



**Bringing Immigrant Voices into
Integration Discourse
Experiences of Polish Greenhouse Workers
in the Netherlands**

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Michelle Munteanu

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Members of the Examining Committee:

Karin Astrid Siegmann

Mahmood Messkoub

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Inquiries:

Postal address:

Institute of Social Studies
P.O. Box 29776
2502 LT The Hague
The Netherlands

Location:

Kortenaerkade 12
2518 AX The Hague
The Netherlands

Telephone: +31 70 426 0460

Fax: +31 70 426 0799

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Abstract

In the Netherlands, the government utilizes the labour market position of migrants to determine their degree of integration. Migrants in the low-end sector of the labour market are therefore judged as unsuccessfully integrating, despite the fact that this approach overlooks the structural constraints that migrants face.

This research aims to challenge the dominant integration discourse by examining the links between employment conditions and integration processes of migrant workers. Analysing the narratives of Polish greenhouse workers in The Hague/Westland region, this research tries to critically look at the precarious working conditions migrants face under a neoliberal regime and reflect on the effect this has on their integration processes. The migrant workers emerge as complex subjects whose integration cannot simply be measured in terms of their position in the labour market without considering the wider structural context they are embedded in.

Relevance to Development Studies

This research takes heed of the profound population transformations that industrialised nations are undergoing because of increased migration flows. Embedded within the context of contemporary globalisation and neoliberalism, migrants are often channelled into lower segments of the labour market and experience precarious work. By critically analysing the effect these precarious conditions have on migrant integration processes, this project supports the idea of a more equitable society where migrants are granted equal rights. Therefore, this research is relevant to development studies because it advocates for the use of social policies as a force of progressive transformation that tackle the range of accumulated disadvantages from which many migrants suffer and aims to change the practices of the receiving society that act as barriers to full participation.

Keywords

Integration, migration, greenhouse workers, EU migration, Polish migrants, The Netherlands, The Hague, Westland region, precarious work, neoliberal governance

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Table 1: Interview participants and survey results

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List of Acronyms

CAO	Collectieve Arbeids Overeenkomst (Collective Labour Agreement)
CBS	Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek (Central Agency for Statistics)
EU	European Union
ILO	International Labour Organization
NL	The Netherlands
SCP	Sociaal en Cultureel Planbureau (The Netherlands Institute for Social Research)
SER	Sociaal-Economische Raad (Social and Economic Council)
SZW	Sociale Zaken en Werkgelegenheid (Social Affairs and Employment)
TNC	Transnational corporation
US	United States

1 Introduction

In immigration discourse, the term ‘integration’ is commonly used to refer to the desirable way by which newcomers should become members of the host society. In Dutch civic integration policy, integration is a multi-dimensional concept combining socioeconomic and cultural factors, which are monitored and measured using empirical analyses based on demographic data and surveys (Bijl and Verweij 2012; Goodman 2010). A ‘successfully’ integrated migrant in the Netherlands generally refers to a migrant who is familiar with Dutch values and norms, has a good command of the Dutch language and is similar to the average native Dutch in terms of labour market position and education level (Government of the Netherlands 2015a). The idea is that the more successfully integrated the migrant is, the better the migrant functions within Dutch society.

Current policies place a heavy emphasis on labour market position as a key indicator for integration and claim that migrants are responsible for their own integration (Bijl and Verweij 2012; Vasta 2007). This is especially interesting given the context of Dutch policies concerning EU migrants. While EU migrants are not obligated by law to integrate, their lives are still affected by integration discourse as they face pressure to learn the Dutch language and their integration efforts are carefully monitored and measured by the government. Moreover, the steadily increasing numbers of EU migrants have prompted the Dutch government to tighten up the rules on foreign workers from Europe (Government of the Netherlands 2015b). Despite having EU citizenship, which grants migrants the ability to move and reside freely within the EU, Dutch policies mandate that migrants without employment should go home (Government of the Netherlands 2015b).

Such a stance tends to overlook the structural problems and employment conditions that these migrants face, especially in low wage sectors. The problems and the ways migrants participate in the labour market and integrate greatly depend on their specific local context, and while labour market participation is used as a gauge of integration, the actual conditions of employment do not matter. Furthermore, the government’s predominant reliance on empirical data to measure integration neglects migrants’ actual perspectives and experiences of their own integration processes. There is a need to incorporate migrant voices to assess the barriers and challenges they face, to better understand the experiences of these populations and to formulate effective policy that helps them achieve integration.

This research examines the links between employment conditions and integration processes of migrant workers. Specifically, it focuses on the voices and experiences of a group of EU migrant workers in the Netherlands and explores how their working conditions translate into their daily life in Dutch society. This project is also being done in collaboration with the Municipality of The Hague in order to inform their policy-making decisions on the integration of migrant workers. Based on a review of government sources and academic literature, this research generates and analyses primary data from in-depth individual interviews with migrant workers.

1.1 Research question and objectives

The central research question is: *What role do employment conditions have for the integration of migrant workers in the Netherlands?* The term ‘employment conditions’ includes the situation of the working environment, the contractual relationship with the employer and the weak bargaining positions of the migrants. Specific objectives include increasing knowledge of immigrants’ needs, experiences and aspirations based on migrants’ own voices, and of integration and policy impacts, as well as finding links between employment conditions and integration processes.

1.2 Structure of the research paper

This paper is divided into 6 chapters. Chapter 2 provides relevant background information on the research topic to better situate the reader. Chapter 3 goes on to discuss the main theoretical underpinnings of this research. By critically exploring an overarching framework to better understand the wider context of migrant employment and labour market conditions as well as integration processes, this chapter serves as the foundation for the analysis of primary data results in chapter 5. Chapter 4 explains the methodology of the research, including the selection of the target location, population and sector as well as the appropriate data generation techniques. The chapter also discusses the process of analysing the results and my own reflections. Chapter 5 addresses the main objectives of the research by engaging with the narratives of respondents and analysing the results. The paper concludes with a summary of the analysis and a recommendation for future integration policies for migrant workers in the Netherlands.

2 Background

The following section will provide a background to justify the focus of this research, starting with an overview of the typical employment conditions of migrant workers and the reasons behind them, a conceptualization of the term ‘integration’ in academic discourse followed by a review of Dutch immigrant integration policies and closing with the analysis that there are gaps in measuring integration in the current Dutch integration attitude towards migrants.

2.1 Typical employment conditions of migrant workers

In general, migrants must deal with many structural barriers in the labour market that affect their processes of finding employment in their new society. Indeed, migrants with the same characteristics as natives have less chance of finding (permanent) work, suggesting that additional factors play a role (Dagevos et al. 2013). When migrants do find employment, they are typically concentrated in poor, insecure positions in the labour market.

Immigrant labour has long underpinned the low wage¹ economy in industrialized countries. Migrants, especially new arrivals, are described as being ‘harder workers, more loyal and reliable, and prepared to work longer hours due to their lack of choice and the large volume of available labour at the low-end of the labour market’ (Lewis et al. 2014). However, there is growing evidence that migrants working in these low-end jobs are the most exploited and insecure workers; in other words, they are doing ‘precarious work’. The ILO (2012) defines a precarious job by uncertainty as to the duration of employment, multiple possible employers or a disguised or ambiguous employment relationship, a lack of access to social protection and benefits, low pay and substantial legal and practical obstacles to joining a trade union and bargaining collectively (ILO 2012). McDowell et al. (2009) add that while precarious work is not solely a feature of the lower end of the labour market, the rise in precarious work and insecure employment is most pronounced on that end.

¹ I use the term ‘low wage’ instead of the more common ‘low skill’ for very intentional reasons. When speaking of typical migrant workers, often references of skill are highlighted, yet this raises the question of what exactly is ‘skill’ and how it is measured. By describing migrant jobs as ‘low skill’, it immediately creates a bias towards migrants working these jobs as being below average and inferior to other workers, therefore validating their low positions in the labour market. In reality, migrants often experience ‘deskilling’, or the undervaluing of their skills, education and experience, which results in significant disadvantages in the receiving country’s labour market. This highlighting of skill tends to channel people into different immigration statuses and gain varying levels of respect by the host society. Indeed, migrants’ employment opportunities are not only shaped by their ‘skills’ and economic factors but also by the host society’s occupational opportunity structure and their views towards migrants (Syed 2008). To remove these biases of skill level, I proxy ‘low skill’ with ‘low wage’, which emphasizes only the wage aspect of their work.

There are several studies that give explanations for the low positions of migrants in the labour market, such as weak native language skills, low education, poor knowledge of the labour market, and less efficient strategies than the native workers to find a job (Gonzalez and Irastorza 2007). Migrants also face both institutionalised discrimination, where legislation restricts immigrants' civic and labour market rights, as well as informal discriminatory practices based on racism or xenophobia (Castles and Kosack 2010). Examples of informal discrimination are how migrants are not hired for lacking 'the "right" accents, work experience and cultural knowledge' (Creese and Wiebe 2009).

The basic assumption behind the concept of full participation in a democratic society is that migrants would be evenly represented in employment figures and would receive qualifications in 'proportion to their numbers in the relevant part of the population' if discrimination did not exist and migrants faced no additional disadvantages (Coussey and Christensen 1997). However, it is impossible to find any society that has successfully achieved full participation of migrants in all areas of economic and social life, signifying that this is a prevalent issue in migrant lives and more knowledge of migrant experiences in the labour market is necessary.

2.2 Conceptualising integration

It is a common argument that the successful integration of immigrants in the labour market and more broadly, in public life, is vital for ensuring social cohesion in the host country and for the migrants' ability to function as autonomous, productive citizens. However, immigration policies often reflect different understandings of what exactly is meant by 'integration'. It is necessary to conceptualise the term as it is used in academic discourse and in the Dutch context, since the definition will have a bearing on its measurement and evaluation when studying the practical interpretation and social connotation of integration (Werth et al. 1997).

Democratic societies believe that every legally settled resident should be granted equal opportunities to 'fully participate in the economic, social and political life of the country, regardless of their race, colour, ethnic or national origins' (Coussey and Christensen 1997). Therefore, measuring and monitoring integration can be interpreted as a way of analysing whether or not migrants are granted the same opportunities and benefits as the native population and to what degree. It should be noted that integration is a multi-dimensional concept with at least three dimensions concerning the socio-economic, legal-political and cultural role migrants play in society (Entzinger and Biezeveld 2003; Werth et al. 1997). The socio-economic dimension covers topics related to the labour market as well as access to facilities, such as unemployment benefits. The legal-political dimension examines whether or not migrants are afforded the same rights granted to fully-fledged members of the political community, such as the right to secure residence and the ability to acquire national citizenship. The cultural dimension is concerned with whether all groups are recognised and accepted as equals and given access to the same facilities. Though integration monitoring usually distinguish between these three major dimensions, it is also important to be aware of their complex interrelationship.

As soon as migrants arrive in the host society, they acquire a place in their new environment, both in the physical sense (finding employment, housing, etc.) and the social and cultural sense (finding their place in society). In this regard, migrants are undergoing the process of ‘integration’, or ‘becoming an accepted part of society’ (Penninx 2005). This basic definition of integration emphasises the *process* of integration rather than defining the final condition or particular requirements for acceptance by the host society. However, in practice, integration policies do tend to subtly specify the requirements for becoming an accepted part of society and often lean towards the side of either ‘assimilation’ or ‘multiculturalism’ in definition. These are two extremes on the continuum of integration discussed in academic discourse, and their definitions are practically opposite: ‘Assimilation’ refers to the adaptation of the host society’s values, with a simultaneous decline of an ethnic and racial distinction (Alba and Nee 1997). ‘Multiculturalism’, on the other hand, views and respects members of migrant groups as integral segments of the host society (Zhou 1997). Unsurprisingly, the requirements for success in an assimilationist context are considerably more difficult to meet than requirements for a multiculturalist society.

The classic assimilation perspective emphasizes the cultural dimension of integration in its definition by positing that ‘immigrants must divest themselves of their previous cultural patterns, including their ethnic identification and languages, and adopt those of the host society to become assimilated as full members of their new country’ (Zhou and Bankston 1994: 822). This ‘straight-line’ perspective also assumes that with each succeeding generation, these groups will become more assimilated to the mainstream culture and ‘each new generation represents a new stage of adjustment to the host society, i.e., a further step away from ethnic “ground zero”, the community and culture established by the immigrants, and a step closer to more complete assimilation’ (Alba and Nee 1997: 832). This implies that generations are not just the time frame within which assimilation takes place, but are driving forces of successful assimilation. Assimilation policies also stress the importance of the socio-economic position of immigrants, and believe that ‘socioeconomic mobility creates the social conditions conducive to other forms of assimilation since it likely results in equal status contact across ethnic lines in workplaces’ (Alba and Nee 1997: 835). In other words, economic opportunities are essential to the successful assimilation of immigrant groups.

Measuring and monitoring integration requires the use of indicators selected from the three dimensions, which are then empirically analysed. When a host society takes an assimilationist approach, indicators that emphasize the economic dimension are often selected to measure integration. Some examples of common indicators include: access to the labour market, employment and unemployment rates, occupation and level, and proportions in dangerous or dirty jobs (Coussey and Christensen 1997). These indicators are then compared to data sets of the native population in order to provide a reference point, and migrant populations are subsequently deemed as successfully integrated or not.

Although this is a common practice, it must be questioned whether it is useful or fair to compare these two groups. By focusing on the socio-economic dimension, this approach tends to neglect central characteristics of migrants and other important structural factors determining the indicator in question. For example, a high unemployment rate is understood as an indicator of a lack

of integration, yet considering migrants are generally significantly different from the native population with regard to their education or professional qualifications, it seems 'rather pointless to use the average of the non-immigrant population as reference group in order to assess economic success and integration' (Werth et al. 1997).

Depicting migrant groups as separate variables of analysis from the native population also overlooks the interactions between these groups and how they influence each other. There are basically two parties involved in integration processes: the migrants and the receiving society and the interaction between the two is what determines the final outcomes (Penninx 2005). However, it is key to recognize that these two groups are fundamentally unequal in terms of power and resources. As integration policies are an institutional arrangement and defined politically by the receiving society, the relationship is inherently lopsided since policies will tend to represent the expectations and demands of the dominant parts of society rather than being based on participation, negotiation and agreement with the migrant groups themselves (Penninx 2005). Therefore, the host society with its institutional structure and its reaction to newcomers are much more decisive for the outcome of the integration process. For instance, a host society that remains hostile towards migrants will encourage migrants to form their own neighbourhoods to feel more comfortable, greatly reducing their contacts to the host society and resulting in a lack of integration. On the other hand, a host society characterized by open attitudes and high diversity will be easier for migrants to integrate into and find their place within (Werth et al. 1997). Structural factors can also perpetuate attitudes of racism and discrimination towards minority groups. Research by Berry and Sabatier (2010) finds that when migrants 'perceive that they are targets of discrimination, they are less likely to orient themselves to the larger society, and instead reject the larger society' (Berry and Sabatier 2010: 194). These items must be considered before expecting migrants to follow a path of assimilation.

2.3 Critical look at Dutch integration policy

After conceptualizing integration in the previous section, it is now important to situate the context of integration in the Netherlands. In the past decade, attitudes towards immigrants have toughened, and the Dutch government has turned from previous policies promoting multiculturalism to a stricter policy of assimilation. This is evident through a critical look at the history of Dutch integration views and policies, which have shifted and changed over three different phases (Vasta 2007):

1. *Pillarization* emphasised tolerance between different ethnic and religious groups, allowing each group to create their own institutions to channel economic and cultural provisioning.
2. *Ethnic Minority Policies* (1980s-1990s) provided support for minority groups through legal-political, socio-economic, and cultural domains, and focused on issues such as anti-discrimination laws, access to housing, and mandatory integration and language courses.
3. *Civic Integration Policies* (1994-Present) were created to promote inclusion of migrants in mainstream services. Sanctions were also introduced to-

wards migrants who failed to fulfil their responsibilities of participating in mandatory courses or actively searching for employment.

As shown above, the responsibility of integration has gradually shifted from ethnic and religious groups, to the state, to finally the individual migrant, demonstrating the Dutch shift towards assimilationist policies. Integration is also now defined in socio-economic terms, and indicators are mainly selected from this dimension. These indicators of integration are analysed using empirical analyses based on demographic data and surveys (Waldrauch and Hofinger 1997). By combining information from different sources (register and survey data) at a micro level, the Dutch monitoring system could be best characterized as an information structure that consists of a wide variety of sources, variables and indicators. Though the Dutch government has no official selections of core or central indicators of integration, this does not alter the fact that in practice, education level and labour market position are perceived as the key aspects for measuring integration, where the bar is determined by the performance of the native Dutch (Bijl and Verweij 2012). Monitoring this information plays a major role within Dutch integration policy at both a national and local level. Such empirical data on immigrants' membership and participation have been recast as evidence for 'successful' or 'failed' integration; as a result, civic integration requirements have become the new guidelines for what a 'successfully' integrated member of the Netherlands looks like (Bloemraad et al. 2008; Goodman 2010).

It is also relevant to discuss Dutch policies concerning EU migrants. The Dutch government has recently tightened up the rules on EU migrant workers because of the influx of workers who are coming to live and work in the Netherlands. The main change is the fact that foreigners who 'cannot provide for themselves may not stay in the Netherlands' (Government of the Netherlands 2015b). A document by The Hague Municipality outlines the different procedures of the return policy and specifically targets those who represent 'a disproportionate burden on the Dutch social security system' (Bertram and Engelshoven 2013). Migrants who 'cannot provide for themselves' therefore entails vulnerable and 'potentially homeless' migrants with no job prospects of Polish, Romanian or Bulgarian descent. These migrants must have been in the Netherlands for three months to five years, and are given about one year before final eviction is decided upon and enforced by the Municipality (Bertram and Engelshoven 2013). As EU citizens have, in principle, the right to mobility in all other EU member states under international law, such a procedure seems quite discriminatory in nature. This reveals how the mobility of EU migrants is foregrounded as an economic process—migrant mobility should serve EU economic growth, otherwise the migrant should go (and stay) home.

Another change as of 1 July 2013 is that 'foreign nationals working temporarily in high-risk jobs, such as crane operators and asbestos removers, are also required to speak Dutch [...] The work and responsibilities will determine how good the worker's command of Dutch must be. If it is not satisfied, the Inspectorate SZW² can fine the employer and the employee' (Government of

² Started in January 2012, the Inspectorate SZW is a 'combination of the organisations and activities of the former Labour Inspectorate, the Work and Income Inspectorate and the Social and Intelligence Investigation Service of the Ministry of Social Affairs

the Netherlands 2015b). This is an example of a governmental sanction in the assimilationist approach towards immigrants, for migrant workers are punished for not speaking Dutch, though the requirements for the exact level of Dutch are quite vague and arbitrarily determined by the individual inspectorate officer. Considering that these high-risk jobs are also often low wage, such a requirement is effectively discriminating against newcomers, since temporary EU labour migrants are ‘often young singles who come to the Netherlands to earn money, for example as seasonal workers in the agricultural and horticultural sectors’ meaning they are not coming to the Netherlands with the intentions of learning the Dutch language (Gijsberts and Lubbers 2013). It is paradoxical to emphasize labour market position as a key indicator for integration, yet also penalize migrants who are often put into temporary, precarious positions for not having work or not speaking Dutch.

As integration policy is a highly localized issue often implemented and enforced at the municipality level, I now focus on Dutch integration policy for EU migrants from the local context of The Hague. In The Hague, the goal of integration is to ‘achieve a society where everyone adheres to the principles of the Dutch constitutional state’ (Baldewsingh 2015). Like the Dutch government, The Hague Municipality has also toughened their integration policies towards migrants. It claims that though people have rights, they also have duties, and a main duty is taking personal responsibility to integrate. As expected, the Municipality monitors EU migrants through mainly quantitative data, and uses data from existing registries and databases to keep track of their activity (Gemeente Den Haag 2014). The Municipality also emphasizes that EU migrants are permitted to come to The Hague to work, yet are expected to go back to their origin countries if they do not find employment or are fired from their jobs. Additionally, the Municipality specifically addresses that EU migrants ‘who want to follow an integration course³ or want to take part in the naturalization exam must organize and pay for it themselves’ (Gemeente Den Haag 2013). This shows that all responsibilities for integrating are placed solely on the shoulders of the migrants and integration efforts are to come from the migrants’ side. It seems inconsistent for The Hague to present itself as a city that values diversity and claims that everyone is ‘entitled to the sense of belonging, to have the feeling of security and self-esteem’, yet approaches integration as a one-way street. Furthermore, it has been reported that a number of migrant groups have difficulty accessing the institutions put in place that are meant to support the settling of migrants (Baldewsingh 2015). This contradictory system of dealing with integration can in fact be detrimental to the lives of migrants.

2.4 Gaps in integration discourse

The underlying idea behind current Dutch integration policies is that migrants are to blame for their slow (or lack of) integration, and efforts to advance the process should come from their side (Entzinger 2006). This implies that a dis-

and Employment’ that works for ‘fair, healthy and safe working conditions and socio-economic security for everyone’ (Inspectie SZW 2013).

³ These integration courses focus on Dutch language, culture and values.

advantaged socioeconomic position is seen less as a consequence of structural constraints that the migrant faces, and more as a result of lack of effort of the migrant (Entzinger 2006; Ersanilli 2007). Yet the ways the poor and precarious positions of migrant workers in the labour market affect integration processes cannot be discerned simply from analysing statistics. In addition, integration processes are affected by structural factors that perpetuate attitudes of discrimination towards minority groups. The causes of discrimination and inequality tend to be deep-rooted and persistent and for a country that expects migrants to be responsible for their own integration, these issues must be considered when evaluating migrant integration (Werth et al. 1997). It is crucial to examine integration in the context of the structural system migrants are embedded in, as well as in the context of their employment conditions.

Furthermore, the government's use of empirical data to measure integration neglects migrants' actual perspectives and experiences of their own integration process. There is a need to incorporate migrant voices to assess the barriers and challenges they face, and to better understand the experiences of these populations. Gaining a better insight into processes and causal connections is just as important as the monitoring of integration itself, since it provides a necessary basis for an effective policy (Bijl and Verweij 2012).

Finally, it is critical to mention that although EU migrants are not legally required to integrate, media and popular discourses in Parliament debates about migrant integration do not distinguish between EU and other migrants. In fact, the arguments that are used against other labour migrants are the same ones used to justify the restriction of EU workers in the Netherlands. For example, Vink (2014) uses discourse analysis to study the overall representation of Polish migrants in the Dutch media, and finds that they are overwhelmingly negative, with multiple articles fearing the Polish migrants for taking away jobs from Dutch natives, as well as blaming the migrants for their own exploitation. There is also discourse around how the Poles are 'badly integrating'—in the form of spatial segregation in cities, the rise of Polish shops and the fact that they do not speak the Dutch language. This shows that despite the fact that there is no legal requirement for the integration of EU migrants, there is still a normative demand for them to integrate, and their failure to do so is used as an argument to restrict and evict them. Therefore, it is compelling to focus on this group when studying the effect employment conditions have on integration processes, as it will reveal more information about their experiences and prompt the Dutch government to view this group in a new light.

3 Theoretical framework

The following chapter critically explores the concepts that will form the basis of analysis in Chapter 5. The analytical framework in this chapter addresses how migrant employment conditions can be seen in relation to the larger, overarching system of neoliberalism, and how this has an effect on migrant integration processes particularly within the EU.

3.1 Relating precarity to the neoliberal governance of labour markets

I use this section to explore the theory that the precarious situation of migrants is due to a shift towards a neoliberal governance of labour markets.

Piore's (1979) labour market segmentation theory seeks to explain why migrants are often concentrated in these types of jobs, why they receive low wages that often fall but rarely rise and why they take the work of low social status (as cited in McGovern 2007). He recognizes that the demand for certain kinds of disposable labour is an inherent feature of industrialized nations and identifies three reasons why the demand for migrant workers is 'chronic and unavoidable'. The first reason states that migration is a response to labour shortages that occur during periods of prosperity. When an economy expands, native workers typically gravitate towards better-paying and more prestigious positions. Employers facing labour shortages turn to the easiest and least costly solution, which is to recruit migrant workers in need of jobs.

The second reason stems from the effects occupational hierarchy has on motivating workers: people work not only for money, but also to gain and maintain high social status. Such motivational problems are not as present at the bottom of hierarchies since most of the jobs are low status with few opportunities for advancement. Employers find that migrant workers, who view low status jobs simply as a means to earn money, are the best fit for these types of jobs, since they are more concerned with economic survival than obtaining a high social status. Indeed, there is a substantial body of evidence supporting the fact that immigrants generally receive lower wages than native workers, even across generations (McGovern 2007). This indicates that immigrant groups have lower reservation wages, or are willing to work for a lower wage rate than native workers.

The third reason relates to the 'inherent duality between capital and labour'. This duality speaks of the division in the labour force between capital-intensive sector workers, who enjoy secure, high wage jobs with regular promotions and raises, and the more disposable labour-intensive sector workers, who deal with low wages, poor conditions and little opportunity for promotion. Immigrants tend to be concentrated in the labour-intensive sector, since these sectors have more job openings and migrants are less concerned with the status of their work and more concerned with having a job (McGovern 2007).

To delve deeper, I ask: what is the mechanism driving this segmentation of the labour market? By approaching my research from Lewis et al.'s (2015) framework on how neoliberalism has driven precarious labour, I am able to

focus on the structural transformation of the labour market that creates and reinforces the demand for various forms of precarious work.

Connections between global economic change and related labour market transformations are an important explanatory framework for understanding precarious conditions in the workplace. In this perspective, 'globalisation is intimately connected to neoliberalism as a complex process of market transnationalisation in which capital has developed an unprecedented level of mobility principally through the organisational strategies of TNCs and the constitutive power of states' (Lewis et al. 2015). In theory, a market operating under a neoliberal regime ensures that by deregulating the market, factors of production will be paid what they are worth under the forces of supply and demand, eradicating the need for institutions of social protection and trade unions (Palley 2004). Neoliberalism is thus understood as both a process of deepening commodification and a project of privileging the labour market over public regulation (Overbeek 2002). This concept has gripped the global economy, with a large proportion of nation-states being integrated directly into capitalist labour markets due to globalization (Overbeek 2002). By reducing the role of the nation-state, the mechanisms of neoliberalism have induced the structural adjustment, privatisation and deregulation of labour markets around the world (Man 2004; Whittall 2007).

Lewis et al. (2015) deploy a political economy lens to explore the role structural factors of neoliberalism have on precarious labour workers. As a result of neoliberal labour policies, those who work in the lower-end of the economy are likely to face 'uncertainty over the continuity of employment; a lack of individual and collective control over wages and conditions; limited or no social protection against unemployment and discrimination; and insufficient income or economic vulnerability' (Lewis et al. 2015: 19). This vulnerability in the low wage sector is part of a larger trend in labour relations where employers increasingly breach labour standards to maximise profit and competition, creating a labour market climate of employment insecurity (Lewis et al. 2015). To demonstrate, I use the case of the construction sector. While many sectors end up shifting their production to cheaper locations abroad in order to lower costs, in certain sectors such as construction, the work must be done on the site itself. To deal with this, employers seek to bring cheap labour from abroad, resulting in a disproportionate demand and reliance on migrant labour. Migrant labour is thus commoditised, or as Marx (1997) asserts, given value only because the human workers are objectified as a factor of production (as cited in Hairong 2003). Through the use of labour contractors that handle all aspects of the recruiting and hiring process, employers are able to protect themselves from legal liabilities while simultaneously isolating the migrants from the economic and social norms of the host society (Lille and Greer 2007). By being hired through labour contractors, the migrants' bargaining power is undermined, and wage demands are lowered. The neoliberal governance of labour markets therefore attempts to make migrant workers into 'disconnected individuals compliant to the whims of capital' (Lewis et al. 2015). This relates to Marx's concept of the 'industrial reserve army', where the needs of capital dictating the lives of migrants. Castles and Kosack (2010) go further to apply this concept to immigrant workers and explain that while immigrants should be able to obtain better jobs after a period of adaptation to the host society, most of the time neoliberal mechanisms ensure that this does not happen. Since mi-

grants are required to demonstrate greater flexibility and work under precarious conditions in order to access the market, this has resulted in a widening wage and income inequality in society (Palley 2004; Whittall 2007).

This research looks at those migrants who are working in sectors reliant on migrant labour. By engaging with and challenging the underlying neoliberal conceptual framework of labour markets, I am able to reflect on the wider context behind the employment conditions of my research participants.

3.2 Integration processes undermined by neoliberal interests

I now ask the question: what effect does this shift towards neoliberalism have on the integration processes of migrant workers? Given this paper's focus is on how migrant employment conditions affect integration processes, the concept of precarity is most useful as a term through which to explore the research respondents' labour conditions while acknowledging the 'profoundly destabilising effects of precarious work' in broader life (Lewis et al. 2015). Undoubtedly, the neoliberal restructuring of the labour market has served to marginalize migrant workers, as migrants are increasingly being used as flexible and disposable labour within the highly segmented labour market. This coupled with the decline in publicly funded support programs greatly reduce the chances of migrants' successful integration into the host society and as a result, migrants become highly susceptible to problems of social exclusion (Man 2004). This suffering leads the unfair paradox of particular migrant groups being portrayed as policy and societal 'problems' (Abu-Laban 1998). In reality, there exists a tension between the neoliberal vision that attempts to extend market relations by rolling back state provision, and the integration vision that promotes social cohesion and equal opportunities. Within the context of the EU migrant, the idea of perceiving these migrants as EU citizens with legal-political and socio-economic rights is subordinate to the idea that they are mere production factors. Despite the fact that the EU is represented as a political project that guarantees equal rights, the policies that are implemented and sanctioned are the ones that serve the flexibility regime.

Though integration policies are often advertised as promoting the full participation and social cohesion of society, Amin et al. (2002) emphasize that this idea of a 'social economy' is constituted in official discourse as 'part of a new governmentality that seeks to defuse and control proposals for radical change rather than becoming a conduit for promoting such change' (as cited in Graefe 2007). In other words, these policies only seek to develop integration and promote civic participation within the limits of the main tenets of neoliberalism (Graefe 2007). Indeed, when it comes to full access to the labour market, the labour mobility that is so widely promoted by neoliberal regimes ends abruptly at the national border (McGovern 2007).

This framework of how the neoliberal regime conflicts with integration processes helps to answer my research question of the role employment conditions has on the integration of migrants. By first analysing the degree of neoliberalism in the employment conditions of my research respondents, I can deduce that the mechanisms of neoliberalism are also interfering with their in-

tegration processes. The exact degree of interference will depend on the migrants' experiences and perceptions of the Dutch society as a whole.

4 Methodology

This chapter explains the choices and strategies taken to select the target groups and data generation techniques, as well as the approaches, experiences, and challenges of conducting and analysing fieldwork. I also situate myself in the context and describe the effect my positioning may have had on the participants and the results.

4.1 Selection of target location, population and sector

This research is concerned with finding the role employment conditions play in the integration processes of migrant workers in the Netherlands. As integration policy is often implemented and enforced at the municipality level, I chose to look at the process of integration through the local context of The Hague to gain insights that may be overlooked if just focusing on the national level. The Hague is also an appropriate choice as the number of migrants in the city is growing fastest out of the four largest cities in the Netherlands. The number of migrants in The Hague increased by 0.81% in 2014 (CBS Statistics Netherlands 2015). According to a monitoring report by The Hague Municipality, there has also been a huge increase of Central and Eastern European migrants in January 2014, with 16,831 migrants registered (seven percent more than in 2013 and fifty percent more than in 2009). It should also be considered that not all migrants register, and according to recent research, an estimated fifty percent of migrants do not register, bringing the actual number of Central and East European migrants to around 33,000 people (Gemeente Den Haag 2014). Clearly, The Hague is a location rich with the target population of this research.

In order to make the project feasible, it was necessary to choose a specific group of migrant workers characterized by low wages and precarity. This was done through intensity sampling. To be relevant to my research question, the target group should not only be well represented in current migration trends in the Netherlands and The Hague, but also have EU citizenship to contribute to the theoretical discussion of conflicting ideas of integration and citizenship within a neoliberal labour market. Keeping these aspects in mind, I decided to focus on migrants from Poland. Since Poland joined the European Union in 2004, the number of Poles coming to live in the Netherlands has risen every year. People of Polish origin today make up the largest component in annual migration to the Netherlands, even when compared with non-Western migrant groups (Gijsberts and Lubbers 2015). In fact, in the first months of 2014, it has been reported that twelve thousand Poles registered in a Dutch municipality (CBS Statistics Netherlands 2014). Around seventy percent of these people are labour migrants and find jobs via temporary agencies in sectors such as construction and horticulture. A large number of Polish migrants are said to be in the country temporarily, yet the number of arrivals is still larger than the number of departures (CBS Statistics Netherlands 2014). In fact, in a SCP survey that asked Polish migrants if they expect to reside in the Netherlands for over five years, fifty-one percent answered yes (Gemeente Den Haag 2014). This shows that the nature of Polish migration to the Netherlands is more long-term than previously believed.

I also chose this group for a personal reason. I moved to The Hague in September 2014 with my Polish partner. Though he had been accepted into an Erasmus university exchange program and moved here in order to study, the program was cancelled in late August without any plausible explanation and my partner was forced to change his initial plans and look for work. Without a completed Bachelor's degree and knowledge of the Dutch language, his job seeking efforts were met with continuous disappointment and he had to resort to working in manual labour, mainly in warehouses and greenhouses. His struggles over the year inspired me to critically look into the situation of Polish migrants to find explanations and possibly solutions. These combined factors all contributed to my choice of Polish migrants as the target group.

The final step was to choose a relevant sector where many Polish migrants are concentrated and experiencing precarious work. Looking into the influx of Polish migrant workers in The Hague, I found that this is likely due to the proximity of The Hague to the Westland region, which is one of the main centers of the Dutch horticulture and agriculture industry. In fact, most Poles work in the Westland area—three times the average share of Polish migrants in the Netherlands to be exact (CBS Statistics Netherlands 2014).

Horticulture is an especially important sector in the Dutch economy and plays a major role in world trade. In 2011, total horticultural production in the Netherlands amounted to €8.6 billion, and exports amounted to €16.2 billion. Horticulture alone accounts for thirty-nine percent of Dutch agricultural production (Nieuwenhuijse 2010; Holland Trade). The Westland region is about fifteen kilometers away from the center of The Hague by car and upon visiting the region it is hard not to notice the large acres of land covered with greenhouses. Interestingly, the horticulture sector and the economy of the Westland region in particular, has always been dependent on labour recruited from outside the region. While many migrants live in and commute from The Hague to the Westland region for work, these greenhouses are quite distanced and segregated from the regular city life of The Hague. This geographic distance adds another interesting aspect and may serve as a metaphor when studying how migrants are separated from the native Dutch into certain sectors of the labour market. As the horticulture sector relies on workers who are prepared to do routine, hard physical labour, such jobs represent a more easily accessible option for migrant workers, given that the native Dutch are often unwilling to accept them (Gonzalez and Irastorza 2007; SER 2014). In fact, despite recent attempts by the government to persuade the native Dutch to work in the horticulture sector by rewarding social assistance benefits, this has not managed to persuade large numbers (Gijsberts and Lubbers 2013). The resistance of Dutch workers in taking such jobs has consequently led to an overrepresentation of migrant workers in the sector. Though these migrant workers contribute to the economic viability of the region, they are hardly recognized and respected as doing so and often deal with harsh, exploitative working conditions. Migrants who work in the agricultural sector are also significantly likely to earn less than migrants working in other sectors (Ostaijen et al. 2014).

Though this sector used to be dominated by Turkish and Moroccan workers on permanent contracts, in recent decades, Polish workers have become increasingly important to the sector (SER 2014; Ostaijen et al. 2014). In fact, Dutch employers have shown a preference towards hiring Polish labour migrants in this sector (Gijsberts and Lubbers 2013). Their deployment has

almost entirely resolved the labour deficit that arose in the 1990s for low wage jobs and has been accompanied by an increase in flexible labour in the sector. Certified temporary employment agencies have played a key role in this. The collective agreement for the horticulture sector now makes the use of such agencies mandatory, with the user company qualifying for indemnification from liability on that basis (SER 2014). There is no doubt that resolving labour supply problems by hiring temporary EU workers has had a positive effect on the horticulture sector in general and the economy of the Westland region in particular.

Therefore, narrowing the focus to the horticulture sector in the Westland region is pertinent to answering my research question since greenhouses are essential for the Dutch economy to thrive, yet are known to employ mostly migrants and demand work that is characterized by high work uncertainty, poor working conditions, temporary jobs, precarious work contracts through agencies and low wages (Gonzalez and Irastorza 2007).

4.2 Data generation techniques

After a critical review of integration policies in the Netherlands and The Hague in Section 2.3, it is clear that the Dutch government frames the issue of integration as a problem that can be measured, quantified and evaluated through statistics. Yet this definition and way of measuring integration was not established through a participatory process, but rather through the statistical and quantitative analysis of surveys, which takes advantage of hegemonic positivist views towards research. The use of statistics in integration reports published by SCP and CBS Statistics Netherlands, as well as monitoring reports by The Hague Municipality, assumes that claims of migrant integration based on measurable data must be true. This establishes a message of authority and objectivity on the subject of integration by the government. There is a need for qualitative data to assess changes in the perception and experiences of the migrant population, since such data tends to be more useful at the level of an institution or sector (Coussey and Christensen 1997).

In order to address this gap of migrant voices in the measuring and understanding of integration and addressing their weak bargaining power in the labour market, I needed a research and analytical tool and technique that would best represent and make audible their migrant voices. Furthermore, as my conceptual framework claims that neoliberal governance of labour markets is the mechanism causing these types of precarious lives, I needed a method that enabled me to look for manifestations of neoliberal governance on a micro level. I decided that these research targets were best approached and captured through the use of qualitative research. More specifically, semi-structured in-depth individual interviews was the most suitable method for breaking down manifestations of neoliberal governance in labour markets into something more tangible while simultaneously representing migrant voices. As opposed to survey data, finding power relations and understanding integration processes is best done through in-depth interviews for this method provides the opportunity to delve deep into immigrants' own perceptions of their job situation, and therefore better interpret the employment statistics behind most integration indicators measured through surveys. This method also gave the space for participants to play a more active role in producing knowledge relevant for my

analysis, and develop definitions of integration by themselves in a conversational manner. This participatory method results in the ‘forging of a relationship, whereby researchers can make observations about participants’ personal worlds and participants can shed light on how issues in their personal worlds connect with public issues’ (Sinha and Back 2014: 478).

My partner provided a gateway into the Polish community of greenhouse workers, as he himself belonged to it. Weary of tough greenhouse work and his inability to escape the low wage sector, he readily agreed to help with my research by searching for participants for data generation and translating documents from English to Polish, hoping the project would spark some change in his situation in the Netherlands. He acted as my main point of contact and aimed to look for various types of people with different lengths of stay in the Netherlands to interview.

From there, a chain sampling method began, as respondents would bring along their friends and help recruit future subjects. My partner assisted me in the forging of relationships and as many were his co-workers who already knew and liked him, I was able to develop relationships quicker and with less effort than had I not had a direct link. Yet the reliance on chain sampling brings the risk of the sample group becoming more homogenous. This was the case in my sample group, as my entry point was my partner who is higher educated and tended to befriend and know other workers who had similar job occupations and were higher educated and male, despite looking for a diverse group of people to interview. Respondents who also contributed to the chain sampling would do so by bringing or telling their friends, who tended to be similar to themselves. Though I also posted advertisements to participate in my project on various Facebook groups and Polish community forums, these ads received only a few comments and emails in response with no follow up reply when asked to meet in person for an interview. This demonstrated the difficulty of gaining access to a group of people without a person to act as a gateway. Thankfully, I had the help of my partner, yet as a result of chain sampling, most of the respondents are young, male and higher educated. The young ages of the participants are representative of the Polish diaspora in the Netherlands, as nearly half (forty-six percent) of all registered Central and Eastern European migrants in 2014 was between twenty-six and forty years (Gemeente Den Haag 2014). However, the overrepresentation of males and higher educated people can be seen as a limitation, since Polish workers in greenhouses are represented by both genders and are usually lower educated than what the sample size shows.

I developed an interview guide (see Appendix 1) to prepare what to say before an interview to explain the project and ensure informed consent and the confidentiality of the interview and my partner translated this document into Polish. In order to make potential respondents more comfortable, I emailed them beforehand with the interview guide so they could get familiar with the topics I wanted to talk about. I explained the study as being about the lives they were leading and wanted to lead, how they felt about their employment situation, and what they felt that they were able and unable to do as a result of being a Polish migrant worker in the Netherlands. Moreover, I added that I was interested in their experiences at work and how that translates into their daily lives in Dutch society. This offered participants the ability to prepare in advance any questions or topics they thought were most appropriate to talk

about. This approach was in part inspired by Sinha and Back's (2014) elicitation technique, which is argued to give voice to research participants because it 'illuminat[es] the 'backstage' areas of participants' lives, which would otherwise not have been explored because researchers would not have known or thought to prompt about them' (Sinha and Back 2014: 477). During the actual interview, I had a set of three basic guiding questions to keep the format semi-structured and allow for space for the participant's voice to be heard (see Appendix 2).

My partner acted as a translator for respondents who were not comfortable holding the interview fully in English. I gave all participants the option of speaking in Polish, English or mixed, and most opted for the mixed option. As a result, my partner would often be by my side as I led the interview and would directly translate what the respondents were saying if they resorted to Polish to better explain their thoughts and perceptions. This was an advantage for making the respondents feel more comfortable, as it was as if they were just having a conversation with a friend who could relate with them and understand their points of view. However, I found the respondents who did the interview fully in English to be more open, perhaps due to the fact that they felt they could better relate to me, as they tended to be higher educated and fluent in English. Nonetheless, each respondent provided me with valuable insights for my analysis.

The interviews with individual workers were mostly undertaken in a neutral location in The Hague (for example, in a café or restaurant). However, one particular respondent insisted to be interviewed at my apartment, for he claimed it was the most convenient place for him to meet after work. While I was not entirely comfortable with this arrangement, I agreed on the basis of trying to make my respondents happy and do what was most convenient for them. Another respondent was extremely concerned about his privacy and invited my partner and I to his private home because he did not want to be seen being interviewed in public. He also did not allow me for his interview to be recorded out of fear that the information he revealed would be traced back to him. The rest of the interviews were recorded, transcribed and then analysed. In order to protect the identities of my respondents, all names have been changed and particularization of certain facts that could potentially be used to identify them has been avoided.

The data collected from these interviews helped me see beyond some of the rhetoric and allowed me to get to know these migrants better as people, as well as understand more deeply the challenges and structural constraints they face. These in-depth individual interviews provided me with an opportunity to understand the lived experiences of migrant workers, as well as better analyse their structural position in society. After each interview, I asked each participant to fill out a survey to be able to collect socio-demographic data on the respondents (see Table 1 below for participants and survey results; see Appendix 3 for full survey). Though most of these questions were covered in the interview in more depth, the survey sheets provided me with a quick overview of the factors that the Dutch government often looks into when measuring integration, which I used to assist my data analysis.

It is worth noting that this research initially intended to have focus group discussions after the interviews were over and went so far as to secure a date and meeting place for the discussion to take place. Though three respondents

were eager to participate, four participants gave tentative responses saying they would confirm the day before and ended up cancelling or not answering my phone calls. I include these details in order to reflect on their reasons for cancellation in my later discussion of the respondents' interviews.

Table 1: Interview participants and survey results

<i>No.</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Time in NL</i>	<i>Time in current position</i>	<i>Level of education</i>	<i>Monthly income</i>	<i>Dutch language ability</i>	<i>Intended time in NL</i>
1.	Dawid	23	1 year	6 months	Left BA studies	1,000 euro	Elementary level	Over 5 years
2.	Monika	23	1.5 years	3 to 6 months	Graduated upper secondary ⁴ education	1,000 to 1,600 euro	None	Permanently
3.	Ewa	23	1 year	6 months to 1 year	BA degree	1,000 to 1,600 euro	Elementary level	1 to 5 years
4.	Andrzej	23	1.5 years	Under 3 months	Left BA studies	1,000 to 1,600 euro	Elementary level	Unsure
5.	Krzysztof	26	2 years	6 months to 1 year	Left MA studies	More than 1,600 euro	Working proficiency	Permanently
6.	Franek	33	4 years	Under 3 months	MA degree	1,000 to 1,600 euro	Elementary level	Permanently
7.	Rafal	20	2 months	Under 3 months	Current BA student	1,000 to 1,600 euro	None	3 months: seasonal employment

⁴ *Średnie* or general upper secondary schools last 3 years and lead to the 'Matura' exam, which grants access to higher education. These schools prepare students for entry directly into the labour market and/or higher education.

8.	Zbyszek	30	4 years	6 months to 1 year	Graduated upper secondary education	More than 1,600 euro	Elementary level	Permanently, if possible
9.	Mateusz	28	5 years	4 years	Graduated basic vocational ⁵ education	Did not disclose	Limited working proficiency	Permanently

4.3 Techniques for data analysis

Using Bernard's (2011) chapter on field notes as a guide, I kept a log of my plans, how I actually spent my time and how much money I spent in a notebook. During the interviews, I jotted down the main ideas into a notebook as well as quotes I found particularly interesting to serve as reminders when transcribing. Looking back, I was acting as a sort of theme filter, choosing (sometimes subconsciously) what data was important to record and what data was not. Therefore, in producing field notes, I was already beginning the process of identifying themes (Ryan and Bernard 2003). After I would arrive home from interviewing and had about an hour to process and go over the conversation in my head, I would add to my notes the behaviours of the respondents and my general feelings about each interview. If my partner had also been a part of the interview as translator, he would also share his thoughts and any nuances that may have not been captured in his translations; for example how he interpreted the attitude of the respondent or how the respondent had answered the question and the word choices used.

I then began the process of identifying themes when transcribing the interview recordings and writing down large chunks of what people said verbatim. My partner would do the same for Polish interviews and translate directly what respondents said into English. I focused on what was continuously repeated in the individual interviews and the material as a whole, since repetition is one of the easiest ways to identify themes (Ryan and Bernard 2003).

After reviewing each individual interview and identifying the themes, I began gathering the data relevant to each theme and checking if the themes worked in relation to the interview extracts and the entire data set. I then began linking the themes to the background review and theoretical models (Ryan and Bernard 2003). Through a combination of engaging with policy documents, academic articles and the data from the interviews, I was able to gain a multi-layered understanding of the experiences of my respondents. My material is thus examined and interpreted within the context of the labour migrant situation in the Netherlands (Mayring 2014).

⁵ *Zasadnicze szkola zawodowe* or basic vocational schools last 2 years and grant a certificate of competence in various fields such as cook, hairdresser or automobile mechanic.

4.4 Reflexivity

My decision to speak for a group of migrant workers as their ‘voice’ came with a set of challenges. An important step in understanding marginalized groups and the inequalities they face is by attending to the perspectives and experiences of those who do not have the power to make their voices heard. Indeed, as Choo and Ferree (2010) contend, these groups are often the objects of political debates rather than the participating subjects of democratic politics. Yet it is easy for the researcher who attempts to speak for them to overlook the wider, structural system that these marginalized groups are in and formulate results intended for a ‘mainstream’ audience, thereby perpetuating the separation of these groups (Choo and Ferree 2010: 137).

In order to avoid this, I approached this research with intersectionality in mind in order to emphasize the various marginalizations that Polish migrant workers face in the Netherlands while keeping their perspectives at the center of the research (Choo and Ferree 2010). This approach was inspired by Mazzei and Jackson (2012) who encourage qualitative researchers to ‘*think with theory*’ as a guard against being seduced by the desire to create a coherent and interesting narrative that does little to challenge hegemonic discourses and (over)simplified knowledge claims’. By understanding intersectionality as a complex system where several factors such as nationality are ‘fundamentally embedded in, working through, and determining the organization of ownership, profit, and commodification of labour, for example, by fixing which types of work and types of people enter the market at all’, I was able to focus on the experiences of these individuals while simultaneously reflecting on the wider intersections of structure, agency and institutions that they were entangled in. Choo and Ferree (2010: 135) go on to say that ‘even studies that are not institutional in focus and do not use comparative or historical methods can be improved by closer attention to how inclusion, interaction, and institutions are being treated analytically’. I tried to follow this advice through the use of my theoretical framework, which relates understandings of integration with the neoliberal mechanisms driving labour market conditions. The fact that my research is being done in collaboration with the Hague Municipality motivated this approach even more, as I knew I have a fixed, powerful ‘mainstream’ audience who will read the results and wanted to provide a broader picture of the problems that Polish migrant workers face within the specific Dutch system.

I also had to consider my own background when serving this notion of providing voice to a marginalized group that I had no ties to. As I am a US American woman of mixed European and Asian descent with no ethnic ties to Poland and no experience working in the horticulture sector, I worried that the respondents would see my background and appearance as too different to relate their experiences to. Admittedly, I was unsure that I was even qualified to represent their voices: surely only Polish migrant workers can speak *as* such, and Polish migrant workers must be heard speaking *for* themselves?

However, such a standpoint towards research is incredibly limiting in scope and researchers often find themselves investigating contexts they are not familiar with in order to produce knowledge. Furthermore, authors such as Bourdieu (1990) and Narayan (2004) posit that there are advantages of the researcher being an outsider and having the ability or effort to walk in someone else’s shoes is of critical value. As an insider, it is more difficult to identify

things that are internalized and not questioned within the society. By not being a part of the group, I was able to critically observe the situation without inherent biases and reflect on and challenge social norms through data analysis. In this sense, not being a member of the group grants the ability to have a much clearer understanding of how power structures work within a given society. On the basis of Narayan's (2004) reflections on epistemic advantage, despite my geographic location as a US American, I do share an epistemic location with the Polish group by also being a minority and migrant in the Netherlands. Therefore, despite my being an outsider, I can use my epistemic location to empathize with and provide a voice to these Polish migrants.

5 Giving a voice to Polish greenhouse workers in the Netherlands

This chapter analyses the employment conditions and integration processes of the respondents from data collected from individual semi-structured in-depth interviews. Through a structuralist lens, it seeks to go beyond the experiences and perceptions of the greenhouse workers by reflecting on the wider context of neoliberalism and the deep effects precarity is having on migrant lives.

5.1 Manifestations of neoliberal governance of labour markets

The following sections delve into the respondents' employment conditions to demonstrate the manifestations of neoliberal governance of the labour market on a micro level. Through a demonstration of their precarious conditions, these migrant workers are shown to be bearing the brunt of the neoliberal labour policies.

5.1.1 Labour seen as disposable by employers

An inherent feature of industrialized nations within the neoliberal era is the demand for disposable labour. To be disposable is to be precarious, with workers existing only to fulfil the needs of their employers and being easily discarded once the needs are met. The disposable nature of greenhouse work was clear when the respondents were asked to describe their work.

One of my first respondents helped me see the extent to which greenhouse labourers are pushed to succumb to the demands of their employers while sacrificing their own needs. I met Dawid, a twenty-three year old Polish man, through my partner. Dawid was fluent in English and had moved to the Netherlands one year prior to make money, working in several temporary jobs before starting greenhouse work in February 2015. His previous job in a warehouse was twenty kilometres away and since he was living in private housing instead of agency housing, which provides a van to transport workers to and from work, Dawid had to leave for work more than an hour earlier to commute by bicycle. When asked why he didn't work in a closer location, he answered simply, 'I couldn't find a closer job. All the jobs were far away'. His tone indicated resignation to his unfavourable situation. This to me served as an early sign of the powerlessness migrants often feel within the labour market.

Dawid's commute to the warehouse was made five days a week even in harsh weather conditions, causing Dawid to frequently get sick. On top of that, the warehouse work was exhausting and required repetitive, strenuous work. Yet he refused to skip work when he didn't feel well, claiming that if he missed work, he would immediately get fired. This is quite illustrative of the precarity of his situation; despite his commitment to getting to work, he faced 'uncertainty as to the duration of employment' (Lewis et al. 2015). Considering this background, Dawid explained his feelings towards his greenhouse job:

When I came to greenhouse I was a little bit relieved because my previous job was order picking and I was constantly walking around and pulling a heavy cart. But in greenhouse, it was different and I wasn't constantly doing the same thing over and over again... and it was only seventeen kilometres away.

Dawid's comment that the greenhouse job was 'only' seventeen kilometres away (notably, only a three kilometre difference from his previous job) displays almost a desperate effort to find positive aspects of his situation. Perhaps this was done as a reflex to my look of concern. Yet after a pause, he continued with sadness in his voice:

But once I got accustomed to this job and the temperature was getting warmer and warmer and the peak season started and I had to wake up earlier... and I started hating this job. And constantly working with a bent back gave me back problems. Sometimes I worked even six days a week, for eight to ten hours a day. Some days even starting at three or four AM. I couldn't wake up for work even anymore. And when I was at job my body was refusing to work. It was overloaded.

To me, Dawid seemed to resolve to being as transparent as possible with his experiences, and later even admitted that he went to a mental health facility to get treated for depression. Knowing that his problems stemmed from his harsh working conditions, he spoke with his greenhouse manager and told him that he could not work there anymore. In response, he was quickly transferred to another job within the greenhouse as a machine operator. This also indicates the neoliberal mechanisms of his workplace: with the surplus availability of low-end jobs, workers can be transferred quickly as a factor of production.

Krzysztof is another example of a Polish worker who dislikes his job. Also introduced to me through my partner, he was twenty-six years old, fluent in English with a Bachelor's degree in environmental engineering. Krzysztof at first gave somewhat flippant remarks about participating in my research, choosing to hold the interview in English in order to 'get it over with faster'. He quickly disclosed that he came to the Netherlands in March 2014 to earn money and now works as an agency manager for a greenhouse, but began in the company as a regular labour worker. When asked to describe his original job, he quipped it was 'like Chinese in rice field – a very tough job'. Yet as the interview progressed, Krzysztof seemed to grow more comfortable in revealing his pent up frustrations with his situation. He expressed mild annoyance when describing how he worked in a position that was clearly below his qualification level:

I was really pissed off about the hard job, I was very drunk, because before I had a big party, and I was telling myself this is the last day of my job here and after the break I will go to the office and tell them. But two hours before, the manager asked me to come to the office and I was sure that they were going to fire me because it was the fifth day in a row that I came late. But they asked me first, what are my plans, if I want to stay longer in the Netherlands, and then if I want to become manager. Actually, I shouldn't have worked there anymore; they should have fired me, because my behaviour was very bad. I don't know why I got the position.

This passage is very interesting because it indicates Krzysztof's nonchalant attitude towards his employment and dismissal of his language skills and education. With his high education level, working proficiency in Dutch, and fluency in English, it is not unreasonable to assume that these played a factor in his

promotion. Perhaps Krzysztof's can be explained because he had become accustomed to the experience of deskilling in the labour market, where he could not find any work in the Netherlands outside the low-wage sector.

Now Krzysztof has diligently been working as a manager for one year. His work mainly deals with making sure there are enough greenhouse workers scheduled for each day, though he also steps in to do physical labour when there is a labour shortage, demonstrating neoliberal mechanisms being used by employers: instead of hiring another worker, they pull from the existing pool of labourers, no matter what their position, in order to lower costs.

Another young migrant, Andrzej, had worked in a greenhouse every day for one month and dealt with the consequences:

Some days I woke up with head pain, because of pesticides in the water, and this pain was permanent. I felt so, so bad. Every morning for two weeks I had the pain. And I worked there for one month, and I told my coordinator of my headache, and one week later my coordinator told me I was fired.

This experience is startling in its severity. Andrzej was working in extremely precarious conditions, cleaning tables that exposed him to many pesticides and required hard physical work. Andrzej was essentially penalized for displaying human vulnerability and developing health problems from his work. The mechanisms of neoliberal governance are clear: as soon as the factor of production was no longer productive and therefore profitable, it was discarded.

Rafal, a twenty-year old Bachelor's student who came to the Netherlands for the summer holidays in order to 'develop' himself, demonstrated how migrants are hired according to capital demands through his claim that 'the one bad thing about this job is that there are not enough hours. In general, there were three days off during the week and now, today my manager called me and said that also during Thursdays there won't be any job. So I am working there only three days'. It is important to note that Rafal, who wanted to work full-time, could only get part-time hours—a clear indicator of precarious work where neoliberal principles prohibit employers from hiring excess labour.

One of my more outspoken respondents was Zbyszek, a thirty-year old migrant who came to work in the Netherlands to make more money than he could in Poland, in line with Piore's explanation of migrants viewing low sector jobs as a means to making money (McGovern 2007). As mentioned in Section 4.2, Zbyszek was the respondent who requested to be interviewed in my apartment. For the majority of the interview (conducted in Polish), Zbyszek praised the working conditions of the Netherlands, claiming that he values the Netherlands because 'if someone works well then he can work for [the employer] more. Because they appreciate you for that'. I found this statement intriguing since the flipside to this system is that if a worker does not work 'well', or say, does average work, the worker is easily replaceable. Although Zbyszek's statement clearly shows the neoliberal governance of the labour market (workers who help the employer accumulate wealth are regarded as valuable factors of production), it also demonstrates his willingness to be commoditised as a factor of production.

Another example of Zbyszek's tendency to approach his working conditions from a surprisingly neoliberal viewpoint was his story of a worker getting hurt at his workplace:

Once there was a situation where I didn't know what to do. This dude fell into the some kind of mixer machine. It just cut him up a little bit and he broke two legs. But it is his fault, because there were special chains [blocking it], and I still don't know today how he fell there.

Despite the shocking and rather grisly nature of the incident, Zbyszek is quick to minimize the accident (*just* cut him *a little bit* and broke two legs) and blame the victim (it was *his fault*). This may be explained by his belief in humans as factors of production, where vulnerability detracts from value. However, it is important to view this accident as further evidence of unsafe working conditions that migrants must deal with.

From these migrant experiences, it is clear that greenhouse work is incredibly strenuous with precarious conditions, though the migrants' perceptions of their situations can be clouded by their motivation to accumulate money. Migrants are shown to enter and leave the labour force according to the needs of capital as part of an 'industrial reserve army'. Employers treat their reserve army as a disposable and easily replaceable part of the production process to accumulate wealth.

5.1.2 Exploitation through labour contractors

Since labour migrants are often forced to accept the most precarious labour contracts, this section serves to demonstrate the respondents' experiences with their labour contractors and reflect on the neoliberal underpinnings.

The use of third party labour contractors is one way an employer can create flexibility under a neoliberal regime. Labour contractors are attractive to employers because they can coordinate the flexible supply of labour and match the variable numbers of workers at short notice to meet supply requirements (Barrientos 2013). However, the use of labour contractors reduces migrants' bargaining power, forcing them to comply with the whims of capital demands, which effectively lowers their wages. Knowing this, labour contractors often take advantage of migrant workers through exploitation.

Exploitation, under Dutch definitions, 'may exist if you recognise one or more of the following features; serious underpayment, severe or unsafe working conditions, deception, intimidation, a restriction of liberty and independence by the employer' (Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment 2014).

Perhaps the respondent who gave the most examples of exploitation was the one who was most concerned for his privacy: Mateusz. Introduced to me through my partner, Mateusz has lived in the Netherlands with his wife and son since 2010 and has encountered many exploitative agencies over the years. Throughout his interview, he voiced a deep distrust and pessimism about the Dutch labour contracting system. He stated how one agency demanded access to their workers' bank accounts, citing 'the law' as their justification and often threatening the workers with incomprehensible fines when not complying with their rules. One of the first agencies Mateusz worked for had withheld his earnings for half a year, and Mateusz, being new to the Netherlands and unclear on his rights, claimed he could do nothing but accept it. He even divulged that he knew of agencies where workers were withheld their full salaries for up to three years. As these are serious accusations of the wrongdoings of agencies, it is understandable that Mateusz requested for his interview to be in a private space without recording. He was indeed quite reserved during the interview,

with my partner noting that Mateusz revealed many more stories and details during their own private conversations. Mateusz' inherent fear of being exposed for speaking out and losing his job demonstrates a wider issue of migrant workers' precarity. Labour contractors are taking advantage of migrants' lack of bargaining power and dependency on their jobs for an income by imposing unfair, exploitative conditions in order to make profit.

It was interesting to see how the majority of respondents showed a keen awareness of the exploitative situations that they were operating within, yet displayed a sense of overwhelming helplessness to fight against the injustice.

This was indeed the case with Monika's experiences. Monika, introduced to me through Krzysztof, explained that her labour agency 'used to take out a flat fee from my salary. Although I moved out in May, they had been taking out my flat money for the next two months'. Though she stated that this has since been fixed, she went on to share:

Now there is also a problem. Girls, who have started working since February, will no longer get a raise. It is unfair because since first of April apparently such a [law] change came out. But girls, who have started in January, will still get a raise. And all guys also will get it. That is also a little bit unfair.

When asked if she was sure there was a law change prohibiting her from getting a promised wage raise, she replied with a shrug, 'Well, this is the manager [who told me]... So probably it is the truth'. This is significant since Monika is disadvantaged in several regards: she is a female, lower educated migrant. Since labour contractors gather details on the background and behaviour of all contracted employees in a database, it is possible that they target specific vulnerable people and groups. Indeed, though this is a clear case of gender discrimination and exploitation, Monika writes it off as 'a little bit unfair' and accepts her fate, stating that there was 'nothing [she] can do'. Her response demonstrates how labour agencies can easily take advantage of its workers by relying on their ignorance of the laws. Fittingly, Dawid displays his awareness that labour contractors are taking advantage of his lack of understanding of labour laws:

This is based on CAO⁶, which is some international European law for labour work or something like that, and in this policy it's written all the rules and my contract applies to these rules. I know that I can quit basically whenever I want. And they can fire me whenever they want with a one-week or one month notice, I don't really know [...] The law is constantly changing; at least that's what the managers say. So sometimes when I ask the managers questions, I don't even understand what they're saying because what they're saying is so confusing, like they're trying to not even give you an answer.

Ewa, who was introduced to me through Monika, faced similar experiences of withheld payment: 'we had a problem with payment. They didn't pay enough. We didn't get our holiday money. And I think it was said in my contract that I will earn nine euro, but they didn't pay that'. By 'we', she was refer-

⁶ *Collectieve Arbeids Overeenkomst* or Collective Labour Agreement, which specify collective agreements between employers, employers' organisations, employees and employee organisations and contain essential elements such as minimum salary, overtime pay, notice periods, holiday allowance, etc. (PECO-Institut GmbH 2002)

ring to the women in the agency, again indicating that there is a gendered aspect to the exploitation. When asked if she knew the reasons behind why her payment was withheld, she answered, 'because... It is a Turkish agency. So you know...'. Looking past the racial undertones of this statement, Ewa shows that a justification for being exploited can simply be because it is a labour contractor and this type of behaviour is expected.

While the Dutch government urges migrants who suffer from exploitation to immediately report it, migrants are often in too precarious conditions to risk saying something and losing their jobs, and often adopt an attitude of 'that's just the way it is'. Perhaps Franek, a highly educated migrant who offered poignant insights throughout his interview, said it best:

So everyone now, we're in training because we're temporary. Yeah, it kind of really argues with my ideas. I do believe that companies are as much for people as people for companies, so you need to have loyalty both ways. If you don't care about building your loyalty, if you're not loyal to your employees, you don't have the right to expect your employees being loyal to you. But they think differently here. It's pretty common here. People think it's ok, that companies have to be first.

Indeed, under a neoliberal governance of labour markets, companies always come before the labourer, and this section has demonstrated that migrant workers succumb to the demands of their labour contractors as a result of their lack of bargaining power to fight for their rights.

5.2 Destabilising effects of precarious work

In line with my research question, I now move on to critically analyse how these precarious employment conditions affect the integration processes of migrants. By searching beyond their situations at work, I was able to see the destabilising effects precarious work had on migrants' everyday lives.

5.2.1 Labour immobility, leaving aspirations unfulfilled

A recurrent theme in the responses of participants was their inability to escape the low-end sector of the labour market. Yet it is commonly believed that those with more qualifications are better able to overcome the disadvantages of being new to the labour market (Coussey and Christensen 1997). However, research has shown that these higher qualified individuals experience the same degree of discrimination as less qualified migrants. To strengthen the case of this argument, I focus on the three respondents who had higher qualifications relative to the overall sample group: Franek, a current PhD student in the Netherlands who is fluent in English and has a Master's degree in biology; Krzysztof, fluent in English and proficient in Dutch, who had left his Master's studies in Poland to pursue better opportunities in the Netherlands; and Dawid, fluent in English, who had left his Bachelor's studies in Poland in pursuit of a more fulfilling life in the Netherlands.

Franek had come to the Netherlands with no intention of doing labour work, but instead to look for work related to biology, his field of study. Considering his qualifications (Master's degree, fluent English, experience in the field), he expected to find work easily. Yet he explains how the stigma of

Polish migrants as low-end, greenhouse workers affected even his daily interactions:

We went to an appointment at the bank, and the whole procedure, and the girl was really young and really nice, and she was chatty, and then she saw my passport, and said ‘Oh, you’re Polish! Did you come here to work at a greenhouse?’ ‘Um.. No, maybe not’, ‘Oh, are you going to work at a building site?’ ‘No, I’m a biologist, I have a Master’s degree from Poland, and I will try to find this kind of job’. And she said, ‘That will be *really* hard on you, like you need to know, that for every step that you will take here, you will have to prove to everyone that you’re not one of the *‘flower people’*’.

Despite not even being a part of the greenhouse sector, this preconception of the native Dutch to believe Polish workers were limited to the horticulture or construction sector was already intruding into Franek’s identity. Franek realised that he had to prove himself as not a part of that group. However, his efforts proved futile and he had to change his plans:

After [going to] twenty-five agencies, I was kind of desperate, like really getting depressed, and that was hard. I didn’t know anyone here; that was a really horrible year actually. And then I decided that then, ok, I will do another Master’s degree. My Polish degree was never enough.

Franek shows how his qualifications were ‘deskilled’ through his proclamation that his Polish degree ‘was never enough’. Despite his high education level, his precarious position as a migrant meant that he was still channelled into the lower end of the labour market. He realised that the only way to get proper credentials in the Netherlands was to obtain his degree here.

Similarly, Krzysztof was unsatisfied in his precarious position as a labour worker and had the desire to get a higher position:

All the time at the company, I thought, I don’t like this job, I’ve never worked in Poland in a physical job, always in office or something, and I want to change it, I want to quit!

The reason why he did not (or more appropriately, could not) quit his job was because his seemingly high qualifications were not enough to escape from his precarious position; if he quit his job at the greenhouse, he was not guaranteed to find other employment. Krzysztof explained that he had gotten a serious job offer in his field of electrical engineering in Poland, yet declined because of the low salary and decided to come to the Netherlands to pursue the same opportunities. Yet he realised the difficulties of doing so, and claimed that one of the only ways he could access the same opportunities was to do a Master’s degree in the Netherlands. This again shows how migrants’ qualifications are undervalued in the host society.

Finally, Dawid, like Franek, had come to the Netherlands not to work in labour but to gain experience in his field of marketing. Yet he was aware of his lack of qualifications, and stated that his barriers to accessing higher levels of the labour market were ‘the Dutch language and experience... education. I mean, I made an effort to find an [unpaid] internship, and even that was hard. I couldn’t get one’. The fact that even gaining access to an unpaid internship is met with difficulty speaks largely of the barriers migrants must overcome. Dawid also recognizes the need to have Dutch educational qualifications while lamenting the destabilising effect his working conditions have on his everyday life:

It's my dream to escape this place. I'm working here to come back to studies and go back to an environment where I can meet people with passions. I don't have chances to get another job here without studying. I can't do it now because I have to go everyday to job and spend six to eight hours doing boring things, and then coming back home and being really tired and exhausted, and not being able to do anything productive. What kind of life is it?

These findings are significant because qualifications such as English fluency and higher education are often associated with more bargaining power. Yet if these better-qualified migrants are still facing labour immobility and barriers to access higher levels of the labour market, then the conditions of the majority must be even worse. Additionally, all three of them happened to mention the need for a Dutch degree in order to be seriously considered as a job candidate for higher levels of the labour market. This proves that there exists discrimination towards foreign credentials with native qualifications being more valued. This is in line with Gijsberts and Lubbers (2015) research on Polish migrants in the Netherlands, where they find that 'higher-skilled migrants and migrants whose command of Dutch has improved do not have a better chance of finding work after a longer period of residence in the Netherlands [...] We suspect that the competition for better jobs requiring a higher skill level and a good command of Dutch is still too great for these migrants'. This procedure of deskilling effectively hinders migrants' integration because they are confined within the trappings of social exclusion and are unable to escape their low labour market positions.

It is interesting to note that these three participants were also the ones who were eager to participate in the intended focus group discussions, even expressing disappointment when learning it had been cancelled. This enthusiasm to discuss the topic of integration in a focus group makes sense, since the three of them had the most ambitious goals in terms of what they hoped to achieve in Dutch society.

5.2.2 Using migrants' definitions of integration to analyse integration processes

As Sections 2.2 and 2.3 broke down the meanings of integration from a governmental perspective, I sought to find out what integration meant from the migrants' point of view and their feelings toward the Dutch society.

Rafal claimed that integration occurs when people are feeling good when in the company of Dutch people and made sure to clarify that the success of integration depends on the migrants' attitude and commitment to only be among Dutch people. The similarity of his definition to official integration discourse is interesting considering since Rafal is a temporary migrant who had only planned to stay in the Netherlands for three months. Without having to go through the process himself, it was easier for Rafal to impose strict guidelines as to what made a migrant successfully integrated.

Rafal's response can be juxtaposed to the responses of other participants who planned to stay in the Netherlands permanently. Krzysztof cited the importance of learning about Dutch culture and society in order to integrate, yet when asked to name some specific aspects of Dutch culture that were different from Polish culture, he had no answer, indicating the difficulty in identifying specific values unique to certain cultures.

Dawid defined integration based on the feeling of being equal and accepted:

Integration... It's feeling to be a part of the society you're living in and having knowledge about the country and culture. And not just knowledge, but being considered as one of them or at least equal. I'm sure speaking Dutch would help to feel more comfortable and homey.

Franek had been in the Netherlands for four years and found the concept of integration troubling:

I'm at university, I'm doing my research project, and even then, I don't have any Dutch friends. I have a gigantic group of expats. If I'm close to any Dutch people, it's a second-generation. So my best friend is Dutch, she was born here but her parents came from Hong Kong. She loves the Netherlands, she was brought up here, she feels really Dutch, but at the same time she hates this place so much, because there's not a single day she's not abused verbally or you know, if someone would call her a Chino or something. So we're really, you know, talking a lot about this issue [of integration]. Because, if *she* can't get integration, and treated equal, I don't see myself, and then, even worse, if I just arrived [to work] for a greenhouse, then what does integration even mean?

By unpacking this passage, it can be implied that Franek believes integration to mean that one is friends with members of the native population and is treated equally and not (systematically) discriminated against. After a lengthy discussion of the meanings of integration, I asked Franek if he believed that integration was possible. He responded that it depends on the definition of integration, but 'if you're going to be accepted as equal? No, I cannot imagine that'.

A frequent theme among responses was the criticism of the stereotype of the Netherlands as a tolerant country. Frustrated by their precarious situations and experiences of discrimination, respondents cited examples of proof that the Dutch society was not a tolerant, equal society. For example, Krzysztof explains how the Dutch society is perpetuating stereotypes towards Polish migrants through their segregation in neighbourhoods:

Everybody says this is a very tolerant country but I don't think so because they are trying to create closed places, closed areas with Polish people, with Turkish people. If I'm Polish and I think I'm a little bit smarter than other Polish people who came here, then they think, all Dutch, that Polish can only do hard work, but they can do nothing, cannot think. But, if you speak Dutch, or you try to speak Dutch, maybe something can change.

Interestingly, none of the respondents mentioned labour market position as part of their definition of integration. Instead, they stressed not only the importance of the migrants' efforts to learn about the Dutch culture and language but also the efforts that the Dutch society needed to make in order to ensure an equal society. It is also worth noting that none of the respondents considered themselves as integrated in the Dutch society. This may be explained by their general distance from Dutch society as greenhouse workers; many respondents complained that their work not only did not grant them any opportunity to meet Dutch people, but also made them too tired to engage in any social activities after work. They also claimed that they did not make enough money or have enough time to take Dutch courses, although they all cited that learning and knowing Dutch would facilitate integration processes.

6 Conclusion

This paper begins by problematizing the Dutch government's reliance on labour market position as a key indicator for integration (Chapter 1). By providing an overview of the typical employment conditions of migrants, conceptualising integration and critically discussing Dutch integration policies, I argue that the current approach to integration overlooks several structural factors that affect the position of migrants in the labour market as well as migrant voices (Chapter 2). The theoretical framework employs the labour market segmentation theory and conceptualises neoliberal mechanisms behind the labour market to provide a framework with which to analyse the precarious working conditions and integration processes of migrants (Chapter 3). The methodological framework justifies my choices of target groups and enables me to situate myself in the research context (Chapter 4). Through the narratives of migrants collected in interviews, I find that the precarious employment conditions of migrants have a negative effect on their integration processes (Chapter 5). I will now use this chapter to clarify my analysis and make policy recommendations for future integration policies.

The neoliberal governance of labour markets is the mechanism behind the precarious positions of migrant workers, which leads to their lack of integration. Yet instead of understanding migrant labour positions in the broader context of neoliberalism, their precarious positions are used to fuel the legitimacy of the idea that migrants not successfully integrating and it is their own fault. This notion that Polish migrants (or more broadly, EU migrants) are a social/welfare/economic cost to the Dutch society promotes institutionalised discrimination, and ultimately has a negatively impact on the integration processes of migrants (Abu-Laban 1998). Therefore, supportive policies that work to eradicate discrimination are necessary to allow migrants to 'become better dispersed across sectors and gain access to higher levels and professions' (Coussey and Christensen 1997).

The results of this research make clear that true integration processes are not limited to the socio-economic domain. Migrants emphasised the necessity of creating an atmosphere of mutual understanding within society, where migrants and the host society both make an effort towards an equal, respectful society. In order to do so, it is necessary to choose indicators for integration in the cultural domain and value them as significant. Another key element is to realise that Dutch culture is not uniform, let alone static. Integration therefore has to pay attention to social, cultural and linguistic differences on the part of migrants and host communities.

It is interesting to examine how the rights of EU citizens are invisibilised in Dutch integration discourse. The European Union as a whole is a political project that pledges for peace, and having EU citizenship guarantees not only the right to move and reside and freely within the EU, but also the right to not be discriminated against on the grounds of nationality (European Commission 2012). EU migrants deserve to be viewed by the government as human beings with voices and experiences, beyond just their economic value. By excluding EU migrants from the official integration policies, their voices are fundamentally being ignored as EU citizens and as migrants. Furthermore, a substantial

part of intra-EU migration has been induced by economic needs and has therefore been defined as temporary. Yet quite often, temporary workers become permanent settlers after some time (Entzinger and Biezeveld 2003). As seen in Table 1 of Section 4.2, most of my research participants reported that they are intending to permanently stay in the Netherlands, indicating the need for the Dutch government to develop policy instruments that aim for the integration of EU migrants.

To sum up, by pointing out the structural constraints that migrants face in the labour market, this research problematizes Dutch integration policy for using labour market participation to measure integration. When migrants are expected to follow a path of assimilation, it is crucial for a society to not only recognize the overall context that the migrant is placed in, but to also have supportive structures in place to combat racist attitudes and provide assistance.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Interview Guide

(English version)

Thank you for participating in this research.

My name is Michelle Munteanu and this project is part of my thesis at the International Institute of Social Studies, in collaboration with The Hague Municipality. I am looking into the experiences of Polish greenhouse workers in the Westland region and seeing how working conditions affect integration into Dutch society. Integration means fitting into the host society. Currently, the Dutch government emphasizes labour market position to measure integration of immigrants, but I am interested in your own perceptions of what it means to be integrated. Specifically, I am interested in your experiences at work and how that translates into your daily life in Dutch society. The reason I want to interview you is because policymakers are talking about integration but not talking about actual migrant experiences.

The interview should take less than an hour. If it's okay with you, I will be recording the session so I can get all the details but at the same time be able to carry on an attentive conversation with you. All of your comments will remain confidential. I will also be taking some notes during the session so I can quickly jot down important details. This is strictly for my own purposes and will not be shared with others.

Again, all responses will be kept anonymous. I will ensure that any information included in the report does not identify you as the respondent. Remember, you don't have to talk about anything you don't want to and you may end the interview at any time.

(Polish version)

Dziękuję za wzięcie udziału w tym badaniu. To jest Michelle Munteanu. Jej projekt jest częścią pracy dyplomowej w International Institut of Social Studys we współpracy z miejscowym rządem Hagi (gemeente). Badanie dotyczy doświadczeń polskich pracowników szklarni pracujących w regionie Westland oraz ich warunków pracy w celu sprawdzenia w jaki sposób wpływają one na ich integrację z Holenderskim społeczeństwem. Poprzez integrację rozumiemy dopasowanie się grupy imigrantów do reszty społeczeństwa, w tym przypadku holenderskiego. To czy pracownik zostanie zaklasyfikowany jako zintegrowany lub nie, może mieć duży wpływ na sposób w jaki jest postrzegany przez pracodawców i instytucje, co może spowodować na przykład ograniczenie jego szans w ubieganiu się o lepszą pracę oraz podtrzymywaniu dyskryminacji. Obecnie holenderski rząd mierzy poziom integracji zwracając szczególną uwagę na posiadaną przez pracownika pozycję na rynku pracy fizycznej. Natomiast my chcielibyśmy wiedzieć co to oznacza dla Ciebie – być zintegrowanym. Szczególnie jesteśmy zainteresowani Twoim doświadczeniem w pracy oraz w jaki sposób przekłada się ono na życie w holenderskim społeczeństwie. Powód dla którego chcemy przeprowadzić z Tobą ten wywiad wynika z tego,

że osoby tworzące prawo mówią o integracji bez uwzględniania osobistych doświadczeń imigrantów. Naszym zadaniem jest dać Ci możliwość zabrania głosu w tej sprawie.

Ten wywiad powinien potrwać nie więcej niż godzinę. Jeśli nie masz nic przeciwko, chcielibyśmy nagrać tę sesję aby zachować wszystkie szczegóły oraz mieć możliwość prowadzenia swobodnej rozmowy. Wszystkie twoje odpowiedzi pozostaną anonimowe a nagranie zostanie skasowane po zakończeniu prac nad projektem. Oczywiście masz możliwość nie wyrażenia zgody na nagrywanie. Będziemy również sporządzali krótkie notatki tylko w celu zapamiętania ważnych szczegółów. Wszystkie informacje zawarte w raporcie nie identyfikują Twojej osoby. Pamiętaj, że nie musisz mówić o niczym o czym nie chcesz i możesz zakończyć wywiad w dowolnym dla ciebie momencie.

Appendix 2: Interview Questions

(English version)

1. Can you tell me about yourself and your background? What were you doing before coming to the Netherlands, what made you come here and how did you end up in your current position?
2. Can you tell me about your job?
3. How do you feel about working in the Netherlands? About your life here?

(Polish version)

1. Możesz mi powiedzieć o sobie i swojej przeszłości? Dlaczego zdecydowałeś się przyjechać do Holandii? Co robiłeś przed przyjazdem do Holandii? Jak znalazłeś się w obecnej pracy?
2. Możesz mi opowiedzieć o swojej obecnej pracy? (zadania, godziny, kontrakt, relacje, atmosfera, problemy, płaca, zdrowie, warunki, zmiany, upodobania/ awersje)
3. Co sądzisz o pracy w Holandii? (prawa, zarobki, dyskryminacja, pozycja, traktowanie przez mieszkańców)

Appendix 3: Survey

(English version)

Name:

Phone number:

Email address:

Company:

Position:

What is your age? Under 20 20 – 25 26 – 30 31 – 40 Over 40

How long have you been in The Netherlands? Under 1 year 1 to 5 years
 Over 5 years

How long have you been in your current position at the greenhouse? Under 3 months 3 to 6 months 6 months to 1 year Over 1 year

What is your education level? Completed Compulsory education Graduated Upper Secondary education Graduated University

What is your average monthly income? Under 800 euro 800 to 1,000 euro
 1,000 to 1,600 euro More than 1,600 euro

What is your Dutch language ability? Elementary Limited Working Proficiency Working Proficiency Bilingual Proficiency None

How did you get this job? Through agency Through direct contract
 Other:

What is your housing situation? Through agency Through direct contract
 Other:

How long do you plan to stay in The Netherlands? Under 1 year 1 to 5 years
 Over 5 years Permanently

(Polish version)

Imię:

Numer telefonu:

e-mail:

Nazwa firmy:

Pozycja:

Ile masz lat? Poniżej 20 20 – 25 26 – 30 31 – 40 Powyżej 40

Od jak dawna przebywasz w Holandii? Poniżej roku 1 - 5 lat Powyżej 5 lat

Jak długo pracujesz na obecnej pozycji w Twojej firmie? Poniżej 3 miesięcy
 3 to 6 miesięcy 6 miesięcy do roku Powyżej 1 roku

Jakie posiadasz wykształcenie? Podstawowe Zasadnicze zawodowe Średnie Wyższe

Jaki jest Twój średni dochód miesięczny? Poniżej 800 e/m 800 - 1000 e/m
 1,000 - 1,600 e/m Powyżej 1,600

Jaki jest Twój poziom posługiwania się językiem holenderskim? Podstawowy Średnio zaawansowany Zaawansowany Poziom języka ojczystego Nie dotyczy

Jak dostałeś obecną pracę? Poprzez agencję Bezpośredni kontrakt W inny sposób:

W jaki sposób wynajmujesz zakwaterowanie? Poprzez agencję Bezpośredni kontrakt W inny sposób:

Jak długo zamierzasz zostać w Holandii? Poniżej roku 1 - 5 lat Powyżej
5 lat Na stałe