The dividing line of (im)mobility

Analysing the decision making process of status holders in Friesland

by

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Summary

The (im)mobility of status holders in peripheral regions in the Netherlands is the main subject of this paper. The status holder is a former asylum seeker, who involuntarily had to leave his/her country, to find the Netherlands as the next destination to be accommodated. As soon as the asylum seeker has a legal status, (s)he get's accommodated via the Dutch dispersal policy over the country. As a consequence a status holder can get placed in peripheral regions of the Netherlands. A specific approach is taken on the case of status holders in the province of Friesland, where it was expected that many of the status holders who got accommodated in this province, would leave the place already within one year. Friesland is an interesting case as this province can be considered as a rural province, covered with many small villages and, more important, having an own official language.

The main question in this paper is concerned with the main determinants of the (im)mobility decision of status holders living in Friesland. Also, theories on the migrant trajectory are taken into account by considering the influence of the history and past of the status holder. By analyzing the decision making process of the status holder and therewith understanding the day-to-day realities of status holders, one can improve existing integration initiatives. This is desirable, as there is a general image of this group that they leave the accommodated place within one year. The analysis should give municipalities in peripheral regions some insights, with which they can cater to the status holders' needs. Also, the analysis contributes to the theoretical debates on the nature of migrants' determinants, as there is still limited theoretical understanding of the multi-level forces driving migration.

Exploring the day-to-day realities and mobilities of status holders in Friesland was done by conducting eleven biographical interviews with status holders of different nationalities, living in Friesland for short- and longer times, in different places in Friesland. Biographical interviews give insight in the broader temporal perspective of the phenomenon and puts status holders' experiences at the centre of the empirical analysis. Past actions are related to their current place and their future plans are analyzed with respect to their migration history. Conducting the interviews was done in the research field itself; status holders were visited at their homes and at the Dutch Council for Refugees. To give content to the mobility of status holders, statistical information was received to show the first and second mobility. This showed that the majority of the status holders who are accommodated in Friesland also stayed in an Asylum Centre in Friesland, which means that they stay in the same region for some time. The second potential movement showed that a majority of the status holders stay immobile during their stay in Friesland.

This immobility was explained by the biographical interviews, which showed two important factors of immobility. First are the practical considerations to build on a future perspective in the Netherlands by studying in Friesland. There considerations of immobility were mostly found among the younger status holders, who are happy to find themselves in a peaceful environment and perceive Friesland as a step towards a successful future. The second explanation of the immobility of status holders are the economical constraints that keep status holders with aspirations from moving to an elsewhere. Unemployment among the status holder who are living for a longer time in Friesland makes it hard to think of a movement to an elsewhere, as the movement in itself also costs a lot of money. The status holders' aspirations showed that the future trajectory is in most cases more relevant in the status holders' decision making process than integration in the current place of residence.

The different ways of integration could not explain the immobility of status holders in Friesland. Though it was expected that when status holders stay immobile in a certain region, one would automatically integrate; the interviews could not confirm this expectancy. Almost all interviews showed that on a social, economical and cultural level there are just few signs of integration. The Frisian language has a negative role in this. Status holders who did integrate can be considered as lucky.

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1 Introduction

People move from one place to another, alone or together with others, for a short visit or for a long period of time, over a long or short distance. Every place can be the end station or just a place along the migration route. Getting integrated in a place can make people stay, whereas the connections to another place can make people decide to move. The migration route for refugees is quite similar, though this group is a special case for two reasons: first, because recognized refugees enjoy a specific legal status that separates them from other migrants; and second because of the longstanding belief that refugees share a particular psychology and orientation towards their homeland, derived from the involuntary nature of their departure (Crisp, 1999). Once accepted and accommodated in the host country, safety is ensured and other factors become important for refugees to decide to become mobile or to stay. What makes these people decide not to lengthen their migration trajectory, or ís there a planned trajectory? This research should be viewed within the context of the wider debate about reception, perception and impact of refugees within peripheral regions in the Netherlands.

These former refugees in the Netherlands live scattered all over the country. They do not only live in big cities, but also in villages in peripheral rural provinces as Friesland, Limburg or Drenthe. In comparison to the traditional immigrants in the Netherlands (Turkish, Moroccan) there are less status holders living in one of the four big cities[1], 18 percent versus 40 percent (Klaver & Welle, 2009). This means that the other 82 percent are living in the periphery; sometimes in smaller cities but also in villages with no more than 1000 inhabitants.

Due to less social contacts and a lower amount of available labour in these smaller villages, not every status holder gets well integrated in the Dutch society (Provincie Limburg, nd). This is especially the case with single status holders, who feel a threshold to get in contact with local people. At that point, the decision to stay (immobility) or to leave to another place (mobility) becomes an important consideration.

Before the refugee is accommodated in the Netherlands, and is officially called an asylum seeker, (s)he has to receive a residence permit. During this process the asylum seeker can get placed from one asylum centre to the other, which makes them highly mobile in their first years in the Netherlands. Getting attached to one place is therefore very hard (Klaver & Welle, 2009). At the moment the refugee receives the residence permit he becomes a *status holder*, he can focus on the next step in the migration process; to obtain a new accommodation. Status holders have the right to search for an accommodation on their own, but they can also choose to use the housing supply

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[1] Amsterdam, Rotterdam, The Hague, Utrecht (G4)

model offered by the *Central Agency for the Reception of Asylum Seekers* (Centraal orgaan Opvang Asielzoekers (COA)). This governmental organization provides accommodation during and after the asylum procedure and prepares asylum seekers for staying in the Netherlands, returning to their country of origin, or transit migration. The housing supply model gives status holders the opportunity to choose where (s)he wants to live in the Netherlands, based on the limited availability of houses in municipalities all over the country. The basic idea behind this centrally organized reception of refugees is spreading the 'costs' and unburdening large cities, and that reception ought to take place as much as possible among the 'ordinary' citizens and in regular housing accommodation (Van Liempt, 2011). The result of this policy is that asylum seekers are housed in relatively good-quality housing in residentially mixed areas, but scattered all over the Netherlands.

Being scattered all over the Netherlands means that single status holders are also accommodated quite often in scarcely populated regions as the province of Friesland. There, the status holder is often isolated from family members and friends. At that point the consideration to stay or to move further, to be mobile or immobile and therewith to lengthen their migration trajectory is again one of the considerations.

One can imagine that after being involuntary migrated to an unknown country, and involuntary dispersed in an unknown region, the last thing one wants is to be involuntary immobile.

1.1 Research Objective

This research will be on the dividing line of being mobile or immobile; on getting integrated in a place, or consider the current place as one of the nodes in the migration trajectory. It has the following objective:

To analyze what the main determinants are of the (im)mobility decision of single status holders living in a peripheral area in the Netherlands.

There are three things important within this research objective. The first is that the objective is twofold; both the main determinants to being immobile and the determinants to be mobile will be investigated. Second, the research objective mainly focuses on the single status holder. Not only because about 90% of all the status holders is single[2], but also because the single status holder might be more isolated than for example, status holders who came as a family. Therefore, it is assumed they will have more aspiration to become mobile again when situated in the periphery of the Netherlands. Thirdly, the focus is on the province of Friesland, because it is argued that many status holders in peripheral regions in the Netherlands leave the place within one year after they have been

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[2] (Vrom-inspectie, 2009)

accommodated[3]. Conclusions on the province of Friesland can therefore also be applied to other peripheral regions in the Netherlands.

1.2 Research Question

The following main research question is guiding in this paper:

What are the main determinants in the (im)mobility decision of the single status holder living in Friesland?

To operationalize this question three different components are distinguished in the situation after dispersal; I) the motivation of their mobility (aspirations), II) the motivation of their immobility, and III) their constraints in becoming mobile. To answer this question, this study concentrates on (im)mobility and the degree of integration and identification to the place the single status holder lives in. Therefore the following research questions are supporting the main research question:

1) *What are the characteristics of the dispersed status holder in Friesland?*
2) *To what degree do 'the integration to the place' or 'the migration route' influence the status holders migration trajectory?*
3) *What makes status holders (im)mobile in Friesland?*

1.3 Social and scientific relevance

Studying the (im)mobility of single status holders is connected with the dispersal policy in the Netherlands, because it is this policy that places the single status holder in municipalities all over the country. Municipalities have a so called target *(Taakstelling)* given by the national government. This target is the number of status holders which the municipality has to accommodate every half year[4]. Especially small municipalities in peripheral regions in the Netherlands have many problems accommodating single status holders. These regions mostly have fewer possibilities for employment and are therefore less attractive. Single status holders accommodated there, can consider to move again to the centre part of the Netherlands. Research on the effects of the Dutch dispersal policy on the mobility of status holders in the province of Drenthe shows that in five of the biggest municipalities more than 50% of the status-holders already moved within one year (Jansen, 2006). Other research shows that, in comparison to other regions in the Netherlands, 33 percent of the status holders living in the northern regions move to the west (Randstad) of the Netherlands (Klaver & Welle, 2009). This makes clear that the dispersal policy has an influence on the (im)mobility of

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[3] At different meetings of municipalities in the province of Limburg and Overijssel these secondary mobilities were much heard complaints.

[4] This is done via a distributive code, based on the number of inhabitants living in the municipality. The level of the *Taakstelling* is determined every half year by the Ministry of Justice.

single status holders in peripheral regions. In these cases one could say that the policy has failed with the accommodation. Understanding the day-to-day realities of migrants, may contribute to improving the quality of policy making in the Netherlands.

This mobility does not only have negative outcomes for the status holder; also the efforts by the municipality, the Dutch Council for refugees *Vluchtelingenwerk* and the housing corporations have been useless when the status holder leaves within one year. The concerned municipality and housing corporations get subsidies for every status holder. Though with the high mobility of status holders these subsidies are revoked as soon as the status holder leaves the municipality. Also the efforts done with regard to the integration process by Vluchtelingenwerk are less effective when the status holder becomes mobile. A better comprehension of the local dynamic of status holders social life may therefore contribute to new ways of integration initiatives, less loss of money and a better integration for the status holder.

Scientific research on the migration determinants of single status holders is strongly related to that of migration scholars. Research on migration originally focused on the beginning and end points of the journey. At the beginning of these points, the researchers focused merely on why migrants depart in the first place. The decision making process before the actual departure is the main focus of these researches. These decision making processes are often investigated by scholars writing from a neo-classical tradition (Lee, 1966). According to these perspectives migrants know their eventual destinations and reach their destinations without many interventions. The journey to the destination is the outcome of pushes and pulls, with rational migrants making rational decisions whether or not to move. The departure question is also investigated by macro-economic and historical-structural frameworks. Internationalization of production (Sassen, 1998) or the political mechanisms of power and domination (Cohen, 1987) are there the main explanations of migrants' movements. Finally, with the emergency of literature on migration systems (Massey et al., 1988; Giddens, 1991), the idea was that departures are the outcome of both micro and macro factors, emphasizing that there is no single explanation for migration.

Research on mobility is well known in migration studies. Classical migration theories explain mobility via decisive push and pull factors on different levels. On the macro-level they make a difference between places, the meso-level is about group dynamics and networking, and the micro-level is about socio-economic characteristics and behavioural strategies (Fischer et al, 2000). These positivistic approaches lack a more realistic approach to migrants and are only focused on the mobility part of migration. Migrants are not always in the position to move where they want to

move, therefore the decision to migrate cannot always be explained only by looking at economic wage differences (Van Liempt, 2011). De Haas gives another critique to the positivistic view:

> *"Migrants are humans, who make active decisions based on their subjective aspirations and preferences, so their behaviour is not just a function of macro-level disequilibria, neither does their behaviour necessarily decrease these disequilibria. Second, such a micro-model should incorporate a sense of structure, in the sense that migration behaviour is constrained by structurally determined resource and information limitations."*
> *(De Haas, 2011, 17)*

At this point a broader theoretical approach to (im)mobility is required, with which we move away from the classical analysis of migration movements as discrete, isolated acts where people change their place of residence because of a series of constraints or decisions, to another approach of migrations where events take place in time. This is a richer approach, as it considers the whole migratory process as a sequence of movements that are linked to each other by periods of settlement, which entail relationships with the place of residence (De Sans, 2004; Ernste, 2010).

This thesis will focus on the endpoint of migration. Relevant studies on this part of migration are focused on immigration patterns, processes of integration, assimilation and migrants socio-economic contributions to receiving and sending countries (Fitzgerald, 2006; Sporten& Valentine, 2005). One of the main issues here is the integration debate. Important questions in this debate are on the social, cultural and economic costs and benefits after migration has taken place. Other questions are about how migrants can be successfully integrated into receiving societies. With these questions in mind, integration policies (De Haas, 2011; Wren, 2003; Damm, 2005), the forming of ethnic communities (Portes, 1998), social embeddedness (Valenta, 2009) and multiculturalism (Scheffer, 2007) are some of the issues discussed concerning citizenship.

These existing studies on migration and the determinants of migration tend to exclude theoretically relevant non-economic and policy variables. An important other concept that has recently been investigated and tries to fill this gap of relevant non-economic variables is the impact of the *journey* on the migrant, in which the focus is on the '*in-between-phases*' of migration. These researches take the beginning and end-points in the perspectives of the journey (Schapendonk, 2011). As a consequence of this, the end-point of the journey can also be the next point of departure. *Secondary migration* is one of the results that elaborates on this, in which the focus is on intra-EU mobility (Van Liempt, 2009). The term secondary migration is often used when it comes to asylum seekers' onward migration. This terms refers to a move *after* the first claim to refugee status is completed (Van Liempt, 2009). These secondary migrations are a confirmation that, from the perspective of the journey, migration is never permanent.

It can thus be said that migration processes not only evolve in a different way than policy makers could plan for, they are also often very unpredictable for migrants themselves (Van Liempt, 2009, 264).

As shown, there is a lot of debate on the nature of the migrants' determinants, which reveals that there is still limited theoretical understanding of the multi-level forces driving international migration (http://www.imi.ox.ac.uk)[5]. This, and the fact that there is little research on single status holders, will be the point of departure for this research. Here, I will try to fill these theoretical and empirical gaps, in order to give more insights in the way status holders make their (im)mobility decisions and which influence their journey and their future aspirations have on this.

1.4 Overview

This paper will be structured as follows. In the second chapter the theories on integration, constraints and mobilities will be examined, which will be leading for the analyses of the interviews. In the third chapter the method of analysis and the difficulties of doing research with status holders will be explained. Chapter four will give an outline of the situation of the status holder in Friesland, which is followed by chapter five in which an overview of the conducted interviews will be given. Chapter six contains the analysis of this thesis. In this chapter the interviews will be confronted with the existing theories. A conclusion will be given in the final chapter.

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[5] Next to this research there is a EU-funded research project going called DEMIG, which stands for The Determinants of International Migration. The project addresses the question: how do migration policies of receiving and sending states affect the size, direction and nature of international migration? For more information see: http://www.imi.ox.ac.uk/research-projects/demig/demig-the-determinants-of-international-migration

2 The Dividing line of (im)mobility

First of all it is important to know that this is an inductive research. The theories used in this chapter will on the one hand explain the theoretical lens used in this paper and on the other hand give different perspectives which can explain the (im)mobility of status holder in Friesland. This chapter has four paragraphs. The first will explain the theoretical lens with which the mobility and immobility of status holders in Friesland will be explored. Urry's (2007) mobilities paradigm will be the guideline for this lens. In the second paragraph aspirations and perceptions and their role in the migration trajectory will be set out. Schapendonk's research on the migrants trajectory will be used to explain this. Though he explains the trajectory with three components (migrants aspirations, their social network and their immobility), this paper especially focuses on the status holder' aspiration, as it will be expected that the aspirations of former refugees will be different from most other migrants. The social network and immobility will be incorporated in the theory on integration. In the third paragraph I will focus on different constraints status holders can have with not becoming mobile; the mobilities term '*access*' will be linked to this. In the last paragraph, I will focus on how there are different ways to get attached to a place and ways to integrate.

2.1 A mobilities perspective on migration

Migration related research is traditionally conducted on the beginning and ending sites of migration. In the pre-migration phase, much research has been done on the decision making process of migrants. At the ending site many researchers studied the consequences for the receiving societies. The migration route itself as a process of moving has not been studied in great depth, until Schapendonk (2011) has offered insightful analysis to this process. He questions the idea of migration as movement between two fixed points. According to him, from the perspective of the journey, migration is never permanent. This builds in particular on the words of Brian du Toit:

> *"More attention should be given to the 'journey' than to the 'origin' or 'destination' because people who move may not know exactly where they are moving to, nor do they necessarily remain there once they reached this destination. The migrant may explore better opportunities, may move on to a new situation, or may return to the point of departure. Migration is not an act but a process" (Du Toit, 1990, 308)*

With this in mind, I identify with the ontological shift Schapendonk makes, by moving the focus from the 'end-point' of migration as 'settlement and permanency' to 'mobility and process' (Schapendonk, 2011, 8). Although migration research has focused on questions with regard to human movement, the analytical starting point has been fixity, and, partly as a result of this, the actual movements of migrants have been neglected in empirical studies (Schapendonk, 2011). Herewith, the central

research object of this thesis shifts from the single status holders' viewpoint of Friesland as an 'endpoint', to Friesland as one of the points on the trajectory.

This mobile view has consequences for migration as an analytical object. As it is noted by Du Toit, it puts the beginning and endpoints of migration in perspective. A mobile view opens up migration, as it suggests that there is no such thing as settlement since migration contains more than a uni-linear movement between two places and there is always a possibility of further movement (Skeldon, 1997).

2.1.1 The Mobilities Paradigm

This above mentioned view on mobility is in line with the recent change in the mobilities debate. This change is especially based on "the mobilities paradigm". This is not a single, well defined conceptual system, rather it is an interconnection of theories and methods (Urry, 2007). Looking at social life from a mobilities perspective, transforms social science. The main argument of this paradigm is that there is a relationality between different mobilities as well as between mobilities and (relative) immobilities (Urry, 2007). One mobility always seems to involve others in terms of facilitation or production (Adey, 2010). For example, the mobility of a celebrity may produce the mobility of fans to this place. On the other hand, the mobility of one can also prevent the mobility of another. For example, in the case of migrants coming to Europe, the facilitation of movement in Europe (to EU-citizens) means the immobilization of the other (African would-be migrant) (Schapendonk, 2011). In this last case, mobilities include politics and meanings (Cresswell, 2006), which means that mobility is not used by everyone in the same way and is given different meaning by different authors.

One of the main building blocks of the mobilities turn is the work of John Urry (2007), who distinguishes five forms of interdependent mobility that produce social life. These are (I) the corporeal travel of people, (II) the physical mobility of objects, (III) the imaginative travel of people, (IV) the virtual travel by using social media, and (V) the communicative travel through person-to-person messages (Urry, 2007). Schapendonk modified these five forms of mobility into a more relevant form for migration studies, highlighting the influence of these five mobilities on migrants movements:

1) *Corporeal travel of people*: this is related to the importance of social networks in the migration process. It is widely agreed that social contacts ease migration processes in terms of financial and psychological costs. However, the mobility of people not belonging to the social network might also matter.

2) *Physical mobility of objects*: this includes consumer goods, passports and money from family members.

3) *Imaginative travel of people*: daydreaming and imaginaries might influence migration processes in a profound way, both at home and during the migration process.

4) *Virtual travel*: with the help of the internet, television or other social media, migrants access new information or create new aspirations

5) *Communicative travel*: Especially in case of overland trajectories, migrants are highly dependent on trustworthy and fresh information for their own security as well as for the continuation of their journeys (Schapendonk, 2009, 298)

These five different mobilities give a good basis for the analysis of the status holders' decision making process. It is not said that all these mobilities have a direct influence on the decision making process, rather all the above aspects might have an effect on the mobility decision of the status holder. As a result, the decisions will not be made entirely by rational consideration, rather the social and cultural components of these mobilities and the 'here' and 'there' are of major importance in the decision making process.

Another condition of the mobilities paradigm is the relevance of immobility. Though it seems that everybody is mobile and migrating, it is important to know that there is no substantial increase of all these mobilities without the presence of immobilities and permanencies. The main argument to this is that we have to take into account "specialized periods and places involving temporary rest, storage, infra-structural mobility, disposal and immobile zones" when we analyze mobility (Urry, 2003, 126). For example, to make a telephone call one needs a telephone line and airplanes need an airport to depart from and arrive at. Important is, that this connection between mobility and immobility underlines the relationality of the mobilities turn.

Connecting this importance of immobility to migration then the importance of *places* and *settlement* becomes clear. Returning to Schapendonk (2011), and looking from a trajectory perspective, places are "the nodes where peoples trajectories come together, where social networks meet, and from where journeying becomes possible*"* (p.216). According to Schapendonk, this also means that settlement, seen from a mobilities perspective, does not mean spatial fixity. Settlement rather implies some institutional and embeddedness which enables a person to move back and forwards. Schapendonk calls this kind of settlement or place a '*migrant anchorage'*. This term suggests "that someone may be institutionally and socially embedded in a specific country. However, it deliberately lacks any connotations of finality or permanence" (Schapendonk, 2011, 193). An anchor can be raised and then grounded in a different place.

This notion has a connection with the insights of the migrants' transnationalism debate. According to these scholars, it is mainly the 'settled migrant' who lives in the conditions that enable him/her to

construct their transnational lives; their lives between here and there. In these transnational lives, settlement and movement are two sides of the same coin. Having found one's place often means that one has found a place from which one can move back and forwards, or onwards, without many restrictions (Schapendonk, 2011, 191). In line with this thought, Danish research on Somali secondary movements shows that refugees do not necessarily wait passively in their country of asylum until the situation 'home' has changed, but according to the situation and its opportunities. For Danish Somalis who moved to the UK and perhaps onwards towards to yet another country, permanent settlement seemed not be the aim. Movement and settlement are therefore not mutually exclusive, which implies that to some extent it can be said that migrants are settling in their movement (Nielsen, 2004, 18).

For the interest of this paper, it will be explored if this relative permanency of places and settlement also counts for former refugees. These 'type' of migrants mostly have had different reasons to migrate, as this was most of the time an involuntary decision. Finding a new place in a 'safe' country, starting over with a new life, it can be imagined that one wants stability. It can therefore be questioned if the doubts of mobility studies on fixity, integration and emplacement are justified.

2.2 Thresholds and decisions for migratory behaviour

Now the possible uncertainty of places is explained, the reasons for a possible movement have to be explored. These are well summarized in a concept on thresholds on migratory behaviour, established by Van der Velde & Van Naerssen (2010). This concept starts in contrast to the previous theory from an immobile perspective, using the idea of a *space of belonging* as developed by Van Houtum & Van der Velde (2004). This idea is connected to the importance for people to belong somewhere or to feel at home at a specific place or region. They argue that through this process of belonging, a 'we' in the 'here' is created in a place of comfort and ease. The other side of the border, the 'there', is not a place of ease and comfort; the 'they' in the 'there'. Through this process, a *space of indifference* is created, a space that impacts the decision to cross borders, and consciously or unconsciously creates a threshold that has to be overcome before the 'there' is included in the search for a destination (Van der Velde & van Naerssen, 2010, p.221). This space of indifference is relevant, as it can possibly be applied to the situation of status holders when they finally are in a safe place, not having to worry about war or other discomfortable situations in their home country.

At the moment the status holders decides to become active and therewith crosses the indifference threshold, (s)he becomes engaged in a so called *process of bounded rationality.* This implicates that there are different kinds of locational factors known to the potential migrant taken into account. These factors can be connected to the place or region of origin, but also the possible destination (Van

der Velde & Van Naerssen, 2010, 4). Depending on this consideration, the status holder might decide to become mobile or to stay. Finally, Van der Velde & Van Naerssen incorporate the trajectory in their approach, in which the route to take has to be determined. Also in this process there are obstacles to move, as the route can be too dangerous or the costs are too high. These factors preventing the migrant to start the trajectory are cold the *trajectory threshold.*

This thesis will try to give content to these three spaces of spatial migratory behaviour: first the space of indifference, second the space of difference and third a space of constraints. In the first one status holders living in Friesland are not focussing on potential destinations, but are assumed to integrate and see this place as the endpoint in their migration trajectory. Therefore, different ways of integration will be discussed in this paragraph. Secondly, in the space of difference it is assumed that status holders are actively engaged in thinking of becoming mobile, perceiving Friesland as one of the nodes in their trajectory and focussing themselves on an elsewhere. Push and pull factors will be examined and herewith *aspiration* will be added to this framework as one of the decisive factors that has an impact on the decision to move. Finally, in the space of constraints it is assumed that the status holder will find some constraints to continue his trajectory and become mobile. The trajectory factors in this paper are translated as constraints, which can limit the status holder to become mobile (paragraph 2.3).

2.3 Integration in a space of indifference

This paragraph is concerned with the immobility of status holders. It is on the status holders who are acting in a space of indifference. These do not have the urgent aspiration to become mobile, but are content with their current situation in Friesland. In this paper it is assumed that status holders who act in a space of indifference, will integrate more easily. But what are the different ways to integrate? The work of Valenta (2009) is useful to explain the immobillity of the status holders, which focuses on social integration and identity constructions in the everyday life of first generation immigrants. Processes between persons, their experiences of belonging and recognition, as well as the identity construction of the status holder itself are factors that may lead to settlement and a better integration. Valenta's analysis of the immigrants' day-to-day realities and his reconstruction of social life after resettlement are better understood within their relation between immigrants' behaviour and the wider social order, social ties, settings and their networks (Valenta, 2007). The quote of Malmberg (1997) is an example of this:

> *"Strong ties to specific places or geographical units can provide important explanations as to why people prefer to stay in the place of residence and reject emigration despite the economic advantages of moving abroad" (Malmberg, 1997).*

This study is interesting for this thesis because Valenta looks at the processes that take place as immigrants "try to build bridges to the mainstream", and try to identify themselves with the place they live in. This last notion connects Valenta's work with Urry, by stating the importance of places. The degree of integration to the place a status holder lives in, can be decisive with the consideration to make a secondary movement, or to stay immobile.

Researchers often divide integration into social integration, economic integration and cultural integration of refugees and status holders. In the following, these processes will be discussed shortly and the relevance for this thesis will be looked at.

2.3.1 Relevance of social, cultural and economical integration

Concerning the relevance of social integration with the immobility of status holders, studies on immigrants' social networks, their size, their ethnic composition and the frequency of contacts within them are well studied subjects. It Is known for example that many immigrants experience cultural and social isolation and disqualification in relation to the mainstream. These immigrants seldom have friends among the indigenous locals and they seldom meet indigenous locals within the context of informal interactions (Valenta, 2009, 16). Though as Valenta argues, there are less studies concerned about the quality of the network and what kind of meanings are connected to these friendships.

In this thesis, the type of ties a status holder has with fellow compatriots, indigenous locals or other immigrants is important for the perception of the host country. These ties can be divided in strong and weak ties. Strong ties are those defined by durability, emotional intensity and intimacy, while weak ties are single stranded and defined by emotional neutrality (Granovetter, 1973). Among status holders, one can expect strong ties with family or good friends. Weak ties are found among co-workers or neighbours. Via these ties the status holders are connected to the mainstream society, and as Valenta argues, these connections are mostly via weak ties. Concerning the ties with people from the host country, there is a development over time with the following outcomes: I) most of the first generation immigrants do not develop their amount of spare time with the hosts, and II) the number of weak ties with the host country will increase, but the number of strong ties with locals will remain stable or decreases (Valenta, 2009, p.145).

Connected to the principle of strong and weak ties, are the principles of bonding and bridging, which are again related to the social networking of immigrants. According to Putnam (2000), bonding is seen as an inward looking form of social network which tends to reinforce exclusive identities, mostly among fellow compatriots. Bridging on the other hand, is an outward looking form of social networking which connects people across diverse social categories and groups (Putnam, 2000). The views on these forms of networking are contested, as some studies argue that bonding within the

ethnic community may hinder bridging, while other suggest that bonding is a precondition to bridging (Wilson, 1998). These theories are relevant for this study, as their relations with the hosts or fellow status holders can tell something about their social attachment to the region. It is for instance not hard to imagine that status holders who are living in a small village with no other fellow compatriots may experience feelings of alienation and as a result experience an absence of ties with indigenous locals. Status holders who are well integrated in their own ethnic group are likely to not have these feelings.

The processes of social integration are often linked to cultural integration and assimilation (Korac, 2001). In general it can be assumed that the level of status holders' cultural integration will influence their chances to establish and evolve social relations with the locals because they would level more in a cultural way. It is also assumed that some status holders will maintain their own ethnic identities and culture, while others will avoid differing from indigenous locals in their look and behaviour (Valenta, 2009). In this case two aspects of the Frisian culture will be interesting to examine. First is the role of the Frisian language within the acculturation process in Friesland, as this can provide difficulties with finding jobs. And second is the rural landscape, which is especially relevant when the status holder came from the urban capital city of their home country.

The last mode of integration that will be discussed in this paper is the economic integration. It is a widespread idea that when status holders leaves the passivity of being unemployed and starts to actively participate in the work life of the host country, then social integration will follow. The general tendencies are that status holders have a lower labour market attachment versus natives, which is similar in different European countries (Bevelander, 2012). Previous studies in Sweden show that the internal migration of immigrants/refugees are important factors related to obtaining employment, which is related to the choice of the city and the labour market situation. Language and labour market knowledge take time to acquire and mobility in the long run can have a positive effect on the labour market integration of immigrants (Bevelander, 2012). This is relevant for this study as the province of Friesland has a high unemployment rate, which can have its influences on the integration of status holders, but also on its consideration to become mobile.

2.4 Locational factors: the push and pull factors

2.4.1 Push and pull factors

In order to give relevant examples of push and pull factors, research on former refugees is explored. Van Liempts (2009) research on Somali refugees moving to England explores these reasons from an economical, social-cultural and political perspective. These factors have pushed away the refugees from staying in the Netherlands and pulling them towards the UK. For most Somalis the move to the

UK was a career move, they expected to find better career opportunities for themselves and for their children. At the time they came to the Netherlands they were looking for safety, but at the time they noticed they could not realize their dreams in the Netherlands they decided to move somewhere else. Other than career opportunities was the difference in political climate between the Netherlands and the UK. The reasoning was that the Somalis didn't want their children to grow up in a country where the Islam is in a negative daylight and where it is made difficult to live the 'Somali' way of life. Also social reasons were one of the main motivations to migrate to the UK. Being close to family and friends was an important motivator, as the Somali population in the Netherlands is much smaller (Van Liempt, 2009). A large group of Somalis in Leicester can be explained by chain migration from the Netherlands, by the drive to regroup. This last reason can only be explained by the integral network of Somalis in transnational networks. Therefore not only the level of satisfaction is of main importance to Somalis, but also the family ties in other countries.

Other research on secondary movements stresses the importance of transnational networks in the mobility of refugees. Unsatisfied refugees in Denmark gain vital information about the UK through their transnational social networks. Also in a research on locational choices of first generation immigrants within the United States this transnational network is one of the main reasons. The presence of foreign born persons is here one of the primary determinants. The research stresses the strong relationship between the location of the new legal permanent residents and the foreign-born already present in the United States, which settlement pattern is not influenced by the power of state and local governments (Zavodny, 1999).

Next to these more 'general' mobility factors, Van Liempt stresses to take into account refugee-specific reasons. She argues it is equally important to take the structural and the refugee-specific reasons into account when exploring their 'onward' movement. For refugees it is sometimes a coincidence where they will end up on their route to somewhere else. They ended up in the Netherlands because they did not have the legal means to travel where they wanted to go. For status holders it is easier because of their status as EU-citizens they can travel for free as they have to right to be mobile within the EU. Also, for some former asylum seekers the procedural limbo took 10 years, in which they were not able to move somewhere else than their host country. Some asylum seekers know that the Netherlands is not the country they want to stay in, but due to this legal procedure, they are forced to stay (Van Liempt, 2009, 264).

2.4.2 Aspiration & potential destinations

To understand the (im)mobility of status holders this study examines, next to the push and pull factors, how aspirations can influence the decision making. The thought of a 'them' in the 'there'

means that migration is always related to an elsewhere (Appadurai, 1996). The motivation to move to an elsewhere is conceptualised as a migration aspiration. The aspiration to become mobile can vary in degree and can be expressed by migrants as a choice or force (Carling, 2002). Analytically, aspirations differ from intentions, in the way that intentions can be seen as a confusing mix of aspirations, plans and feasibility. Aspirations on the other hand, include dreams, wishes and perspectives without a direct link to what is feasible. Within this context, it is safe to state that not all status holders who aspire to migrate will actually do so (Carling, 2002). Thus, migration aspirations are not a reliable predictor of future migration. However, as Schapendonk (2011) argues, *"the aspirations are vital in giving some direction to migrants trajectories, in social and geographical sense (…) they indicate what the migrant hopes to achieve by migrating, and reveal much of the social meaning that is attached to migration"* (p.79). Therefore it is useful for this research to indicate the status holders' aspiration and see what future hopes and perspectives (s)he has, while living in Friesland.

In that future, build from hopes and perspectives, the potential destinations play an important role. They are present through the virtual and imaginative travels of people, with locally existing ideas and meanings attached to these places. This is a characteristic of the migration decision-making process that has long been recognized, whether it is conceptualized in terms of imperfect information or discursive constructions (Carling, 2002, 17). This has two implications. First, the ideas created about the own region could be influencing. For example, a region can be marked by unemployment, but people's wish to become mobile is a result of their own understanding of these problems, rather than a clear function of unemployment rates and precipitation figures. This makes the potential destination more attractive. The second implication of imperfect information is the idea about the potential destination. A relevant example is the picture of Europe as being the 'Eldorado', the Promised Land for African migrants. The potential destination can therefore be seen as a socially constructed project (Carling, 2002). From a trajectory view, Schapendonk stresses the changeability of these potential destinations. According to him these are moving targets:

Some aspired-to destinations are unreachable, new destinations emerge en route, old destinations lose their attractiveness, transit places transform into home-like places and home-like places become departure places. (Schapendonk, 2011, p.195)

The projection of Friesland being a 'safe haven' must for all status holders be right, but what would their new potential destination look like? Therefore, as Schapendonk argues, it is good to pay attention to shifting scenario's as well as migrants' ambivalences and uncertainties during different

phases of their trajectories, as it is not only migrants who are on the move – so too are their aspirations (Schapendonk, 2011).

2.5 Constraints and access

Though the status holder has the aspiration to move, knows the reasons to move and therewith acts in a space of difference, this does not automatically mean a world in which status holders can move to any place they desire. Different constraints can keep status holders from moving to other places, which makes them involuntary immobile. One can imagine that after being involuntary migrated to an unknown country, and involuntary dispersed in an unknown region, the first thing one wants to have is freedom, and not to become involuntary immobile. These constraints can be seen as part of the last trajectory threshold from Van der Velde & Van Naerssen, in which the factors that totally prevent mobility or change the destination become clear.

Carling (2002) puts the involuntary immobility at the centre of the migration process in his paper on emigration from Cape Verde. According to him this is important for two reasons. First, because the massive extent of unfulfilled dreams about migration needs to be explained and second, because there is a widespread frustration over immobility which is an important backdrop to explaining migration flows (Carling, 2002). Though he looks at this from an emigration perspective, the different constraints in Carlings framework are to some extent useful for the immobile status holders in Friesland, as it can give a better insight in the immobility of status holders. He divides seven different constraints that are encountered more generally in the immigration interface, of which four will be analysed for the interest of this paper: qualitative, social network, practicality and financial constraints. Categorical constraints, physical danger and risk of expulsion or denial are not applicable to the status holders who live in Friesland.

These constraints will be combined with Urry's (2007) notion of access, as these constraints are here explained by a lack of the former. He distinguishes four different types of access: economic, physical, organizational and availability. These four different types of access are linked to citizenship and social exclusion. A lack of citizenship or new kinds of social exclusion are said to be resulting not only from social inequality per se, but also from a combination of distance, inadequate transport and limited ways of communicating, which is applicable for the situation in Friesland. It is also maintained that these socio-spatial exclusions are unfair or discriminatory and that local and national governments should reduce such socio-spatial inequality (Urry, 2007, 190).

This results in the following four constraints that are potential obstacles to become mobile. First, all mobilities require *economic* resources and this is the largest constraint upon social equality (even

walking needs decent shoes). Economic resources are necessary in order to own or use a car/taxi or to use the public transport. But not only the access to money, but also the access to achieve money (a job) is necessary to become mobile. From a mobilities perspective, the access and availability of communicative material (telephone/e-mail) is necessary. An important conclusion from this perspective is that roughly speaking those with most access to travel are also those with best access to communications 'at-a-distance'(Urry, 2007). Though the low entry cost of the mobile phone, the minute costs of sms messaging and the cheapness of internet cafes is making it easier for status holders to have a better access to this.

Second are *qualitative constraints*, a more individual based constraint. This includes properties as skill level, and an employment status. But also the physical aspects of the status holders, their health and inability to drive a car, difficulties involved walking certain distances, physical difficulties involved entering particular sites or limitations on the capacity to read timetabled information and physical constraints upon carrying or moving large or weighty objects are part of the qualitative constraint.

The third one is the *social network* constraint. This means that one has a lack of biological family ties in the host country, which can contribute to not being able to move because of not having the necessary social contacts. Also, a lack of social capital within the region of living can hinder the possibilities to move.

The last constraint to become mobile is the *organisational constraint*. Status holders' ability to access services and facilities depends upon how they are organized, such as the ability to negotiate lifts with others. With regard to public transport, not only is it important to be near a bus stop or railway station but also to reach various destinations, to be provided with safe, secure and productive travel experiences, good conditions of waiting and interchange locations, and high frequency, reliability and punctuality (Urry, 2007). This is strongly related to the access to temporal services. Thus many people find no 'public' transport before or after working hours, or that services to cheap shopping centres are unavailable when they are free to shop, or that leisure activities have to be curtailed because of the time and frequency of services.

2.6 Conceptual framework

To conclude this chapter the conceptual framework for this paper will be given. This is based on the framework Van der Velde & Van Naerssen (2010) used to explain the 'dynamics' in cross border mobility and immobility, where they divide the decision making process of migrants in three phases. For the interest of this paper, the framework was adapted to the decision making process of status holders in Friesland. In the first phase, the status holder is supposed to be passive in his thoughts

about migration to an elsewhere and unconsciously creating a mental border. As a consequence of this passiveness one automatically starts integrating in the current place of residence. Here,
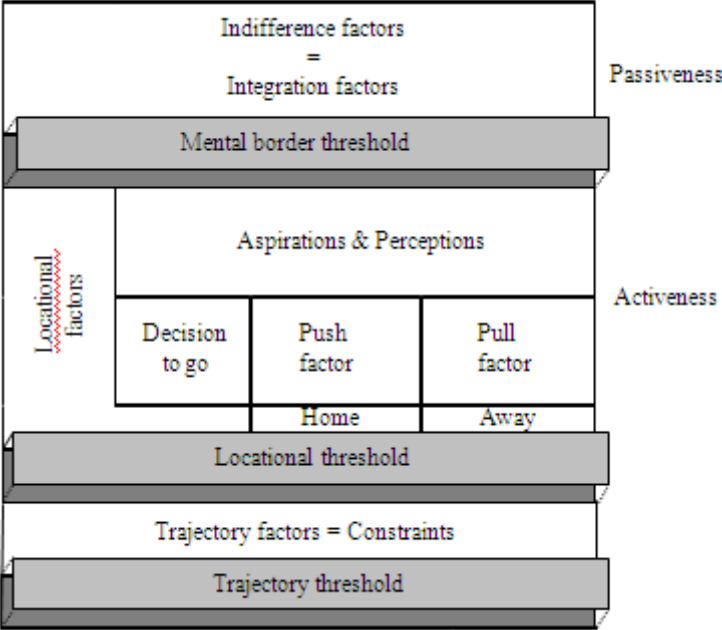
Figure 1: Factors and thresholds for migratory behaviour (editted from Van der Velde & Van Naerssen (2010)

integration factors focused on the individual are decisive in their feeling of integration to the society. At the point the status holder wants to move elsewhere, therewith crossing the mental border threshold, s(he) becomes in an active state of decision making, focusing on locational factors which can be influenced by aspirations and perceptions. When the locational threshold is also crossed, one has to consider if there are possible constraints that can keep the status holder from migrating, for instance money or a lack of social contacts. Crossing the last threshold means that there are no obstructions in the migratory process and one can make the move to an elsewhere.

3 Methodological Choices

This paper is concerned with the day-to-day mobilities of people and its meanings and experiences and can best be described as a qualitative comparative analysis (QCA). Empirical phenomena are observed, while also the contextual conditions are controlled. In this research the phenomenon "(im)mobility in Friesland" (or: the specific reasons concerning the (im)mobility in this geographical region) will be explored. The study requires methodological tools that can explore in depth subjective realities and statistics to explain the mobilities of status holders. In what follows, I will present the different characteristics of the empirical data and discuss the process of gathering this data.

3.1 Empirical data

Given the focus on status holders' meanings and experiences, the data is mainly gathered through qualitative interviews. Eleven male status holders were formally interviewed. They were mostly single; only three of them came as a family, which enriches the results of this paper. The status holders came from eight different countries: Congo, Iran, Somalia, Ethiopia, Liberia, Syria, Angola, and Kurdistan. It was not the intention to get different nationalities deliberately, the focus was on status holders who came here as single refugee, and where placed by COA in Friesland. Whether he is from Somalia or Syria; the mobility issues with which they are encountered in the Netherlands are all the same. All of them live spread over Friesland, from villages[6] as Holwerd, Kollum, Anjum and Joure, to small sized cities as Burgum, Heerenveen, Sneek and Leeuwarden, the capital city of Friesland. Variation was tried to be gained with respect to the length of stay in the Netherlands; with the oldest status holder arriving in 1992 and the shortest one arriving last December 2011. In this way the significance of time will be observed.

The interviews were held in February and March 2012. The selection and mobilization of status holders was based on discussions with key informants working at the Dutch Council for Refugees[7] (Vluchtelingenwerk) in Sneek, Heerenveen, Dokkum and Burgum. Most of the status holders were actively participating at the Dutch Council for Refugees, helping other status holders with financial issues or being an interpreter. It is not unusual for status holders to volunteer at this council, especially those who are still studying or cannot work, appreciate it to be active and make themselves useful. Other status holders were coincidentally at the Council's office, and willing to

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[6] Holwerd is a small town in the upper north of Friesland, while Joure is only 10 kilometers from Heerenveen, a larger city. Speaking about the social life of status holders in villages means referring to the experiences of status holders who live in villages with not more than 30.000 inhabitants, like Anjum, Holwerd, Burgum, Dokkum and Joure. Referring to the city means talking about status holders who live in cities as Sneek, Heerenveen and Leeuwarden (30.000-100.000 inhabitants).

[7] The Dutch Council for Refugees is a non-governmental organisation which offers refugees practical supportduring their asylum procedure and help them rebuild their lives in the Netherlands. The organisation is mainly run by volunteers.

participate. The spoken language of the interviews was in Dutch or English. Most of the interviews were recorded, unless the respondent did not want to. In two cases a report was made of the interview. The status holders who were living in Friesland for more than two years were speaking relatively fluent Dutch, which could say something about their integration in the Netherlands. Others spoke English, which was because they had studied this in their own country. The interviews where held at their home or at the Council's office. These two places were good interview settings because these are places where the status holder feels himself comfortable.

To support the relevance of the interview data, secondary information about the (im)mobility of single status holders in Friesland is gained via interviews with people from different organisations related to the subject. Via the network of COA, interviews with key informants of the government and organisations such as the VROM-inspection, the Dutch Council for Refugees in Friesland, the province of Friesland and municipalities in Friesland could be held. Also, they gave the opportunity to attend workshops of municipalities which had the mobility of status holders as subject. The results of these interviews and workshops are used to give background information to understanding the situation of the status holder in Friesland.

The earlier mentioned background statistics about the moving patterns of status holders are the result of a query of data available from COA. The query contained information about all the status holders being placed in Friesland between 2000 and 2010, with respect to age, sex, family situation, nationality, the place of the former AZC, the place of residence after the AZC in Friesland and the actual place of residence according to the Municipalities Administration (Gemeentelijke Basis Administratie (GBA)).

3.2 Biographical Interviews

Biographical interviews were held to give content to the (im)mobility decisions. In qualitative oriented studies on migration, biographical interviews are used for a broader temporal perspective to analyze migration, for the recognition of migrants' multiple motivations and for the acknowledgement that migration is first and foremost a socially embedded event (Schapendonk, 2011). The approach was also used by Schapendonk and Valenta; two doctoral thesis which this paper is built on. Halfacree and Boyle (1993) launched this approach, with a focus on three principles in the conceptualization of migration; the time-dimension, the recognition of migration as the outcome of multiple reasons, and that it puts the migrants' experiences at the centre of the empirical analysis of migration.

To focus on the time principle first, migration is seen as 'action in time'. With this notion the migration decision is not only related to the physical relocation but also to "some relation to the individual's past, present and predicted or projected future (…) it approaches migration as a sequence of events where one move may influence subsequent moves" (Halfacree & Boyle, 1993, 337). This leaves room for possible future migration. Since this approach places migration in continuous time, it can be used for the process-like understanding of migration that is central to this thesis.

Another principle of the biographical approach is that it sees migration as the outcome of multiple reasons of individuals, whereby economic factors are not decisive (Schapendonk, 2011). To cite Halfacree & Boyle (1993):

> *"Rather than look for one or two relatively self contained reasons for migration we must expect to find several, some relatively fully-formed, others more indefinite"*

This has consequences for the way of doing interviews, which contains a much more open attitude than trying to look for only one important reason.

The last principle is that this approach puts the migrants' experiences at the centre of the empirical analysis of migration. Halfacree and Boyle (1993) see migration as a 'habitus' and therewith places migration into the everyday experience of the individual within society. This principle underlines that the notion of mobility, as with the geographical concept of place, is full of social meaning (Urry, 1997). In other words, adding a social dimension to the analysis of migration is necessarily since it perceives migration as an experienced phenomenon that is better understood when the deeper social connotations are also taken into account (Halfacree and Boyle, 1993).

It is acknowledged that the biographical approach reconstructs specific aspects, parts and sequences of migrants' life worlds. In this research, the focus will be on (im)mobility of the status holders with regard to the place they are staying at the moment of interviewing. Other importance is given to the earlier mobility within the Netherlands and the projected mobility in the near future. This is in line with the relationality of mobility and immobility, as the biographical approach attempts to understand migration in relation to its relative permanency (Halfacree & Boyle, 1993).

One of the advantages of biographical interviews with regard to interviewing former refugees is that these sorts of interviews make it easier to discuss difficult subjects than standard interviews. It is very difficult to define the dividing line of what is a sensitive subject and to what extent you can call for answers. By asking them to make a reconstruction of their social life from arrival to present and give them space for own interpretation, the status holder is free to tell what he wants. Especially with

discussing difficult subjects, it is easier when a conversation about someone's life is going well, it can be a natural way to discuss also the more difficult subjects because they are part of their life story and they grow logically from the rest of the story (Van Liempt, 2007). Another advantage is that because of the distrust with these groups of respondents with interviews about history with the migration offices, the biographical approach gives the respondents control and space for narrating about their own experiences. Giving control to the respondent is important for these groups (Van Liempt, 2007). This resulted in a more conversational way of interviewing, instead of a structured one on one questionnaire. Different subjects where used instead of a structured interview by which the respondents got the ability to tell their stories in their own tempo and give more or less regard to the subjects that they find important or unimportant.

3.3 Data Analysis

With discussing the analysis of the data material it is important to distinguish between induction, deduction and abduction. The analysis of the empirical data was mostly characterized by abduction where the theory and gathered empirical data was continuously oscillated. The process of analysis usually began in an inductive manner, but gradually became more deductive when theoretical concepts were used in order to interpret the data. The presentation of the empirical material was structured in such a way that the analytical part of this paper may indicate the analytical approach to the data. Firstly, it was tried to capture broad varieties that were necessarily present when there were many different cases, aspirations for status holders' mobility and reasons for immobility. Secondly, analytical categories were proposed. And thirdly, the analytical categories were contextualized and related to different local settings and broader structural constraints. This process was repeated several times, because new material often contributed to new interpretations of the chosen theoretical perspectives.

These new perspectives were again applied when interpreting fresh material as it came in. As it was explored how the (im)mobility is subjectively perceived and experienced by the status holders, their behaviour and statements were continuously analyzed, questioned, reconstructed and interpreted in a flexible and imaginative manner. According to several scholars, qualitative data analysis should not be rigid, but it should be a flexible, imaginative and reflexive process (Valenta, 2009). He argues that data analysis should not be seen as a distinct last phase of research. In line with him, the analysis of this material is considered as a reflexive activity that had its direct influence on the data collection, writing, and the next data collection. Through further data collection with secondary informants the interpretations and conclusions were verified and modified. This continuous oscillation between the gathering and analysis of data contributed to the flexibility of the whole research process.

In order to make the analytical process more systematic, the interview transcriptions were coded and classified. Collected data was broken down into analytical categories of mobility and immobility. By reducing the data material in this way, a better overall picture of the data material was developed. By identifying categories, comparative and contrasting cases could more easily be confronted and compared. Finally, by identifying analytical categories, an overview of certain experiences, opinions or patterns of mobility strategies among the status holders were obtained. As a result, it was easier to get an overview of the exceptions and relate them to the rest of the data.

4 The Context: Status holders, the dispersal policy and Friesland

To understand the reasons of status holders to consider moving from Friesland, it is relevant to examine the general situation of refugees and the context of the dispersal to this province. Therefore firstly, it will be explained what the status holder differs from any other migrant. Secondly, the dispersal policy in the Netherlands will be explained and lastly, the geographical context itself will be explored by giving a brief overview of the province of Friesland. To conclude, some statistics about status holders in Friesland will be given.

4.1 From asylum seeker to status holder

There are three main elements that distinguish asylum seekers from migrants. The first is their reason for the first migration movement, namely that their refuge was involuntary. Though there is not one single reason for asylum seekers to flee from their country, many of the asylhum seekers flee persecution, violence or threats of violence. They are more concerned about escaping their country of origin than they were about which country they would eventually seek refuge in (Robinson & Segrott, 2002). Therefore, in this study it is taken for granted that the principal first aim of asylum seekers is to reach a place of safety. This differs from the reasons of, for example economical migrants, who are mostly escaping poverty or social injustice.

It should however be noted that this differentiation from other migrants has become highly contested. According to UNHCR it has become increasingly difficult to make a clear distinction between 'voluntary' and 'involuntary' population movements. A recent report of the UN on international migration argue the same by stating that "Many people are prompted to leave their own country by a mixture of fears, hopes and aspirations which can be very difficult, if not impossible, to unravel"[8]

The second distinction is that refugees have an official status and therefore obtain rights, which the 'normal' migrant has not. The definition of a refugee is in this paper understood as it was defined at the Geneva treaty in 1957:

> '*A person who owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of*

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[8] *Technical Symposium on International Migration and Development, The Hague, 29 June – 3 July 1998, UNFPA, New York, 1989, p.70*

his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it' (Jansen, 2006, p. 117)

As by this convention in Geneva it was the first time where the refugee gained an official status and with this confirmation more than 120 countries had the duty to protect refugees (Mattheijer, 2000). This treaty has also influence on the definition of asylum seekers. Asylum seekers are persons who are oppressed in their own country and recall protection from another country, with the result to ask for asylum (Vluchtelingenwerk Nederland, 2011). When this person asks for asylum, the receiving country has to examine whether this persons appertains to the Refugee Treaty. This examination is called the asylum procedure, during which the migrant has to live in an asylum centre. In paragraph 2.1.2 there will be more information about this procedure. If there is a positive verdict at the end of the asylum procedure, this person can get a residence permit and 'becomes' a status holder.

With this residence permit the third distinction with other migrants is made, namely that the new migration status makes the status holders EU-citizens. With this new migration status the status holder is free to travel around Europe, which is crucial to make the secondary move. Intra-EU movers are often perceived as free movers who take advantages of the right of mobility as true 'cosmopolitans' (Van Liempt, 2009, 263).

4.2 Reception and Dispersal policy in the Netherlands

All these migrants need a place to live, with whatever status they have. The way asylum seekers are hosted in the Netherlands today was not the same as it was before in the 80s. Due to the relatively small amount of asylum requests in the 60s and 70s, the hosting of asylum seekers was done by non-governmental institutions, it was mostly done by private initiatives and other private foundations (Jansen, 2006). Migrants who came to the Netherlands where seen as repatriates, temporary migrants or guest workers, so migration was only minimally regulated (Bruquetas-Callejo, Garces-Mascarenas, Penninx, & Scholten, 2007). During the end of the 70s around 6.000 Vietnamese refugees arrived in the Netherlands which caused a first intervention of the government to help municipalities out with the hosting of refugees; around 40 refugee centers were build. In 1985 the first reception policy was submitted, because of the large amount of requests at the same time of mostly Tamils from Sri Lanka. This first policy was called the 'Arrangement for Catered Stay'[9] or the 'Bed-Bath-Bread-Arrangement', which was especially introduced for these asylum seekers. This was also the first time asylum seekers were spread over the country, whereas they were first mostly located in one of the four big cities (Jansen, 2006).

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[9] Regeling verzorgd verblijf

In 1987 the first general policy for asylum seekers was constituted, namely the Arrangement for the Reception of Asylum Seekers (Regeling Opvang Asielzoekers (ROA)), which made the government responsible for the asylum procedure. The regulation also included the goal to spread asylum seekers over the country. Asylum seekers who got their residence permit could be placed in a so called ROA-residence: a residence arranged by one of the 400 municipalities over the country. The advantage of this kind of residency was that asylum seekers lived in the society, instead of asylum centres which are mainly located outside the village. The first asylum centres were also build in this year and were evenly spread over the country, according to the number of inhabitants of the concerning province (Jansen, 2006).

In the 90s the need for more asylum centres rose. Therefore, in 1992 a new system of hosting was implemented. After the arrival in the country the first place asylum seekers had to go to was one of the few 'Research- and Reception centres' (Onderzoek- en opvangcentra), where they could make their application and stay for a few days. If the application procedure would take more days, the asylum seeker was being transferred directly to an Asylum Centre (AZC).

4.2.1 The asylum procedure in the Netherlands

During the last years, the asylum procedure has been reformed several times. The most recent change has been constituted in 2010 and applied the European guidelines to the Dutch asylum procedure. This means that asylum seekers will get a quicker response whether they can stay or not (Vluchtelingenwerk, 2010). When asylum seekers come to the Netherlands, they first have to go to the Centre for Subscription (Aanvraagcentrum (AC)) in Ter Apel or Schiphol. In these places they make their first subscription and also the first assessment is being made here. This first phase consists of interviews with the Immigration and Naturalisation service (Immigratie en Naturalisatiedienst (IND)). This institution assesses whether the asylum seeker has the right to get a residence permit. This is part of the general procedure, which takes around eight days. This procedure was one of the main issues that was revised in 2010. In de Vreemdelingenwet 2000 this took only 48 hours, which was too quick to help people with a more complicated background.

After this first phase the asylum seekers are being placed in one of the many Asylum centers (AZC) in the Netherlands. People who stay here are waiting for their permit or waiting to go back to their home country. After the conclusion of the procedure three situations can happen: (I) the asylum seeker gets rejected. In this case he has the opportunity to oppose the rejection or prepare his return travel. (II) The asylum seeker has to wait longer because the nationality or the situation in the mother country is not sure. Here, the extended procedure can take the maximum of half a year. Or (III) the asylum seeker gets his temporary residence permit. After five years this turns into a normal

residence permit. These permits allow them to live in the Netherlands with the same rights as native inhabitants and, maybe even more important, other EU-citizens.

4.2.2 The dispersal policy

When status holders received their residence permit, they are free to choose where they want to live. Roughly 40 percent succeeds to find a house directly after their stay in the asylum centre (Klaver, 2009), though the largest part is dependent on mediation through the COA. Because of the dispersal policy municipalities are legally bound to make houses available for status holders, the so called 'taakstelling' or target. The more inhabitants in a municipality, the higher the target, and the more houses they have to make available. Dependant on the region there are two different housing procedures. The first is generally used in regions with high population density like the Randstad. Here, municipalities offer houses which are suitable for the refugees; then, COA nominates an appropriate status holder (family) who is suitable for this house. In the second procedure, generally used in regions with low population density like Friesland, the status holder has the possibility to choose houses in different municipalities from a website managed by COA. Both the housing procedures have the consequence that when status holders refuse the offer, they have to leave the asylum centre.

As it may sound easy for status holders to live where they want, in reality it means that the housing offer from the COA most of the time doesn't meet the wishes of the status holder. This is due to the dispersal policy and the associated target of municipalities. Because the densely populated areas are very popular and therefore cannot offer houses, the offer of COA mostly contains houses in the rural periphery of the Netherlands. Especially in provinces as Limburg, Drenthe and Friesland municipalities have difficulties with reaching their target. Another complicating problem in the matching of houses is that 80% of the status holders in the COA-accommodations live alone (either single or awaiting family to join), whereas most housing in the rural periphery of the Netherlands is equipped to accommodate families (Kullberg & Kulu-Glasgow, 2009). Small cheap houses suitable for small households are mostly found in central urban areas. As a result, the

	Vluchtelingen	Vergelijkingsgroep Immigranten	Autochtonen
	%	%	%
Groningen	4	2	4
Friesland	3	2	4
Drenthe	2	1	3
Overijssel	7	4	7
Flevoland	3	4	2
Gelderland	11	7	13
Utrecht	8	7	7
Noord Holland	15	23	15
Zuid Holland	24	34	19
Zeeland	2	1	2
Noord Brabant	14	10	16
Limburg	6	4	7
Totaal	100	100	100

Bron: CBS 2009.

Table 1: Geographical spread of refugees, regular immigrants and native Dutch (1-1-2008) (source: Vluchtelingenwerk, 2010)

geographical spread of status holders corresponds with the general spread of the Dutch population, with almost half of the status holders now living in the Western part of the Netherlands, which is shown in table 1.

In order to contextualize the status holder' social life in Friesland, it is good to discuss the situation in terms of 'dispersed' and 'concentrated settlement'. There is a discussion on what kind of settlement is better for immigrants and status holders: scattered or concentrated. On the one hand, these are the ones who refer to the contact hypothesis, who argue that increased proximity will lead to growth of respect between ethnic groups. Also, they suggest that with dispersion, the contact will increase and lead to further integration of the status holders. Furthermore, they suggest that dispersion will at the same time discourage the emergency of socially segregated communities and encourage inter-individual and inter-group contact across ethnic borders (Valenta, 2009). On the other hand are the critics who argue that dispersal settlement neglects the realities of daily life, and eventually will not lead to integration. These studies argue, that under certain circumstances, the result of increased dispersion, proximity and interethnic interaction may generate even more conflicts, may increase the feeling of isolation among status holders and may eventually lead to secondary migration (Robinson & Segrott, 2002; Valenta, 2009).

As an example, Robinson and Hale (1989) found that, as a result of secondary migration, 46% of all Vietnamese refugees in the UK were living in London by 1988, with concentrations in three special neighborhoods (Robinson, Andersson, & Musterd, 2003). This geographical concentration is not unique in the UK. Also in Belgium, Sweden and the Netherlands the concentration of former asylum-seekers are particularly high in the bigger cities. Research shows that for example only one-third of the Somalis in the Netherlands still lives at the same address to which they were dispersed. Many Somalis regrouped and moved to larger cities such as Rotterdam, Tilburg and Den Haag (Hessels, 2000; in Van Liempt, 2011). But also for other immigrant groups this pattern is known. Many Angolan, for example, moved to Rotterdam after having been dispersed all over the country because Rotterdam hosts a large Cape Verdian community with whom they share a language and cultural habits (Van Heelsum & Hessels, 2006; in Van Liempt, 2011).

4.3 The status holder in Friesland

There is not much research about these secondary movements in Friesland. Therefore, statistical data was gained by COA about around 1600 status holders who lived, or are still living in Friesland during the time of 2000-2010. Because of information about the former AZC, the first place after resettlement from COA and the current place of residence, two different movements can be

analysed: the movement from the former Asylum Centre to the first place of residence, and the movement from this first place to the current place of residence.

Interesting is that though it seems that with the current dispersal policy status holders are placed randomly around the country, in between the years 2000-2010 most status holders retrieved a house in the same region as where they were situated in an Asylum Centre. Statistics show that 72% of the status holders came from an AZC within the province of Friesland. Also, it is notable that the two provinces who 'deliver' the second highest amount of status holders are the two neighbouring provinces Groningen and Flevoland, with both 4 percent.

The 'expected' second(ary) movement is not massively shown in the results retrieved in Friesland. Main conclusion from these statistics is that in between 2000 and 2010 only 26 percent of all the status holders moved to another place, so the vast majority stayed immobile. In a region where the employment rate is not high, this is rather remarkable. Moreover, this immobility is contradictory to the general image of the mobility of status holders in peripheral regions. Especially taking into account that from this 26 percent that did become mobile, almost half of the status holders moved within Friesland to a bigger municipality. This is confirmed by the Province of Friesland, who states there are many secondary movements within Friesland to the higher populated municipalities.

4.4 The province of Friesland

Now we know how the status holder was settled in Friesland, the research setting itself shall be briefly explained. Friesland is one of the Northern provinces in the Netherlands. September 2011 the province had 647.696 inhabitants (3,9% of the total population in the Netherlands), with 8,5% being immigrant. In contrast, the national average of immigrant inhabitants is 20%. There is a demographical tendency in Friesland in growth. The total amount of inhabitants is growing, but there is a difference in development between the local and regional scale. Next to a growth of 5% since 2000 in the biggest municipalities, there are six municipalities where the population has declined. In smaller villages this decline is among 50% of all small villages. The prediction for the future is a small incline of people, but this growth will only influence the demography of the urban centres in Friesland.

The province of Friesland has two aspects in particular that are of special interest for this research, namely the rurality of the province, and the language Frisian. In order to make sense of the above mentioned mobilities and immobilities, it is necessary to link these to discussions on the status holders' integration in rural and urban areas of new settlement countries. Friesland is mainly a rural

province, which can have influence on the mobility of migrant (im)mobility and integration process. Moreover, nine of the eleven interview respondents were living in small villages.

4.4.2 Rurality: small villages

There are some general characteristics that are relevant for most small villages in western countries. Of special interest is the work of Marco Valenta (2007), who, in his paper on the integration of immigrants in the city and the small town in Norway, enumerates some pro's and con's of small villages. One of the negative aspects is that places which appear to be idyllic social environments where everybody knows everyone else can generate a high degree of social exclusion, xenophobia and scepticism against foreigners. Worth noting is the example of Kollum, a small town in the eastern part of Friesland, where in 1999 a girl was raped and murdered. Suspects were two asylum seekers, who vanished after the murder was done. Though it has never been proved that one of the asylum seekers in the village was the murderer, the atmosphere in the village was very intimidating, which caused fear under the asylum seekers and other non-western inhabitants in the village (Joustra, 1999). This hostile atmosphere could be created, because the local community is often characterized by dense social networks that support conformity and suppress diversity (Valenta, 2007).

On the other hand, status holders can also benefit if they settle in a small town, for example in bridging to the mainstream. Being dispersed in a small town and to get accepted in the communities, status holders have to enter deeply into the full complexity of local relations and networks. Such pressure sometimes indeed results in increased participation and an inclination for melting into the mainstream (Valenta, 2007). The Dutch council for refugees (Vluchtelingenwerk) is one of the organizations that are said to be more helpful in small villages as they can bring new status holders more quickly in contact with other villagers.

Another aspect that has negative consequences for status holders' settlement is the housing supply in small municipalities in Friesland. First, from a policy viewpoint, many municipalities are behind in their target, with the result that there is always pressure on the target. Second, there are few housing mutations, with the result that there are not many new houses available for status holders. Third, there is pressure on the housing market with not more than 25% of the houses being social housing. Finding an affordable house is therefore difficult for status holders. Furthermore, the composition of the family can lead to problems finding houses in small villages. On the one hand it is difficult to settle large families because of the type of houses which where build in the '70s. These houses cannot host large Somalian families of 8-17 persons. On the other hand it is difficult to settle single status holders. Small villages normally don't have a large amount of single person apartments, in contrast to urban centres. Also, single status holders don't want to be put together with other

single status holders. This gives them the same feeling as in the Asylum Centre. As soon as they receive a status, they feel free and they want to move on; not locked up again with other former status holders.

The last difficult aspect of the rural area of Friesland related to the status holders is the limited amount of public transport, which is one of the important factors for status holders to choose where to live. Mainly because of money issues their mobility is not high, so they are dependent on the public transport as this is the cheapest way of mobility. The amount of social benefit is not high enough to provide status holders with a Dutch drivers license (Information meeting Zwolle, 2011). This results in long travelling times and distances which can give status holders a feeling of loneliness.

4.4.2 Frisian language

Friesland is a special province within the Netherlands because since 1998 it has its own official separate language, Frisian. As a consequence, the population of Friesland can officially choose between Frisian and Dutch, names of streets are to be in two languages and courts have to provide interpreters to translate from Frisian to Dutch (Suurenbroek & Schrover, 2005). This is relevant for this study because in some small villages people only speak Frisian, which is rare, but this has consequences for status holders who try to integrate. It is especially difficult because Frisian is not included in the Integration course. Also in finding jobs it is harder for status holders. Not only do they have to speak the Dutch language, but for some jobs (for example civil servant) it is also obliged to speak the Frisian language.

Having said this, it can be questioned what drives this vast majority of status holders to stay in Friesland. Can they, despite of the housing, mobility and language difficulties, still settle easily or are there constraints that keep them in Friesland? In the next chapter the analysis of the interviews with 11 of these status holders will try to give some answers to these questions.

5 Status holders in Friesland: a biography

In this chapter the interviews will be described. A context of the eleven interviews will be provided. These interviews will not explain the general position of status holders in Friesland, let alone the status holder in the Netherlands. Though what it does say is that it adds something to the existing theory about status holders' way of integration and aspirations.

For the analysis of this thesis a distinction was made within the total of eleven interviews. Three groups are formed, based on their future aspirations at the moment of interviewing. These groups are I) status holders who at the moment of interviewing want to leave their place of residents and live there for a longer time, II) status holders who want to stay at the moment of interviewing and live there for a shorter period of time, and III) status holders who want to stay at the moment of interviewing, and live there for a longer period of time. Hence, important is that a distinction is made between their *direct* aspirations of becoming mobile, and their length of stay in the Netherlands. A pattern will be sought within these three groups, and via these groups it is tried to expand the knowledge about the rooting and aspirations of status holders in Friesland.

Within the description of the context the focus will be on three aspects. The first is their past, in which their view of the Netherlands will be made clear, their home situation and their education in their home country. Here, the focus will be on the situation until their obtainment of their status. In the second part of the description special attention will be given to the status holders' current situation. What friends do they have, do they work and are they bonded with the region. Third is their view of the future. What do their aspirations look like? Are their certain goals?

5.1 Wants to leave and lives in Friesland for longer time

The first group is the group who wants to leave and lives here for a longer period of time. The group is in the age of 36 – 52. This group arrived in the Netherlands between 1999 and 2006, which means they are at least for 6 years in the Netherlands. At the time of interviewing these status holders lived in villages (around 11.000 inhabitants) in the east and north-east of Friesland. All interviews were held in Dutch.

5.1.1 Past situation

Before this group came to the Netherlands most of the refugees where living in the capital city of their country, though one of them already lived in a rural area. They all flew from their country because of political issues. Most of them studied, and some of them could not finish their studies because of the political situation. The consequence of this is that most of them had diplomas and

therefore were already working. Knowledge of the Netherlands varied. Via books, work, football, the news on television or from personal political interest one had a general idea of the Netherlands.

After they left their country, but befóre they received their status and a house in Friesland, they had at least a couple of asylum centres (AZC's) where they had to stay. These AZC's where all situated in the periphery of the Netherlands[10], of which some already where situated in Friesland. For some the amount of AZC's meant that they were living for a longer time in the Netherlands. Though one would think this would be good for the integration, it did not. One cannot start with a new life, though they are living already in their new country. Also the life in the AZC is hard, especially with the different cultures living together in a noisy house.

> *"Also, it was a bad time for me and my wife because to live here in the AZC, we had a small room, with eight persons in one house. For each family there was a room and I had to make contacts with the other nationalities of all over the world, which was hard for us. Especially with the more radical religious people from other nationalities. When I for example wanted to go to the kitchen, I couldn't, because there was a woman in there. And sometimes it was even forbidden to open the windows because of religious conditions" (Syrian man, 52)*

Another problem of the longer stay in the AZC's is the declining chances of receiving fund for studying. As one passes the 30th year, one does not receive a study loan, but has to pay for himself. For some this was the occasion, with a five years stay in different AZC's.

After they got their status they could start searching for a private house. Because of the bad situation of employment in the province of Friesland, some searched outside Friesland but could not find any attractive place in the south, north or middle of the country. Due to the maximum time they could search for a house themselves, they took a house assigned by the COA. Other status holders just wanted to get out of the AZC, and saw the offer from COA as a "chance" to leave the AZC, and therefore took the first house they were assigned to. For some this was easy, because the former AZC was already in Friesland, and they could stay in the same village.

5.1.2 Present situation

Right from the beginning it was hard for this group of status holders to make any *social contacts* with the Frisian natives. Most people they came to know over the years are considered acquaintances; no real friends are made whom they see very often. Some were worried to make these contacts; others wanted to make friends but had difficulties with getting close to Frisian people. They feel that they need time to get closer to you.

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[10] For example: Eindhoven, Deventer, Dokkum, Lemmer, Zevenaar, Luttelgeest

"This is because the Frisians do not talk to strangers that quickly. They are not like people from Amsterdam for example. Someone from Amsterdam walks to you and asks this and that. The Frisians don't". (Congolese man, 36)

This does not automatically happen, but there has to be an occasion for this meeting for Frisians to get in contact with the status holders. A man from Kurdistan has the feeling that people know each other in Friesland from associations, church, work and school. For example in his case, most of his contacts are living in Leeuwarden, which are mostly study-friends and friends from work. He emphasizes that it is hard to make contact in the village itself. Even his neighbours are not people whom he talks to very often. Therefore, this status holder joined the chess association after he got information about associations and work at one of the meetings at the Council for Refugees. Yet, another problem occurs when he joined the association, which is the language. In general the people at these associations talk Frisian to each other, which makes it hard to follow conversations.

An exceptional case concerning the social contacts in this group is the status holder who came here as a family. He came together with his daughter and wife, and had made Dutch friends during his time in the AZC. Also his feeling is that getting in contact with other Frisian people in general is hard, but his idea about the Frisians is that they are sweet and very "pure" people. He considers his social relations as good.

Apart from the social contacts, the interviews with this group where mainly concentrated on the difficult *economic situation* in Friesland. At the time of interviewing, none of my informants had a job. Some were finishing their study at the NHL[11] under the finances of the UAF; others were unemployed after their study and are now volunteering at the Dutch Council for Refugees. There are three factors that make it difficult to find a job for refugees. The first factor is related to the region of Friesland, as the language is a problem. Some status holders tried to find work in Friesland but were refused because they did not speak the Frisian language. The second factor that makes it difficult for this group of status holders is their age. Due to the long time of asylum procedures in the AZC before the status holder receives its status, they are not allowed to work during a long time of their stay in the Netherlands. When they finally receive their status, they have the same problems as any other older Dutch person who is unemployed, with the extra difficulty not completely understanding the language. The final problem is one concerned with the possibility not to move. In this group this has two reasons. One is because of medical reasons, and not wanting to have another doctor. The other is that one cannot move because of the waiting lists for social housing in the Randstad. In this case, the Syrian man was working in his own country for a big hotel concern. This is what he also wanted

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[11] Higher Vocational Education in Leeuwarden

to do in the Netherlands, so he studied International Hotel Management together with the English language at the NHL. As soon as he found a house in Dokkum, he started searching for a house in the Randstad, as he knew that the possibility for work was higher because of the more abundant hotels around Amsterdam and Schiphol. Despite his search for almost 5 years, he cannot afford to buy a house, and therefore has to wait for a social house to become available. These social housing waiting lists have an average waiting time of 15 years. Therefore he is stuck in Friesland, where the opportunity to work in a hotel is very small.

An exception in this group is a Congolese man, who studied International business and languages and got a job in The Hague as a civil servant, where he worked for the ministry of Home Affairs. Unfortunately this was a one-year-contract, which was one of the reasons to make him stay in Burgum. Here, he became an entrepreneur working as a mediator between refugees, businesses and the government. Due to unexplained reasons he stopped with this, and started to do the same work, but now as a volunteer for the Council for Refugees in his municipality.

Volunteering (or having the aspiration to work) for the Council for Refugees is one of the main activities in this group that connects them all. Though it is of course one of the reasons that the respondents where all obtained via the Council for Refugees, it was still noticed that when status holders are within a longer period of time without work, they start to see the relevance of volunteering which make them feel useful.

Concerning the *Frisian culture*, questions about the Elfstedentocht[12] where answered with some recognition. But though they live for more than six years in Friesland, they have not payed any attention to this and have not participated in anything that was typically Frisian.One of the answers made it very clear that there was no reason for bonding with this region, as the only three reasons for staying in Burgum where the following:

> *"No I just stayed in Burgum because I had a relationship with someone from Friesland. We got a child, I went studying in Leeuwarden. And I had the possibility to start a small business. So it is the combination of these things that made me stay in Burgum. This combination was possible in Burgum, and therefore I stayed. " (Congolese man, 36)*

Their view of the Netherlands was mainly characterized by positive views on the organization of the country *("the social welfare, the medical services and public transportation")* and the many

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[12] The Elfstedentocht is an ice skating tour on natural ice within the province of Friesland and one of the main cultural (and sportive) events of the province. During the interviews, the Elfstedentocht was at the height of attention in Friesland and the rest of the Netherlands.

possibilities, for example to study and to learn the language. It was difficult for them to get used to the culture, which took a while, but in general they do not feel Frisian.

> *"We are now used to the life here, with the culture. There are some basics of your own culture that you cannot change, but for all the other rules of the culture we are now almost the same Dutch culture. Because you live here and you cannot live here and use another culture. Though this was not easy for me"* (Syrian man, 52)

5.1.3 Future situation

Their view of the future is mainly formed by aspirations to move and constraints why they cannot move. Their aspirations are mainly concerned with work and moving away from Friesland to find work. They want to go to "the centre" of the Netherlands, because there is more work to offer. For some finding work is the first reason to move, for others finding a house is the first reason to move. But, more important, they want to live where their work will be. How this perception of work is influenced, can be explained by the answers of a Angolan man (37), who has a brother in Rotterdam. When I asked him about where he wants to go to in the future, he says the following:

> *"Anyway I want to go to Rotterdam. Or not Rotterdam, but Utrecht or Amsterdam. Because I don't want to go to Rotterdam because there is also not much work. So around there."* (Angolan man, 37)

The only man with family in this group also sees their future in the light of work opportunities. Going to the Randstad is their goal, with the hope to find more work when they live there. Interesting is that their daughter is not a reason to stay in Dokkum, because "she can adjust herself in two months, but for us to stay under the current social welfare conditions, it is very hard". When I ask about a probable remigration to their home country, then their daughter ís a reason to stay in Friesland. Cultural differences, the language and school are arguments not to go.

Interesting is the entrepreneur of this group. After eight years of living in Burgum he has plans for the future to start an international company with some friends he made in the AZC. This company will operate in Africa, which will make him leave Friesland. He has the feeling his time has come to move to somewhere else. In this case, entrepreneurial drive has a strong impact on his decision to go.

5.2 Wants to stay and lives in Friesland for a short time

The second group wants to stay for now, and lives in Friesland for a short time, differently placed by COA in small and bigger villages and in a city. The group has an age in between 19 and 21 years old, and all came by oneself to the Netherlands, fleeing because of a disturbed political environment. Some are waiting for their family to arrive and hope they will also come to the Netherlands. They

came to the Netherlands in the period between January 2010 and December 2011, which means that at the moment of interviewing they were here for a minimum of three months and a maximum of two years. The interviews were almost all held in English; only the status holder who lived here for two years wanted to do the interview in Dutch.

5.2.1 Past situation

Before this group came to the Netherlands the knowledge of this country was very little. They knew that life in the Netherlands was a bit colder than at the place they were staying in their home country, and they knew they can go to school and learn here and, more important, build their future.

They came from big cities in their home countries in Ethiopia, Somalia and Iran, but they typify the life there as a total different 'life situation'. There, they lived together with their families, who are in all the cases torn apart because of the 'political situation'. Some family members died, and some they don't know where they are, because they separated from war.

All of the status holders did primary school, most of them also secondary school and just a few three years of university. For some the war started or they had to leave after primary school because of the political problem. It is not always clear why they had to leave at a sudden moment. For instance, an Iranian man told me he had to leave his high school because his principle was arrested. This automatically meant he had to leave the country. The consequence of these sudden removals from school is that the status holders have to leave their country without a diploma. To compensate this, some status holders mention that they worked next to their school and therefore have some work experience, which is "better than nothing".

When they arrived in the Netherlands, they were placed in different asylum centres all over the country. None of them lived in Friesland, but corresponding with the statistical data from chapter four, the last AZC was in all cases a neighbouring province of Friesland[13]. Typical was that all of the status holders were positive about the AZC; they call it a "good guide for you". One of the status holders was an invited refugee who directly was placed in a house in Sneek. He stayed in a refugee camp in Jemen for three years before he was invited to the Netherlands. "As you can see now, thank god I am in Holland".

After this period in the AZC they were all assigned to a village in Friesland. Information about this was found during their stay in the AZC. For example, one Somalian man (20) was placed in Heerenveen. Before he got there, he did research on Heerenveen via Wikipedia, and he saw that this place was good for studies. The information they gave him was that when one has to get a diploma in Friesland,

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[13] Emmeloord in the province of Flevoland and Delfzijl in the province of Groningen

It is better to be in Heerenveen than other regions near that city. That was what he preferred. This is also one of the pillars of the new system of integration of the COA, namely expectation management, with the result that status holders know what they can expect in Friesland.

5.2.2 Present situation

Information about their present situation in the Netherlands was characterized by (I) the role of the Council for Refugees, (II) learning a new language and (III) the differences in the Netherlands compared to their own country. The information they get from the Council for Refugees right from the moment they are living on their own in Friesland is very important, as it influences their opinion of the Netherlands. This Council informs the status holders right after their arrival in Friesland that it is difficult to find a job here. They hear for instance that in the capital city Amsterdam or Rotterdam it is easier to find than in Sneek or Friesland as a whole.

> *"Here it is good for the family and for the children. But if you want to work, it is not good for working. Even my teacher said, Friesland is not good for job, but good for learning. If your goal is learning, you can do it here. But you can go working in Amsterdam or Rotterdam. (…) [in Amsterdam] it is so easy to get a job. But if you think you can, you can end up in a small city too. It is not so much people, so you can be the only one who works here." (Somalian man, 20)*

Next to this general information from the Council for Refugees, the first thing they start with is learning the language. Especially for this status holders who live here for a short time, learning the language is of importance and during the interviews it came to notice that they also found it important as a way to integrate better and a way to get more opportunities. So right from the beginning they are going to language school. Dutch is a difficult language to learn; especially speaking the language is hard, because there are few opportunities to practice it:

> *"Yes the language is not the problem. Just writing, I have lot of friends on Facebook where I can write in Dutch. But the problem is 'spreken'. Het spreken with people. So speaking is not easy, if you live in Heerenveen or in Friesland. You cannot find people that you can speak with them." (Somalian man, 20).*

Different from the two groups mentioned paragraphs above, is that the conversations in these interviews are more focused on the direct cultural and conditional differences of the Netherlands with their own country. For instance, the weather (cold, raining) and the food are some of the subjects. This can be explained because everything is new to them. Questions about their experiences in the Netherlands therefore get different answers than from status holders who are

living here for a longer time. In three months there are a lot of the things to get used to. It took them for example three months to realize: "this is the life, I came here to live". Now they are used to this new life with new people and culture, different concerns are appearing.

One of the other subjects that appeared was that there is peace in the Netherlands. They call this "the most important thing in life". A Somali guy thinks this is the most important thing about the Netherlands and one of the conditions to move on with your life:

> *"Actually this country has, how do you call, a peacefull [situation].(…) For example this morning I left my house to come here. In Somalia there is no guarantee that you go back to your home safe. So that [peace] is the most important thing in life. Once you have peace you can do everything you want. Or at least move forward, to the next level in your life. So the first thing I noticed is the peace and the culture and the people." (Somalian man, 21)*

The *social situation* of this group of status holders is characterized by many contacts with their fellow compatriots living in the same village or city. They know them from the language school and the integration course or because they live in the same village. Noticeable it that the Somali's have much contacts with their own nationality, more than other nationalities. Contacts outside their village are mostly with other status holders who are dispersed over the country, whom they know from their stay at one of the Asylum Centre's. Contact between those is mostly virtual via Facebook, or via telephone. For some lonely status holders it is hard to only have contact via telephone or Facebook, especially when discussing their own difficulties:

> *"Yes I have many friends, whom I talk to via Facebook or Hyves. But to talk about nice things or about problems then it helps to have some friends living closer. I am here alone, and they also live alone." (Syrian man, 20)*

Getting in contact with the native local people from Friesland is difficult, especially because of the language. They know English, but in the villages where they live the old people don't know English. It is perceived that the majority of the people in that area are older than fifty years. So when the chance of talking to these locals is hard, because they don't know English.

> *"When you are talking to them or get to know them they are talking this language, even it is not, what do you call, the indigenous language… Frisian. Yes, I don't understand. Even I don't understand Dutch. How am I going to understand this?" (Somalian man, 21)*

Getting to know the people is therefore hard and sometimes they have the feeling that the native locals don't want to get in touch with "foreigners". This is in contrast with the status holder, who

does wants to get in touch with the native Frisians. They think the reason for this is that Dutch people are maybe scared for foreigners. In one case, the result of this is that on the streets, they get the feeling of being spoken of. Also, some heard people saying that there are 'weird' people walking around in the streets of Kollum. Having the knowledge that the foregoing was stated from the status holder who lived already for two years in Kollum, it is interesting to see the contrast with that the status holder who lives in Friesland for the shortest period of three months. After being invited to the Netherlands, he does not feel looked at. Instead, he thinks everybody is friendly and nice.

Due to the short period of time in the Netherlands, the *economical situation* of this group is not yet developed. Important is that they see this upcoming period of studying as "the next level in life", provided by the peaceful situation in the Netherlands. They can start this period after they finished their language and integration course. Dependant on their education in their home country they can start with studying at a high school or university. With the help of the Foundation for Refugee Students (UAF) they can apply for this. Some though are already working as a volunteer; therewith not only helping people from their own country who cannot speak English, but also enriching their work experience.

The ideas of this group about the region of Friesland itself are mostly connected with the small size of the villages and cities in Friesland. This has positive and negative outcomes for the status holders. One of the positive things, probably influenced because of information provided by the Council for Refugees, is that one can study in a place that is not so boisterous.

> *"Heerenveen is not so big. It is little, so you can learn [in a calm environment]; there is not more environment, more people. The people are not so rumorous, and you get more opportunities [to learn]. So that is why I want to live in Heerenveen." (Somalian man, 20)*

One of the negative outcomes for status holders is the size of their village:

> *"Kollum is a nice village, but too small for me.(…) no one is walking outside, there are no people on the streets. (…) This life is very difficult for me. But I have to live there, until the education is finished, and after that I have to search for a study. But I have to stay in Kollum." (Iranian man, 20)*

These small village contact problems are also mentioned by another status holder by mentioning that people in Friesland don't just come to each other and have a small talk. He mentions that everyone closes his door of his house. This is very different from their home situation where they lived together with their family and they could "go to your neighbour and talk and have fun together".

When this group was asked about their meaning about the Netherlands they mostly give general answers. This can be explained because they haven't seen much of the country yet. The places they have been are the places where they lived in the AZC and where they had to go for their exams.

5.2.3 Future situation

Their view of the future is one related to study and work. First they want to succeed with their studies in Friesland, and after that the future perspectives differ. On the one hand are the status holders who ultimately want to go back to their own country. They see the Netherlands as a country in which they can stay and study as long as their own country is not stable. On the other hand are the status holders who want achieve a job here in the Netherlands, as they cannot, or don't know if they can go back to their home country. As was mentioned above, they don't see themselves working or living in Friesland in ten years. The most striking answer to this question was:

> *"Ten years in Kollum, are you killing me?!" (Syrian man, 21)*

They don't see any future in Friesland and therefore ultimately most of the young status holders want to go to places situated in the Randstad, like Amsterdam or The Hague. These are chosen because they have the perception that at those places one can find work. Also, getting in contact with other people should be easier, as there are more foreigners living in the Randstad.

5.3 Wants to stay and lives in Friesland for longer time

The third group wants to stay for now and lives in Friesland for at least 13 years, differently placed in smaller villages in Friesland[14]. The group has varying ages, with two of almost the same age (45 & 50) and one who came as a child and at the time of interviewing is 25 years old. This group arrived in the Netherlands in between the period of 1992 and 1999, all of them being families at the time of interviewing. The interviews were all held in Dutch.

Unlike the other two groups, this group is more differentiated than the others. Though they all want to stay in the Netherlands, they have different reasons for their immobility. This is because their life situations differed before they came here to the Netherlands. To be clearer in the explanation for staying immobile in Friesland, in the paragraph about the present situation the three cases will be explained independent from one another. The first case came to the Netherlands as a child together with his family. At the moment he is a student and lives in Leeuwarden. The second case is a Liberian man who came here as single refugee. At the moment he is married with a Frisian woman and has a child. The third case is an Iraqi man who came here as a father together with his wife and child. At the moment he is divorced and has three children, of which one lives at his place.

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[14] Stavoren, Joure & Holwerd

5.3.1 Past situation

This group almost knew nothing about the Netherlands before they came here, only about the windmills and the tulips. A civil war and political situations are the reasons to come to the Netherlands. Some came from rural areas before they came to the Netherlands. They studied and worked already; one working next to his study, the other owning a wholesale in provisions. When they came to the Netherlands, all had to stay in different Asylum Centre's all over the country. The time differed, as one had to stay for 1,5 years, another for 4 years in different AZC's. After this they all got a house by the COA.

Since the interviewees in this group are living here for a longer time one can expect more movements before they came to their current location. This differed between the three cases. The 25 year old Somalian man, who came together with his parents and sisters, had his first house in Stavoren. He went to secondary school there, and after four years he moved with the family to Sneek. This is a bigger city than Stavoren, with more work opportunities and more facilities, which was one of the reasons his parents wanted to move here. Now, he lives as a student in Leeuwarden. The 50 year old Liberian man, who came as single status holder, got his first house in Holwerd and stayed in this village until now. He married a Frisian wife, and moved together with her to a bigger house which is also his workplace. The 45 year old Syrian man, who came as a family together with his wife and child, got their first house in Heerenveen. After 1,5 years they moved to Zevenaar, to live near family at the border of Germany. They lived there for 9 years, when he divorced and came back alone to Joure, a place next to Heerenveen. Not much later his ex wife joined him; to leave him again after 1 year to live in Heerenveen together with their two other children. At the moment he still lives in Joure with his son.

5.3.2 Present situation

The social situation of these three cases differed. The Somalian man studies in Leeuwarden where he lives together with two friends from Somalia and Sudan. He lives in Leeuwarden because he wanted to live on his own in the city where he was studying. The friendship with these friends was based on similar live events, which they shared over the years. They all fled from their home country and ended up in the same asylum centre. Especially in the beginning it was hard for him to understand jokes between the Dutch and him. He felt that Dutch people are sarcastic, which he had to get used to. When he lived in Sneek he joined the local football team, where he was one of the two foreigners. This was one of the first places where he was confronted with this kind of humour. At the moment he has an equal amount of Dutch and foreign friends, who he sees to play games. His Dutch friends are going out more often than him, and he feels that he still has more in common with his native friends. His contacts outside Friesland have been fading during the years. He still speaks to some he

knows from the asylum centre in Den Helder and Leeuwarden, but they left Friesland for Groningen and Rotterdam.

The social situation of the 50 year old Liberian man is different, as he was older when he came to the Netherlands. Getting in contact with the people was difficult for him in the beginning.

> *"The beginning is hard. You are in Europe but you feel as if you are in prison. You feel useless because you have no job and no social contacts."*

In the beginning there were some other status holders in the village, but they moved to other places in the Netherlands. He stayed and never moved, and was "lucky". His main way to get into contact with other people was via his work. He had a good relationship with his boss, he liked the job and it was "gezellig"[15]. So he did not want to move. Interesting is his idea of integrating and getting into contact with people.

> *"Contact comes from yourself, which is my experience and my opinion. If you participate, the people will also participate. (…) between the Dutch people and the foreigners it is difficult, so you have to co-operate (…) you have to get everything out of yourself to join [the society], and try to adapt to some things so that the people will accept you. Not at the expense of everything, but you have to give your best to let people accept you and to show: hey I came here and I want to live together with you"*

Over the years, next to his work he made many social contacts with the local inhabitants.. This was hard in the beginning as the cultural differences were a shock for him. He saw that people in the Netherlands are more concentrating on themselves, they are "individualists". One lives next to ones neighbours and one does not have any contact with them. Frisian people are especially hard to get into contact with, as they close their door after they have been outside. This was different in Liberia where the whole neighbourhood lives together and helps each other. The social life is everything in his old village, where he did everything together. He misses this social environment, where for instance everybody can come over to eat.

> *"You try to accept people the way they are, that is our culture. Here it is normal that you are sometimes not that interesting. If you can be important for someone, then it is ok. But after this is finished, then you can have your own pick (…) you notice that people do not dare to ask if one wants to join for dinner (…) maybe they want it, but they do not know any better; not because they are bad people, but because the Dutch people are not used to it".*

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[15] This is one of the only Dutch words which cannot be literally translated and, more importantly, can be seen as typically Dutch. In this case it means something as 'sociable'.

After accepting this cultural difference he tried to broaden his network so that he did not have to feel lonely. This was his intention when he came to the Netherlands and he felt that by having a job was the way to get into contact with the local people. Now he has his own company, and almost all of the inhabitants of Holwerd are his customer. With his company he supports the local football team and other little associations with small funding. This contribution to the local society makes him feel good about himself and accepted which helps him to integrate and gives him a sense of belonging. Through the years he settled down and got used to the 'system'. After this he felt more 'comfortable' and 'relaxed'. This all contributes to his feeling of home in Holwerd.

The social situation of the 45 year old Iranian man was different from the first two cases, as he made a secondary movement after 1,5 years to Zevenaar, a city near to the German border in the province of Gelderland. Interesting is that though they had a good relationship with local people from the church in Heerenveen, his wife wanted to live near to her sister. For nine years they lived in Zevenaar "without success". He had no contacts with the people there and felt very lonely. Due to other problems they divorced, and he decided to come back to Friesland. He moved to Joure, which is near to Heerenveen. He likes the nice people in Friesland. Unlike all the experiences of the other interviewed status holders, he thinks the local people are easy in making contact, and maybe more convenient; he is also easy in making contact as he considers himself very open.

One other reason he gives for getting into contact with the host society is by learning the language. This was hard in the beginning, but already in the AZC he learned his first words in Dutch. It was interesting to hear how hard he wanted to learn the language, as he even watched television programmes as Lingo to learn how to speak and spell the words. Already in the AZC the employees recognized he was an active person, wanting to learn the language and getting in contact with Dutch people.

> *"If you want to belong to somewhere you have to learn the language"*

He has family in the Netherlands with which he has no contact anymore because of a quarrel. This is not a problem for him. He does have contact with his niece, who lives in Alkmaar. With her he has contact over the telephone. He cannot visit her that often as travelling is very expensive in the Netherlands.

The economical situation in this group varied strongly, especially between the two older status holders; one being very successful and the other having problems with getting work. The story of the Liberian man has become successful because of his mentality. He feels that in contrast with other status holders he has another mentality, another way of thinking. Before he came to Friesland, he

worked already in Liberia as an upholsterer and studied economy next to his job. When he got his house in Dokkum, the municipality arranged a social workplace for him, a so called "Melkertbaan"[16]. Though via his social connections in the village, who knew he was an upholsterer in Liberia, he got a job in an upholster workplace near his village. He worked there for a couple of years, quitted, and then started an upholsterer company for himself with the earned money at his former job. At the moment he has his company for eleven years and almost all the inhabitants of Holwerd are his customers.

The economical story of the Iranian man in the Netherlands is less successful, as he had many difficulties during all different kind of jobs. Before he came to the Netherlands he owned a company in Iran. Here, he wanted to do the same work, but he needed the right diplomas. He wanted to get these diplomas, but to achieve a scholarship at the UAF one has to be younger than thirty. Because he was 32 at that time, he could not afford to pay any studies, next to maintaining his family.

Interesting is his view on working: "when people can work, they are working", which is similar to the mentality of the Liberian man. But his mentality also implicates that when there are medical or physical issues than working is not possible. If there is something physically wrong with a person "they don't want you". He retrieved this view as he had this experience many times, which explains his many temporary work experiences. Unfortunately the main cause for his physical condition is found in his history in Iran. Here, he was tortured for 1,5 month by the Iranian government, where they hung him on his ankles and beat him with a stick. One can imagine that these practices not only have an effect on his physical but also on his psychological condition.

> "People ask me why I am not working and always at home. But they don't know what happened to me over the years. All my health problems and the past"

Also discrimination was one of the reasons he stopped working at some places. In Zevenaar his work was replaced by a younger Dutch guy, who was placed one rank above him, though he had the same capabilities. His boss told the young guy to watch over him, which did not give him a good feeling. He wanted to work somewhere where he feels comfortable, not with the feeling that he is a foreigner and they are the natives. So he quitted this job.

The interesting thing is that he is very specific in his explanations about his work experiences and the injustice that happened to him in the Netherlands. He knew all the different ways he got fired, together with quotations. He tried to be a hear cutter, a postman, working as bicycle fixer, working in

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[16] The 'Melkert-job' or 'Melkertbaan' was an initiative in the Netherlands by former Minister of Social Affairs Ad Melkert to help people with a great distance to the labor market via subsidized labor to get work experience

the warehouse, working in the field, working in a restaurant, but all had its own complications. Now, he is a volunteer at Vluchtelingenwerk, where he committed himself as an interpreter. As he did not find any jobs, he still wanted to help people that had the same struggles in the Netherlands as he had. He likes to do this, but it is unfortunate that he does not earn money with it. This is not only hard for himself, but also for his children. Not going on a holiday while the rest of the children at school are going, is striking for him.

> "I want to be there for my children and also for myself. I hate it that seven years of my life have been worth nothing. I find this very hard, I cannot turn it back and I have to move on (…) I have tried everything, but unfortunately it did not work out well and this is very hard for me, also for my children. When they are at school, their friends ask them about my job. It is hard for them to know that their father has no job. Now they think I am working because I volunteer at Vluchtelingenwerk, and they are happy for me. But I would love to have a paid job. You want to do something with your life. That is the most important."

The *ideas about Friesland* are quite similar in this group, especially about the benefits of living in a village compared to the bigger city. There are different reasons given. First is that in the village one can get into contact with the 'real Dutch people'. To get into contact with these people, the Liberian man thinks one has to live in the rural area, "you have to live outside the "metropolis". He believes that in the rural area there are almost no mixed cultures, but only the real Dutch culture. As mentioned above, he thinks this culture is difficult to understand in the beginning, but one can grow and "become a real Dutchman". That was his goal. Second is that both the Liberian and the Iranian man argue that their children can better be raised in the village than in the city.

On the question what they think about the Elfstedentocht they give a positive answer and tell that they are able to ice skate, and know what the Elfstedentocht means. Also their view of the winter is good, as the Liberian man tells with proud about the scenery of the Frisian landscape in the winter:

> "I love ice-skating. I think this is fantastic in Friesland if you are here during the winter then it is a paradise. And if the weather is beautiful, then everybody is on the ice, which is fantastic. Then you are really proud." (Liberian man, 50).

The conclusion of this paragraph is that one can have different reasons for staying in Friesland, with or without work. On the one hand one can see that working also indirectly means an identification of belonging to the region, getting connections. On the other hand one can see that not having any work does not immediately mean that one wants to move, if one has children. This, and their connections let them stay in the village.

5.3.3 Future situation

Their view of the future is concentrated on staying in the Netherlands as long as possible. Especially they want their children to stay in a stable environment and to integrate deep in the country. They want their children to grow up with a good education and in a decent way, not in the city. That is why they don't want to move for now.

For the future, this group does not see themselves back in their own country. There are two reasons given for this. First is the lack of safety in their home country. They have seen the current situation in their country during holidays, where they visited their family. They mention the uncertainty that the government creates in their own country. The government can appear out of nothing and torture someone without any reason. This is not the environment where they want their children to grow up in. Though the Iranian man also mentions that if it was only up to him, he would prefer to go back. He thinks the Netherlands is comfortable, but his family and friends are in Iran, and this is 'his country'. Hence, he stays for the children. Second is the fact that after such a long time of living outside their own country, they feel that they do not belong to that society anymore. This reason was given by the Liberian man, who feels Dutch, and is in contrast to the argument above.

> *"I never want to go back. That will not work out because I don't belong to the people anymore. They don't know me anymore. My generation does not exist there. So if I am there I will be a stranger. I don't know anybody. (…) I don't belong anymore to those people".*

5.4 Conclusions

This chapter gave an insight in the biographical stories of the different interviewed status holders, by dividing the status holders into three groups. The first group, who wanted to leave Friesland at the moment of interviewing and was living for a longer time in Friesland, was characterized by their difficulties to find employment and having few social contacts. This group is hoping to see themselves leave to the Randstad in the near future. The second group, consisted of mostly young status holders, wants to stay in Friesland at the moment of interviewing, and live there for a short time. Developing themselves in the Netherlands is their main concern for the future and therefore the focus on studying in Friesland. Social contacts are rare in this group, because they haven't had the time to build these. For the near future they are satisfied with their stay in Friesland, but on the longer term they expect a movement to an elsewhere. The last group, who wants to stay in Friesland and lives there for a longer time, consisted of three different cases with different reasons to stay. Having children, having an own company or studying were the examples that kept them in Friesland. They shared the fact that their social network was grown over the years and their contacts with other Frisians were good. For the future they see themselves living in Friesland.

6 Thresholds in (im)mobility decision making

In this chapter the outcomes of the interviews will be analyzed and compared to the theories from chapter two. There will be three different paragraphs, where the thresholds for spatial migratory behaviour will be the guideline for the paragraphs. First, the space of indifference will be highlighted in the first paragraph. Here, the ways of integration will be elaborated with the three groups. It can be expected that only the third group who wants to stay in Friesland gives some good integration examples. The second paragraph will show the locational factors of the status holders which influence their decision making. In the final paragraph the constraints for becoming mobile are examined, by focussing on the difficulties of the group of status holders who want to lengthen their trajectory.
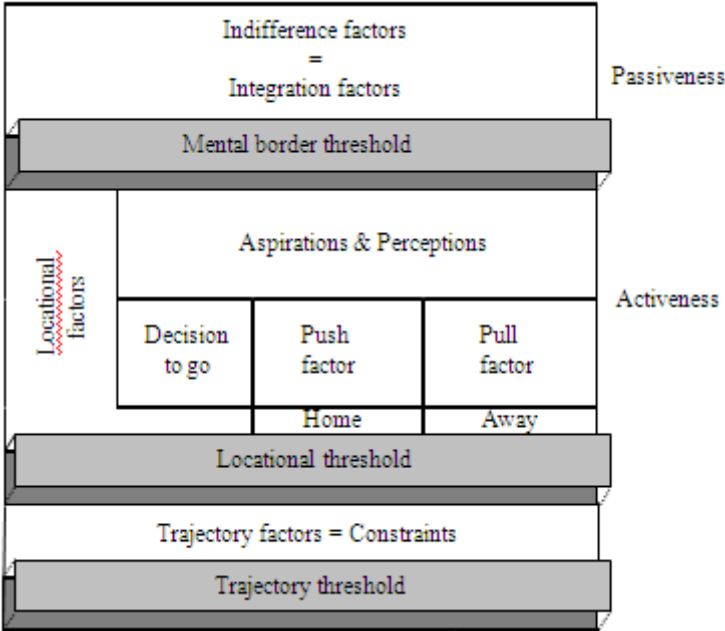
6.1 Thresholds of indifference

In this paragraph it is supposed that when the status holder is immobile and finds himself in a space of indifference, one automatically integrates. The ways in which the status holder can integrate is divided in three ways: socially, culturally and economically. By looking at these three forms of integration this paragraph tries to say something about their alliance to the region and consider if the status holder in Friesland actually 'acts' in a space of indifference or has crossed the first mental border threshold.

6.1.1 Social integration

The social integration will be examined looking at the social ties and the way of social networking of status in Friesland. According to Valenta (2009) these status holders seldom have friends among the indigenous locals and they seldom meet indigenous locals within the context of informal interaction

(Valenta, 2009, 16). This varies among the three groups, and depends on the length of stay in Friesland.

Strong ties are about durability, emotional intensity and intimacy, and are in this researched among the status holders' fellow compatriots and the indigenous locals. In the group who wants to stay and lives for a short time in Friesland, these strong ties are especially among their fellow compatriots. In most cases, they build their relations in the AZC, and if they are lucky, they get a house in the same municipality. There are no strong ties found upon this group with indigenous locals. In the group who wants to leave and lives for a long time in Friesland, these ties are also hard to find. They consider their relations with the indigenous people not as friends, but in the most positive case acquaintances. If there are some strong ties, these are with compatriots who most of the time do not live in Friesland, so their communication is mostly via Facebook and telephone. Among the last group of status holders who want to stay and live for a long time in Friesland, there is a stronger tendency of strong ties with indigenous locals. This is in particular because of the family situation, with which they can level more with other Frisian families. Interesting is that the social ties with fellow compatriots have worn off during the years. To conclude, one can say that over the years the strong ties change, starting with a group of fellow compatriots. Over the years, dependant on the wish to become (im)mobile, this group of status holders reduces if one wants to leave, as there are more examples of friends who left. If one wants to stay, the strong ties of this group changes into more ties with indigenous locals, also losing some of its strong ties with their former compatriots.

Weak ties are single stranded and defined by emotional neutrality, mostly acquaintances. Research shows that weak tie contact with the indigenous locals may have an important symbolic value for immigrants, as this proves that they are not rejected by the mainstream society (Valenta, 2009). For the first group of status holders who want to stay and live for a short time in Friesland, these relations especially exist among their fellow compatriots whom they met in the AZC. Weak ties are not yet found with the indigenous locals, as they search their first contacts among their compatriots, whom they shared a lot with. The second group, who want to leave and live for a longer time in Friesland, have more weak ties around them. They want to leave, so there is not much social bonding with the region and over the years they just created few weak ties.

> *"You say contact with people; no that didn't work out successful for me in terms of making friends. I did make some acquaintances over the years. But real friends, who come over, no that did not work out for me so far." (Congolese man, 36)*

There were no signs of weak ties with indigenous locals. In the last group, who wants to stay and lives for a long time in Friesland, there were more weak ties than the other groups had. These weak

ties were especially among the indigenous locals. They know them from work or the church. Concluding on the weak ties of the status holders in Friesland, one can see that these weak ties exist especially with their compatriots. Over the years, the weak ties with the indigenous Frisians can grow, dependant on how 'active' the status holder is in the socializing process; working, member of an association or volunteering at Vluchtelingenwerk.

Related to these ties, are the bonding and bridging characteristics of the social networks. Of special interest for the integration of status holders, are the bridging characteristics of their network, as these represent the outward looking form of social networking which connects people across diverse categories and groups. Special attention is going to the connections between the status holder and the Frisian people. In the young group who is living for a short time in the Netherlands, these connections are rare. In contrast, the other groups who are living for a longer time in Friesland have more bridging connections with the Frisians. There is a difference though between the status holders who are thinking of moving and the status holders who want to stay. In the first group, these status holders over the years did just make a few bridging connections, though not making real friends. Interesting is that in Valenta's (2009) research, it is suggested that status holders who do not have personal ties with indigenous locals, report feeling "burdened by intense pressure in their everyday life as a direct consequence of their ethnicity (…) in their case, interactions with locals are restricted to occasional encounters with strangers (…) this lack of personal ties with indigenous locals ensures that these immigrants are never in a position to learn about the different attitudes and beliefs held by the locals. Accordingly, they think that the locals dislike status holders like them. (Valenta, 2009, 108). This last remark shows a vicious circle in which the status holder makes no contact, which makes him feel like a stranger, which in turn does not create more opportunities to make bridging contacts. It is worth mentioning this because the group who wanted to leave made this impression during the interviews, which is in contrast with the believe that status holders who have to settle in a small town, will easier bridge with the mainstream society. In the second group of status holders who want to stay, one can see that over the years there have been a lot of bridging connections. These have been established either via work, by marrying a Frisian woman, or going to school in a Frisian village. Bridging connections like these have a positive outcome for their feeling and stay in Friesland.

6.1.2 Cultural integration

Cultural integration in Friesland is hard for almost all of the status holders. The Frisian language and the Dutch/Frisian culture are the main reasons for this lack of integration. One of the factors which explains that the bridging with the mainstream Frisians was so little is the Frisian language. It is strange that in a province where there are two official languages, the status holders only learn Dutch in their integration course. Especially the young group who lives in Friesland for a short time and the

group who wants to leave Friesland mention the language problem. Hence, it was expected that the young group relates the language with finding it difficult to get into contact with the indigenous Frisians.

> *"When you are talking to them or get to know them they are talking this language, even it is not, what do you call, the indigenous language… Frisian. Yes, I don't understand. Even I don't understand Dutch. How am I going to understand this?" (Somalian man, 21)*

The role of the Frisian language within the acculturation process in Friesland is therefore important.

Second is the role of the Dutch/Frisian culture which makes it hard for all the groups to integrate. Depsite of their short stay, the group of young status holders mention the cultural differences already after a few months. The individualistic behaviour of the Frisian, which is expressed in their way of dealing with each other, is one of the first characteristics that is mentioned by a status holder who arrived three months before he was interviewed:

> *"But one thing I have seen here is, everyone lives 'inside'. You don't come to each other and talk like that (…) everyone closes the door of his house. In our country it isn't like that (…) you go to your neighbour and talk and have fun together. But here I saw everyone, when one comes, they close their house and stay home". (Somalian man, 19)*

It is striking that of all the eleven interviews that were held, only one case had the feeling that he was feeling totally Dutch. This interview was part of the group who lives for a longer time in Friesland, and wants to stay. Like the first young group status holders, he also mentions the typical culture and calls Frisians 'reticent' and 'rigid' in their intercourse with other people. However, this person feels he has the same personality as many Frisians, so culturally this was no shock for him. Of all the interviews, he was the only one to be proud that he was living in such a beautiful landscape, especially during winter. For him the real 'Dutch' people live in the rural areas, which are the places where one can integrate in the "real Dutch culture".

This last case can be described as an exception to the 'normal' status holder who lives in Friesland, as the general cultural integration of this group as a whole is in most cases not showable. One of the citations in Valenta's work gives a good summary of this only succesfull case in the above mentioned interviews:

> *"We may say that immigrants who manage to integrate into close knit networks within small towns are the lucky ones. They will benefit from the solidarity of these networks within the frame of a dense sociability – as the cases in the previous sections have indicated. In such*

environments, they will display their desired self within networks characterized by predominance of primary relations, where people appear as a whole individual rather than as role-fragments. They will enjoy being defined as insiders by indigenous locals" (Valenta, 2009, 199)

6.1.3 Economical integration

Economical integration in the province of Friesland is hard. This can best be seen in the group who wants to leave Friesland and lives there for a longer time. Medical reasons, a lack of diplomas and a lack of speaking the Frisian language are different reasons for the status holders why they cannot get employed. The Frisian language is a problem because for some professions, for example in the government sector, it is mandatory to have the knowledge of both the Dutch and Frisian language. The Frisian language is not included in the integration course which makes it hard for the status holders to learn.

Status holders who do economically integrate in Friesland can therefore be seen as exceptions. In the interviewed cases only one man, in the group of status holders who are living for a long time in Friesland and who want to stay, was employer and has his own company. He learned the craft of upholstering in his home country, and was able to maintain this in Friesland via his weak tie connections. He feels that he was lucky, but also had a good mentality. Working in Friesland makes him feel "part of the Dutch society".

Two alternative ways of economically integrating in Friesland, or contributing to the Frisian society is via studying and volunteering. Studying is mainly done by the young status holders, who just arrived in Friesland. They want to start with "the next level in life", by thinking of their future and therefore want to study in the Netherlands. They know that the facilities for studying are good in Friesland, and therefore do not especially want to do this in another province. The second way of feeling economically integrated is by volunteering, which is seen in all the different interviewed groups. There are various reasons for volunteering. Some mention that they want to help their people, others want to make themselves useful because they cannot find work. The fact that the majority of the interviewed status holders was volunteering at Vluchtelingenwerk, can for a large part be explained by the way of selecting the status holders, as this is done via Vluchtelingenwerk. However, the activity and their feeling of contributing to the society are reasons to include this to the research.

The widespread idea that when status holders come out from the passivity of unemployment and start to actively participate in the work life of the host country, social integration will follow is acknowledged in this thesis. The status holders identify themselves with their work, or in the case they did not have work, they see work as very important and something to strive for. Although the

status holders have the will to economically integrate in Friesland; the opportunities are rare and as a consequence this impedes the status holder to integrate.

6.1.4 Conclusions

Integrating in Friesland is not easy, which has a couple of reasons. First is the language, which on the one hand hinders people to get into contact with indigenous locals and on the other hand impedes unemployed status holders to find work, as speaking the language is in many cases mandatory. Second, is the Frisian/Dutch culture, with people who are very individualistic, not leaving their door open or inviting people for dinner. Hence, the cultural differences between the Frisians and the status holders former countries are all to distinct. Third, economical integration is difficult as the work opportunities in the province of Friesland are rare.

This has its consequences for each group. The young status holders do not show forms of integration, as they see Friesland as a good place to study for the moment, but do not feel the need to integrate as their work will probably be in another region. It gave the impression that for status holders it does not matter where they are situated, as long as they have the opportunity to study. The status holders who want to move do not integrate stay in a type of condition in which they do not integrate because of their constant search for work. Work can therefore be seen as an important factor of integration.

6.2 Locational thresholds

By examining the factors of integration one can see some indications for the reasons to leave the province of Friesland. Especially the group who wants to leave the province has crossed the indifference threshold and becomes engaged in a so called *process of bounded rationality.* This implicates that there are different kinds of locational factors known to the potential migrant which are taken into account and can be connected to the place or region of origin, but also the possible destination (Van der Velde & Van Naerssen, 2010, p.4). In this paragraph, these location specific factors will be examined, by comparing previous research on push and pull factors with the interviews. Next to these factors the importance of aspirations will be examined, with which it will become clear if Friesland is perceived as a region to stay and build on the future or a region which is a new departure place to a new elsewhere.

6.2.1 Reasons to go: push & pull

Push factors are those factors which are related to the current place or region of residence, and therefore pushes the status holder to another place. The second interviewed group who wants to leave gives the most information about these factors. One of the main factors to leave Friesland is the economical factor. As noted in the previous paragraph, the economical integration in the group

of status holders could not be accomplished as the career opportunities in Friesland are rare. Almost all of the interviewed status holders were unemployed at the moment of interviewing. They are not pleased with their current situation, having different economical related reasons for being unemployed.

> *"There is no chance for me to work here, first because of my age (...) and also the language is a reason why I have no chance here. For example in 2007 I tried to find a job at Holland Casino in Leeuwarden. But they only needed people who speak the Frisian language; it is not possible to work there without the knowledge of the Frisian language" (Syrian man, 50)*

> *"When I came here [Burgum], I wanted to stay but I am not happy, because it is difficult to find work. That is very difficult for me. I am searching for a job, but I cannot find it (...) they asked for work experience or my age, also for an internship. If I want to go to school, I dare not to because it means I have to find an internship, which is difficult because they also take into account work experience and age" (Angolan man, 36)*

The reasons these status holders appoint are all related to the economical position of the status holder in Friesland. The first reason is the Frisian language, which makes it even harder to find a job in a region where the chances for getting a job as status holder is already hard. The other mentioned reasons, age and experience, are not direct locational factors, but are strongly related to the economical situation in Friesland. They do not expect these same reasons to be a problem when they make the move to the Randstad, which is interesting because the move to the Randstad gives them no certainty in finding employment.

Another reason to be pushed away from Friesland is the lack of a social network, especially in the small villages. These small villages often have a small community characterized by a dense social network, where everybody knows everybody. This can create social exclusion among the new status holders, which is felt by some of the status holders; mentioning that they feel that people in these villages all know eachother from different associations. Joining one of these associations, a football association for instance, can benefit to bridging connections. However, also within these associations the language is a crucial factor, as the Frisian language is another threshold to get into contact with other people.

> *"I have no contacts with people in the Netherlands. I find it difficult to get into contact with people here. People in the Netherlands maybe don't want to get into contact with foreign people; I don't like it." (Iranian man, 20)*

The lack of bonding within an existing network is also one of the push factors. As a dispersed status holder in Friesland, the chance of being settled in a village with a large amount of fellow compatriots is small. Statistical research from Denmark shows that the higher the concentration of fellow compatriots in the municipality of placement, the lower is the secondary movement rate to another destination. Moreover it means that the lack of an immigrant can increase the movement to a larger municipality (Damm, 2004).

Pull factors are those factors which are related to the potential destination, which pull the status holder to that place. The economical factor is related to the most important pull factor of the interviewed group who wants to leave Friesland at the moment of interviewing. They see the Randstad as a place where there are more and better opportunities.

> *"So of course when you live in the capital city, there are more opportunities then in other cities. So the same here, when you live in Amsterdam, it is so easy to get a job (…) if your goal is learning, you can do it here [in Heerenveen]. But you can go working in Amsterdam or Rotterdam" (Somalian man, 20)*

A good example of these economical pull factors are also the examined reasons for Somalis to make a secondary move to the United Kingdom. This group has a large share that moves to the UK, and makes this movement because of a probable better career; they expect to find better career opportunities for themselves and for their children (Van Liempt, 2009). The earlier mentioned Danish study acknowledges these pull factors by providing evidence that status holders' are attracted to large cities because they facilitate access to rental, including social, housing and institutions for qualifying education. Here, placed status holders do indeed react to relatively high regional unemployment by a secondary (internal) movement (Damm, 2005b).

One of the presumptions that can be made from the interviews is that the higher educated status holder will have a mismatch in Friesland, which means that their education does not meet the job offer in this region. It is therefore not unlikely that the first group of young status holders eventually will leave the current place to make a secondary movement to a bigger municipality (Damm, 2004).

A seemingly less mentioned pull factor during the interviews is the social factor. Bigger cities are often characterized by more ethnic social networks, which attract status holders to move (Van Liempt, 2009). Only during one interview with a Iranian man living in Kollum the importance of a social network related to the Randstad was mentioned.

"They say it is good to live here. They are so happy to live there. Because it is a big city, they like the fuss (…) If you go and live there, there will be more foreigners, who make it easier for me to get into contact with them" (Iranian man, 20)

The citation above also shows these pull factors are highly influenced by stories of friends. These stories can influence the status holders aspirations, which will be shown in the next paragraph.

6.2.2 Aspirations

It will be shown here how the aspirations can influence the decision making. Aspirations include dreams, wishes and perspectives, give some direction to the status holders' possible trajectory and indicate what the status holder hopes to achieve by migrating (Schapendonk, 2009, p.79). The different aspirations for the future are examined in the different groups. It can be expected that the projection of Friesland as a 'safe haven' is changeable and can transform into Friesland being a departure place.

The first young group of status holders, who are only living in Friesland for an average of one year, has a clear difference in their short term and long term aspirations. For the short term, they are focused on achieving their Dutch language course and with finding a study.

"(…) I first have to go to high school and university, so it will take a longer period, so first I have to learn the language. That is the most important thing. Then I will think what I am going to do." (Somalian, 20)

"For now, I have peace, I have a life here. So I think for this next level in life to get what I want to be in the future to become a journalist (…) when I finish the language course I am about to start to apply for the UAF" (Somalian, 21)

These aspirations are influenced by two actors. First are their friends and family, whom they talk to over the internet. Especially Somalis have a large network in the Netherlands, which they use to achieve information. However, these both Somalis did not have the aspiration to join these social networks in the Netherlands; or at least not at this moment in their lives. The other actor which has influence is the Dutch council for Refugees. During the first weeks of their stay in the new municipality they get informed about the advantages of Friesland, and what they can expect of this province. Almost all of the interviews with this group gave some hints that their choice of staying in Friesland for their education was influenced by information by the council for Refugees.

The long term aspirations of this group are, as well as the other group who wants to leave at the moment of interviewing, about work opportunities. They know they probably cannot find these

opportunities in Friesland, and therefore have to move elsewhere eventually. From what they have heard, this elsewhere is probably the Randstad. Most of them have not been there and only know stories about work opportunities from friends and family.

For the moment, they see Friesland as a home like place, where safety is found and they can develop themselves. Eventually, a later movement to somewhere else can be expected. They are all single, so they don't have to take into account their family, which makes a secondary move to somewhere else easier. From a mobilities view, they stay immobile to develop themselves, to become mobile later and to move to another place where the opportunities should be better.

The second group of status holders, who want to leave Friesland, is searching for job opportunities in the Randstad or elsewhere. Over the years they have come to know the difficulties of finding employment in Friesland, and moreover, they get to know the stories of the Randstad as a possible next point in their trajectory. Schapendonk argues that these migration destinations are best perceived as moving targets. This cannot be shown from this research, as this research takes a one-point view of the situation of the status holders in Friesland; not following the status holder during his trajectory. What can be said though is that the possible destination of the status holder in Friesland is totally focused on one of the cities in the Randstad, which should be the next point in their trajectory.

This focus on the Randstad is socially constructed by stories of families and friends who live in the Randstad. One Angolan man gives a clear example of how his perception is created:

> "There [the Randstad] is more work on offer, more work than here (…) anyway I want to go to Rotterdam. Well maybe not Rotterdam, but Utrecht or Amsterdam. I don't want to live in Rotterdam because also there it is difficult to find jobs. So around there." (Angolan man, 37)

This quote explains two things. First is his view of the Randstad; a place where are more work opportunities. Second is that because his brother lives in Rotterdam, he knows that also in Rotterdam it is not easy to get work. That is probably the reason why he switches while he is telling where he will he think his future will be. Automatically, he switches to another big city in the Randstad, not even considering that it could be difficult to find a job everywhere. Hence, the incomplete information about the Randstad is one of the factors which influences his decision making.

Also the only status holder with a family in this group has the aspiration to move to the Randstad. Before he came to the Netherlands he worked in the hotel industry in the capital city of Syria. He wants to continue this and knows that the tourism business can be found in the Randstad, for which

he did his own research on the internet. Remarkable in this interview is that his daughter does not play a role in this decision, while in other families it is shown that stability and education for their children is more a important factor in their decision for the future. His view on this is that "she [his daughter] can adjust herself in two months, but for us to stay under the current social welfare conditions is very hard".

Thus, at this moment, the second group sees Friesland as a departure place. From the different stories one can see that in the beginning they were happy to finally have an own house and start with their 'new' life as a Dutch citizen. Over the years though, as it turned out that it was difficult to find work in Friesland, the view of Friesland as a 'home like' place turned into a departure place.

The third group, who wants to stay and lives for a longer time in Friesland, have totally different aspirations for the future. Their difficulties with getting in contact with the people in the beginning changed over the years, giving them a stable situation. Their main concern for the future is mainly focused on their children. They want them to be raised in a safe and stable environment, for which they see Friesland as a perfect place.

The aspirations of this group are formed by keep and repel factors. The keep factors are shaped by the stability and safety of the region, while the repel factors are directly related to the Randstad and express the total opposite.

> "I never wanted to live in the big city. I have small children and I wanted to live in a small city. In these places I can give my children opportunities and protect them. In the big city the control is more difficult. At those places, the children see things they don't want to see. I don't want my children to get into contact with drugs and alcohol. Therefore I thought, in the small village everybody knows one another, which makes it easier for me to raise the children and protect them. That is why I think Joure is a pleasant place to stay, and why we stayed here in Friesland." (Iranian man, 45)

It is not clear how this perception of the Randstad is created; though it is obvious that the Randstad is directly linked with the 'threats' of the big cities. An explanation can be the comparison of the Randstad with his own capital city in Iran. During the interview he explained his terrible experiences of living in the big city there; not trusting anyone and seeing the most horrible things on the television while his children were watching.

Friesland is in this case seen as a home like place, where they can build the future of their children. This did not change over the years, because of the connections made with the local society, which only made their bond with the region stronger. What can be said for all the groups, is that the status

holders seek to secure their wider needs and work towards normality, beyond just looking for safety (Zimmermann, 2009). Dependent on the work opportunities or having a family, the focus on immobility can change into becoming mobile.

6.3 Trajectory thresholds: constraints to go

Now that the reasons to stay and the reasons to leave for status holders in Friesland are clear, one questions remains from the statistics. These showed that the majority of the status holders who lived in the period between 2000 and 2010 in Friesland stayed in Friesland, or made a secondary movement within the same province. Thus, despite of all the aspirations of the group of status holders who want to leave, they are still living in the same province. Moving to the Randstad may assume some complications in their projected trajectory. These complications are here defined as different constraints which keep the status holder from becoming mobile to other potential destinations; and make them involuntary immobile. By using the four concepts of constraints given in the theoretical part of this research, the constraints for the status holder in Friesland is tried to be explained. In particular the group of unemployed status holders who want to leave Friesland will give some answers.

The most important constraint to become mobile for status holders in Friesland is the *economical constraint*. The lack of access to economic resources is not the problem for status holders in the Netherlands; unemployed status holders receive social benefit so that they can afford to buy the basic needs for living. Hence, staying immobile means there is no direct economical concern, though when the status holder has the aspiration to move a lack of economical resources becomes a constraint.

> *"It is very difficult for us [to move] because at the moment the good houses are very expensive in this area [the Randstad] and there are almost no houses because of the economic crisis. This is a reason why there is so less housing offer (…) in Haarlem I have to wait for ten years to get a house, maybe in The Hague fifteen years, and in Amsterdam I have to wait for twenty years until I can apply for social housing" (Syrian man, 52)*

The quotation shows that after achieving a status, the status holder moves less than in the period before. This is influenced by the status holders possibilities on the housing market at the potential destination. They are especially dependent on the available housing offer in the social housing, which have waiting lists. Moreover, moving is expensive. The first settlement in the municipality is financed by a so called 'equipment-credit' with which the status holder can furnish the house. Status holders who get social benefit have to wear out this credit for three years which will be subtracted from their

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social welfare. The remaining credit will be remitted after three years. Status holders with a paid job have to repay a bigger amount of their credit (Vluchtelingenbarometer, 2009). These financial issues at their departure place and their potential destination keep the status holder from continuing their planned trajectory.

Qualitative constraints are individual based constraints and contain skill level, employment status, health or physical difficulties. These constraints can also keep the status holders from moving, but are not a direct constraint as it is a constraint that can be overcome over time. For instance, the young group of status holders first have to obtain some diploma's before they can become active in the Dutch labour market and make money if they want to continue their journey to the Randstad. This also applies to the unemployed status holder, who needs money for this movement.

The effects of *social network constraints* are not directly clear from the information of the achieved interviews. A social network can assist the status holder to move in its trajectory, by giving support both at the departure place as at the destination. Yet, relatives in the Netherlands seemed rare, which can be explained because the status holders came as single refugee to the Netherlands. Therefore it takes some time to extend the network of social contacts, making it even harder that they live in a small village with fewer compatriots around them. Moving to the Randstad without knowing any other compatriot may therefore be a big constraint for the single status holder. It was mentioned above that it is remarkable that the social network in the Randstad is not being spoken of during the interviews. Other research on these movements explains the importance of this network elsewhere (Carling, 2002; Van Liempt, 2009). Perhaps not mentioning any form of social network in the Randstad means that the single status holder in Friesland does not have one. Conclusions on this can therefore not be given from this research.

Concerning the different constraints, the economical constraint is for most status holders in Friesland the reason to stay immobile in Friesland, not continuing their journey to the Randstad. To overcome this economical constraint, the younger status holder tries to obtain a diploma, with which they can develop themselves, and therewith overcoming the last threshold to become mobile.

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7 Conclusion

The present research shows that status holders in Friesland over the years stay to a large extent immobile. This immobility of status holders is explained by two important factors. First is the practical factor which takes account for younger status holders who are placed in Friesland. These status holders find themselves in a place of safety where they can build on their new life and their future, by learning the Dutch language and thereafter having the possibility to study in Friesland. Staying in the place where they have been dispersed is practically the easiest option. The second factor which explains the immobility of status holders who are living for a longer time in Friesland is the economical constraint to become mobile. A large share of status holders is unemployed, which makes them financially dependent on the state. Moving to another place costs money, which they don't have. Being unemployed in a rural region where the there are few work opportunities, brings these status holders in a negative vicious circle where they become and stay involuntary immobile.

This involuntary immobility is fed by the aspiration to become mobile. Economical reasons are also in this case the most important factor to explain this aspiration, which is also confirmed in other researches on secondary mobilities of status holders. Almost all the interviewed status holders aspire to move to the Randstad; of which they have the perception that they can find more work opportunities there. Social connections and the Council for Refugees are the most important actors who shape these aspirations.

The different ways of integration could not explain the immobility of status holders. Expected was that when status holders find themselves in a *space of indifference*, one automatically starts to integrate. Examining three different ways of integration showed that none of these made the status holders really integrate in their place of residence. Social integration is hard for most of the interviewed status holders because of the language, the reserved personality of the average Frisian and the small village community structures. Most social contacts where formed by the few fellow compatriots who were also living in the same village. Economical integration is almost not found among the interviewed status holders, for most of them were unemployed at the moment of interviewing and also in their past they did not have a permanent job. The Frisian language also plays a role in this economical integration, making it hard to find jobs in the labour market which already has little opportunities. Following from the previous it is obvious that the cultural integration is also not found. The practical reasons of staying in Friesland can explain this lack of integration, as the status holder keeps in mind that eventually he wants to leave the current place of residence.

The few status holders who did integrate socially, economically and culturally must be seen as an exception to the majority of the status holders who get placed in Friesland. The fact that the Liberian

man from the interviews married a Frisian wife and gets the chance to continue with his hobby in Friesland which he already practiced in his home country, makes him a lucky status holder. However, it must be noted that his mentality was also one of the decisive factors in getting integrated in one of the smallest villages in Friesland.

Perceiving the (im)mobility of the status holder from a trajectory perspective gave the insight that for most of the status holders Friesland must be perceived as a place from where the journey to another destination is being build. By using Schapendonks (2011) concepts of aspiration, social network and immobility to understand to trajectory, the current situation of the status holder was given more depth. In addition it must be said that the involuntary mobility of the refugee gives an interesting perspective to the concept of the journey; which showed that the status holder had to think of its future only from the moment they live in a country which they maybe did not know before. This future trajectory was in all cases formed by a move outside Friesland, to an elsewhere with more work opportunities; which in most cases meant the Randstad.

It is hard to characterize the average status holder in Friesland, as their personality, motivations and future plans are all different. However, there are some points which showed some overlap within this group of refugees. First is their young age at their arrival in the Netherlands, with most of them having the age in between 20 and 30. This means that the status holder in Friesland is still able to study and develop itself; at least easier than many older status holders. Second is their activity at the Council of Refugees. Although this is influenced by the Council itself, as they selected the interviewees for this research, it was shown that all of the status holders come into contact with the Council during their stay in the Netherlands. They perceive this all as very helpful and moreover, the status holders have the feeling that becoming an active volunteer can contribute to their work experiences. Third, is that despite of all the different interviewed nationalities, no big differences between this possible factor came to the forefront. Expected could be for instance, that all the interviewed Somalis would have a distinct larger social network than the other interviewed nationalities, as the Somali society in the Netherlands is relatively big. But the interviews gave no direct clue on this expectation.

The experiences of this group of status holders can to a certain extent be compared with other peripheral regions in the Netherlands. First, is that communities in small villages with dense networks of indigenous locals can be found everywhere, and almost everywhere work the same. Inhabitants all know each other, directly noticing outsiders when they enter the village. Problems for the status holder to bridge with these social networks, are universally found. More connected to the Netherlands is the fact that the work opportunities can also be applicable in other peripheral regions

in the Netherlands. Drenthe and Limburg for instance, have the same economical problems and therefore it can be expected that also in these regions the status holders will have a hard time to find employment. One of the factors which distinguishes Friesland from all the other peripheral regions is the Frisian language. The official status of this language provides an extra difficulty in finding employment, which is not applicable to other regions.

This thesis tried to give a deeper understanding in the main determinants for becoming mobile or staying immobile of the status holder in Friesland. It showed that the immobility is to a large extent explained by two factors. First are the practical considerations to build on a future perspective in the Netherlands by studying in Friesland, and second are the economical constraints who keep unemployed status holders with moving aspirations in their current place of residence. These aspirations also show that the trajectory is in most cases more relevant than the integration in the region itself.

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Appendix A

The retrieved statistical data by COA cannot be published publicly as it contains confidential information about around 1600 status holders. If one wishes to see the data, contact can be made with the author. Subsequently I will have to make contact with my supervisor from COA, Stephan van der Meij, who has the rights to make the data public.

The interviews held for this thesis on the other hand are public and can be listened via the attached CD.