



**Utrecht  
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# Is Volunteering for Everybody?

A comparative study of volunteering between the European population and immigrants, in terms of socialisation, employment, civic engagement and gender.

*The case of Amsterdam*

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## **Abstract**

Many studies have been done on immigrant integration and much research has focused on volunteering and the motivation for it, but few have looked at the links between them, let alone compared the two. It is in this context that the following research question is addressed:

*To what extent does the volunteering behaviour of immigrants in Europe differ from that of the general population?*

This problem was addressed through a mixed method approach. On the one hand, the quantitative part uses the ESS round 1, concerning the volunteering behaviour of the European population. On the other hand, qualitative interviews were conducted to understand in depth what volunteers learn from their activities. The quantitative results of the logistic regression show that the volunteering behaviour of immigrants does not differ from that of the general population. In general, having a job, a greater social capital, being politically engaged and being women are drivers for volunteering. The qualitative section emphasizes the importance of social contacts, learning soft skills and building self-confidence.

The recommendations are addressed to the non-profit volunteering organisation Serve the City Amsterdam. The recommendations are addressed to the non-profit volunteering organisation Serve the City Amsterdam and suggest promoting volunteering among the female immigrant population, which could be based on the learning part of volunteering. In addition, the organisation advises contacting politicians to encourage them to participate in volunteering and to strengthen their sense of community.

## **Ethical statement**

This thesis has been officially approved by the Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences of the University of Utrecht. More information is in the appendix.

# 1. Introduction

Over the past few decades, volunteering has become more popular than ever (Anheier et al., 2003). Although we are living in a more materialistic and individualistic society, this has not stopped people from wanting to give time and help others. Today's growing individualism allows people to think first of their well-being; nonetheless, many individuals find that giving to others is the best way to foster the inner growth of their sense of well-being. Generosity can also be individualistic, but this does not detract from the act of solidarity itself. Commitment to the community has given people a fulfilment that they cannot find in other activities. In addition to providing a valuable contribution to the community, this commitment is shown to have a range of positive consequences for people: allowing them to develop and acquire skills as well as meet new people (Schugurensky et al., 2008). Volunteering could be considered together with growing population movements, greater migration flows and a more globalised world in general. As it becomes a more common phenomenon (Anheier et al., 2003), volunteering has been the subject of many studies. According to research, people get involved with others for a variety of reasons, including to meet new people, feel useful, carry out meaningful activities, and participate in their community. (Wilson, 2000). Some studies have also been conducted about immigrants who volunteer (Handy & Greenspan, 2008; Greenspan et al., 2018). However, the purpose of these studies was not to compare, but rather to comprehend the integration processes of immigrants through understanding their volunteering behaviour. This research adds debate to existing scientific knowledge by aiming to understand the differences in volunteering patterns.

I will answer the following research question:

***To what extent do immigrants in Europe differ in their volunteering behaviour from the general population?***

The following policy question will be answered in the form of a policy recommendation:

***How can we stimulate volunteering among immigrants in The Netherlands?***

Combining quantitative and qualitative approaches provides me with a more comprehensive understanding of the topic. The first approach allows me to compare the general population and immigrants in terms of their profiles. Using the 2002 European Social Survey (ESS) Round 1 ("Search European Social Survey", 2002), this research takes a closer look at the profile of immigrant volunteers in terms of age and education level and compares how it differs from that

of general volunteers. In addition, I examined other individual dimensions that drive people to volunteer, such as employment status, social capital, political involvement and gender, in comparison to their counterparts in the general population. Secondly, the second approach consists of in-depth interviews with six immigrants (expatriates) to understand how employment, social capital, civic engagement, and gender influenced their volunteering behaviour. This part of the research focuses on the Netherlands, specifically on Amsterdam. This city has become very cosmopolitan, welcoming expatriates in large numbers (Jennissen et al., 2018) and very friendly to English speakers. I had the chance to get close to these volunteers through my internship with Serve the City Amsterdam, more is explained in the method section.

## **2. Theory section**

### *Defining the terms*

First, volunteering can take many forms and measuring it can be complicated. From joining a political party to help your neighbour gardening, this activity can have many different aspects. It is therefore not possible to dwell on all these individual and different forms. To frame this activity, I have used the criteria put forward by Roy & Ziemek (2000). In their paper, they state several key points for an activity to be considered volunteering. Firstly, it must involve some kind of reward such as altruism or personal satisfaction but not a monetary reward (a freebie at most). Secondly, it must be of free will, i.e., it is not obliged by any law, institution or any form of authority (otherwise it could be understood as unpaid work). Thirdly, someone has to benefit from this service, either a specific person or people, or a community, or even a city (e.g., clean walks). Fourth, the voluntary work must take place in an organised way (supervised by some organisation). Despite all these different points, to be able to consider a person as a volunteer, the level of commitment can be minimal. The individual must have participated in only one activity that meets the aforementioned points to be considered a volunteer.

Secondly, the term immigrant (in the analyses) will be understood simply: a person who was not born in the country where the interview took place. I chose to do this because it is the best way to define the six volunteers I interviewed. The only drawback of this definition is the case of a foreign-born citizen who returns to live in his or her country of origin, where he or she probably shares the language and culture, and who is then considered an immigrant, even though this is not the case. However, this case is marginal and should not affect this study.

### **Importance of context and circumstances**

In general, as stated by Anheier, et al. (2003), people begin to volunteer not so much because of personality attributes such as altruism and a willingness to help others, but rather because of opportunities (“social and institutional forces”) and encouragement from others. This same research found that people also tend to volunteer because friends or family members have done so in the past, therefore they are drawn to this particular activity since it is part of their social circle's typical activities. It's sometimes just because they've been requested to give their time and have accepted (Couton & Gaudet, 2008).

The same applies to the specific population of immigrants: they are more likely to volunteer in their community (Lee & Moon, 2011). Because of the cultural familiarity with other volunteers

or members of the organisation, the majority of immigrants volunteer mostly in their cultural circle (Stepick & Stepick, 2002). In addition, volunteers who are involved in their community are less likely to engage in 'mainstream' volunteer activities, i.e. unspecified services for refugees (Tomlinson, 2008) in the host country. As a result, the two sorts of organisations (community and mainstream) are fuelled by two distinct types of volunteers, each of whom will prefer one over the other (Lee & Moon, 2011).

Some studies have also shown that there is no correlation between people who volunteer and a particular socioeconomic status. Rather, it is because of their personal values and personal interest (Anheier, et al., 2003). This latter aspect has no influence on the quality of the work done; as Wuthnow (1991) stated: individualism can be viewed as a beneficial resource for achieving a common good objective. However, other authors think differently. It is also argued by Voicu & Voicu (2003) that an individual who cares about his/her personal well-being, in other words, his self-fulfilment, has the luxury of not having to worry about his other primary needs. It is the hierarchy of needs (Maslow, 1943) that is addressed here: a volunteer can thus devote time to others, to the community, to assisting, or to an unpaid activity in general, which is a luxury that individuals without employment, for example, cannot afford. To relate this to immigrants arriving in a new country, it has been shown that the immigrants who are most likely to volunteer are those who have been in the host country for some time, and who already have a job and a network (Greenspan et al., 2018).

The following hypothesis can therefore be made:

*Voluntary behaviour is more common among people with stable employment. This relationship applies equally to immigrants.*

### **Socializing**

Another perspective on what motivates people to volunteer is connected to the concept of social capital. Bourdieu (1980) defines social capital as a set of durable and useful connections, usually made of individuals who have certain properties in common. Volunteering is a way to meet least like-minded people (being active, involved in civil life, interested in what is happening locally, etc.). Socialising and cooperating with strangers (Anheier, et al., 2003) is also a way to expand one's network.

One of the objectives of immigrants is to build up a network and volunteering is an effective way to achieve this goal (Colakoglu et al., 2018). About networking, Putnam (2000) makes a difference between bridging and bonding relationships. On the one hand, bonding refers to



strong, emotionally close, and supportive ties. On the other hand, bridging relationships reflect a weaker bond. Bridging gives the opportunity to establish links outside one's ethnic community (Handy & Greenspan, 2008). Granovetter (1973) showed that it is through these superficial but numerous links that individuals' social opportunities increase and therefore more job opportunities develop. Several studies have shown that social capital contributes positively to labour market access (Aguilera, 2002; Drever and Hoffmeister, 2008), wages (Boxman, Graaf, & Flap, 1991; Aguilera, 2005), or occupational status (Lin, 1999). For immigrants, social capital is particularly important, as relying on social networks is a way to reduce the costs of finding a job.

As Schugurensky et al. (2008) have shown, Canadian immigrants demonstrate that their integration into the labour market also involves volunteering. Without forgetting their goal of finding a job that matches their skills, volunteering allows them to stay active, learn new things, and integrate into the culture. As Schugurensky et al.'s (2008) study shows, volunteers who were not born in Canada are the most motivated to learn more about the country they arrive in.

Besides, structural bridges are defined by Lancee (2010) as interethnic contacts: it appears from this study that these relationships are conducive to accessing the labour market. An interethnic relationship can be built by becoming a member of organisations with a high proportion of autochthone residents. It is also of relevance to mention that immigrants show a shortfall in social capital which leads to a lack of access to appropriate jobs (Behtoui, 2007).

One motivation for volunteering is therefore to expand one's network but this reasoning also works in the other direction. As mentioned earlier, it is because an individual has been solicited to become a volunteer that he or she becomes one, and this solicitation is more likely to happen if the individual's social network is large (Anheier et al., 2003). These advantages are not unique to the native population; immigrants also enjoy greater social capital overall. It is therefore possible to conclude the following hypothesis related to social capital:

*Volunteering is correlated with high social capital; the strength of this relationship is stronger among immigrants.*

### **Political behaviours**

Another aspect of volunteering is a lack of state services, especially in rural areas (Wilson, 2000) where services are lacking, citizens are taking over the role of the state. In general, the rise in volunteer organizations indicates a shift in the traditional role of the state (Lorentzen &

Hustinx, 2007; European Economic and Social Committee, 2021) which is worth developing here.

In terms of the state's involvement, it's possible that people (i.e. the general population, immigrants, and natives) volunteer specifically to get closer to civil life. Tocqueville's concept of democracy can be linked to civic participation; he worried about the rise of individualism and materialism, and volunteering can be regarded as a response to this concern (Alexis De Tocqueville, 1835). Volunteering leads to civic engagement and vice versa (Hodgkinson, 2003). Tocqueville supports his point by saying that improving the political involvement of citizens in the society of which they are a part is essential for progress. Thus, more citizens (especially the working classes and immigrants) involved in politics allows for a better representation of society, which can lead to a reduction of inequalities. Specifically, Ramakrishnan (2001) states that decreasing levels of volunteering may be a factor in the continuing decrease in political interest and participation. This idea leads me to take a look at the correlation between civic engagement and volunteering, as one can induce the other and vice-versa.

Many studies point in the same direction regarding immigrants. Jensen (2008) has reported that civic engagement is important for newcomers. In addition to this, she found that in a local and community sense immigrants are likely to volunteer for political or societal benefits. For immigrants, being able to go to the polls or engage in other types of civic activities marks the culmination of the integration path in a new country (Gordon 1964, as cited in Eve, 2010; Heath et al. 2013; Jones-Correa 1998; Ramakrishnan 2001). For them, civic commitment is expressed more often locally (García, 2021).

In the case of the Netherlands, general civic participation has increased significantly since 1977 (Maraffi, et al., 2008). As Maraffi et al. (2008) show, contact with politicians/state officials, the number of signatures on petitions, as well as electoral participation have increased. This increase correlates with a higher registration of the organisations' memberships. Thanks to this same study, it is possible to state that the higher the civic engagement of an individual, the greater the chances of getting involved in voluntary work. However, it is important to emphasise that the increase in volunteering is also due to the opportunities for different types of volunteering that have developed in recent years, i.e. dating volunteering, family volunteering or travelling volunteering (voluntourism) (European Economic and Social Committee, 2021). The term "volunteering" is now used in a broader sense than it was previously.

In addition to this engagement perspective, it is interesting to consider the dimension of immigrants who do not have the same place in society as natives. Many immigrants choose to become more involved in their ethnicity and community already established in the country (Stepick & Stepick, 2002). This engagement is somehow politically linked as it has for purpose to defend, support and promote a certain culture and protecting the rights of its citizens. To my knowledge, no literature links political or civic engagement with volunteering in an immigrant population.

This raises the question of whether or not immigrants' civic engagement influences participation in volunteering. Given the above, the following hypothesis can be formulated:

*Individuals involved in political life tend also to be volunteers; this relationship applies equally to natives and immigrants.*

### **Gender perspective**

There is no consensus in the literature as to whether women volunteer more or not. At first glance, one might think that this is the case because empathy and caregiving attributes are often associated with women. To some extent, it is true that women volunteer more but this is only for formal volunteering, as shown by the UN: 53,42% of informal volunteers are women and 46,40% of formal volunteers are women (United Nations Volunteers, 2021). Some arguments can be put forward to qualify this preconception.

First, about the population in general, women tend to work more part-time to perform domestic tasks (Oslawski-Lopez, 2016). This would mean they have in theory more time dedicated to volunteer work. However, this is not the case. First, it could be pointed out that women already do a lot of unpaid work in their domestic life and that they may not want to give more time and energy to unpaid work (UN Women, 2019). This view is supported by Wilson (2000), who argues that women's involvement in volunteering differs considerably by life stages. Younger women volunteer more hours than younger men, but this pattern reverses at older ages: older men volunteer more than older women. This data date back to the 1990s, so it would be relevant to reassess these patterns, as the role of women and men in society has changed in recent years.

Similarly, immigrant women are disadvantaged to volunteer. They are often seen more as family pillars than future employees when they arrive in a country (Kofman et al., 2005). They have to take care of the domestic chores and finding a job is secondary. It is therefore even harder to imagine they would devote time to volunteering. On top of this, leaving a country also

has a strong gender component. Iredale (2005) shows that, in many countries, the position of women does not allow them to leave easily, only to join a partner, or for an extraordinary situation. She also found that the condition of men is more free and flexible: moving to a new country is generally more accepted.

Secondly, in addition to the fact that men undertake fewer household chores, they generally have a greater social capital (Collischon & Eberl, 2021; Blommaert, Meuleman, Leenheer, & Butkēviča, 2019). In addition to having a larger social capital, men are more likely to be successful in surrounding themselves with a relevant professional network (Uzzi, 2019). A bigger and quality network, therefore, creates an important gender gap. And as mentioned above, social capital is essential in the chances of volunteering. A more intercultural dimension could be added: female immigrants are at a crucial disadvantage compared to men in terms of their social networks. Indeed, women are expected to take care of the home and family life, putting aside their social life or at least to a lesser extent than men (Boyd & Grieco, 2003). Volunteering is therefore an opportunity for women to expand their network, as opportunities are rarer because of their status (Colakoglu et al., 2018). Lack of social capital can be seen as an obstacle to volunteering for women, but volunteering can also be seen as a motivation for women to grow their social capital. Here, the scientific literature does not give a consensus either.

Thirdly, contrary to what one might think, men have more time to volunteer than women (Mattingly & Bianchi, 2003; Wilson, 2000). Taking these three components into account, it is possible to assume that the majority of volunteers would be men, the same ideas can be applied to male immigrants.

On another note, volunteering activities respect the gender norms of today's society. On one hand, women tend to be more interested in jobs in sectors of the care, human, social, childcare, and early childhood sectors, etc. On the other hand, men are still the ones who have access to positions of power, leadership, and visibility (Game, Pringle, & Grace, 2020). This same hierarchy is found among volunteers, and immigrants' career paths (Ghosh, 2009). Women tend to be involved in volunteering related to care, personal assistance, care of the planet, etc. Men tend to be more leaders or are involved in more manual and physical work. As Wilson (2000) points out, these trends are stable and do not depend on country, age or race. Interestingly, this can also apply equally to immigrants. Men tend to migrate to a country to work in the construction and building sector, while women tend to migrate to work in the service, personal care or events sector (Ghosh, 2009). In low-income countries, men are expected to do technical,

manual or strength-based work. They are also socially expected to be the primary source of income for their families. Under such conditions, it is difficult to imagine that male volunteering would be acceptable. This cultural difference could contribute to a lower propensity of immigrant men to volunteer, although this tendency is mostly observed in informal volunteering (United Nations, 2018).

Adding to these differences is the reason for volunteering. For women, it is a way to spend time with friends and strengthen an existing bond while being a little more approved by their peers. Whereas for men, volunteering is often used in conjunction with their main job as a way to use their skills (Wuthnow, 1995).

In sum, it is difficult to demonstrate whether women or men are more involved in volunteering as they involve in different stages of life, different types of projects and different motivations. Most of the articles presented here suggest that men do more volunteering. As it's easier for them to migrate, have more time to dedicate to unpaid work and a larger network. Among other arguments, it is possible to hypothesize that:

*Men volunteer more than women; this relationship is reinforced among immigrants.*

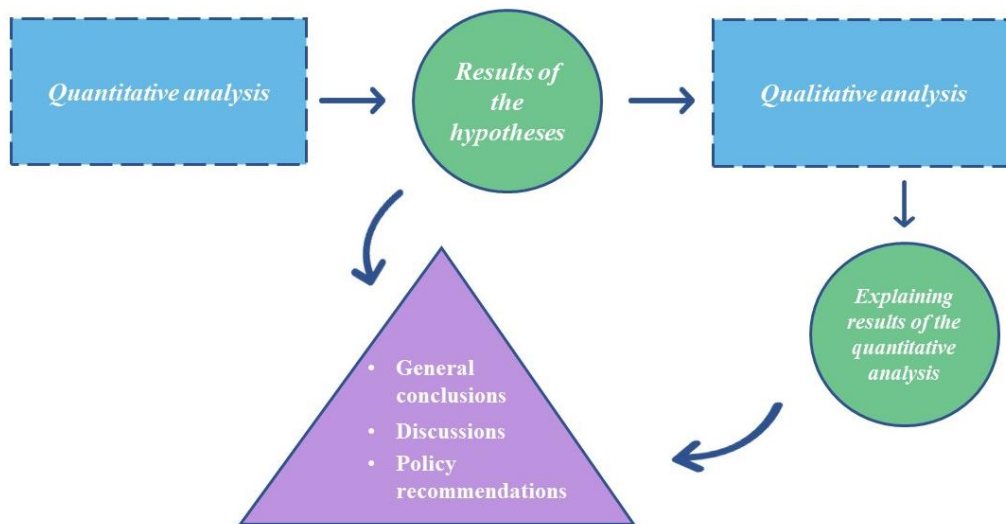
### 3. Method

#### 3.1. Quantitative methodology

##### 3.1.1. Research design

This thesis uses a mix-method (Creswell, 2014) that has two parts in its analysis. The first part is quantitative and will answer the four hypotheses formulated above. The second part consists of explaining the quantitative results through qualitative interviews. This follow-up will allow me to investigate the personal and underlying reasons for educated immigrants to engage as volunteers in Amsterdam.

*Figure 1: Diagram of the research design:*



##### 3.1.2. Dataset and population

For this thesis, I use the European Social Survey dataset from 2002 (ESS Round 1). The European Social Survey is a large-scale, cross-national, longitudinal research initiative on how Europeans relate to their ideas about family, work, religion, politics and society. Conducted every two years in a growing number of countries, the survey gives an overview of the ideas, beliefs, preferences, attitudes, values and opinions of the people living in Europe. This dataset has been released in 2002. To the best of my knowledge, this is the best database on Europe and volunteering opportunities to date. It should be noted that the following ESS surveys do not cover volunteering. The respondents are European habitants aged 14+ years old and were randomly chosen (N=33,396). The sample has been weighted and is accurately representing the

European population. An average of 1500 respondents take part in these face-to-face interviews in each of the 38 countries part of the study.

More precisely, I will compare the inhabitants of the country in question with the immigrants (i.e. respondents that were not born in the country). The questionnaires were conducted by the national polling institutes of each country. Surveys are conducted in the official national language(s) of the country, consequently excluding a part of the population's ideas. Especially when researching about immigrants, this barrier is important to be taken into account. Some studies have shown that language is a significant obstacle for the immigrant to integrate into a culture, and therefore participate in volunteering activities (Voicu, 2014).

### *3.1.3. Ethical and privacy considerations*

ESS is a contributor to the Declaration on Professional Ethics of the International Statistical Institute (ISI). This institute provides a framework for conducting research with values and habits that researchers should adopt together. The three main values of the ISI are respect, professionalism, truthfulness and integrity. In addition to this, there are 12 ethical principles that researchers should follow such as clarifying the dangers of a study, avoiding conflicts of interest, maintaining confidentiality, exposing and reviewing methods and results, etc. (International Statistical Institute, 2010). All the details are available on the ISI Declaration on Professional Ethics which you can find [here](#).

In addition to this ethical charter, ESS informs its participants about the conduct of the study. Participation in the survey is voluntary. Furthermore, participants might not answer a question if they do not wish to, and they can interrupt the interview at any time without explaining. Interview responses are recorded electronically. Information on the region from which respondents come is also collected. When the survey is finished, the fieldwork organisation sends the ESS data, without the name and contact details of the respondents, to the ESS archive. The name and contact details are removed when the data is published. Regarding confidentiality, ESS states: "We will make every effort to ensure that no participant is identifiable in the results of the survey or in any publications based on the study." (European Social Survey, n.d.).

To be short, the use of this database is said to be secondary, and it is impossible for me, or any reader of this thesis, to re-identify participants in the surveys.

### 3.1.4. Operationalisation

#### **Dependent variable**

Since this research focuses on the proclivity to volunteer, I created the variable '*Engaging in volunteering*' (binary, not volunteer in the past 12 months=0 and volunteer in the past 12 months=1). All missing values were reported as so. This computed variable consisted of 12 binary variables (0=not marked, 1=marked) relating to volunteering in different organisations in the past year, such as the following associations: *sports/outdoor activity, cultural/hobby activity, trade union, business/profession/farmer, Consumer/automobile, humanitarian, science/education/teacher, social club, environment/peace/animal, religious/church, political party, or any other voluntary organisation.*

#### **Independent variables**

##### *Employment status*

It has been shown that signs of life stability encourage volunteering. The variable measures if the respondent is employed, self-employed or not doing any paid activity. I recoded this variable as a binary variable, differentiating individuals having a paid job or not. I consider here that not having a paid activity is a sign of instability (or at least financial instability), these respondents are expected to be more involved in volunteering.

##### *Social capital*

The larger a person's network, the more likely they are to volunteer. If a person meets with their acquaintances often, that same person is also more likely to meet new people more often. The '*Social capital*' of the respondents was calculated through an ordinal variable: how often socially meet with friends, relatives or colleagues (never/less than once a month/ several times a month/ once a week/ several times a week/every day).

##### *Involvement in political life*

Volunteering behaviours often correlate with broader involvement in society. The '*Involvement in political life*' was measured by computing 10 binary variables (yes/no) about the political implication in the last year, which are the following: *contacted politician or government official, worked in a political party or action group, worked in another organisation or association, worn or displayed campaign badge/sticker, signed a petition, taken part in a lawful public demonstration, boycotted certain products, bought a product for*



*political/ethical/environment reason, donated money to a political organisation or group, participated illegal protest activities.*

### *Gender*

Previous research fails to provide an accurate account of the importance of gender in volunteering behaviour. A closer look will be given to this one. The 'Gender' of the respondents was asked by a binary variable (male/female).

### **Moderator**

#### *Being a high skilled immigrant*

Immigrant status is defined by being born or not in the country where the interview was conducted. I choose for this definition as the volunteers I interview for the qualitative part are defined as such. This variable is binary: 'Born in this country' (yes/no).

### **Control variables**

The *age of respondent* was chosen as a control variable as it seems to be important component of volunteering (especially related to gender, the life stages seem to be relevant in the reasons to volunteer or not).

The education level of participants is the second control variable. This one was chosen because again that's what links the volunteers I interviewed. This component might be relevant for volunteering in general.

#### *3.1.5. Method of analysis*

I used SPSS version 27 to perform the analyses. The dataset was cleaned of all missing values, the final N is 33 396. As the dependent variable is binary and the outcome variables are binary or categorical, I ran a logistic regression. Before doing so, I checked the three assumptions of this analysis: the independent variables cannot be highly correlated, there are no outliers and the dependent variable is binary or dichotomous. Afterwards, I performed a logistic regression including as the dependent variable (having been a volunteer) with in model 1 the two control variables (level of education and age), in model 2 I added the four independent variables (employment status, civic engagement, social capital and gender), finally model 3 includes in addition the 4 interactions of the four independent variables with the dependent variable. As observed in the results, the interactions were found to be non-significant. In order to see if this

was due to the other elements of the equation, I performed a logistic regression for each hypothesis, involving only the variables used in the hypothesis in question.

## *3.2 Qualitative Analyses*

### *3.2.1 Methodology*

I conducted six interviews with volunteers. These in-depth interviews aimed to understand the meaning of volunteering for these people. On the advice of my supervisor and due to time constraints, the interviews were not transcribed in their entirety, only the most relevant parts were. The interviews have not been coded, because these interviews add relevance to this research but are not the main part of it.

### *3.2.2 Respondents*

The six people I interviewed are volunteers for the organisation Serve the City Amsterdam for which a 5-month internship. This NGO organises volunteering projects in Amsterdam several times a week, with the particularity of being all bilingual English/Dutch and not binding (i.e. there is no obligation to return or to make a long-term commitment). All six participants have the same kind of profile: highly educated, working, and living in Amsterdam but were not born in The Netherlands (the longest stay is 10 years). I interviewed three men and three women. They were particularly chosen for their involvement as they are project coordinators themselves. They are from the following countries: Germany, Romania, France, the United Kingdom (2) and India.

### *3.2.3 Ethical and privacy considerations*

Each respondent was contacted through email and/or WhatsApp. They read the information letter about the study and signed the consent form. All respondents consent to be interviewed and recorded. They also all agreed on keeping their real names. The interviews were conducted in person in Amsterdam.

### 3.2.4 Questionnaire

#### List of topics discussed during the interview

<p>Q1: General information</p>	<p>What is your life story? Could you tell me more about your past?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How old are you?</li> <li>- Where are you from?</li> <li>- What is your educational background?</li> <li>- How long have you been in the Netherlands? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➔ How did you end up in the Netherlands?</li> </ul> </li> <li>- What is your professional background?</li> </ul>
<p>Q2: Volunteering information</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How often do you volunteer?</li> <li>- What kind of projects have you participated in?</li> </ul> <p><i>Expected: women more involved in care activities and men in more practical activities (building, painting, etc)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➔ Which organisation? Only with Serve the City?</li> </ul>
<p>Q3: Meaning for volunteering</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What do you get out of volunteering? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➔ How do you feel before, during and after volunteering?</li> </ul> </li> <li>- What motivated you the first time? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➔ Why do you keep on going?</li> <li>➔ Do you plan on continuing?</li> </ul> </li> <li>- What do you gain from it? <p><i>Expected: Socializing, Civic life, Job-related, Skills</i></p> <p><b>If they have a job</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➔ Would you say you have a stable job?</li> <li>➔ How does volunteering benefit you in your job?</li> </ul> <p>How is it beneficial for your career?</p> <p><b>If they don't have a job</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➔ How can volunteering for you be positively linked to getting a job?</li> <li>➔ How do you think volunteering can be positive for your career?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>Q4: Social capital</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How did you get into volunteering?</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ How did you hear of it?</li> <li>- How was it for you to meet other volunteers? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Did you think you would meet people through volunteering before you started?</li> <li>→ Was it a motivation for you? If yes, why?</li> <li>→ Did you keep in touch with any of them? If yes, how often are you in contact? How does this relation benefit or could benefit you?</li> <li>→ How would you define the relationship you have with them?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>Q5: Integration / Citizenship / Political involvement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How did volunteering help you to understand the Dutch culture?</li> <li>- Did volunteering help you to integrate into the Dutch culture? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ If so, could you describe how? In what ways?</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Would you say you feel more at home since you started volunteering? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ How do you think volunteering helped this feeling to grow?</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Would you describe yourself as an engaged citizen? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ For example, do you sign petitions? Go to demonstrations? Go on strike?</li> <li>→ How does volunteering affect this engagement? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>If yes,</b></li> <li>→ Is it also a way for you to get your ideas across?</li> <li>→ Is it a way to engage in civil society even more?</li> <li><b>If no,</b></li> <li>→ Would you like to be more civically/politically engaged in the near future?</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>

### 3.2.5 *Method of analysis*

Describe briefly how you went about identifying the qualitative findings. Did you listen to the interviews and note relevant passages, for example? Give the reader an idea of how you did this.

The qualitative results were taken into account after the quantitative part was finished, the aim being to be able to explain the former by the latter. During the interviews, I already took note of the timing of the interview when a passage seemed interesting. I then listened to all the interviews again and noted the interesting passages. I then grouped the passages that were similar and linked them to my quantitative results, more precisely I tried to understand more precisely what volunteering is about for these immigrants.

## 4. Results

### 4.1 Descriptive statistics

Firstly, to provide some context, The Netherlands is a model country in terms of volunteering: being the second most active country after Norway (12%), the Netherlands is accounting for 11.5% of total volunteering in Europe. Furthermore, the population of this quantitative research is made of a total of 33 396 respondents (interviews were conducted in 2002), after excluding the missing values. It is important to note that when the term 'population' is used, it includes both immigrants and the native born. There are 52,8% of women. The age has a mean of 47 years old. The average education of the respondents is fairly average, i.e. 2.92: between the so-called lower secondary education and upper secondary education. 37,2% of the population has finished high school. On the other hand, the participants show a low political engagement. Indeed, the average is 1.2 on a scale of 3 and 81,1% of the respondents show a low level of political engagement (voting, participating in a protest, signing petitions, etc.). A relatively high proportion of the respondents are not immigrants, i.e. are born in the country of the interview. This is shown by the low Standard Deviation of 0.269. The percentage of respondents who were not born in the country is 7,8%. The volunteering rate is moderate with 16,4% of the population who did volunteer in the last 12 months.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics

	N	Min	Total population			Immigrants		
			Max	Mean	S.D.	N	Mean	S.D.
Education level	33396	1	5	2.92	1.352	2620	3.18	1.412
Age of respondents	33396	14	102	47.85	17.599	2620	47.92	17.395
Gender	33396	1	2	1.53	0.499	2620	1.57	0.495
Political engagement	33396	1	3	1.20	0.433	2620	1.18	0.419
Volunteer in the last 12 months	33396	0	1	0.16	0.37	2620	0.12	0.323
Employment status	33396	1	2	0.55	0.498	2620	0.54	0.498
Born in country	33396	1	2	1.08	0.269	2620	2	0.00

For the immigrant population (people who were not born in the country where the interview was conducted) the statistics are slightly different. A majority of respondents are women

(56.8%). The average age is 47.92 years. 32% of the immigrant respondents have a high level of educational attainment (ISCED 5-6). The employment rate is relatively low with 54.4% of this population holding a paid position. In addition to this, the tendency to volunteer is slightly lower than the overall population, with 11.8% of individuals who were not born in that country engaging in volunteer work in the last 12 months.

#### 4.2 Logistic regression

Before running the logistic regression, I checked the assumptions related to this analysis. First, the independent variables cannot be highly correlated. As Table 2 shows, the variables are highly correlated, as most of the predictors are significant. Occupational status and social capital seem to be negatively correlated; however, it is interesting to take a closer look because -0.8 is not -1, which means that one variable cannot be fully explained by the other. Because of this high multi-collinearity between the predictors, I will run, in addition to the full model including all variables, a separate logistic regression for each independent variable to isolate the effect of other variables and interactions.

Table 2. Correlation between Independent Variables

	N	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Social capital	33 396	1					
2. Gender	33 396	-.024**	1				
3. Employment status	33 396	-.80**	.112**	1			
4. Political engagement	33 396	.118**	-.029**	-.110**	1		
5. Age of respondents	33 396	-.226**	.022	-.408**	-.061**	1	
6. Highest education level	33 396	.095**	-.054**	.306**	.243**	-.273**	1

\*\*p<.001

The second assumption concerns the outliers. As all dependent and independent variables are categorical, there is no need to check for outliers. It can be assumed that respondents cannot submit such a response, moreover, missing values have already been excluded. The third assumption is that the dependent variable is dichotomous which has been respected.

After checking these assumptions, I ran a logistic regression in SPSS. The output of the regression can be found in table 3. The Model 1 illustrates the simple association between the two control variables: education and age. Model 2 shows what happens when we add the moderator on immigration (born in country) and the other 4 independent variables: stable employment, social capital, political engagement and gender. Model 3 demonstrates the significant interaction between immigration status and the four independent variables mentioned above.

The first general results show that in Model 2, the unstandardized Beta weight for the moderator variable immigrant background status ('Born in country'):  $B = .460$ ,  $SE = [.065]$ ,  $Wald = 50,322$ ,  $p < .001$ . More explicitly, findings are found through the odds ratio. About the immigrant background ('born in country'), in the Model 2, there are 58,4% more chances to volunteer if the individual was born in the country (CI = 1.373-1.871). In Model 3, this percentage increases to 71.8% but the range is very high (CI= 0.946-3.118), so it is not possible to state strongly that being born in the country in question improves volunteering attitudes when adding the four interaction effects. Besides, education level also is important in the Model 1, with 35,4% more likely to volunteer if the education level of the individual is high. This percentage decreases in Model 2 and 3 to 21,7%. After that, in model 2 and 3, the control variable age has a small odds ratio interval (1.009-1.013) and the expected B is greater than 1, which means that for each additional year, the chances of volunteering increase by 1,1%.

*Hypothesis 1: Voluntary behaviour is more common among people with stable employment. This relationship applies equally to immigrants.*

The main predictor variables, employment status and immigrant background, were tested a priori to verify there was no violation of the assumption of the linearity of the logit. The two predictor variables, employment status and immigrant background, in the logistic regression analysis were found to contribute to the model. I also tested for the control variables age and education level.



Table 3: Output table logistic regression

Variables	Model 1			Model 2			Model 3		
	B	SE	Exp(B) [95% CI]	B	SE	Exp(B) [95% CI]	B	SE	Exp(B) [95% CI]
Level of education	.303*	.011	1.354 [1.324-1.384]	0.196*	.012	1.217 [1.188-1.246]	.197*	.012	1.217 [1.189-1.247]
Age	.003*	.001	1.003 [1.003-1.002]	.011*	.001	1.011 [1.009-1.013]	.011*	.001	1.011 [1.009-1.013]
Born in country ( <i>Base = Yes</i> )				.460*	.065	1.584 [1.395-1.799]	.541	.304	1.718 [0.946-3.118]
In a paid work ( <i>Base = Yes</i> )				.374*	.036	1.454 [1.353-1.561]	.475*	.134	1.168 [1.070-1.275]
Social Capital				.196*	.011	1.216 [1.190-1.243]	.155*	.045	1.168 [1.070-1.275]
Political Engagement				.969*	.030	2.635 [2.483-2.797]	1.143*	.115	3.136 [2.502-3.931]
Gender				.172*	.031	1.188 [1.118-1.263]	.150	.128	1.162 [.905-1.493]
<i>Interaction immigrant</i>									
Stable Employment*Born in country							-.107	.137	0.898 [0.687-1.175]
Social capital*Born in country							.043	.046	1.044 [0.954-1.142]
Political Engagement*Born in country							-.186	.119	0.830 [0.657-1.048]
Gender*Born in country							.023	.132	1.023 [.790-1.324]
Constant	-2.729	.064	.065	-5.748	.125	.003	-5.826	.306	.003

a Dependent variable = Volunteering in the last 12 months

\* p<0.001

The unstandardized Beta weight for the predictor variable employment status ('In a paid work'):  $B = .374$ ,  $SE = [.036]$ ,  $Wald = 105,437$ ,  $p < .001$ . In Model 3, both predictors (employment status and immigration) have increased slightly but there is no significant increase that seems important to note. In addition to this, the odds ratio shows interesting findings. Indeed, having a paid job increases the propensity to volunteer by 45,4% in model 2. This number falls to 16,8% when adding the interaction effects in Model 3. However, the interaction effect of these two main predictors was found to be non-significant ( $p=0.434$ ). It is therefore not possible to say whether or not being in paid employment and immigration are correlated with volunteering behaviour. As this effect could be constrained by the other variables, I performed an independent logistic regression. The execution of this command, however, remained non-significant.

Thus, the analyses do not suggest that being immigrant influences the effects of employment and volunteering attitudes. Rather, since immigrants are included in the general population, this shows that they follow the patterns of the native population.

### *Qualitative results*

The six people interviewed all have stable jobs and give on average their time to volunteer once a month, for a few hours or a day. Part of the reason they have a job in the Netherlands is that most of them moved to Amsterdam for their work. It could also be assumed, thanks to the literature mentioned above, that volunteering is a career-enhancing activity for them and that it is because of this extracurricular role that they were enabled to be employed.

Benjamin and Leonine both spoke about how volunteering has been beneficial to their careers. Mainly, it has given them confidence in themselves, in their skills and that they are capable of more than they thought:

Benjamin (31, United Kingdom): *The project management side was useful for my career. It helped me growing my confidence. Having to make decisions, dealing with it, going around to fix things. It gave me the belief that I can do things. When I did the first painting job or paving job, I thought I could not make that, but you just jump in in, you just need the confidence to do it actually.*

Leonine (31, Germany): *It taught me how I can work with strangers, in your job you know your colleagues but, in these activities, not always. But also volunteering shows you that you can learn new skills. Sometimes there are things you have never done*

*before and then you think; 'Oh I can do it'. It's nice for your own self-awareness and what you are capable of.*

In the same vein, Mădălina, Peter and Douglas acquired soft skills as a main outcome of volunteering. This development was not planned, and they realised it as the interview progressed. All three described how they were able to learn to deal with different personality types:

Douglas (30, United Kingdom): *I learned a lot of skills like how to interact with others, also how to deal with angry people, so yes how to deal with different types of people and different types of personality. A lot of my soft skills I definitely learned through volunteering, and I need them for my job. (...) Also, public speaking is a skill I could learn through volunteering. (...) So, I feel like it was a really good opportunity to grow for myself, which benefits me in my job now.*

Marie (32, France) [translated from French]: *I learned how to interact with others: as my company is a big company, and under stress or whatever, you may not react well. But you have to remember that we all do our best and this ability to communicate, I think I also acquired it through volunteering.*

Peter (35, India): *I learned how to deal with different people because you have volunteers that come with different motivations (...). And I think that skill is fundamental if you want to have leadership or when you have a lot of people reporting to you. It's understanding different temperaments and then being able to decide what is best for each person. And then aligning them with the common goal. And that's exactly what Serve the City does. (...) That way of how to get someone to do something that they are not really sure about doing. So, a lot of these soft skills that you use as a leader in an organization can be built in a social context.*

On the one hand, the volunteers gained self-confidence and it has been shown that self-confidence is a strong driver in finding a job (Luthans & Youssef, 2004; Carlier et al., 2014). On the other hand, they were able to learn new soft skills such as managing a group, public speaking, getting out of their comfort zone, and communicating with different types of people. Several research studies have shown that communication skills are the most sought after (Thompson, et al., 2012; Sameen & Cornelius, 2013). In addition, soft skills are essential for getting a job (Andrews & Higson, 2008; Deming, 2017). Marie, for example, explains that in

her job she also needs to be able to coordinate projects and different people, so volunteering has been helpful in this sense.

Hypothesis 2: *Volunteering is correlated with high social capital; the strength of this relationship is stronger among immigrants than natives.*

The two predictor variables, social capital and immigrant origin, in the logistic regression analysis were found to contribute to the model. In Model 2, the unstandardized Beta weight for the predictor variable social capital ('Frequency of meeting with friends, family or colleagues'):  $B = .196$ ,  $SE = [.011]$ ,  $Wald = 307,069$ ,  $p < .001$ . In Model 3, the unstandardized Beta weight for the interaction variable (immigrant status and social capital):  $B = .043$ ,  $SE = [.046]$ ,  $Wald = 0.873$ ,  $p > .05$ . The interaction effect between being born in another country and social capital is not significant. It is therefore not possible to confirm the second hypothesis. However, the odds ratio explains the influence of social capital on volunteering attitudes more broadly. In model 2, social capital increases volunteering by 21.6%. This percentage drops to 16.8% when interaction effects are added in model 3. When the isolated logistic regression is performed, it is found to be insignificant for the interaction effect of social capital and immigrant status.

Again, the immigration population does not differ in their volunteering behaviour from the general population at least in terms of social capital effects.

### *Qualitative results*

The qualitative analyses confirm the importance of social capital, within volunteering but also for immigrants in general. This socializing aspect of volunteering is important for the participants, but it was generally not their primary motivation, except for Mădălina. It should be noted that this is contrary to the literature mentioned above. However, they all enjoyed their volunteering experience because it was shared with people. These internationals mention that the mutual and international aspect was an asset that should not be neglected. All the volunteers stressed how these encounters make volunteering more enjoyable. In particular, the diversity of the volunteers was highlighted as a source of enrichment:

Benjamin (31, United Kingdom): *I found that over the years that by doing I forget about any concerns, I'm helping other people, I'm having a laugh with other people, meeting people, talking about who they are, what they are sharing, sharing knowledge, making friends out of it. (...) They [the other volunteers] opened my eyes to more cultures, to*

*understanding. (...) It stimulates my curiosity. These people they give me a window into their world.*

Leonine (29, Germany): *You always got something out of it, like interesting conversation about their backgrounds. It's really nice to get inspired by other people stories, from people that are different from me.*

Additionally, it is also interesting to learn how they started volunteering. Some did it through a friend or colleague, others simply looked it up on the internet, or through social media. Here are some relevant cases involving social capital:

Leonine (29, Germany): *Through a friend that was actually once sharing something on social media (Blue Monday Baking Action), so I learned about Serve the City and I came to volunteer. And I think it's really nice if you know people who inspire you to engage yourself as volunteer, and this can happen online or offline. (...) I think it even works better if you know that person, so you're like "ok that's an organization you can trust".*

Douglas (30, United Kingdom): *Colleagues of mine knew about Serve the City through their church, they are also internationals and they started volunteering as a way of getting to meet new people and make friends. And they had this project close to where I live and they invited me! (...) What motivated the first time is that I kind of had someone to go with, I wasn't doing it by myself.*

It can be further noted that nowadays social media plays a crucial role in volunteering. For example, Mădălina has recruited many volunteers through social networks, while Leonine hopes to inspire other people by volunteering herself and sharing about it.

Furthermore, not all the interviewees have established specific links with other volunteers. This may be mainly because some of these people have not been volunteering for a long time. And because of the COVID-19 pandemic, which caused a break in volunteering habits, especially made it difficult to socialize outside activities. However, volunteering remains a way to meet new people and make strong friendships:

Douglas (30, United Kingdom): *I'm still friends with some of them [the volunteers]. We also see each other outside volunteering. You kind of naturally click with people because of common values, which I guess is easy to take for granted when you have the same heart to be involved in something to make a difference, you just gravitate toward one another.*

Mădălina (29, Romania): *It's a good opportunity as a foreigner in a country to meet like-minded people and create connections; It was definitely one of my motivations to start volunteering.*

Peter (35, India): *Meeting people was a reason to volunteer but I have also realised it is natural.*

Leonine (29, Germany): *I know now that if I had to move to a new town, I would meet people through sport and also volunteering for sure.*

The last component of social capital is the belonging feeling. Both Peter and Mădălina stressed the strong positive community feeling they get out of volunteering:

Peter (35, India): *I know more about the Dutch culture, like the structure, how Dutch are organized, I feel more part of the community, and that makes me feel home.*

Mădălina (29, Romania): *I think we all need that feeling to belong to something and I think that's one of the ways to satisfy that need to be part of something.*

This suggests that volunteering can be a way to gain a sense of community, this is also consistent with theories. Immigrants who enjoy such a sense of community have better mental health and are more positive (Salami et al., 2019; Salami et al., 2017). As Carpiano and Hystad (2011) have also shown, a sense of belonging is also a factor in improving immigrants' social capital.

In general, the interviews relate to the theory of social capital. All this shows that humans are fundamentally social beings. Both the means of volunteering and the encounters made on the spot: social capital plays an important role in volunteering.

*Hypothesis 3: Individuals involved in political life tend also to be volunteers; this relationship applies equally to natives and immigrants.*

Political implication and immigrant background are contributors to the logistic regression. In Model 2, the unstandardized Beta weight for the predictor variable political engagement:  $B = .969$ ,  $SE = [.030]$ ,  $Wald = 1016.721$ ,  $p < .001$ . The odds ratio is high, which means that political involvement increases the level of volunteering. Specifically, there is a 163.5% higher chance of volunteering if one is politically active. In model 3, the odds ratio increases even more, but the range is wide (CI 2.502-3.931) and it is, therefore, difficult to draw conclusions. On the other hand, the interaction effect between political commitment and being born in the country

where the participant lives are found to contribute to the model. The unstandardized beta weight for the predictor variable of political commitment:  $B = -.186$ ,  $SE = [.119]$ ,  $Wald = 2.447$ ,  $p > .05$ . The interaction effect is therefore insignificant given its high p-value. It is not possible to confirm hypothesis three. I then ran a logistic regression only with the engagement and migration variable. However, the P-value is higher than the well-known confidence interval of 0.05. It is therefore not possible to say that these two variables are related. Thus, people with an immigrant background do not differ from the general population in terms of political engagement linked to voluntary behaviour.

### *Qualitative results*

Although the results do not allow us to see differences between immigrants and the general population, the interviews shed light on how civic engagement is related to volunteering for immigrants. At first sight, none of the volunteers stated categorically that they were engaged, probably because it is a broad term open to different interpretations. However, as the discussion went on, I realised that some of them had some forms of commitment, for example in their business, by donating money to some organisation or in their daily habits. Most of them are particularly sensitive to the environment and would be willing to take more action to protect the planet:

*Leonine (29, Germany): I think it's all related how do we actually want our planet to be and how do we want our society to be. For me, an ideal society would be one that takes care of our planet, that really thinks that everything we do have an impact on the nature and that we should treat it with respect but also the society, like others that don't have the same chances. (...) I think somehow, every person on this planet is responsible for the entire planet and for our society, by engaging into volunteering work but also environmentally work.*

According to them, their civic commitment is through volunteering. By getting involved and mobilising more people around them, these volunteers consider that they already have a civic commitment. However, again, they would not mind being more involved in more politically oriented activities:

*Benjamin (31, United Kingdom): I want to be more engaged. I don't think that protesting is always the best option. I think doing, doing activities, small things can be more efficient. I have signed petitions and I want to go to protest but I need time to invest in that.*

Peter (35, India): *It has helped me to engage more as a citizen because you know you are doing work for the city in a way, for the city you live in and make it a better place. (...) And being able to help on that it's nice.*

*What I mean by being more engage politically is that how do we make sure that people that run our city, our country, have accessed to information that can better their decision. (...) So, they should volunteer as well!*

These interviews show the diversity of volunteering, if these people were part of a more ideologically influential organisation one might suspect greater civic engagement. In this case these people were not particularly involved, or at least they did not mention it. However, none of them was against the idea of being more involved. So, all in all, they are probably persons with a positive propensity to get involved in organisations.

*Hypothesis 4: Men volunteer more than women; this relationship is reinforced among immigrants.*

The gender variable was found to contribute to the model. In Model 2, the unstandardized Beta weight for the predictor variable political engagement:  $B = .172$ ,  $SE = [.031]$ ,  $Wald = 30.604$ ,  $p < .001$ . According to the odds ratio, volunteering increases by 18,8% when being a woman.

Nevertheless, when adding the interaction effects in Model 3, gender is non-significant. Besides the interaction effect of immigrant status and gender is found to be non-significant ( $p > 0.05$ ). The interaction is also non-significant when the predictors are isolated from the other predictors. Hypothesis four cannot be confirmed. Thus, the results for immigrants do not differ from the general population. It is likely that immigrant women are more numerous in volunteering than immigrant men. This is contrary to the hypothesis formulated.

#### *Qualitative results*

Of the six interviews, three are women and three are men. From this small sample, it is difficult to say whether there are gender differences in volunteering. However, Leonine, Benjamin and Douglas expressed preferences for social projects. This type of project is usually more attractive to women, but here it appears that men were particularly inclined to participate in social projects. In addition, volunteering is a way for them to "balance their karma" as their work is more profit-oriented and they do not find it meaningful. Participating in social projects from time to time helps them to feel better, useful and have a positive impact.



Leonine (29, Germany): *I have been working with big companies, and even good causes but even there I was always wondering what I'm doing here? I'm just here to help companies to grow and earn more money? And some things I was a bit critical about how they were doing stuffs, so I thought I really want to invest my time in things I'm really convinced off and being like yes I really want to contribute and have a positive impact to this world.*

In addition, Benjamin also shared an interesting testimony. He was asked to undertake a lot of manual work, which is not necessarily what he would have chosen:

Benjamin: *I mostly ended doing the gardening or painting work. It's not the thing I like the most but I am the one that does it most of the time. I taught quite a bit of the voluntary people how to paint properly, it's quite funny. It gets frustrating at time, I would not mind doing other things.*

As seen in the theory, gender differences are also reflected in volunteering, especially in the activities performed. However, from these six interviews, volunteers seem to do a bit of everything. Since Benjamin was particularly asked to do these tasks, one might wonder whether this is a coincidence or a source of institutional sexism.

Given the inconclusive quantitative results (this may be due to a very large database), I also ran a multilinear regression. This analysis reflects the general results found, i.e. for each year taken an individual is more likely to volunteer. Gender and volunteering are negatively correlated, meaning that when people volunteer, they are more likely to be male. Secondly, more political involvement leads to more volunteering. An increase in social capital is linked to an increase in volunteer work. On the other hand, having a paid job also enhances the chances of being willing to volunteer. Finally, being born in the country where the interview was conducted also raises the likelihood of engaging in volunteering.

To compare the general population (i.e. including immigrants) with the immigrant population only, I also ran a regression only on this population. It appears that the effects observed on the general population also apply to the immigrant population. Only gender and age did not show significant results. According to these results, there are no differences in the drivers of volunteering between the general population and the immigrant population.

The results show that the behaviour of immigrants tends to be in line with that of the general population. The qualitative results support these figures. In particular, social capital is widely mentioned by respondents. Soft skills acquired through volunteering are also important for some of them.

In addition, during the interviews, the volunteers largely mentioned the personal benefits of volunteering. These benefits are not significant in relation to the hypotheses put forward, but they are not negligible in the overall understanding of volunteering attitudes.

## **5. Conclusion, Discussion and Policy Recommendation**

### *5.1 Conclusion and discussion*

First, it appears from these results that individuals are 58.4% more likely to engage in volunteering if the individual was born in the country where the survey was conducted. Furthermore, among the general population, the educational level is also relevant with a 35.4% more probability of volunteering if the individual's education level is high. Subsequently, age also shows to be a major element in volunteering, as for each additional year, the chances of volunteering rise by 1.1%, still in the general population. Overall, the interactions are insignificant, but this does not specifically mean that there is no effect. Indeed, immigrants reflect their volunteering behaviour in the general population itself, they align themselves with the host country. Some precisions could be added.

Furthermore, employment increases the propensity to volunteer by 45.4%. These results support the idea that paid employment increasing volunteering is not influenced by immigrant background. Immigrants are therefore aligned with the general population. The link between paid employment and volunteering could be explained by the qualitative results. These show that volunteering strongly improves self-confidence and learning of soft skills. Previous research has shown that learning through volunteering is an effective way to acquire these valuable career skills (Anheier, Dekker, & Halman, 2003), with the end result being a greater chance of finding a job. On this point, the quantitative data lacks detailed questions. It would be interesting to have more information on this learning of skills through volunteering among immigrants.

Besides, high social capital has been shown to significantly increase volunteering. However, our analysis involving immigrants was not significant. More precisely, the immigrant population does not show a different relationship to the general population in terms of social capital and propensity to volunteer. More precise analyses should be conducted to clarify this point, but it is possible to deduce that with higher social capital, immigrants do the same percentages of volunteer work. This indicates that their social capital is probably more qualitative or in other words, offers more opportunities. A study dedicated to this point would be relevant. Furthermore, the qualitative results show the importance of social contact during a volunteering activity - the enrichment of encounters, the building of links and the feeling of belonging to a community were noted by the participants.

Second, volunteering in the general population is significantly higher if one is politically active. However, this can be attributed to some of the questions asked to respondents about volunteering. Indeed, it was specifically asked if people are active in a political party or political activity as a volunteer, this work could be considered for some as political engagement and not as volunteering. Nevertheless, the qualitative results do not show a strong link with any civic engagement. Although the respondents show a positive attitude towards more involvement in civil society. This may be due to a lack of opportunities in English to become more involved.

Finally, as for gender, it appears to be an important component of volunteering. According to the results, volunteering increases by 18.8% when you are a woman. This is inversely what was expected. A difference between with expectations could be attributable to informal volunteering carried out by women (as opposed to formal, organised volunteering). However, the results concerning the interaction between gender and immigration were not significant. It is not possible to demonstrate that women with an immigrant background would volunteer more than their male counterparts. Rather, again, immigrants follow the same pattern as the general population. So, if further research were to prove that female immigrants do volunteer more it could be explained that women immigrate for their partner, depriving them of a job and making it harder to build a network from scratch (Boyle et al., 2009). Volunteering can solve this problem and could also help them to acquire skills.

For future research several aspects could be analysed. Firstly, looking at social networks could be interesting, as the database used in this thesis dates back to 2002, and this factor could not be taken into account. It would be interesting to see more closely what role social networks play in encouraging volunteering. And how the use of modern technologies can strengthen the incentive to volunteer. The qualitative interviews also highlighted the importance of social media. In addition, more specific studies on Amsterdam might also be relevant, as this city seems to be particularly welcoming to internationals. In general, volunteering is a local and situation-specific event, so research in specific cities may also be relevant. Furthermore, it might be relevant to analyse from which countries the volunteer immigrants come and how long they have been in the Netherlands.

One problem with the research conducted here is the age of the respondents. All respondents were 30 years old, which was not expected, but turned out to be the case, perhaps a more diverse age range would provide more varied answers, and therefore more indicative of reality.

## *5.2 Policy Recommendations*

The quantitative and qualitative analyses show that volunteering attitudes are still marginal and that only a certain type of people take part. These are mainly people from the country in question, older people and people with a stable jobs (with paid work). It would therefore be interesting to promote volunteering outside this category of people to widen the audience. I would advise that this promotion should be directed towards internationals, with an emphasis on skills acquisition, as this is one of the main unintended outcomes of those involved. This can be promoted as free training that would be beneficial for their career. Or volunteering as a way to improve oneself, one's self-confidence, one's non-technical performance and a first introduction to multicultural communication (in the case of *Serve the City*). In addition, depending on the type of activity, people may acquire some more technical skills that could be useful for their personal lives. These could also be highlighted, although they would probably have less impact.

Furthermore, from two interviews, it was strongly suggested and argued that politicians should be involved in volunteering. In particular social volunteering, so that they can better understand who social policy would contribute to. It is also a great way for them to advertise and be seen to be closer to the people. I would recommend inviting local politicians in a very proactive way, explaining how their participation would benefit both sides.

Finally, as a third recommendation, I would suggest that *Serve the City* improves its sense of community. Concretely, this could be done through more informal meetings with the organisers as well as more meetings between volunteers, which would allow for stronger bonds between people. Social gatherings are already in place but extraordinarily, I would suggest that they should be more regular (before and after each project, also for those taking place every week).

As a final conclusion to this thesis, increasing the sense of belonging among immigrants has shown many positive outcomes, including better mental health, greater social capital, a positive attitude towards the host society, etc. Salami et al (2019) suggested strengthening local diversity programmes. As *Serve the City* works at the local level and is internationally oriented, the service it offers meets this objective. In addition to this, they suggest supporting participation and social engagement, both of which *Serve the City* aims to achieve. Therefore, this organisation should be better supported for the societal needs it fulfils.



## 6. References

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## 7. Appendices

### 7.1 SPSS Syntax

\* Encoding: UTF-8.

\*Recode missing values into SYSMIS.

RECODE sptcvw cltovw prfovw cnsovw hmnovw setovw setovw epaovw rlgovw prtyvw othvvw (6 thru hi=SYSMIS).

RECODE vote (3 thru hi = SYSMIS).

RECODE contplt wrkprty wrkorg badge sgnptit pblldmn bctprd bghtprd dntmny ilglpst vote(6 thru 9=SYSMIS).

RECODE empl (7, 8, 9=SYSMIS).

RECODE gndr (9=SYSMIS).

RECODE gndr (1=0) (2=1).

RECODE edulvla (55 thru hi=SYSMIS).

RECODE brncntr (7, 8, 9 = SYSMIS).

RECODE agea (999=SYSMIS).

RECODE livecntr (7, 8, 9=SYSMIS).

RECODE edulvla (6 thru 9=SYSMIS).

RECODE sclmeet (77, 88, 99 =SYSMIS).

EXECUTE.

\*Measuring Political engagement.

RECODE contplt wrkprty wrkorg badge sgnptit pblldmn bctprd bghtprd dntmny ilglpst vote (2=0) (1=1).

COMPUTE PoliEng=contplt +wrkprty +wrkorg +badge +sgnptit +pblldmn +bctprd +bghtprd +dntmny +ilglpst +vote.

RECODE PoliEng (4 thru 7=2) (0 thru 3=1) (8 thru 11=3).

Frequencies PoliEng.

\*Measuring being a volunteer in the last 12 months.

COMPUTE Beingvolunteertotal=sptcvw + cltovw + truvw + prfovw + cnsovw + hmnovw + setovw + epaovw + rlgovw + prtyvw + othvvw .

EXECUTE.

RECODE Beingvolunteertotal (0=0) (1 thru 11=1).

EXECUTE.

\*Recode employment variable to have dummies variable.



RECODE empl (3=0) (1 thru 2=1).

EXECUTE.

DESCRIPTIVES VARIABLES=edulvla agea PoliEng Beingvolunteertotal gndr empl brncnr livecncr

/STATISTICS=MEAN STDDEV MIN MAX.

\*Excluding missing values.

DATASET ACTIVATE DataSet3.

DATASET COPY ESSnomissingsmallerthanone.

DATASET ACTIVATE ESSnomissingsmallerthanone.

FILTER OFF.

USE ALL.

SELECT IF (NMISS(Beingvolunteertotal, gndr, brncnr, agea, edulvla, empl, PoliEng, sclmeet) < 1).

EXECUTE.

\*Description of the sample.

DESCRIPTIVES VARIABLES=edulvla agea PoliEng Beingvolunteertotal gndr empl brncnr

/STATISTICS=MEAN STDDEV MIN MAX.

FREQUENCIES VARIABLES=Beingvolunteertotal, gndr, brncnr, agea, edulvla, empl, PoliEng, sclmeet

/STATISTICS=STDDEV MEAN MODE

/ORDER=ANALYSIS.

MEANS TABLES=Beingvolunteertotal BY cncry

/CELLS=MEAN COUNT STDDEV SPCT.

\*Filter to make descriptive of the immigrantpopulation.

USE ALL.

COMPUTE filter\_\$(brncnr = 2).

VARIABLE LABELS filter\_\$(brncnr = 2 (FILTER)).

VALUE LABELS filter\_\$(0 'Not Selected' 1 'Selected').

FORMATS filter\_\$(f1.0).

FILTER BY filter\_\$(.

EXECUTE.

FREQUENCIES VARIABLES=Beingvolunteertotal, gndr, brncnr, agea, edulvla, empl, PoliEng, sclmeet

/STATISTICS=STDDEV MEAN MODE

/ORDER=ANALYSIS.

\*CHECKING ASSUMPTIONS FOR LOGISTIC BINARY REGRESSION.

\* 1) Independent variables are not highly correlated.

CORRELATIONS

/VARIABLES=sclmeet gndr empl PoliEng Agea edulvla

/PRINT=TWOTAIL NOSIG FULL

/MISSING=PAIRWISE.

\*Interaction to check for multicollinearity.

COMPUTE INbrncntrgndr=brncntr\*gndr.

COMPUTE INbrncntrempl=brncntr\*empl.

COMPUTE INbrncntrsclmeet=brncntr\*sclmeet.

COMPUTE INbrncntrPoliEng=brncntr\*PoliEng.

COMPUTE INbrncntredulvla=brncntr\*edulvla.

COMPUTE INbrncntragea=brncntr\*agea.

EXECUTE.

REGRESSION

/MISSING LISTWISE

/STATISTICS COEFF OUTS R ANOVA COLLIN TOL

/CRITERIA=PIN(.05) POUT(.10)

/NOORIGIN

/DEPENDENT Beingvolunteertotal

/METHOD=ENTER empl gndr edulvla agea PoliEng sclmeet INbrncntrgndr INbrncntrempl  
INbrncntrsclmeet

INbrncntrPoliEng INbrncntredulvla INbrncntragea.

DESCRIPTIVES VARIABLES=PoliEng sclmeet agea edulvla

/SAVE

/STATISTICS=MEAN STDDEV MIN MAX.

\*Creation standardized variables to reduce multicollinearity.

COMPUTE ZINbrncntrsclmeet=brncntr\*Zsclmeet.

COMPUTE ZINbrncntrPoliEng=brncntr\*ZPoliEng.

COMPUTE ZINbrncntredulvla=brncntr\*Zedulvla.

COMPUTE ZINbrncntragea=brncntr\*Zagea.

EXECUTE.

REGRESSION

/MISSING LISTWISE

/STATISTICS COEFF OUTS R ANOVA COLLIN TOL

/CRITERIA=PIN(.05) POUT(.10)

/NOORIGIN

/DEPENDENT Beingvolunteertotal

/METHOD=ENTER empl gndr Zedulvla Zagea ZPoliEng Zsclmeet INbrncntrgndr INbrncntreempl  
ZINbrncntrsclmeet

ZINbrncntrPoliEng ZINbrncntredulvla ZINbrncntragea.

\* 2) Checking for outliers. But because my variables are all dummies, there is no chance for individuals to be outliers.

\*No need to check as there is no outliers possible (only categorical variables).

\*RUNNING LOGISTIC REGRESSION (binary logistic regression bc DV = dichotomic).

LOGISTIC REGRESSION VARIABLES Beingvolunteertotal

/METHOD=ENTER edulvla agea

/METHOD=ENTER brncntr empl sclmeet PoliEng gndr

/METHOD=ENTER empl\*brncntr sclmeet\*brncntr PoliEng\*brncntr gndr\*brncntr

/CONTRAST (gndr)=Indicator

/CONTRAST (brncntr)=Indicator

/PRINT=Goodfit CI(95)

/CRITERIA=PIN(.05) POUT(.10) ITERATE(20) CUT(.5).

\*Need to check logistic regression independently.

\*HYPO 1.

LOGISTIC REGRESSION VARIABLES Beingvolunteertotal

/METHOD=ENTER edulvla agea

/METHOD=ENTER brncntr empl

/METHOD=ENTER empl\*brncntr

/CONTRAST (brncntr)=Indicator

/PRINT=Goodfit CI(95)

/CRITERIA=PIN(.05) POUT(.10) ITERATE(20) CUT(.5).

\*HYPO 2.

LOGISTIC REGRESSION VARIABLES Beingvolunteertotal

/METHOD=ENTER edulvla agea

/METHOD=ENTER brncntr sclmeet

```
/METHOD=ENTER sclmeet*brncntr
/CONTRAST (brncntr)=Indicator
/PRINT=Goodfit CI(95)
/CRITERIA=PIN(.05) POUT(.10) ITERATE(20) CUT(.5).
```

\*HYPO 3.

LOGISTIC REGRESSION VARIABLES Beingvolunteertotal

```
/METHOD=ENTER edulvla agea
/METHOD=ENTER brncntr PoliEng
/METHOD=ENTER PoliEng*brncntr
/CONTRAST (brncntr)=Indicator
/PRINT=Goodfit CI(95)
/CRITERIA=PIN(.05) POUT(.10) ITERATE(20) CUT(.5).
```

\*HYPO 4.

LOGISTIC REGRESSION VARIABLES Beingvolunteertotal

```
/METHOD=ENTER edulvla agea
/METHOD=ENTER brncntr gndr
/METHOD=ENTER gndr*brncntr
/CONTRAST (brncntr)=Indicator
/PRINT=Goodfit CI(95)
/CRITERIA=PIN(.05) POUT(.10) ITERATE(20) CUT(.5).
```

REGRESSION

```
/MISSING LISTWISE
/STATISTICS COEFF OUTS R ANOVA CHANGE
/CRITERIA=PIN(.05) POUT(.10)
/NOORIGIN
/DEPENDENT Beingvolunteertotal
/METHOD=ENTER gndr edulvla agea PoliEng sclmeet empl brncntr.
```

USE ALL.

```
COMPUTE filter_$=(brncntr = 2).
```

```
VARIABLE LABELS filter_$ 'brncntr = 1 (FILTER)'.

```

```
VALUE LABELS filter_$ 0 'Not Selected' 1 'Selected'.

```

```
FORMATS filter_$ (f1.0).
```

FILTER BY filter\_\$.

EXECUTE.

REGRESSION

/MISSING LISTWISE

/STATISTICS COEFF OUTS R ANOVA CHANGE

/CRITERIA=PIN(.05) POUT(.10)

/NOORIGIN

/DEPENDENT Beingvolunteertotal

/METHOD=ENTER gndr edulvla agea PoliEng sclmeet empl.

## *7.2 Information letter for interview participants*

### *Volunteering as a means of socialization, integration, and personal enrichment for immigrants: The case of The Netherlands.*

17<sup>th</sup> May, Utrecht

Dear participant,

By means of this letter, I would like to invite you to participate in the research project about the meaning of volunteering and underlined motivations. The purpose of this study is to understand better how immigrants start volunteering and why they engage in such activities.

#### ***Research design***

The research uses a mixed method which means that the first part of the study was quantitative, using a data set, and second part explores the results of the analyses by conducting in depth interviews.

#### ***Expectations of participants***

I do not expect a lot from you except willingness to answer the question and to be open to share your views and experience on the matter.

#### ***Confidentiality of data processing***

This study requires me to collect some of your personal data. I need this data in order to be able to answer the research question properly (age, gender, employment status, etc.). This personal data will be stored on my personal computer for the time of the study but will be deleted after the study. If you have any problems with this, please do not hesitate to contact me.

#### ***Independent contact and complaints officer***

If you have any questions or comments about the study, please contact Lucas Drouhot [l.g.m.drouhot@uu.nl](mailto:l.g.m.drouhot@uu.nl). If you have an official complaint about the study, you can send an email to the complaints officer at [klachtenfunctionaris-fetcsocwet@uu.nl](mailto:klachtenfunctionaris-fetcsocwet@uu.nl).

If, after reading this information letter, you decide to take part in the research, I would kindly ask you to sign the attached consent form and send it to me.

Kind regards,

Fanny Fontaine

### 7.3 Ethical approval: qualitative research

<b>P.O. Box 80140, 3508 TC Utrecht</b> The Board of the Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences Utrecht University P.O. Box 80.140 3508 TC Utrecht	<b>Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences</b> Faculty Support Office Ethics Committee <b>Visiting Address</b> Padualaan 14 3584 CH Utrecht
<b>Our Description</b> 22-1626 <b>Telephone</b> 030 253 46 33 <b>E-mail</b> FETC-fsw@uu.nl <b>Date</b> 18 May 2022 <b>Subject</b> Ethical approval	

#### ETHICAL APPROVAL

Study: Volunteering as a means of socialization, integration, and personal enrichment for immigrants: the case of The Netherlands

Principal investigator: F.P.V. Fontaine

Supervisor: Lucas Drouhot

The study is approved by the Ethical Review Board of the Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences of Utrecht University. The approval is based on the documents sent by the researchers as requested in the form of the Ethics committee and filed under number 22-1626. The approval is valid through 24 June 2022. The approval of the Ethical Review Board concerns ethical aspects, as well as data management and privacy issues (including the GDPR). It should be noticed that any changes in the research design oblige a renewed review by the Ethical Review Board.

Yours sincerely,

Peter van der Heijden, Ph.D.  
Chair

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#### 7.4 Ethical approval: quantitative research

<b>P.O. Box 80140, 3508 TC Utrecht</b> The Board of the Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences Utrecht University P.O. Box 80.140 3508 TC Utrecht	<b>Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences</b> Faculty Support Office Ethics Committee <b>Visiting Address</b> Padualaan 14 3584 CH Utrecht
<b>Our Description</b> 22-1716 <b>Telephone</b> 030 253 46 33 <b>E-mail</b> FETC-fsw@uu.nl <b>Date</b> 15 June 2022 <b>Subject</b> Ethical approval	

#### ETHICAL APPROVAL

Study: Volunteering as a means of socialization, integration, and personal enrichment for immigrants.

Principal investigator: F.P.V. Fontaine

Supervisor: Lucas Drouhot

The study is approved by the Ethical Review Board of the Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences of Utrecht University. The approval is based on the documents sent by the researchers as requested in the form of the Ethics committee and filed under number 22-1716. The approval is valid through 24 June 2022. The approval of the Ethical Review Board concerns ethical aspects, as well as data management and privacy issues (including the GDPR). It should be noticed that any changes in the research design oblige a renewed review by the Ethical Review Board.

Yours sincerely,

Peter van der Heijden, Ph.D.  
Chair

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