

# The Participation Declaration: Connecting or Dividing Dutch and non-Dutch people?

*An analysis of the role of references to gender and sexuality in the way distinctions between Dutch and non-Dutch people are made in the Participation Declaration and in the materials used in the Participation Declaration Trajectory.*



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## **ABSTRACT**

This thesis analyses the role of references to gender and sexuality in the way distinctions are made between Dutch and non-Dutch people in the Participation Declaration and in the official materials of the Participation Declaration Trajectory. By undertaking a critical discourse analysis the hidden assumptions about newcomers in the materials are revealed. These hidden assumptions are based on ideas about gender equality and tolerance of freedom of sexual orientation. By making use of theories of representation, tolerance, othering and gendered citizenship the role of gender and sexuality as excluding mechanism and as absolute norm of difference is revealed. Previous authors have showed how the civic integration exam contributes to exclusion and how it creates hierarchy between the us and the them. This thesis highlights the role of references to gender and sexuality in the creation of this exclusion in the material of the Participation Declaration and Participation Declaration Trajectory. This conclusion adds to the critiques concerning culturalist discourse in integration policies, in which a focus is put on cultural differences.

**KEYWORDS:** Gender equality; sexuality; tolerance; representation; othering; citizenship; participation; integration; civic integration.

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## **PREFACE**

Dear reader,

In front of you is my final master's thesis, which might be the final document of my career as a student. Since the start of my academic career in September 2012 I have been interested in culture and cultural diversity. I have learned a lot during the Master's programme of Gender Studies, not just from the courses but even more so from the people, both my the teachers as well as my fellow students. I have learned a lot from their perspectives in life, about feminism, and about standing for what you believe in, even when this perspective does not always cohere with the 'majority'. This is a state of mind I will take with me in my further career and of which I am sure it will help me. For this I am very grateful.

Back to this thesis, which did not appear out of nowhere and which has been a long process. I wish to thank my family, friends and boyfriend for supporting me and always telling me everything will be all right in the end (even when I did not believe it at times). I want to thank David, for helping me with revising the thesis on a linguistic level. I want to thank Eva Midden, the second reader of this thesis who also has been my supervisor. I also wish to thank Berteke Waaldijk, my supervisor. Her enthusiasm in regard to my topic brought back my enthusiasm and here on-point feedback helped me throughout the process.

Rest me tow wish you a pleasant reading,

Bibian Ogier

May 2020.

## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

*“I hereby state that I have read, understood and will respect the information above about values in Dutch society” - Participatieverklaring*

Currently, we are living in an era of global migration. Throughout European history, people have migrated throughout the world, but, as is reported by Banks (2008), never before has the movement of such a wide variety of groups across the globe been on such large-scale. The increase of migration flows can also be seen in the Netherlands, where an increase in migration of refugees reached a peak in 2017 (Vluchtelingenwerk, 2019). In the Netherlands, a variety of groups of migrants are present in society, of which three main groups can be distinguished *“as having shaped the current Dutch social formation: postcolonial migrants, the so-called ‘guest workers’, and refugees growing migrant population in the post-war era”* (Midden, 2018, p. 2). The postcolonial migrants mainly arrived from Indonesia, Surinam, and the Antilles. Guest workers are migrants who migrated to the Netherlands as labour migrants, mostly from the south of Europe, Turkey and Morocco. Refugees are the group of migrants who are arriving in the Netherlands to seek safety, and are the focus of the most current immigration debate in the Netherlands (Midden, 2018).

The question most asked in immigration and integration policies is: how should these new groups of migrants be dealt with in society? Over time, the Dutch Government has formulated a variety of immigration policies, the first being based on the expected temporary stay of the migrants. These first policies based on temporary stay placed emphasis on keeping one’s own (cultural) identity. However, over time, it became apparent that migrants stayed longer than anticipated, and, as such, a more permanent immigration policy was needed, with an emphasis on taking on the ‘Dutch identity’. The Dutch political attitude and discourse concerning immigration and integration changed from a liberal perspective, towards a more negative, assimilationist perspective (Slootman 2018; Kurvers & Spotti, 2015). As a result of this, the practical execution of the current immigration policy is the civic integration exam (*Inburgeringsexamen*), which consists of different elements. The analysis of one of these elements, the Participation Declaration (*Participatieverklaring*), together with its corresponding Participation Declaration Trajectory (*Participatieverklaringstraject*) forms the basis of this thesis.

### **1.1 Object of study: The Participation Declaration**

As mentioned above, the Participation Declaration is part of the civic integration of migrants. The Participation Declaration, together with the Participation Declaration Trajectory, demand that the newcomer/migrant<sup>1</sup> (in this case, a status holder, who is a refugee who has been granted a residence permit) participates in Dutch society in accordance with the guidance set out in the Participation Declaration, and this forms a contract between the migrant and the state that the migrant is required to sign. Municipalities have the responsibility for ensuring that this contract is signed, and, therefore, have developed a Participation Declaration Trajectory leading up to the moment of signing. This thesis investigates how gender and sexuality are dealt with in the content of both the Participation Declaration and the Participation Declaration Trajectory and, as such, what role these references play in the way distinctions are made between Dutch and non-Dutch people. By examining how gender and sexuality function in the content of these materials, the potential for excluding mechanisms and distinguishing practices can be uncovered. This thesis aims to analyse content of the participation materials from a gender studies perspective, and, as a result, offer a different perspective for policy workers at municipalities who are working with and implementing these materials.

The societal relevance of this thesis is the connection to the current immigration and integration debate. The civic integration law (*Wet Inburgering*) as it exists now (May 2020) will change in 2021, and these changes are likely to increase the roles and responsibilities of municipalities in this area of the law. The main purpose of integration and integration policies is letting the newcomer blend in, a purpose in which division is opted against. However, previous scholars have showed how the current integration policy focuses on difference and is therefore rather excluding (Slootman 2018). Awareness of the role of references to gender and sexuality in the creation of distinctions between Dutch and non-Dutch people can potentially assist policy makers with the implementation of this legislation and with the adoption of a (more) inclusive attitude towards migrants/newcomers. As a result, this may complement the aims of integration, without separating “us from them”. The purpose of integration then can become more focused on coming together and connecting, rather than dividing.

### **1.2 Aim of the research: Research Question**

This thesis aims to investigate the role of explicit and implicit references to gender and sexuality in the way distinctions between Dutch and non-Dutch people are made in the

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<sup>1</sup> Not all migrants are expected to complete the civic integration exam. The obligation depends on, amongst other things, nationality, age and residence time in the Netherlands.

content of the Participation Declaration and the material of the Participation Declaration Trajectory. The aim is to not describe gender and sexuality as neutral concepts, but to reveal how gender and sexuality can play a role in (social) inclusion and exclusion. The central research question that guides this thesis is as follows:

*What role do explicit and implicit references to gender and sexuality play in the way distinctions between Dutch and non-Dutch people are made in the Participation Declaration and in the official materials used in the trajectory supporting the execution of the Participation Declaration?*

The research in this thesis focuses on four theories as theoretical lenses to analyse and answer this question. Based on these theories, the following sub-questions are also posed:

- *How is gender represented?* I will interpret this representation of gender with the help of Stuart Hall's theory of representation as constructed and dependent on language and power structures.
- *What references to freedom of sexual orientation are part of the material?* I will interpret the references to sexual freedom with help of Wendy Brown's explanation of tolerance as an excluding mechanism.
- *Are references to cultural difference between Dutch and non-Dutch gendered?* I will analyse this aspect with help of the concept of 'Othering' as developed by Edward Said.
- *What role does gender play in the description of 'participation'?* I will analyse these references with help of the concept 'gendered citizenship' as explained by Dutt, Reinelt and Sahai.

As a result of undertaking this research and analysing the materials, I have concluded that gender and sexuality are significant factors in the distinction between Dutch and non-Dutch people in the content of the materials. Assumptions about migrants/newcomers are connected to attitudes about gender (equality) and (tolerance of) sexuality. This thesis looks at the hidden assumptions made of newcomers as being 'different', and how gender and sexuality impact on this. In this thesis the materials are analysed in an intersectional manner, while focusing not solely on gender, sexuality or ethnicity, but on how these principles are structurally intertwined.



These findings will be examined and explained in this thesis, using the following structure. First, chapter two of this thesis focuses on a literature review which was undertaken, where the critique and criticism of scholars on the Participation Declaration will be summarized, whilst also highlighting the fact that these scholars do not use gender and sexuality in their critique or otherwise use gender and sexuality solely as an example, without putting extensive focus on the function of these concepts in formulating their arguments. This chapter will also provide a general overview of the Dutch national discourse on integration and the development of the civic integration exam, as well as the development of the Participation Declaration. After the literature review, the following chapter will provide an explanation and justification of the methods and methodology of this thesis, being a critical discourse analysis. This chapter contains an explanation of the methods used, critical discourse analysis undertaken, and an overview of the analysed materials. The next chapter, the theoretical framework, will provide summaries of the theories described in the sub-questions above. These theories are used as theoretical lenses to analyse and assess the materials. The analysis chapter (chapter 5) will deal with the materials one by one, focussing on the role of gender and sexuality as markers of distinction making use of the sub-questions as a structure basis for this analysis. The concluding chapter will provide an answer to the central research question, making use of the literature review, theoretical framework and analysis set out in the previous chapters.

## **CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW**

This chapter provides a literature review of literature concerning the topic of integration in the Netherlands, ‘*Inburgering*’, and more specifically the Participation Declaration. It will provide practical knowledge and understanding about these concepts, as well as the theoretical insights of a variety of scholars, explaining their critique and criticism on the Participation Declaration. The review focuses on the ways in which gender and sexuality are used by the authors in these specific articles.

### **2.1 Integration policies in the Netherlands: from foreign-friendly to assimilationist**

The Netherlands has a diverse society, in which a variety of migration and integration policies have been created, developed and adapted over time. Currently, as of May 2020, the civic integration exam, is one of the basic tools used in integration policy in the Netherlands, of which the Participation Declaration forms a part. The civic integration exam, about which a more extensive explanation will follow, was created in 2007 as a result of the changing attitudes within integration policies in the Netherlands. This paragraph provides a short overview and description of integration policies in the Netherlands, as well as an explanation of integration as a concept and its different approaches.

In general, the concept of integration is hard to grasp, as it varies across nation-states and their “*discourses of belonging*” (Extra, Spotti and Avermaet, 2009, p. 11). Generally, it can be said that integration is the way migrants are included in, and adapt to, their new home country. Tariq Modood (2007) describes a variety of approaches to integration, from a two-way social interaction (integration and multiculturalism), in which both the host society as well as the immigrant are expected to make an effort to adapt to each other, to a one-directional process (assimilation), in which the migrant has the sole and full responsibility of adapting to the host country and full adaptation by the immigrant is required.

The changes in the integration policies in the Netherlands are described by Sloomman (2018) and Kurvers and Spotti (2015) as having transformed from a foreigner-friendly policy and developing into a more restrictive policy. In their article, however, Kurvers and Spotti (2015) focus on the impact of the integration legislation on the language development of low-educated migrants and adult second-language teaching. They do not specifically mention gender and sexuality in their paper.

Marieke Sloomman (2018) discusses the development of integration policies in the Netherlands, while focussing on the culturalist discourse. By culturalist discourse, Sloomman (2018) refers to the idea that there is a division between enlightened and liberal culture, which culture is presumed to be the dominant culture in the Netherlands, and the cultures of

minorities, which are characterized by illiberal ideologies. Referring to the integration policies, she states that *“Dutch integration politics has seen a significant turn from a relative tolerance of diversity to an ‘assimilationist’ or ‘culturalist’ intolerance of cultural diversity”* (p. 59). Here she means that tolerance towards cultural diversity is challenged in society and that *“those who were presented as cultural Other were increasingly regarded as outsiders”* (p. 61).

In her article, gender and sexuality come into play as examples of the (presumed) differences between cultures. The general argument of the culturalist discourse in Dutch integration policies, as Slootman (2018) explains, *“showed that progressive values such as secularism, sexual freedom, and gender equality are presented as the core value of ‘Dutch culture’, which is supposedly under threat by non-Western, Muslim immigrants”* (p. 67). Her explanation of the Dutch integration landscape forms the basis for her analysis of the societal context of first and second generation Moroccan-Dutch and Turkish-Dutch immigrants. In the case of gender and gender equality, she concludes from her literature study that traditional gender roles and family structures are of greater importance for the first generation immigrants than for the second generation, while concluding that there is no such thing as a homogeneous Muslim, and ultimately asking for a *“reconsideration of the assumption that attitudinal uniformity among all its citizens is prerequisite for a country”* (p.79).

Slootman (2018) explains how the rise of the culturalist discourse was instrumental in driving the changes in integration policy, with the Participation Declaration as one of the instruments calling for and dictating integration. She describes the Participation Declaration as something which *“attempts to morally bind new immigrants to Dutch society”* (p. 65-66).

## **2.2. The practicalities of the Civic Integration Exam (Inburgering)**

While having established that the integration landscape in the Netherlands is currently characterized by an assimilationist attitude, this paragraph explains the practicalities of one of the core elements of integration policy, namely the civic integration exam (*Inburgering*). ‘Inburgering’ can be seen as an example one of tools behind this renewed policy, with its purpose being a demand for the adoption of national culture (Ogier, 2020). The current civic integration exam mirrors, in some respects, the ‘Wet Inburgering’ which came into force in January 2007. One of the changes introduced by the ‘Wet Inburgering’ was the inclusion of an exam in the civic integration trajectory. Spotti and Kurvers (2012) emphasize how the inclusion of an exam puts pressure on newcomers: *“The consequences of the two new civic integration laws are big: (...) he who does not pass the civic integration exam in the*

*Netherlands will not be granted a permanent residence permit (newcomers) or is not granted the opportunity to naturalize<sup>2</sup>” (p. 78)*

The current Wet Inburgering does not differ enormously from the one introduced in 2007 nor the one revised in 2011; the basic obligation to pass the civic integration exam as a prerequisite to obtaining or keeping a residence permit remains the same. The Dutch Government currently defines the purpose of the civic integration trajectory (*Inburgeren*) as learning how to speak the Dutch language and getting to know Dutch society ([Civic Integration in the Netherlands], n.d.). The civic integration exam consists of an exam testing the Dutch language and knowledge of the Dutch society, focussing on especially norms, values and practicalities. In 2015, in addition to the understanding of these concepts, an element was added concerning the Dutch labour market. In this new element, which is called “*Oriëntatie Nederlandse Arbeidsmarkt*” (orientation Dutch Labour Market), the newcomer is taught about the Dutch labour market and about strategies on how to behave within this labour market. The newest addition to the trajectory is the Participation Declaration, which was added in 2017. Newcomers to the Netherlands<sup>3</sup>, between the ages of 18 and 65, are obliged to pass the civic integration exam within three years of arrival, in order to maintain their residence permit.

### **2.3 The Participation Declaration**

As mentioned above, this thesis focuses on one specific element of the civic integration exam, being the Participation Declaration (*Participatieverklaring*) and the Participation Declaration Trajectory (*Participatieverklaringstraject*), which is the practical execution of the Participation Declaration. The Participation Declaration is a contract or declaration that needs to be signed by the one who is obliged to sit the civic integration exam. The website of the Dutch Government describes the purpose of the Declaration as “*learning what is important in the Netherlands*”([Civic Integration Exam, n.d.]) The Declaration itself is a A4 document created by the Government.

The Declaration discusses and describes four core values of Dutch society, as defined by the Dutch Government, being: freedom; equality; solidarity and participation. The core values are written down and explained in an official document, which needs to be signed by the newcomer at the end of the Trajectory. The Declaration explains that the core value,

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<sup>2</sup> Translation of: De consequenties van de twee nieuwe inburgeringswetten zijn groot: ..... wie niet slaagt voor het inburgeringsexamen in Nederland krijgt geen permanente verblijfsstatus (nieuwkomers) of kan niet naturaliseren (oudkomers)

<sup>3</sup> Newcomers from within the European Union are excluded from the obligation to pass the civic integration exam.

‘freedom’, needs to be understood as that everybody in the Netherlands is allowed to think, do and say what s/he wants. The Declaration’s meaning of ‘equality’ is that all citizens are to be treated equally, and that discrimination on the basis of sex, religion, ethnicity or sexual preference is not tolerated or allowed. ‘Solidarity’ within the meaning of the Declaration, establishes the principle that citizens, together, are responsible for society. Finally ‘participation’ is described as a way in which all citizens collectively contribute to a nice and safe society. A translation of the content of the Declaration can be found in Appendix I. Signing the Participation Declaration is an obligation of the civic integration exam and if it is not signed (in time) the newcomer risks a repetitive fine, and the consequences that their application for a residence permit, and/or possible naturalisation in the future may be denied.

Municipalities have been given the responsibility that newcomers who are finishing their civic integration exam sign the Participation Declaration. They are also responsible for ensuring that the core values of the Netherlands are communicated and explained, which can be done in any way the relevant municipality chooses. Municipalities may design their own Participation Declaration Trajectory, with corresponding workshops or contact moments. To help them, ProDemos, in conjunction with the ministry of Social Affairs and Employment, designed material which can be used as an example of workshops to be held to transmit the core values. ProDemos is a research institution specializing in democracy and constitutional law. The developed materials consist of a slide presentation describing the core values, and an accompanying manual to assist the trainer or presenter of the workshop. ([ProDemos, n.d.]

As described above, the attitude and discourse in integration policies changed from one foreign-friendly multiculturalism to a more restrictive, assimilationist policy in which full adaption is demanded and expected. Following the argument of Slotman (2018), I argue that the Participation Declaration is a result of this change in attitude. The next paragraph will provide a more in-depth critique of the Participation Declaration.

## **2.4 Criticism and critiques of the Participation Declaration**

Since its introduction, the Participation Declaration has received wide criticism and a number of critiques have been made, which will be discussed in the following paragraphs.

### **2.4.1. Participation Declaration as legal question point**

One of the ways in which the Participation Declaration is analysed is from a legal perspective. De Waal (2017a), who is a philosopher of law concepts, discusses the ambiguity of the Dutch civic integration exam as a whole, whilst focusing on the Participation Declaration as an example of such ambiguity. She describes the (objectives of the) Declaration as ‘doubtful’,

since it demands knowledge ability and commitment from newcomers which are not demanded from any other, natural Dutch citizen, namely not merely respecting Dutch values and laws, but also actively committing to and living by them. The legal basis for her argument is highlighted in her statement that the ‘Orde van Advocaten’ has even called the Declaration “*in violation of human rights*”. De Waal also expresses doubt about the effectiveness of the Declaration. She states that, because signing the Declaration is a legal obligation, newcomers will not risk incurring fines for not doing so and, as such, the value place on actually signing the document is itself decreased. In a different article, de Waal (2017b) lists three reasons why, according to her, the Participation Declaration is a bad idea. She states that the Participation Declaration is itself in conflict with fundamental values, such as freedom of speech, that it affects equal citizenship, and she suggests that there are better ways to invest in structural integration.

Another legal point of view has been posed in an article on the website ‘Nederlandrechtsstaat.nl’ by Stremmer (2017), who is a PhD candidate in European Constitutional Law. In his article, Stremmer disputes the morality and legality of the Participation Declaration. Besides the fact that the origin and interpretation of the norms and values are described in the Declaration, Stremmer also questions how the Declaration conflicts with freedom of speech in the Netherlands, since it demands the acceptance of specific norms and values. In both articles, cited above, where a legal point of view has been debated, neither article addresses any specific notion of gender and sexuality, nor how either of these concepts come into play with regard to the Participation Declaration.

#### 2.4.2 Participation Declaration as an example of a shift from national to local authorities

Oomen and Leenders (2020) discuss the Participation Declaration at length, more specifically the Participation Declaration Workshops executed by municipalities. They use the workshops as a case study to exemplify the shift in the responsibility for integration policies from the national state to the level of local authorities. By having the responsibility of creating and executing the Participation Declaration Workshops, local authorities have “*formal responsibility for deciding which understandings of citizenship newcomers are obliged to commit to and adopt*” (p. 266). Oomen and Leenders (2020) explain that the Declaration is an example of a fourfold turn in national migrant integration policies, being the responsabilisation, contractualisation, culturalisation and differentialisation of integration policies (p. 273). Just as Slotman, Oomen and Leenders refer to culturalisation of integration, by making use of the definition of Tonkens concerning this concept, describing it

as “*the process by which ‘culture (emotions, feelings, cultural norms and values, and cultural symbols and traditions, including religion) has come to play a central role in the debate on social integration*” (Tonkens as quoted by Oomen and Leenders p. 274). Having analysed the Participation Declaration Trajectories at four different municipalities, Oomen and Leenders (2020) conclude that the shift in integration policies to local authorities is happening, and that this results in the culturalisation of citizenship and of perspectives of the norms and values of the newcomer. Oomen and Leenders link this conclusion to the idea of border politics, in which symbolic borders are shifting.

Just as Slotman (2018) uses gender and sexuality only as examples in the explanation of culturalisation in integration policies, Oomen and Leenders (2020) mention gender and sexuality as examples of different assumptions about norms and values. In their introduction, they include an anecdote of one of the workshop observations:

*“After having introduced women’s rights, premarital sex, topless women and same-sex marriage in the past half hour, it is time to turn to the differences between Syrian and Dutch culture. “Tell me, what is the relation between men and women in Syria?” “They’re the same,” an Iraqi girl (...) “Are you sure?” the Turkish-Dutch trainer says. “How about inside the house, and in the little villages? Here, there are big differences in Arab culture. Now let’s move on to Namus, honour, in the Netherlands, if my unmarried daughter falls pregnant, it is not a problem. In Syria this would be a problem. Let me write the differences on the flip-over” (p. 265 – 266)*

I have included this anecdote in this chapter, because it shows how gender equality is used as an example in a Participation Declaration workshop to explain cultural differences between the Dutch (Western) culture and the immigrant culture. Focussing on the gender component of this anecdote shows me a distinction between Dutch and non-Dutch people, something on which I will remain focused throughout this thesis. From this anecdote, Oomen and Leenders derive the culturalisation of integration policies. Gender and sexuality are also discussed when Oomen and Leenders compare the Dutch version of the Participation Declaration to other European immigration policies, more specifically the immigration policy of Denmark. Oomen and Leenders describe how the policies of Denmark go even more in-depth into the

importance of gender equality in their country. In addition, Oomen and Leenders (2020) make another remark regarding sexuality when they compare the Participation Declaration to the Dutch Constitution. *“The explicit mention of sexual orientation is striking, as this ground is not named in the Dutch constitution whereas grounds like race and political opinion (left out in the Declaration) are.”* (p. 278)

Oomen and Leenders (2020) make reference to gender and sexuality by way of example, but the concepts do not form the main point of focus. They state that, while the agency is shifted from national to local authorities and thus to an individual level, the moral agency of the actors of the trajectory determines the subjects discussed. The moral agency is determining, while the subject of the workshop is focused on the discussion of norms and values.

#### 2.4.3 Participation Declaration as example of fear of moral diversity

Oomen and Leenders (2020) used the Participation Declaration as an example of the shift from national to local authorities in immigration policies and the consequences for the culturalisation of citizenship. Saharso (2017) argues how the Participation Declaration can be described as an example of fear of moral diversity, as will be explained in the following paragraph.

Saharso (2017) discusses the integration policies in the Netherlands, whilst being critical of the Participation Declaration. In her oration, she describes an increased fear of moral diversity in the Netherlands, from which the Participation Declaration might have resulted. She states that, in order to cohabitate in a moral diverse society, the citizens themselves, rather than the Government, are responsible for adopting an open attitude and to being open with each other. Her oration is meant as an introduction to further research into possible alternative integration strategies, in order to create an inclusive attitude towards moral diversity. Saharso (2017) does discuss gender and sexuality in her oration, again as examples of the cultural differences she is talking about. She acknowledges that the differences are there, referring to research about the views of Muslims regarding the position of the women. She states: *“so, yes, there is indeed a difference in values with regards to relationships, gender and sexuality, that is why we cannot shy away from questioning how to deal with this<sup>4</sup>* (p.10)”. She continues by stating that cultural differences in views regarding gender equality and the positions of men and women in society are seen as the biggest problem in establishing values. While acknowledging the challenge this poses, she does not

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<sup>4</sup> Translation of: “Dus, ja, er is in ieder geval ten aanzien van relaties, gender en seksualiteit inderdaad een verschil in waarden, waardoor we er niet onderuit kunnen ons af te vragen hoe we daar mee om moeten gaan.



see the Participation Declaration and culturalist integration policy as the solution, stating that she will seek different options in the future, and emphasizing the role of the open attitude of the citizen in this solution.

### **2.5 Conclusion: Relevance of Literature Review for Thesis**

This chapter provided an overview of authors critically discussing integration and the integration policies in the Netherlands, the civic integration exam and, specifically, the Participation Declaration. An analysis of the concepts of gender and sexuality in the articles described above show that the concepts are used as examples of cultural differences and as examples of the culturalisation of citizenship.

This thesis will consider gender and sexuality and the way in which they come into play in the material of the Participation Declaration as its main focus, by examining their role in the way distinctions are made between Dutch and non-Dutch people. The analysis will follow the argument concerning the culturalisation of citizenship as discussed by Slotman (2018) and Oomen and Leenders (2020) and the argument of Saharso, who rejects the idea that different opinions about gender and sexuality constitute a problem due to fear of moral diversity. I will build on their arguments by taking a closer look to the (physical) material of the Declaration and Trajectory as currently offered and not using gender and sexuality as examples, but by analysing their role in the arguments made by Slotman, Oomen and Leenders and Saharso. The explicit focus on the role of gender and sexuality in the distinction between Dutch and non-Dutch people in this thesis is an addition to the material described above.

## **CHAPTER 3: METHODS AND METHODOLOGY**

This chapter discusses and explains the method of this thesis, being a critical discourse analysis. The chapter starts with an epistemological introduction about the (professional) position of the researcher towards this research and about feminist research in general. It continues with a general explanation of discourse, discourse analysis and critical discourse analysis, while specifying this method onto the subject of the thesis. Furthermore, an in-depth explanation of the analysed materials follows, explaining the relevance and scale of use.

### **3.1 Epistemology: Position of the Researcher in this Thesis**

This paragraph will give a broader epistemological introduction reflecting on how knowledge was gained for this research. Feminist research is characterized by an aim of undoing fixed stereotyped understandings of concepts, such as the concept of gender/sex (Lykke, 2010). This thesis is achieving this by assessing the representation of migrants and their presumed norms and values.

This research can also be considered as feminist research, not because of the specific extra inclusion of women, but because of the reflection and inclusion of the position of the researcher. Sandra Harding (2004) describes this as follows:

*“The best feminist analysis goes beyond (...) in a crucial way: it insists that the inquirer her/himself be placed in the same critical place as the overt subject matter, thereby recovering the entire research process for scrutiny in the results of research” (p. 461).*

As a white woman who was born and raised in the Netherlands and who never had to deal with anything like immigration policies or exams concerning ‘*Inburgering*’, I could be viewed as an outsider towards the newcomers who are obliged to sign the Participation Declaration and follow the trajectory. However, my identity as a Dutch woman also enabled me to explore spaces which gave me some of the knowledge used for this thesis. The fact that I am Dutch, together with my personal network in the Netherlands, provided me the opportunity for my internship, which then enabled me to establish a network of employees in different municipalities. I gained this network during this Master programme’s internship, which I did at Stimulanz, a foundation providing support for municipalities. As part of this internship I developed a training and prior to this training I spoke to a number of people (mostly policy

workers) from a variety of municipalities, about their possible issues with status holders. As a result of these conversations I got more acquainted with the civic integration exam and, more specifically, the Participation Declaration. This experience led to the inspiration and start of this research, but also to more insight in the way the Declaration is used. I will specify the way I granted access towards the different research materials in paragraph 3.3.

### **3.2 Method of The Thesis: Critical Discourse Analysis**

The first paragraph of this chapter clarifies the epistemology of this thesis and this paragraph will continue with an explanation of the main method used, being critical discourse analysis. It will explain this method in more detail, while tailoring it towards the subject matter of this research. A critical discourse analysis is a specific discourse analysis focussed on social change and social justice.

It remains rather difficult to define the concept of ‘discourse’, but, generally speaking it refers to a generalization of communication, a general perspective on who uses language to say what. Norman Fairclough and Ruth Wodak (2004) explain that a discourse is “*socially constitutive as well as socially shaped*”, meaning that it “*constitutes situations, objects of knowledge, and the social identities of and relationships between people and groups of people*” (p. 357). This means that discourse includes and shapes social constructs, and that social constructs shape discourse. As Fairclough and Wodak (2004) point out, this means that a discourse helps to sustain, as well as to reproduce, the social status quo. One tool in which a discourse is manifested and by which a discourse is reproduced is language. According to Fairclough (2001), discourse deals with meaning-making, which manifests itself through “*language, body language, visual images, or any other way of signifying*” (p. 229).

Another important aspect of discourse is power, since power relations determine the importance and shape of a discourse. According to Roger Fowler (1985), power relationships are socially constructed, and are therefore not objective. Since discourse, as described above, is socially shaped, it also depicts and “*gives rise to important issues of power*” (Fowler as quoted by Fairclough & Wodak, 2004, p. 357).

Undertaking a discourse analysis requires an understanding of who uses language or visual representations in what manner, for what reason and at which time (van Dijk, 1996). A critical discourse analysis is a specific type of discourse analysis which asks “*how does language figure as an element in social processes?*” (Fairclough, 2001, p. 229). Fairclough (2001) continues by stating that a critical discourse analysis is “*committed to progressive social change*” (p. 230). This means that a critical discourse analysis seeks to make visible

*“the way social power abuse, dominance, and inequality are enacted, reproduced, and resisted by text and talk”* (van Dijk, 2001, p. 352). After having made visible these representations of injustice, a critical discourse analysis, aims at changing and resisting social inequality.

The method of critical discourse analysis fits the subject of this thesis, since the Participation Declaration offers a specific explanation concerning norms and values, while making use of the national discourse. This discourse is socially constructed and defined by one group in society, namely the Dutch Government, which implies that there is a power relation at stake as well. Analysing the discourses in a critical manner, focussing on the role of gender and sexuality, reveals excluding mechanisms related to the culturalisation of citizenship as described in the literature review. Discourse analysis as described by Fairclough focusses on analysis of language and is extensive as a method. However, Fairclough and Wodak (2004) also state how discourse may be *“racist, or sexist, and try to pass off assumptions (...) about any aspect of social life as mere common sense”* (p. 357). They state that critical discourse analysis as a method can make these assumptions more visible. I will use the method of critical discourse analysis in this manner, looking critically at the meaning behind the literal material, to look at the hidden connotations. I will do this by focussing on the role of gender and sexuality in the creation of hidden assumptions about the newcomer as being different from Dutch people. Looking at different ways in which material can be interpreted, and at which different connotations it can have, besides the literal, is an example of a critical discourse analysis and this is what I am doing in this thesis.

### **3.3 Analysed Material**

This thesis will undertake a critical discourse analysis on a variety of materials. This paragraph explains which material is used, in what manner, and how access to the material was granted. All the materials were originally in Dutch. Where an official translation was available, the official translation was used, but, otherwise, in relation to other documents, I have translated those documents myself. Even though I have made an effort in capturing the same meaning, it must be said that a literal translation is never possible.

The first piece of material to be analysed is the Participation Declaration itself, the actual document which describes the four core values of the Netherlands and needs to be signed by the status holders at the end of the Participation Declaration Trajectory. This document is written by the Government who initiated the Participation Declaration as an obligatory element of the civic integration exam (*Inburgeringsexamen*). This document is a

public document which is openly accessible via the website of the Dutch Government, where translated options are also available. The document was created in 2015 and is used in the trajectories of municipalities who have newcomers residing in their municipality. The Government, more specifically the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment accompanied this document with a short video-clip as a visual representation of their interpretation of the core values described in the Declaration. This clip, which is also publicly accessible, was also analysed. Analysing these pieces of material will give an insight in the discourses authored by the Government on core values, such as solidarity and equality, and in what manner gender and sexuality come into play in these discourses. The video-clip was created in 2016 and it is not obligatory for municipalities to use this clip, and, as such, I am unaware of the scale of its use.

In addition to the Participation Declaration, material concerning the Participation Declaration Trajectory were also analysed. The materials at this level were those materials developed by ProDemos, providing an example workshop for municipalities to use. The example training consists of a slide presentation, which can be used during the workshop, and an instruction manual for trainers about how to use the slide presentation and includes explanations of the assignments discussed in the power point. In addition to the workshop materials, an information brochure for newcomers about the Participation Declaration Trajectory was also analysed. The analysis of these materials will give insight in how the discourses authored and issued by the Government is translated into material meant for practical use. Once again, this material is publicly accessible, on the website of ProDemos.

To be able to understand on what scale this material is used, I conducted two interviews with policy workers who are responsible for the execution and development of the Participation Declaration Trajectory at their respective municipalities. The interviews were conducted in August 2018. The content of the interviews as such are not analysed, since there is no focus on the role of gender and sexuality. Rather, the interviews focused more on the trajectories at these municipalities and the way these trajectories are developed. Both municipalities interviewed use the material of ProDemos. This material is, however, just a small part of the trajectory, and other elements are included (such as working visits or introduction to leisure activities). The contacts for the interviews were made during my internship. The interviews offered me a greater sense of how the material of the trajectory is used and reveals the involvement of local officials. It also provided me with a sense of the context in which the material is used.

### **3.4. Structure of Analysis**

All pieces of material will be analysed by making use of the same main research question, being: *what role do explicit and implicit references to gender and sexuality play in the way distinctions between Dutch and non-Dutch people are made?* The analysis of each piece of material will be split up into four paragraphs, based on the theoretical lenses used to examine the material. First, the representation of gender, making use of Stuart Hall's theory of representation will be analysed. Continuing, an analysis of the role of the tolerance towards sexual orientation, making use of the description of tolerance as an excluding mechanism as discussed by Wendy Brown will follow. The next paragraph will analyse how references to cultural differences are gendered and how people are othered, using the description of Othering and Orientalism from Edward Said. The last paragraph about each piece of material will reflect on the role of gender in the description of participation, as described by Dutt, Rienelt and Sahai.

The references towards gender and sexuality will be described, the theory will be explained and in the last part of each paragraph both will be combined. The arguments found in the literature review and the concepts described in the theoretical framework will be used to recognize the way gender and sexuality are represented in the material that has been collected. In the conclusion, the main research question: "*What role do explicit and implicit references to gender and sexuality play in the way distinctions between Dutch and non-Dutch people are made in the Participation Declaration and in the official materials used in the trajectory supporting the execution of the Participation Declaration?*" will be answered while following the line of argument as discussed in the literature review.

### **3.5 Intersectional Approach**

This thesis will have an intersectional approach. Intersectionality, a term coined by Kimberle Crenshaw (1991), explains how inequality or oppression is caused by the intertwining of different axes of identity and that analysis of inequality should not focus on one aspect (such as solely gender). This thesis does not focus on gender and sexuality as individual axes of difference, but on how they interfere with perceptions of ethnicity and race, thereby undertaking an intersectional analysis. The second reason for this research to be intersectional is whilst it does not refer to gender and sexuality solely as examples when looking for exclusion, but as active actors in excluding mechanisms.

## **CHAPTER 4: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

To be able to analyse the material it is important to have a theoretical link on which the analysis will be based. These theories then provide the theoretical lenses through which the material will be examined. This chapter provides the theoretical framework of this thesis, while discussing representation as described by Stuart Hall; tolerance as described as an excluding mechanism by Wendy Brown; othering and Orientalism as described by Edward Said; and (gendered) citizenship as described by Dutt, Reinelt and Sahai.

### **4.1 Representation: the constructivist approach**

To analyse the role of gender and sexuality in the way distinctions are made between Dutch and non-Dutch people, it is important to discuss, the process of meaning-making through representation. Stuart Hall (2013), a cultural theorist and sociologist, defines representation as “*an essential part of the process by which meaning is produced and exchanged between members of a culture*” (p. 1), meaning that representation is the basis of meaning-making. He distinguishes representation in two systems, of which the first system refers to the individual concepts in our heads, our mental representations. The second system elaborates on the first principle, stating that representation does not consist solely of individual concepts, “*but of different ways or organizing, clustering, arranging and classifying concepts, and of establishing complex relationships between them*” (Hall, 2013, p. 3). These two systems refer to the individual and collective aspect of meaning-making through representation. A third important concept linked to representation, as explained by Hall (2013), is the concept of power, referring to the symbolic power of who can “*represent someone or something in a certain way – within a certain ‘regime of representations’*” (p. 249).

Hall (2013) continues by explaining three different theoretical approaches towards the understanding of representation. The reflective approach refers to the idea that the object itself entails meaning, and representation is the reflection of that meaning as “*the true meaning that already exists in the world*” (p. 10). The second approach, as described by Hall, is the intentional approach. The intentional approach refers to the idea that the speaker imposes his or her own meaning on the world, meaning that “*words mean what the author intends they should mean*” (p. 10). The last approach, the constructivist approach, excludes the role of the individual user or the object in itself in having meaning, but referring to the idea that “*we construct meaning, using representational systems, concepts and signs*” (p. 11). Hall (1997) argues that the reflective and intentional approach are flawed and that the constructivist approach is the correct theoretical approach towards the understanding of representation.

A specific form of representation in a sense of meaning-making is that of stereotyping, where people are reduced to “*a few, simple, essential characteristics*” (Hall, 2013, p. 247). Stereotyping is thus a form of simplifying and assigning someone’s identity to the characteristics belonging to the stereotype. It is important to be aware of this simplification, since “*stereotypes do not need to refer to a social reality, and they do not necessarily give accurate hints of what people actually do*” (Eriksen, 2010, p. 29).

Stereotyping, according to Hall (2013), has a few consequences, one of which is that it naturalizes and, therefore, approves difference. Secondly, it has a consequence of dividing the normal from the abnormal, distinguishing the us from them. The third consequence or element of stereotyping is that it occurs in situations with inequalities of power, where “*power is usually directed against the subordinate or excluded group*” (p. 248).

The next chapter, chapter 5, will analyse how gender is represented in the Participation Declaration and Participation Declaration Trajectory. The constructivist approach of understanding representation, as described by Stuart Hall, will be used as a basis for this analysis of the way gender is represented.

#### **4.2 Tolerance as an excluding mechanism**

“*Today the Netherlands is known as one of the most permissive societies in the Western world*” (Besamusca & Verheul, 2010, p. 109). Tolerance is stated to be an important trademark of Dutch identity. In this sense, tolerance is described as something positive, as a welcoming trait towards ‘others’. This paragraph provides a theoretical analysis of tolerance, as described by Wendy Brown, which portrays the other side of tolerance.

Political theorist Wendy Brown is one of the writers discussing tolerance. In her book ‘Regulating Aversion’, she discusses the side of tolerance as allowing what is unwanted and deviant. This interpretation of tolerance already has an implication of including something one essentially does not want to include. Brown (2009) states that in the case of a cultural clash, such as immigration and integration might be, tolerance is an important factor for two reasons. The first reason states that when tolerance comes into play in cultural clashes it is culturalised in such a manner that is “*understood to be available only to certain cultures*” (p. 150). This results in a division between tolerant and intolerant cultures. The second reason relates to the culturalisation of the conflict, while the clash is founded on the basis of cultural differences. In this culturalisation of conflict the (cultural) difference itself is used as a basis for tolerance or intolerance of others.



Brown continues by explaining how tolerance in a case of cultural clash is used as a political tool to frame what is, and should be, tolerated and what is not on the one side, and which culture is tolerant and which is not on the other side. She states: “*Tolerance as a political discourse is concerned with designated modalities of diversity, identity, justice and civic cohabitation is another matter*” (Brown, 2009, p. 13).

Brown continues by relating tolerance to Orientalist discourse (addressed in more detail in the following paragraph). She explains how, in the twenty-first century, an opposition between the West and the other was constructed. In this construction tolerance was used as “*a part of a civilizational discourse that identifies both tolerance and the tolerable with the West, marking non-liberal societies and practices as candidates for an intolerable barbarism that is itself signalled by the putative intolerance ruling these societies*” (Brown, 2009, p. 6).

In the analysis chapter, chapter five, the references to freedom sexual orientation in the material of the Participation Declaration and the Participation Declaration Trajectory will be looked at. Tolerance towards sexual orientation might be used as an excluding mechanism in the material. The references towards sexuality, or the references towards tolerance of sexuality, will be analysed with help of Wendy Brown’s explanation of tolerance as an excluding mechanism.

### **4.3 Othering**

Othering is a process of (collective) identity construction in which the ‘Other’ is constructed in relation to the ‘Self’. This construction is not a simple opposition between the two, but, as explained by Baumann & Gingrich (2004), the self is constructed in comparison to the other. This means that the self is constructed by taking what is bad in the other as what is good in the self. Othering is a process which occurs when cultural differences are at stake.

A specific form of othering is Orientalism as described by Edward Said (1978). He defines Orientalism in an academic matter as: “*style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction made between the ‘Orient’ and (most of the time) ‘the Occident’*” (p. 2). Said refers to the creation of the ‘East’ by the ‘West’, based on an imagined perspective of what the East entails. In this creation the West (Occident) is defined as the superior and free, where the East (Orient) is defined as the static inferior.

Othering can happen on the basis of cultural differences. The following chapter examines how references to cultural differences are gendered and how people are othered in the materials of the Participation Declaration and corresponding Trajectory.

#### **4.4 Gendered Citizenship**

Integration and integration policies relate to citizenship, literally becoming a member of society. Citizenship can be explained in different manners. Dutt, Reinelt and Sahai (2017) describe, in their book, *Gendered Citizenship*, a change in the understanding of citizenship. According to them, citizenship was initially understood solely as “*membership in a political community*”, but they elaborate how citizenship “*is also an ongoing process, constantly being redefined and revised – through struggles of ordinary people as well as through changes in state law and other formal legal channels*” (p. 5). They continue by stating that citizenship as an ongoing process is something which is performed. In the same book, Rai (2017) elaborates on citizenship as a performance, stating that “*citizens perform in relation to others – other citizens, other ‘Others’, individuals as well as nodes of power, the state as well as community groups*” (p. 34). This means that citizenship is performed in “*specific contexts, in particular languages, even as it makes universal claims of equal rights for citizens*” (p. 34).

Dutt, Reinelt and Sahai (2017) state that citizenship might seem universal, but that its criteria can be exclusionary. They refer to the meaning of gendered citizenship, stating that the universal understanding of citizenship does not always “*take into account the differences in context and situation that make some ‘citizens’ (often women) less able to participate in public life than others*” (p. 5). When participation is politically defined, this solely includes masculinist models of participation (e.g. based on paid labour) and activities in the private sphere are often excluded. Women missing from the public sphere, due to e.g. domestic labour, are, therefore, not able to participate according to the ‘universal’ definition of citizenship.

The next chapter, chapter 5, will look at the role gender plays in the description of participation in the Participation Declaration and Trajectory. I will also look at how this description is gendered.



# Participatieverklaring

## *Welkom in Nederland!*

Nederland is een democratie en een rechtsstaat. Dat betekent dat iedereen dezelfde rechten heeft, en dat iedereen zich aan dezelfde regels moet houden. In Nederland spelen de waarden vrijheid, gelijkwaardigheid en solidariteit een centrale rol. Met deze waarden hangen rechten samen waarop u een beroep kunt doen. Deze waarden kunnen alleen stand houden als iedereen actief bijdraagt aan de samenleving. Participatie is in Nederland heel belangrijk.

### *Vrijheid:*

In Nederland mag iedereen denken, doen en zeggen wat hij wil. Dit betekent dat:

- iedereen zijn eigen mening mag uiten;
- iedereen een eigen geloof mag hebben en vrij is wel of niet te geloven;
- iedereen mag uitkomen voor zijn of haar eigen seksuele geaardheid;
- iedereen recht heeft op eigen keuzen en zelfstandigheid (zelfbeschikkingsrecht).

Hier zijn ook grenzen aan verbonden. Wat iemand doet of zegt mag nooit in strijd zijn met de wet. Je mag bijvoorbeeld niet discrimineren, aanzetten tot haat of oproepen tot vijandigheid.

### *Gelijkwaardigheid:*

In Nederland worden alle burgers gelijkwaardig behandeld. Discriminatie naar geslacht, geloof, afkomst of seksuele geaardheid wordt niet geaccepteerd.

### *Solidariteit:*

In Nederland zijn burgers samen verantwoordelijk voor de samenleving. Burgers hebben recht op een veilige leefomgeving, fatsoenlijke huisvesting, eerlijke arbeidsvoorwaarden, minimumloon bij werk, goed onderwijs en goede medische zorg. De overheid heeft de plicht mensen te beschermen tegen uitbuiting en ongelijke behandeling. Burgers moeten in principe in hun eigen levensonderhoud voorzien. Als dat niet op eigen kracht lukt, en er is niemand die kan helpen, dan biedt de overheid hulp.

### *Participatie:*

In Nederland vragen we alle burgers bij te dragen aan een prettige en veilige samenleving, bijvoorbeeld door te werken, naar school te gaan of door vrijwilligerswerk te doen. Dat kan in de wijk, op school of in een vereniging. Het spreken van de Nederlandse taal is hierbij essentieel.

*Ik verklaar dat ik kennis heb genomen van de waarden en spelregels van de Nederlandse samenleving en dat ik deze respecteer. Ik verklaar dat ik actief een bijdrage wil leveren aan de Nederlandse samenleving en reken erop dat ik daarvoor ook de ruimte krijg van mijn medeburgers.*

Naam:

Geboortedatum:

Handtekening:

\_\_\_\_\_

Datum \_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_ , te \_\_\_\_\_

Figure 1

## **CHAPTER 5: ANALYSIS**

This chapter contains the analysis of the materials regarding the Participation Declaration and its corresponding Trajectory (as developed by ProDemos). Throughout this analysis, the question is asked: what is the role of gender and sexuality in the (possible) distinction between Dutch and non-Dutch people? To analyse this in a structural manner, all chapters follow the same structure. First, the notion of gender in the material are described, while explaining how gender is represented, making use of the description of representation as described by Stuart Hall. Secondly, the notion of sexuality are mentioned, focussing on the tolerance towards freedom of sexuality. This tolerance is analysed by making use of Wendy Brown's explanation of tolerance as an excluding mechanism. An intersectional analysis will then follow, focussing on the notions of origin and ethnicity and the role of gender in these notions. This section makes use of theories of othering, such as Orientalism as described by Edward Said. Lastly, the notion of citizenship in the material will be explained, while investigating how these explanations are gendered, making use of the theories of Dutt, Reinelt and Sahai.

### **5.1 The Participation Declaration**

The first material to be analysed, as described in the methodology chapter, is the document of the Participation Declaration which needs to be signed at the end of the trajectory. The document is one A4 sized paper, with a space for a signature at the bottom. It is a paper document, which is also available digitally via the website of the Government. Figure 1 portrays the Participation Declaration as downloaded from the Government's website. A complete translation of the Declaration can be found in appendix I.

The text of the Participation Declaration commences by stating that the Netherlands is a democracy and a constitutional state. Furthermore, the Declaration specifies the four core values which play a central role in the Netherlands. These core values are: 'freedom' (*vrijheid*), 'equality' (*gelijkwaardigheid*), 'solidarity' (*solidariteit*) and 'participation' (*participatie*). A description of what is meant with these core values is provided. The text concludes with a statement referring to the one who is required to sign the paper (the newcomer). This part is the actual 'declaration' part stating: *"I hereby state that I have read, understood and will respect the above information about values in Dutch society. I also state that I will make an active contribution towards Dutch society and will be given the space to*

*do so by my fellow citizens*<sup>5</sup>” (Participatieverklaring). This chapter will analyse what role explicit and implicit references to gender and sexuality in the Participation Declaration play in the way distinctions between Dutch and non-Dutch people are made. Gender and sexuality do not feature in the introduction of the document and, therefore, the analysis will focus on the description of the four core values.

### 5.1.1. The Representation of Gender

First, the references to gender in the Participation Declaration will be analysed. As stated above, the Declaration describes four core values. References to gender can be found in the explanation of the core value equality, which states: *‘In the Netherlands, all citizens are treated equally. Discrimination on the basis of **gender**<sup>6</sup>, beliefs, origins or sexuality is not accepted.’* In this description gender is one of the examples about which citizens are treated as equals in Dutch society and about which discrimination might occur, albeit not allowed. This statement shows that ‘being Dutch’ (or participating in Dutch society) is equal to believing in gender equality.

As described in the theoretical framework, Stuart Hall (1997) distinguishes between different theoretical approaches towards the understanding of representation. These approaches can help me in understanding the role of gender in the Participation Declaration. The constructionist approach as described by Hall explains that meaning is constructed while making use of representational systems, such as language. This means that meaning cannot be found in the object itself, but in the way and (cultural) context it is used and how it is perceived and interpreted by the spectator. The way gender is used as an example of equality in the Participation Declaration shows me how it is used to give meaning to this core value. This is the literal function of gender in the text, gender equality as an example of equality. However, looking to the context in which it is used, gender is represented as emphasizing gender equality in Dutch society as something which is possibly in contrast and contradiction to the cultural background of the newcomer. The choice of the example of gender as a core value equality shows an assumption about which differences with the (norms and values of) newcomer might occur, related to ideologies of gender equality. The context of the Participation Declaration being a contract, meaning that the core value (of gender equality)

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<sup>5</sup> Translation of: Ik verklaar dat ik kennis heb genomen van de waarden en spelregels van de Nederlandse samenleving en dat ik deze respecteer. Ik verklaar dat ik actief een bijdrage wil leveren aan de Nederlandse samenleving en reken erop dat ik daarvoor ook de ruimte krijg van mijn medeburgers.

<sup>6</sup> The original Declaration is in Dutch, but an official translation is offered on the website of the Government. The Dutch declaration makes use of the word “*Geslacht*” which would translate to sex. However the translated document uses gender instead of sex as a translation of ‘*Geslacht*’.

need to be respected and adopted by the newcomer, emphasizes this function of gender as a norm of difference between the Dutch and non-Dutch.

### 5.1.2 Referencing of Sexuality: Act of Tolerance

Secondly, the ways in which sexuality is referenced in the Participation Declaration will be analysed. Sexuality, or freedom of sexual orientation, is mentioned explicitly in the Participation Declaration two times. The first reference can be found in the same explanation of the core value 'equality' as described above: "*In the Netherlands, all citizens are treated equally. Discrimination on the basis of gender, beliefs, origins or **sexuality** is not accepted.*" In this example sexuality is, just as gender, used as an example of equality (as in equal treatment) and as an example of something about which discrimination might occur but is not allowed.

The second time sexuality is mentioned is in the explanation of the core value freedom. This core value is explained as followed: "*in the Netherlands everyone is allowed to **think, do and say whatever he wants***". This statement is followed by statements showing examples of the meaning of this sentence, and one of these examples directly refers to sexuality, being: "*Everyone may be open about their **sexuality***". The notion of sexuality shows a tolerance towards freedom of sexual orientation in the Netherlands, as described in the Declaration. Wendy Brown (2009) describes how tolerance emerges as a key term in cultural clashes and how it creates or emphasizes difference. This emphasis on difference occurs in a cultural clash by dividing between tolerant and intolerant cultures. In this manner, tolerance functions as an excluding mechanism.

The emphasis on tolerance towards freedom of sexual orientation, as described in the Participation Declaration, shows me how Dutch identity is branded as tolerant. The newcomer is expected to respect this tolerance and act in a non-rejecting manner. The insistence on tolerance of freedom of sexual orientation as a trademark of Dutch identity and as something that needs to be 'taught' to the newcomer gives me the connotation of tolerance as an excluding mechanism, as described by Wendy Brown. The use of sexuality in the Participation Declaration makes a division between tolerant and intolerant cultures and tolerance towards different sexualities is used as a gauge for this division. The inclusion of "Everyone may be open about their sexuality" makes intolerance towards freedom of sexual orientation even illegal, due to the contractual nature of the Declaration.

### 5.1.3. Othering: Intersectional Analysis

Thirdly, this paragraph will discuss the way people are ‘othered’ in the Participation Declaration, making use of theories about Othering and Orientalism and providing an intersectional analysis. The general question will be: how are people ‘othered’ in the Participation Declaration? All explanations of the core values start with the words: “*In the Netherlands*”, while continuing with the actual description of the core value. In this description the pronoun ‘we’ is used. Othering is about constructing the other in relation to the self, while imagining the good in the self as the bad in the other. As described by Reinke de Buitrago (2012), this division can be based on cultural differences. One of these cultural differences is related to the perspectives towards gender and sexuality.

I perceive the use of the words ‘In the Netherlands’ at the beginning of each description as distinguishing the Netherlands from the ‘other’. It seems as if it would be followed by: ‘in contrast to’ or ‘compared to’ and emphasizes the difference between Dutch people and non-Dutch people. As a consequence, the examples listed afterwards, relating to gender equality and tolerance towards diversity of sexuality are also read with a presumed ‘in contrast to’ in mind. The use of the pronoun ‘we’ in comparison to the pronoun ‘you’ in the end of the declaration emphasizes and magnifies this division even further. People are othered in the Declaration as people who do not have the correct norms and values in mind (yet) and need to adopt these values. The basis of the Participation Declaration is asking newcomers to sign a contract to ‘join’ and participate in the Dutch norms and values. This basis assumes a contradiction in which the group of Dutch people sets the norm.

### 5.1.4. Gendered Citizenship

The last part of this analysis of the Participation Declaration discusses the way citizenship is explained in the Declaration and what role gender plays in the description of participation. The description of the core values solidarity and participation show how citizenship is explained. In the Declaration, the explanation of the core value ‘solidarity’ states that: “*In the Netherlands, citizens are all responsible for society. Citizens have a right to a safe environment, decent housing, fair employment conditions, a minimum wage at work, a good education and top quality medical care. (...) Citizens must, in principle, maintain themselves. If this is not possible, and nobody can help, the Government will provide assistance.*”

The description in the Participation Declaration of the fourth and last core value ‘participation’ is about citizens contributing to and participating in society: “*In the Netherlands we ask all citizens to contribute towards a pleasant and safe society*”. Examples of contributing to society are, according to the Declaration: “*working, going to school or*

*taking part in voluntary work. This may take place in your neighbourhood school or in an association”.*

As explained before, Dutt, Reinelt and Sahai (2017) point out that citizenship does not necessarily need to be understood as “*membership in a political community*”, but more as “*an ongoing process, constantly being redefined and revised*” (p. 5). In their book, they elaborate upon citizenship as performative, and Rai (2017) lays out different characteristics of how citizenship is performative, such as its variety and how it is performed and defined in relation to others. Citizenship, or the conditions of citizenship in the Netherlands are described clearly in the Participation Declaration. One of the characteristics Rai (2017) describes is how citizenship is performed “*in political spaces and also politicises spaces through performance*” (p. 36). Focusing in with this lens on the material, I see how this can be recognized in the material of the Participation Declaration, while the contractual characteristic of the Declaration towards the notion of citizenship excludes people in (politically) invisible spaces. This relates to the explanation of gendered citizenship as described by Dutt, Reinelt and Sahai, explained in the theoretical framework. The explanation in the Participation Declaration of solidarity and participation, important core values of the conditions of citizenship in the Netherlands, are gendered in their absence of references towards activities in the private sphere, such as domestic work or childcare. While these activities are generally subscribed to women, the descriptions are gendered, making gender an excluding marker in the notion of citizenship.

## **5.2 Video-Clip explaining the Dutch core values**

The previous paragraph analysed the text of the Participation Declaration and this second paragraph will analyse a short video-clip, developed by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment, which accompanies the Declaration. The video-clip explains the four core values described in the Declaration, and is used as a clarifying tool for the text and as an introduction to the Participation Declaration Trajectory. The clip takes 2 minutes and 32 seconds and is a depiction using graphical images and video material, with some background sounds. There is no background voice explaining the images and video material displayed. The clip can be found on YouTube, as well as on the website of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment and is open access. This chapter will analyse what the role of gender and sexuality is as a divisional tool between Dutch and non-Dutch people in this document, while discussing different fragments focussing on both the visual images as well as the video footage.



### 5.2.1 The Representation of Gender

This paragraph analyses the references to gender in the video-clip and contains an explanation of how gender is represented. In the video-clip, the core value ‘freedom’ is portrayed as freedom of speech. Video footage is shown illustrating how people are protesting. Another portrait of freedom depicted in the video-clip is the right to vote. In this explanation, gender comes into play, while the people depicted voting are women. In this fragment, gender has the function of portraying suffrage, more specifically women’s suffrage.

Another fragment in which gender has a role is a fragment which refers to the core value ‘equality’. The fragment shows video footage of a work-related meeting, in which a woman is taking the lead role (figure 2). The function of this fragment is portraying a woman in a leading position, with the result of showing gender equality at the labour market in the Netherlands.



*Figure 2*

As described previously, the constructionist approach of representation as elaborated upon by Stuart Hall explains how meaning is constructed through representational systems, and how a material in itself does not convey meaning. One of these representational systems is the use of visual images. Meaning derived from the video-clip is constructed from the visual images in the video-clip, by the spectator using their own cultural background as social actor. Depicting the right to vote in words does not necessarily emphasize gender equality in the Netherlands, but by specifically depicting a woman voting, gender equality in the Netherlands is emphasized. The choice of depicting the right to vote and democracy, and more specifically women’s suffrage, projects an assumption that this is something the newcomers is expected to learn. It is assumed that the newcomer thinks differently about this core value, even though this is not mentioned literally.

This is similar for the representation of gender in the labour market. By depicting a woman in the lead at a meeting it is assumed that this illustrates that: ‘In the Netherlands there is gender equality at the labour market’, while I follow this depiction with: ‘In contrast to (the cultural background of the newcomer)’. The visual image in itself and in isolation (a woman

working) does not literally mean gender equality, and does not have meaning on its own, but the connection to the core value equality in the video-clip provides this meaning and emphasis on gender equality.

### 5.2.2 Referencing of Sexuality: Act of Tolerance

This paragraph discusses the references towards sexuality in the video-clip. Where the Declaration also mentioned examples related to other topics (such as self-determination), the depiction in the video-clip of the core value equality focusses solely on gender equality and freedom of sexual orientation. This part of the video-clip starts with the depiction of sex symbols, next to the word 'equal'. The female and male symbols are connected in various combinations as can be seen in figure 3, 4 and 5.



Figure 3



Figure 4



Figure 5

The clip continues with video footage depicting people getting married (figure 6). First, a man and a woman and then two men get married, showing that same-sex marriage is allowed in the Netherlands.



Figure 6

As discussed, Wendy Brown (2009) describes the use of tolerance as a differentiating mechanism between tolerant and intolerant cultures. Within this mechanism there is a focus on cultural differences as potential reasons for conflict, which she describes as the 'culturalisation of conflict'. When I look at tolerance as a differentiating mechanism and the way tolerance towards freedom of sexual orientations is depicted in the video-clip, I see a similar process. Equality is depicted as tolerance of freedom of sexual orientation and the

combinations of the sex symbols and the depiction of two men getting married emphasize this depiction. Tolerance concerning sexuality is used as a trademark of Dutch identity, where I, just as in the Participation Declaration, interpret this trademark as ‘in contrast to’. The focus on tolerance as a ‘national’ norm puts the Dutch identity in contrast to cultures which are expected to not have this norm, separating between tolerant and intolerant cultures, just as described by Wendy Brown. Sexuality functions as the basis for this tolerance.

### 5.2.3 Othering: Intersectional Analysis

This paragraph describes how people are othered in the video-clip. The core value solidarity is explained and portrayed in the video-clip as showing solidarity and helping other people. Different examples are displayed through the use of video footage of people helping other people (such as giving up a seat in the bus). One of the displayed examples of solidarity is doing voluntary work by helping elderly people. This is depicted by video footage of a woman, who is wearing a headscarf, pushing two elderly women in wheelchairs (figure 7).



*Figure 7*

The choice for a woman who is wearing a headscarf shows two identity markers. One of which is gender and the other is the headscarf as symbol for a religious background or a different (than Dutch) ethnic background, focussing on the combination between the two provides an intersectional analysis. By depicting solidarity in this manner, it is assumed that a woman with a different cultural background should be made aware of the possibilities of voluntary work, while it is expected that she will not be active in the working sphere. The newcomer is othered on the basis of gender equality as a norm of difference. This norm of difference means that it is expected that there are contrasting views between Dutch people and non-Dutch people towards the topic of gender equality. The difference is thus constructed on the basis of opposing views towards gender roles, more specifically the role of women. I must add that it is not said specifically that the woman is conducting voluntary work, however I made the assumption because of the use of this imagery in connection to the core value

solidarity, instead of a connection the core value participation (which is generally more related to the (paid) labour sphere).

#### 5.2.4 Gendered Citizenship

The last paragraph of this chapter analyses how citizenship is portrayed in the video-clip and how this portrayal might be gendered. The core value participation relates mostly to citizenship and is depicted in different manners, via a variety of video footage, being: education (kids in school), work (paid, in a bike shop), playing sports (soccer) and participating in national traditions (celebrating King's day). These images have the function of providing examples of how citizens can participate and are already participating in Dutch society. Dutt, Reinelt and Sahai (2017) explain gendered citizenship as a definition of citizenship in which certain domains of society are excluded and in which there is a focus on male models of participation (such as paid labour). When I look at the way they describe this exclusion I find the same exclusion in the depiction of participation in the video-clip. All examples relate to activities in the public sphere, while activities in the private sphere are absent. As such, I see gender as an excluding marker in the definition of citizenship, as portrayed in the video-clip.

### **5.3 From Declaration to Trajectory: Supporting Material of ProDemos**

To be able to transmit the abstract Participation Declaration into a practical trajectory (and transmit the core values to the newcomers) ProDemos developed a workshop which municipalities can use. ProDemos is the 'House of democracy and state of law' (ProDemos). On their website ProDemos state that they "*explain what the game rules of democracy and the state of law are*". They conduct research about citizen participation and the diversity of parliament (website ProDemos). The material of the workshop is developed by ProDemos in collaboration with of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment. Municipalities are not obliged to use the material, but it is offered as a free basis for their trajectory, and is, therefore, called a 'toolkit participation declaration'.

The material in this toolkit consists of a PowerPoint presentation, an instruction manual for workshop holders, and a brochure for newcomers providing information about the Trajectory. This chapter will analyse this toolkit, following the main question about the role of gender and sexuality as a divisional tool in this material. First, the information brochure will be analysed separately, followed by a combined analysis of the presentation and appurtenant instruction manual.

### 5.3.1. Information Brochure

The information brochure for newcomers is available in a variety of languages (such as Dutch, English, Arabic and Farsi) and is developed by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment and co-developed by and in collaboration with ProDemos. The brochure consists of eleven pages of information, filled with both text and visuals. It is targeted at the people who are enrolled in the Participation Declaration Trajectory and it offers information regarding the (basic) content of the Trajectory and a description the core values stated in the Declaration.

#### *5.3.1.1 The Representation of Gender*

The information brochure has some references to gender, which will be discussed in this paragraph, whilst focussing on how they are represented. The brochure describes the core values discussed in the Declaration, one of which is equality. In the explanation of this core value mentions of gender can be found, the brochure namely states: *‘In the Netherlands people are treated equally. (...) Whether you are **male or female**, gay or straight (...) There are no separate rules for Christians, Muslim or other believers and there are no separate rule for **women or gays**’*<sup>7</sup> (p. 9). Here gender is used as an example of equality in Dutch society.

Gender and gender equality also come into play when the labour sphere in the Netherlands is discussed. The brochure reads: *“Employers cannot refuse **women** for a job or treat them differently because they are pregnant or have young children”*<sup>8</sup> as well as: *“A **woman cannot get paid less for the same job as a man**”*.<sup>9</sup> In this example, gender equality in the labour market is discussed, as well as intolerance of gender discrimination in the labour market.

Gender is used as an example of equality, more specifically of equality in the labour sphere. Gender is represented as gender equality in the Netherlands, as equal chances between men and women. Literally no comparison between Dutch norms and values in regards to gender equality and the norms and values of newcomers is made, but as described by Hall, meaning cannot be found in the material itself, but is inferred from the use of representational systems. The aim of the brochure is to inform newcomers about the Participation Declaration and about important aspects of Dutch society. The fact that gender is chosen as an example

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<sup>7</sup> Translation of: In Nederland worden mensen in gelijke gevallen gelijk behandeld.

. Of je nu man of vrouw bent, homo of hetero, jong of oud, en of je nu (...). (p. 9) Er zijn geen aparte regels voor christenen, moslims of andere gelovigen en geen aparte regels voor vrouwen of voor homo's.

<sup>8</sup> Translation of: Werkgevers mogen vrouwen niet weigeren voor een baan of anders behandelen omdat zij zwanger zijn of jonge kinderen hebben.

<sup>9</sup> Translation of: En een vrouw mag voor hetzelfde werk niet minder betaald krijgen dan een man.

shows how there is an assumption that newcomers have a different perspective towards this topic. This is emphasized by the inclusion of gender in, what at first sight appears to be, a practical explanation of the labour market in the Netherlands. By specifying equal rights between men and women in the labour market, the assumption is made that this is information that needs to be taught to the newcomer. Gender is represented as a marker of difference between the newcomer and the Dutch.

#### *5.3.1.2 Referencing of Sexuality: Act of Tolerance*

References with regard to sexuality can also be found in the information brochure, which is the topic of this second paragraph. One of the topics discussed is the right of self-determination. One of the ways this is explained is: *“You can determine yourself who you wish to marry and you can represent your own **sexual orientation**”* (p. 8). This description shows sexual orientation as an example of self-determination. Sexuality is also described in the quote about equality which is stated in chapter 5.3.1.1. *‘In the Netherlands people are treated equally. Whether you are (...), **gay or straight** (...)* (p. 9).

Discrimination is also discussed in the brochure, and a reference towards sexual orientation can be found in this discussion. The brochure explains the prohibition of discrimination against people who identify themselves as gay as followed:

*“**Straight people and gays** (hetero’s en homo’s) should be treated the same way. **Gays** have the right, just like anyone else, to have their own associations and in the Netherlands people with the same sex are allowed to get married. **The Netherlands was the first country in the world where this was allowed**<sup>10</sup>”*

The way sexual orientation is used shows tolerance towards freedom of sexual orientation in the Netherlands. As described earlier, Wendy Brown (2009) explains how *“tolerance is culturalized insofar as it is understood to be available only to certain cultures”* (p. 150). This means that tolerance is connected to certain cultural aspects, creating differences between tolerant and intolerant cultures. Different perceptions towards the freedom of sexual orientation is one of these markers of difference. I see the references towards sexual

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<sup>10</sup> Translation of: Ook hetero’s en homo’s moeten op dezelfde manier behandeld worden. Homo’s hebben net als iedereen recht op een eigen levensstijl, en op eigen verenigingen en in Nederland mogen mensen met hetzelfde geslacht met elkaar trouwen. Nederland was het eerste land ter wereld waar dit werd toegestaan.

orientation in the information brochure as described above as a notion of tolerance of Dutch identity. This is emphasized by the extra information provided in the last quote, about the Netherlands being the first country in the world to legalize same-sex marriage. I see this description of tolerance as a sense of superiority over other intolerant cultures, as described by Brown.

#### *5.3.1.3 Othering: Intersectional Analysis*

People are othered in the information brochure, which will be the topic of discussion in this paragraph. In the beginning of the brochure the following can be read: “*In this booklet you read about the values which form the basis of Dutch society. Once you have read it you know better how **we** interact in the Netherlands and why **we** interact in that manner*” (p. 3). The division between you and we, which looks at a division between the Self (we) and the You (other). I see the process of othering, as described above, in the usage of the pronoun ‘we’ in relation to the Netherlands, in contrast to the use of the pronoun ‘you’ for the newcomers (for whom this brochure is).

In the material notions about religion and ethnicity can also be found. The quote about the description of equality stated in chapter 5.3.1.1 and chapter 5.3.1.2 reads: “*There are no separate rules for **Christians, Muslim** or other believers (...)(p. 9)*. The mentioning of religion here has the function of excluding it as a factor of possibility for different treatment.

I see how two specific religions being chosen to be mentioned specifically in the quote about equality, namely Christianity and Islam. Often it is thought that newcomers are less consumed with ideologies of gender equality and freedom of sexual orientation due to religious reasons. By specifically mentioning the two dominant religions in the Netherlands as an invalid exception of the rule, I see the basic representation of the East (as underdeveloped) as explained by Said (1978).

#### *5.3.1.4 Gendered Citizenship*

The brochure gives a more practical explanation of the conditions of citizenship in the Netherlands. Topics such as democracy, constitutional law and social rights are described and explained. Gender plays no role in the explanation of this core value, as well as sexuality. The core value participation is not explained in a separate chapter or paragraph, therefore the activities expected of citizenship are not described. Due to this absence, citizenship in the information brochure will not be discussed any further.

### 5.3.2. PowerPoint presentation and instruction manual

The PowerPoint presentation and instruction manual for the workshop of the Participation Declaration Trajectory follow a similar structure, while moving alongside the (proposed) chronological order of the workshop. The instruction manual has some initial, general remarks and tips for the workshop holder and follows with an explanation of the assignments discussed in the slides of the PowerPoint presentation. This chapter will discuss what the role of gender and sexuality is in the material of the workshop. The basis for analysis is the instruction manual, as this is an expanded version of the PowerPoint presentation. Elements of the PowerPoint presentation are included in the analysis, whilst the visual elements are perceived as an expansion. As mentioned above, the workshop offers different assignments. This thesis will discuss these assignments in a random order, based on the connection to the theory and notions towards gender and sexuality. The order of analysis is, therefore, not the chronological order as followed in the workshop. However, to make the purpose of the assignment clear, a short description will be added.

#### *5.3.2.1 The Representation of Gender*

References to gender can be found a variety of times in the material developed for the workshop, which will be discussed in this paragraph. One of the assignments in the workshop is about the Dutch constitution. A variety of statements can be read on the slides of the PowerPoint presentation and the participants of the workshop are supposed to choose the statements which they think correctly defines the Dutch constitution. Notions of gender can be found in the ‘made-up’ or incorrect statements, being the statements that cannot be found in the Dutch constitution. The statements concerning gender are: “*At elections the vote of a **man** counts more than the vote of a **woman**<sup>11</sup>”;* “*All **men** are supposed to join military service at age 19<sup>12</sup>”* and “*Only **sons of the King** are allowed to succeed the **King**<sup>13</sup>”*.

Another assignment in which gender plays a role is an assignment in which life situations are discussed and about which the participants are expected to state whether the situation is allowed or not by holding up a green (allowed) or red (not allowed) card. The instruction manual discusses these situations, while providing the correct answer with an elaborate explanation. One of the questions discussed in which gender has a role is: “*The owner of a restaurant only wants **women** to work as a waiter. Is this allowed?<sup>14</sup>”* The instruction manual offers the following answer: “*No. **Men and women should be treated the***

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<sup>11</sup> Translation of: Bij verkiezingen telt de stem van een man zwaarder dan die van een vrouw

<sup>12</sup> Translation of: Alle mannen moet op hun 19e in militaire dienst

<sup>13</sup> Translation of: Alleen zonen van de koning mogen de koning opvolgen

<sup>14</sup> Translation of: De eigenaar van een restaurant wil alleen vrouwen in de bediening. Mag dit?



*same in the same cases. In this case an employer is not allowed to discriminate. In some cases this is allowed: when an actor is being sought for a male role, than it makes sense that women are rejected*<sup>15</sup>.

Another situation discussed in this same assignment is: *“You work every week for five whole days for your boss. He pays you every week 100 euro. Is this allowed?”*

Applying the constructionist approach of Stuart Hall (1997) allows me to look critically beyond the literal meaning of the words used. Literally, the statements mentioned in the first example are just statements which cannot be found in the Dutch Constitution. However, when I take into account the target group of the material, the newcomers, the focus on gender inequality and male domination in these examples gives me the idea that there is an assumption about the perspective of the newcomer towards male superiority. As such, the assignment is not just about teaching what is in the constitution, but also focuses on teaching that gender equality is of high importance in the Netherlands. Gender is represented as a marker of equality in Dutch society. This line of thought is similar for the second example, which is, however, more tailored towards the labour market.

The third example marks a different representation of gender. The statement is not about teaching gender equality, but teaching about a minimum wage in the Dutch labour market. However, gender comes into play by using the pronoun ‘he’ in combination with ‘boss’. This infers a gender stereotype of male superiority, however this is not related to a perspective of the newcomer.

#### *5.3.2.2 Referencing of Sexuality: Act of Tolerance*

The workshop offers an assignment in which, again, different situations are described. The participants are supposed to explain what they would do in that specific situation, whilst being given the ability to choose from different strategies, such as: to talk, going to the police etc. The situations are presented in the slides of the power-point presentation and the ‘correct’ answers are elaborated upon in the instruction manual. Some of the situations have references to or are about sexuality.

One of the situations is described in the article by Oomen and Leenders (2020) and is as follows: *“Your colleague is homosexual and is getting married to his boyfriend. He invited you to come to his wedding. You are feeling uncomfortable. You are hesitating about what*

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<sup>15</sup> Translation of: Nee. Mannen en vrouwen moet in dezelfde gevallen gelijk worden behandeld. In dit geval mag een werkgever niet discrimineren. In sommige gevallen mag het wel: als er een acteur wordt gezocht voor een mannenrol, dan is het logisch dat vrouwen worden afgewezen.

*you should do*<sup>16</sup>”. In the explication it is not specified what the feeling of discomfort is caused by or based on, but it seems that it is connected to the fact that the colleague is homosexual. The PowerPoint presentation shows a wedding cake with two man-shaped figures on top. The ‘correct’ answer to this situation, according to the instruction manual, reads as follows: *“In the Netherlands the law states that people from the same sex are allowed to get married to each other. So men with men and women with women*<sup>17</sup>.” It continues by providing possible solutions to resolve the feeling of discomfort by stating that it is possible to not go to the wedding, but to contribute financially to the gift for the wedding. Another solution suggested in the manual is to make up an excuse for not attending the wedding. The answer ends with: *“The other should respect your decision, just like you should respect the decision of the other”*.<sup>18</sup> (p. 16). Oomen and Leenders (2020) refer to this description as an example of the individual moral agency of the workshop holder, as described in the literature review. I refer to this description of sexual orientation because of the way it is used as an example of tolerance in the Netherlands, and how I see the explanation of tolerance as an excluding mechanism as explained by Brown (2009). By using the words ‘In the Netherlands’ an emphasis is made on the tolerant culture in Dutch society, possibly in contrast to the culture of the newcomer. The assumption is made that a feeling of discomfort is connected to openness about sexual orientation, making tolerance an excluding marker. In the ‘correct’ answer there is no solution that states that the newcomer might have no feeling of discomfort or problem with the situation or even have a different sexual orientation than straight themselves. This simplifies the image of the newcomer.

### 5.3.2.3 Othering: Intersectional Analysis

The instruction manual starts with describing the target group of the workshop. In this group description, no characteristics of gender and sexuality are mentioned. Some tips and tricks are given to the workshop presenter on how to deal with this target group such as:

*“Do not make comments, allusions of gestures which might have a sexual charge”*<sup>19</sup>

*“Prevent the trap of moral superiority. However, do explain that the Netherlands might have manners that can be different than what they are used to”*<sup>20</sup> (p. 5)

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<sup>16</sup> Translation of: Uw collega is homoseksueel en gaat trouwen met zijn vriend. Hij heeft u uitgenodigd om op de bruiloft te komen. U voelt zich ongemakkelijk. U twijfelt wat u moet doen.

<sup>17</sup> Translation of: In Nederland staat in de wet dat mensen van hetzelfde geslacht met elkaar mogen trouwen. Dus mannen met mannen en vrouwen met vrouwen.

<sup>18</sup> Translation of: De ander moet respect hebben voor uw keuze, net zoals u respect moet hebben voor de keuze van een ander.

<sup>19</sup> Translation of: “Maak geen opmerkingen, toespelingen of gebaren die een seksuele lading kunnen hebben”

These tips and tricks show the assumption of the attitude of the expected target group. The statement that the ‘trap of moral superiority’ should be prevented suggests to me that there is an expected moral superiority there, or that at least workshop holders will expect a moral superiority as the status quo in relation to the newcomer. Stating that this should be prevented seems as if difference is eliminated, however, the addition wording stating that ‘different manners’ should still be explained negates the previous statement. By highlighting this potential moral superiority, the newcomer is already labelled as different and inferior by default. The instructions say nothing about a possible common ground between the Dutch people and the newcomer, which enhances the process of othering in the material. Emphasis is put solely on difference.

#### *5.3.2.4 Gendered Citizenship*

The workshop does not give a definition of the core value participation. Just as in the information brochure only practical examples of how to act in society (with regard to complaints or social contacts) are discussed, but nothing is said about obligations regarding solidarity or participation. The performance element of citizenship, about how citizenship should be performed, has a smaller role in the more practical material of the workshop and the brochure. Therefore, there is no connection to the idea of gendered citizenship.

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<sup>20</sup> Translation of: “Voorkom de valkuil van morele superioriteit. Leg wel uit dat in Nederland omgangsvormen anders kunnen zijn dan dat zij gewend zijn”

## **CHAPTER 6 : CONCLUSION**

This concluding chapter provides the central answer to the question through this thesis: what role do references to gender and sexuality play in the way distinctions between Dutch and non-Dutch people are made in the Participation Declaration and Participation Declaration Trajectory? The chapter will first provide a concluding paragraph per sub-question, while continuing with a central answer to the research question.

### **6.1 The representation of gender:**

The representation of gender in the Participation Declaration and the Participation Declaration Trajectory is very similar. In all sorts of materials, gender functions as example of equality and is represented as marker of equality in Dutch society. Gender equality is the norm and discrimination on the basis of gender is not allowed. This emphasis on gender as a marker of equality creates a distinction between Dutch and non-Dutch people in the material, in which the newcomer is portrayed as someone who needs to be taught about gender equality and who is expected to have different norms and values concerning the topic.

### **6.2 The way sexual orientation is referenced:**

The attitude towards and the way in which sexual orientation is analysed in the different materials is similar. All materials describe the freedom of sexual orientation in the Netherlands and the tolerance towards a variety of sexualities. Wendy Brown described how tolerance can be a key term in dividing tolerant and intolerant cultures. The emphasis on tolerance towards freedom of sexual orientation in the Netherlands makes this distinction, allowing sexuality to be used as a marker of distinction between Dutch and non-Dutch people (as tolerant and intolerant). This provides a sense of moral superiority of Dutch society over the culture and society of the newcomer. The tolerance of sexual orientation is, just as gender equality, used as an absolute norm of difference.

### **6.3 How are people othered: intersectional analysis**

The material uses the pronoun 'we' for the Netherlands in comparison to the 'you' for the newcomer. People are othered in the material in the sense that there is no mention of any common ground between the two groups. The assumption is a contradiction, where the Dutch group is set as the norm. The expected differences are gendered in the sense that a focus on gender equality is a basis for distinction.

### **6.4 Gendered citizenship:**

In the material of the Declaration and the video-clip, citizenship as a performance is described as a clear aim, especially in the descriptions of the core values solidarity and equality.

Concrete expected actions are depicted. The description of these core values, and thus of the conditions of active citizenship are gendered, while no activities of the private sphere are mentioned, and as such excluding typical female activities. The aim of citizenship as a performance fades away in the material of the workshop, where the focus is on the core values equality and freedom and on certain practicalities in the Netherlands (such as voting etc.).

### **6.5 Conclusion: the role of gender and sexuality in the material**

Throughout the material, gender and sexuality are used as absolute norms of difference, resulting in a division between the tolerant (Dutch culture) and intolerant (newcomer). No common ground is expected, and the newcomer is expected to be different by default. The newcomers in the material are othered in the sense of being intolerant (yet), while the expectation is that they need to be taught about norms and values concerning gender equality and freedom of sexual orientation. The focus on tolerance as trademark for Dutch identity causes a division between the other and the self. The focus on gender and sexuality causes absolute differences between the us and the them in the Participation Declaration and in the material of the Participation Declaration Trajectory.

This conclusion of the way gender and sexuality are used as absolute norms of difference relates to the changing attitude in integration policies as described in the literature review. Slootman (2018) described the culturalist discourse as the idea that there is a division between enlightened liberal and illiberal cultures. Focussing on the roles of gender and sexuality in the Participation Declaration reveals this same culturalist discourse. Oomen and Leenders (2020) revealed this culturalist discourse in the Participation Declaration workshops and this thesis highlights how the discourse can also be found in the materials themselves. Saharso (2017) argued that there is a fear of moral diversity in the Netherlands. This ‘fear’ re-emerges in the material of the Participation Declaration as well, due to the fact that a certain description of core values is obliged to be adopted. Demanding this adoption and dividing between tolerant and intolerant leaves no room for acceptance of (cultural) difference. By making use of critical discourse analysis as a method, this intolerance towards difference can be revealed, while there also can be opted for social change.

Citizenship as a performance is something which is emphasized in the materials authored by the Government, however this emphasis fades away in the materials developed for the workshop, which are the the more ‘practical’ newcomer-facing materials. The practical materials focus more on the core values of equality and freedom, while using gender and sexuality as absolute norms of difference. This emphasis highlights the culturalist discourse

on integration even more, where the discourse is stripped down to the discussion of norms and value, leaving the practical elements further behind.

### **6.6 Suggestions for further research**

For further research concerning the role of gender and sexuality in the way distinctions between Dutch and non-Dutch people are made the content of the actual workshops (not just the ProDemos) material could be analysed with the same focus on gender and sexuality. This would provide an even more complete perspective, whilst the perspective of the newcomer and presenter of the workshop could also be included.

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## APPENDIX I: English Participation Declaration



# Participation statement

## *Welcome to the Netherlands!*

The Netherlands is a democracy and a constitutional state. This means that everyone has the same rights and that everyone must abide by the same rules. In the Netherlands, freedom, equality and solidarity play a central role. These values correspond to rights that you may call upon. These values can only be maintained if everyone actively contributes towards society. Participation in the Netherlands is very important.

### *Freedom:*

In the Netherlands, everyone may think, do and say what they like.

This means that:

- everyone can express their opinions;
- everyone may have their own faith or choose not to;
- everyone may be open about their sexuality;
- everyone is entitled to make their own choices and be independent (the right to self-determination)

There are also corresponding limits. Whatever someone says or does may not contravene the law. For example, you cannot deliberately discriminate against someone or incite them to hatred or hostility.

### *Equality:*

In the Netherlands, all citizens are treated equally. Discrimination on the basis of gender, beliefs, origins or sexuality is not accepted.

### *Solidarity:*

In the Netherlands, citizens are all responsible for society. Citizens have a right to a safe environment, decent housing, fair employment conditions, a minimum wage at work, a good education and top quality medical care. The government is obliged to protect people against exclusion and unfair treatment. Citizens must, in principle, maintain themselves. If this is not possible, and nobody can help, the government will provide assistance.

### *Participation:*

In the Netherlands, we ask all citizens to contribute towards a pleasant and safe society, e.g. by working, going to school or by taking part in voluntary work. This may take place in your neighbourhood, school or in an association. Speaking the Dutch language is vital in this context.

*I hereby state that I have read, understood and will respect the above information about values in Dutch society. I also state that I will make an active contribution towards Dutch society and will be given the space to do so by my fellow citizens.*

## APPENDIX II: List of Images

Figure 1: ProDemos (n.d.a). *Participatieverklaring*. Retrieved from:

<https://prodemos.nl/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/PV-Nederlands-2016-mw.pdf>

Figure 2: Screenshot from: Ministerieszw. (2016, February 18). *Kernwaarden Nederland*. [Video]. YouTube.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8fVhLbA8PHE>

Figure 3: Screenshot from: Ministerieszw. (2016, February 18). *Kernwaarden Nederland*. [Video]. YouTube.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8fVhLbA8PHE>

Figure 4: Screenshot from: Ministerieszw. (2016, February 18). *Kernwaarden Nederland*. [Video]. YouTube.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8fVhLbA8PHE>

Figure 5: Screenshot from: Ministerieszw. (2016, February 18). *Kernwaarden Nederland*. [Video]. YouTube.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8fVhLbA8PHE>

Figure 6: Screenshot from: Ministerieszw. (2016, February 18). *Kernwaarden Nederland*. [Video]. YouTube.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8fVhLbA8PHE>

Figure 7: Screenshot from: Ministerieszw. (2016, February 18). *Kernwaarden Nederland*. [Video]. YouTube.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8fVhLbA8PHE>