Gender, Religion, and Ethnicity: Intersections and Boundaries in Immigrant Integration Policy Making

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In this paper, we analyze Dutch policy debates that focused on the development of a distinct program to advance the social and economic participation of ethnic minority women (where this label captures immigrant women from non-Western countries). Drawing on intersectional analysis and theories of ethnic boundary formation, we argue that the parliamentary debates surrounding this policy program framed the social problems of these women to effectively reduce a diverse range of ethnic minority women into a narrowly defined group of Muslim women. Referencing multiple axes of difference, the adopted policies encouraged women to overcome ethnic distinctions and gender inequality by abandoning their (imputed) religious practices. Parliamentary debates on these policies generated bright boundaries and assimilationist approaches to the integration of ethnic minority women. In our conclusion, we suggest how our framework might be applied to inform analyses of integration policy making and boundary construction in other countries.

The postwar period witnessed the movement of large numbers of immigrants into Western Europe. Although most are by now settled in their respective receiving societies, their integration is often deemed incomplete. Perceptions that long settled immigrants, their descendants and newly arriving cohorts have problems integrating led to the creation of a new policy field focused on newcomers and “old-comers.” Over the past decade-and-a-half, many Western European countries have engaged in such immigrant integration policy making (Jacobs and Rea 2007; Joppke 2007; Scuzzarello 2008; Goodman 2010; Kostakopoulou 2010). These policies often construe immigrants’ gender relations as problematic and evince a tension between seeing immigrants as defined by their religion or their ethnicity.

In this article, we combine intersectional theory and theories of boundary formation to analyze how these policies construct immigrant as subjects in

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ways that define the conditions for their membership in receiving societies. We focus on Dutch parliamentary debates surrounding the Plan to Address the Emancipation and Integration of Women and Girls from Ethnic Minorities (the Integration Plan). Developed by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Integration, in conjunction with the cognate standing parliamentary committees, the Plan’s target group consisted of long-settled first generation and second-generation immigrant women. The Commission [on the] Participation of women from ethnic minorities (PaVEM Commission) implemented the Plan. Our analysis focuses on how this integration policy specifies the necessary prerequisites of membership and was thus productive of particular subjects. We employ feminist intersectional theory to analyze how multiple axes of difference came together to produce particular understandings of what it means to be an ethnic minority or immigrant woman in the Netherlands (see also Yuval-Davis 2006). We then show how intersectional subject constructions inform understandings of the social problems that integration policies are meant to address.

Theories of ethnic boundary formation shed light on how these processes inform the ways in which politicians understand the prerequisites of belonging: either fluidly, allowing for an expression of multiplicity in identity formation, or rigidly in ways that privilege an imagined “native” subject. Furthermore, theories of boundary formation allow us to better understand how integration policies can belie their apparent objective of enabling participation by deepening, rather than ameliorating, distinctions between individuals of particular immigrant backgrounds and host societies. The usefulness of linking feminist intersectional and boundary theories lies in the way in which they inform each other: whereas the boundary literature tends to focus on the boundary inducing (or reducing) qualities of culture or ethnicity, intersectional theory allows us to better understand how the (imagined) subjects of these boundaries are complexly constituted. The integration of intersectional theory with theories of boundary production enables an analysis of the type of subjectivity and the conditions for membership that politicians generate when they engage in policymaking.

Applying this framework to these Dutch parliamentary debates, we show that parliamentarians redefined diverse identities in narrow terms to cohere to specific conceptions of self and other, with the category “Muslim women” emerging as a particularly salient subject position. Participants in these debates did so by, first, starting from the highly gendered assumption that women are key to the successful integration of entire communities because they parent the next generation. Second, they positioned an iconic downtrodden Muslim immigrant woman to represent what it meant to be an ethnic minority woman. The consequent narrowing of a wide range of different ethnic minority women into this singular category informed Dutch parliamentarians’ narrow conception of belonging and support of assimilationist integration policy approaches.
An alternative understanding of immigrant integration focuses on labor market participation rather than immigrant subjectivity. During the period of the PaVEM debates, the Parliamentary Inquiry Committee on Integration Policy presented its conclusion that immigrant integration in the Netherlands had been relatively successful. The Commission, however, also found that integration policies had no impact on integration itself. This Commission’s central finding stood in stark contrast to the Integration Plan’s approach, suggesting that obstacles to labor market participation, rather than gender relations and ethnic religious practices, were at the root of immigrants’ integration challenges. While labor market participation was a topic of the PaVEM debates, we show that the PaVEM discussions turned away from the suggestion that integration required changes in the practices of receiving society members, placing the onus of change on ethnic minority women alone.

Our primary focus is on the how, rather than the why, of such policy making. Nonetheless, our analysis of the specific case of the PaVEM debates suggests that at least three factors can play an explanatory role in the construction of immigrant subjectivity: continuities in the framing of social problems and policy responses, public opinion regarding immigrant integration, and the dynamics of the political field, in particular political party and electoral politics. While our primary focus is on showing how the Integration Plan generated a certain subjectivity, we refer to these explanatory factors throughout the paper.

We begin by outlining how religious, ethnic, and gender differences have informed Dutch integration politics and policies over the last 40 years (the period during which immigration increased sharply). We then develop our theoretical framework and briefly discuss our methodology before analyzing the parliamentary debates regarding the work of the PaVEM Commission between 2003 and 2005. We conclude with suggestions as to how our approach might be extended to inform analyses of integration policy making and boundary construction in other cases and countries.

**Immigrant Integration and Women’s Emancipation in the Netherlands**

Since the 1960s, the Netherlands has seen the influx of four major groups of immigrants from non-Western countries—Surinam, the Netherlands Antilles, Turkey and Morocco—that now together make up a little over 10 percent of the Dutch population (Dagevos and Gijsberts 2007). Approximately a third come from Surinam, a former Dutch colony that achieved independence in 1975, and the Netherlands Antilles, which continues to be part of the Dutch kingdom. Large numbers from predominantly Turkey and Morocco entered the Netherlands as guest workers starting in the 1960s. More recently, migration streams from these countries often result from family reunification.
and marriage. By the time PAVeM was developed, Turkish and Moroccan first- and second-generation immigrants made up 4.3 percent of the total population in the Netherlands (Dagevos and Gijsberts 2007). In the four largest Dutch cities, a third of the population was designated "non-Western," with 50 percent of youth under 20 of non-Western descent (Dagevos and Gijsberts 2007). This concentration of "non-Western" immigrants and second-generation youth in cities such as Amsterdam and Rotterdam heightened the salience of the Dutch integration debates.

Particular understandings of religion, ethnicity, and gender have all played a role in the political responses to large-scale immigration. Religious differences have historically been addressed through pillarization, or the institutionalized recognition of different forms of Christianity through the establishment of Protestant and Catholic schools, political parties, and social welfare organizations (Lijphart 1968). Policies targeting immigrants grafted Muslim newcomer organizations somewhat uncomfortably onto this institutional structure. For example, the National Minorities Consultation Organization (Landelijk Overlegorgaan Minderheden or LOM), which includes representative groups of all main immigrant groups in the Netherlands, has mandatory bi-annual meetings with the ministry housing the immigration portfolio, a consultative mechanism that some argue mimics the institutionalization of Dutch pillars (but see Vink 2007). This has led some to argue that the Netherlands pursued a policy of multiculturalism (Entzinger 2003, 2006; Joppke 2004), though others are critical of equating pillarization with multiculturalism (Duyvendak 2006, 2011; Vink 2007; Schrover 2010).

Second, in the Netherlands, ethnicity, unlike religion, has historically not been a key concept in political struggles or policy making. Rather, in this historically diverse country adherence to civic and then liberal democratic values allowed for relatively large variation in cultural practices among groups in the Netherlands (WRR 2007). However, in the contemporary era, civic and liberal democratic values have been used to construct a relatively more exclusionary notion of Dutch identity (Jacobs and Rea 2007; Joppke 2007). Many date this trend to the early 1990s, when the leader of the Dutch right-Liberal party, Frits Bolkestein, argued that integration—defined in opposition to the segregation associated with the formation of distinct ethnic, religious, and cultural sub-national communities—should be mandatory to safeguard the achievements of Dutch culture and politics (Bolkestein 1991; Prins 2004). While Bolkestein’s argument was perceived as fanning the flames of a troubling ethnic nationalism (Entzinger 2003, 2006; Prins 2004), during the following decade his analysis of the integration problem gained increased acceptance, from the right to the left of the Dutch political field. By 1998, a coalition government of right Liberals and Social Democrats adopted Europe’s first official integration law, albeit one still marked by a degree of voluntarism and lacking the more aggressive sanctions that would characterize later iterations (Wet Inburgering Nieuwkomers or WIN). At this
point, ethnicity had become a salient category in Dutch politics, in that the attributes of an “integrated” immigrant were based on a particular understanding of “Dutchness.” Put differently, immigrants were asked to adopt certain manners of being that were associated with a (newly) coherent Dutch identity.

The publication of Paul Scheffer’s full-page newspaper article condemning multiculturalism in 2000 marked an important moment in the ascendance of integration as a desired aim and the related ethnicization of Dutch identity. From this point onward, integration into Dutch society became defined as sharing in a common Dutch history, demonstrating competency in the Dutch language and, perhaps most importantly, internalizing the liberal-democratic values and orientations that were increasingly seen as marking the essence of a distinctively Dutch way of life (Entzinger 2006; Bjornson 2007). In 2005, the Dutch government charged a specially formed committee with identifying key moments in Dutch history to help teach the meaning of Dutch national identity in school curricula and immigrant integration courses (WRR 2007).

Attempts to articulate a shared history rooted in distinctively “national” practices marked an important break with preceding Dutch approaches to the regulation of difference. Unlike pillarized minorities, immigrants were now expected to integrate into a distinctively Dutch society—a concept left undefined in the past. As students of ethnicity suggest, “Dutchness” was being defined by demarcating characteristics of the group in contrast to putative characteristics of non-Dutch groups (Barth 1969; Brubaker 2004). In this way “immigrant” and “ethnic” were rendered synonymous, shedding some light on the use of terms such as “ethnic minorities” to refer to second-generation immigrants born and raised in the Netherlands, as the Integration Plan did.

Third, the increase in immigrant-related diversity coincided with a rapid transformation of gender relations in the Netherlands (Roggeband and Verloo 2007; Prins and Saharso 2008). By the mid-1970s, government policy and practice had come to identify gender inequality at work and at home as a major social problem. The Dutch welfare state reflected a strong male breadwinner social policy model, leading to low levels of labor market participation among women and low levels of engagement with unpaid care work among men (Knijn 1996; Knijn and Kremer 1997). Since the 1970s, Dutch emancipation policies have primarily targeted women’s labor force participation, paying limited attention to inequities in unpaid care work (Roggeband and Verloo 2007; Prins and Saharso 2008). Despite the persistence of considerable inequality between women and men with respect to hours worked for pay and participation in household labor, by the time the Integration Plan was being discussed gender equality was much greater than in the past (Emancipatie Monitor 2004, 110, 118). Certain politicians took to explaining persisting gender differences in employment and care as reflective of choices made by non-immigrant women and men, rather than as the result of systemic gender oppression (Prins and Saharso 2008).
These prior approaches to religious, ethnic, and gender differences have informed integration policy efforts aimed at women from ethnic minorities. However, this is not only a matter of policy continuities; integration policies also need to be understood in the context of shifts in public opinion regarding the participation of immigrants in society.

The period under consideration saw tremendous contestation regarding the place of immigrants in general, and Muslims in particular, contestations that preceded 9/11. A sense that the “native” Dutch were losing their “home” (Duyvendak 2011) coincided with the demise of popular support for multiculturalism and the increasing salience of Dutch national identity in the face of what a growing segment of the general public perceived as the immigrant threat (Sniderman and Hagendoorn 2007). The Dutch tend to conform to progressive or left-liberal values on issues like gender equality and gay rights (Duyvendak 2006, 2011). Opinion polls however show that in 2005, 41 percent of autochthone Dutch felt that ethnic minorities threatened Dutch culture (Gijsberts and Lubbers 2009, 260). Muslim immigrants in particular were perceived as culturally and socially conservative or against women’s and gay rights. In 2004, 91 percent of autochthone respondents believed that Muslim men dominated Muslim women, while in 2005 43 percent of respondents believed that “Islamic women who wear a headscarf do not adjust to our society” (Gijsberts and Lubbers 2009, 272–3).

The internal dynamics of the political field, in particular political party and electoral politics, also influenced the immigrant integration debates. The Purple Coalition of Social Democrats and right-wing Liberals that ruled the country between 1994 and 2002 epitomized the Dutch “polder-model” of governing by consensus. While this coalition put immigrant integration on the political agenda, their efforts were “soft” compared to those that followed, emphasizing positive incentives rather than threats and negative sanctions.

Nine days before the 2002 election anti-immigrant politician Pim Fortuyn, who was riding high in the polls, was murdered. His party gained second place and became a member of a coalition government with the Christian Democrats and the right Liberals. While the coalition government collapsed within nine months, the subsequent government of Christian Democrats, right Liberals and a small center-left party responded to the general public sentiments regarding the immigrant threat reflected in the electoral support for Fortuyn.

Anti-immigrant sentiment continues to shape Dutch politics, most recently with the rise of Geert Wilders’ Party for Freedom, which bolstered the Dutch minority government that ruled from October 2010 through April 2012 (Mudde 2011; Van Holsteyn 2011). During the past decade, the approximately ten political parties that gained representation in the Dutch parliament increasingly have had to profile themselves against multiculturalism and for an assertion of Dutch values, with individual parties profiling
themselves in terms of how their interpretation of these Dutch values can best facilitate the integration of immigrants.3

This anti-immigrant sentiment informs increasingly “tough” stance on integration policies. The Purple Coalition’s civic integration efforts gave people ample opportunity to fulfill their integration obligations without the threat of sanctions. When further elaborated by the coalition government of center Christian Democrats and right-wing and center-left Liberals (2003 to 2006), these policies became increasingly coercive, restrictive, and exclusionary. Our analysis of the debates on the Integration Plan developed during this latter period shows how politicians’ understandings of the relations between gender, religion, and integration informed such outcomes. Before analyzing the Integration Plan debates, we first turn to our analytical framework.

### Immigrant Integration and Belonging: Intersectionality and Boundary Construction

Integration policy debates are usefully thought of as negotiations over how best to craft a shared national identity in a social context transformed by immigration (Anderson 1991; Brubaker 1992, 1996; Wimmer 2008). From this perspective, immigrant integration policies aim to turn “foreigners” into subjects who engage in practices that make them “fit into” dominant societies (Favell 2001). At the highest level of abstraction, integration policies seek to manage diversity by accepting those differences that do not overtly challenge the values and practices of majority society while attempting to alter those perceived as problematic (Brubaker 2001). In the process, integration policies construct an idealized subject against whom the to-be integrated subject can be compared. Hence, integration policies attempt to constitute immigrants as subjects who are capable of supporting the continued viability of the national society within which they live.

In contemporary immigrant receiving states, immigrant subjectivity is increasingly given meaning with reference to gender, religion, and ethnicity or national origin (Bloul 1998; Yuval-Davis 2007; Kiliç, Saharso and Sauer 2008; Rottman and Ferree 2008). Intersectional theory argues that instead of calculating people’s position in social hierarchies by adding up the effects of discrete aspects of their identity, each difference becomes meaningful in reference to the other differences at play (Glenn 1999; see also Crenshaw 1991; Collins 2000; McCall 2005; Davis 2008; Choo and Ferree 2010). In other words, intersectional theory understands difference as constituted by multiple, intersecting markers of identity, which interactively constitute a particular subject and inform experiences of subjectivity (West and Fenstermaker 1995; Glenn 1999; Yuval-Davis 2006, 2007).4 Furthermore, intersectional theory allows us to see how multiple markers of difference are
at play in these constructions, regardless of whether these markers reflect the
dominant or the subordinate pole of binary distinctions (see also Choo and
Ferree 2010). Thus, we can read intersectional definitional projects for how
they constitute both marginalized immigrant and dominant subjectivities,
recognizing that the latter serve as the lodestar orienting integration policies.

A developing body of work on the politics of immigrant women in
European societies has shown that political actors strategically mobilize
certain intersecting differences while downplaying others in their support or
rejection of certain policy approaches. For example, Rottman and Ferree
(2008) show that German feminists understand Muslim women’s gender
oppression as intersecting with religion but do not see Muslim women’s con-
frontations with racism as a gendered issue. Work on the veil, honor-related
violence, and forced marriage similarly demonstrates the usefulness of in-
tersectional approaches to understanding the politics surrounding Muslim and
other immigrant women in the North American and European contexts
(Gresch et al. 2008; Kiliç et al 2008; Dustin and Phillips 2008; Sauer 2009;
Korteweg and Yurdakul 2010). Taken together, this work illustrates that
intersectional forces structure institutional practices in different institutional
spheres.

Building on these insights, we start our analysis of the parliamentary
debates by disentangling the intersectional construction of immigrants’ sub-
jectivity along the lines of gender, religion, ethnicity, or national origin. We
then analyze the ways in which the construction of this subjectivity informs
the framing of integration as a particular social problem (Rochefort and
Cobb 1993; Verloo 2005). This in turn influences how immigrant integration
is approached in the political arena. Thus, intersectional theory allows us to
analyze the articulation of immigrant subjectivity and the institutional trans-
lation of that subjectivity in the political field of policy making.

While work on gender and immigrant integration politics shows that
intersections produce notions of belonging that differ in their relative inclus-
siveness, the production of belonging remains somewhat under-theorized
(but see Yuval-Davis 2007). To understand this process, we turn to the
constitution of a sense of “groupness” through the more or less strategic
processes by which distinctions among social groups are mobilized in the
political field (Brubaker 2004).

Like intersectional theory, the literature on boundary formation under-
stands difference as a relational construct (Barth 1969; Glenn 1999). However,
theories of boundary construction focus not on the relationship
between categories of differentiation but on the production of “groupness”
that can occur when people draw distinctions based on imputed group
membership. Indeed, much of the theory on boundary formation explicitly
provides an alternative to understandings of ethnicity that see ethnicity as
produced within groups, through appeals to shared history, blood ties, and
distinctive cultural practices, rather than in the interactions between groups.
Theories of boundary formation suggest that the formation of group identity always involves defining an “us” vis-à-vis a “not-us” (Zolberg and Long 1999, p. 8).

There is a debate in the literature on immigrant integration as to whether the purported demise of multiculturalism has coincided with an increasingly individualized, rather than group-based, approach to immigrants (Joppke and Morawska 2003; Joppke 2007; Givens 2007). Even if integration policies target immigrant as individuals by emphasizing civic values, they continue to identify these individual immigrants as members of a group by naming them “Turks,” “Moroccans,” “non-Western,” etc. Consequently, the designation of group membership continues to be a key practice in formulating policy and targeting immigrants—a multiculturalism of naming. In the process, immigrants are construed as belonging to a group of like immigrants, who are more or less threatening to the integrity of the receiving society. Majority society membership, in contrast, is often defined in positive (indeed idealized) ways (see also Scuzzarello 2008).

Processes that produce “groupness” create different types of boundaries and boundary negotiations (Bauböck 1994; Zolberg and Long 1999; Alba 2005, 2010; Wimmer 2008). Bright boundaries allow only for boundary crossing, which entails immigrants’ adoption of majority society attributes, practices, or values, typically sacrificing some elements of their cultural identity in the process. Conversely, blurred boundaries enable immigrants to cross into the majority society without relinquishing distinct aspects of their identity. Boundary blurring is facilitated by the majority society’s willingness to change its legal, social, and cultural institutions to enable multiple memberships (e.g., dual citizenship) and the participation of immigrants. Boundary shifting can occur in two directions. Boundaries expand when minorities’ practices or beliefs become accepted as “normal” attributes of majority society; they contract when the range of acceptable practices is narrowed to the point where minority beliefs, values and ways of life are deemed unacceptable.

While theories of boundary formation highlight processes involved in structuring the bases for immigrants’ integration and belonging, they fall short not only in fully articulating the multiplicity of categories mobilized in group formation, but also in appreciating the interdependent constructedness of these categories. The key insight of intersectional theorizing, namely the mutual constitution of meaning, hierarchy, and hegemony through mobilizations of multiple markers of difference, is often assumed rather than analyzed. While attention is paid to race, ethnicity, religion, and national origin, the gender dynamics so central to intersectional theorizing tend to drop out of sight, in part because “groups” as political formations continue to be understood within a gender neutral, yet masculinist, conception of the public sphere.

These shortcomings can be remedied by taking intersectional processes seriously in analyzing boundary formations; insofar as actors strategically draw
on multiple markers of difference to produce “groupness”, they engage in an intersectional process of identity formation. Furthermore, in the current political context, gender is increasingly a central marker in understanding religion, ethnicity, and race and needs to be taken more fully into account. Finally, while actors involved in these processes are strategic, they are not “free agents.” As “groupness” is produced through the mobilization of discourses and representations of intersecting differences, actors themselves are constrained and indeed produced as subjects by intersecting markers of difference.

We thus argue that immigrant integration policies can be analyzed as intersectional boundary formations. Combining intersectional and boundary approaches grants us a powerful means to understand how Dutch politicians engaged in integration policy making to (a) constitute the subjects of integration policy, (b) define the problem to be addressed by immigrant integration policies, (c) mobilize their own group membership and political power to make their claims, and (d) create membership boundaries.

Cases and Methodology

In 2003, the Minister of Social Affairs and Employment, the Christian Democrat Aart Jan de Geus, and the Minister of Foreigners’ Affairs and Integration, the right-wing Liberal party’s Rita Verdonk, developed the Integration Plan and charged the PaVEM Commission with supervising and monitoring its municipal-level implementation. The efforts of the Commission were to be discussed in bi-annual meetings of the standing parliamentary committees on Social Affairs and Integration. The PaVEM Commission consisted of seven members, who were political, economic, and educational leaders, including three women of immigrant background. Their task was to ensure that municipal bureaucracies implemented the guidelines developed by the Ministers in consultation with the standing parliamentary committees.

We focus on the presentations of the reports by the relevant Ministers and the publicly available reports of the bi-annual parliamentary debates regarding the progress of the Integration Plan and the work of the PaVEM Commission (see Appendix A), supplementing this with the report from a parliamentary committee that investigated the success of immigrants’ integration into the Netherlands, the Committee Blok report (CB 2004—see Primary Source Material). Our initial analysis showed that there was an interesting conflation of Muslim women with Dutch ethnic and minority women more generally. This finding turned us to the literatures on intersectionality and boundary formation, which generated the following questions:

1. Which axes of difference did politicians appeal to as they identified the subjects of their policies?
2. How did politicians understand the social problems to which they were responding?
3. Which actors produced the dominant definitions of subjectivity and social problem to be addressed?

4. What group did these actors represent or belong to and how did they mobilize that belonging?

By asking these questions, we capture the definitional projects that draw distinctions between immigrants and the majority society and thus give meaning to immigrant subjectivity. As we will show, the Integration Plan developed by the Ministers and parliamentary committees explicitly targeted immigrant women, even though the title of the Plan suggested a focus on women from ethnic minorities, thus adopting a common Dutch conflation of “ethnic” and “immigrant”. The plan largely ignored the role of men in the process. In defining the subjects of integration policy, political actors also defined the problems of immigration and diversity and thus its solutions. We trace how this problem definition reflected the subjectivity articulated under question 1 to map onto a particular policy solution.

We then point out that definitions of subjectivity and attendant social problems are not uniform, but rather differ among political actors. As the literature on groupness and boundary formation suggests, such processes of subjectivity formation and problem articulation have more or less traction depending on political actors’ differential positions in hierarchies of power, including their position in the political field and the groups they themselves (appear to) represent (Yuval-Davis 2006, 2007; Wimmer 2008). Positions in power hierarchies affect actors’ capacity to influence a given situation and to have their definition of immigrant subjectivity and attendant social problems accepted as the definition.

Finally, we show that the answers to the questions guiding our analysis point to particular boundary negotiations and the construction of different types of boundaries. Throughout we touch upon the ways in which prior policy approaches, public opinion regarding immigrant integration, and party politics influenced the debates.

Analysis: Integrating Ethnic Minority Women in the Netherlands

In October 2003, the ministers presented their plan to guide the work of the PaVEM Commission to parliament. The Integration Plan’s explicit goal was to increase ethnic minority women and girls’ participation in Dutch society. The national-level Integration Plan focused on improving language learning, employment, and social dialogue, while creating “participation teams” consisting of highly successful ethnic minority women who could “stimulate” other ethnic minority women (Participation Agenda 2010, final report PaVEM Commission, 2005, p. 7; see also Appendix B for the stated
goals of the Integration Plan). In addition, 30 Dutch municipalities created similar local action plans. The Integration Plan maintained that ethnic minority women’s role in social reproduction, via mothering new generations, constituted a crucial element in the broader process of integration. Integration policy should, therefore, ensure that ethnic minority mothers had the capacity to encourage their children’s future participation in Dutch society (see also Prins and Saharso 2008).

Citing evidence that 53 percent of this group experienced “diminished opportunities” (measured as a limited capacity to be economically self-sufficient), labor market integration emerged as a key but not sole goal of the program. Not only paid labor, but also volunteer work, was seen as a positive outcome, because it would generate a sense of self-efficacy even in the absence of economic self-sufficiency. This emphasis on labor market integration and volunteer work generally guides women’s emancipation policy in the Netherlands and indicates that the Integration Plan should be read in that context (Prins and Saharso 2008).

The ultimate pay-off of these efforts in increasing ethnic minority women’s access to the public sphere and employment is not known, given the absence of monitoring requirements (van Maaren 2009). However, ongoing policy developments, particularly at the municipal level, suggest that they sparked greater awareness of the situation of ethnic minority women as defined by the Integration Plan (City of Rotterdam 2007).

On the face of it, then, the national-level Integration Plan and local implementation efforts focused on labor market and other forms of participation in the public sphere. However, we were struck by the fact that parliamentarians and Ministers focused on ethnic minority women’s role in labor market integration, largely ignoring that of the receiving society. In the process, they generated a particular interpretation of ethnic minority women’s subjectivity and engaged in boundary drawing between them and the Dutch majority. It is to these processes that we now turn.

**Ethnic Minority Women’s Subjectivity as Immigrants and Muslims**

Between the initial presentation in 2003 and the time the PaVEM Commission’s work ended (in 2005), parliamentary committees, together with the two Ministers, debated how to achieve the Integration Plan’s goals. How did these political actors define ethnic minority women’s subjectivity?

In identifying the target group, the Ministers indicated that they understood ethnic minority women to be long-term, first and second-generation immigrants:

Within the target group of women from ethnic minorities we can distinguish between two groups: those who came to the Netherlands from a range of countries and who are required to follow an integration
course (the so-called newcomers) and those who have lived in the Netherlands for a longer period or those who are born here. (TK 29203 nr. 3, p. 2)

This suggests that the Ministers conflated being from an ethnic minority with being an immigrant or of immigrant background. “Integration” is also strongly associated with immigrant status.

In their initial outline of the Integration Plan, the Ministers presented a seven-point set of initiatives aimed directly at women and girls from ethnic minorities (see TK 29203 nr. 3, p. 2–3). These goals identified barriers to social participation, economic self-sufficiency, and labor market participation (see Appendix B). In doing so, they reflected policymakers’ understandings of what made these women different from majority society, and of what being a full member of Dutch society entailed.

By conflating immigrant and ethnic minority, the Integration Plan construed the subjectivity of ethnic minority women narrowly as Muslim immigrants whose experiences were shaped by their religion (see also Roggeband and Verloo 2007). Although immigrants from predominantly Muslim countries make up approximately half of non-Western residents in the Netherlands, the policy seemed to pertain primarily to them and not to non-Muslim ethnic-minority women (predominantly from Surinam and the Antilles). The first and second policy goals aimed to pull women out of social isolation, reflecting the perception that many first, but also second, generation female immigrants from Turkey and Morocco are virtually locked in their homes by husbands, fathers, sons, and brothers to guard the family honor. Similarly, the fifth goal—“facilitating the discussion in one’s own circle about topics such as arranged marriage, female circumcision, honor-related violence, and sexual and relationship formation” (TK 29203 nr.3, p.2)—is a direct reference to practices associated with Muslim immigrant communities (Korteweg and Yurdakul 2009, 2010; Abu-Lughod 2011). Although the word “Muslim” is not mentioned in the initial policy document, through these associations ethnic minority women and girls became shorthand for women and girls of Muslim backgrounds. This background, in turn, signified an experience of gendered oppression rooted in particular shared practices and traditions associated with ethnicity, where a tendency to equate religion and ethnicity can be linked to the history of pillarization.6

Parliamentary debates of the Integration Plan reinforced this construction of minority women’s subjectivity. In March 2004, the parliamentary committees on Social Affairs and Employment and Justice (the department of Justice had immigrant integration in its portfolio at the time) jointly debated the initial version of the Integration Plan (TK 29203 nr. 9). They argued that the Ministers’ indictment of gendered forms of violence against women did not go far enough. Ayaan Hirsi Ali, the controversial parliamentarian for the
governing right-Liberal party the VVD, wanted a more precise definition of emancipation and integration:

The biggest obstacle on the road to emancipation and integration for women from ethnic minorities is violence legitimated by culture, perpetrated by male family members, and kept silent by female family members... It doesn’t seem possible to me to, as the Cabinet proposes, to prevent these forms of violence through debate and dialogue. ...Given that it is the primary task of government to guarantee the safety of its subjects, it is the task of government to eliminate [crimes like] ... [h]onor killing, kidnappings, and forced marriages ... (TK 29203 nr. 9, p.2)7

Hirsi Ali was careful to stipulate that these forms of violence are not necessarily the outcome of religious and cultural practices. However, the quote nonetheless conjures up an image of Muslim women as needing protection and removes other ethnic minority women from view by defining ethnicity implicitly in terms of gender relations associated with Islam. This construction of immigrant women’s subjectivity dominated the debates.

Some politicians tried to argue against these associations of ethnicity, religion and gender as obstacles to emancipation and integration. For example, Ms. Vos of the Green Left party stated that many Muslim women freely choose to wear the headscarf and went on to note that policy makers needed to ensure that women wearing headscarves would not face negative repercussions in the spheres of education and employment. However, Mr Bakker, from the centrist governing party D66, voiced the majority opinion of the majority, arguing that “allochthone women will take off their headscarf when they feel that they can emancipate in Dutch society without fear,” reinforcing the notion that allochthones are Muslim and that Muslim women are oppressed (TK 29203 nr. 9, p.7). Thus, parliamentarians like Vos were unable to undermine the overarching construction of ethnic minority women as Muslim women and the association between that identity and submission. In other words while dissent could be expressed within the parliament, that it came from a small opposition party limited the impact on the constitution of ethnic minority women as oppressed Muslim women.

**Defining the Problem of Integration**

These constructions of ethnic minority women’s subjectivity informed politicians’ understandings of the social problems integration policies ought to address. By making the category “ethnic minority women” synonymous with “Muslim immigrant women,” politicians identified gender oppression within immigrant communities as the major obstacle to women’s integration. Further, their participation became key to integration in general as they were identified as the ones who determine the integration of their children. This definition of the problem led to three closely related solutions, which drew
in part on prior policy development regarding religion, ethnicity, and gender.

First, once the problem of integration was the defined as a problem of gender equality, the historically strong policy link between gender equality and labor market participation offered the solution to the integration of ethnic minority women. A debate (TK 29203 nr. 18) in response to the progress report submitted by the Ministers in November 2004 (TK 29203 nr 16) showed the importance parliamentarians attached to labor market participation. A number of projects flowing from the initial Integration Plan had already been initiated, but parliamentarians pushed for clearer and more ambitious goals in the area of employment.

The emphasis on labor market integration not only fits with longstanding aims of Dutch emancipation policy, it also reinforced the notion that ethnic minority women were women from Muslim communities as it is Turkish and Moroccan women who fare least well on the prime indicators of gender equality, labor market participation, and economic independence (Keuzekamp and Merens 2006). Surinamese women often have slightly higher labor participation rates than average and often do better on economic independence measures than non-immigrant Dutch women so this problem definition and solution did not fit their experiences (see Appendix C).

Second, the identification of gender inequality as the key obstacle to integration led a number of parliamentarians to stress the importance of reaching out to ethnic minority men. Mr. Eski, a Muslim Christian-Democrat, argued that religious organizations could play a key role here (TK 29203 nr. 9, p. 5). However, others rejected this because they saw religion as the source of ethnic minority women’s oppression. In general, there was little support for addressing men from ethnic minority communities, although this was one of the stated goals of the Integration Plan. By interpreting women’s lagging integration as directly resulting from oppressive gender relations within their own communities, dominant voices in these policy debates construed Muslim men as part of the problem but not part of the solution (see also Cohen, Nussbaum, and Howard 1999).

Finally, certain parliamentarians proposed to teach emancipation courses in schools to address problematic gender relations within ethnic minority communities at their root (TK 29203, nr. 9). Minister Verdonk also linked the teaching of gender equality to Dutch citizenship practices, stating that citizenship courses that emphasize gender equality should become part of school curricula (TK 29203 nr. 18). Thus, the particular ways in which gender and religion intersected in Dutch constructions of ethnic minority women’s subjectivity led to a problem definition that addressed problems associated with ethnicity and religion by dealing with gender inequality. To reiterate, the primary policy response—to stimulate employment—was rooted in Dutch emancipation and integration policies, which had historically positioned employment as a sign of full participation (Bjornson 2007;
Roggeband and Verloo 2007; Prins and Saharso 2008). Alternative approaches, such as those directly addressing men and religious institutions, fit less comfortably with the problem definition that positioned these men and “their” religion as obstacles to integration. Conversely, the idea that gender inequality profoundly hindered ethnic minority (i.e. Muslim) women’s integration, informed the widely supported suggestion to expose school age children to lessons highlighting the link between gender equality and Dutch citizenship.

**Actors’ Positions in the Political Field and the Resources of Group Membership**

Actors’ capacity to draw on resources associated with their group membership, both in terms of individual subjectivity and party affiliation, affected which definitions of immigrant women’s subjectivity came to dominate debates. For example, Minister Verdonk, argued that:

Many allochthone women bring a life pattern with them that does nothing to further integration. They have little or no education, are subordinate to their husbands, and have no opportunity to participate in public life (TK 29203 nr. 9, p.8).

Elaborating, Verdonk then reinforced the implicit equation of ethnic minority women with Muslim immigrant women:

During a meeting on International Women’s Day with as topic Religion and Emancipation allochthone women indicated that at least for Moslimas emancipation cannot take place without violence [by men] (TK 29203 nr. 9, p.8).

Verdonk is neither a “Moslima” (a common Dutch appellation for Muslim women), nor from an ethnic minority background, yet she was able to mobilize claims to intimate knowledge of this segment of the Dutch population, gleaned in her capacity as Minister, to position her interpretation of Muslim women’s subjectivity and the problem of integration as the dominant one. In this case, she mobilized her membership in majority society and in her political party to create a dominant interpretation of what it means to be a Muslim woman. This claim to knowledge of Islam also led her to question whether women can wear the headscarf voluntarily, putting her weight as Minister behind the interpretation that headscarves signified oppression (TK 29203 nr. 9, p. 9). Finally, although this quote suggests that testimony by Dutch Muslim women can inform debate, the Minister did not draw from Muslim women who would argue differently (see for example, Pektas-Weber 2006).

Members of ethnic minority groups also acted within the political field demarcated by parliament. Ayaan Hirsi Ali was a member of the same liberal right-wing party as Verdonk. Her contributions to the debate reflected her (largely successful) attempt to position herself as the dominant voice against
Muslim women’s oppression. Hirsi Ali was the first to speak in the initial debate on the Integration Plan and used this opportunity to further her campaign against gender oppression associated with Islam. Her words had weight because of her status as a refugee from Islamic gender practices (of Somali descent, she received refugee status in the Netherlands after escaping a forced marriage). In addition, her position as a prominent member of the (then) second largest political party in the Netherlands furthered her capacity to construct ethnic minority women’s subjectivity in particular ways.

Actors’ positioning in the power hierarchies of the political field, whether based on party affiliation or membership in ethnic minority groups, also affected how the problem of integration was defined. The framing of labor market participation as the pathway to integration revealed the tensions inherent in defining ethnic minority women as Muslim women. This came to the fore when parliamentarians wanted to know what the government was doing about labor market discrimination. When a number of parliamentarians pointed out that members of ethnic minorities, including women, faced discrimination on the labor market, Minister Verdonk contested this. The report of her response reads:

Especially allochthone youth often point to discrimination on the labor market, but when she [Minister Verdonk] asks for concrete and provable examples, they do not exist. This is not to say that there is no discrimination on the labor market, but that you can only address such discrimination when you have concrete examples. (TK 29203 nr. 18, p.9)

Parliamentarian Naima Azough of the opposition GreenLeft Party then submitted the example of a young man who successfully interviewed for a position under a Dutch name, while he was not offered a position when he applied under the name Abdul Nasser Nazeri. She also offered to give the Minister other examples (TK 29203 nr. 18, p.9).

Although Azough, of Moroccan descent, was also a member of one of the communities in question, as a parliamentarian for one of the smaller parties, her arguments had little traction. Comparing her capacity to frame the problem to Hirsi Ali’s, who represents a far smaller Muslim group in the Netherlands, suggests that personal experience does not by itself enable the successful framing of political debates. Rather, experience gains weight when backed by a political party’s power in the parliamentary political field.

Boundary Formations

Finally, we consider whether the preceding processes produced bright, blurred, expanding, or contracting boundaries. Many issues were at stake in these debates, including securing political power in the face of strong, if divided, public opinion against immigrants. For example, as the Integration Plan’s main promoter, Minister Verdonk had ambitions to gain her party’s leadership. The Integration Plan fit well with her attempts to profile herself
as someone who wanted to protect and safeguard “core” Dutch values, including a liberal understanding of gender equality. Verdonk staked her political capital on these issues and, after losing a protracted leadership struggle, she resigned from the VVD to found her own political party, Proud of the Netherlands. Her fall from power ultimately resulted from intra-party strife informed by, but not directly related to, her position on immigration and integration (for details see Peeperkorn and Sitalsing 2007).

Many of Verdonk’s policies and ideas served to draw the bright boundaries that separate people into discrete membership groups, making assimilation a prerequisite for boundary crossing (Zolberg and Long 1999; Alba 2005, 2010). In her promotion of the Integration Plan and the work of the PaVEM Commission, Minister Verdonk was reluctant to understand the lower participation rates of (some) women from ethnic minorities as resulting from labor market discrimination. To illustrate how this reinforced a bright boundary between ethnic minorities and majority society members, we turn to the report published in January 2004 by the Temporary Parliamentary Inquiry Commission on Integration Policy (Tijdelijke Commissie Onderzoek Integratiebeleid), also known as the Blok Commission, which researched the relationship between immigrant integration and integration policy from the early 1970s to the early 2000s.

The Blok Commission’s conclusion that integration was a qualified success was roundly rejected by Dutch parliament, particularly by the right Liberals and Christian-Democratic parliamentary majority who called the report “incredibly naïve” and the report’s recommendations “too non-binding and general” to be useful (NRC 2004). The report itself gives further weight to Azough’s assertions that members of ethnic minority groups face labor market discrimination. In the focus groups the Committee conducted, women from the four main Dutch ethnic minority groups claimed that racial, ethnic, and religious discrimination was the main reason why they did not get ahead on the Dutch labor market (see also Essed 2002). All the women interviewed indicated that they had high levels of education and that the obstacles they encountered trying to find employment commensurate with their education frustrated them. For example, one woman of Surinamese descent who was a lawyer before moving to the Netherlands is quoted as saying:

...I can remember an interview. My name sounds a bit Dutch. I was invited and all of a sudden I saw their faces stiffen when I walked in. I felt it was a good interview but they told me “no” anyway. When you ask why, there are all kinds of reasons, kind of vague. (CB 2004, 422)

This woman now helps other women with similar backgrounds negotiate the Dutch labor market. Similarly, a woman of Moroccan descent told the Committee at a public hearing on the integration of immigrants:
I want to talk about discrimination on the labor market. I’ll give you an example. I have a good education, just like many of the people here. I have been discriminated against and am still discriminated against, with every new job. They don’t look at my CV. If they do, they are stunned, because how can a woman who wears a headscarf and who dresses like that have achieved so much? I have had to work twice as hard to be accepted on the labor market. (CB 2004, 422)

These statements suggest that women from ethnic minorities also see labor market participation as fostering integration. They differ, however, on the obstacles the Integration Plan identified. Their statements, combined with statistics on labor market participation, indicate that once women from ethnic minorities enter the labor market, intersections of ethnicity, race, religion, and gender shape their trajectories. Yet, the politicians promoting the Integration Plan and the work of the PaVEM Commission isolated gender as they emphasized the perception of differences in gender relations between (Muslim) immigrants and non-immigrants. This enabled them to focus on family dynamics rather than the organization of the Dutch labor market and the (institutionalized) interactions between immigrant and non-immigrant Dutch, in the process confirming general public opinion on these issues.

The perceived gender differences structuring intimate familial relationships were also construed as rooted in religion and then tied to ethnicity by labeling the women under discussion members of ethnic minority groups. These moves facilitated both the establishment of a bright boundary along multiple, intersecting lines of difference, and calls for assimilation, in which ethnic minority women were to model their practices on those of non-immigrant Dutch women. However, if, as the charges of labor market discrimination seem to indicate, non-immigrant Dutch are not ready to see immigrant Dutch as potential full partners in Dutch society, then integration paradigms would have to focus much more closely on changes on both sides of the boundaries drawn in policy debates. Alternative framings of immigrant women’s subjectivity and of the problematic of integration could lead to policies and debates that fostered either boundary blurring, by focusing on similarities between immigrant and non-immigrant groups and differences within immigrant groups, or boundary expansion, by problematizing a smaller range of immigrant practices, as the way to achieve integration.

The bright boundaries drawn by the dominant voices in the debate also exaggerated the gender differences between immigrant and non-immigrant women. Second generation immigrants, whether Turkish, Moroccan or from other ethnic groups, do significantly better than their first generation mothers on the indicators such as labor market participation and educational attainment (Keuzekamp and Merens 2006). Yet, by focusing their efforts in large part on first generation women, and generalizing an already limited interpretation of that experience to all ethnic minority women, the Ministers
reinforced the stereotypical portrayal of Muslim women as downtrodden. At the same time, the fact that, for example, Surinamese women often have slightly higher labor participation rates and do better on economic independence measures than non-immigrant Dutch women was not seen as a sign that non-immigrant Dutch women should look toward their Surinamese counterparts as examples (see Appendix C). While we cannot measure the relationship between political policy debates and public opinion, the ways in which these “blind spots” in the parliamentary debates led to discussions that confirmed public opinion are striking.

Conclusion

In the Dutch parliamentary debates, mobilizations of gender, religious, and ethnic differences at the highest level of policy making reinforced perceptions of the gendered practices of ethnic minority women and girls (and by extensions, of ethnic minority men and boys) as obstacles to integration, enabling calls for strong forms of assimilation (Brubaker 2001). While the calls of some political actors for greater attention to labor market discrimination suggest how boundaries might have been blurred, an analysis of the relative power of actors in the political field demonstrated that the actors putting forth such constructions were relatively weak and thus unable to influence prevailing understandings of group membership. Three factors played a role in generating these outcomes. First, pre-existing policy approaches to religion, ethnicity, and gender came into play in this debate. Second, political actors, like Rita Verdonk and Ayaan Hirsi Ali, benefitted from their membership in governing political parties, and in Hirsi Ali’s case in one of the minority groups under discussions. Third, the public’s sharply negative views of immigrants, generally, and Muslims, in particular, reflected in public opinion likely further undermined dissenting voices allowing those in favor of bright boundaries to dominate the debate. The boundaries created in the Integration Plan (and the parliamentary debates accompanying its development and implementation) can only be crossed, in assimilatory fashion.

This analytical approach, combining theories of intersectionality with those of boundary formation, can also be applied to understanding other policy developments and public debates taking place in the Netherlands and other countries. For example, an analysis of Dutch policy approaches to honor-related violence between 2005 and 2009 indicates a more blurred approach to boundary formation (Korteweg and Yurdakul 2010). This can be explained by a different construction of Muslim women’s subjectivity, a different set of political actors, in this case including immigrant NGOs, and a different political field marked by changes in the ideological composition of governing coalitions. Similarly, the process that led to the 2004 French law against the wearing of ostentatious religious symbols, including the headscarf,
in public schools can be fruitfully analyzed by paying attention to the ways in which religiosity, gender, and civic notions of belonging came to intersect in an environment where few religious French Muslims had a voice in public debate (for example, the Stasi Commission that made the recommendations that led to this law conducted many interviews, but only one with two Muslim headscarf wearing women). Similarly, the adoption of policies that require that aspiring immigrants learn German as a condition for receiving residency permits can be interpreted as a shift in understandings of immigrants from permanent others to potential Germans. However, German integration policies can also be understood as reinforcing “us” versus “them” distinctions now rooted in language rather than ethnic belonging. Here, arguments of German parliamentarians of the ruling parties that mandatory language learning prior to arrival in Germany will enable immigrant women to avoid forced marriage because knowing German will allow them to call the police can also indicate the strategic, almost cynical use of real and perceived problems to create barriers to immigrant entry (Korteweg and Yurdakul 2010). An analysis of the boundary forming processes that produced these policies might indicate which interpretation is correct.

Our analysis of this particular instance of Dutch policy making shows how Dutch parliamentarians frustrated the overall aim of integration by the imposition of rigid, “bright” boundaries that act to exclude groups. The making of “Muslim women” in our account thus demonstrates how politics has the power to “simplify” a highly complex social reality, such that insiders and outsiders are granted coherence in policy that they lack in reality. As James Scott (1998) has noted in a very different context, such processes of “state simplification” are rarely successful. If integration was the aim of Dutch politicians, we very much agree.

Notes

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1. In brief, we approach religion as “far from being a fixed or unitary phenomenon, [rather] religion . . . is a social construct that varies in meaning across time and place” (Beckford 2003, 7). We approach ethnicity as a relational construct that informs group formation through narratives of shared history, blood relationships, and language, which inform cultural practices that distinguish an “us” from a “them” (Barth 1969; Brubaker 2004). Gender is the process of making perceived differences between women and men salient at the personal, interpersonal, institutional, and societal levels, creating hegemonies and hierarchies along these lines of perceived difference (Scott 1988; Glenn 1999).
2. The terms “autochthone,” referring to native-born Dutch, and “allochthone” referring to people who are first or second-generation immigration gained ascendancy in the early 1970s (Prins 2004).

3. This is also evident from a summary of party platforms on issues related to immigration where only the GreenLeft is guardedly positive regarding multiculturalism, and all other parties use tough language regarding the need for immigrants to abide by the law, though none are as openly hostile to immigrants as the PVV. http://www.forum.nl/Portals/0/Publicaties/Verkiezingsprogrammas-FORUM-2012.pdf. (last accessed on October 22, 2012).

4. In the USA, intersectional theory most commonly looks at the intersection of race, class, and gender, while European scholars have long been more fluid with regards to which categories they focus on in their analysis (for the USA: Crenshaw 1991; Glenn 1999; Collins 2000, for Europe: Yuval-Davis 1997, 2006; Knapp 2005; Prins 2006; Davis 2008). This largely reflects the very different positioning of race in the social contexts within which this scholarship is produced.

5. The Committee was headed by Paul Rosenmöller (former cabinet member and party leader of GreenLeft), Hans de Boer (former chair, MKB-Nederland), Lilian Callender (director of Hogeschool INHOLLAND), Hans Dijkstal (former minister, former head of fraction VVD, former parliamentarian), Prinses Máxima, and Yasemin Tümer (managing director of KPMG).

6. As one reviewer pointed out, the tradition of pillarization might have made this turn to religion more comfortable.

7. All translation from the Dutch are our own.

8. In 2006, a news show reported that Hirsi Ali gave false information during her refugee hearings (something which she herself had already admitted to in her own writing) and the subsequent parliamentary debate, which briefly resulted in the revoking of her citizenship status, led Hirsi Ali to resign from parliament. Ultimately, the course of events led to the resignation of Minister Verdonk for her handling of the affair and the fall of the sitting cabinet.

9. Thanks to one of our anonymous reviewers for this observation.

10. All available at www.overheid.nl.

Appendix A. Primary Source Material

Commissie Blok


Plan to Address the Emancipation and Integration of Women and Girls from Ethnic Minorities and the PaVEM Commission:

Plan to Address the Emancipation and Integration of Women and Girls from Ethnic Minorities (Plan van Aanpak voor de Emancipatie van Vrouwen en
Minister A.J. de Geus, Social Affairs and Employment and Minister M.C.F. Verdonk of Foreigners’ Affairs and Integration

Tweede Kamer, vergaderjaar 2003–2004, 29203 nr. 9
March 29, 2004

Tweede Kamer, vergaderjaar 2004–2005, 29203 nr. 10
April 14, 2004

Tweede Kamer, vergaderjaar 2004–2005, 29203 nr. 16
November 15, 2004

Tweede Kamer, vergaderjaar 2004–2005, 29203, nr. 18
March 10, 2005

Tweede Kamer, vergaderjaar 2003–2004, 29203 nr. 22
April 18, 2004

Tweede Kamer, vergaderjaar 2004–2005, 29203 nr. 23
April 19, 2005

Tweede Kamer, vergaderjaar 2004–2005, 29203 nr. 26
June 24, 2005

Tweede Kamer, vergaderjaar 2005–2006, 29203 nr. 27
November 15, 2005

Tweede Kamer, vergaderjaar 2004–2005, 29203 nr. 28
December 9, 2005
Appendix B

The Integration Plan’s Stated Goals:

(A) Initiatives with aimed directly at the target group:

1. Increase the reach of women from ethnic minority groups, among other things by breaking their isolation;
2. Integrating women (mothers and grandmothers) who have not or rarely been reached so far;
3. Improving the education of girls from ethnic minority groups;
4. Supporting the exchange of beliefs and the dialogue between autochthones and ethnic minorities and between and within the diverse minority groups;
5. Facilitating the discussion in one’s own circle of issues such as forced marriage, women’s circumcision, honor killing, and sexual and relationship formation;
6. Strengthening the emancipation of men from ethnic minorities;
7. Increasing the ease of access for women from ethnic minorities to the labor market. (TK29 203 nr. 3 p. 2)

Appendix C


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<tr>
<th>Origin</th>
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References


