



# Refugees in urban and rural Nijmegen

The influence of space on the integration of refugees from the Islamic world

Lars Olof Haverkort





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<http://www.terra-vita.com/leven-van-het-land-groesbeek-ooijpolder-duffelt/images/frontpage/ooijpolder.jpg>

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With great pleasure I hereby present my thesis titled '*Refugees in urban and rural Nijmegen: the influence of space on the integration of refugees from the Islamic world*'. This thesis was my final challenge to complete the Globalisation, Migration and Development-master, part of the study Human Geography at the Radboud University in Nijmegen. And I consider this a great pleasure because the process of writing and performing the research has truly and without doubt enriched my life, plunging myself in a field of work that I can definitely see myself working in, bringing me many moments worthy of remembrance and introducing me to many people that have inspired me with their life-stories, philosophies and attitudes.

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*Lars Olof Haverkort,*

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## Executive summary

The majority of the refugees from the Islamic world that fled to the Netherlands have great difficulties with integrating in the Dutch society which is probably best illustrated by the fact that unemployment between them is higher than between any other ethnic group in the Netherlands. To facilitate the integration-process of refugees the Dutch government carries out a policy that spatially distributes the refugees over the different municipalities of the Netherlands consequently meaning that an individual could possibly be assigned to housing in a large city but also to a small village. What is critical here is that this distribution does not happen in mutual consultation with the refugee, thus also disregarding any differences that might exist between these individuals.

In order to reflect on this policy and aiming to determine how the spatial distribution of refugees from the Islamic world over the urban and rural domain influences the integration-process of the refugees this research investigates the case of the Nijmegen area. Integration is considered to be a two-sided process, meaning that it should be approached from the perspective of both the individual as the receiving society. In developing a theoretical basis supporting an investigation from this perspective this research turned to the concepts of *identity*, *citizenship* and *empowerment* that all come together in the concept of *intersectionality*. Integration considered from the perspective of the individual means that the refugee is able to 'live' the identities that together shape the personal's self, whereas from the external perspective it emphasizes that the refugee should live up to the societal idea of good citizenship. By mirroring these two perspectives it can be determined whether refugees are empowered or disempowered or 'helped' or 'hindered'.

The theory of intersectionality proved to be a good methodological basis to investigate the lives of refugees using this combination of concepts. Rather than focusing on the individual's entire life, intersectionality zooms in on one specific identity-category at a time. What this does is de-individualizing the refugees, setting aside the coincidences of the individual's life and instead finding the 'common story' of the group, thus making generalizations possible. Valentine's (2007) geographic addition to the idea of intersectionality, arguing that space and identity are co-implicated, finally made it possible to compare refugees living in the urban and the rural domain and thus to use this concept to address the question as to what extent the spatial distribution of refugees over the urban and rural Nijmegen domain has helped or hindered their integration in the Dutch society.

The empirical part of this research is structured according to McCall's (2005) suggestion that, when using the methodology of intersectionality, one should start with the individual context and work

outward to unravel how categories of identities are lived and experienced. The first empiric part thus investigates the context of this research which is threefold: it is about refugees trying to integrate in the *Netherlands*, in the *Nijmegen* area and between the *urban and rural domain*. To investigate this context literature about citizenship in the Netherlands and the urban-rural distinction is complemented with information derived from interviews with refugee-experts in - and statistics about - the area. Based on this exploration of the context a plausible, but hypothetical understanding of possible factors influencing the process of integration between urban and rural Nijmegen is developed. These factors then form the input of the second and more analytical empiric part which builds on 22 interviews with refugees from the Islamic world in the Nijmegen area: 10 in the city, 12 in the villages. The analysis investigates if and how these individuals 'live' the identity-categories that are determined to be of importance in the lives of an integrating refugee (their sexual-, racial-, social-, cultural-, national- and professional identity) and how this practice differently affects their two-sided integration process between the urban and rural domain. The outcomes of this analysis are finally mirrored to the hypothetical framework developed in the first empirical part which leads to a conclusion about whether refugees are helped or hindered in the urban or rural domain.

So what is this conclusion? The most important finding is that refugees are highly dependent on the urban domain considering their integration from both their own perspective as that of the receiving society as the city offers them cultural diversity and a wider variety of services, facilities and employment opportunities than the rural domain. But this does not mean that a refugee cannot benefit from placement in a village. The rural domain offers them social control and social cohesion that prevents them from alienating themselves from the Dutch society and helps them to develop more sustained contact with natives and as a result also with learning the Dutch language and culture through regular practice. In theory this thus means that refugees are best helped in a village close to the city as it allows them to enjoy 'the best of both worlds' whereas the individuals are hindered with every kilometer that brings them further away from the city.

But how this theoretic understanding of the influence of the spatial distribution works out in practice depends greatly on the individual. Factors that might play a role in the lives of integrating refugees and that affect whether an individual is best helped in the urban or rural domain include the level of attachment and openness to both the Netherlands and the home-country and culture, the financial possibility to be mobile, the psychological ability to deal with discrimination and racism and the flexibility to explore a new professional path. The policy of spatially distributing refugees should take into account such individual factors and, when assigning them to housing, make the city of which they are often highly dependent the standard starting point and only in mutual consideration of the qualities of the individual choose to let the refugees live in the rural domain.

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# Refugees in urban and rural Nijmegen

*The influence of space on the integration of refugees from the Islamic world*

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Global theme

Many refugees in the Netherlands have problems with 'rooting' themselves in the Dutch society. They are trying to live up to the Dutch norm of being a 'good citizen' while at the same time holding onto the personal identity that shapes the individual's self. In a nutshell this is the essence of the in the Netherlands so often discussed and notorious theme of integration. In a changing Netherlands this integration is not easily realized in many cases, which can probably be best illustrated by the high unemployment levels among non-Western immigrants and even significantly higher levels among those who have fled their home country (Sociaal Cultureel Planbureau [SCP], 2014). The causes for this high level of unemployment are not always easily identified. According to an investigation by the refugee-supporting organization VluchtelingenWerk (2012) many native Dutch shift the blame to the individual refugees as they feel that the language gap between the refugees and themselves often plays an important role. Besides that the report pointed out that a lack of professional and social networks as well as unfamiliarity with the Dutch ways are also important factors impeding the integration of refugees (VluchtelingenWerk, 2012). But, as said, the Netherlands is changing. And the impact of this change on the atmosphere in the Dutch society and communities regarding refugees should not be underestimated. It was only a few decades ago that through liberal politics the Netherlands embraced the idea of multiculturalism as the main discourse on how to cope with immigration and therefore emphasizing individual's freedom and liberty no matter what background of the refugee (Sleegers, 2007). In the last decades this mindset however has changed massively to the point that the immigration policy in the Netherlands is even seen as among the most restrictive and harshest in Europe (Harding, 2005; Meyers, 2007). The discourse has for a large extent shifted from individual freedom towards assimilation to the Dutch ways, norms and values because many natives feel that the economic inactivity of the refugees can be explained culturally (Sleegers, 2007; Vasta, 2007; Schinkel & Van Houdt, 2010; VluchtelingenWerk, 2012). This is what Paul Scheffer (2000) depicted as "the Dutch multicultural tragedy", arguing that a society only has a finite absorptive capacity for people moving in from other cultures; a capacity that has been exceeded in

the Netherlands. He therefore argues that homogeneity and integration are necessary for a society while the presence of (non-integrated) immigrants and refugees undermines this (Scheffer, 2000).

So this liberal worldview in relation to immigrants that has characterized the Dutch political mindset for so long seems to be fading away since the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In the last decades the Netherlands has especially seen a growth in the volume of refugees coming from countries from the so-called 'Islamic world' such as Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran and Somalia (SCP, 2011). Self-evidently, as this region is called the 'Islamic world', the majority of the people from these countries adhere to the religion of the Islam. In the Netherlands it is especially this religion that has been the focus of much negative attention in the Dutch media and politics after the murder of the immigrant-critical politician Pim Fortuyn in 2002 by left-wing activist Volkert van der G., and the murder on film-maker Theo van Gogh by the Muslim Mohammed B. in 2004 (Sleegers, 2007). These events contributed to the Netherlands being the first society to radically break with the progressive and tolerant integration policies that belonged to the ideal of multiculturalism (Scheffer, 2000; Penninx, 2006). Instead of multiculturalism remaining the main-paradigm in Dutch thinking about immigration and integration, the discourse shifted towards assimilation (Sleegers, 2007; Vasta, 2007). The enormous growth in support for anti-Islam politician Geert Wilders possibly illustrates best how this mindset has shifted radically in the last years.

This attention to the integration of immigrants and refugees has made the issue an important part of the Dutch political debate and as a result there are certain ideas on how to deal with the problems of the integration of those who have fled their home countries. In this aforementioned discourse shift in the Netherlands regarding immigrant integration, which thus is said to have moved away from the liberal mindset and now approaches more neo-liberal thinking (Van Houdt & Schinkel, 2010), many feel that it is not the responsibility of the Dutch central government to help the refugee's find a place in the Dutch society. Rather the responsibility shifts away from the national-level towards the provinces, municipalities and most of all the refugees themselves who have to "earn the Dutch citizenship" (Van Houdt, Suvavierol & Schinkel, 2011), a development that has been confirmed and heavily criticized by the Dutch Council for Refugees (VluchtelingenWerk, 2012) who defend the rights of refugees in the Netherlands. Their director Dorine Manson (VluchtelingenWerk, 2013a) believes that the shift from national to local refugee-policy is arbitrary as "many municipalities cut in their expenses for well-being and social services". As a result a refugee may get good counseling in one municipality while a similar refugee in the municipality, even in the same province, is left to his or her chances.

Despite this shift of responsibility towards the individual refugee, one national policy aimed at the local level is kept intact: all municipalities are obliged to assign housing to a certain number of

refugees, based on the number of residents in that specific municipality (VluchtelingenWerk, 2013b). In 2013 for example a total number of around 800 refugees expected to be assigned housing in one of the 56 municipalities of the province of Gelderland (Provincie Gelderland, 2013). What is considered critical in this human geographic research considering this policy, and which subsequently is also the main theme around which the research revolves, is the fact that the refugees themselves have no voice in deciding which place they will live, meaning that they can be assigned to housing in an urban municipality as Nijmegen, but also to its more rural surrounding municipalities as Groesbeek, Heumen, Millingen or Ubbergen.

## 1.2 Theoretical grounding and former research

From a human geographic perspective this spatially distributing policy of refugees by the Dutch government is considered to possibly have profound implications for if and how these people can integrate in the Dutch society. According to Henri Lefebvre (1968) the organization of space is a crucial dimension of human societies which reflects social facts and influences social relations. This means that when refugees in the Netherlands are assigned to housing in villages or cities, i.e. organizing space, there will be social implications in terms of their integration. Consider for instance a refugee who is assigned to live in a small village, possibly far away from job-opportunities for which he is schooled, from people with whom he possibly wants to share his cultural background and from places where he could practice his religion if he has one. The life of this refugee is undoubtedly impacted as he possibly has great difficulties with 'living' his personal identity. On the other hand the refugee possibly benefits from the social cohesion and control that often characterizes villages which could help him to learn the Dutch language and getting to know the Dutch culture. In this sense his integration is undoubtedly impacted through the spatial distribution of refugees over housing in urban and rural areas. Even though this may be an extreme example, it does demonstrate that the search by refugees for a social justice has a geographic aspect. Furthermore, this example also hints at the theoretical concept that is central in this research, namely *integration as a two-sided process* (European Commission, 1999; ECRE, 2002). This concept of integration has two-sides (in this research referred to as the macro- and micro-side) describing the process as being influenced by respectively the receiving society as the individual refugee. The example just given emphasizes the possible importance of job-opportunities, the presence of a diversity of cultures and services, social cohesion and control; all external factors belonging to the macro-side of integration. However, it also emphasizes the fact that the refugee is schooled for a certain profession, assigns value to contact with people from the same culture and has a certain believe he likes to practice; these are all stemming from the individual and thus belong to the micro-side of the integration paradigm. In this

research the two concepts used to further investigate these two sides are *citizenship* (Fenster, 2005; Schinkel & Van Houdt, 2010) and *identity* (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Basically the macro-side influences the meaning of 'good citizenship' and the extent to which a refugee can live up to this notion whereas on the micro-side a refugee has a certain personal identity that influences his life and with it his chances to attain the identity of a good citizen in the Netherlands.

In this research from the perspective of integration as a two-sided process, on the analytical level a vital connecting concept between the concepts of identity and citizenship is considered that of *empowerment* as theorized by Sadan (1997). Considering the macro-side of integration as two-sided, the general notion of good citizenship (actively and passively) influences what identities are and are not included in the hegemonic community, thus possibly empowering or disempowering those who aim to integrate in the society. From the micro-side of the integration paradigm the identities that shape the individual's person influence the extent to which he is able to live up to the idea of good citizenship in the society; the refugee is empowered or disempowered in the process of integration as a result of for example his cultural, religious, sexual or professional identity. The added value of this insight for this research is that studying the integration of refugees becomes a matter of "simply" mirroring the interpretations of good citizenship to the identities of the refugee and seeing whether or not they cancel each other out. When there is friction between the two it means that the refugee is disempowered or '*hindered*' while if there is no cancelling out it means that the refugee is '*helped*' in the process of integration.

Relating this to the human geographic perspective that space influences social relations (Lefebvre, 1968) and the spatially distributing of refugees over urban and rural areas this research hypothesizes that the process of integration of these refugees is helped or hindered in a different manner between cities and villages. Elements in both the urban and rural domain can empower the integration process as there are for example possibly more like-minded people in cities or there may be a greater sense of community and thus a positive social cohesion in villages that can help the refugees in their search for a place in the Dutch society. But the domains could also disempower the refugees in this process of integration as cities, being hotbeds of cultural diversity, may tempt immigrants to live together and spatially and socially exclude themselves from the other people in the city while the population in villages may not accept the newcomer amongst them.

In the course of time some researches have been carried out about the influence of space on the integration of refugees and immigrants. Van der Laan Bouma-Doff (2007) has for example studied the influence of spatial segregation on the inclusion of ethnic minorities in the Dutch society and

concluded that it hampers this process as it stands in the way of contact between them and the native Dutch. However, and this is a notion made already four years before this research by Murdie and Teixeira (2003), not one final and definite conclusion can be drawn from such inquiries as there are cases from which it seems that ethnic enclaves actually play an important role to minimize social exclusion. Even though this research only focuses on cities and not on the divide between urban and rural, an important lesson can be learned: the context in which a research is performed is important.

The research that approaches the theme of this specific investigation the closest is the master-thesis by Franssens (2012). She investigated the integration of Somalian refugees in the urban and rural setting which is very similar to the aim of this research. However, in her research she seems to focus on random disconnected cities and villages in the Netherlands without elaborating why she chose these places and what make them similar or different from each other, thus basically violating the lesson that was just learned: she does not take into account the context. She for example discusses the experiences of refugees in Amsterdam and Groningen, which are totally different cities regarding their population, as well as in villages as Dalfsen and Haren, the former which is known to be relatively conservative and the latter to be younger and more liberal. Considering the critique of 'context is everything' she should have looked more at what is happening in and between these cities and villages and how this influences the integration of the refugees. Besides that she approaches integration too much as a one-sided process, namely from the macro-perspective. She theorizes integration in such a way that it is successful if the refugee has embedded himself in the Dutch society on a political-, socioeconomic- and sociocultural level. This perspective however neglects the idea that integration also is about possibilities for living the personal identity of the refugee; her research is too much geared towards assimilation and not to integration.

Considering the central concept of this research, integration as a two-sided process, this research aims to fill this knowledge gap. In chapter 2 the theoretical grounding of this research will be further elaborated. This theoretical foundation builds on the idea of a 'refugee as a flower', a metaphor used by Dutch-Afghan and refugee Qader Shafiq (personal communication) that helped to develop an understanding of what migration is and does with an individual exactly, namely un-rooting and re-rooting an individual. Elaborating from this metaphor a workable and concrete definition of integration as a two-sided process is developed, further describing the concepts of citizenship, identity and empowerment. This understanding will finally flow into the theory and method of *intersectionality*. This concept was officially used to investigate the subordination of black women in the United States by looking at the identity of being a women and being black at the same time (Crenshaw, 1989), but has since been expanded to look at all sorts of identity categories such as gender, race, class, ability and sexual orientation (Valentine, 2007) as well as taking into account the

significance of space as space and identity are co-implicated according to Valentine (2007, p. 19). In a practical sense this concept opens the door for investigating and analyzing the lives of refugees from this two-sided perspective of integration as determined by good citizenship and identity.

## 1.3 Research specifications

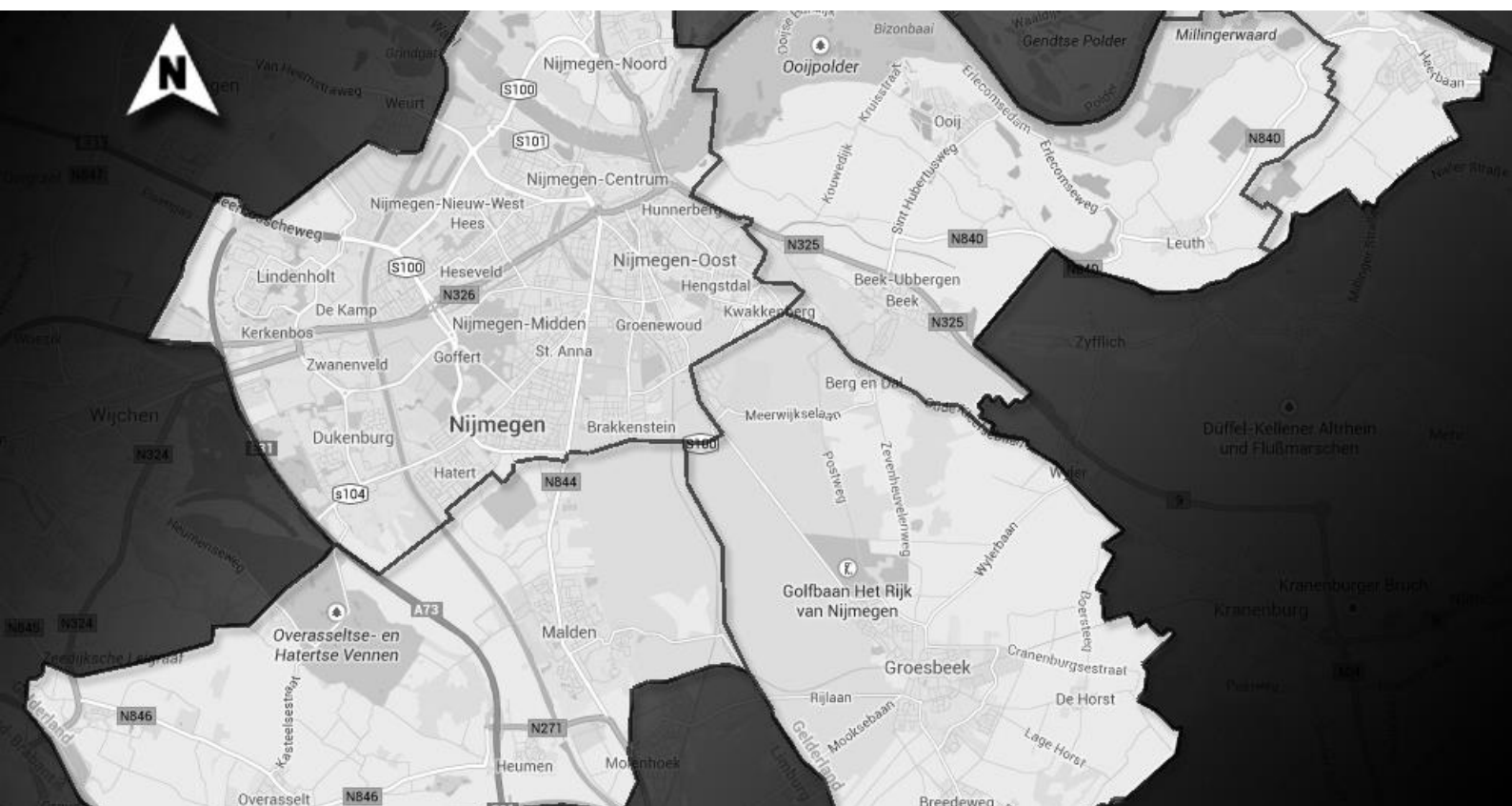
So what exactly is the aim of this research and how will it be structured? This paragraph will shortly address the research specifications, first describing the context in which it is carried out and then further elaborating on the goal of the investigation and how the theory discussed above is used to pursue this goal. Combined, this context, goal and theory lead to a central question that is split up in a number of sub-questions that will help to get to a structured answer on this main question. Finally the social, political and scientific relevance of answering the central question will be discussed.

### 1.3.1 Research context

Through discussing former researches on the integration of refugees in urban and rural areas it has been established that the context in which an investigation is performed is very important, especially considering the human geographic viewpoint that 'space matters'. Since this research builds on the aforementioned perspective of integration as a two-sided process it is necessary to discuss the context in-depth as this is what influences the macro-side of the integration-paradigm. This in-depth description however will be made in the 4<sup>th</sup> chapter. At this point in the research it is sufficient to introduce the site of research superficially.

So what is the geographic context in which this research is carried out? Obviously it focusses on the distinction between the urban and rural domain within the boundaries of the Netherlands as the introduced problems with the integration of Islamic refugees concerns the Dutch society. Besides that it is also in the Netherlands where there exists a policy of spatially distributing refugees over the urban and rural areas of the country's territory. So the context on which this investigation needs to focus is clear on a national level. On a local scale the focus lies on the urban area of Nijmegen and its adjacent rural areas of Heumen, Groesbeek, Millingen and Ubbergen because the research is carried out under the wings of the refugee-empowering organization COS Gelderland that is active in this specific context. This 'Nijmegen area' is diverse in its social and geographical structure while remaining closely connected because of the connection to the city of Nijmegen; Nijmegen is the urban core while the rural areas are mostly geared towards Nijmegen as there are no other cities nearby. Figure 1 shows the Nijmegen area. The urban center of Nijmegen is located at the banks of the Waal and has a population of 165.000 people (Provincie Gelderland, 2014a). Then Ubbergen is

the rural municipality that is closest to this urban core, where especially the village Beek-Ubbergen is very approximate to Nijmegen itself. Smaller villages in the municipality are Leuth and Ooij which are located further away from Nijmegen. Ubbergen has a total of 9.400 residents. Adjacent to Ubbergen there is the municipality of Millingen a/d Rijn [Millingen]. The area of Millingen is the only one in this research that is not connected with its borders to that of Nijmegen and therefore is furthest away. Of the five municipalities Millingen is the smallest; there are 5.900 inhabitants. It also only has one village which, unsurprisingly, is called Millingen. Moving south from Millingen the municipality of Groesbeek is found. Groesbeek is the largest rural municipality in this research with a total of 19.000 residents. The villages Groesbeek, Breedeweg and De Horst are relatively secluded from Nijmegen, while Berg en Dal is close to the city of Nijmegen. Finally the fifth municipality in this research is Heumen which is located west from Groesbeek. It is a rural area with a population of 16.000 distributed over the villages Heumen, Malden, Overasselt and Nederasselt. Malden is the village closest to Nijmegen, but is already relatively remote. In this research Nijmegen will be the urban center that is investigated while Groesbeek, Heumen, Millingen and Ubbergen together form the rural domain.



**Figure 1: Research context: urban Nijmegen and its surrounding rural municipalities (Map data Google ©2014)**

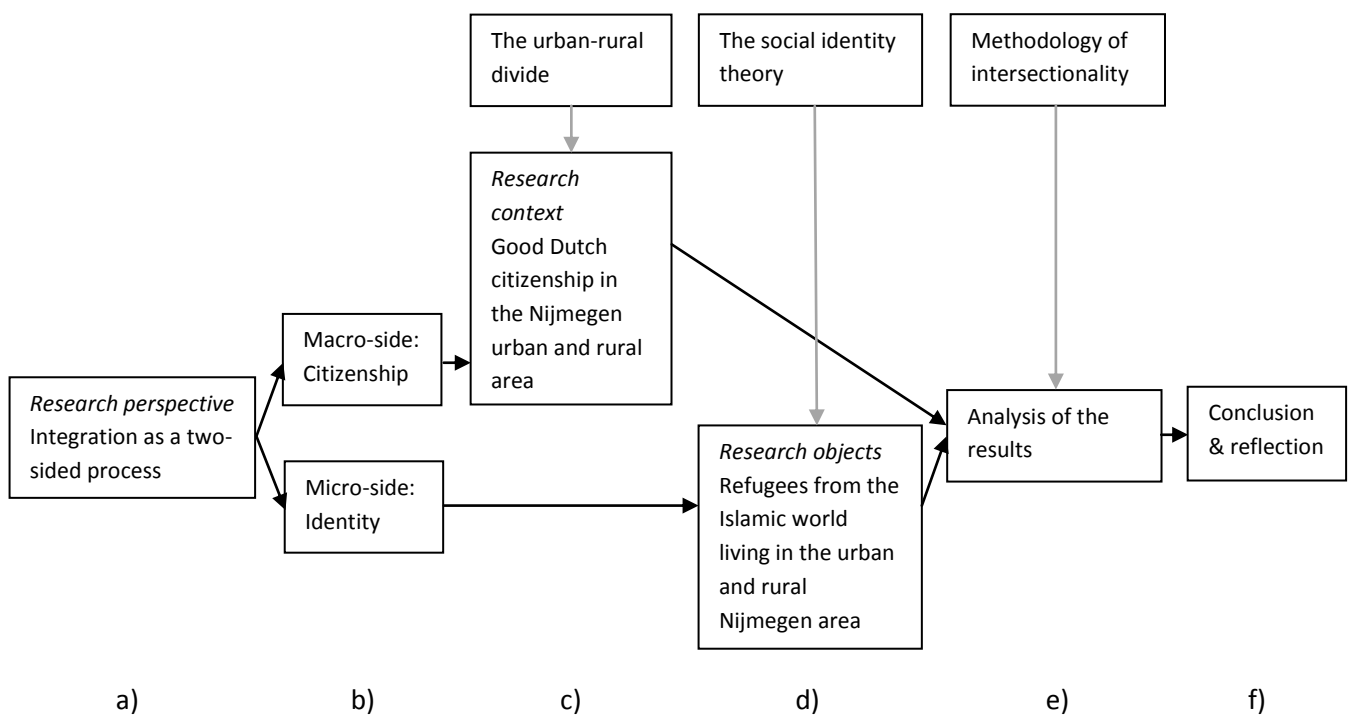
### 1.3.2 Research goal

This chapter began with the observation that unemployment levels are disproportionately high among refugees in the Netherlands, with a disproportionately high peak of these unemployment



numbers between those who have fled the Islamic world (SCP, 2014). In politics and general discourse it is argued that this fact points out that these refugees are not successful in integrating in the Dutch society which is considered a great problem (Scheffer, 2000). One policy to cope with this problem introduced by the Dutch government is (seemingly random) spatially distributing the refugees over all the municipalities in the Netherlands (Vluchtelingenwerk, 2013b). From the human geographical perspective that space influences social relations this spatial distribution of refugees can be considered to have a great impact on the integration of these people in the Dutch society. Using the concepts of integration as two-sided and the methodology of intersectionality this impact is investigated in the context of the urban and rural Nijmegen area. Therefore the goal of this research is *to determine how the spatial dispersal of refugees from the Islamic world over urban and rural areas helps or hinders their integration in the Dutch society by analyzing the life's of different refugees in urban Nijmegen and its surrounding rural municipalities from the geographically determined perspective of integration as a two-sided process using the theory and methodology of intersectionality, in order to develop a better understanding of the process that the refugees in Nijmegen and its surrounding areas go through and to argue if and how the spatially distributing policy of the Dutch government should be reconsidered.*

### 1.3.3 Research model and structure



**Figure 2: Research-model for research on the Integration of Refugees in the Nijmegen area**

How the aforementioned goal is pursued in this investigation is visualized in the research-model in figure 2. The model is based on a confrontation of the theory, the research-object and the research-perspective (Verschuren & Doorewaard, 2007, p. 72). This research is structured according to this model and will in the remainder of this report move through it from left to right. After this introduction, **chapter 2** will start with further describing the research perspective of this research which is integration as a two-sided process (a), linking the concepts of citizenship and identity (b) to the respective macro- and micro-side of this integration-paradigm. Before then moving further in the model, **chapter 3** makes a side-step out of it to describe the methodology that lies at the heart of this research. In **chapter 4** the macro-side of integration as a two-sided process is investigated by determining what good Dutch citizenship means and how living up to this mode of citizenship might possibly be different in the urban and rural domain of the Nijmegen area (c), developing an analytical framework that is mirrored to the experiences and life's of refugees. Using this plausible, but still hypothetical understanding of how the urban and rural domain influences the process of integration of refugees, **chapter 5** focusses on the micro-side of the integration-paradigm. Based on the social identity theory that implies that an individual is a collection of several identities this chapter starts by determining the most important and relevant of these identity-categories of the research objects (d), being refugees from the Islamic world that try to integrate in the Dutch society and that live in the urban and rural Nijmegen area. Based on interviews that uncover the life-stories of the refugees, the meaning and subsequent influence of living these identity categories on the integration in the urban and rural domain is described and analyzed (e). Finally **chapter 6** will combine the findings of the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> chapter and come to a conclusion about how the spatial distribution of refugees from the Islamic world over urban and rural areas helps or hinders their integration in the Dutch society and will use this information to reflect on the spatially distributing policy of the Dutch government.

#### 1.3.4 Research questions

Based on the goal and the research-model, the central question in this research is: **“to what extent has the spatial distribution of refugees from the Islamic world over the urban and rural Nijmegen area helped or hindered their integration in the Dutch society?”** To find a structured and well-substantiated answer on this central question a number of sub questions needs to be addressed throughout the different chapters of this investigation. These are:

- What is integration?
- How can the geographic spatial distribution of refugees help or hinder their integration?
- What are aspects differing between urban and rural Nijmegen that could possibly help or hinder ((dis)empower) refugees from the Islamic world to become a good citizen in the Dutch society?

- What are aspects differing between urban and rural Nijmegen that could possibly help or hinder the living of identities of integrating refugees from the Islamic world in the Dutch society?
- How is the integration-process of the refugees from the Islamic world in the Nijmegen area in its entirety actually affected through their spatial distribution over the urban and rural domain?

### **1.3.5 Research relevance**

Now what is the relevance of pursuing the goal of this research and answering the main question in the matter that has been described? This matter has three different sides to it. First and foremost there is a social and societal relevance to attain knowledge about the influence of spatially distributing refugees over the urban and rural areas of Nijmegen. A better understanding of this influence will in the first place be beneficial for the refugees themselves as some struggles of refugees who are trying to integrate should become clearer; a better understanding should automatically lead to more effective and efficient ways to deal with the issues of the refugees. Subsequently this should lead to a better integration of refugees meaning that in the Netherlands their standard of living can be improved while at the same time this should ultimately relieve some of the general tensions between the native Dutch and the newcomers from the Islamic world in the Netherlands that have been induced by the lack of integration of refugees and that have scarred the society the last decades, making the research possibly beneficial for the Dutch society as a whole.

Secondly there is a sociopolitical relevance to this research related to the policy of spatially distributing refugees over the different municipalities of the Netherlands. Filling the knowledge gap about the influence of spatially distributing the refugees from the Islamic world on their integration is self-evidently beneficial for the Dutch authorities that execute this policy. The knowledge created in this research can be used to determine the best method considering the future allocating of housing to refugees, as a result improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the policy. Besides improving - and thus being beneficial for - the policy itself, it should also lead to lower costs in terms of time and money for these authorities that are responsible for the execution of the policy.

Thirdly and finally there is a scientific relevance to find an answer on the central question using the two-sided perspective of integration and the self-developed and therefore unique theoretic and methodological combination of identity, citizenship, empowerment and intersectionality. As mentioned earlier the research aims to fill a knowledge gap about the influence of the distribution of refugees over urban and rural areas on their integration as it has not been properly studied from the perspective of integration as a two-sided process. The theoretic grounding of this research, which thus builds on this two-sided integration concept, can function as a stimulation and inspiration for a series of scientific studies (not necessarily only from the field of human geography, but possibly also fields as psychology, sociology and anthropology) that build on this perspective which is desirable for

both the receiving society as the individual refugee as the interests of both parties are taken into account in developing knowledge about how the integration-process is affected. Furthermore it is, as far as known, the first time that the integration of a certain group in a society is investigated using the combination of the concept of integration as a two-sided process and the theory and methodology of intersectionality. At the end of the research it is thus also important to reflect on the usefulness and added value of this combination of concepts as a theoretic methodology for studying the theme of integration.

## 2. Theoretical grounding

This chapter aims to further describe the already introduced concepts and theoretical relations and use them to develop a theoretical foundation that provides a solid basis to investigate the integration of refugees in urban and rural settings. In doing so it will start by building on the metaphor of a refugee as a flower to get a clear picture of the consequences of forced migration and see how this relates to the difficulties that many people who are forced to migrate experience when trying to settle in a new society. Building from this metaphor in the first paragraph the concept of integration as a two-sided process is introduced: a concept that supposes that the integration process has an external or a 'macro-side' and an internal or 'micro-side'. Two concepts that fit well within this two-sided integration-paradigm are respectively 'citizenship' and 'identity'. In the second paragraph these two concepts are linked to each other using the third concept of 'empowerment', seemingly making them belong to each other. Flowing from there the theory of intersectionality is introduced in the third paragraph. Finally, all these concepts and how they relate is summarized in the fourth and last paragraph.

### 2.1 Integration as a two-sided process

What happens with a refugee when he or she is forced to migrate can best be explained on the basis of the analogy of a flower as described by Qader Shafiq (personal communication) who has personally fled his home-country Afghanistan and now tries to guide and empower refugees in the Netherlands to find a place in the Dutch society. Qader Shafiq: *"When a flower is violently pulled out of its soil it will take along a whole bunch of roots. These roots are vital as they obtain nutrients for the flower and they help to anchor it in the ground. Then, when replanting the flower, one should consider the fertility of the ground considering the qualities of the flower. One flower may need loose sand and only a small amount of water while another flower flourishes best in a wet climate."*

He believes that people are not that different compared to flowers. In the course of time they root themselves in certain places, albeit cities, provinces or countries. They feel at home in these places because of the networks they have established, because of the role they can play in that society, because they know how to live in the culture and because they have a certain stability in their lives. When a person then gets violently ripped out of this life this has profound implications. This is what happens with refugees as well. They are forced away from their homes but take along a whole set of norms, values, ideas and experiences; this is what makes up the *identity* of the person who is forced

away from its home country. These roots should be taken into account when trying to understand why a refugee can or cannot integrate in a new society. We can all imagine that persons with such roots and who did not even voluntarily leave their home country want to hold onto his or her personal self as much as possible and live the identities that shape this personal self. This basically also is the essence of integration; otherwise it would be assimilation. But to what extent is this possible in the country of arrival? This is where an important insight in integration comes into play: *“the process of integration must be seen as a two way process which places certain duties and obligations on refugees and on the host society at both national and community level in order to create an environment in the host society which welcomes refugees as people who have something to contribute to society”* (European Commission, 1999; ECRE, 2002). So integration as a two-sided process implies that people should as much as possible ‘live’ the identity that they want to live while at the same time the receiving community should provide them with an environment that does not hinder their integration; it is about inclusion and exclusion. What is considered an important state regulated technique and instrument of in- and exclusion is the notion of *citizenship* (Schinkel & Van Houdt, 2010) which in this research will provide the basis for studying the external or macro-side of the concept of integration as a two-sided process; the side of the receiving communities.

### **2.1.1 The macro-side: Citizenship**

Citizenship is an important notion in the debate about integration. Schinkel and Van Houdt (2010) distinguish between two types of citizenship: formal citizenship and moral citizenship. Formal citizenship deals with the more legal issues of being a part of a society, as the permission to work and/or vote, whereas moral citizenship emphasizes the notion of what is a ‘good citizen’ and what is ‘asked’ by the people in the receiving society. The distinction between these two relates to what has been mentioned earlier about integration as a two-sided process. The obligation of the host society to create a welcoming environment for the refugee has a national/political and a societal level: the host society at a national level mostly deals with more formal issues whereas the notion of a good citizen mostly stems from the level of the community.

For a refugee in the Netherlands formal citizenship comes in the form of a residence permit, which means that he or she is allowed to stay and work in the Netherlands. When they have such a permit they do not need to worry about their formal citizenship. For a great deal the pressure on the integration of the forced migrants seems to come forward out of this idea of moral citizenship, making this form more relevant for this specific research about the integration of these refugees. That is why in the remainder of this research when talking about ‘citizenship’ it is referring to this moral definition.

But what does it theoretically mean that there exists, albeit consciously or unconsciously, a moral definition of citizenship within a society? Fenster (2005) states that the traditional definitions of citizenship *“are about exclusion rather than inclusion for many people ... the definitions of citizenship are identity related in that they dictate which identities are included within the hegemonic community and which are excluded”* (Fenster, 2005, p. 224). In relation to this idea of moral citizenship this means that people who do not comply with the generally accepted view of a good citizen within a community are not included but rather excluded, meaning that they are not able to integrate within that society. Fenster (2005) then points out that as a result of specific definitions of moral citizenship there could be negative (as well as positive) effects on women, children, gays and lesbians, elderly people and people of ethnic racial minorities. So there exists a pressure on the integration of migrants from this idea of citizenship as it dictates whether or not their identity could be included within the receiving society. This introduces the next important concept in this investigation which is that of *identity*, which will provide the basis for studying the internal and thus micro-side of integration as a two-sided process.

### **2.1.2 The micro-side: Identity**

The term identity is one that is used widely in politics and often heard in other contexts as well. It however remains a relatively vague and variously defined concept. Taking the metaphor of the refugee as a flower with different roots as a starting point however allows finding a direction as to how in this research the concept of identity should be used; it introduces the Social Identity Theory of Tajfel and Turner (1979). According to them an individual does not have one “personal self”, but rather several selves that correspond to widening circles of group membership. In the same vein this also means that a person has multiple social identities, derived from the individual’s perceived membership to certain social groups (Hogg & Vaughan, 2002). Such thinking is closely related to the analogy of the refugee having different roots. Someone can for instance, based on the life and experiences in both his home- and new country describe himself (and assign value to these identities) as a male, young, Somalian, Nijmegian, Muslim technician and may think, feel and act on the basis of these different identities in differing social contexts (Turner & Hogg, 1987). This means that in this research when talking about the ‘identity’ of an individual it is not the aim to give an all-encompassing description of an individual but rather zoom in on one of the identity-categories that is just one piece of the ‘personal self’ of the refugee. An important insight that shines through here is that someone’s personal identity or personal self is not something that is passively experienced but rather actively lived and practiced. This is in accordance with Amartya Sen’s (2006) perspective who also builds on this idea that individuals have multiple identities. He additionally criticizes the idea that someone’s personal identity is fixed and rather argues that identities are fluid and ever evolving

as a result of the individual who actively influences how an identity is lived and what identities are given more salience to (Sen, 2006). This is an important additional insight for this research as it means that the integration-process can be actively influenced by the individual refugee through the practice of identity and is not something that is predetermined to succeed or not only as a result of external factors. This means that even though this research focuses on the influence of the spatial distribution on the integration of refugees (macro-side), it is important not to forget that the individual's practice and determination to integrate (micro-side) still plays a vital role as well.

With all this in the back of our minds, what actually is integration in this research? So far, it has been established that the integration of a refugee is two-sided; both the individual itself as the receiving society have an important role to play in the process of the integration of a refugee. The process of integration therefore is under pressure from the perspective of the community as well as the perspective of the refugee. This is where the concepts of citizenship and identity are opposing each other. On the one side the refugee wants as much as possible be who he wants to be and thus live the identities that shape the individual's self (Turner & Hogg, 1987). The receiving society however has a perspective and structure that affect the extent to which an individual can live up to the notion of 'good' or 'moral' citizenship (Fenster, 2005); a perspective and structure that possibly leaves no room for the identity of refugees. In such a situation this means that the refugee has to assimilate to fit in the receiving society, which thus means moving away from the idea of integration. On the other side of the continuum there is the perspective of the receiving community that defines what it means to be a good citizen (Schinkel & Van Houdt, 2010) and has a certain societal structure that influences how an individual can live up to this notion. If the refugee then does not live up to these ideas of integration this means that he or she will be excluded by the society (Fenster, 2005). Integration, in this research, thus is finding the balance between living the identities that the refugee wants to live as they shape the individual's self while at the same time complying to the societal identity of good citizen so that he or she can be included within the hegemonic community.

Now briefly return to the idea of a refugee as a flower. It perfectly fits within the definition of integration that has been described above as it also emphasizes the two-sidedness of the process; on the one hand it is about the roots of the refugee itself, on the other it recognizes the importance of the ground (the new society) in which the refugee is trying to root gain. So now it has been established what integration means and how citizenship and identity fit within the definition of integration. But what exactly happens between these two concepts that theoretically helps or hinders the integration of refugees? To answer that question next paragraph investigates the concept of empowerment and disempowerment.



## 2.2 Empowerment and disempowerment

The study of empowerment and disempowerment addresses members of groups that are excluded from decision-making processes through social discrimination based on disability, race, ethnicity, religion or gender. This field of study is therefore closely related to the struggles to integrate by refugees as, when integration is failing, they are excluded from the (Dutch) society in which they try to find a place and they thus need to be empowered to turn things around. In the view of Elisheva Sadan (1997) the idea of empowerment is, just like integration, a process which can be investigated from two sides; she describes these two sides as the micro- and the macro-level. She states: *“for the individual – the micro level – the empowerment process of increasing control and transition from a state of powerlessness. Community empowerment – the macro level – is a collective social process of creating a community, achieving better control over the environment, and decision making in which groups, organizations or communities participate”* (Sadan, 1997, p. 137). What is obvious in this distinction is that the empowerment process for the individual (refugee) is a more active process whereas there is none to limited influence on the more passive and external notion of community empowerment.

So how does the concept of empowerment relate to this research’s perspective on integration as two-sided and what is its added value when investigating the integration of refugees? In this research the concepts of empowerment and disempowerment are considered the glue between the two theoretical sides of integration as two-sided, bringing them together as if they belong to each other. To understand this statement it is needed to briefly return to the two concepts that are at the core of the definition of integration: citizenship and identity. Considering the link between integration and (dis)empowerment from the micro-level of empowering, thus from the perspective of the individual, this means that the refugee is or is not able to connect and therefore include himself in the society as a result of his personal identity; the refugee can or cannot be included in the hegemonic community because of his cultural, sexual, educational, religious or other personal identity. From the macro-level of (dis)empowerment, so the perspective of the community, the linkage between empowerment and integration means that there exists an interpretation of what is ‘good citizenship’ within the receiving community that dictates what identities are accepted and which identities are denied within that society. In both these linkages of integration as two-sided to empowerment from the micro- and the macro-level the concepts of citizenship and identity play the leading roles. The added value of this insight for this research is that studying the integration of refugees becomes a matter of “simply” mirroring the interpretations of good citizenship (or better the identity of a good citizen) to the

identities of the refugee and seeing whether or not they cancel each other out. When there is friction between the two it means that the refugee is disempowered or '*hindered*' while if there is no cancelling out it means that the refugee is '*helped*' in the process of integration.

So it has been established that through this mirroring of good citizenship and identity it can be determined whether or not a refugee is hindered or helped in his process of integrating in the Dutch society. There is however one important implication for researching this issue considering the Social Identity Theory of Tajfel and Turner (1969) that lies on the basis of the central perception on identity in this research. To recall: the theory states that an individual does not have one identity but rather a multiplicity of social identities that together shape this individual's self. The practical implication for this research is that when trying to determine whether a refugee is helped or hindered to integrate there can only be zoomed in on one of the identities of the refugee and not the person as a whole, meaning that the result of the investigation will be an insight in internal and external factors that possibly contribute to or break down the process of integration based on one of the loose identities of the refugee in a certain context. The strength of using this Social Identity Theory here is that the focus in the investigation shifts towards identity-categories and therefore the refugees are de-individualized which allows a greater generalizability as coincidences of the individuals life are left out of the analysis. This de-individualization is in line with the intentions behind this research as it does not seek to find or describe a theoretically 'perfect refugee' or 'perfect receiving community' as there will be differences in the process of integration between communities and individuals. Rather it aims to develop a better understanding of the process that the refugees in urban Nijmegen and its rural surroundings are likely to go through and what factors may well play an important role in helping this process forward; it aims to develop an understanding on how to empower these people as a group. But how to further investigate this process of integration of refugees in the differing contexts of the urban and rural domain? For this matter the next paragraph will introduce the theory and methodology of intersectionality that perfectly links up with the perspective on integration as two-sided and the idea of empowerment that have been discussed in this chapter so far.

## 2.3 Intersectionality as a theory

The concept of intersectionality was first mentioned by feminist Kimberlé Crenshaw (1989). In a research about the subordination of black women in the United States she states that their experience of oppression can only be understood by looking at their race and sex dependently; the combination of being black and being a woman. The concept has since then been expanded to not

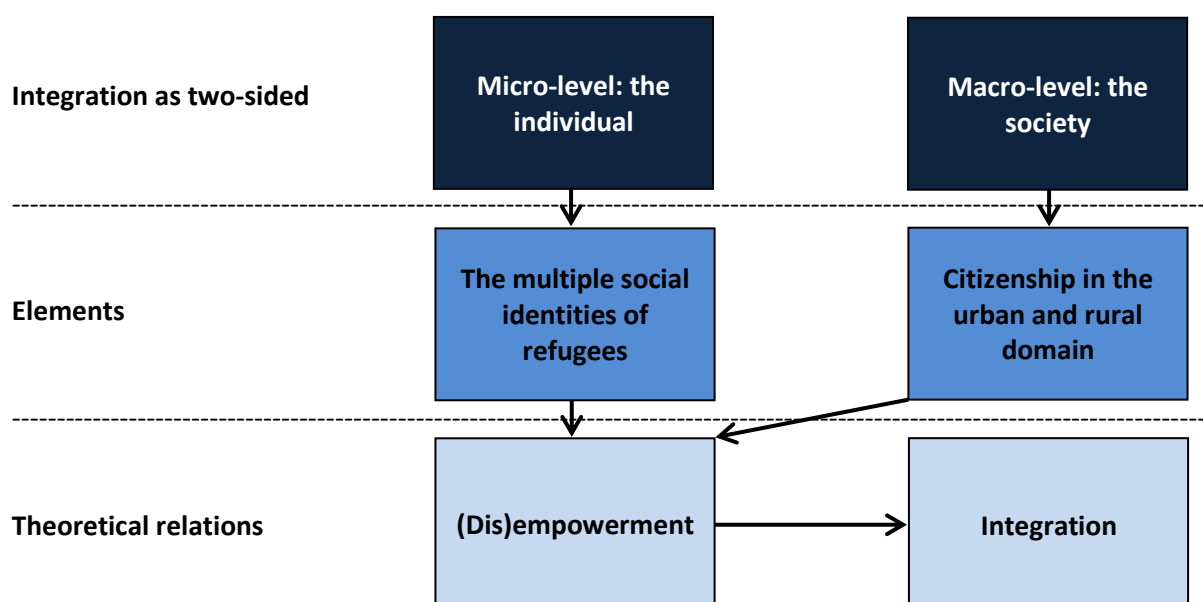
only look at black women but to all sorts of biological, social and cultural categories, such as gender, race, class, ability, sexual orientation and species (Valentine, 2007). The theory suggests that these axes of identity interact on multiple and often simultaneous levels, contributing to systematic injustice and social inequality (Crenshaw, 1989). From a geographical perspective, Valentine (2007) has formulated critique on the theory of intersectionality. She states that studies have tended to limit their analyses to the relationship between particular identities such as ethnicity and gender (such as the research about black women) rather than also taking into account the significance of space in processes of subject formation; this is where she builds on Henri Lefebvre's (1968) perspective who argues that the organization of space is a crucial dimension of human societies which reflects social facts and influences social relations. She states: *"the stories through which specific identities emerge for a particular individual do not occur in a vacuum; rather, identities are highly contingent and situated accomplishments. Space and identities are co-implicated"* (Valentine, 2007, p. 19). This means that, considering the field of human geography, the theory of intersectionality should not only focus on the relationship between identities but also take into account the intersection of space.

So when studying the impact of the spatial dispersal of refugees over urban and rural areas in the Netherlands on their chance to find a place in the Dutch society, this theoretic idea of intersectionality as formulated by Valentine (2007) should provide a solid foundation. But how well does it fit with the perspective of integration as two-sided and the concept of empowerment as described in this chapter so far? And what are the practical implications for the study? First of all it connects to the Social Identity Theory by Tajfel and Turner (1979) that argues that an individual has not one but multiple social identities. A fundamental attribute of the theory of intersectionality is that it supposes the same thing as it tries to investigate how these loose social identities connect to each other and how they contribute to systematic injustice and social inequality. This injustice and social inequality can have very different connotations considering the field of study. In this specific study the issue of integration of refugees is addressed, arguing that the placement of refugees over the urban and rural municipalities around Nijmegen possibly strengthens or weakens the growth of injustice and inequality between the refugees as the research is based on the believe that space matters and therefore believes that this placement has profound implications on the process of refugee's integration in the Dutch society. This is the second manner in which intersectionality fits well within this specific research. Valentine's (2007) contribution to the theory makes it embrace Henri Lefebvre's (1968) view that space influences social relations and also makes it connect to the perspective on integration as a two-sided process; the stories and difficulties of the individual refugees are not only the result of the working out of his or her own specific identities as they do not

occur in a vacuum. But “rather, identities are highly contingent and situated accomplishments meaning that space and identity are co-implicated” (Valentine, 2007, p. 19), which means that the differing qualities of social and physical environments, such as the deviating notions of citizenship between the urban and the rural domain, influences the process of integration of the refugees as well. So the idea of intersectionality fits well with the intentions of this research. But how is the concept then practically employed in studying the influence of the spatial distribution of the refugees on their integration in the Dutch society? This question will be addressed in the next chapter which describes and underpins the methodology that lies on the basis of this research. But before continuing, the next paragraph will briefly recap and summarize the theoretical concepts and relations that have been adopted in the previous paragraphs.

## 2.4 Conceptual model

The causal relations that are presumed in this research are visualized in the conceptual model (Verschuren & Doorewaard, 2007), which is shown in figure 3. The conceptual model consists of three layers that in this paragraph will be discussed from the top, being the concept of integration as two-sided, moving down via the central elements and further towards the theoretical relations that are presumed in this research.



**Figure 3: the conceptual model of integration as a two-sided process**

The starting point of this research is the idea that the integration of an individual has two sides. On the one hand it is up to the refugee to find a spot in the new society; on the other hand the receiving

society in which he or she comes to live needs to provide a situation that helps this process. This means that on the one hand a refugee needs to find a way to incorporate all social identities in the society of arrival where on the other hand the physical and social environment influences the extent to which this is possible. Moving down one layer in the conceptual model the central elements that need to be investigated in the research are found. In this matter this chapter has first investigated and defined the concept of citizenship, arguing that through geographical differences (in this research between the urban and rural domain) both the notion on what good citizenship means as well as the possibilities to live up to this notion are affected. This is the societal or macro-side of the idea of integration as two-sided. Opposite to this concept of citizenship this chapter investigated the concept of identity and, building from the Social Identity Theory by Tajfel and Turner (1979), argued that individual refugees have different social identities based on their personal self which can influence the process of their integration. This is the micro-side of the integration-paradigm. Moving down in the conceptual model, the lowest level focusses on the (dis)empowerment of refugees and their process of integration. This is where the concepts of identity and citizenship get connected, because when mirroring the experiences and identities of the refugees to the rural and urban notions and implications on citizenship it can be investigated how they are empowered or disempowered, or helped or hindered, to be a part of the Dutch society and thus also how the spatial dispersal influences their integration.

### 3. Methodology

This chapter will discuss how this theoretic concept of intersectionality can practically be employed to study the influence that the policy of spatially distributing the refugees over urban and rural areas in the Netherlands has on their integration in the Dutch society. The usage of this theory as a practical research-methodology implies using a certain scientific strategic perspective which in turn has implications for the way data needs to be collected and analyzed as well as for the validity, reliability and usefulness of this research. Finally there are also certain ethical considerations that need to be elaborated as they possibly have a consequence on how the research is carried out. These issues are discussed in this chapter after first elaborating on the methodological nature of the theory of intersectionality.

#### 3.1 Intersectionality as a methodology

As mentioned in the last chapter, the concept of intersectionality was first developed to get a better understanding of the contribution to systematic injustice and social inequality by studying the intersections of the multiple identities of an individual, such as his or hers ethnicity, gender and/or sexuality (Crenshaw, 1989). Valentine (2007) suggested from a geographical perspective that the concept could also be used for spatial studies as identities and space are co-implicated. When using intersectionality as a method to study spatial questions McCall (2005) suggests starting with an individual context and then working outward to unravel how categories of identities are lived and experienced. Valentine (2007, p. 15) adds that *“this approach means looking at, for example, accounts of the multiple, shifting and sometimes simultaneous ways that self and other are represented, the way that individuals identify and disidentify with other groups, how one category is used to differentiate another in specific contexts, and how particular identities become salient or foregrounded at particular moments. Such an analysis means asking questions about what identities are being “done”, and when and by whom, evaluating how particular identities are weighted or given importance by individuals at particular moments and in specific contexts, and looking at when some categories such as [religion] might unsettle, undo, or cancel out other categories such as [good citizenship]”*.

This research takes a closer look at the Dutch governmental policy of spatially distributing refugees from the Islamic world over the different municipalities in the Netherlands and questions the seemingly random distribution of these people over urban and rural areas as it builds on the believe

that the organization of space influences social relations. In other words this means that the division over and assigning of refugees to more urban areas as Nijmegen as well to its rural surrounding municipalities as Heumen, Groesbeek, Millingen and Ubbergen will have implications for their integration in the Dutch society. In this matter this research will use intersectionality to investigate the intersection of space, with a specific focus on the distinction between the urban and the rural domain, and the identities of the refugees from the Islamic world. Building on McCall's (2005) suggestion that a geographically-based research using intersectionality needs to start from the context before investigating how identities are lived this report will consist of two distinct parts that run parallel with the concept of integration as a two-sided process. The first part is more theoretic and starts with determining how the context of the Netherlands as well as urban and rural Nijmegen could possibly play a role in the living of identities by refugees and thus influence their integration; this is considered the macro-side of integration. The differences between the urban and rural domain can be found in many different aspects, including the composition of the population (cultural diversity or monotony?), social cohesion and control (stronger bonds in villages?), the activity that is taking place (religious, cultural and economic practices and traditions?) and so forth. These differences all influence the idea of 'good citizenship', both from what this notion possibly means (thus how the people define a good citizen) as well as how the refugee can possibly comply with this idea (can the individual be a good citizen in a certain context?). The result of this first part of the research (chapter 4) is a definition of the identity of a good citizen in the Netherlands and a hypothetical understanding of factors influencing the living of this identity in the urban and rural domain of Nijmegen. What is important to emphasize is that even though this part develops an understanding of the influence of the spatial distribution it is purely and solely hypothetical.

When moving to the second part (chapter 5) of the investigation this hypothetical understanding will then be 'tested' by investigating how the individual refugees from the Islamic world can represent their personal identities in the urban and rural context. This is the main part of the research that focusses more on the micro-side of the integration-paradigm by determining if and how the identity of an integrating refugee from the Islamic world is cancelled out by - or cancels out - the identity of a good citizen in the context of either urban Nijmegen or its rural surroundings. In doing so, considering the methodology of intersectionality and the social identity theory of Tajfel and Turner (1979), the chapter starts with an exploration of what identity-categories are of significance for an integrating refugee from the Islamic world by assessing what identity-categories get foregrounded during this integration-process. These categories will then one by one be analyzed by in the first place determining what 'living' the specific identity category means exactly and then assessing if the urban and/or the rural context influences how these identities can be lived while at the same time seeing how this influences the chance of the refugees to acquire the identity of a good

citizen. When the social identities of the refugees cancel out or are cancelled out by the identity of a good citizen in either the urban or rural domain this means that the refugees are disempowered, or hindered, in their process of integration while when there is no cancelling out the integration process is helped in the specific context. When all relevant identity-categories are discussed, the 5<sup>th</sup> chapter will end by mirroring the hypothetical understanding of the influence of the spatial distribution of refugees developed in the first part to the lives and living of identities of refugees investigated in the second part to determine which hypotheses are plausible and which are not.

## 3.2 Research strategy

So what does the combination of the goal of this specific research and using this concept of intersectionality strategically and practically mean for investigating the integration of refugees in the Nijmegen area? A consideration that needs to be made is whether qualitative or quantitative methods are more suitable. Both strategies have their benefits and flaws. Quantitative research allows a researcher to find empirical support for hypotheses in numbers and calculations that allows the conclusion to be generalized. However this strategy mainly focuses on questions concerning the “what, where and when” (Myers, 2000). Qualitative research on the other hand tries to explore a problem in-depth and allows for individuals to share their stories. It is hard to capture interactions between people with statistical methods (Creswell, 2012, p. 48); qualitative research however is able to do so and tries to answer the “how and why” questions. The downside is that qualitative research goes in depth on just a small number of cases, meaning that it is hard to formulate generalizable conclusions (Myers, 2000).

The best way to thus determine what strategy is most appropriate is to return to the goal of the research. As a reminder, this goal is: *to determine how the spatial dispersal of refugees from the Islamic world over urban and rural areas helps or hinders their integration in the Dutch society by analyzing the life's of different refugees in urban Nijmegen and its surrounding rural municipalities from the geographically determined perspective of integration as a two-sided process using the theory and methodology of intersectionality, in order to develop a better understanding of the process that the refugees in Nijmegen and its surrounding areas go through and to argue if and how the spatially distributing policy of the Dutch government should be reconsidered.* The goal is thus aimed at “how and why” rather than at “what, where and when”. It is about finding the underlying elements that influence the integration of refugees and especially how these elements help or hinder their integration in the Dutch society; as said it is about developing hypotheses concerning the



influence of the spatial distribution rather than to come to clear-cut generalizable conclusions and confirming or falsifying a hypothesis. Statistical methods will not prove to be helpful in pursuing this goal. Rather, in order to find an answer, methods that go more in-depth deserve to be preferred. In this sense intersectionality is a methodology that links up well with the qualitative intentions of this research as it dictates to delve into the lives of whoever is the subject of an investigation, in this case the refugees in the urban and rural Nijmegen area.

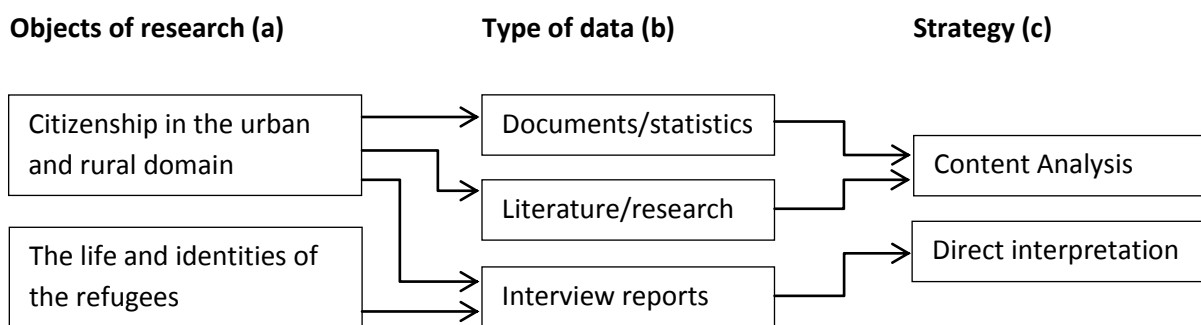
### 3.3 Case study

As mentioned in the introduction this research is carried out in the context of urban Nijmegen and rural Groesbeek, Heumen, Millingen and Ubbergen because the investigation is facilitated by COS Gelderland which is active in this context. This focus on the Nijmegen area automatically suggests that this research will be a single case study. As already described earlier McCall (2005) suggests that, when using the concept of intersectionality, the investigation should start with an individual context and from there work outward to unravel how categories are lived and experienced. She also suggests that case studies represent the most effective way of empirically researching the complexity of the way that the intersection of categories are experienced in subject's everyday lives (McCall, 2005). But there are many types of case-studies, all having another impact on the outcome of the research.

According to Yin (2009) there are exploratory, descriptive and explanatory case-studies that can also be extreme, deviant, typical or critical. This research about the integration of refugees in the Nijmegen area can best be depicted as exploratory because in essence it intends to formulate a hypothesis; the question about whether or not the spatial distribution of refugees over urban and rural areas will finally lead to an understanding in the form of a hypothesis. Besides this, the case-study can best be placed somewhere between being typical and deviant which has implications for the generalizability of the outcomes. The case is typical because the problems in urban Nijmegen and its rural surroundings are not deviating from the general picture in the Netherlands since there are no clues that refugees in this area face more and different problems in terms of for example employment than those in the rest of the country; generalization in this sense would be possible. However, the research also has the quality of being deviant as the main perspective of the theoretical foundation is that 'geography matters', meaning that what is true in Nijmegen may not be true in another city. The lesson here is that generalization is possible only on a hypothetical level.

### 3.4 Data collection

Building from this research-strategy and the choice to carry out a case-study it needs to be determined what material is needed to pursue the goal of the research and how this material is attained (Verschuren & Doorewaard, 2007). According to Creswell (2012) a case-study can be carried out using many different forms of data collection, such as interviews, observations, documents, audiovisual material and other artifacts. What form or forms are most suitable is determined by looking at the conceptual model and especially at the elements that are central in studying the process of integration of refugees: the life's and identities of the refugees that have fled the Islamic world as well as the continuum that is the urban-rural divide in the Nijmegen area and the influence on citizenship through differences between these two domains. The scheme portrayed in figure 4 summarizes the process of data collection that will be explained in the remainder of this paragraph.



**Figure 4: Schematic summary of the data-collection strategy**

#### 3.4.1 Ethical and practical considerations

But first it is important to consider some ethical and practical issues concerning the investigation of lives of refugees as these have implications for the methodology used in this research. First of all an inquiry in the life of a refugee can possibly bring up negative sentiments concerning their history in their homelands and concerning the difficulties many have to deal with in their new life. This means that many feel uneasy to talk about it. Therefore it is important to leave these people as much as possible in their comfort zone during the inquiry. The usage of a recording device, for example, possibly evokes an uncomfortable feeling of the refugees meaning that they are likely to give socially desired answers and not to tell the whole truth. That is why in this research no recording device is used when performing interviews. Furthermore a setting in which questions are ‘fired’ at the refugee can also be perceived as negative and as a result drag them out of this comfort zone as it possibly evokes negative memories while it could also be difficult for them to comprehend and answer every individual question.

Besides this, it is also important to secure the anonymity of the people that so willingly share their life story and insights for the purpose of this research. This means that the names of both the experts and refugees will remain anonymous during the entire research as it can have profound implications for these individuals when they are shared with the wider world; the use and interpretation of their words can possibly be used against them. Also there is no added value to use the names of the refugees as the investigation is about the distinction between the urban and the rural and not about them personally. Therefore this research does not use the names of the refugees and the experts but rather describes the experts in relation to their field and place of knowledge (e.g. 'expert of Millingen' who works as...) and the refugees by using the letters of the alphabet (e.g. respondent A, B, C, etc.). In this way the anonymity of the contributing individuals is ensured.

Furthermore it has to be realized that many refugees (especially those who have difficulties with integrating in the Dutch society) have problems with understanding - and expressing themselves in - the Dutch language since it is not their mother tongue. The majority is capable to do this on a basic level while only a few are able to understand and elaborate on theoretic and scientific concepts. Besides that it can again be experienced as humiliating when the respondents of this research do not understand the question that is posed to them, meaning that it is desirable that an easily intelligible language level is used when inquiring in the lives of the refugees. This, as well as the aforementioned ethical and practical considerations, should be taken into account when further developing the methodology that lies at the heart of this research.

### **3.4.2 Process**

As mentioned earlier, considering the methodology of intersectionality as described by McCall (2005), the process of data-collecting for this specific research has two main parts and therefore also two objects of research, being the *context* in which the inquiry takes place as well as the *life and identities of the individual refugees*. At first research data needs to be collected concerning the context, namely urban Nijmegen and the surrounding rural municipalities of Groesbeek, Heumen, Millingen and Ubbergen. In doing so the concept of 'good citizenship' in the Dutch society is described after which the distinction between the rural and urban domain will be the input for the description of the context with a focus on this notion of good citizenship. To investigate this concept of good citizenship in the Netherlands and the differences between the urban and rural literature is used. The most important source here is 'The Urban-Rural Divide: Myth or Reality?' by Scott, Gilbert and Gelan (2007) that provides a theoretical, but still hypothetical entrance in beginning to investigate how the urban and rural domain could differ in the Nijmegen area. To start with carefully testing this theoretic input more local sources are used. Firstly statistics and documents about the municipalities help to illustrate differences between Nijmegen and its surroundings. Secondly

interviews are held with experts who are knowledgeable about refugees in Nijmegen as well as in the surrounding areas; one in every municipality. The best advantage here of the combination between intersectionality and this data collecting method is that before investigating the life's of the refugee's there is already an indication as to what differing external factors between the urban and rural domain could play an important role (i.e. hypotheses) whereas if this step would not have been taken the second part of the research could become vague and confusing because it is likely that it would become lost in the complexity that is the divide between urban and rural.

The outcome of this investigation in the context of urban Nijmegen and its rural surroundings is a framework with an hypothetical understanding of the influence of the spatial distribution of refugees that can be mirrored to the life-stories and identities of the individual refugees which is the second object of research and which consequently will be the second part of the data-collecting process. To collect data about how refugees 'live' their identities there is only one appropriate source: the people themselves. Therefore interviews are held with refugees in both the urban and rural Nijmegen area. As stated earlier, the first empirical part of this research starts with analyzing the context and investigating how the meaning of – and living up to – the notion of good citizenship could be different between cities and villages while the second part describes the most important identity categories for integrating refugees. This means there is already a theoretical basis before starting with interviewing the refugees. However, how the central concepts of this theoretic foundation works out in the empirics is still open for interpretation (for example: what does it mean to live a certain identity?); this is the essence of an exploratory research. Bearing this in mind it means that the interviews need to be performed in a semi-structured manner, meaning that there are certain theoretic over-arching themes (aspects of identity and good citizenship) that need to be discussed and that can be explored further during the interviews. Considering the practical and ethical issues discussed earlier these semi-structured interviews are also the most desirable option; this method allows keeping the refugees in their comfort zone as there is not a rapid fire of questions (which generally is the case during a strictly structured interview) but rather some themes that are discussed in a loose manner that allows them to make the choice what they want to tell and what not. Furthermore the semi-structured form also allows rephrasing questions whereas structured interviews have a set list of questions that need to be answered which can be difficult considering the language level of many refugees that makes it difficult for them to understand every individual question. After performing these semi-structured interviews, reports are made to summarize the findings during the interview. Normally, when processing an interview, this means making a word-by-word transcription using recording-material. However these are not used during the research to assure a comfortable and consequently more useful talk with the refugees. The consequence is that the processing of data needs to happen in another manner. Therefore a report of every individual

interview is written that is structured according to the theoretical knowledge of 'good citizenship' (as developed in chapter 4) and the identity-categories of an integrating refugee from the Islamic world (as developed in chapter 5). The result is firstly that all interview reports are structured in the same manner which allows comparing them easily and secondly it means that directly after the interviews the words of the refugees can be translated to a more analytical useable level. This last notion means that there is automatically dealt with the aforementioned issue that many refugees are not able to understand and express themselves beyond the basic level of the Dutch language, let alone theoretically discuss scientific themes as identity and good citizenship; a necessary analytical translation is made. How these reports are structured can be seen in appendix 1.

### **3.4.3 Sources**

What sources are approached during the investigation? As mentioned the first part of the research is partly theoretical and practical as it is about the urban and rural distinction in general while zooming in on the specific situation of Nijmegen and its rural surrounding municipalities. The theoretical part here mostly builds on the aforementioned article about the urban-rural distinction by Scott, Gilbert and Gelan (2007) which will then be mirrored to the practical situation as can be seen in the Nijmegen region by using documents, statistics and stories about for example the structure of the population, the political background of the people, economic activities and other relevant information. In doing so merely statistics and documents will not suffice to develop a full understanding, meaning that a series of interviews will be held with people who are knowledgeable about the Nijmegen area; people who work for VluchtelingenWerk, for the administration of the municipalities or others who are somehow involved with refugees and their problems.

The second part of the research focuses on the life-stories and identities of the refugees, living in the urban and rural domains of the Nijmegen area, that have fled the Islamic world at one point in their life. This means that refugees need to be approached that are willing to share their life story in favor of this research. In doing so different organizations working with refugees have offered to provide names and contact-information of refugees from countries including Afghanistan, Guinea, Iran, Iraq, Somalia and Syria. COS Gelderland, the organization under whose wings this research is carried out, is the most important facilitator concerning the contact with refugees that can possibly contribute to the investigation. What is important here, considering the usefulness, validity and reliability of the research, are the selection criteria in this search for refugee respondents.

One can imagine that the results will differ greatly, and therefore may not be as useful, valid and reliable as possible, if there are a large variety of refugees in regard of age, sex and cultural background. The last of these three factors, the cultural background, is already narrowed down by

focusing merely on refugees coming from the Islamic world. The choice to focus on these refugees and not on those from another culture or region is already explained in the introduction; it are these people who struggle the most on the Dutch labor market and thus have the largest difficulties with integrating in the Dutch society (SCP, 2014). This is one of the factors contributing to a lot of negative attention towards these Islamic refugees and a change in discourse in the Dutch society, media and politics concerning the culture of the Islam (Sleegers, 2007). However, an implication of focusing on the Islamic world in its entirety is that there is no sensitivity to the diversity of people from different backgrounds that live within and across the different countries. On the other hand it has to be realized that no population in the world is entirely culturally uniform; think for example of the cultural differences within even relatively small countries as the Netherlands. During the research there will be a focus from the micro-perspective of the integration paradigm on the living of the cultural identity of the refugees, meaning that the research does not focus specifically on the culture of their homelands but rather on the way that people live their culture and if they are able to do so in the urban and rural domain and what this consequently means for their integration. Besides that, considering the macro-side of integration as two-sided, the people within the Netherlands are unlikely to know in-depth the cultural differences between for example a Afghan, an Iranian and a Syrian refugee which thus also does not have any implications for their view on if and how these people could become a 'good citizen'.

So what about the age of the refugees and the age at which they have fled from the Islamic world to come to the Netherlands? The theoretic framework that has been described in the last chapter was developed based on the metaphor of a refugee as a flower that has anchored its roots in a certain country and then gets ripped away, takes along a bunch of roots, and tries to integrate in a new country again. In this sense it would be most appropriate in this research to not to focus on too young or too old refugees: during the course of their life's the refugees develop a personal self with different identities including those of a social, professional, national, cultural and religious nature. This means that when young people flee their home country they might not have developed such a set of personal identities yet as they are still in this process. When young refugees then come to the Netherlands in the middle of this process they are likely to more easily integrate in the society than those who have already a fixed personal self. In opposite, this reasoning means that the relatively old refugees, who do have a relatively fixed personal self, are likely to have more difficulties to integrate in a new society as they are probably not as flexible to reshape their personal identities (learn a new profession and language, accommodate to the culture). Therefore to really investigate the differences between the urban and rural this research does not focus on, in the context of this research, 'too young' or 'too old' refugees but rather tries to find respondents that came to the Netherlands at the age of between the 20 and 40 years old.

Another important time-aspect that needs to be taken into account is the period in which they fled the Islamic world to come to the Netherlands, especially with a focus on the discursive shift in Dutch politics and media from liberal towards assimilation after the aforementioned 'multicultural tragedy' (Sleegers, 2007). Paul Scheffer (2000) states that this shift started happening in the years before and after the turn of the millennium in 2000. One can imagine that a refugee who came to the Netherlands in the 1980's, a period in which the Netherlands was known for its liberal idea about integration, had less difficulties with integrating in the Dutch society than someone who migrates or has migrated to the Netherlands in the current time-period, a period which is characterized by criticism on the idea of multiculturalism and the Islamic world. This is especially true with the macro-perspective of integration as two-sided in the back of the mind that puts an emphasis on the notion of 'good citizenship' that is developed from within the Dutch society. This notion will probably differ greatly between a society that is liberal and open to unknown cultures and a society that emphasizes that someone has to adjust his or her identity to fit within that society. That is why in the search for respondents the focus will lie on refugees from the Islamic world who came to the Netherlands around and after the year 2000 when this process of 'neo-liberalization' had already started to take place and the negative view on the Islam in the Dutch society grew to the high level as it is now experienced.

And finally a choice needs to be made regarding the focus on male or female refugees from the Islamic world. The problems to integrate in a society are likely to be different between the two sexes because traditionally they have different roles in the household, which is still evident in the Islamic cultures but also still apparent in the Dutch culture; women are generally more responsible for nurturing and the upbringing of the children at home whereas men are traditionally seen as the breadwinners. So should this research focus on women or men, considering the concept of integration as two-sided? From the macro-side there is a pressure of the receiving society to become a good citizen; a notion that most of all implies that a newcomer needs to contribute economically (Spijkerboer, 2007). Relating this to the individual side of this concept, integration in its simplified essence means that the refugee will become a part of society through having a job. So when looking at the traditional roles of men and women in the household it thus seems likely that the struggle to integrate in the society by economically participating mostly (not exclusively) concerns male refugees. However, in the last decades the Netherlands has seen a development concerning female emancipation that resulted in an increasing number of women that joined the national labor force. In this sense this notion of good citizenship as (economically) participating in the society becomes increasingly applicable on the integration of female newcomers. Therefore this research equally focuses on male and female refugees from the Islamic world.

#### **3.4.4 Analysis of data**

According to Creswell (2012) the process of data analysis is a process involving organizing the data, organizing themes, forming an interpretation of the data and representing it. He proposes a structure for data analysis and representation specifically for case studies (Creswell, 2012, p. 190). First the data is organized, meaning that files or documents are created that hold this data. In this research these are the reports written directly after every individual interview. These reports are structured according to the second and third step of data analysis according to Creswell (2012); the case and its context is described and the report classified into themes. Practically this means that the reports will shortly describe the specific case of the refugee and use the theoretic concepts of good citizenship and identity as a handhold to thematically structure the remainder of the report. Since the reports are then structured in the same manner patterns can be established through comparing the findings per theme (basically: what is the general story told by the group of respondents?). The next step is then interpreting the data, for which direct interpretation and developing naturalistic generalizations is the normal mode of analysis during case studies (Creswell, 2012). This means that single examples are used to illustrate the meaning of established patterns (direct interpretation) while suggestions are made as to what others can take from the research and apply to other situations (naturalistic generalizations). Finally the data is visualized and represented to illustrate the found patterns (Creswell, 2012) meaning that in this report an in-depth picture of the specific pattern is sketched using narrative, tables and figures.

#### **3.4.5 Validity, reliability and usefulness**

In summary this research focusses on both male and female refugees from the Islamic world who came to the Netherlands in the period around and after 2000 and that came here at the age of between the 20 and 40 years old. What does this mean for the validity, reliability and usefulness of this research? The validity of a research relates to the issue to what extent the observations correctly lead to an answer on the research question that is central in the investigation (Verschuren & Doorewaard, 2007). The focus on both male and female refugees does not influence this validity while it does increase the usefulness of the research as knowledge is developed based on experiences of both sexes. An influence on the validity can be experienced concerning the age of the responding refugees. The focus on 20 to 40 years old refugees is the most neutral when investigating the differences of integration between the urban and rural domain whereas investigating the life's of both younger and older refugees means incorporating a further complexity of factors that are not directly related to the distinction between the urban and rural domain.

Then there is the reliability of the research that concerns the issue whether or not repeated research leads to the same observations and conclusions as this particular research (Verschuren &



Doorewaard, 2007). A difficulty here is deciding the number of refugees that need to be interviewed. When performing quantitative research there are calculations to determine the exact sample size whereas for qualitative research there exists no strict rule to the number of respondents (Verschuren & Doorewaard, 2007). An often used rule of thumb is the point of 'data saturation' which implies that there will be a moment during the data collection at which no new or relevant information emerges from the interviews (Baker & Edwards, 2012). But when is this point generally reached? Baker and Edwards (2012) argues that for a qualitative, single-case study the regular number of respondents at which this point is reached lies around 20 to 25 interviews. This is therefore also the main guideline in this research, while the number is increased if needed. The main focus of this research is on the distinction between urban and rural. But because the site of this research is divided over five municipalities of which only Nijmegen is urban and the rest is rural a slight larger number of respondents are approached in this rural domain. A total of 22 refugees is approached, 10 from Nijmegen and 12 from the rural municipalities. Furthermore the research thus focuses equally on male and female refugees, meaning that 5 men and women are approached in Nijmegen and 6 of both sexes in the rural domain.

So to what extent is this research useful? As mentioned earlier the choice to focus on refugees in the context of the Nijmegen area means that it is a typical research with qualities of being deviant. Furthermore it has been established that the results of the research will be hypothetical as it is a quantitative case-study based on stories of a limited number of respondents and not a quantitative study that is supported with numbers and scientifically calculated conclusions. The result is that the research is specifically useful to develop ideas and reflect on the spatial distribution concerning the male and female refugees from the Islamic world in the Nijmegen area while generalizations towards the larger context of the Netherlands is only possible on a hypothetical level making it useful as guidance. Further distinctions in the selection criteria of respondents are deliberately not made as it would mean that the research would focus on refugees with very specific qualities, thus making it useful in only very specific cases.

## 4. Good Dutch Citizenship in Urban & Rural Nijmegen

In the foregoing a working definition for the integration of refugees has been developed. As a reminder: *“Integration is finding the balance between living the identities that the refugee wants to live as they shape the individual’s self while at the same time complying to the societal identity of good citizen so that he or she can be included within the hegemonic community”*. So on one side there is the perspective of the refugee that is determined to be who he or she wants to be and not necessarily entirely assimilate to the ways of the society that is being discovered. On the other side there is the perspective of the receiving community that is structured in a specific way and has certain traditions, norms and values, and with them an influence on how a newcomer can, should or should not behave to be accepted as a good citizen; in other words living in either a city or village has an influence on how newcomers can acquire the identity of a good citizen. This is the two-sidedness of integration. So to get a complete picture of the struggles of refugees to integrate in a society an understanding is needed of both the identities and life of the refugee as well as the influence of the receiving society. This chapter focusses on this external side of integration by exploring the notion of good citizenship that stems from the Dutch society and examining how the urban and rural domain differ and how these differences hypothetically influence if and how a refugee can comply with this notion of good citizenship. In the next chapter this understanding of how living up to the identity of a good citizen could be different between the urban and rural domain will serve as a *hypothetical mirror* to how the refugees are able to represent their personal identities in the Dutch society.

With the aim to create such a mirror the first paragraph delves into the question of what being a good Dutch citizen means and entails, resulting in a list of elements that are essential. In the second paragraph these elements of good citizenship are used as a directive to respectively investigate good citizenship in the urban and rural domain based on insights of people working with refugees in both domains, statistics about the Nijmegen area and theories about the differences between cities and villages. This should finally lead to an idea about the most important external factors that influence how the integration of refugees differs between the urban and rural domain. These factors are summarized and combined in the third paragraph to form a series of hypotheses that in the conclusion of the next chapter will be mirrored to the life-experiences and identities of refugees from the Islamic world in the Nijmegen area.

## 4.1 Good Dutch citizenship

The general perspective on what good citizenship implies in the Netherlands is closely related to the social problems of – and the subsequent discussion about – the integration of immigrants and refugees in the Dutch society. It is especially through these problems that people started to actively think about ‘good citizenship’ and about what this notion means in the Netherlands. The meaning however seems to be ever-shifting through these discussions. So to fully understand the current perspective on good Dutch citizenship an insight in the Dutch history of migration is needed, especially in the period that migration towards the Netherlands grew explosively.

After the ending of World War II the traditionally more conservative society of the Netherlands transforms itself to the point that it is conceived as one of the most liberal, spirited and enlightened populations of the world (Schinkel & Van Houdt, 2010). As Ames (2011) states “*the Netherlands has [for a long time] been relaxed about sex, drugs and immigration*”. The latter becomes evident when observing the large number of immigrants with various and differing backgrounds that are welcomed in the country after the war. From this period onwards three successive waves of major immigration can be recognized (Schalk-Soekar et al., 2004). In the period of the 1950s the first wave of immigrants consisted mostly of people from Indonesia, Surinam and the Dutch Antilles, which are former Dutch colonies. The second wave, which came in the form of labour migration, originated in Southern Europe, Turkey and Morocco during the mid-1950s and 1960s. And then the third wave since the mid-1980s and onwards mainly consists of refugees from many different countries such as Hungary, former Yugoslavia and other East Bloc countries as well as countries as Iran, Afghanistan and Ghana and more recently also Arab countries as Iraq, Somalia, Syria, Algeria, Sudan and Lebanon.

With the generally liberal worldview of the Dutch people multiculturalism was adopted as a policy in the Netherlands around the 1980s (Scheffer, 2000; Slegers, 2007). The foundation of liberalism is the thought that an individual has as much freedom as possible without limiting the freedom of another. For migrants and refugees this basically means that with this policy of multiculturalism they can practice the life that they want in the Netherlands, meaning for example that they can be Muslim and hold onto norms and values they belong to the culture in which they have lived before they came to the Netherlands. At this point in time there was some opposition to this multicultural policy by for example Hans Janmaat, a political leader of the anti-immigration Centrumpartij, but his opposition was finally dismissed as being discriminatory and promoting ethnic cleansing (Slegers, 2007), which alone already illustrates the open-mindedness towards other cultures of the Dutch society at this point in time. However, this liberal worldview in relation to

immigrants seems to make place for another view ever since the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century (Sleegers, 2007; Van Houdt & Schinkel, 2010). It was already in 2000 that Paul Scheffer (2000) published his essay “the multicultural tragedy” in which he argues that a society only has a finite “absorptive capacity” for people moving in from other cultures; a capacity he argues has been exceeded in the Netherlands. This is why he states that homogeneity and integration are necessary for a society while the presence of (non-integrated) immigrants undermines this (Scheffer, 2000). His work was already influential at the moment it got published, but the multicultural debate rose to new heights after the murder by the left-wing activist Volkert van der G. of anti-immigrant politician Pim Fortuyn in 2002, and the murder of film-maker Theo van Gogh by the Muslim Mohammed B in 2004 (Sleegers, 2007). These events contributed to the Netherlands being the first society to break with the idea of ‘multiculturalism’ (Penninx, 2006; Sleegers, 2007; Schinkel & Van Houdt, 2010). Instead of this multiculturalism remaining the main-paradigm in Dutch thinking about immigration and integration, the discourse shifted towards assimilation (Sleegers, 2007; Vasta, 2007). Schinkel and Van Houdt (2010) depict this shift as a move towards neo-liberal communitarianism. They argue that the result is a ‘double helix of cultural assimilation’ which consists of a coming together of a communitarian emphasis on ‘Dutch culture’ and ‘Dutch norms and values’ with a neo-liberal emphasis on individual responsibility and participation (Schinkel & Van Houdt, 2010, p. 710). In their article they describe neo-liberal communitarianism as the underlying rationale of population management that operates both in an individualizing and de-individualizing way (Schinkel & Van Houdt, 2010): on the one hand citizenship in the Dutch society is the result of individual participation and responsibility, on the other it are the communities at various levels that form the frame of integration. They state: “*neo-liberal communitarianism combines a communitarian care of a Dutch culturally grounded national community with a neo-liberal emphasis on the individual’s responsibility to achieve membership of that community*” (Schinkel & Van Houdt, 2010, p. 711).

So what does this mean for the notion of citizenship and what does it therefore mean to be a ‘good’ citizen in the Netherlands? The shift away from the idea of multiculturalism and towards cultural assimilation and neo-liberal communitarianism has profound implications on the notion of citizenship in the Netherlands. Schinkel and Van Houdt (2010) note that this process in the first place has led to the *moralization of citizenship*. In the period before the failing of multiculturalism in the Netherlands getting formal citizenship rights was the most important step to become an accepted part of the Dutch society. However, after the discourse-shift real entry into the Dutch society is possible only through moral citizenship, meaning that to become accepted as a part of the community one should be a ‘good’ citizen. In most (liberalist) Western cultures the operative image of a good citizen is that of one that is (economically) participating in and contributing to society

(Spijkerboer, 2007) which shows his or her loyalty to the Dutch society. Practically, and also very bluntly and simplified, this means that a good citizen is one that has a job or at the very least does some sort of work from which the community benefits, such as being a trainer for the youth of the local sports club or actively participating in dealing with social issues in the neighborhood in which he or she lives. The fact that being a good citizen practically equals with having a job further explains the shift away from multiculturalism and towards neo-liberal communitarianism as the unemployment levels between the refugees and migrants in the Netherlands are remarkably high, the reasons of which are often depicted as being culturally determined (Schinkel & Van Houdt, 2010).

The result is that many people feel that the problems of integration are the individual's own failure (Spijkerboer, 2007) as, and this is often heard on the street but also in national politics, it is the refugee that 'does not want to adhere to the Dutch cultural norms and values'. This relates to the second consequence that Schinkel and Van Houdt (2010) recognize from the shift towards neo-liberalism and at the same time the idea of cultural assimilation: *the responsabilization of citizenship*, which means that there is an increasing emphasis on 'individual responsibility' to become a part of the Dutch society. Basically if one wants to integrate in the Dutch society he or she should individually make an effort in the eyes of the rest of society. This also points out why there is such an emphasis on learning the Dutch language and why higher educated refugees are more appreciated than newcomers who did not have any education as they can more easily make it on their own. Besides that, the shift towards neo-liberal communitarianism has implications for the way the cultural identity of the refugees is practiced in the Dutch society. Wagenvoorde (2012, p. 3) states that "*the focus is on individuality. Immigrants are obliged to participate, but they are free in their personal development and in the importance of their cultural identity*". This essentially means that the refugee can practice his or her cultural and national identity in such a manner that it does not hinder his or her integration in the Dutch society; it may not affect their economic participation and their process of learning the Dutch language and culture. This explains why in the Netherlands there exists the idea that outings of the cultural identity of the refugee, such as religion and foreign languages, should preferably be practiced in the personal sphere and not in the public domain (Wagenvoorde, 2012) as many feel that it demonstrates that the refugee is not loyal as many feel that it demonstrates that the refugee is not loyal to the Netherlands and the Dutch society but rather to another culture and society. So deduced from this Dutch development towards neo-liberal communitarianism, good Dutch citizenship entails having a job thus actively contributing to the Dutch society and doing everything in his power to help him do so, which means speaking the Dutch language, being or getting educated and practicing outings of cultural identities in the personal sphere. From this definition four elements can be derived:

1. A good citizen actively participates and (economically) contributes to the society

2. A good citizen is or gets educated
3. A good citizen speaks the Dutch language and knows the Dutch culture
4. A good citizen does not let his or her cultural and national background affect the process of integration

Thus for a refugee to fully integrate in the Dutch society, and with that become entirely included in the hegemonic community, he should comply with these four elements that do need to be seen as highly inter-connected; by actively participating and getting educated a refugee learns to know the culture and speak the Dutch language while this will also influence if and to what extent an individual wants to practice his or her national and cultural background in the personal sphere. In this specific paragraph however the elements are addressed individually to explore the subject in a more structured and clear matter. Now since this research is based on the theoretical conception that social relations are influenced by the organization of space (Lefebvre, 1968), it is needed to investigate the geographic context in which the refugee is trying to integrate in the Dutch society. Therefore the remainder of this chapter takes the four elements of good citizenship as described and investigates how the urban and rural domain influence how an individual can comply with this meaning of good citizenship in the urban and rural area of Nijmegen in order to develop a first, hypothetical understanding of geographic factors influencing the integration-process.

## 4.2 Good citizenship in Nijmegen's urban and rural domain

In politics, human geographic studies and in general rhetoric the distinction between the urban and the rural domain is a classic topic; the social, economic and political situations in cities differ from those in villages and the countryside. The urban domain is generally portrayed as a space of progress, quantity, greatness, diversity and contrasts in terms of people, culture, wealth and economy, while rural areas are often defined by backwardness, uniformity and smallness. In the article 'The Urban-Rural Divide: Myth or Reality?', Scott, Gilbert and Gelan (2007) argue that even though there is a truth behind many of these stereotypical differences between cities and villages, it is hardly ever so black and white as many people make it look to be; a rural area can also have characteristics of urbanity while an urban area may have more rural qualities than another. So the often proposed idea that cities by definition are diverse while the countryside as a whole is a monotone area should be considered a misconception. Just like there are differences between cities, the rural domain is not a single homogeneous entity; it is multifunctional and diverse (Scott et al., 2007, p. 24). In the introduction of this research there was already hinted at this assertion when criticizing a former

research on the differences in the process of integration of refugees between the urban and rural domain. Here it was illustrated that there exist major differences between areas such as Dalfsen in Overijssel, which is a relatively conservative municipality, and Haren in Groningen, where relatively liberal and young people live. This thus also means that not one single urban-rural classification can be used for all geographies and the context is essential. Therefore in this paragraph the notion of citizenship in the urban area of Nijmegen and its rural surroundings of Groesbeek, Heumen, Millingen and Ubbergen will be investigated to get an understanding of how the urban-rural distinction possibly plays out in this specific context, asking the question: *in which ways are refugees plausibly, purposefully or not, included or excluded from being a citizen of the hegemonic society through differences between the urban and the rural domain in the Nijmegen area?* It is absolutely vital to first answer this question to find the most important elements that might influence the integration of refugees before interviewing the refugees themselves as it provides a focus within the complexity that is the urban-rural divide. The question will be answered using theory about the urban-rural distinction, statistics about the Nijmegen region and by building on interviews with experts from this same region. In the next paragraph, this answer will serve as input for developing a framework of hypotheses that ultimately can be mirrored to the life-stories of the individual refugees. This framework specifically focusses on visible and practical factors that could *possibly* help or hinder the refugee's process of integrating in the context of the urban or rural Nijmegen area because studying social relations using intersectionality requires looking at how the subject's everyday life is affected (McCall, 2005). It has to be emphasized again that these are thus all plausible, but still hypothetical factors as they are derived from theory and interviews with experts. Whether these hypotheses are actually true can only be determined by mirroring them to the life-stories and experiences of refugees which will happen in the next chapter.

#### **4.2.1 Actively participating and contributing**

So in the Netherlands a good citizen actively participates and (economically) contributes to the Dutch society which insinuates that a good citizen has a job or at least actively participates in public associations as the local football-team or community-centers. Firstly, what does having or getting a job in both the urban and the rural domain practically mean? According to Scott, Gilbert and Gelan (2007) most of the employment opportunities can generally be found in cities and not in rural areas. This is also true in the Nijmegen area where there is a larger offer of jobs than there are people belonging to the work-force in Nijmegen while the economies of Groesbeek, Heumen, Millingen and Ubbergen show an exact opposite picture (see table 1). The consequence is that there exists a stream of commuters that live in the villages and work in the city of Nijmegen. For a good citizen in the rural domain to economically participate this more often than not means joining this daily movement

towards the city. What can be of great importance here is the distance between the place of residence and Nijmegen; the experts from the region state that “luckily Beek, Ubbergen [villages in Ubbergen] and Malden [village in Heumen] lie relatively close to the economic core of Nijmegen. When living in Overasselt, Nederasselt, Heumen [villages in Heumen], Groesbeek, Breedeweg [villages in Groesbeek], Ooij or Leuth [villages in Ubbergen] people are already further away from the city”. And this is entirely true for the municipality and village of Millingen that, besides already having little economic activity, is situated in a very isolated location in relation to Nijmegen.

Another important economic difference between cities and villages can be found in the types and diversity of activities. Scott, Gilbert and Gelan (2007) argue that urban centers generally offer a greater diversity in jobs mostly in the secondary and tertiary sector while in rural areas activities from the primary industry sector and supporting activities are dominant. This again also seems to be true in the Nijmegen context as the city has a relatively large demand for employees in industry, business services, public administration, education and health care. The surrounding rural municipalities show a different economic picture. In the villages relatively much employment can be found in agriculture [Groesbeek, Heumen and Ubbergen], construction [Groesbeek and Heumen], retail and wholesale [Heumen and Millingen], transport and storage [Heumen and Millingen], catering [Groesbeek, Heumen, Millingen and Ubbergen] and health care [Groesbeek, Ubbergen]. Important to note here is that, as can be seen in the table below, all these sectors are still larger in the city of Nijmegen in absolute numbers.

Economic activity	Nijmegen	Groesbeek	Heumen	Millingen	Ubbergen
Agriculture/fishery	210	150	170	20	120
Industry/mining	9940	280	260	80	190
Utilities	700	30	0	10	0
Construction	3140	790	310	90	190
Retail & Wholesale	12390	870	1040	300	350
Transport and storage	5630	80	370	110	70
Catering	4430	640	380	110	300
Financial institutions	1210	110	30	10	20
Business services	12690	880	770	90	380
Public administration	4570	170	150	10	90
Education	11990	510	220	50	420
Health care & well-being	28870	2450	820	150	2590
Other public services	3600	360	380	90	210
<b>Total</b>	<b>99.350</b>	<b>7.320</b>	<b>4.900</b>	<b>1.110</b>	<b>4.920</b>

**Table 1: Economic activity per municipality (Provincie Gelderland, 2014b)**

Besides participating economically a good citizen should also contribute socially. According to the expert of Millingen, who is an active member of the local politics, villages are characterized by residents who attach a great value to the associational-life while in cities there is not a great emphasis on this mode of living. This observation is in line with Scott, Gilbert and Gelan's (2007)



hypothesis that populations living in rural areas generally have a greater sense of community while people in the city are more individualistic. However, they also argue that people in the rural domain generally have a more conservative mindset than those in the city (Scott, Gilbert and Gelan, 2007) which possibly influences the extent to which a newcomer can socially contribute in a rural area; if people are generally open-minded and open for new influences they are likely to more easily accept newcomers in their community while if people are conservative, closed-off and hesitant towards change and new culture they may exclude newcomers. Closely related to this is the political voting behaviour which can also be divided in progressive and conservative. When only looking at the political voting behaviour, the entire Nijmegen area as a whole can be seen as relatively progressive; in the 2012 national elections over 62% of the population voted for one of the four progressive parties (PvdA, D66, GroenLinks and SP) whereas on a national scale this was 45% (NRC, 2012). In Nijmegen this percentage is even slightly higher with almost 66%. And even though the populations living in villages are generally seen as conservative, there is a relatively high support for the progressive parties in Groesbeek (50%), Heumen (50%), Millingen (57%) and Ubbergen (54%) (NRC, 2012). So when purely looking at these political statistics it can be concluded here that the hypothesis that populations in the rural domain are more conservative is true in the local context and not necessarily on a national scale. Furthermore, when reflecting on the nation-wide policy of spatially distributing refugees in the Netherlands, it should be taken into account that this research is performed in a relatively progressive context and that when there is an effect on the extent to which a newcomer can comply with the notion of Dutch citizenship through differences in terms of progressiveness or conservativeness, these effects might be even exacerbated in a context where these differences between cities and villages might be larger and where the conservative mindset is more foregrounded.

When confronting the experts of the different municipalities with these statistics about a possible conservative mindset in the rural area of Nijmegen they tell different stories. Both about Groesbeek, Millingen as Heumen the experts state that there is a traditional core of respectively Groesbeekers, Millingenaren and Maldenaren, forming a closed community of which it is very hard to become a part of while arguing that this could even be harder in the smaller villages; all the three experts discuss situations in which (even Dutch) people who have lived in the respective villages for a longer time are seen as 'import'. This consequently means that a newcomer who is considered 'import' will have great difficulties to socially contribute in the village in which he or she lives. The expert of Ubbergen, who works at the local government as a relation-manager between the unemployed and employers, states that this may also be the case in smaller villages as Ooij and Leuth, but believes there is no such mindset in the villages Beek and Ubbergen that are already geared more towards the city of Nijmegen. Whether this all is actually true, thus that newcomers

(refugees) are excluded more in villages than in cities, can only be determined by investigating the life-stories of these newcomers themselves which will happen in the next chapter. But first the influence of the urban and rural domain on the next element of good Dutch citizenship is discussed.

#### **4.2.2 Being or getting educated**

Very closely related to the element of good citizenship that demands a newcomer to actively participate and economically contribute to the society, a good citizen also needs to be or get educated as it shows that he or she does anything in his or her power to possibly contribute to the Dutch society; after all a newcomer who is well educated in theory has less difficulties with finding a job. But could the importance of being or getting educated possibly be different in villages and cities? Scott, Gilbert and Gelan (2007) state that a small scale is what characterizes a village, which according to the experts means that people know each other and look out for each other. This means that people are more likely to notice the fact that someone makes an effort to become a part of the hegemonic community. The expert from Millingen states: “I believe that the people of Millingen appreciate it when a newcomer really tries and thus gets educated”. The expert from Groesbeek, who volunteers for the local ‘Vluchtelingenwerk’, argues that “because of the culture where everyone knows everyone [and with it the social control], villages are often characterized by nepotism”. When a newcomer then shows a good effort he or she is more likely to gain from this culture. In this sense getting and being educated seems to be important in the village.

On the other hand it could possibly be less important just because of this ‘all-know-all’-culture. The expert from Millingen adds that even though people appreciate it when a newcomer shows an effort to get educated he believes that the people do understand that there might be a good reason for someone [especially a refugee] to have difficulties to find his or her place in a society. Through the small scale and culture of social control in villages the people are more likely to have such an understanding of the newcomer and know the person more than just superficially.

This is where urban areas differ greatly from rural areas. As hypothesized by Scott, Gilbert and Gelan (2007), and confirmed by the experts from the different municipalities, urban areas are characterized by relative anonymity and individuality. In this sense this means that for a newcomer to get or being educated is far more important than in villages as he or she may be more dependent on the professional and formal worth of his or her diploma to contribute economically; employees do not know what someone is capable of unless it is on their résumé, while in villages people could possibly benefit from the more informal know-all culture.

On the other hand Scott, Gilbert and Gelan (2007) argue that cities are characterized by a high cultural diversity while rural areas lack this quality and are predominantly ‘white’. This also

seems to be true in the context of this research. In Nijmegen 13% of the population (meaning around 21.000 people) has a non-western background whereas this percentage is around 3% on average in the rural municipalities (a total number of 1.300 individuals relatively evenly divided over the four municipalities) (Provincie Gelderland, 2014c). This means that both relatively and in absolute numbers the city is far more culturally diverse. To illustrate this even further: in 2013 there were 414 people originating from Somalia living in Nijmegen, 16 in Heumen, 9 in Millingen, 6 in Groesbeek and 6 in Ubbergen (Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek [CBS], 2013). For a newcomer from a certain culture this means that it is possible that he or she becomes a part of a network of people from this specific culture. The expert of Groesbeek agrees with this and gives the example of an Afghan owner of a taxi company in the city of Nijmegen who has hired a struggling newcomer from the same country as a taxi-driver. This illustrates that people from the same culture that meet each other in another culture are possible to look out for each other, meaning that getting educated might be less important for a newcomer in the city. Whether there is a truth behind the assertions above should prove when investigating the life-stories of the refugees in the next chapter. However, what already can be concluded here is that being educated would never hinder an individual that is trying to become a good citizen in either the urban or rural domain.

But might there be a difference in practically getting educated between cities and villages? Scott, Gilbert and Gelan (2007) state that cities are characterized by a high availability of services while the opposite is true in the rural surroundings. This also means that when a newcomer would like to get educated he or she would benefit by living close to the facilities that provide such an opportunity. The experts of the different municipalities agree with this statement that in this sense a newcomer is not helped when living in the rural domain. Groesbeek, Heumen, Millingen and Ubbergen all have elementary schools and high schools that provide education for people till the age of 16-18 years. But when one wants to get a diploma in a specialty and therefore wants to get further educated he or she has to visit the city of Nijmegen that is home to the Radboud University, the HAN and the ROC. The expert from Millingen states that “services are almost absent in villages while they have them in the city. To get educated this automatically means that a newcomer has to travel to the city”. Elaborating from this the expert of Heumen, who has set up and monitored a local project concerning the empowerment of refugees, argues that “an individual is then still relatively lucky to be placed in Malden [or in Groesbeek, Beek or Ubbergen] and not in villages as Overasselt, Nederasselt or Heumen [or Ooij, Leuth, Breedeweg or Millingen] as they are already smaller and further away from the city meaning that the distance towards the city is even further away”.

#### **4.2.3 Knowing the Dutch culture and language**

A good citizen in the Netherlands speaks the Dutch language and knows the culture. Newcomers who want to learn the culture and language from either the urban or rural domain have two different options. Firstly the language can be learned by following courses. However, what Scott, Gilbert and Gelan (2007) argue is a characteristic difference between urban and rural areas is that services are generally centered more in cities rather than in villages, possibly meaning that to follow courses newcomers outside Nijmegen should move between the city and their place of residence. The experts of Groesbeek and Millingen agree with this, arguing that courses to learn the Dutch language are more and more situated in the city of Nijmegen rather than in the villages surrounding the city.

What the experts however also agree with is the fact that newcomers do not adequately learn the language from courses or books alone, but rather become skilled by actively speaking and practicing it in their daily life's. The expert from Heumen for example states that "you can learn the basics of the language by participating in language courses two times a week, but when it is not practiced in the personal sphere all is lost again". A sustained connection with native Dutch people is thus needed for newcomers to become a good citizen in terms of speaking the language and knowing the culture. The question that then arises is whether such a sustained connection of newcomers with natives is more likely to occur in Nijmegen or in the surrounding villages. This is again closely related to the relatively high sense of community that can be found in rural areas while people in cities are generally more individualistic in this sense (Scott, Gilbert and Gelan, 2007). The experts generally agree that a high sense of community and small scale is what characterizes a village which can likely be explained by the small scale of rural communities. Originating from this, the experts from the different municipalities argue, is a village culture in which everyone knows everyone and where there is a high social control, thus resulting in a community where people look out for each other. The expert from Millingen states that for a newcomer who is trying to learn the language "this social control can be experienced as pleasant and help them" while the expert from Ubbergen adds that the small-scale of a rural community also means that "those who are in need of support to learn the language are on the radar". This is where a village community differs from the generally larger and more individualistic city population. The experts from Millingen, Ubbergen and Groesbeek argue that in the city a newcomer is relatively anonymous meaning that he or she is more dependent on his or her own efforts to make connections with native citizens.

Besides that a newcomer from another culture in a city is more likely to become part of a network from people from the same culture as cities are characterized by cultural diversity whereas villages are monotone in this sense (Scott, Gilbert and Gelan, 2007). Subsequently an often raised concern is that newcomers in a city seek each other out and cling together, socially segregating themselves from the native people. When this happens, learning the Dutch language would for a

newcomer in the first place become less important as social exclusion is less likely and besides that the language is practiced to a lesser extent. When a newcomer thus does not want to get socially excluded, he or she is more likely to learn the Dutch language in a rural area as he or she has a larger incentive to seek contact with the native population.

#### **4.2.4 Not affecting integration through cultural and national background**

A good citizen does not let his or her cultural and national background affect the process of integration. This means that a good citizen in the Netherlands practices his cultural and national background in the personal sphere. But could there be factors hindering or helping such practicing in both the urban and rural domain? As mentioned earlier rural areas are generally characterized by a relative absence of services as these are more concentrated in cities (Scott, Gilbert and Gelan, 2007). For a newcomer from a deviating culture in a village this means that services that support the practicing of his or her culture are likely to be only present in the city; think for example of a Islamic newcomer who wants to visit a mosque or who wants to eat food that is typical for his culture and that cannot be found in general supermarkets. In the Nijmegen area there are 4 mosques, all located in the city of Nijmegen itself. The fact that these services are not present in villages can be explained by Scott, Gilbert and Gelan's (2007) hypothesis that villages are uniform in its demographic structure, meaning that there are mainly Dutch people living in Groesbeek, Heumen, Millingen and Ubbergen and the Dutch culture is the standard; as mentioned earlier only 3% of the total population is from non-Western background in these municipalities while in Nijmegen this percentage is 13% (Provincie Gelderland, 2014b).

This monotonous demography of villages also means that for newcomers from deviating cultures in the rural domain sharing the cultural and national background becomes problematic as there are simply not so many people with this same background. The expert from Groesbeek indicates that there have been instances of people who she felt were lonely in the village. As mentioned earlier, the expert from Heumen argues that an individual is still relatively lucky to be placed in a village as Malden, Groesbeek, Beek or Ubbergen and not in the really small villages. She adds that "in those villages a newcomer from another culture and ethnicity can really be considered 'the foreigner of the village' by the native population". Considering the fact that there is more social control in these villages this last notion does not necessarily have to be a bad thing. However, as mentioned earlier, people in rural areas tend to have both a greater sense of community as well as a more conservative mindset than those living cities (Scott, Gilbert and Gelan, 2007) meaning that they are likely to be more resistant towards change in terms of newcomers and culture in their communal environment. The expert of Heumen for example describes two cases from the smaller villages in the area: one in which a (African) mother, when picking up her children at the local school, is structurally

ignored by the Dutch mothers and one where a woman is bullied away by throwing eggs against her home window. Two similar stories about the rural domain are told by the experts of Groesbeek and Millingen who respectively mention cases in which a child is alienated and discriminated against by other youth. Such incidents heavily influence the extent to which an individual feels that he or she can practice his or her cultural or national identity and thus also affects their process of integration. It should be noted that incidents as these could also occur in the city of Nijmegen, but from this reasoning seem to be more likely to happen in villages. Whether this is actually true and whether there might exist a difference between the villages themselves should prove when investigating the life-stories of the individual refugees in the next chapter.

### 4.3 Hypotheses

In the foregoing it is discussed in which ways refugees are **possibly** included or excluded from being a citizen of the hegemonic society through differences between the urban and the rural domain in the Nijmegen area. The different understandings of this matter are caught and summarized in the six hypotheses below. It is important to emphasize again that these possibilities, while plausible, are regarded as purely hypothetical and will be ‘tested’ in the concluding paragraph of the next chapter by mirroring them to the life-stories and identities of the refugees as it totally depends on both the specific context and the experiences of the individual refugees whether these theoretical differences between city and village actually positively or negatively affect their integration in the Dutch society.

#### **Seeing integration as a two-sided process, integrating refugees in the Nijmegen area are...**

1. Helped in the urban domain as there is more and varied employment in the city.
2. Helped in the rural domain as villages are characterized by a higher sense of community.
3. Helped in the rural domain as villages are characterized by a higher social control.
4. Helped in the urban domain as the people in cities generally have a more progressive mindset.
5. Helped in the urban domain through a relatively high availability of services.
6. Helped in the urban domain as cities are characterized by a high cultural diversity.

## 5. The Intersecting Identities of Integration

The aim of this research is to underpin whether or not the distribution of refugees over urban and rural areas helps or hinders, thus empowers or disempowers, them in the process of integrating in the Dutch society. As discussed earlier, this theoretic idea of empowerment has a macro- and a micro-level (Sadan, 1997) that run parallel with the idea of integration as a two-sided process. From the macro-level the refugee is possibly (dis)empowered through his or her surroundings while (dis)empowerment from the micro-level suggests that the individual refugee is or is not able to connect and therefore include himself in the hegemonic community as a result of his personal identity. Focusing on the external (macro) side of this integration as two-sided, last chapter investigated the meaning of good Dutch citizenship and developed an understanding of the implications of living in the urban or rural domain to live up to this notion. This chapter will mirror this understanding to the individual's (micro) side of the integration-paradigm, "holding onto the own personal identities of the refugee", which means talking to individual refugees about their lives and identities. In this research integration is considered a success when one is able to hold onto his or her identities while at the same time being accepted as a good citizen in the Dutch society. This insinuates that an integrated refugee should carry both the identity of good Dutch citizen as well as the different identities that shape the individual's self. As stated in the theoretic part of this research using the methodology of intersectionality "means looking at what identities are being "done" at particular moments and in specific contexts, and looking at when some identity categories such as religion might unsettle, undo or cancel out other categories such as [in this case] good citizenship" (Valentine, 2007, p. 15). When applying the methodology to this research this means looking at the differences in if and how the identities of a refugee's self and the identity of a good Dutch citizen possibly cancel each other out in the contexts of the urban and rural Nijmegen area. When such cancelling out does occur this means that the refugee is disempowered in the specific context in which he lives (the urban or rural domain) while if there is no overlap between the identities the refugee is empowered in his search to integrate in the Dutch society.

While aiming to underpin whether the distribution of refugees helped or hindered their integration it should be noted that it largely depends on the lives and identities of the individual refugees whether the differences between city and village positively or negatively affect their integration in the Dutch society. This can best be illustrated by a case. Think for example of two refugees who both live in Nijmegen, one educated to work in public administration, one trained to work in agriculture. Only little imagination is needed to realize that there might be an influence of the fact that employment in

public administration can almost exclusively be found in Nijmegen while the agricultural sector is practically absent in the city. This means that, only in terms of his or her professional identity, the refugee with the background in public administration is helped when being placed in the city. On the other hand it is possible that this same refugee has, as a result of living in the individualistic city, little direct connection with native Dutch people and therefore hardly had any practice in speaking the Dutch language. To avoid such coincidences by focusing on individual cases this chapter therefore does not try to describe a theoretically 'perfect' refugee and a 'perfect' receiving community but rather tries to find both external and internal factors that in general seem to help or hinder the integration of refugees by focusing on the categories of separate identities of the refugee's, analyzing *the most common* possible difficulties of attaining the identity of a good citizen.

In doing so, the first paragraph starts with exploring what identities need to be discussed in this chapter by looking at what categories are of importance with the concept of integration as a two-sided process in the back of the mind. After then anonymously introducing the respondents that have shared their life-stories for this research in paragraph 2, this exploration of identity-categories will provide the structure for the paragraphs 3 to 8 while concluding the chapter in paragraph 9.

## 5.1 The identities of an integrating refugee

As described in the theoretical grounding, this research builds on the Social Identity Theory of Tajfel and Turner (1979) which argues that an individual does not just have one identity, but rather several identities that shape the individual's self. Before delving into the lives of refugees from the Islamic world in the Nijmegen area it is necessary to determine what identity-categories are of significance in studying the process of integration as two-sided to give a direction and subsequent structure to the rest of this chapter. Evidently the over-arching and all-encompassing identity of the subjects in this research is the identity of an 'integrating refugee from the Islamic world'; all respondents belong to this identity category. There are however differences in terms of personal identity. Maybe some refugees identify themselves to a great extent with the Dutch culture while others do not and maintain a wish to return to their home countries someday. In other words: all subjects in this research relate to each other through their descent from the Islamic world but do have differing social identities in terms of other categories that influence their life's. So what identity-categories become foregrounded in the two-sided process and therefore play an important role during the integration of these refugees from the Islamic world?



From the macro-side an integrated refugee has to live up to the societal idea of good citizenship that implies complying with the four different elements that have been discussed in the last chapter. From these elements certain identity categories of the individual's self can be derived that possibly play an important role in becoming a good citizen and thus in the integration process. Here there is an interaction between the macro- and the micro-side of the integration paradigm. The first two elements of good citizenship, that prescribe that a good citizen actively participates and is or gets educated, insinuate that an individual needs to have a *professional* identity. The individual in return has a certain desire to find employment in the field that he or she has possibly studied for or worked in. The third and fourth elements of good citizenship respectively dictate that a good citizen speaks the Dutch language and knows the Dutch culture while also practicing his or her cultural and national background in the personal sphere in a manner that does not affect their integration in the Dutch society. These two elements indicate that the integration is also about the inter-related (but still slightly different) *national*- and *cultural* identities of the refugees. Opposite to this macro-perspective, the individual refugee identifies with a certain nationality and feels the desire to live a certain culture; this can possibly be either the nationality and culture of their homelands or that of the Netherlands, but maybe also even both or neither of these identities.

In addition there are also certain 'passive' identities that are important to take into account. These identities are passive because the individual refugees belong to these categories whether they like it or not. The best example of such a passive identity is the individual's *sexual* identity as everyone on the planet is either man or women. But besides that the refugees that provided their life-stories also have a shared appearance characteristic that deviates from the Dutch standard and which can also have an important impact on their integration; it is their *racial* identity. And finally refugees have a certain *social* identity as a newcomer as a result of their forced departure of their home country; they are forced to rebuild a new life.

This chapter starts analyzing the integration of refugees with these passive identities as input and then moves further to the identities that can be derived from the macro- and micro-side of the idea of integration as a two-sided process. This means that after the introduction of the respondents in the next paragraph, the third, fourth and fifth paragraph will respectively focus on the sexual-, racial- and social identity of the refugees from the Islamic world. Then the sixth, seventh and eighth paragraphs will analyze the influence of the cultural-, national- and professional identity on the chance of the respondents to attain the identity of a good citizen in either the urban or the rural domain. The analytical paragraphs are all structured in the same manner, answering six questions:

1. What does it most commonly mean to live the identity-category for the different refugees?
2. Considering the differences in living of the identities, how are the refugees spatially distributed over the urban and rural Nijmegen area?
3. Are there notable differences between the identities of the refugees living across the urban and rural domain? And if so, how can they be explained?
4. Considering integration from the micro-side: what are the implications of living in the urban or rural domain on living the individual identities?
5. Considering integration from the macro-side: what are the implications of living the identities in the urban and rural domain on the notion of good citizenship?
6. *Conclusion:* to what extent are the identity category and the identity of a good citizen cancelling each other out in both the urban and the rural context?

## 5.2 Anonymously introducing the respondents



Figure 5: The spatial distribution of the respondents across the Nijmegen area

For the purpose of this research a total of 22 refugees in the Nijmegen area have shared their life-story. To not unnecessarily infringe the anonymity of those who have so willingly contributed to the

research this report will only elaborate on the for this specific research relevant personal information of the individuals. This information is shared in the course of this chapter when describing the personal identities of the refugees. Some general characteristics of the entire group that are important for this research however can be shared without damaging their anonymity. From the total number of 22 refugees 10 live in Nijmegen and 12 across the rural surrounding municipalities. An equal number of female as male refugees have been interviewed, also equally divided over the urban and rural domain. The years that the refugees have arrived in the Netherlands ranges from 1997 to 2011 while the youngest at the time of this arrival was 22 years old and the oldest 39 years. Refugees from 6 different Islam countries have been interviewed, divided over Afghanistan, Guinea, Iran, Iraq, Somalia and Syria. Figure 5 sketches the spatial dispersal of these people over the Nijmegen area.

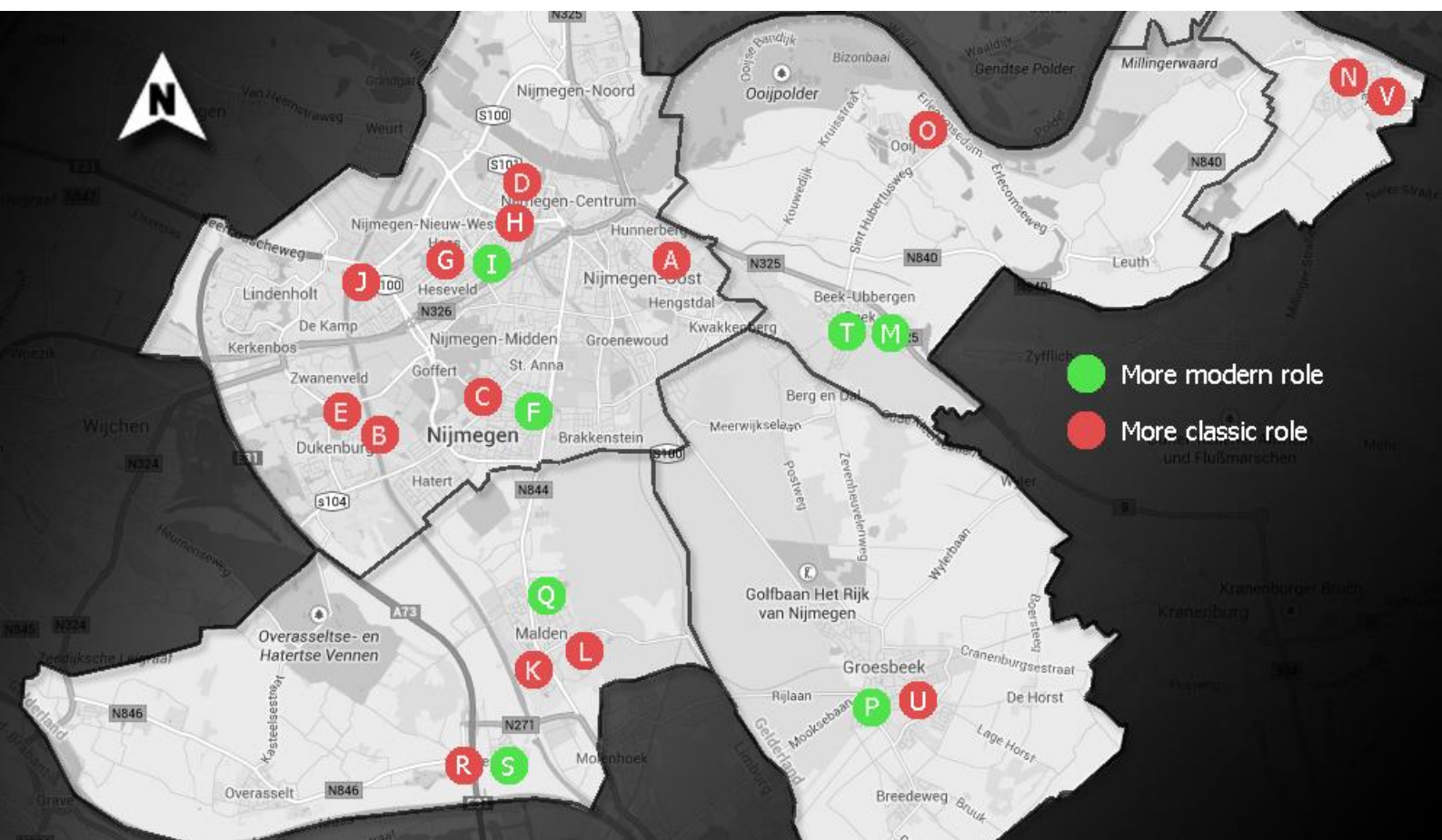
### 5.3 Sexual Identity

Every individual has either a male or female identity. How this identity is lived however can differ greatly between these individuals. So what does it mean for the refugees to live their sexuality? The common theme throughout the life-experiences of the refugees concerning their sexuality is the role that the male and female individuals play in their household. A distinction can be made here between more classic roles and more modern roles in the household. In a classic family the male is the breadwinner, i.e. the one who works and supports his family with his earnings, while the female is responsible for taking care of the children. In a more modern distribution of roles in households the tasks are not so strictly divided between male and female, meaning that the male also takes care of the children and the female is co-responsible for the earnings of the family. In general this still means that the male is the primary breadwinner and the female the primary caretaker, but the division become more indistinct.

When observing the lives of the refugees in the Nijmegen area there are great differences between men and women in this sense; there are both female and male refugees living the classic role in terms of sexuality while there are also those who have more modern ideas on how the roles should be divided. Figure 6 below indicates how the refugees are divided over the Nijmegen area in terms of these classic or more modern roles. This is determined through how these people 'live' the identity that belongs to their sexuality. The male respondents portrayed in red (A, B, C, D, E, K, L N & O) are mostly concerned with finding a job and making money and not so much with their child as they live alone without children or they feel that this is the task of their wife. The men in green (M & P) have a more modern conception of the household distribution in the sense that they also take

care of their children; both regularly bring their children to their schools and to the local football club while M is also flexible with his working hours so that his wife can contribute economically as well.

The female refugees portrayed in red (G, H, J, R, U & V) have classic roles in the sense that they are predominantly concerned with the upbringing of their children and the running of the household which in turn stands in their way to contribute economically. Opposite to them the female refugees in green (F, I, Q, S, T) all contribute to the Dutch society in the form of either (full-time or part-time) paid work, internships or charity work, meaning that they get out of their homes far more regularly than those women who live their lives in a more classic role.



**Figure 6: The distribution of refugees in relation to their life's according to their sexuality**

Are there notable differences how the different refugees live their sexual identity between the urban and rural domain? What is striking is that of the 10 refugees in the urban domain, only 2 live a more modern role in the household whereas there are 5 of the 12 doing so in the rural domain. This can be explained by the fact that the refugees in the urban domain are mostly single men, who are solely active in an economic sense, and single women, who are hindered to contribute economically as a result of the young age of their children who they feel need their constant care. The respondents in the rural domain who are labeled as living more modern roles in the households are mostly married

men and women, meaning that for them it is actually practically possible to live this identity in a modern way.

So let us investigate the implications on the integration of these people living their sexual identity in a more classic and a more modern role. From the micro-side of the integration-paradigm the effects of living in the urban or rural domain on the possibilities to live the identities should be considered. But it cannot be said there is a great impact here. The living of these sexual identities is mostly determined on the level of the household and not so much on the level of the community meaning that, for example, a classic female role can just as easy be lived in the rural domain as it can in the urban domain.

From the macro-side however there is a definite impact on the integration of the refugees. The large majority of the refugees responding to this research agree that it is through direct contact with the Dutch people that they learn the Dutch language and culture the best. But the amount of contact that they have with the Dutch natives differs greatly between male and female refugees living classic and more modern roles in the household. A classic male almost solely has contact with the Dutch at his work whereas a classic female refugee predominantly meets other people via her children. As said, these lines get more blurred when a male and female refugee live more modern roles in the household; the father meets other people by taking care of his children and the mother through having a job. In its simplified essence this means that refugees living their sexual identity in a more modern manner spread their chances to make contact with the Dutch and learn the language and culture whereas those in a classic role have a larger chance to get socially isolated from the Dutch people. The situation of the female refugees 'I' and 'Q' illustrate this assertion the best. They were both married and had a classic role in the household meaning that they were at home most of the week. For both this has changed radically after they have gotten divorced. Refugee 'I' for example states that she has become a free and independent women and she has only began learning the Dutch culture and language after she had divorced her ex-husband as it has given her the chance to leave her home and find work.

But this in itself does not tell anything about if and how the distribution of refugees over the urban or rural domain has helped or hindered their integration. As said, refugees living their sexual identity in a more classic manner have a smaller chance to make direct contact with the Dutch people. There is however a great difference between the refugees in the urban and rural domain. Of all the 8 refugees with a classic sexual identity in the urban domain, not one has sustained contacts with Dutch people outside work and contact with parents at the school of the children; the vast majority of them state that they do not have contacts within their neighborhood and do not even know who their neighbors are. A different situation can be seen among the refugees in the rural

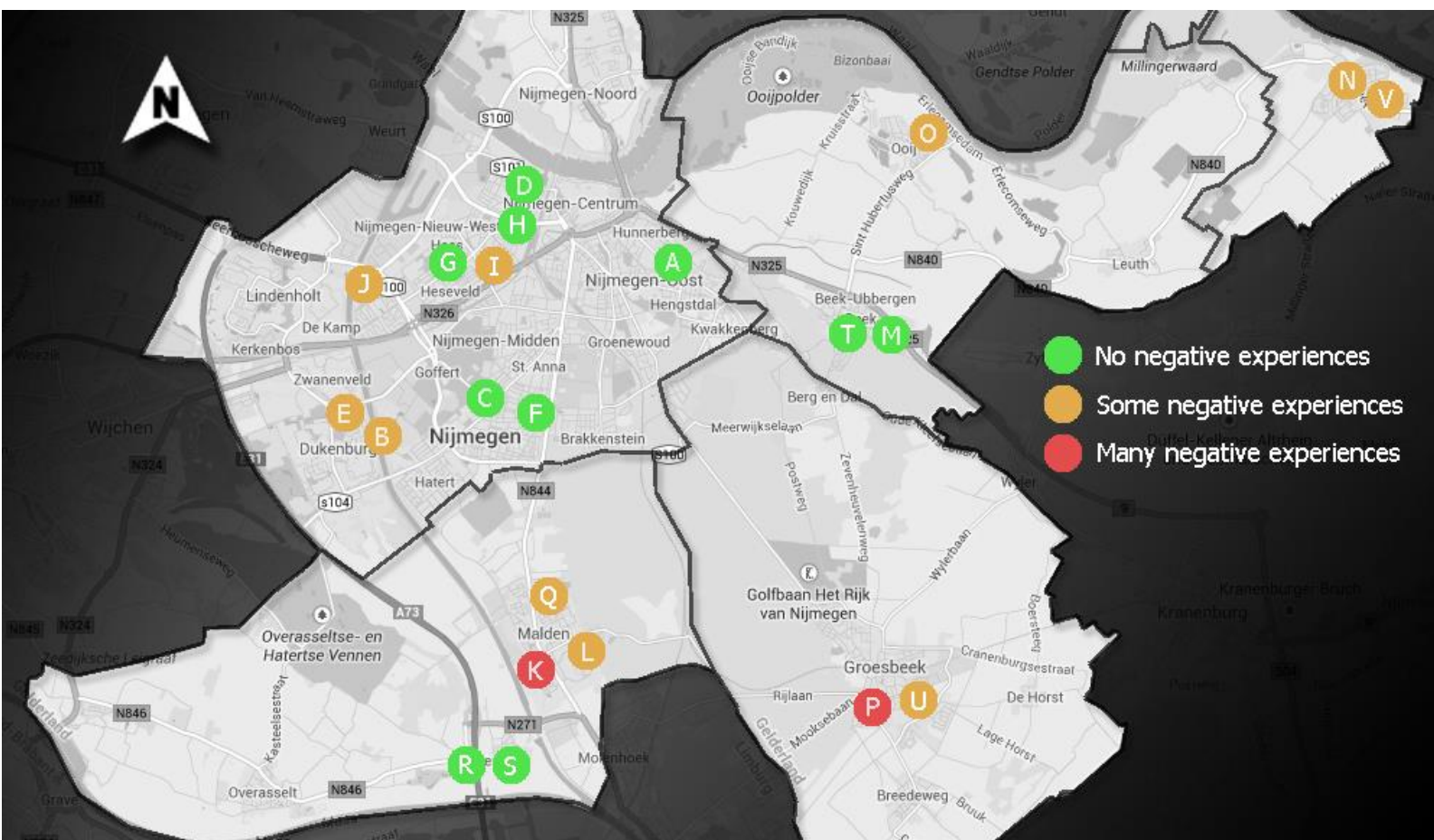
domain: of the 7 respondents determined as living their sexual identity in a classic manner only 2 state that they do not have any contacts with Dutch people outside work. Refugees 'N', 'R' and 'V' have contact with their neighbors and other people who want to help them to learn the Dutch language whereas 'K' and 'L' state that they had contact with Dutch people when they were still active at the local swim- and table tennis associations. This can best be explained through the differences in social cohesion between cities and villages; villages are characterized by a high social control and a great attachment to the associational life whereas cities are more individualistic and a place where people live in relative anonymity. It seems that in the city refugees can get totally socially isolated from the Dutch people when they do not have contact with natives via their children or when they do not have a job that brings them into contact with the locals. This social isolation is disastrous for the chance of a refugee to learn the Dutch language and culture. In contrast to this, the refugees living in the rural domain are less likely to get socially isolated as it is probable that a neighbor or another person from the community reaches out to the refugee and tries to help him or her with learning the Dutch language and culture. This can be confirmed when investigating the lives of the refugees that do have a more modern role in the household; respondents 'F' and 'I', living in the city of Nijmegen, both do have many contacts with Dutch people, but only at their job or at school. This is again in sharp contrast with the respondents in the rural domain. Respondents 'M', 'P', 'Q', 'S' and 'T' all have sustained contacts with Dutch people within their home village. 'M' and 'P' for example are active members at their local football teams while, just like 'Q', 'S' and 'T', they also visit their neighbors regularly to socialize, drink coffee and/or to practice the language.

So in summary: from the macro-perspective of the integration-paradigm a good citizen speaks the Dutch language and knows the Dutch culture. This language and culture is best learned through sustained contacts with the Dutch people. Such contact can best be made at a workplace, via children or by having social contacts in the living area. What is evident when observing the sexual identities of the refugees in the Nijmegen area is that a refugee has a larger chance to make contact with Dutch people when he or she has a more modern conception of their role in the household whereas an individual that either only works or only takes care of the children has a smaller chance to build sustained contacts and therefore a larger chance to socially isolate themselves from the Dutch people and not learn the Dutch language. What however is even further *hindering* the integration of the refugees living in cities and *helping* those living in the villages is the fact that cities are characterized by individuality and villages by social cohesion and control, making sustained contact with the natives more likely for the refugees in the rural domain. In this sense the identity of a good citizen is cancelled out to a greater extent for the refugees living their sexual identity in the urban domain than those living in the rural domain.



## 5.4 Racial Identity

Refugees from the Islamic world generally share an appearance characteristic that deviates from the Dutch standard. But what does it mean for the refugees that the color of their skin is different than that of the majority of the people in the Netherlands - if it even means anything? Derived from the interviews with the respondents in the Nijmegen area it can be determined that generally the refugees do not attach value to this racial identity until there are negative experiences; it is only at this point that the racial identity of the refugees becomes foregrounded and with it a (undesired) part of the life of the refugees. When delving into the lives of the refugees across the urban and rural Nijmegen area this means inquiring in the experiences they feel they have had with the local people concerning discrimination or racism. Figure 7 summarizes such experiences per respondent.



**Figure 7: The distribution of refugees in relation to their negative experiences concerning their race**

Are there notable differences between if and how the racial identity becomes foregrounded between the urban and the rural domain? The figure indicates that there are. The refugees in the city of

Nijmegen generally seem to have less negative experiences than those in the rural domain. The respondents shown in green (A, C, D, F, G, H, M, R, S & T) state that they do not have experiences of racism or discrimination in their place of residence. In the city of Nijmegen they account for 6 of the 10 respondents while in the rural surroundings only 4 of the 12 refugees have had no negative experiences. Respondents portrayed in orange do have some negative experiences concerning discrimination. Some state that they could be the victim of discrimination on the labor market (B, E, I, N) while others had some minor incidents as strange looks (O, Q, V) or a single offensive shout on the street (J, L, N, U). And finally the two refugees shown in red (K & P) argue that they have many negative experiences as a result of their race. Refugee 'P' for example has been the victim of threats and bullying by people in his neighborhood who have thrown eggs against his windows and garbage in his back garden.

So what does it mean for the integration of these refugees that their racial identity becomes foregrounded in this manner? As a reminder, the micro-perspective of integration as a two-sided process states that an individual refugee should be able to live the life that he or she wants. Generally the respondents want to live a life in which the color of their skin does not play any role of importance. An inquiry in the lives of the refugees in the Nijmegen area however shows that their racial identity becomes more foregrounded in the rural domain while it remains relatively unimportant in the city. This fact can best be explained by the more progressive mindset and the ethnic diversity in cities whereas villages are still relatively monotone and conservative in terms of openness towards other cultures and ethnicities. Important here is the manner in which the individuals deal with this more prominent presence of their racial identity. The reactions of 'K', 'P' and 'U' are good examples of how discrimination and racism can have totally different effects. Refugee 'P', who was the victim of bullying in Groesbeek, remained calm and argues that this was only one group of people. It did not disconnect him from the other people in his neighborhood with whom he now still has a sustained and positive contact. Respondents 'K' and 'U' are not able to deal with this discrimination and racism in such a manner. 'K' feels that he is not able to find work as a result of the color of his skin and besides that has, just like 'U', many negative experiences with the people in respectively Malden and Groesbeek. The result is that they do not feel any connection with the people in their neighborhood and with the Dutch culture in general. So where 'P' is able to place the negative events in perspective, 'K' and 'U' only isolate themselves from the local people and the Dutch culture. It needs to be said that the majority of the other refugees with negative experiences is able to deal positively with these events and state that there are good and bad people in every place of the world. Respondent 'L' adds that "the large majority of the experiences are positive. I am not going to let a small group get to me".



How is their integration affected considering the macro-perspective and the notion of good citizenship? It is obvious that an individual who suffers from discrimination and racism to such an extent that he or she gets socially isolated has a smaller chance to become a 'good citizen'; no contact with the Dutch population means that the language and culture is not learned. A question that then arises is whether or not the other refugees, those who do not care about discrimination or racism in their place of residence, are still benefitting from their placement in the rural domain? This discrimination could mean that a refugee is less likely to participate economically in the village (while not claiming that discrimination is absent in the city!), which is already characterized by a relatively low amount of economic activity in comparison to the city. In the last paragraph however it was already learned that villages are also characterized by a greater sense of community making it more likely for the refugee to establish sustained connections with the Dutch native population and thus to learn the language and culture. Logically this would mean that a refugee is best helped when he is able to enjoy the 'best of both worlds'; participate economically in the urban domain while having social contacts in the rural domain. This means that the refugee lives in a village and has physical connectivity to the city. The life of respondent 'P' illustrates this: he has sustained social connections with the locals in Groesbeek while at the same time having a job in Nijmegen to which he commutes every day using his car. This is in sharp contrast with the lives of 'N' and 'V' that both live in the remote village of Millingen and that rely on the (for them costly) public transport to get to and from Nijmegen. They both do have social connections with Dutch people from Millingen but are both not able to contribute economically.

So to what extent are the racial identity and the identity of a good citizen cancelling each other out in both the urban and the rural context? It has been learned that the racial identity of a refugee gets more foregrounded in the rural domain than it does in the urban domain, possibly socially isolating those individuals who cannot deal with it while at the same time hindering the others to find a job in the village. The manner in which refugees deal with this foregrounding of their racial identity is essential in determining whether or not the spatial distribution of refugees is helping or hindering their integration; people who get socially isolated as a result of discrimination and racism are definitely *hindered* to attain the identity of a good citizen while those who are able to place these negative experiences in perspective and maintain strong links with others in the village are still *helped* in the village as long as they are at the same time physically connected to the city to possibly contribute economically. In other words this means that depending on the individual's ability to deal with discrimination and his or her proximity to the city the racial identity of the refugees cancels out the identity of a good citizen to a greater or lesser extent.

## 5.5 Social Identity

A general characteristic of the refugees as a result of their forced departure from their home country is that they are forced to rebuild a new life from scratch. For many of them this means that socially they have to take a few steps back in their lives. Derived from the life-stories of the respondents it becomes evident that in their home country most of the refugees enjoyed an education, had a stable income and owned something as seemingly unimportant as a driver's license. When coming to the Netherlands they had to leave all this behind and start over again. Their educational background and driver's licenses are generally not recognized while their income self-evidently is no longer secured. In other words: their social identity has been 'downgraded' from being an established- towards being an unestablished citizen. Since this is an experience inherent to being an integrating refugee this means that all respondents share this social identity of being unestablished. A map portraying their distribution over the Nijmegen area is therefore not needed.

But what does this social identity mean considering the concept of integration as a two-sided process? What is evident here is that the micro- and the macro-perspective become intertwined as the ability of a refugee to live the life they want and become an established citizen again is closely related to their ability to become a good citizen. For the refugee living this social identity means trying to find a job, receiving education, learning a new language and possibly getting a driver's license. In pursuing these goals two factors seem to be of great importance for the refugees: it is the physical availability of services and the financial capacity to make use of these services. And this is where the life's between refugees in the urban and the rural domain differ greatly. In general rural areas are characterized by a relative low availability of services as these are more concentrated in the city. This is also true for the Nijmegen area: courses for refugees to learn the Dutch language are held on a daily basis in the city of Nijmegen while these are held once every week or two weeks in the surrounding municipalities. Furthermore the large majority of economic activities and educational institutions are also centered in urban Nijmegen. For the respondents this concentration of services in the urban domain means that they are to some extent dependent of the city to attain the social identity of an established citizen.

But, as mentioned, it is the financial capacity of refugees to make use of these services that is an important second factor in determining whether or not refugees can live their social identity. And it is exactly this financial capacity that many refugees lack just because they are an unestablished citizen without a job and thus a stable income. Even though it is a difficult subject to talk about for many, a significant number of respondents indicated that they have to deal with debts and financial

misery; 'B', 'G', 'N', 'O', 'P' and 'R' all stated that they have or had financial struggles since their arrival in the Netherlands. And it is not entirely unthinkable that many of the others also have tight financial situations as they are often unemployed. So what does this financial situation mean for the lives of the refugees in the urban and rural domain considering the argument that they are dependent of the employment opportunities, facilities and services in the city of Nijmegen to attain their desired social identity? The situation of 'N', who lives in the remote village of Millingen, is probably the best example to how living in the rural domain affects the living of the desired social identity of a refugee. He has financial problems as a result of unemployment and is dependent on Nijmegen to learn the Dutch language via courses as there are only limited lessons offered in Millingen. During the interview he expressed his desire to visit the city on a more regular basis but is hindered to do so as a result of his financial situation. He has no car and driver's license, public transport is costly for him and the distance between Millingen and Nijmegen is simply too far to bridge it with a bike on a daily basis. The result is in the first place that he is not able to visit Nijmegen as often as he may have liked and in the second place that he regularly misses courses to learn the Dutch language. In this sense he is only hindered by the allocation to the village of Millingen in his desire to become an established citizen. And the same can be said when a refugee is trying to find employment or gets educated in the city; considering this social identity of the refugee, that often means dealing with financial problems, it is always better to be physically proximate to such opportunities than further away.

What does this mean considering the macro-perspective of integration? As said, the ability of a refugee to live the desired social identity of an established citizen and the macro-perspective of integration are highly intertwined; learning the Dutch language, getting educated and finding employment are all elements belonging to this social identity category and the notion of good citizenship. When approaching the integration of these refugees from the macro-perspective this means that the understanding about how their spatial dispersal affects their integration is the same as those stemming from the analysis from the micro-perspective, namely that a refugee is dependent on the services and facilities of the city of Nijmegen to become a good citizen and thus has to be physically proximate to the city.

So to what extent are the social identity and the identity of a good citizen cancelling each other out in both the urban and the rural context? In this paragraph it has become evident that refugees are dependent on the variety of jobs, services and facilities of the city to try and live the desired social identity of an established citizen but often lack the financial capacity to visit the city on a regular basis just because they are unestablished in the Netherlands. Concerning their spatial distribution over the Nijmegen area they are therefore *helped* when they are allocated to a place of residence

close to these opportunities offered by the urban domain; this means that living in Nijmegen itself would therefore be beneficial for the individual while refugees living in the village of for example Beek-Ubbergen, which lies directly adjacent to the city of Nijmegen, are still relatively well-off in comparison to the respondents in villages further away as Heumen, Groesbeek and especially Millingen. In summary this means that this unestablished social identity of the refugee cancels out the identity of a good citizen in the rural context.

## 5.6 Cultural Identity

The respondents of this research all fled the Islamic world at one point in their lives. Evidently this means that they all lived in a country where the Islamic culture was the norm. The majority of the refugees who still identify with this cultural background of their homelands attach value to a lifestyle that is in accordance to this Islamic culture, which means visiting a mosque, praying on a daily basis, wearing traditional clothing and buying and eating halal-products. In figure 8 these people are portrayed in green.

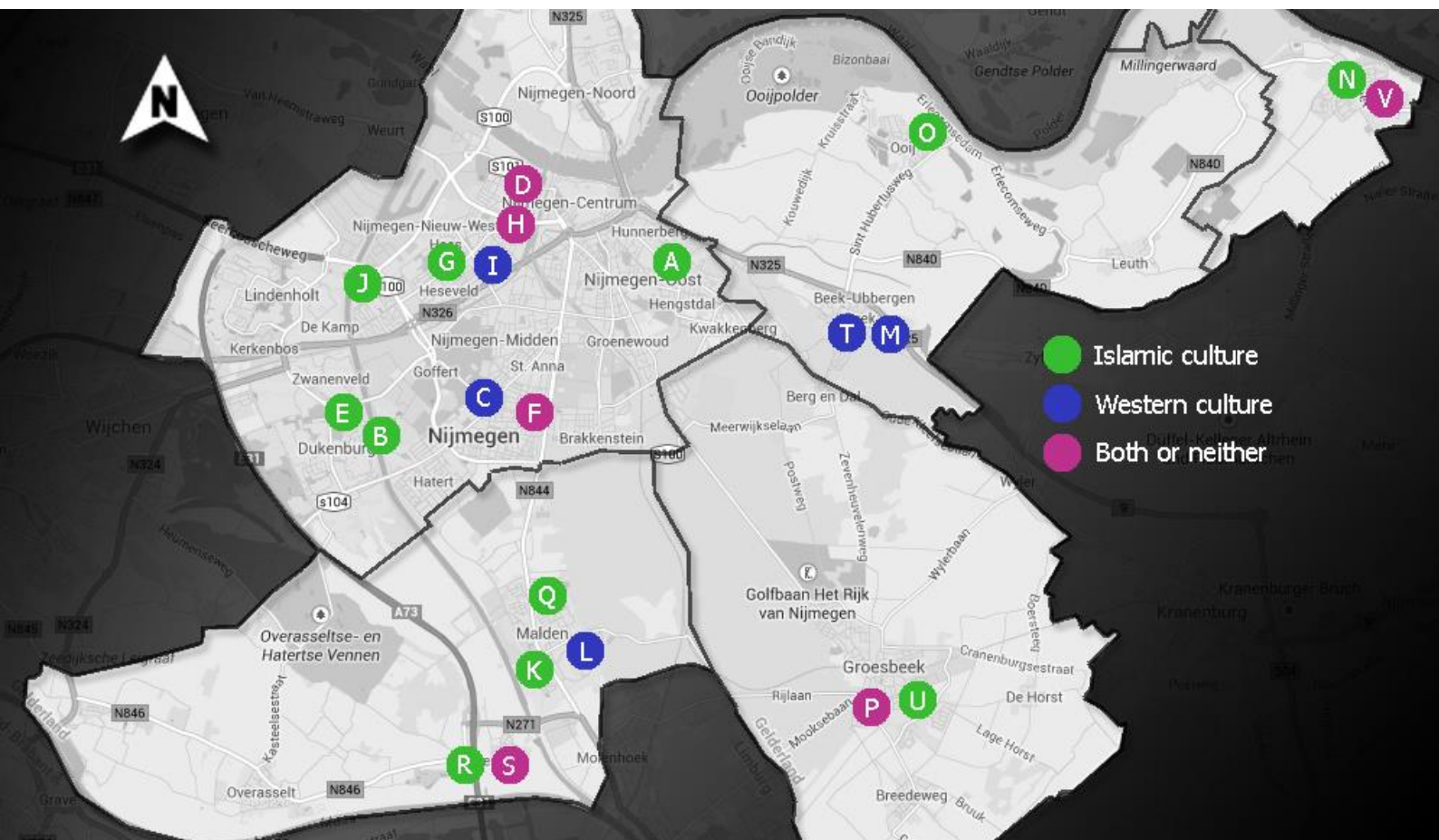


Figure 8: The distribution of refugees in relation to their cultural background

But there are also refugees that, despite their upbringing in the Islamic world, identify to a greater or lesser extent with the Western culture and world. The respondents portrayed in blue state that they do not feel a strong connection with the culture of the Islamic world but rather feel more at home in the Dutch culture; respondents 'M' and 'T' for example visit the local church on a regular basis while 'C', 'I' and 'L' state that they like the personal freedom that they feel they have in the Netherlands while they lacked this in their home countries. Finally, refugees portrayed in purple feel a connection with both cultures. Respondents 'D', 'P', 'S' and 'V' all state that they are Muslim from birth but do not actually feel the need to strictly practice this religious background by going to a mosque, by praying five times a day or by eating only halal-food. Refugees 'F' and 'H' assign a great value to the eating habits of their home culture.

There are no notable differences between the cultural identities of the refugees living across the urban and rural domain; the people identifying with the Islamic, Western or both cultures are distributed evenly across the Nijmegen area. So what are the implications of this spatial distribution on the integration of the refugees considering the micro-perspective? When investigating the lives of the individuals it becomes clear that especially those who want to hold onto the culture of their Islamic home countries have difficulties to live the life that they want in the rural domain. This is best explained by the fact that the villages surrounding the city are relatively monotonous in terms of culture whereas Nijmegen is characterized by a great diversity. As a result there are only little services and companies in the rural domain that cater to the people living their lives according to the Islamic culture. This is best exemplified by the fact that there are four mosques in the entire area, all located in Nijmegen while supermarkets selling Halal-products can also solely be found in the city. All respondents living in the rural domain and who stated that they attach great value to the Islamic culture (K, N, O, Q, R & U) visit the city of Nijmegen on a regular basis to visit one of these mosques or supermarkets. Respondent 'N' however stated that he cannot visit the city as often as he likes as it simply is too far away from the village of Millingen while 'Q' and 'R' state that they would like to move to the city of Nijmegen just because they cannot live their cultural identity in respectively Malden and Heumen. The refugees living in the rural domain who identify more with the Western culture do not tell such stories. All respondents (L, M & T) state that they feel fortunate that they live in the villages of Malden and Beek-Ubbergen and do not visit Nijmegen to live their cultural identity; 'L' states that he only visits Nijmegen for the course to learn the Dutch language while Christians 'M' and 'T' go to the church in their village. From the micro-perspective it is evident that the integration of people living in the rural domain identifying with the Islamic culture is under greater pressure than of those identifying with the Western culture.

But what is the influence of living these cultural identities in the urban and rural domain on their integration from the macro-perspective? According to the concept of good citizenship a newcomer should practice his or her cultural and national identity in such a manner that it does not hinder his or her integration in the Dutch society. We can all however imagine that the respondents who identify with the Western culture get more into contact with the Dutch people than those who consider themselves Islamic and visit mosques and supermarkets where the Dutch language is not spoken and the culture is not learned. In other words: people living the Islamic culture are more likely to alienate themselves from the Dutch people than those living their culture in a more Western manner, thus hindering their integration through the practice of their cultural identity. Whether there is a truth behind this statement will be further investigated in the next paragraph that focuses on the closely related national identity of the refugees; many refugees that describe themselves as either more Islamic or more Western are also likely to identify more with respectively the people from their homeland or the people from the Netherlands. It is however more relevant to investigate this in the paragraph analyzing the practicing of national identity, which actually means seeking contact with people from a certain nationality, and not in the paragraph analyzing the cultural identity, which means visiting mosques and eating culturally-related food.

So what can be concluded so far concerning the implications of living the cultural identity in either the urban and rural domain on the integration of the respondents? In the first part of this paragraph it has been determined that to live the Islamic cultural identity the individuals are dependent on the services and facilities of the city while the refugees that identify more with the Western people do not necessarily need to visit Nijmegen to practice their culture. In the second part however the concern is raised that the practicing of the Islamic cultural identity might result in an alienation of these refugees from the Dutch society. The result is a dilemma: should the refugees be placed in the city so that they are *helped* with their integration from the micro-perspective or should they be assigned to housing in villages so that they become more disconnected from culturally like-minded Islamic refugees in the city and 'forced' into contact with the native population in the villages, *helping* them to learn the Dutch language and culture? As said, the next paragraph will further investigate this dilemma.

## 5.7 National Identity

All 22 respondents in this research have fled their home countries in the Islamic world at one point in their lives. Every individual is born and raised in this home country, being Afghanistan, Guinea, Iran,

Iraq, Somalia or Syria. But that does not necessarily mean that these individuals identify with the countries in which they have lived all these years. Figure 9 summarizes the national identity of the individual refugees by determining with which nationality they identify themselves. The 10 respondents portrayed in green stated that they identify more with their home country than with the Netherlands. In practice this means that they like to speak their mother language, seek contact with people from their own country and watch specific television stations from this country. Besides that many of these respondents indicated that, if they had the possibility, they would return to their home country immediately. This is totally different for the 5 refugees portrayed in orange that indicated that a return to their home country is the last thing they would do. These people feel that they carry the Dutch nationality, stating that they prefer contact with the Dutch people above contact with people from their original nationality. Finally there are 7 refugees that indicated that they identify with both the Netherlands and their home country, meaning that they feel that they have two nationalities. Living this identity for this people means that they attach equal value to contact with people from their home country and people from the Netherlands while most of them also state that they like to speak their mother language.



Figure 9: The distribution of the refugees in relation to their national identity

The figure does not show any obvious differences between how the national identity is lived between the urban and the rural domain. The people identifying with their home country, the Netherlands or with both are relatively evenly spread across the Nijmegen area. But what is notable is the fact that the figure is quite comparable with figure 8 that was used in the last paragraph to portray the distribution of the refugees in relation to their cultural identity. There it was already suggested that many refugees that describe themselves as either more Islamic or more Western are also likely to identify more with respectively the people from their homeland or the people from the Netherlands. A comparison between the two figures tells that 16 of the 22 respondents live their nationality and culture in the same vein, meaning that those who adhere to the Islamic culture also identify to a larger extent with the nationality of their home country while those who identify with the Western culture are also more likely to feel that they are Dutch. Furthermore last paragraph also hypothesized that the individuals that identify more with the Islamic culture and their home country are more likely to alienate themselves from the Dutch society. This claim is further investigated in the course of this paragraph.

But first the implications on the integration process are investigated from the micro-perspective. How is the distribution of refugees across the urban and rural domain affecting if and how the national identities are practiced? Those who identify strongly with their home country tell that they often watch television stations and visit websites from this specific country to keep up with the latest developments in their country. In this age of technology this is all possible for refugees in both the city and the village. But practicing the national identity for these respondents also means getting into contact with fellow countrymen and speaking their mother language. And since cities are characterized by high cultural diversity while villages are monotone in this sense, this can be problematic for the refugees living in the rural domain. This is also evident when delving into the life stories of the respondents. Of the 10 respondents identifying with the nationality of the home country 4 live in the urban domain and 6 in the rural domain. The refugees living in Nijmegen (A, B, E & J) all state that they have no problems to maintain sustained contact with their fellow countrymen in the city. Those living in the surrounding villages however generally argue that they have to visit Nijmegen to get such contact; 'K', 'O', 'Q' and 'U' therefore often visit Nijmegen to socialize with friends while 'R' and 'V', who live in the relatively remote villages of Heumen and Millingen, are not satisfied with the amount of contact that they have. For 'R' this resulted in a desire to move to the city while 'V' has many contacts via internet. Proximity to the city thus seems to be important for the integration of these people.

And then there are also the refugees portrayed in orange and green in figure 9. These respondents stated that they identify to a lesser or larger extent with the Dutch nationality which



means that they, besides generally attaching value to contact with their fellow countrymen, also appreciate sustained contact with the Dutch natives. How they are able to live this national identity differs between those living in the city and the village. The respondents living in the city (C, D, F, G, H & I) often have much contact with people from the same nationality and not so much with the Dutch natives. These contacts are often limited to the workplace and other formal situations. Respondent 'C' states that he values contact with people from his home country and Dutch people equally but that in practice he mostly socializes with people with the same national background as himself as it is easier for him. For the others living in the city this is basically the same while the investigation in the lives of refugees in the rural domain shows an opposite picture. They generally have less contact with the people from their home country while often having sustained contact with the Dutch; 5 of the 6 respondents (M, N, P, S & T) stated that they have much contact with the native population outside work, school and other formal activities. Contacts with people from their own nationality also happen mostly in the city of Nijmegen.

It can therefore easily be concluded that, from the micro-perspective of integration, refugees that identify more with their home country are helped to live their national identity in the urban domain while those that identify more with the Dutch are helped to practice this identity in the rural domain. However, if an individual attaches value to contact with both nationality categories they are best helped in villages close to the city since socializing with fellow countrymen happens mostly in the urban domain.

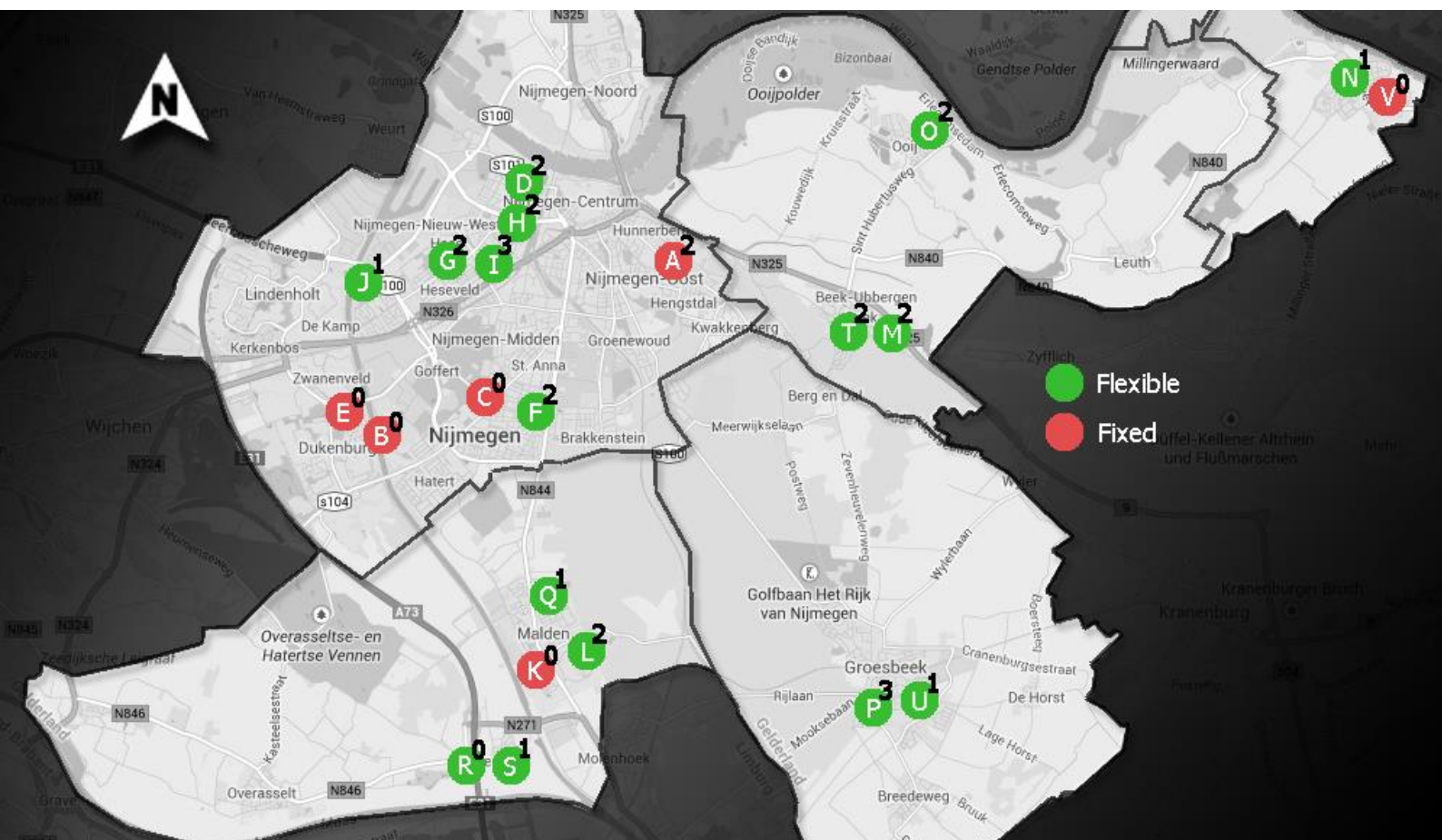
But how is living these identity categories affecting the integration process from the macro-perspective? Good citizenship entails learning the Dutch language and culture while this is not jeopardized by the individual through living the cultural and national background in a manner that hinders the process. Important here is the amount of contact that the refugees make with Dutch natives outside work and other formal social situations; the large majority of the refugees agree with the assertion that the language is best learned when practicing it on a regular basis in the private sphere. But we can imagine that those identifying solely with their home country and therefore do not necessarily feel the desire to have contact with the Dutch are only alienating themselves from the Dutch society, thus jeopardizing their own process of integration by not learning the language and culture through regular practice. When comparing the lives of the respectively respondents identifying more with their home country and individuals leaning more towards the Dutch it is obvious that the chance for sustained contact and with it the learning of the Dutch language is larger for the last group. Of the 12 respondents identifying with the Dutch nationality 5 stated that they have sustained contact with natives while their ability to speak Dutch is of a relatively good level (M, N, P, S & T); these respondents all live in the rural domain which again illustrates that sustained

contact for refugees seems to be more likely in the village. But what is striking is that of the other 7 respondents, even though they do not really have sustained contact with the Dutch population, only 1 really struggles with the Dutch language (C). Respondent 'L' for example states that he has no contact with the Dutch but really wants to learn the language and therefore watches Dutch television and never misses a lesson of the course. Considering that he has only fled to the Netherlands in 2010 his language level is excellent. This demonstrates that individual determination to become a good citizen is a very important factor in the process of integration. And it is this determination that seems to be relatively absent for the 10 refugees identifying solely with their home country. Of them only 1 has sustained contact with Dutch people in her area (Q) while some others have irregular and superficial contact with neighbors. Their ability to speak the Dutch language also is significantly lower than among the respondents of the other group. Of the 10 individuals only 1 speaks the Dutch language on a good level (B) while the others generally struggle, regardless if they live in the urban or the rural domain. So where refugees identifying with the Dutch nationality are helped by their allocation to the village, this generally cannot be said for those practicing the nationality of their home country. If the refugee is not fully determined to become a good citizen in the Netherlands there is a large chance that the individual alienates himself from the Dutch society. The lives of 'K', 'U' and 'V' are good examples of this. Both 'K' and 'V' avoid talking Dutch whenever they can and speak English while 'U', after already living in the Netherlands for 17 years, still barely speaks a word of Dutch.

So what conclusion can be drawn from this concerning the influence of the spatial distribution on the integration of the refugees? In the paragraph investigating the cultural identity of the respondents a dilemma was introduced concerning the respondents that possibly alienate themselves from the Dutch society; should these individuals be placed in the city so that they are helped with their integration from the micro-perspective or should they be assigned to housing in villages so that they are 'forced' into contact with the native population? Based on this paragraph it has to be concluded that this last option is not likely to lead to the desired results. When people do not identify with the Dutch population they are also very likely not to have contacts with the natives. Allocating these people to housing in the rural domain does not add anything to their process of integration but only means that their chance to become socially isolated grows as contact with their fellow countrymen is less likely in the village. This means that those who identify strongly with their home country are best *helped* in the city, which consequently also brings them closer to work and education opportunities, while those who are more open to the Dutch nationality can still be *helped* by living in the rural domain.

## 5.8 Professional Identity

Between the responding refugees the professional background differs greatly. Some of them were schooled on a high level while others never enjoyed education in their home country. Some owned a supermarket or a store while there are also those who were active in technique, health-care, journalism or education. Every individual is unique in this sense. But as refugees they all have the shared experience of fleeing from their home country and therefore being forced to leave their professional activities behind. In the Netherlands they then have to start 'from zero', meaning that they have no job, no professional network and they do not speak the language that helps them to practice their respective professional identities. A quality that all respondents have in common is the fact that they want to contribute economically in order to establish a stable source of income. Their approach to attain this goal however differs. Building from the interviews with the refugees concerning their professional identity two categories of people can be derived: there are those who are more *flexible* and feel that they need to take a step back in order to take two steps forward again while there are also respondents who are determined to continue their professional activities like they have done in their home countries, thus being more *fixed* in terms of their professional identity.



**Figure 10: The distribution of the refugees in relation to their professional identity**

In figure 10 these respondents depicted as 'flexible' are marked in green while those with a 'fixed' identity are portrayed in red. Furthermore the figure also illustrates the position of the respondents on the economic participation ladder, 0 being unemployed moving up the ladder via doing charity work (1), internships and work experience placement (2) to paid work (3). The figure does not show any abnormalities concerning the distribution of people with a flexible or fixed professional background over the urban and the rural domain.

So how is the integration affected through the different approaches of the refugees with the aim to establish a stable source of income? It is evident that the micro- and macro-perspective of the integration-paradigm get highly intertwined here; when one is able to fully practice his desired professional identity it also means that he participates economically, thus living up to one of the elements of good citizenship. This paragraph will therefore discuss these both sides of the paradigm simultaneously and alternately by addressing how the approaches of practicing the professional identity (both in the urban and the rural domain) in a fixed or flexible manner affect the process of integration of the individual refugees in its entirety.

As the figure illustrates it has been determined that the large majority of the respondents (16 of the 22) have or had a flexible approach to re-establish a source of income in their lives. These people seem to realize that they have to take a step back in terms of their professional life so that in the long-term they benefit. This step back can have different practical connotations for different individuals. Firstly many choose to focus on charity work or internships to get accustomed with the Dutch ways and language. Respondent 'D' for example had his own company in his home country but in the Netherlands started with charity work as he acknowledged that he needed to improve his language skills before entering the labor market. Respondents 'D', 'M' and 'Q' tell a similar story.

Secondly a step back for many refugees means returning to school and re-educating themselves. Respondent 'O' for example already has work experience with fixing cars in his home country, but in the Netherlands is re-trained for a technical craft which occupies him four days per week: two days of school and two days of internship, both in Nijmegen. Respondent 'F' has a similar experience. She has studied English in her home country and after fleeing to the Netherlands chose to study linguistics at the Radboud University in Nijmegen.

Finally a step back may possibly mean that the refugees needs to lower his or her expectations concerning the working field and the level at which they work entirely; respondent 'L' for example was relatively high educated in his home country and trained to be a teacher while now working on an unschooled-level as a forklift-driver in a warehouse. He states that he accepts that in the Netherlands he is not able to find employment on this level as he does not have acknowledged qualifications. Rather than holding on to this identity of being a teacher he states that he prefers

working on a lower level than not working at all. The majority of the respondents indicate that they have lowered their professional expectations since their arrival in the Netherlands. Another example is given by 'P' whose passion it is to work in technique and who has also followed education to do so, but now works full-time as a taxi-driver. He indicates that he is grateful because, he argues, 'it is a difficult time in terms of employment which possibly affects refugees even harder than the native population of the Netherlands'.

Opposite to those who have a flexible professional identity there are those who are more rigid in their approach to attain a stable income (respondents A, B, C, E, K & V). A good example of such an individual is respondent 'K'. In his home country he enjoyed scientific education meaning that he has difficulties to accept that he might not find a job that matches his qualities in the Netherlands; his thinking level might be good but his lacking ability to speak the Dutch language makes it impossible to practically live his professional identity in the Netherlands. For him it would be wise to first do some charity work or an internship so that his language ability improves but he refuses to do so. Another example of someone with a too fixed professional identity is respondent 'E'. He wants to start his own restaurant but has no educational background to do so while he also refuses to do unpaid work to learn the basics.

So how is the process of integration in the Dutch society affected by the individuals practicing their professional identity in a more fixed or a more flexible manner and how is their spatial distribution helping or hindering this process? As said, the micro- and macro-perspective of the integration-paradigm get intertwined, meaning that they are analyzed simultaneously here. All the individuals have the desire to establish a stable source of income (micro) while the notion of good citizenship states that the individuals need to participate economically (macro). Furthermore the majority of the respondents agree that participating economically also helps them with learning the Dutch language and culture (macro). Derived from figure 10 it is obvious that those who are not willing to take a step back have significant lower positions on the participation ladder, regardless if they live in the urban or the rural domain; from the 6 respondents depicted as 'fixed' only 1 participates economically. Of those with a more flexible approach there is only 1 refugee who does not participate while 15 do. But where do these people participate? Since economic activities and services are centered in the city one can imagine that the majority of the respondents participate in the city. This is correct: 9 of the 15 participate in Nijmegen while 6 do this in the rural domain. But what is striking is that none of these individuals participating in the rural domain have paid work; 'N', 'Q', 'S' and 'U' do charity work for the local elementary schools or nursing houses while 'M' and 'T' gain work experience at respectively a local store and clinic. The majority of the refugees who are gaining working experience

or who have paid work (8 of the 10) do this for an organization in Nijmegen. Important here is that these people on the 2<sup>nd</sup> step of the participation ladder have a greater chance to get fully employed than those who are on the 1<sup>st</sup> step as these people often work for larger and commercial organizations with a greater financial capacity such as distribution centers, administrative organizations or technical companies. For paid work the refugees thus seem to be dependent on the economic opportunities in the city while more accessible work as charity work is predominantly done by refugees in the rural domain. This can probably best be explained by the social control as a result of the strong social cohesion in villages; the community may feel responsible for the well-being of the refugee and reaches out by helping him or her to do something in return for the community. The situation of respondent 'N' illustrates this assertion the best as he has been helped by his neighbor to do the charity work he does now. This means that it is not unthinkable that a refugee is helped by his allocation to housing in the rural domain.

But another aspect in the lives of the respondents depicted as having a flexible professional identity again illustrates that proximity to the city is more likely to help refugees than hindering them. Some of them want to (re)educate themselves in order to strengthen their position on the labor market (micro) which also means living up to the societal perspective of integration that insinuates that a good citizen is an educated citizen (macro). The life-stories of respondents 'F' and 'O' have already served as examples to point out that some refugees want to follow a study or courses that help them to polish their knowledge and skills. Considering the fact that educational services and facilities, such as in Nijmegen the Radboud University, the HAN and the ROC, are almost without exception located in the urban domain it is important that the refugees live near the city.

And in addition there is another example that illustrates there are certain opportunities in the urban domain from which refugees can possibly benefit in terms of establishing a stable income. Respondent 'P' is a taxi-driver employed by a company in Nijmegen that is managed by someone from his home country while the majority of his colleagues are also fellow countrymen. This suggests that people from the same nationality seem to look after each other which in turn means that a refugee can benefit from the cultural diversity that is present in the urban domain while this is relatively absent in the villages.

In conclusion: to what extent are the professional identities and the identity of a good citizen cancelling each other out in both the urban and the rural context? In essence the aim of every individual refugee is to establish a source of income. Their approach to do so however differs as some have a fixed professional identity, meaning that they hold on to their professional background no matter what, while others are more flexible meaning that they are able to take a step back, possibly start with charity- and unpaid work or explore a whole new professional path in order to

make a step forward again. It is obvious that those with a fixed professional identity are less likely to establish an income regardless if they live in the urban or rural domain consequently meaning that this identity cancels out the identity of a good Dutch citizen. The refugees with a flexible identity on the other hand can possibly benefit from the social control in the rural domain to make the first step on the participation ladder while they are certainly dependent on the paid employment opportunities, educational facilities and services offered by the city of Nijmegen to be able to really establish an income and thus to attain the identity of a good citizen by getting educated and contributing economically. This last factor should in turn also help the refugees to further develop their ability to speak the Dutch language and their knowledge of the Dutch culture. This means that refugees having a flexible professional identity are possibly *helped* by living in the rural domain while they are *hindered* if there is no physical proximity to the urban domain.

## 5.9 Conclusions: mirroring findings to the hypotheses

To draw this chapter to a conclusion the findings based on the 22 interviews with refugees will be mirrored to the plausible yet untested hypotheses that were posed at the end of chapter 4 and which were developed building on theoretic literature and interviews with experts concerning refugees in the urban and rural domain of Nijmegen. *Seeing integration as a two-sided process, integrating refugees in the Nijmegen area are...*

### **1. Helped in the urban domain as there is more and varied employment in the city.**

*This seems true.* Refugees generally were established citizens in their home country, meaning that they had a job and with it financial security. After seeking refuge in the Netherlands they become unestablished citizens with no job and no money (5.5) while they generally need to seek employment in another (lower level) field of work than they were used to as a result of not being native speakers of the Dutch language while their qualifications are often not recognized in the Netherlands (5.8). From the two-sided perspective, integration for these people means being able to establish a sustainable source of income and therefore becoming an established citizen again (micro) while this subsequently also means contributing economically to the Dutch society (macro). The analysis has pointed out that the refugees are more likely to get paid work and thus contribute economically in the urban domain whereas participating in the rural area more often than not seems to mean doing charity work at the local school or another smaller non-profit organization. This can best be explained by the fact that cities are centers of economic activity. For an individual contributing economically from the rural domain this generally means joining the commute to the city. Proximity

to the city thus is important, especially when realizing that many refugees do not have the financial capacity to pay public transport on a daily basis or to get a driver's license. An important non-spatial condition to contribute economically at all however lies in the fact that refugees need to be realistic about their chances to (immediately) find employment on the same level as in their home country.

## **2. Helped in the rural domain as villages are characterized by a higher sense of community.**

*This seems true.* Refugees generally had an extensive social network in their home countries in which they managed to act in the first place by their ability to speak the common language and their knowledge of the culture. When fleeing to the Netherlands this established network is lost (5.5) and needs to be re-established in an area with people from another nationality and thus a strange language and culture (5.7). What integration means for the individual depends on their identity; some are determined to establish a network with Dutch people while others identify mostly with the people from their home-country and thus attach greater value to contact with them (micro). Opposite to this the receiving society emphasizes that the newcomers need to learn the language and culture to be accepted as a good citizen (macro). The analysis has shown that refugees in cities are more likely to become part of a network of people from their home country while individuals in the rural domain are more likely to develop sustained contacts with Dutch people as a result of the relatively high sense of community in villages which in return means that they are helped to learn the Dutch language and culture through regular practice. An important condition here is that the refugee needs to have a positive attitude towards contact with the native population. If this is the case the individuals are likely to benefit from the sense of community in the village which in practice means establishing a social network and learning the language and culture via contact with people in the neighborhood and involvement in the local associational life like for example the local football team.

## **3. Helped in the rural domain as villages are characterized by a higher social control.**

*This seems true.* As mentioned in concluding the previous hypotheses fleeing from the homeland for refugees means a transition from a life in which they had many social contacts and financial stability to a life where social isolation as a result of a lack of social contacts (5.3/5.5) and unemployment (5.8) is not unlikely. Integration for these people means crawling out of this social isolation by establishing a social network and finding employment (micro) while at the same time learning the Dutch language and culture to ultimately be able to contribute economically (macro). Derived from the analysis the conclusion needs to be drawn that the social control (closely related to the sense of community) in villages helps to prevent social isolation while at the same time helping refugees to learn the language whereas refugees in the city might prevent social isolation as a result of probable contact with people from the home country but are not as much helped with learning the Dutch



language through regular practice. Social control in the village makes it more likely that members from the village community reach out to refugees than in the more individualistic city. In practice this means that individuals help refugees to learn the language while at the same time offering them the opportunity to do charity work for local organizations and with it to learn the language and culture. Again, an important condition here is that individuals do not have a negative attitude towards contact with the Dutch people, do not passively rely on one social context (i.e. via children or work) to make contact with the native population and do not have unrealistic expectations concerning their chance to participate on their desired level as this might only jeopardize the process of integration.

#### **4. Helped in the urban domain as the people in cities generally have a more progressive mindset.**

*This is not necessarily true.* When looking for refuge in the Netherlands generally this means for a refugee from the Islamic world that there is a transition from being 'the standard' in terms of race in the home country to a situation in which the color of their skin means that they are 'deviant' (5.4). Integration for these refugees means that they are not hindered in their daily life and in their desire to find a job through the color of their skin (micro) while on the other hand the notion of good citizenship prescribes that an individual learns the Dutch culture and language and contributes economically (macro). The analysis has brought forward that even though discrimination and racism based on the race of the refugees might be more likely in the rural domain as a result of a relatively conservative mindset towards newcomers, much depends on the manner in which the individual deals with it. Those who carry these negative experiences with them to such an extent that they get socially isolated and thus do not get sustained contact with the Dutch people, do not learn the language and do not find employment are probably better off in the more progressive city where racism and discrimination on the labor market are less likely (not absent). But this hypothesis is not necessarily true as those who are able to place the negative experiences in perspective generally are still more likely to develop and sustained social connections with other locals and thus are able to benefit from the communal sense in the villages by making contact with Dutch people, even if discrimination on the rural labor market plausibly makes it harder for them to find employment. This last factor does imply that an individual needs to have proximity to the city to be able to 'enjoy the best of both worlds', being the urban labor market and the rural sense of community.

#### **5. Helped in the urban domain through a relatively high availability of services.**

*This seems true.* Being a refugee generally means leaving behind a life of relative stability in which the individual had established him or herself in the first place by knowing the common language (5.5) and in the second place by possibly having enjoyed education or professional training which together, more often than not, led to financial stability in the form of permanent employment (5.8).

This stability is totally lost in the process of seeking refuge in the Netherlands. Integration for these people therefore means again finding such stability in their lives by re-establishing a stable source of income (micro) while learning the language and getting educated (macro). The analysis has pointed out that, to find such stability, refugees are highly dependent of the services and facilities that are offered in the city and comparatively lacking in the rural domain. For refugees to re-establish the source of income by finding employment they generally primarily need to follow courses to learn the Dutch language (even though they claim that practice in the daily life helps them even better) while those who are willing to explore a new field-of-work to increase their chances often also want to re-educate themselves professionally. Since education facilities (as in Nijmegen the Radboud University, HAN and the ROC) are centered in the city and the courses to learn the Dutch language are held more frequently in the urban domain the refugees are reasonably dependent on the city in pursuing their desire to find stability in their lives again. And considering the fact that refugees do not have the financial capacity to visit the city on a daily basis, just because of this unestablished condition in which they live, they have a need for physical proximity to the city.

#### **6. Helped in the urban domain as cities are characterized by a high cultural diversity.**

*This seems partly true.* When refugees from the Islamic world come to the Netherlands it means a transition from a situation in which they belong to the majority in terms of nationality and culture to a life where they are seen as the minority (5.6/5.7). Even though the individuals have fled these countries in the course of their lives, many still identify with the culture and nationality. Integration for these people means that they can practice their culture and have contact with fellow countrymen so that they can speak their mother tongue (micro). But when living these identities refugees should be cautious that they do not alienate themselves from the Dutch natives so that they do not learn the Dutch language and culture; they should not let their culture and nationality affect the process of integration (macro). From the analysis it can be concluded that refugees who indeed attach value to their home country and culture are helped to practice these identities through a higher cultural diversity in the city resulting in the possibility to visit mosques and socialize with fellow countrymen. But the hypothesis posed is only partly true as this high cultural diversity could also jeopardize the process of integration from the macro-perspective through alienation. People who at the same time identify with the nationality and culture of the Netherlands and their home country are more likely to practice the Dutch part of their identity in the rural domain as contact with the natives is simply more probable in the village. But as the majority still desire to practice their original identity to a lesser or larger extent, proximity to the city remains an important factor. Furthermore 'forcing' those who identify solely with the other culture to integrate by placing them in a village is not likely to lead to the desired result as contact is still unlikely; they do not benefit from the placement in the village.

## 6. Conclusion & recommendations

The goal of this research was *to determine how the spatial dispersal of refugees from the Islamic world over urban and rural areas helps or hinders their integration in the Dutch society by analyzing the life's of different refugees in urban Nijmegen and its surrounding rural municipalities from the geographically determined perspective of integration as a two-sided process using the theory and methodology of intersectionality, in order to develop a better understanding of the process that the refugees in Nijmegen and its surrounding areas go through and to argue if and how the spatially distributing policy of the Dutch government should be reconsidered.* Drawing a conclusion this chapter will discuss the three elements that lie in this goal. The first paragraph will answer the main question about how the spatial dispersal of refugees from the Islamic world over urban and rural areas helps or hinders their integration in the Dutch society. Then the second paragraph will take this understanding and give recommendations about if and how the spatially distributing of refugees by the Dutch government should be reconsidered. Finally the third paragraph will reflect on the theoretic perspective used in this research, arguing whether or not the method was useful for discussing the integration of refugees in urban and rural areas.

### 6.1 Conclusion

The central question posed in the introduction of this research is: **to what extent has the spatial distribution of refugees from the Islamic world over the urban and rural Nijmegen area helped or hindered their integration in the Dutch society?**

But before answering this question it should again be emphasized how this answer needs to be interpreted. Using the combination of the social identity theory and the methodology of intersectionality this research has investigated how the integration of refugees is affected by their spatial distribution over the urban and the rural domain of the Nijmegen area by analyzing how this process is affected through practicing different identity categories. The consequence of using this methodology is that the 22 refugees that have shared their life-story are de-individualized which subsequently means that coincidences of the individual's life are kept outside the analysis. This in the first place means that generalization is possible, but also that a great deal of how the integration process evolves still depends on the individual's life. The answer on the main-question therefore is based on external and internal factors that are likely to affect the integration of the refugees from the Islamic world but are not necessarily true for every one of them individually.

This research has demonstrated that integration from the two-sided perspective is a complex process with many different aspects depending on the desire of the individual refugees (the micro-perspective) and the pressure from the receiving society (the macro-perspective). The investigation pointed out that stemming from the receiving society there is the idea of good citizenship that prescribes that an integrated individual should comply with the certain aspects belonging to this idea, while the 'common story' of the refugees concerning the practice of their identities has also led to an understanding about specific aspects that are of importance in the integration-process from their perspective. By mirroring the practice of identities by the refugees in the urban and rural domain to the idea of good citizenship, an understanding has been developed about what external (societal) factors affect the integration. So based on this mirroring: what factors between the cities and villages are determined to be important and how do these factors essentially influence the integration-process from the two-sided perspective?

The vital difference between the two domains can be found in the scale; cities are characterized by largeness, diversity and activity whereas villages are relatively small, monotone and serene. Employment opportunities, availability of services and cultural diversity are factors that define the city and that highly affect the integration of those who seek to integrate in the Dutch society. Since the majority of the *employment opportunities* are centered in the city it is more likely for refugees to find a paid job in the city than in the rural domain. And since integration from the perspective of the individual means that they can restore financial stability and re-establish themselves while also living up to the societal idea that a good citizen needs to contribute economically, proximity to these employment opportunities means that integrating refugees are empowered. And a similar conclusion can be drawn concerning the *availability of services* in the city. Integration from the perspective of the individual means that refugees have the possibility to (re-) educate themselves and learn the Dutch language to ultimately find paid employment while at the same time there is an emphasis on getting educated and learning the language from the idea of good citizenship. And since education facilities and courses to learn the language are present in the city and relatively unavailable in the village it again means that the integrating individuals are empowered in the urban domain. Finally the city also offers *cultural diversity*. Integration for the majority of the refugees from the Islamic world also means the ability to practice their culture and nationality while the societal idea of good citizenship prescribes that such practicing may not stand in the way of the integration of the refugees by alienating them from the Dutch natives. This cultural diversity of the city on the one hand allows individuals to live their culture and nationality by visiting mosques and other culturally-related facilities and by seeking contact with their fellow countrymen. On the other hand it could also mean

that refugees get entangled in a network of like-minded individuals from their home region and thus alienate themselves from the Dutch society.

The rural domain also has qualities that could empower the refugees in their process of integrating in the Dutch society. As mentioned, villages are characterized by smallness and relative serenity which also means that there is an 'all-know-all'-culture and therefore no individual easily disappears from the radar of the community whereas the city is more individualistic meaning that someone can live in relative anonymity. Factors that define the rural domain and that affect the integration of refugees are the social cohesion and social control in villages. The *social cohesion* in the rural domain makes it more likely that refugees practice the Dutch language on a daily basis. Integration from the perspective of the individual for some means that they, besides having contact with people from their home country, also able to practice the Dutch national identity while from the societal perspective of integration a good citizen learns the Dutch language and culture. This social cohesion in the village means that, for those who are open-minded towards the Dutch culture and nationality, sustained contact with natives is more likely with people in the neighborhood and via involvement in the more present local associational life that is also an important outcome of the social cohesion in the rural domain. Closely related is the *social control* which makes living in anonymity less likely for refugees in the rural domain than those who live in the more individualistic city. Integration from the individual perspective means that the refugee does not solely sit at home and gets socially isolated while the societal perspective of good citizenship prescribes that the refugee does not alienate him- or herself but rather learns the Dutch language and culture to ultimately help the individual to contribute economically. The social control that characterizes the rural domain makes it more likely that members from the village community reach out to refugees which in practice means helping them to learn the language during a regular cup of coffee or by offering them the opportunity to do charity work for a local organization as a school or nursing house; social isolation and alienation from the Dutch society are thus relatively unlikely in the rural domain as a result of the social control, empowering the integrating refugees.

To come to an actual answer on the main question purely reasoning from this understanding about the external factors influencing the process of integration: how has the distribution of refugees over the urban and rural Nijmegen area in theory helped or hindered them in this process? Based on merely these factors it would be very logical that refugees are best helped when living in a village close to the city; it is only then that they are able to enjoy the 'best of two worlds', meaning that they live in a rural community with social cohesion and social control while they are at the same time able to enjoy factors typical of the urban domain as a result of relative physical proximity. In the Nijmegen context this would mean that a refugee is best helped by allocation to housing in for example Beek-

Ubbergen, which lies directly adjacent to Nijmegen but still has the qualities of a village. What however is obvious is the fact that an integrating refugee is highly dependent of the opportunities offered in the urban domain, meaning that they are helped when they are close to the city while they are hindered with every kilometer that brings them further away from these opportunities. This is especially true when considering that many refugees need to deal with financial instability as a result of unemployment which in turn means that they do not have the money to pay for public transport on a daily basis or to get a driver's license and thus simply are not able to visit the city as often as they like. This means that, in theory, placing refugees in a village as remote as Millingen can really be hindering their integration process while placement remains questionable in villages as Groesbeek, Heumen and Ooij.

Based purely on this theoretic understanding it would mean that the next refugee that is currently waiting to be allocated to housing in the Nijmegen area should simply be placed in a village as Beek-Ubbergen. But, as mentioned, this theoretic understanding of external factors influencing integration is based on the de-individualization and generalization of 22 life-stories of refugees living in the Nijmegen area meaning that a great deal depends on the individual's practice of identity. This means that even though placing an individual in an optimal geographic location can be beneficial for the refugee, it cannot be said with full certainty that the integration-process will automatically succeed; the individual determination of the refugee is still the most important element. So what individual or internal factors could possibly influence how the spatial distribution of refugees over urban and rural areas works out? Reasoning from the analysis investigating the identity-categories that are of importance in the integration-process of the refugees, it can be argued that some individuals are more likely to benefit from their placement in either the urban or rural domain than others:

1. *Sexual identity* - Refugees that are more susceptible for social isolation as a result of having strict classic roles in the household are helped more in the rural domain as a result of the social control that is more likely to keep them out of this isolation than in the city.
2. *Racial identity* - Refugees that carry negative experiences as discrimination or racism heavily and therefore isolate themselves from the Dutch people are helped more in the urban domain as a result of a more progressive mindset in the city while those who are able to ignore such experiences can still benefit from the qualities of the rural domain.
3. *Social identity* - Refugees that as a result of unemployment do not have the financial capacity to get a driver's license or pay public transport are more likely to be helped in the urban domain whereas those that do have a driver's license can probably bridge a greater distance.

4. *Cultural identity* - Refugees that attach a great value to practicing their Islamic cultural background are best helped in the urban domain while those who identify more with the Dutch culture are more likely to benefit by placement in the rural domain.
5. *National identity* - Refugees that solely attach value to contact with their fellow countrymen and not with the Dutch people are more likely to isolate themselves from the Dutch people and are better helped in the culturally diverse urban domain whereas those that identify to a greater or lesser extent with the natives are more likely to be helped in the rural domain.
6. *Professional identity* – Refugees that have the desire to re-educate themselves in order to strengthen their position on the labor market are best helped in the urban domain whereas for those who are best helped to find employment in the long run by doing charity work benefit from their allocation to the rural domain.

A great deal of how the spatial distribution of refugees over urban and rural areas unfolds thus depends on the individual. And the mentioned internal factors are only the most common factors derived from the stories of the refugees that contributed to this research. There are always other aspects of the individual's life and pure coincidences that could affect the integration-process as well and which need to be considered when finding a place to live for the refugee. The next paragraph takes this understanding and elaborates how this is important by reflecting on the Dutch policy.

## 6.2 Recommendations

Now what can be learned from this understanding about the influence of the spatial distribution of refugees over the urban and rural Nijmegen area concerning the nationwide Dutch governmental policy that is responsible for this geographic dispersal? In answering this question it is important to remember that this research is determined to be a case-study somewhere between typical and deviant. This means that even though it is likely that a same research in another urban-rural context in the Netherlands would lead to the same result, it cannot be claimed with full certainty as the hypotheses developed in chapter 4 are based on interviews, facts and statistics in- and about the Nijmegen area while the interviews on which chapter 5 is based are held only with refugees in this same geographic context; it is for example not unimaginable that other areas than the 'left-wing' Nijmegen have rural areas that are far more conservative leading to a different impact on the integration of refugees. Recommendations can therefore only be made on a hypothetical level.

The most important lesson learned in this research is that it is absolutely vital that the spatial distribution of refugees does not happen randomly and without consideration of the identity and life of the refugee, but rather happens in mutual consultation with the individual at which the policy is aimed in order to assure that his or her integration-process happens in the for him or her most optimal geographic context.

Even though in theory a refugee is best helped in a village close to the city, not all individuals would benefit from placement in the rural domain as it would not add to their integration-process but rather only hinder it. Think for example of individuals that feel no connection whatsoever with the Dutch people and that get assigned to housing in villages with merely a native population. Such refugees are likely to get socially isolated from both Dutch people as their fellow countrymen, which is absolutely destructive for the integration process from both the perspective of the society as the individual itself. This, along with other factors described in this investigation, means that the executives of the policy should be careful with allocating refugees to housing in rural areas – especially to those in villages far away from the city.

The majority of the integrating refugees are just too dependent on the city as the urban domain offers them cultural diversity, more economic opportunities, courses to learn the Dutch language and educational facilities. It would thus be fair that, when searching for housing for a refugee, principally the standard starting point is the city while the scope is only aimed at the rural domain when the individual for example has a modern/positive attitude, the adaptability to identify with the Dutch people and culture, the mental ability to deal with possible negative experiences as discrimination and racism and a realistic expectation as to how they can contribute economically. Allocation to housing in remote rural areas should only happen in exceptional cases in which refugees for example have a car and driver's license at their disposal or when they only have a small dependency of the city.

It is evident that such reconsideration of the policy as recommended here does not go without investment as determining whether or not living in the urban or rural domain is suitable for the individual refugee is costly in terms of manpower and time. In the long run this investment should however repay itself as not only the individual but the entire receiving society benefits when the refugees are able to integrate and thus contribute economically to the Dutch society.



## 6.3 Reflection

Aiming to fill a knowledge gap, this research studied the influence of the geographic distribution of refugees on their integration, considering this as a two-sided process. In developing a theoretical and methodological basis for studying integration from this perspective the investigation turned to the concepts of identity, citizenship, empowerment and intersectionality. This combination is, as far as known, a unique combination to investigate the integration of a certain group in a society, especially from a geographic perspective. It is thus important to reflect on this conceptual basis.

So in retrospect: how valuable was this theoretical and methodological combination and what can be learned considering future research? In the first place the method made it possible to focus on very practical aspects of the life of the integrating refugees from the Islamic world as for example their desire to get educated, to visit culturally-related facilities and their financial impossibilities to make use of public transport. The insight in such matters consequently means that relatively straightforward and practically valuable recommendations can be made as well. And this is important because the struggle of refugees to integrate in a society is also a very practical and everyday struggle; there are refugees that cannot find work because they lack the ability to speak the Dutch language simply as a result that they do not get into contact with the native population and practice it on a daily basis.

Secondly, Valentine's (2007) addition to the theory of intersectionality, arguing that space and identity are co-implicated, made it possible to use the concepts of identity and citizenship to explore the integration of refugees from a two-sided and geographic perspective. This theoretical insight made it possible to carry out the investigation in a structured manner and make a clear-cut divide between the practicing of identities by refugees living in the urban and the rural domain which has led to an understanding of geographically-based factors that influence the process of integration from both the micro- as the macro-perspective.

But, as with most newly developed theories or combination of concepts, there are also some clear shortcomings to the theoretical basis and methodology used in this investigation. And the most important one can be derived exactly from the fact that the theoretic basis was developed as a unique combination to study the process of integration. It is therefore that it was not possible to build on any existing knowledge that had been developed in other researches from different perspectives; how could this research for example possibly build on an understanding of the influence of spatially distributing ethnic groups that was developed based on another perspective

(such as for example integration seen as from only one perspective) and that therefore might not be true considering the perspective of this specific investigation. This developing of the own methodology on the one hand meant a fresh look at the issue of spatially distributing refugees but on the other hand thus also a totally new look with no clear clues as to where to exactly focus on. The result is a qualitative, exploratory case-study that has been set-up in a very broad manner and with a reasonably broad scope, focusing on a large variety of factors between the urban and rural domain and a diverse number of identity-categories. As a result of this broad-scope and qualitative approach it was only possible to formulate conclusions and consequent recommendations on a hypothetical basis.

Future investigations from the perspective of integration as a two-sided process could build from the understanding of this qualitative exploratory research and test the findings using quantitative approaches as surveys and thus formulate more generalizable conclusions. Or it could do the exact opposite and use qualitative methods to go in depth on either one element that is part of the urban-rural distinction (for example studying how social cohesion in the village helps – and individualism in the city hinders – the refugees exactly by intensively following a small group of refugees) or one practical element that is part of the refugee's identity (for example studying the physical (im)mobility of refugees and the influence of their placement in either the urban and the rural domain on their integration by mapping their movement).

In any case this research has made clear that there are still many aspects to explore concerning the integration of refugees from the Islamic world, both from a human geographic perspective as well as many other scientific fields as anthropology, sociology or psychology. And this is especially true since there is no tangible proof that their collective struggle to integrate is ending in the near future. Newly developed knowledge about how to help this process forward thus can be vital for the future of these people in the Netherlands. This research can provide a good and fresh inspiration for starting up a series of investigations in this field of study.

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# Appendix 1

The reports of the semi-structured interviews with 22 refugees in the Nijmegen area are structured according to the two perspectives of the integration-paradigm, being the perspective of the individual refugee (the micro-side) and that of the receiving society (the macro-side). In this research the theoretic concepts of identity and good citizenship are linked to these respective sides. The elements of both these concepts that are relevant for integrating refugees from the Islamic world in the Nijmegen area are determined in paragraphs 4.1 and 5.3 and form the input for the interview-reports. To secure the anonymity of the responding refugees the remainder of this appendix will not show an actual interview report but rather one that is **totally fictional**.

## Interview-report respondent 'X' – Lives in *Nijmegen*

The respondent is born in 1982, lives in *Nijmegen* and has fled his home country Somalia in 2011 to come to the Netherlands. He lives here with his wife and children and is very positive about his life in Nijmegen. He states that he does not ever want to return to his home country.

### **Identities**

<i>Social</i>	Financially X has had some difficulties in the Netherlands whereas in his home country he could be seen as wealthy. This can be difficult for him, but he states that he is mostly grateful to still be alive.
<i>Sexual</i>	X is a married man and has two children. Besides working he also takes on some responsibilities in the household; he for example accompanies his son to the local football team and often picks them up from school.
<i>Racial</i>	Like most people from Africa, X has a physical appearance that differs from the people in the Netherlands. He however states that he does not experiences any hinder from the color of his skin; he has no experiences with racism and does not feel that he is discriminated on the Dutch labor market.
<i>Cultural</i>	X is a born Muslim but does not extensively practice this cultural background. Rather he identifies more with people than a religion; he feels at home in the Western culture as much as he did in the Arab culture of Somalia.
<i>National</i>	And in the same vein X does not necessarily seek out people from his home country but attaches value to contact with both people from Somalia as from

the Netherlands; he does admit that he likes to speak his mother tongue occasionally.

*Professional*

In his home country X owned his own store. In the Netherlands he would like to do the same one time, but he realizes that he needs to learn the language and culture more before he is able to do so. He has a realistic view of what he is capable off at this point in time in terms of his professional identity.

**1. A good citizen: actively participates and contributes**

X has not had a paid job and thus a fixed income since his arrival in the Netherlands. His dream is to one time open a store in the Netherlands like he had in Somalia. In pursuing this goal he is currently working at a local store in Nijmegen to gain working experience in this field and new culture. What is good here is that he knows he has to take a step back in order to make one forward later on.

**2. A good citizen: is or gets educated**

X has not enjoyed education in both Somalia and in the Netherlands. He is planning to follow an education in the field of retail at the ROC in Nijmegen. What is important for him however is to first get his language level on a sufficient level before taking the step to education; this seems to be the most sensible way of approaching it.

**3. A good citizen: speaks the Dutch language and knows the culture**

Considering the fact that X only lives in the Netherlands since 2011 he speaks the Dutch language relatively well. He thinks this has to do with his open attitude towards the Dutch people but also with the fact that he is gaining working-experience at a store in Nijmegen at which he practices the language on a regular basis. What bothers him is that he does not have any social contacts with Dutch people outside work.

**4. A good citizen: practices his culture and nationality in the personal sphere**

X practices his culture and nationality in the personal sphere. As said, X does not attach much value to the practice of his Muslim background, even though he does regard himself as a Muslim. Visiting a mosque for example is not important for him as he can easily practice his religion in his own home. He does like to have contact with Somalian people to be able to keep speaking his mother tongue. Since Nijmegen has a relatively large Somalian-community he is also able to do so.