



## **“I Work as I am”**

How do state policy and street-level bureaucrats perform gender in the Dutch integration system?

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Master's Thesis  
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### **Abstract**

Women, who enter the Dutch Integration system as *statushouders*, slip between the cracks of the Dutch integration system. While they are problematised for not integrating well enough, no concrete policy is advised for street-level bureaucrats to implement. With the ‘absent presence’ of gender in integration policy, there is extensive room left for interpretation by integration workers. With the research question: “How do state policy and street-level bureaucrats perform gender in the Dutch integration system?”, this research aims to unravel how gender is imagined and reproduced by professionals within a policy system that lacks any systematic approach to gender. In this article, in-depth interviews with eight professionals are used to gather data for a critical analysis of street-level bureaucracy in the Dutch integration system. Together with a concise policy analysis, this research shows how the performance of gender reproduces static gendered stereotypes and contributes to further Othering of *statushouders*. This dependent interpretation of gender is possible due to the absent presence of gender in integration policy. As professionals working in integration consider their work to be very personal and social, they perform and reinforce gender through communicating and working within the integration system. Lastly this paper places Dutch state policy and integration work in a neoliberal perspective, in which economic participation is prioritised over social participation, enlarging gender inequality. This paper concludes with a call for reconsideration of the position of gender in policy, with the new *Inburgeringswet* planned for 2021 in mind.

### **Keywords**

Gender, Integration work, Neoliberalism, Performativity, Street-level bureaucracy.

### **“I Work as I am”: How do state policy and street-level bureaucrats perform gender in the Dutch integration system?**

One-third of Dutch municipalities declare that when a couple arrives in the Netherlands as refugees, their integration workers focus on solely one of the two persons. In practice this typically means the man becomes the focus of the integration and employment support offered by the municipality (De Gruijter, Razenger & Tinnemans, 2019, p. 5). This figure turned tangible when during my internship a municipality participating in a research, realised that a substantial number of women that had recently acquired a residence permit, were missing from their client managers' files. After asking for input from their cooperation partner *Vluchtelingenwerk* for participants for their new pilot programmes, *Vluchtelingenwerk* listed names that were unfamiliar to the project leader of the municipality. After some thorough research they discovered that these women were briefly mentioned in the files of their, in all cases, male partners. These women received the legal amount of social economic benefit, however were structurally not integrated with a file for themselves in the administration provided by the municipality. These women were not seen as an individual case by the institutions, they were added as an affix to the dossier of their spouse. One can question whether this could be regarded as an administrative mistake, or rather, when this has been the case for multiple women, a structural pattern reaffirming existing institutionalised sexism. There is more structural policy that reinforces the removal of refugee women from the institutions radar. Once a migrant or refugee family stops receiving social benefit (*'bijstand'*), which in practice occurs primarily when the man of the family finds paid work, half of the municipalities certifies stopping the support in general, which leaves the woman of the family or partnership unemployed and unsupported (De Gruijter, Razenger & Tinnemans, 2019, p. 5).

In the light of the new integration laws in the *Nieuwe Wet Inburgering*, the role of the municipalities working on integration grows to be of high influence. The main motivation behind the new integration law is to better suit refugees and migrants with a personal plan for integration. One of the strategies of the national government is to encourage municipalities to create better support and programmes focussed on women, as it now appears this is greatly lacking. Currently not many municipalities have extra support for women, while the numbers of refugee women participating in the labour market is low (De Gruijter, M., Razenberg, I., & Tinnemans, K., 2019). The main motivation behind the new integration law is to better suit refugees and migrants with a personal plan for integration.

The mention of gender in the new policy and the current focus of pilot programmes for women specifically (Koolmees, 2010, p. 13), can be regarded as the mainstreaming of gender perspectives in integration policy. “[Gender] Mainstreaming involves ensuring that gender perspectives and attention to the goal of gender equality are central to all activities - policy development, research, advocacy/ dialogue, legislation, resource allocation, and planning, implementation and monitoring of programmes and projects.” (United Nations, 2020). However, when gender mainstreaming is enforced in integration policy, the stereotypical ideas about gender role division are kept in stance. This enforces the existing patriarchal power division and does not lead towards gender equality. “It is these policies and processes that, in themselves, reproduce the structural inequalities that women and migrants experience in the particularities of their everyday lives.” (Kotze, 2019, p. 60). The discursive vagueness in both gender- and integration mainstreaming enforces the idea that equality is a tangible goal to strive for, however when this ultimate equality is never truly defined, the strategy of mainstreaming becomes rather hollow. Moreover, if these ultimate goals are defined by existing white patriarchal power structures without paying attention to intersectionality, these goals will not strive for equality but simply strive for assimilation to existing power discourse.

The implementation of policy depends on street-level bureaucrats, in the case of integration work on client managers, counsellors or coaches (Belabas & Gerrits, 2017, p. 147). Moreover, these integration workers represent the government, and therefore its policy (Lipsky, 1971, p. 392). In the new policy integration workers will assign their clients to a certain ‘integration path’, which the client will take in the years after receiving their residence permit. Professionals, working directly for municipalities or indirectly via external organisations, are not neutral beings, as they bring their own experiences and expectations to their work, and perform this through their labour.

The performance of gender by integration workers will affect the outcome of integration for migrants, as it sets expectations and reproduces norms. As for the earlier example, women seem to be more dependent on support by integration workers, as the system already allegedly works against them and makes them invisible. When gender mainstreaming is applied without considering other axes of differences, a complex situation could be treated with oversimplification (Acker, 2006, p. 442). The struggles of migrant women are too often categorised as singular issues, while the intersection of being a migrant and a woman cannot be dissected but should be researched as a whole. If these intersecting axes are researched or regarded as separate, descriptive and normative views are reproduced and the status-quo of society is reinforced (Crenshaw, 1989, p. 167). Academic research on this topic is therefore

highly desirable to explore the discourse in which this system operates and dive deeper into the way policy and professionals operate within this same system. This research aims to critically assess how street-level bureaucrats perform gender through their work, and how this resonates with state policy. By exploring this performance, this research can uncover structural reproductions of stereotypes and create space for more inclusive support and policy work. The above issues are tied together in the research question of this paper: “How do state policy and street-level bureaucrats perform gender in the Dutch integration system?”

The concept of *street-level bureaucrats* in this question refers to employees of the municipality or professionals (indirectly) financed by the municipality that organise trainings for or are supporting *statushouders* in their integration. With *statushouders* this research is referring to people who fled or migrated to the Netherlands and have gained a permanent or temporary residence permit, and who are now in the process of their *inburgering* (Dutch civic integration), have gained a *ontheffing* (exemption) for their *inburgering* or have finished their *inburgering* but are still participating in a support trajectory for their ‘integration’. In this thesis, when the term(s) ‘migrant (women/men)’ is used, this refers to the legal group of *statushouders*, nonetheless one should realise that migrants in the Netherlands of course do not only consist of *statushouders*. This research will critically analyse the performance of gender in policy, as well as in ‘integration work’. The analogy of working towards gender equality and emancipation, and at the same time working towards ‘integrating people’ in Dutch society will be explored and compared. Since this research is focused on street-level bureaucrats working professionally on ‘doing integration’, only the legalised group of *statushouders* is represented within the larger group of migrants in the Netherlands. This research therefore does not cover undocumented migrants, nor migrants that are not obliged to fulfil civic integration to receive a residence permit or citizenship.

## **Framework of policy and theory**

### *Neoliberal policy*

At the time of writing this thesis, the Dutch government plans to impose a new integration law, the *Nieuwe Wet Inburgering*, in June 2021 (Koolmees, 2020). In this new law, the municipality will have a larger role in the integration and becomes more involved in the civic integration from the individual *statushouders*, as they will set up a personalised path per *statushouder*. This new personal integration plan (PIP) will start off with a broad intake and in

most cases a ‘learnability test’, which will decide which integration path the migrant must follow. There are three learning paths, respectively the *BI-route*, the *Education-route* and the *Z-route*. The first path is focused on language quality, the second path on young refugees with the potential to integrate easily into the Dutch education system. The final path spans the remaining group, those who are estimated to not reach the ‘adequate’ language level nor will succeed in the Dutch education system. The *Z* in the *Z-route* stands for *zelfredzaamheid*, which translates the goal of this route to be self-sustainability (Ministerie van Sociale Zaken en Werkgelegenheid, 2018; Koolmees, 2019). It remains unclear what percentage of *statushouders* will be included in this path, however because this route is designed for those who have little to no education and work experience, this route will likely host a large number of migrant women.

The concept of, and the need to legally earn citizenship, is a way of controlling and excluding who belongs to the Dutch state (Schinkel, 2008). Dutch integration policy has developed civic integration into an obligation and a binding commitment through contractual practice. The shift of responsibility for integration in the society from the state to the immigrant should be contextualised within a larger neoliberal shift (Suvarierol & Kirk, 2015), prevalent in most Western capitalist countries (Oksala, 2013). In the Netherlands, *statushouders* are expected to take their individual responsibility and have to find the providers of their civic integration. An example being the language schools, which are privatised and therefore operating in the free-market. However, taking into account the economising model of individual integration as neoliberal, an aspect underlit is the focus on an assumed understanding of the shared Dutch culture after integration. This combination is what van Houdt et al. introduce as ‘neoliberal communitarianism’ (van Houdt, Suvarierol & Schinkel, 2011). They explain the paradoxical contrast between the neoliberal individual and the communitarian strategy as an emerging political strategy in Western-European countries. Where the neoliberalism means a shift to the individual responsibility, communitarianism adds another layer focussing on a shared sense of community to protect the in-group identity of the nation-state.

Within neoliberal communitarianism we see that market rationality, based on cost-benefit calculations, is applied to social practices and institutions (Oksala, 2013). Moreover, it is argued that the effects of neoliberalism are gendered. If neoliberalism is considered as a genealogy, a whole new way of governmentality, as Oksala describes in Foucauldian tradition, we must realise that women, and therefore migrant women, are not apolitical entities but are influenced and affected by the capitalist system. Migrant women are shaped and created by a

neoliberal hegemony (Oksala, 2013, p. 39). Similarly, Butler, describes the ‘heterosexual matrix’, which is the system in which masculinity is advanced in the binary and hierarchical configuration of gender (Butler, 1990; Tyley & Cohen 2010). The influence of the Dutch national governance declaring the position of women as ‘worse off’ than migrant men is gender performativity, and generates the idea of inequality. The call for a more individual approach by street-level bureaucrats in the Dutch integration system, creates space for diverse interpretation of this policy and therefore performances of gender through integration work.

### *Absent Presence of ‘women’*

“Integrating women have a worse position compared to men. [...] By offering everyone obliged to perform civic integration (man or woman, having a permanent residence permit or not) the intake, the personal integration plan, and support [...], municipalities can reduce the disadvantaged position women have.” (Koolmees, 2019, p. 13)

By stating that one is integrated when one performs paid work, and expressing the concern over women’s positions, the Dutch Government shows a neoliberal feminist perspective, measuring gender equality as the economic dependence of women. Interestingly enough, the concept of gender equality is centralised in the definition of Dutch culture (Roggeband & Verloo, 2007). Migrants who are undergoing civic integration are taught that in the Netherlands gender equality is at the core of Dutch culture, and it is the norm for women to work ‘here’. This assertion of the national identity is a mechanism to perform Othering. Through culturalist notions, other cultures are presented as ‘backwards’ because ‘their’ women are not emancipated (Ghorashi, 2010). Femininity and masculinity are cultural and social constructs about how gender can and should be performed. Hegemonic masculinity is hierarchically dominant over hegemonic femininity (Haile & Siegmann, 2014). Power within this dominant discourse is not an external force, but a dynamic process that lives by, and is expressed by those subjected to it (Oksala, 2013).

In addition to seeing gender as a social construct, one should not forget that society in itself is a dynamic and discursive concept, and is separate from the more legal notion of the nation-state. Therefore regardless of someone’s legal status, migrants can still be seen as outside of that society, non-integrated and therefore Othered (Boersma, 2020; Schinkel, 2008). The aim of this thesis is to critically assess the views, perceptions and performances of the people working as street-level bureaucrats within the upcoming civic integration policy. As

their understanding and reproduction of the image the government, and they themselves have of gender, can highly influence the execution of this new law, it is of utmost importance to research and reflect the role and gaze of integration workers. The main goal of Dutch integration is paid work (Koolmees, 2019). As put by Akbar (2016, p. 15): “Drawing on the notion of ‘situated intersectionality’, I suggest that [...] immigrant women’s gender roles and identities are shaped by the locations of their paid and unpaid work.” Integration workers have a large influence over informing and supporting ‘immigrant women’ on the path to work. Their own ideas about gender are projected onto, and may therefore shape the gender role and identity the women take in their future life in the Netherlands.

### *Gender mainstreaming*

When policymakers want to incorporate gender considerations, a common strategy for including the differences that gender can make to the experience of the specific policy, is to perform ‘gender mainstreaming’. As previously shown, current Dutch integration policy is attempting to be gender sensitive, as it highlights the unequal position held by migrant men and women (Koolmees, 2019, p. 13). This inclusion of gender in regular policy, is often described as *gender mainstreaming*. Mainstreaming as a general concept in policy can be described within two key dimensions. Mainstreaming on the one hand means a shift from specific to generic policies, and on the other hand means a shift from state-centric to polycentric modes of governance (Scholten, Collett & Petrovic, 2017). In this case, by including the specific topic of gender in the generic Dutch integration policy, gender is mainstreamed. Moreover because of the decentralisation of integration work to (pilot) programmes held by Dutch municipalities, we also see the described shift from state-centric to polycentric governance.

The goal of mainstreaming is creating policy that applies to all; governing parties must mainstream all citizens’ experiences to create appropriate policy (Scholten, Collett & Petrovic, 2017). Gender mainstreaming has been a trend in policy making for over 20 years. (Caglar, 2013, p. 336; Kotze, 2019, p. 55). Literature often concludes that although highly praised, the results of gender mainstreaming in policy over time have been lacking. This can be illustrated through a general definition for gender mainstreaming given by Caglar, stating that gender mainstreaming is “the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action . . . in all areas and at all levels” (Caglar, 2013, p. 338). Here gender mainstreaming is explained as a process in which policy makers think of the different implications their policy



might have for ‘women and men’. However, one may criticise this definition for not being inclusive. Gender should not be regarded as a dichotomy, but rather as a spectrum of identities (Butler, 1990). By focusing on men and women as two groups, a distance between those groups is created, and moreover people not conforming to the gender binary are overlooked and excluded, as is now the case in the proposed new Dutch integration policy, where gender is only described in terms of men and women (Koolmees, 2019).

An additional lack of gender-mainstreaming policy is the neglect of the performativity of gender in policy. As explained by Judith Butler, gender is not solely a performance, it is performative. Meaning that through performing one’s gender, one also establishes and reproduces that same gender. Gender is not a pre-set definition or establishment; it is constantly in motion while being performed and internalised by actors at the same time. When street-level bureaucrats perform gender in their work, they establish expectations of gender for the migrants they work with. Moreover the professionals’ expectations about gender, also become manifestations of gender in reality, as their performativity carries that power (Butler, 1988).

Another problem we can adhere to gender mainstreaming, is the removal of other social identities that intersect with gender identity. As Crenshaw explains “the intersectional experience is greater than the sum of racism and sexism” (Crenshaw, 1989, p. 140). The multiplication of different identities must be explored to understand a person’s experience in society. bell hooks describes in *Ain’t I a woman* (1981), how black women throughout history have been doubly enslaved. The example of being both black and a woman in American history is described as being a double burden. In the anti-black-racism movement, the focus was on men, while in the feminist movement, the focus was on white women. The multiplication of the axes of difference, the intersectionality of being black and woman, created exclusion and Othering (hooks, 1981). This performative Othering, based on a complex multiplication of identities is a focus further used in this thesis. The migrant women that are subjected to Dutch integration policy and the work of street-level bureaucrats are dealing with similar complex situations. Their experiences are shaped by being a woman, shaped by being a migrant, by other aspects of their identity, and by the interactions and intersections of all these identities together.

### *Reproduction of power*

In turn, policy making does not exist in a vacuum. “Bureaucratic behaviour is not static or immutable, but is a result of learning behaviour and a dynamic political context” (Belabas &

Gerrits, 2017, p. 146). Although Dutch integration policy aims to produce gender equality, it exists in a power system mostly dominated by white men (Acker, 2006, p. 445). Moreover, gender mainstreaming policies are based on heteronormative gender relations which leads to a narrow understanding of gender roles and identities (Caglar, 2013, p. 340), resulting in heteronormativity.

An interesting analysis about mainstreaming is made by Kotze (2019), who compares gender mainstreaming to integration mainstreaming. Mainstreaming, as a general term is often used to address inequalities and endeavours to reflect a broad spectrum of experiences in the scope of policy. She questions whether integration mainstreaming as a concept and strategy can learn from the failure of gender mainstreaming (Kotze, 2019, p. 57). As Butler has described gender as performative, and therefore an act, rather than a static given (Butler, 2006, p. 520; Butler, 1990, p. 34), one can apply the same logic to citizenship within the idea of integration. The state of being integrated, is not a static given either. Integration is a constant dynamic movement, consisting of multiple complex experiences. Integration is too often seen as a static final destination, instead of a process over time. Immigrants and their descendants are consequently never considered to be ‘done’ with integration, and are perpetually checked to have ‘completely arrived’, as Boersma (2019, p. 233) notes.

The discursive emptiness of gender mainstreaming is mainly caused by lacking definitions of what gender equality actually entails. If, in a dichotomous sense, women are included in policy as opposed to men, are they measured up to the former patriarchal masculine norm? Or is there space for a completely new perspective to be added? In other words, is it expected that women will assimilate in accordance with the existing norm, which is mostly designed to suit men in a patriarchal system? The hegemonic patriarchal system, paired with neoliberalism is the base of a long tradition of men as the ultimate neoliberal beings, as they take the role of breadwinners and are therefore seen as efficient and successful, compared to women who are of less worth in the capitalist system as caretakers staying at home (Lather, 1988; Oksala, 2013). In this neoliberal system, men are the producers, while women are the reproducers (Holloway & Pimlott-Wilson, 2016). As current Dutch society is drenched with neoliberalism, the patriarchy continues to be reproduced through the social construction of gender and the system still benefits men over women.

The same discursive emptiness exists in the integration system. To be considered ‘integrated’ in Dutch society, does a migrant woman have to live up to established Dutch standards? To strive for equality means to consider all marginalised identities and not take the intersections of these for granted. As citizenship in public debate is often ‘virtualised’, the

juridical notion of being integrated becomes of lesser value. This virtualisation of citizenship entails a reliance on moral terms (Schinkel, 2008), which due to the interpretation of morality adds to the aforementioned idea of never truly ‘arriving’ in a new society. At the intersection of axes of being a woman and being a migrant, there is a need for extensive attention on the complex structures of Othering, going further than simply stating the gender gap in paid work for migrants.

The statement of the Dutch government that the new Integration Law there will bring more attention to gender equality, is hollow without a concrete definition of gender equality or how this can be obtained through integration work. This commitment can therefore be described as ‘non-performative’, the concept used by Sara Ahmed to describe documents that entail ‘statements as commitments’ (Ahmed, 2012). Building on the definition of performativity by Judith Butler (1993), she states non-performativity is when the “reiterative and citational practice by which discourse *does not produce* the effect that it names” (Ahmed, 2012, p. 117). In the case of the studied policy, this would explain the opaque statement that the new integration law should offer solutions for the gender gap of paid work, without actually offering solutions as it does not provide an understanding of gender or intersectional inequalities.

### *Intersecting axes*

The symmetry seen within gender mainstreaming, where women have to live up to men’s standards to be seen as equal, can also be described within the idea of ‘integration’, where migrants have to live up to ‘native’ standards to be seen as integrated. IOM defines integration as:

“The process by which migrants become accepted into society, both as individuals and as groups... [Integration] refers to a two-way process of adaption by migrants and host societies...[and implies] consideration of the rights and obligations of migrants and host societies, of access to different kinds of services and the labour market, and of identification and respect for a core set of values that bind migrants and host communities in a common purpose.” (IOM, 2011).

Others describe this new view on integration as interculturalism (Zapatta-Berrero, 2015). Within integration practices often the apparent norm for migrants to be integrated into is invisible and the ‘native population’ is neither described nor remembered in narrative

(Boersma, 2019). In the case of the Netherlands, “‘Dutchness’ becomes a neutral category” (Schinkel, 2008, p. 24). A clear definition of the ‘in-group’ cannot be given, the in-group can solely be described by Othering of the out-group.

This research aims to show how integration workers cope with this invisible national identity, and how they imagine the Other from this national identity, through performing gender. How does the attempted attention the state brings to gender, or the interaction they have with *statushouders* they work with, relate to their own gender performance? How do they relate or distance themselves to gendered imaginations? And how does this performance influence their work and therefore the lives of the migrants they work for?

Both through monitoring and following the integration process, state policy reinforces the idea of Othering. The same discursive vagueness earlier ascribed to gender equality, is described by Boersma for the concept of ‘integration’. Integration is not one scale to measure, but consists of multiple indicators, of which ‘gender equality’ can be regarded as one (Boersma, 2020). It is common in Dutch integration work to assume that in the inside society there is gender equality, and in the outside society this is not the case. Therefore, in the work of integration the idea exists that this emancipation must be taught and absorbed to become part of the inside society. The inside society, or national society is elusive and takes shape in contrast to the outside society. As described by Bracke (2011), national identities are formed through mirroring to the Other. According to her theory, *Dutch exceptionalism* is based on the elements of being secular and being sexually liberated. By describing the other as not matching to these values, they find ground to identify themselves and have reason to make people integrate into this national identity (Bracke, 2011, p. 29). Even though there is not a definition of gender equality, let alone proof of having reached this in the Netherlands, the outside society must live up to this discursive cloudcastle and this idea is used for the next discursively-hollow concept of ‘integration’. The lack of self-identification of national identities, or their differentiation from patriarchal identities (Butler, 1990, p. 13), create a self-fulfilling prophecy of reproducing gender stereotypes for migrants.

Ahmed describes the phrase taught to children from a young age is that they “could be anyone”, but this applies to some bodies more than to others (Ahmed, 2012, p. 3). To be emancipated according to Dutch hegemonic standards might not be the goal of the women participating in the pilot programmes. The stereotypical image of migrant women staying home and not participating, reproduced by the Dutch integration policy as anti-Dutch, should be problematised. As Ghorashi (2010) explains, this is a culturalist approach stereotyping migrant women as passive and suppressed (p. 77). The supposedly shared idea of emancipation is not

an equal ‘dialogue’, as there does not simply exist one category of women solely differentiated on some axes of difference. This contested ‘unity of women’ (Butler, 1990, p. 21), serves as a critique to the idea that the defined Dutch emancipation should be applied to migrant women. The way integration workers imagine women as following from this policy, and perform gender into their work, is of high influence on the opportunities these women receive. The problematisation of women’s lack of participation (Koolmees, 2019), may reinforce the stereotypical image through a culturalist gaze and does not contribute to the inclusion of migrant women in Dutch society (Ghorashi, 2010, p. 89). The interpretation and execution by the street-level bureaucrats, i.e. the integration workers, could reinforce this paradox.

Lipsky describes how street level bureaucrats need to develop simplifications to do their work efficiently, how they develop defence mechanisms to accommodate stress due to high workload, and how their imagination becomes reality by performing it (Lipsky, 1971, p. 395-398). The simplifications they perform can lead to a one-dimensional idea they have of gender, instead of a complex intersectional reality (Acker, 2006, p. 442). Within their defence mechanism they are very likely to perform Othering on the group of migrant women they work with (Graham, 2003, p. 211). When a client, i.e. the *statushouder*, becomes too complex for the street-level bureaucrat to accommodate, they can perform bureaucratic indifference by Othering. Therefore, the performances of gender by integration workers are of large influence, as they become reality by the executions of their work motivated by these performances. This performativity can result from policy and is dynamically shaped in the execution of their work within the contact they have with *statushouders*. The lack in literature about the execution of integration work, with gender performance taken in regard, and the power that integration workers have and will receive in new policy over the settlement of migrants in Dutch society, shapes the relevance of this research.

## Research Design

### *Methods*

The data collection for this research was possible because of my internship with the *Verwey-Jonker Instituut*. Due to my involvement in the 2020 *Monitor gemeentelijk beleid arbeidstoeleiding vluchtelingen 2019* (KIS Monitor Municipal Policy Jobmarket Support Refugees), I was able to create contacts with professionals in the field. After the postponement of the originally planned research (as can be read in Appendix A) I had less opportunities to



use the network of the *Verwey-Jonker Instituut*. Moreover in the new situation I finished my internship from home. Nonetheless I used the connections and was able to set up 8 interviews with professionals.

After the first two interviews, the participants acted as gatekeepers and through snowball sampling I was able to use the personal entrance to professionals working in the integration field. For this research eight professionals have been interviewed for a minimum of one hour. To perform this research completely ethical and according to Dutch laws considering privacy protection (AVG) the participants are completely aware of the data being used for my thesis, and it was explained as an independent and separate study from the *Verwey-Jonker Instituut*. I consider my position as an intern as a privilege to write this thesis, as it provides me with relevant connections and a network of integration workers. Moreover by setting up these interviews separately, I can perform this research unbound and independent from the Instituut's original project funder, the Dutch government.

As this research aims to dismantle the performance of gender by integration workers, specific questions were asked to gain information. However, as I wished to receive detailed answers, the interviews were semi-structured, to leave space for the participants' imaginations and their viewings on the world (Bryman, 2012, p. 471). After the data collection through interviews, an analysis of this retrieved data was executed through coding digitally in Atlas TI. The outcomes were compared to the existing theoretical discourse in the fields of gender studies and qualitative migration studies. Hereafter the data was interpreted and analysed with regards to the theoretical framework.

### *Access*

What came to light during the data collection was how scattered integration work is in Dutch society. Although decentralisation of integration work sounds as if municipalities have permanent employees working on supporting *statushouders*, reality proved this untrue. There are many different professions one can have in the integration work sector. Municipalities often outsource integration trajectories to other institutions. This is illustrated by the job descriptions given by participants of this research. In the table in Appendix B some personal characteristics of participants are given, with concise attention for their anonymity.

The fuzziness and scattered-ness of the Dutch integration system results in professionals having multiple jobs and functions in the system. Moreover, their employer is

most often not directly the municipality. This sheds an interesting light on their relations with state policy, as they in some cases they are far removed from state institutions.

### *Reflexivity*

The aim of these interviews was to unravel ideas of gender by integration workers. This research follows from the problematisation of the ‘migrant woman’s position in society by the Dutch government (Koolmees, 2017). Throughout this research attention is paid to gender theory, in which the gender binary is highly criticised. The analysis of the imaginations of the integration workers cannot be done without taking the Dutch policy into account, however this research will aim to critically reflect on the dichotomous heteronormativity that this frame reproduces. I strive to perform this research as inclusively as possible, and reflect on the complexities of hegemonical power structures.

Throughout my thesis I strive to critically reflect on my own point of viewing and researching. Research can criticise or reproduce norms, often at the same time. I strive to be hyper-aware of this through language and categories. Nonetheless I must disclaim that my personal position in the world will always bring a sense of subjectivity and that this will influence the research. An example of this is the role I have as intern in the social research institute, or me being white cisgender woman of non-migrant background.

### *Corona crisis*

For an extensive explanation of the effect the covid-19 epidemic had on this research see Appendix A.

### **Analysis**

The prime motivation of this research was the striking fact that one-third of the Dutch municipalities focus on the male member of a migrant family after arrival in the Netherlands (De Gruijter, Razenger & Tinnemans, 2019). During the interviews with integration workers this sexist discrimination in the integration support was confirmed.

“In this country everyone is equal, man and woman, educated or not, everyone can be an addition to the society. However with this target group [migrant women], I see this is not the case. Men are called for work, women are not. Even worse, some

municipalities have no clue how many women are actually living in their area. They have no clue which men have brought their women to the Netherlands.” (Participant 4, Personal Communication, 2020)

The analysis of this paper will be threefold, starting with analysing Dutch state policy and how this is interpreted by the street-level bureaucrats who are performing it. The professionals interviewed tend to distance themselves from policy and explain their work as very personal, which will be expanded on secondly. Lastly this will be brought together in a critical view of the current Dutch integration practices, in which both the policy as well as the execution of integration will be put in neoliberal light.

### *State Policy: An Absent Presence of ‘Gender’*

In the light of the new *Inburgeringswet*, currently scheduled for June 2021, the Dutch government financed 6 pilot integration projects, run by municipalities, solely focused on women (Koolmees, 2019). The naming of ‘migrant women’ as a problematised group in policy leads to a gendered presence, however the lack of concreteness makes this presence rather absent. This hollow, absent presence of gender leaves free space for interpretation by professionals working in this field.

The professionals I have interviewed all confirm that they have never received nor read gender-specific policy, yet they were they all aware of the statistics; women participate less than men in the workforce. Albeit in the absence of explicit gender specific policy, all participants explain that they take a differentialised approach for supporting women than men, based on their expertise and their personal experience. A trajectory consultant working for a social work company, explains how she performs her work differently based on the gender of her client;

“If I hear that he comes with excuses and wants to change his working days for example, [...]than I act more strict for a man than for a woman. Why? Well I think... [laughs], because I think, come on. Be a man.”. (Participant 1, Personal Communication, 2020)

She explains that as a trajectory consultant she works towards a certain goal with a *statushouder*, which is decided upon together with the client manager from the municipality. For men this goal is almost always paid work, for women there are broader forms of

participation acceptable. When Participant 1 gets assigned women to support in a trajectory towards work, she chooses:

“a different technique for the same conversation. Then I dive deeper and try to find out where her fears come from and what she is afraid of. [...] Those conversations I tend to execute more as a coach, to try to remove the barriers to work for women. So there sure is a difference.” (Participant 1, Personal Communication, 2020).

The stereotyped performance of gender for *statushouders*, is that the woman is passive, and exists in the private space, and the man is active, and moves in the public space (Tyler & Cohen, 2010; Roggeband & Verloo, 2007). Most of the participants of this research reproduced these stereotypes, illustrated by their tactics to always involve the male partner of a woman if supporting her in an integration project:

“Yes, I think the man [male partner] should be taken along throughout the process, if we plan a conversation with a woman the man should be updated about this. If we do not do this, the woman might come but she will get in trouble at home.” (Participant 4, Personal Communication, 2020).

By assuming the submissiveness of a woman to her male partner, the professionals reproduce and perform gendered inequality. Gender was mostly elaborated on as a binary concept. Many interviewed professionals state that integration work can be more efficient when divided on the lines of gender. None of the participant are confident that specific policy should be made based on gender, however almost all agree that integration work should be done in a gendered space, divided along the binary of men/women:

“If you look at gender, of course everyone is equal, but not in this business. So when you want to address a woman to participate or emancipate, you are not going to send a man [to do so]. In some stuff you need to keep the division, then it is an illusion to exclaim that men and women are equal. This is true, but not all the time, depending on the context and situation.” (Participant 1, Personal Communication, 2020).

This gendered division is usually explained through Othering, explaining the Other culture of the migrant as one in which gender means something different than what it means in the

Netherlands. The participant that set up one of the currently evaluated pilot programmes specifically for women, which will serve as a best practice for the new policy, roots for women-only groups in integration work:

“We, Dutch woman, are not at all together. We are raised with the idea of gender equality. [...] Dutch women bring each other down, we do not support each other and try to be like men. [...] That is what I recognise in the [integration] project, [migrant] women support each other, that is very different for the *Hollanders*.” (Participant 7, Personal Communication, 2020).

This need to perform integration work in groups divided by the gender binary is motivated by the idea that women become more visible when in a women-only space. This also has implications for the gender of the integration workers, as they also must be women. This gender division is explained by attempting to create comfort for migrant women. However this extreme gendered performativity in street-level bureaucracy, as compared to the absent presence of gender in policy shows the need for more understanding how these personal interpretations are dependent on the integration worker. With the background knowledge that *statushouders* are randomly placed in a Dutch municipality, and each municipality has its own means to integrate, this establishes an inconsistent lottery. The future of *statushouders*, and especially of marginalised migrant women becomes highly dependent on the one-on-one work performed by the integration worker.

*Street-Level Bureaucracy: “I just perform my job how I am as a person”*

All participants named important characteristics for their job as being social, personal and sensitive. The general message they express is that because their work is social, they execute it in a very personal way, as they do not see themselves as separate from their tasks. Their tasks mainly consist of communication, both with their client, the *statushouders*, or other stakeholders, such as the municipality. Because of the lack of policy, and the nature of their work being very social, the professionals perform their work in line with their personal beliefs.

The differentiation of execution per gender, following from the absence in policy, can be explained by the personalisation street-level bureaucrats apply to their work. All participants in some way describe their work as being very ‘personal’, or describe how the motivation for their job comes from their ‘heart’.



“It is not obliged, but for humane reasons I stay in touch with them [clients]. My work is very personal. For instance now in Corona times, no day goes by without sending and receiving texts over Whatsapp from them. [...] Personal connection is very important.” – (Participant 8, Personal Communication, 2020)

These personal experiences go against the idea that bureaucratic work is indifferent work, based on black and white policy and emotion-less decisions. This former ‘Weberian’ tradition, focusing on the rationality in bureaucracy, has long been reconsidered (Graham, 2003). Moreover, as the public debate about migrants and integration is often led by emotions, it becomes difficult *not* to see the work of the street-level bureaucrats in this research as performing emotional work.

Despite its bureaucratic nature, many professionals describe their work as very personal, as in its turn is expected due to the ‘emotional’ nature of street-level bureaucracy (Lipsky, 1980; Brodtkin, 2012). Seven of the eight participating professionals worked only indirectly for a municipality. As formerly explained municipalities often outsource the ‘integration work’ to existing social work companies or other institutions. The one participant who was a direct civil servant, as client manager, described her job as “80% of the time administrative, [...], it is not solely fun supporting and giving attention, as people tend to think.” (Participant 5, Personal Communication, 2020). Nonetheless she regarded her work as very personal, and when asked what is most important for outsiders to know about her job, she answered that “we are one of the first people they get to know, also for migrant women, and I am a woman. [...] I can have an influence, I can be an example. They can mirror me.”(ibid). Through recognising that she can be mirrored as a woman, this participant not only makes her work personal, she also performs Othering through setting herself as a gendered example. The work is personal, because as a person working in integration you seemingly act as the personification of what it means to be integrated.

Other illustrations of this personalisation of work, and performance of gender, are for example participants who compare the traditional role division to their private home. When asked about to what extent the government can decide over migrant women’s lives, a participant mirrored this question to her own experience:

“I have a parttime job, however I also notice that the role division in my home is very traditional. I am simply the person that does the house chores and cooks. [...] and then I think, well that just is how it is. (Participant 1, Personal Communication, 2020).

She explains that from this personal stance she has more understanding for migrant women. The performance of her own gender in her private home therefore has a direct relation to the performance of gender through her work. She reproduces patriarchal standards, as this is her own standard.

She later explains her main motivation to coach women to work is because she feels that they must recompensate the social benefit that they receive, which can be regarded as a neoliberal motivation. In contrary to Participant 2, who explains her motivation as:

“I think that we as integration workers, or as a country, also have the responsibility to show what other roles can exist within a family, or are important.”- (Participant 2, Personal Communication, 2020)

This motivation is more in line with the earlier described Dutch exceptionalism (Bracke, 2011). Through Othering the professional feels the responsibility to expand Dutch culture.

The performance of gender is not only expressed in the ideas and strategies that the professionals apply in their work. They also gender their job in itself. One of the few men I interviewed interestingly stated that this job is a “feminine job” because of the so-called feminine characteristics one must have to perform this job well; which he defines as empathy, communication skills and sensitivity. He adds:

“I am simply myself, I work as I am, and I am lucky, although it has its pros and cons, that I am a soft person [chuckles]. Women tend to be softer than men, [...] That is why I can level with both men and women [as a men], as I am a sensitive person. I do not mind that characteristic.” (Participant 3, Personal Communication, 2020).

Participant 3 describes his job in itself as feminine. This performativity is described in theory about street-level bureaucracy, describing that the bureaucracy occurring at the ‘street-level’, as opposed to ‘higher’ ranked bureaucratic jobs, is more emotional due to the personal encounters between professionals and clients. The same theory genders this division of types of bureaucracy, by naming that women generally work in the street-level encounters to be of a

‘buffer’ for the ”upper echelons of the welfare bureaucracies, where men are better represented” (Graham, 2003, p. 214; Lipsky, 1980). As I earlier stated to be critical of the binary in gender, I would like to rephrase this based on the quote by Participant 3. The street-level bureaucratic work done by professionals working in the Dutch integration is overall seen as personal and emotional work, characteristics that are generally ascribed to hegemonic femininity. The idea from literature, that the hegemonic feminine nature of the work serves as an emotional buffer to hierarchically ordered higher bureaucracy, can be translated to professionals acting as the barrier to filter out the emotions, for policymakers to no longer act upon this. However, by stating that he *‘does not mind’* having these characteristics, this participant implicitly makes a culturally sexist note, that these ‘feminine’ characteristics in general should be something to *do* mind if a man.

The above quote shows us that the emptiness, absent presence and hollow definitions of gender in state policy not only create extensive space for interpretation in the execution of integration work, but already in the nature of the work. The idea that this work is ‘soft’ work, because the tasks that need to be performed are of a ‘feminine’ nature, genders the work done by professionals.

Besides their own gender performance bring reproducing in integration work, another elucidation made by participants, is the contrast that their work forms with state policy. The participants make a clear distinction between their work being personal and policy as something untouchable and distanced. They use policy, for them often impersonated by the municipality, to strengthen their point, but also to make a stricter argument.

“I think the municipality can have more distance from a client. If someone really does not want [to participate], it would make no sense for me to help. There needs to be some kind of motivation. The municipality can impose measures, or be stricter.” (Participant 3, Personal Communication, 2020).

They distance themselves from policy and create a good cop-bad cop situation. This distancing is enforced by the absence of policy, and the fuzziness of ‘integration work’ in general. Integration work is often outsourced by the municipality. This results in many professionals having their work with *statushouders* just as a part of their other tasks. For all participants I spoke to, the job I interviewed them about was just one of the jobs they did. They had other assignments in healthcare, social work or as an interpreter for the Dutch Immigration Naturalisation Service (IND). This diffusion of responsibilities and tasks create a system in

which not one professional feels responsible for Dutch Integration Policy. Only one participant describes it as her responsibility to exchange experiences with the policy makers at the municipalities she works with. All other participants describe ‘policy’ as an untouchable institution which they can embed in their work when they need to be strict.

*Dutch-Integration system: The ultimate goal of economic participation*

The regular order in which refugee men arrive first, and start their integration first, is enforcing the patriarchy. The current municipal policy aims to effectively coach their ‘clients’ into paid work, so as to no longer pay them social benefits. If refugee women arrive later through family reunification, they are structurally made invisible and left without support. This neoliberal approach to integration is confirmed by the direct employee of a municipality I interviewed:

“If it’s about a couple, a married couple, then as a client manager you are responsible for both. [...]. It is never written down by law or policy, but for us it is a rule of thumb, -because re-integration projects are costly-, that you choose one of the two with the highest chance of outflow to paid work. Usually that is the man.”- (Participant 5, personal communication, 2020)

This shows the unequal focus on supporting men as they are considered the most efficient in the labour market. This strategy, that is explained as regular as a rule of thumb, fits within the context of neoliberalism. Humans are measured up to their efficiency in the labourmarket and are regarded as capital rather than social beings. This unwritten neoliberal policy, performs stereotypical gender norms and reproduces inequality.

In general, it is noticeable that the further removed from an institution of governance an integration worker operates, the more their motivation seems to tread outside of neoliberal norms. The client manager, who works directly for a municipality explains that her clients “...need to earn their passport. They will only get what effort they put into it. I am simply here to facilitate.” (Participant 5, Personal Communication, 2020), applying a direct focus on the responsibility of the *statushouder* for their own integration. Another professional worker, who is self-employed in a cultural organisation, explains the goal of self-sustainability in integration, and states that “...it should come from the inside. It is all about empowerment. And what is that then? That is when a newcomer, whether woman or man, feels at peace with

themselves. [...] That is where integration starts.” (Participant 7, Personal Communication), defining integration completely separately from economic value to Dutch society.

While migrants that are following the integration trajectories constantly hear that women and men are equal in the Netherlands, they actually receive less integration support predominantly based on their gender. This paradox is based on Othering, differentiating the migrant over the stereotype of women being subjected to the men. This is in stark contrast to the message that to integrate into the Dutch culture, women should work because that is what gender equality entails in the Netherlands. This is where neoliberal communitarianism becomes extra paradoxical: neoliberalism subjects migrant women as inefficient to integrate into the labour market, however through communitarianism this same strategy Others them from the apparent Dutch society.

### *Invisible experiences*

All interviewed participants are looking forward to the new *Inburgeringswet*. They acknowledge the need for a personal approach and more individualised trajectories. This research, however, proves the need for specified policy objectives, especially when it comes to gender equality and emancipation through integration work. A personal approach can only benefit all persons if the complete intersection of their identities is seen and valued.

Of the eight professionals I have interviewed, two came to the Netherlands as refugees themselves, and three have parents that migrated to the Netherlands and put emphasis on this ‘migrant background’ multiple times during the interview. They believe that the personal experience they have with living in two cultures or having to integrate in society or institutions is very valuable to their work. All participants in this research give the recommendation that people who have migrated themselves or have extensive experience with a culture should be included in integration policy and implementation. Some state that cultural sensitivity is unable to write down in policy, and is of the utmost importance for their job. Moreover, they state that language is one of the most important barriers to integration, in a double sense. They believe that if an integration worker who speaks the native language of migrants is involved in their integration, this can be very beneficial to the comfort, safety and learnability of the migrants they support. Although it is very important to learn the Dutch language to engage with people in the migrant’s environment, integration workers need to function as bridges and understand and act cultures sensitively.



Nonetheless, both the former refugees, now Dutch citizens, have felt like they were made invisible. Both of them have at some point offered their work to the municipality, but were turned down.

“I perform my job [integration work] well, that is constantly confirmed. However I am not allowed to work with my experience, the municipality acts as if I do not exist” (Participant 6, Personal Communication, 2020).

Without the valuable expertise of people bridging cultures, integration work remains a hollow profession in line with neoliberal policy; solely focussing on paid work. Those who have the most axes of difference to be Othered, in this research migrant women, are regarded as unfit and inefficient for the economy, and respectively made invisible in society.

## Discussion

### *I work as I am*

The freedom of interpretation state policy leaves for street-level bureaucrats, leads to professionals reproducing existing norms through the performance of their gender. With new policy imminent, through which *statushouders* will receive a personalised plan, the influence professionals have on the perceived individual immigrant support provision will only expand. The (implicit) biases and stereotypes that professionals express in their work will have a lot of power over important life choices for *statushouders*. There is a thin line between respecting cultural beliefs and reproducing their own imaginations of migrant women that are based on culturalist stereotypes and traditional role patterns (Ghorashi, 2010). An important question for policymakers therefore is whether this more individual approach is going to lead to more power by street-level bureaucrats over migrant integration. And when the answer is yes, is policy then the tool to implement equality if integration workers tend to see policy as something removed and ‘cold’ from their personal and ‘warm’ work? From the conversations with street-level bureaucrats in this research more equality through policy currently seems improbable.

The analogy of working towards gender equality and emancipation, whilst also working towards ‘integrating people’ in Dutch society is not lost on the professionals interviewed. More than half of the participants name ‘emancipation’ as one of the key elements of ‘integration’.

However, they also reproduce the idea that a *statushouder* is ultimately integrated when doing paid work, and are actively choosing to support men to enter paid work over women. While contrasting their personal social work to the strict untouchable policy, and portraying themselves as facilitators, professionals working in integration continue emphasising that the motivation of the *statushouders* themselves is of utmost importance to their integration. They are indirectly discarding themselves of the responsibility to support migrant women to integrate, both socially and economically, which sheds a neoliberal light over their work and agency.

As this research operates within the policy domain of the Dutch integration system, there is a pitfall of methodological nationalism. This is addressed through contesting the concept of 'integration' as a hollow concept without a clear definition of the 'inner' society, in this case the society within the Dutch nation-state. Nonetheless terminology and the focus within the Dutch nation-state is a limitation to this research.

Policy proves to be too absent to create actual content for gender equality or social integration, however it is present when integration workers need it too perform the strict tasks of their job. Policy is the bogeyman in the world of integration, it serves as an untouchable force which demands *statushouders* to perform paid work as soon as possible. The neoliberal state regards the integration as successful if the policy goals are met on paper. When migrant families no longer need social benefits, they are checked-off the to-do list of street-level bureaucrats, as they are no longer a financial burden for the municipality. Without the explicit goal of what gender equality entails within this integration system, the women of these families could statistically be monitored as integrated, without having ever been in contact with street-level bureaucrats. As unwritten rules, which we can explain as gender performativity, define that women are regarded as less efficient to invest in, they do not receive equal support as their male partners do. State policy features women as 'staying behind' which further reinforces the gender ideas that professionals have again. This non-performativity of policy creates a circular motion of reproduction (Ahmed, 2012).

As seen through the theory of mainstreaming we see specific policy swallowed up in generic policy. By imagining migrant women as passive and not participating in society, they eventually become invisible for bureaucracy. Gender mainstreaming proves to be a hollow tactic for gender equality, as it defines no goal for equality nor any means to produce it.

Just as the destination of gender equality being elusive outside of economic manifestations (Boersma, 2019), the destination of integration remains invisible outside of economic participation. The absent presence of gender in policy contributes to this, as it leaves

room for both aims to be freely interpretable to street-level bureaucrats, they work as they are. Despite their personal efforts and emotional motivation for their work, they cannot contribute to gender equality due to the lack of consideration for gender in policy. By bringing the attention to migrant women, the Dutch state solely contributes to the neoliberal tradition of undervaluing women. Through gender performativity based on both this absent presence as well as internalised sexism expressed through the personal nature of integration work; gender inequality is reproduced in integration work.

While analysing experiences of the street-level bureaucrats and the Dutch policy this research did also not always succeed in being inclusive and stepping out of the gender-dichotomy. Recommendations both for further research and policymakers would be to combine Queer Theory with Migration theory, to apply breaking away of a dichotomy not only for gender, but also for other dichotomous concept reinforced by neoliberalism, such as 'being integrated'/'not being integrated', 'participating through paid work'/'not participating' and the 'public'/'private sphere'. To truly strive for equality involves encompassing the complete diversity of experiences, in which the two fields of research could perfectly complement each other.

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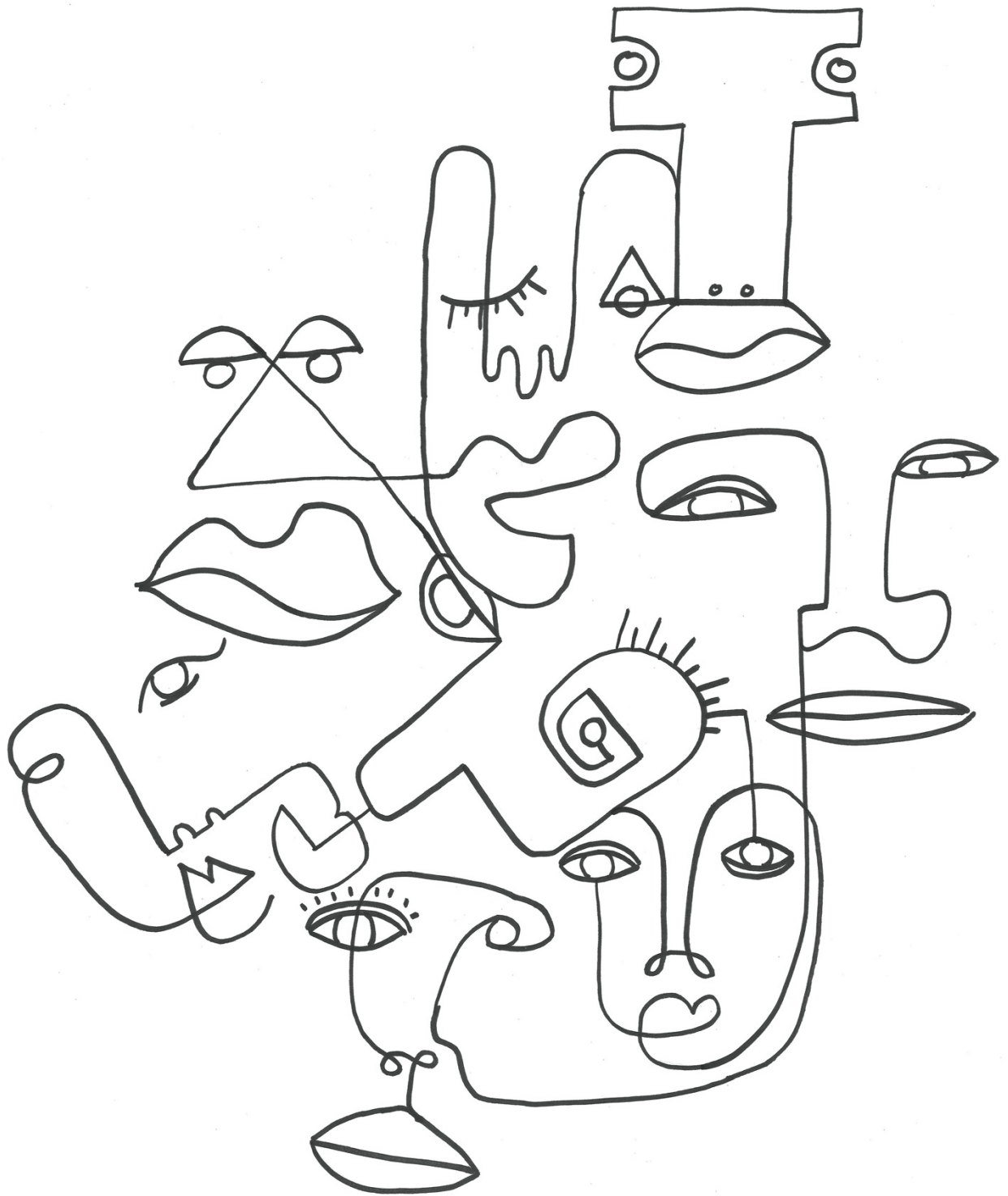


Figure 2 'Eight complexities, sketch of the artwork on the title page, by Sarah Zwerus 2020

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## Appendix A: Explanation Corona Crisis

As this research was conducted, the spread of the Covid-19 virus resulted in a pandemic crisis. The research by *Verwey-Jonker Instituut*, for which I was originally hired as a research intern, was the government financed evaluation for the six pilot programmes for the New Integration Law 2021, focusing on women. When starting my thesis I was therefore planning to pay special attention to *being seen* as a migrant woman by integration institutions through the different municipalities participating. I reckoned the intersection of identities creates a complex discourse which could influence the work of the assigned client managers; proven by research that showed that client managers sometimes focus more on their male clients as they expect better outcomes of them in the job market (De Gruijter, Razenger & Tinnemans, 2019, p. 5).

The postponement of the pilot evaluation by the Dutch government due to the corona epidemic, resulted in a forced revision of my research method in the middle of the thesis trajectory. It became rather challenging to get in contact with the specific integration workers working for the only-women groups, since I could no longer visit the municipalities in person. Luckily with tenacious attempts I found eight other integration workers willing to be interviewed in these hectic times.

Due to this new situation I could no longer include the planned observations in the six pilot programmes in my method, resulting in a change of this research from a rather ethnographic sketch of professional workers in the Dutch integration, to a more in-depth analysis through conversations about the performance of gender in their work. The aim of this research is to critically analyse the gaze of the integration workers and examine their views on current policy and execution of this policy. By doing participant observations, I hoped to get familiar with the 'argot' and sensitive context. The change of method resulted in more in-depth interviews. The interviews have been conducted through (video)calling. This method generally works very well, especially when participants were willing to visually be present and their facial expressions can be taken into account. The participants were less occupied than usual, since there was no human contact possible for them with their clients. As I asked them in-depth about their job, some participants added that they were surprised as well by some of their insights that arose during the conversation.

The unexpected shift to in-depth interviews as main data for this research, allowed for a larger focus on the performance of gender by the street-level bureaucrats. This resulted in a unique look and critical assessment of the ideas that integration workers have concerning gender equality and integration. The interviews with integration workers serve as input to fill in some of the gaps and discursive emptiness around the ideas of integration and gender in Dutch policy. The gaze and way of seeing gender by integration workers highly influences their work as street-level bureaucrats. If policy does not guide them in clear terms and definitions for the goals of the work that they perform in Dutch society, one can imagine that their own discourse influences the way they work and define. The interviews dismantle the layered concepts and through analysis of the data the analogy between gender and integration in the light of Dutch integration work is brought to light.

## Appendix B: Table1: Demographic information participants

<i>Participant #</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>Migrant experience</i>	<i>Relevant Job(s) description</i>
<b>Participant 1</b>	Woman	Parents migrated from North-Africa	Trajectory Consultant
<b>Participant 2</b>	Woman	Non	Project coordinator Cultural Organisation
<b>Participant 3</b>	Man	Parents migrated from North-Africa	Trajectory Consultant & Coach
<b>Participant 4</b>	Woman	Former refugee from East Africa	Interpreter & Coach
<b>Participant 5</b>	Woman	Parents migrated from former Dutch colony	Client manager
<b>Participant 6</b>	Man	Former Refugee from Middle-East	Coach & Assistant language teacher
<b>Participant 7</b>	Woman	Non	Social Entrepreneur & Project Coordinator Cultural Organisation
<b>Participant 8</b>	Woman	Non	Coordinator Volunteering

## Appendix C: Ethics and Privacy Checklist



### CHECKLIST ETHICAL AND PRIVACY ASPECTS OF RESEARCH

#### INSTRUCTION

This checklist should be completed for every research study that is conducted at the Department of Public Administration and Sociology (DPAS). This checklist should be completed *before* commencing with data collection or approaching participants. Students can complete this checklist with help of their supervisor.

This checklist is a mandatory part of the empirical master's thesis and has to be uploaded along with the research proposal.

The guideline for ethical aspects of research of the Dutch Sociological Association (NSV) can be found on their website ([http://www.nsv-sociologie.nl/?page\\_id=17](http://www.nsv-sociologie.nl/?page_id=17)). If you have doubts about ethical or privacy aspects of your research study, discuss and resolve the matter with your EUR supervisor. If needed and if advised to do so by your supervisor, you can also consult Dr. Jennifer A. Holland, coordinator of the Sociology Master's Thesis program.

#### PART I: GENERAL INFORMATION

Project title: Imagination of refugee women by integration workers

Name, email of student: Emma Zwerus (409408ez@eur.nl)

Name, email of supervisor: Maja Hertoghs (hertoghs@essb.eur.nl)

Start date and duration: 06-04-2020 – 21-06-2020

Is the research study conducted within DPAS **YES** - ~~NO~~

If 'NO': at or for what institute or organization will the study be conducted?  
(e.g. internship organization)

*In cooperation with the Verwey-Jonker institution*

## PART II: TYPE OF RESEARCH STUDY

Please indicate the type of research study by circling the appropriate answer:

1. Research involving human participants **YES - ~~NO~~**  
 If 'YES': does the study involve medical or physical research? **~~YES~~ - NO**  
*Research that falls under the Medical Research Involving Human Subjects Act ([WMO](#)) must first be submitted to [an accredited medical research ethics committee](#) or the Central Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects ([CCMO](#)).*
2. Field observations without manipulations that will not involve identification of participants. **YES - ~~NO~~**
3. Research involving completely anonymous data files (secondary data that has been anonymized by someone else). **~~YES~~ - NO**

## PART III: PARTICIPANTS

(Complete this section only if your study involves human participants)

Where will you collect your data?

*Interviews: Using network to find integration workers willing to be interviewed.  
 Participant Observations: done in cooperation with the Verwey-Jonker Institution at workshops organised by the municipalities.  
 Note: indicate for separate data sources.*

What is the (anticipated) size of your sample?

*Interviews: 8  
 Note: indicate for separate data sources.*

What is the size of the population from which you will sample?  
 Amount of people working in integration for their municipality, no numbers known, very approximate guess: 3000 people.

*Note: indicate for separate data sources.*

1. Will information about the nature of the study and about what participants can expect during the study be withheld from them? **~~YES~~ - NO**
2. Will any of the participants not be asked for verbal or written 'informed consent,' whereby they agree to participate in the study? **~~YES~~ - NO**

3. Will information about the possibility to discontinue the participation at any time be withheld from participants?

~~YES~~ - **NO**

4. Will the study involve actively deceiving the participants?

~~YES~~ - **NO**

*Note: almost all research studies involve some kind of deception of participants. Try to think about what types of deception are ethical or non-ethical (e.g. purpose of the study is not told, coercion is exerted on participants, giving participants the feeling that they harm other people by making certain decisions, etc.).*

5. Does the study involve the risk of causing psychological stress or negative emotions beyond those normally encountered by participants?

~~YES~~ - **NO**

6. Will information be collected about special categories of data, as defined by the GDPR (e.g. racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, genetic data, biometric data for the purpose of uniquely identifying a person, data concerning mental or physical health, data concerning a person's sex life or sexual orientation)

**YES** - ~~NO~~

7. Will the study involve the participation of minors (<18 years old) or other groups that cannot give consent?

~~YES~~ - **NO**

8. Is the health and/or safety of participants at risk during the study?

~~YES~~ - **NO**

9. Can participants be identified by the study results or can the confidentiality of the participants' identity not be ensured?

~~YES~~ - **NO**

10. Are there any other possible ethical issues with regard to this study?

~~YES~~ - **NO**

If you have answered 'YES' to any of the previous questions, please indicate below why this issue is unavoidable in this study.

*To understand performance of gender by integration workers it is necessary to understand their background and stance. This way it will be possible to compare gazes between genders, or between integration workers with or without a migrant background, as some integration workers are so called 'experts', who have been refugees themselves.*

What safeguards are taken to relieve possible adverse consequences of these issues (e.g., informing participants about the study afterwards, extra safety regulations, etc.).

*This data will be handled with the utmost care, encrypted with respondent number in a locked document. Moreover the respondents will be fully informed about the research and its goals. Before and after the interview there will be contact with the interviewed persons, and they will be asked whether they are comfortable with what they have shared. If they are not, the researcher will not disclose these elements.*

Are there any unintended circumstances in the study that can cause harm or have negative (emotional) consequences to the participants? Indicate what possible circumstances this could be.

*N/A*

#### **Part IV: Data storage and backup**

Where and when will you store your data in the short term, after acquisition?

*Notes of the observation will be taken in a notebook owned by the researcher, and will be securely deleted from this notebook after being put in a digital document within 1 day, which will be secured encrypted with respondent numbers with a double password on the personal computer of the researcher.*

*The interviews will be recorded with consent, this document will be transferred from the personal phone of the researcher to the personal computer after which it will be deleted from the phone. On the computer it will be stored securely, encrypted with respondent numbers. The same goes for the transcripts of the recordings.*

*Note: indicate for separate data sources, for instance for paper-and pencil test data, and for digital data files.*

Who is responsible for the immediate day-to-day management, storage and backup of the data arising from your research?

*Emma Zwerus, the researcher. MSc GMD student at the EUR.*

How (frequently) will you back-up your research data for short-term data security?

*After each data collection a secured back-up of the data will be copied on the external hard-drive of the researcher, which is safely stored in her home.*

In case of collecting personal data how will you anonymize the data?

*To ensure the privacy and anonymity of the participants, the researcher will use respondent numbers while analysing the data. In the end product there will be no use of personal details, as they will be anonymised to descriptions. E.g. a female integration worker of non-migrant background from a large city.*

*Note: It is advisable to keep directly identifying personal details separated from the rest of the data. Personal details are then replaced by a key/ code. Only the code is part of the database with data and the list of respondents/research subjects is kept separate.*

#### **PART VI: SIGNATURE**

Please note that it is your responsibility to follow the ethical guidelines in the conduct of your study. This includes providing information to participants about the study and ensuring confidentiality in storage and use of personal data. Treat participants respectfully, be on time at appointments, call participants when they have signed up for your study and fulfil promises made to participants.



Furthermore, it is your responsibility that data are authentic, of high quality and properly stored. The principle is always that the supervisor (or strictly speaking the Erasmus University Rotterdam) remains owner of the data, and that the student should therefore hand over all data to the supervisor.

Hereby I declare that the study will be conducted in accordance with the ethical guidelines of the Department of Public Administration and Sociology at Erasmus University Rotterdam. I have answered the questions truthfully.

Name student: Emma Zwerus

Name (EUR)supervisor: Maja Hertoghs

Date: 22-03-2020

Date: 22-03-2020

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Emma Zwerus', with a large, stylized flourish underneath.

## APPENDIX D: Informed Consent Form

**As all participants will be Dutch speaking the consent form that follows is in Dutch**

Beste deelnemer,

Ten eerste van harte bedankt dat ik u mag interviewen/observeren. De data die volgt uit het interview/de observatie gebruik ik (Emma Zwerus) in een analyse voor mijn Master Scriptie. Mijn onderzoek gaat over hoe mensen die binnen het integratie proces werken een beeld van ‘de vrouwelijke vluchteling’ vormen. Ik schrijf deze scriptie in het kader van mijn opleiding Governance of Migration and Diversity aan de Erasmus Universiteit Rotterdam, binnen de faculteit Erasmus School of Social and Behavioural Sciences. Om te onderzoeken hoe integratie medewerkers kijken naar ‘de vrouwelijke vluchteling’ zie en hoor ik graag hoe dit in de praktijk gebeurt. Omdat ik dit onderzoek volledig ethisch en volgens de AVG richtlijnen wil uitvoeren heb ik uw expliciete toestemming nodig middels dit formulier.

Alles wat u deelt wordt volledig vertrouwelijk en geanonimiseerd behandeld. De schriftelijk aantekeningen bij een observatie of de opname van het interview worden enkel gebruikt om digitale data van te genereren. De data wordt veilig en geanonimiseerd opgeslagen. De ruwe data die uiteindelijk niet in de scriptie gebruikt wordt zal uiterlijk na 31 augustus 2020 verwijderd worden. Gebruikte data in de scriptie zal op geen enkele manier terug te leiden zijn naar u. De onderzoeker (Emma Zwerus), mijn directe supervisor (Maja Hertoghs) en mijn tweede lezer (Willem Schinkel) zullen de enige partijen zijn die ook toegang hebben tot deze data.

U neemt te allen tijde vrijwillig deel aan het onderzoek. Mocht u een vraag niet willen beantwoorden, of willen dat ik een deel van de observatie niet gebruik dan kunt u dit altijd aan de onderzoeker laten weten. U kunt op elk moment stoppen met de deelname, of na de observatie of deelname terugkomen op uw beslissing. Dit kunt u bespreken met de onderzoeker, of met de supervisor van deze scriptie. Contactgegevens van beiden vindt u onderaan dit formulier.

Voor verdere vragen of informatie kunt u contact opnemen met de functionaris gegevensbescherming van de universiteit ([privacy@eur.nl](mailto:privacy@eur.nl)). U kunt een klacht indienen bij de Autoriteit Persoonsgegevens. U kunt ook altijd vragen om inzage, wijziging of verwijdering van uw gegevens via het Digitaal Loket op [www.eur.nl/disclaimer/privacy-statement](http://www.eur.nl/disclaimer/privacy-statement). Uw rechten omtrent de Algemene Verordening Gegevensbescherming kunt u achterhalen via <https://gdpr-info.eu/chapter-3/>.

Contactgegevens onderzoeker/student:  
Emma Zwerus  
+31631320987  
[emmazwerus@gmail.com](mailto:emmazwerus@gmail.com)

Contactgegevens supervisor:  
Maja Hertoghs  
+31104081854  
[hertoghs@essb.eur.nl](mailto:hertoghs@essb.eur.nl)

Door het ondertekenen van dit toestemmingsformulier ga ik akkoord met de informatie op dit blad en het volgende:

1. Ik ben voldoende geïnformeerd over het onderzoek.
2. Ik doe vrijwillig mee aan het onderzoek en ik weet dat ik mijn deelname aan het onderzoek elk moment kan stoppen.
3. Ik heb de informatie op dit formulier gelezen en de kans gehad vragen te stellen. Indien dit het geval is zijn deze voldoende beantwoord.
4. Ik geef toestemming dat de verkregen data uit de observatie of het interview geanonimiseerd verwerkt wordt in het eindresultaat van het onderzoek.
5. Ik geef toestemming om tijdens het interview een opname van mij te laten maken en deze te verwerken in documentvorm, of dat tijdens de observatie schriftelijke aantekeningen gemaakt worden die later verwerkt worden tot een geanonimiseerd digitaal verslag.
6. Ik geef toestemming om de bij mij verzamelde gegevens te bewaren tot uiterlijk 31 augustus 2020.
7. Ik geef toestemming om gegevens over mijn etnische achtergrond te verzamelen en verwerken.

Naam deelnemer:

Naam onderzoeker:

Datum:

Datum:

Handtekening:

Handtekening: