votes to only 5.7 percent (from 38 seats to only 9). Meanwhile, Wilders regrew a little bit to 13.1 percent of the votes, and 20 seats, becoming second-largest party as thirteen parties won seats in parliament. Two new parties are noteworthy: Forum for Democracy (FvD), which won two seats, and Denk, which won three seats. Denk (which means “think” in Dutch, and “equal” or “equivalent” in Turkish) was formed in 2015 by Tunahan Kuzu and Selçuk Öztürk, who had been elected as PvdA MPs but left the party over dissatisfaction with the PvdA's integration policy. Denk has been described as the “long arm of Erdogan” for its sympathies with the Turkish president.³⁰

FvD was cofounded in 2016 by the then-33-year-old Thierry Baudet, who four years earlier had offered a copy of his PhD dissertation (entitled “The significance of borders: why representative government and the rule of law require Nation States”) to French far-right politician Jean-Marie Le Pen and had since become known for his strident views. He called the EU a “cultural Marxist” project out to destroy European culture, supported Hungarian leader Viktor Orbán's moves to close borders and stop immigration, and strongly opposed multiculturalism. Although the FvD won only 1.78 percent of the votes (2 seats) in the 2017 parliamentary elections, Baudet's strident pronouncements against the established parties, the EU, immigration, and feminism, and denying the existence of climate change quickly won the party many converts. FvD vaulted to first place in the March 2019 provincial elections, winning 14.5 percent of the votes, while the SP, Wilders' PVV, D66, CDA, PvdA, and VVD all lost votes. FvD won a total of 86 of the 570 seats in the provincial assemblies, becoming the largest party in the provinces North Holland, South Holland, and Flevoland.

In his victory speech, Baudet underlined the need to protect the “boreal world,” understood as a euphemism for whiteness.³¹

Looked at from a comparative perspective, the “more ‘acceptable’ Dutch far-right parties” since the year 2000 “changed the relationship between the mainstream right and the far right” as, in the six elections contested by either the LPF or PVV between 2002 and 2017, those parties were included twice (2002 in cabinet and 2010 with support) while being excluded because of concerns about coalition stability in 2003 and because the mainstream right and far right did not have enough seats for a majority in 2006, 2012, and 2017 (Twist 2019, 101).

In the May 2019 European Parliament elections, FvD became the fourth largest party with 11 percent of the votes (3 seats), while Wilders’ PVV sank from 13.3 percent of the votes (4 seats) to only 3.5 percent and no seats. The Eurosceptic Socialist party (SP) also dropped to zero seats, from two—possibly because the PvdA had taken over the anti-immigration, Eurosceptic, and anti-establishment ground. The mainstream and Europhile parties did quite well: PvdA doubled its votes share to over 19 percent (6 seats), with the VVD and CDA each at 4 seats, all ahead of the FvD, with GreenLeft (GL) at three seats and D66 at two.³²

The 2017–2021 government was a four-party coalition led by Mark Rutte’s VVD with CDA, D66, and CU. Issues relating to immigration and citizenship continue to play a significant role in the political debates. For example, in August 2019 the Netherlands introduced a policy that people wearing face coverings would be denied public services or be fined. The policy was understood to target women wearing the full-face burka, following such bans in Denmark, Belgium, France, and elsewhere, although the transport companies immediately said they would not enforce the policy, rendering it toothless. Yet it would be a mistake to assume that such developments are due entirely to anti-immigration sentiment on the political right: Lucassen and Lucassen (2015, 25) have argued that feelings of discomfort towards immigration and Islam also have deep roots in the Dutch political left and that various leaders across the political spectrum share a “cultural nonconformist stance and a communitarian conception of the people”—a description that could also be compared to the victories in 2019 of social democratic parties in Denmark and Sweden combining rigorous integration policies with promises to protect the native welfare state.

Table 8.8 shows the parties that have won seats in parliament since 1982. The Christian democratic CDA and social democratic PvdA (Labor) together used to dominate Dutch politics, but the PvdA shared the decline of many other European social democratic parties and the CDA suffered from the fragmentation of the political landscape. The March 2021 national elections resulted in further fragmentation of the political landscape, as seventeen parties entered parliament. VVD gained a

TABLE 8.8. Parties Winning Seats in Parliament

	1982	1986	1989	1994	1998	2002	2003	2006	2010	2012	2017	2021
VVD	36	27	22	31	38	24	28	22	31	41	33	34
D66	6	9	12	24	14	7	6	3	10	12	19	24
PVV								9	24	15	20	17
CDA	45	54	54	34	29	43	44	41	21	13	19	15
SP				2	5	9	9	25	15	15	14	9
PvdA	47	52	49	37	45	23	42	33	30	38	9	9
GL	9	3	6	5	11	10	8	7	10	4	14	8
FvD											2	8
PvdD								2	2	2	5	6
CU	3	2	3	5	5	4	3	6	5	5	5	5
Volt												3
JA21												3
SGP	3	3	3	2	3	2	2	2	2	3	3	3
Denk											3	3
50plus										2	4	1
BBB												1
Bij1												1
Lijst Pim Fortuyn						26	8					
LN						2						
AOV/Unie55+				7								
CD			1	3								
CP	1											

VVD: conservative center-right

PVV: right-wing populist

SP: socialist

GL: Green left

PvdD: leftist animal rights

VOLT: progressive European

SGP: Christian right

50PLUS: pensioners

Bij1: left egalitarian

HISTORICAL:

LPF: right-wing populist

AOV/UNIE55+: pensioners

CP: right-wing nationalist

D66: centrist liberal

CDA: Christian democratic

PvdA: social democratic labor

FvD: right-wing nationalist

CU: centrist Christian

JA21: right-wing conservative

Denk: center-left identity

BBB: farmers

LN: populist direct democracy

CD: right-wing nationalist

seat while D66 matched its 1994 result and the CDA continued its slide. Wilders' PVV dropped from twenty seats to seventeen, but the FvD rose to eight seats despite internal turmoil and scandals about antisemitic, fascist, and homophobic statements, possibly helped by strident anti-vaccine and anti-lockdown rhetoric. A third far-right party, JA21 (founded by MPs who had left FvD over the turmoil), also entered parliament, with three seats. JA21 also included breakaway FvD Senators, members of the European Parliament, and members of provincial parliaments. On the left, the Socialists and GreenLeft lost seats, the PvdA stalled rather than regrowing, the leftist animal rights party PvdD continued to grow, and Denk maintained its three seats.

Besides JA21, three other new parties entered parliament: the progressive pan-European Volt, the farmer-oriented BBB, and *Bij1* (*bijeen* means “together”), headed by the Suriname-born Black activist and former television presenter Sylvana Simons, who had earlier joined and then left Denk in 2016, won 0.3 percent of the vote in the 2017 elections, and in 2018 had won a seat on Amsterdam city council. A record number of 28 MPs had a migration background,³³ though this number could change as MPs might join cabinet and be replaced. The VVD looked set to stay in government together with D66 and two or more additional parties necessary to reach a majority in the lower house, although the new parliament voted to censure outgoing prime minister Rutte (VVD) for lack of honesty during the coalition negotiations. As of this writing, it is unclear whether Rutte will survive the lack of trust that other parties have in his leadership.

From Consensus to Fractiousness in Dutch Migration and Citizenship Policies

By way of conclusion, the case of the Netherlands offers a corrective to the gap hypothesis. The hypothesis holds that the gap between the goals of national immigration policies and the actual policy outcomes is increasing, thereby provoking greater public hostility toward immigrants in general and putting pressure on political parties and government officials to adopt more restrictive policies. Yet in order for the gap hypothesis to be testable the goals of national immigration policy must first be clear. Such clarity is lacking in the Netherlands, where both public opinion and the government's approach are fractious and volatile. At the same time, the declining relative net immigration from traditional source countries and their replacement with new source countries such as Poland, coupled with the increasing emigration of Dutch-born citizens mostly within the European Union, changes the picture of both the immigrant and the emigrant. When a growing share of both “immigration” and “emigration” is simply mobility within the EU, which is both difficult to

regulate (because of EU citizenship) and largely accepted politically (despite periodic grumblings about eastern Europeans taking jobs), it becomes unclear what the goals of Dutch immigration policy should be. Looking comparatively at other European cases suggests that polarization about the goals of migration and citizenship policy are no longer restricted to the Netherlands, which suggests a process of “Dutchification” of other European countries. “As long as immigration continues to be a concern for the public, far-right parties will likely remain a fixture of Western European politics,” concludes an analysis comparing the Netherlands with other cases and suggesting that the mainstream right will want to form a government with the far right when the latter is useful to them, as they would with any other party (Twist 2019 149, 144). Across the continent, politics lurch from *wir schaffen das* to draconian border controls, from welcoming certain migrants to demonizing others. And of course, the COVID-19 pandemic introduces a new element of uncertainty.

Notes

1. The concept of the migration state is drawn from James Hollifield (2004), who uses it to mean a situation where regulation of international migration is as important as providing for the security of the state and the economic wellbeing of the citizenry. Grateful thanks to James Hollifield, Leo Lucassen, and Michael Sharpe, participants at the book workshop held at the Collège de France in 2019, and also to Amanda Sears for assistance with the tables and figures.

2. Amsterdam’s population ballooned from 13,500 in 1514 to 104,900 in 1622 and 200,000 in 1675; Leiden’s from 14,300 in 1514 to 44,800 in 1622 and 65,000 in 1675. In 1622, immigrants constituted 33 percent of the population of Amsterdam and Dordrecht, 38 percent of Gouda’s, 40 percent of Rotterdam’s, 51 percent of Haarlem’s, 63 percent of Middelburg’s, and 67 percent of Leiden’s.

3. From the press release at <https://www.knaw.nl/nl/actueel/nieuws/grootste-migratiewebsite-van-nederland-gelanceerd> for the website <https://vijfeeuwenmigratie.nl/>.

4. There is significant variation in the annual numbers in the 1995–2017 period, from a low of 9,794 net emigrants in 1998 to a high of 35,821 net emigrants in 2006.

5. Standard Eurobarometer 92 (fall 2019). In the subsequent survey (Eurobarometer 93), done in summer 2020 during the pandemic, the economic situation, health, and unemployment vaulted to the top of Europeans’ responses. Dutch respondents listed health (47 percent), the environment and climate change (35 percent), the economic situation (34 percent), housing (17 percent), and unemployment (15 percent) ahead of immigration (11 percent). Only in 2016, during the height of the Syrian refugee crisis, did Dutch respondents mention immigration as the top issue facing the Netherlands, a view that was widely shared across Europe.

6. Special Eurobarometer 469 (2018), question A6.5. Dutch respondents were among the most welcoming on most measures.

7. Special Eurobarometer 469 (2018), questions A2, A8T, A9T.

8. “Een deel van ons volk moet het aandurven zoals in vroeger eeuwen zijn toekomst te zoeken in grotere gebieden dan eigen land.”

9. “Nederlandse emigranten in Australië,” <https://www.nationaalarchief.nl/onderzoeken/zoekhulpen/nederlandse-emigranten-in-australie>.

10. Portugal controlled some of the islands of Indonesia in the fifteenth century, when Islam had only recently been introduced. Portuguese missionaries quickly set about to Christianize the population. When Spain took control, Portuguese missionaries were replaced by Spanish missionaries, including Francis Xavier, who later co-founded the Jesuits.

11. In the 1975 train hijacking, in the northern province of Drenthe, the Moluccan hijackers killed three hostages, shooting one in full view of the police and the press. There was a simultaneous hostage-taking at the Indonesian consulate in Amsterdam, which ended when the train hijackers surrendered after two weeks. The 1977 train hijacking on the Drenthe-Groningen border was simultaneous with the hostage-taking of 105 students and their five teachers at a primary school in Drenthe. Lasting twenty days, the train hijacking resulted in the deaths of two hostages and six hijackers. The hostage-takers at the school (who had earlier released the children, keeping only the teachers) surrendered after hearing about the military action at the train. In 1978 there was another hostage-taking at the Drenthe provincial hall; the hostage-takers executed one hostage in front of a window, then threw his body out. Dutch marines raided the building the next day, freeing the hostages.

12. CIA World Factbook, available at <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ns.html> (accessed June 10, 2019).

13. In this way, Dutch citizenship can be compared to citizenship in federal states, where “citizenship” in a subnational jurisdiction does not preclude free movement rights to and from other subnational jurisdictions, such as California to New York, Quebec to Ontario, or England to Scotland. See Maas 2013b, 2013c.

14. “De makamba moet inburgeren: ‘Het mag hier dan warm zijn, maar dan ga je niet driekwart naakt over straat,’” *De Volkskrant*, August 12, 2019, referring to the idea that white Dutch immigrants must integrate into local Dutch Caribbean culture.

15. <https://www.trouw.nl/nieuws/stop-automatische-registratie-tweede-nationaliteit~bff55ebc/>.

16. <https://www.volkskrant.nl/columns-opinie/discrimineren-mag-niet-maar-registratie-van-de-dubbele-nationaliteit-afschaffen~b66a7c11/>.

17. <https://www.ewmagazine.nl/nederland/achtergrond/2017/09/registratie-dubbele-nationaliteiten-alles-is-weg-538471/>.

18. <https://www.tweedekamer.nl/kamerstukken/detail?id=2021Z02312&did=2021D05076>.

19. <https://www.tweedekamer.nl/kamerstukken/detail?id=2021Z02313&did=2021D05077>.

20. <https://www.tweedekamer.nl/kamerstukken/detail?id=2021Z02315&did=2021D05079>.

21. <https://www.parlementairemonitor.nl/9353000/1/j9vvij5epmj1eyo/vl91naicfjwi>.

22. My translation from <https://debalie.nl/artikel/manifest-voor-keuzevrijheid-in-nationaliteit/>.

23. My translation from <https://www.volkskrant.nl/nieuws-achtergrond/nederlandse-burgers-geen-onderdanen-marokko~b74af6bf/>.

24. Philomena Bijlhout was elected LPF member of parliament in the May 2002 elections, then resigned to become deputy minister of emancipation and family affairs in the cabinet

sworn in on June 22, 2002. She resigned the same day when a TV station aired photos of her in the militia uniform of Surinamese military leader Dési Bouterse. The photos were taken in 1983, after the December 1982 murders (in which fifteen prominent opponents of Bouterse's military regime, mostly journalists and lawyers, were shot dead); Bijlhout had earlier claimed she left the militia in 1981. She was replaced by LPF member Khee Liang Phoa.

25. Interestingly both Bolkestein's and Wilders's mothers were of Indo (mixed European and indigenous Indonesian) ancestry, as is the mother of Eddie and Alex van Halen (of the band Van Halen), who emigrated from the Netherlands to California with their parents in 1962, part of the postwar emigration discussed earlier.

26. The VVD grew from thirty-one seats in 1994 elections to thirty-eight seats in the May 1998 elections, but Bolkestein stepped down as party leader; he was European commissioner for internal market from 1999 to 2004. Bolkestein lamented in 2010 that Wilders had become "completely radicalized."

27. Bolkestein, interviewed in *De Volkskrant*, "Rutte is goud, Wilders is strovuur," March 5, 2011.

28. The petition, submitted to parliament in September 2012, was signed by 130,000 people and supported by 135 of the country's 415 municipal councils. It reflected a draft law proposed by PvdA, CU, SP, GL, D66, and PvdD.

29. The other was the PvdA-VVD-D66 coalition under PvdA prime minister Wim Kok, which served from 1994 to 1998; that same coalition continued in office after the 1998 elections, serving until twenty-nine days before the scheduled 2002 elections. The cabinet resigned to take responsibility for the July 1995 murder of over 8,000 Bosnian men and boys by troops led by Bosnian-Serbian general Ratko Mladić in the town of Srebrenica, which was under the protection of a "Dutchbat" of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR).

30. The phrase is by VVD parliamentary leader (later foreign minister) Halbe Zijlstra after Kuzu spoke at a September 2016 rally in Rotterdam of the Turkish AKP. Denk's proposal to renew diplomatic links with Turkey (which had been cut after the 2016 crackdown by Erdogan) was rejected in April 2017, several weeks after Öztürk had accused Dutch Socialist MP Sadet Karabulut of being a PKK sympathizer. In November 2017 Denk was the only party to vote against a motion to pressure Turkey to release Taner Kılıç, a human rights activist and chair of Amnesty International Turkey; in February 2018 Denk was the only party to vote against recognizing the Armenian genocide; and in June 2018 Denk was the only party to vote against a motion asking Turkey to release Turkish MPs opposed to Erdogan.

31. "Like all the other countries in our boreal world we are being destroyed by the very people who are supposed to protect us. We are being undermined by our universities, our journalists. By people who get art subsidies and who design our buildings." <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/apr/03/thierry-baudet-dutch-rightwing-populism>.

32. The Christian Union / SGP stayed at two seats, the animal rights party stayed at one, and the retirees' party 50PLUS gained a seat. Turnout increased to just under 42 percent, from 37.3 percent at the previous elections.

33. https://www.stemdivers.nl/selectie/gekozen/?filter_afkomst=meer-dan-nederlands&query_type_afkomst=or.

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