

# **Differential Attitudes Towards Ukrainian and Other Refugees in the Dutch Population**

Exploring the Underlying Mechanisms

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## **Abstract**

The differences in attitudes towards Ukrainian and other refugees are striking. Therefore, this research focused on these differences in attitudes, along with the possible underlying mechanisms that explain the differences. Based on literature research, framing analyses and a survey analysis, a total of six sub questions were tested.

The results of the survey first of all showed that there are differences in attitudes: people view the reception of Ukrainian refugees more positive than the reception of other refugees. European Union policies, based on literature study, seem to influence the differences in attitudes. Moreover, politicians frame other refugees in a more negative way than they do Ukrainian refugees, which shares similarities with beliefs in society that were tested in the survey. From the individual/societal mechanisms, only the stronger identification with a Dutch identity holds a relationship with the differences in attitudes. The following possible mechanisms did not: perceived differences in culture, perceived differences in religion, and fear of the aggressor.

To conclude, this research gained some insights into the underlying mechanisms for the differences in attitudes, and therefore it has added onto the scientific debate on this relatively new topic.

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# 1. Introduction

On February 24, 2022 Russia invaded Ukraine, escalating the Russo-Ukrainian war that started in 2014. The millions of Ukrainians fleeing from Russian atrocities were welcomed with open arms in European countries. The international community strongly condemned Russia's action (Wilson Center, February 24, 2022) and Ukrainian refugees were immediately met with a wave of solidarity. A large number of countries in Europe opened their borders for them with little to no procedural hurdles. On March 4, 2022, the Council of the European Union implemented an emergency mechanism for Ukrainian refugees, granting them temporary protection (European Commission, 2022). This document also states that Member States of the EU must respect the human dignity of these refugees and therefore must provide them with a dignified standard of living (e.g., residency rights, access to means of subsistence and accommodation, emergency care and adequate care for minors). As of September 2023, around six million Ukrainian refugees were registered across Europe and around 6.2 million worldwide (Statista, 2023). In the Netherlands specifically, there are around 102.000 Ukrainian refugees as of November 5, 2023 (NOS, November 5, 2023).

Immediately it was evident that the warm welcome with which Ukrainian refugees were received in Europe is in stark contrast with how other refugees, for instance Syrian refugees, were received in the 'refugee-crisis' of 2015. Both political leaders, as well as ordinary citizens, seem to treat these two refugee groups differently. The Prime minister of Bulgaria, Kiril Petkov, even said: "These are not the refugees we are used to... these people are Europeans. These people are intelligent, they are educated people. This is not the refugee wave we have been used to, people we were not sure about their identity, people with unclear pasts, who could have been even terrorists. In other words, there is not a single European country now which is afraid of the current wave of refugees." (Brito, February 28, 2022). Also, journalists have been criticized for their support of Ukrainian refugees, while simultaneously criticizing other refugees. For

example, an Al Jazeera English television presenter said the following: “These are prosperous, middle-class people. These are not obviously refugees trying to get away from areas in the Middle East... in North Africa. They look like any European family that would live next door” (Brito, February 28, 2022). One migrant seems to have to be stopped before entering Europe, while another deserves all the help they could possibly get.

In the Netherlands it was also very evident that Ukrainian refugees were received with a warm welcome. Hotels, cruise ships and holiday parks opened their doors to provide shelter (NOS, March 10, 2022). People even opened their homes to provide shelter and massive relief efforts were organized to provide them with necessary items and money. It is of course nice to see this level of support for Ukrainian refugees and the lack of bureaucratic hurdles they face, but it does raise a question of double standards when comparing it to the treatment of other refugees in the Netherlands.

Just a couple of months later, in the summer of 2022, other asylum seekers were forced to live in inhumane conditions in the overcrowded registration center for asylum seekers in Ter Apel, the Netherlands. Hundreds of asylum seekers had to sleep and live outside the center for days. The Inspection of Healthcare and Youth of the Netherlands called the conditions “harrowing” (NOS, October 3, 2022). People were being packed in a “cold, draughty, and dirty” (NOS, October 3, 2022) sports hall. Especially babies and elderly people were at risk for health problems. There was a lack of showers and toilets and those who were present, were dirty. The Dutch Foundation Refugeework (Stichting Vluchtelingenwerk) mentions that the political means to make sure municipalities will provide shelter were used to house Ukrainian refugees, while other refugees were forced to sleep outside (NOS, August 17, 2022). Thousands of beds for Ukrainian refugees were empty and were not used to provide shelter for other refugees. In the EU more generally, non-European refugees are met with strict border controls and

relocations to detention centers (Van Houtum & Pijpers, 2007). This is a stark contrast with the ways the EU welcomed Ukrainian refugees.

Interestingly, the Association of Dutch Municipalities (Vereniging van Nederlandse Gemeenten, n.d.), admit that the difference in treatment of these different types of refugees cannot only be explained by the differences in procedure, but that political-administrative considerations and the support of Dutch citizens play a large role as well.

Anti-immigration sentiments have been growing in the Netherlands, but also Europe as a whole. This has particularly been the case since the so-called 'refugee crisis' of 2015. This started when the flow of migrants to Europe increased largely: in its peak, 2.4 million non-EU migrants arrived on European soil (Eurostat, 2016). The increasing flow of migrants was mainly due to growing numbers of Syrians, Iraqis, Libyans, Afghans and Eritreans fleeing war, ethnic conflict or poverty (Peters, Engelen & Cassimon, 2023). The lack of adequate governance to handle these increasing numbers has given room for radical-right parties along with anti-immigration and anti-Islam sentiments to grow. Like previous literature has shown, we do not see this same attitude when it comes to Ukrainian refugees.

## **1.2. Societal and scientific relevance**

Since perceptions in society are connected to the leaders we choose to represent us and therefore indirectly lead to actions (not) taken by the government, it is important to gain more insight into the underlying mechanisms. Especially if these perceptions indirectly lead to the violation of human rights. This is not only an indirect effect, since support of Dutch citizens play a large part in governmental actions being taken and not taken.

The exclusion of certain groups and the inclusion of other groups can have a psychological impact on the groups that are being excluded, but also impact the society at large,

since it creates a bigger division of who belongs and who does not. Non-Ukrainian refugees are both physically and symbolically excluded from society. They have to await their recognition as a refugee in camps and are therefore physically separated from the rest of society, while Ukrainian refugees are able to roam the country more freely. Other dimensions of exclusion they can face are experiences of racism and discrimination and a lack of citizenship and knowledge of the Dutch language (Taylor, 2004), while Ukrainian refugees experience this to a lesser extent, allowing them to become more included in Dutch society. These factors can all affect refugees' wellbeing negatively, which is why it is societally important to study the underlying mechanisms for the differences in attitudes.

This thesis' results will also be shared with OnMigration, which is a platform and center of expertise about the societal support for migration, aiming to increase the support for migration. This topic is of interest to them, since it is a timely topic and they advise communication advisors at NGOs about issues regarding migration and attitudes towards migrants. Insights into the underlying mechanisms that explain the differences in attitudes could help them with this goal, since it shows which mechanisms to tackle.

Moreover, this thesis will add to scientific knowledge on this topic. A scientific debate on possible underlying mechanisms has started, but since it is a relatively new issue, the number of published journal articles is quite limited. A preliminary basis for research on this topic has been set, as some articles have emphasized the importance of the contrasts between European responses to Ukrainian and other refugees. For instance, Paré (2022) analyzes the discrepancy between Europe's response to the Ukrainian refugee influx and the one in 2015. She discusses how European political elites define which human is deserving of compassion and generosity, solely based on race and ethnicity. Rosstalnyj (2022) also wrote about this issue in her Master Thesis, paying attention to the double standards when it comes to migration, concepts of 'deservingness', 'identity' and 'proximity', and the comparison of the framing of refugee

identities in 2015 and 2022, using secondary data. Moreover, De Coninck (2022) discusses the difference in treatment of Ukrainian and Afghan refugees in Europe, and the differences in attitudes from Europeans and Americans. He focusses on multiple mechanisms that possibly lie at the roots of these differences: symbolic threat, representation of mass events on a global scale, ethnicity, and aggressor-based threat. Pepinsky, Reiff, and Szabó (2022) also discuss the public opinion towards refugees, and particularly in Hungary, which is known for its highly exclusionary political environment with large anti-migrant and anti-refugee sentiments. The possible mechanisms they mention for these differences are: conflict proximity and racial, religious and national identity. They focus on the distinguishing feature of European Christians, being Ukrainians, that sets them apart from non-European and non-Christian refugees.

In most existing research on this issue, there has been either a lack of empirical testing to prove if the mentioned mechanisms are truly at the roots of the differences, or research has been done in another country with secondary data or not controlled for other variables that could be of importance. This research can add to existing knowledge, because it focusses on the Netherlands specifically and therefore can be of relevance in in the Dutch policy context, and because it empirically tests theories, instead of guessing which theories are relevant in this issue. By empirically testing these theories, it can be tested whether theories that were created to explain a difference in attitudes towards different out-groups in general, are applicable to this situation specifically. In this way, it can add to the theoretical debate on this issue, by attempting to use existing theories to explain the differences in attitudes.

Moreover, by including an analysis of frames used by Dutch politicians and comparing this to individual and societal theories that might explain these differences, links can be made between what the Dutch population thinks and what Dutch politicians say. This also aims to add to the existing theoretical debate on ways different groups of refugees are framed.

### 1.3. Research questions

The objective is to gain insight into why Dutch citizens view Ukrainian refugees and other refugees differently. The main research question is as follows: *What are the differences in attitudes towards Ukrainian and other refugees in the Netherlands, and how can they be explained?* This research question will be answered by researching what the differences in attitudes precisely are and which mechanisms lie at the core of the differences in attitudes. The mechanisms will be researched individually, since they each have their respective theories, but connections will be made when possible.

First of all, framing might be of importance when answering this research question. Entman (1993) defines the process of framing as follows: “To frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating context, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, casual interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described” (p. 52). According to Paré (2022), a number of politicians use a securitizing rhetoric to justify controversial immigration policies. Moreover, policies themselves seem to put certain frames forward on who belongs and who does not. That is why it is interesting to look at European and Dutch policies and the messages they (indirectly) convey and compare them to the attitudes towards Ukrainian and other refugees. Regarding the Dutch context, this thesis will mostly be focusing on the frames influential Dutch politicians use in their speech. The first sub-question that will be researched is: *To what extent do the EU policies on Ukrainian and other refugees differ and how does that translate to the differences in attitudes towards Ukrainian and other refugees in the Netherlands?* The second sub-question is as follows: *What are the differences in frames Dutch politicians use when discussing Ukrainian and other refugees?*

Moreover, literature suggests that Europeans experience less out-group threat by migrants from other European countries than migrants from non-European countries (e.g. De

Coninck, 2022) Non-Ukrainian migrants therefore challenge the in-groups religion, values, belief system, ideology, identity and worldview more than Ukrainian refugees, since they are from another European country and might share more similar beliefs. This thesis will focus on three different components, being: culture, religion, and identity. These are all components that other refugees seem to challenge more, according to the Dutch population, compared to Ukrainian refugees. The components are intertwined with each other to some level, but are also independent from one another and should be researched accordingly. This leads to the third, fourth, and fifth sub-question of this thesis: *To what extent are the differences in attitudes towards Ukrainian and other refugees influenced by experienced differences in culture?; To what extent are the differences in attitudes towards Ukrainian and other refugees influenced by experienced differences in religion?; and To what extent are the differences in attitudes towards Ukrainian and other refugees influenced by identity and group belonging?*

Lastly, fear of the aggressor should be taken into account. It is not unthinkable that people might have a different attitude towards Ukrainian refugees, because they know more about this war and are more directly affected by it (in terms of inflation, fear of the war spreading to the rest of Europe, etc.) compared to the reasons why non-Ukrainian refugees flee. This leads to the final sub-question: *To what extent are the differences in attitudes towards Ukrainian and other refugees influenced by fear of Russia?*

This research is divided in two separate parts. The first will discuss the first two research questions and therefore focus on literature on framing and framing by EU policies, a methodology section on the framing analysis and a result section of the analysis of the frames used by Dutch politicians in two House of Representative debates. The second section will focus on the last four research questions and delve into the possible underlying societal and individual mechanisms, starting with a theory section on these mechanisms, a methodology

section about the survey, and finishing with a results section in which the results from the survey will be analyzed. To finalize this research, all research questions will be answered in the conclusion and connections will be made using both parts. This division is mostly to differentiate between the theories on framing, and the theories on individual/societal mechanisms. The overlap between the sections will be discussed throughout the thesis and in the conclusion.

## **Section 1: Framing in the EU and the Netherlands**

The first chapter of the following section will be focusing on how the EU creates frames about deservingness through their different policies regarding the movement of Ukrainian and other refugees. The same will be done for Dutch policies and both parts will be concluded with a hypothesis derived from the literature. The next chapter will discuss the methods used to research both hypotheses, followed by the results which will answer the hypotheses.

## **2. Framing and policies**

### **2.1. Framing through policies**

The process of framing can be defined as the following: “To frame is to select some aspect of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating context, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, casual interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described” (Entman, 1993, p. 52). According to Pope (2017), policy narratives are the “lifeblood of politics” (p. 54), as they “construct a story about a speaker’s views, convey beliefs and create meaning for decision making” (p. 54).

‘Othering’ is actively used in policy narratives to construct symbolic links between refugees and negative characteristics, such as terrorism (Pope, 2017). ‘Othering’ is “a process that identifies those that are thought to be different from oneself or the mainstream, and it can reinforce and reproduce positions of domination and subordination” (Johnson, Bottorff, Browne & Grewal, 2004, p. 253). According to Pope (2017), othering is primarily used as a framing mechanism for groups or events, often in the context of a social or policy problem. The ‘other’ is often framed as a threat to security. Paré (2022) defines securitization as: “the move that takes politics beyond the established rules of game and frames the issue either as a special kind of politics or as above politics” (p. 46). The core of securitization lies in its capacity to catalyze and mobilize fears, in order to legitimize the implementation of restrictive policies of permanent control (Moreno-Lax, 2018). Since policies on migration decide on who is allowed to enter and take refuge in a country and who faces more restrictions, they automatically create a frame in which one migrant is more deserving than another, more dangerous, migrant. In this way, policies on migration and asylum can influence one’s attitude towards refugees.

## **2.2. EU's general migration and asylum policy**

### **2.2.1. The Schengen Agreement**

The signing of the Schengen Agreement in 1985 was the start of the abolishment of national borders of European countries, creating a Europe without internal borders known as the 'Schengen Area' (Schengenvisainfo.com, n.d.). Initially, it was signed by only five EU countries – France, Germany, Belgium, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands. The actual implementation of the Schengen Area started in 1995, where in addition to the five countries listed above, Spain and Portugal decided to abolish their internal border checks and create a larger external European border. As of now, in 2023, a total of 27 countries are a member of the Schengen Area, from which 23 are EU member states.

According to the European Council (n.d.<sup>a</sup>), the Schengen Area was created to abolish checks at the EU's internal borders, like previously mentioned, and to provide a single set of rules for controls at the EU's external borders. They say a common EU visa policy is "necessary for the effective functioning of the border-free Schengen area as it facilitates the entry of visitors into the EU, while strengthening internal security" (European Council, n.d.<sup>a</sup>).

The EU determines the (lack of) procedures different types migrants have to go through when travelling to the Schengen Area through the so-called 'white' Schengen list and 'black' Schengen list. This list shows citizens from countries who require a visa to cross the external EU border and those who are exempt from that requirement. A Schengen visa is "an authorisation issued by a Schengen state that allows travellers to enter the Schengen Area" for either "intended short stays in or transit through the territory of a Schengen state (short stay visa)" or "transit through the international transit areas of airports of the Schengen states (airport transit visa)" (European Council, n.d.<sup>a</sup>). Short stays are defined as "stays of no more than 90 days within any 180-day period" (European Council, n.d.<sup>a</sup>). The European Commission proposes a decision on visa exemptions to the European Parliament and the Council, based on

“a variety of criteria relating, among others, to irregular immigration, public policy and security, economic benefit, in particular in terms of tourism and foreign trade, and the EU’s external relations with the relevant third countries, including, in particular, considerations of human rights and fundamental freedoms, as well as the implications of regional coherence and reciprocity” (European Commission, n.d.<sup>a</sup>). The ‘black list’ consists of 102 states whose inhabitants require a visa before entering the Schengen Area. Interestingly, the majority of these states are Muslim and/or developing states.

### **2.2.2. The Common European Asylum System**

The EU has established the Common European Asylum System (CEAS) in 1999, based on the Geneva Convention (European Commission, n.d.<sup>b</sup>) Asylum being a fundamental right and an international obligation for EU countries was recognized in the 1951 Geneva Convention on the protection of refugees. Because migrant flows are not constant and not evenly distributed across European countries, the CEAS was created. This System provides EU states with a harmonized policy with respect to the definition of a refugee, processing procedures, and reception conditions for asylum seekers (Hatton, 2020). In 2020, a reform of the system was proposed by the European Commission, based on three main pillars: “efficient asylum and return procedures; solidarity and fair share of responsibility; and strengthened partnerships with third countries” (European Commission, n.d.<sup>b</sup>). The System sets out common standards and co-operation to “ensure that asylum seekers are treated equally in an open and fair system – wherever they are” (European Commission, n.d.<sup>b</sup>).

### **2.2.3. The refugee ‘crisis’ of 2015 and its influence on the EU’s external migration policies**

The so-called "refugee crisis" of 2015 expedited the externalization of migration policies and the adoption of new measures, while also strengthening existing ones (Niemann & Zaun, 2023).

According to Niemann and Zaun (2023), the European Union's actions regarding migration heavily rely on the Global Approach to Migration and Mobility of 2005, which serves as the basic framework for EU migration policy with third countries. Additionally, the Commission's European Agenda on Migration updates various aspects of external relations in this area.

The EU has established various forms of collaboration frameworks since the beginning of its cooperation on external migration policy (Niemann & Zaun, 2023). These are mainly focused on trying to limit migration into the EU by incorporating external, mostly African, actors. Examples are: readmission agreements, the Mobility Partnerships, the Common Agendas for Migration and Mobility, the EU-Turkey deal, the Africa-EU Partnership on Migration, Mobility and Employment, the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa, the Lebanon and Jordan Compacts, EU-Libyan cooperation on border control, etc. (Niemann & Zaun, 2023).

As a response to 2015's crisis, EU's efforts to limit migration to its territory increased (Niemann & Zaun, 2023). Migration control became more included in other areas of EU foreign policy. Additionally, operations against human smugglers and traffickers were run in the Mediterranean, and the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) ran several missions to prevent migration. An example of this is the EU Integrated Border Assistance Mission in Libya, where border guards, police and customs were trained and supported to intercept migrant boats (Niemann & Zaun, 2023). The close cooperation has faced significant criticism due to reports of severe human rights violations committed by Libyan authorities, including the alarming issue of open slave trading.

Not only CSDP has had a problematic role in EU's efforts to limit migration, but Frontex has also often been discussed. The European Border Agency has been introduced in 2005 and had a purely supportive role. However, in 2021 the budget for Frontex increased significantly and Frontex' role was expanded. At first it assisted member states in border protection at sea and on land, but nowadays it is its own agency and can enforce EU borders even against the

will of member states. The 2015 crisis is believed to have led to an intensification of Frontex's security practices, which now involve active involvement in intelligence gathering and collaboration with security organizations such as Europol and NATO (Léonard & Kaunert, 2022).

Since the early 2000s, The EU has introduced return and readmission agreements with various third countries, and member states have started to make their own deals (Niemann & Zaun, 2023). These agreements are often adopted in exchange for support – mainly financial – from the EU. Moreover, the EU has been investing more in development aid since 2015 to reduce migration and has been offering neighbouring countries financial support for the protection of refugees in their countries.

## **2.3. EU's migration and asylum policies regarding Ukrainian refugees**

### **2.3.1. Temporary Protection Directive**

Since Ukraine is part of the White Schengen List, Ukrainian refugees do not need a visa to enter the Schengen Area. Moreover, in March 2022, the EU has activated the 'Temporary Protection Directive' for the first time in history, which is an "EU emergency scheme used in exceptional circumstances of a mass influx to: provide immediate and collective protection to displaced persons" and "reduce pressure on the national asylum systems of EU countries" (European Council, n.d.<sup>b</sup>). This ensures them of an access to the labour market and housing, medical care, a residence permit, social welfare assistance, and access to education for children (European Commission, n.d.<sup>c</sup>). The Solidarity Platform has been established to make sure the Temporary Protection Directive is implemented well among EU countries, international partners, Ukrainian authorities and EU agencies (European Commission, n.d.<sup>c</sup>).

### **2.3.2. Border management**

The European Commission has issued new guidelines on external border management to grapple with reducing the waiting time of Ukrainian refugees entering the EU, while still guarding the border (European Commission, n.d.<sup>o</sup>). These guidelines include “simplification of border controls at the EU’s border with Ukraine; more flexibility regarding entry conditions; allowing crossings at temporary border crossing points, outside official border crossing points; easy access for rescue services and humanitarian assistance; and personal belongings and pets” (European Commission, n.d.<sup>o</sup>).

### **2.4. Framing in EU policies**

Stepka (2018) argues that the start of the Schengen zone has driven securitization of migration at the EU level. In this respect, “the security-oriented framing of (especially irregular) migration has been commonly applied in the EU policy discourse, becoming a normal and institutionalized form of problematization of migration-related challenges” (Stepka, 2018, p. 10). Through policies, non-EU migrants are often framed as a risk that needs to be contained to preserve security (De Haas, 2008). This is the message that EU policies such as the black and white Schengen list, along with the border management by Frontex, and several deals have conveyed. Through these policies, the EU frames non-European migration as a threat to security, which can make citizens experience this threat as real, in turn influencing their perceptions of these migrants.

Van Houtum (2021) speaks of the effects of ‘bordering’, defined as: “the ongoing political claiming, appropriating, and demarcating of a territorial here that is being differentiated in space from an imagined there” (p. 36). Through this process, there is an almost constant border work, trying to separate the ‘wanted’ from the ‘unwanted’ (Van Houtum, 2013). Bordering is combined with ‘ordering’ and ‘othering’, which are two processes that bordering

tries to achieve through shaping and demarcating of “a socially ordered identity (a we) and a constructive outside (a them).” (Van Houtum, 2021, p. 36). These geopolitical terms should be understood as an interrelated and contextual process, instead of sequential, since they continuously and dynamically happen at the same time. ‘Ordering’ stands for “the continuous social construction of a We-community and identity in the bordered space” (Van Houtum, 2021, p. 36), while ‘othering’ involves “the continuous construction of a spatiopolitical id/entity we distinguished” (Van Houtum, 2021, p. 36). An ‘other’ is created through a set of power mechanisms, such as chronopolitics, geopolitics, and biopolitics.

The political and policy attention is increasingly shifting towards the protection of the external EU borders, implying that there is a threat that needs to be left outside the EU borders. There is an increased distinction between who ‘belongs to’ the EU and who does not (Van Houtum, 2013). Possibly the most illustrative example of controlling who belongs and who does not is the white and black Schengen list. Van Houtum (2013) calls it “a form of chronopolitics as it slows down, illegalizes, or immobilizes the mobility of a significant part of the world population and prioritises and mobilises the traveling speed of select human segment” (p. 169). Through these lists, the EU discriminates people by their countries of origin, while simultaneously creating a “dichotomous border of in-out” (Van Houtum, 2013, p. 171). In the case of Ukrainian refugees, the EU has made clear by its policies and border regime they are welcome and no threat to the EU. This is not the case for other refugees: through the processes of bordering, ordering and othering they are excluded, undesired and unwanted in the EU.

Following this literature on framing and EU policies, it can be expected that these policies and the message they convey to citizens of the EU can have an influence on the attitudes towards both Ukrainian and other refugees in the Netherlands. Ukrainians are much less portrayed as the ‘other’, because they are not the primary focus of the EU’s border policy. However, other non-European refugees are. They are constantly made to be the ‘other’ that

does not deserve to stay in the EU. Therefore, the first hypothesis of this research is the following:

*H1: The differences in attitudes towards Ukrainian and other refugees in the Netherlands are similar to the differences in treatment of both groups through EU policies.*

## **2.5. Asylum policy in the Netherlands**

The Dutch asylum policy is based on the UN Convention of Refugees, a treaty signed by 150 countries, which determines when someone acquires the status of being a ‘refugee’ and therefore the right to protection. According to Stichting Vluchtelingenwerk (2022), the terms ‘asylum seeker’, ‘refugee’, and ‘migrant’ are often used interchangeably, while the Dutch government does distinguish between them. An asylum seeker can be defined as: “someone who seeks protection in the Netherlands” (Stichting Vluchtelingenwerk, 2022). A refugee can be defined as: “someone who leaves their country due to them being in danger” (Stichting Vluchtelingenwerk, 2022). Finally, a migrant is someone who leaves their country, but is able to return, contrary to a refugee. In the Netherlands, the ‘Immigration and Neutralisation Service’ (Immigratie- en Neutralisatiedienst (IND)) is in charge of the execution of the asylum policy and processes all asylum applications (Centraal Orgaan Opvang Asielzoekers, n.d.).

Once an ‘asylum seeker’ enters the Netherlands, they have to report their arrival at the ‘Department Strangerspolice, Identification and Human Trafficking’ (Afdeling Vreemdelingenpolitie, Identificatie en Mensenhandel (AVIM)) and the IND for identification and registration (Centraal Orgaan Opvang Asielzoekers, n.d.). Following this registration, they receive shelter in the central reception location of the ‘Central Agency for the Reception of Asylum Seekers’ (Centraal Orgaan opvang Asielzoekers (COA)) in Ter Apel. For the rest and preparation time and the general asylum procedure, they receive shelter at a process shelter.

After the general asylum procedure there are three options. The IND can: grant a temporary residence permit, reject the asylum application, and decide they need more time in order to make the decision. In the last case, the applicant enters the extended asylum procedure. From the moment of the decision onwards, the shelter and guidance takes place at an asylum seekers centre (asielzoekerscentrum (AZC)). However, when the asylum application is denied, the 'Repatriation and Departure Service' (Dienst Terugkeer en Vertrek (DT&V)) is in charge of the asylum seeker's departure.

## **2.6. Asylum policy in the Netherlands for Ukrainian refugees**

Refugees from Ukraine are allowed to stay in the Netherlands for 90 days due to the country being part of the White Schengen List. They can get temporary protection in the Netherlands because of the Temporary Protection Directive of the EU until March 4, 2024. Ukrainian refugees are immediately considered refugees, since do not have to apply for asylum. Moreover, they can register at the 'Personal Records Database' (Basisregistratie Personen (BRP)) (Rijksoverheid, n.d.). This registration ensures their right to facilities such as shelter, livelihood, medical care and education.

In the Netherlands, we see a similar pattern as in the EU, which is to be expected for a Schengen country. The procedure to earn the right to shelter and eventually citizenship is much more difficult and long for refugees fleeing from other countries than for Ukrainian refugees.

Since most policies in the Netherlands on asylum and migration are similar to or directly derived from EU policies, a similar frame can be detected. Ukrainian and other refugees are treated differently and have to go through different procedures, creating a frame of one group already 'belonging' in the Netherlands and another group who does not. For framing in the Netherlands specifically, this research will mostly focus on the opinions and frames influential

politicians use. This will be done in the following chapters. Since this thesis will distill frames from Dutch politicians, meaning it is an explorative analysis, there will not be a hypothesis made on this sub-question.

### **3. Methodology framing analysis**

This chapter will focus on the methodology used to answer the first two sub-questions of this thesis, being: *To what extent do the EU policies on Ukrainian and other refugees differ and how does that translate to the differences in attitudes towards Ukrainian and other refugees in the Netherlands?* and *What are the differences in frames Dutch politicians use when discussing Ukrainian and other refugees?* The literature analysis for the first sub-question has been done in the previous chapter. The literature analysis, in combination with the results of the survey, will answer this sub-question. The methodology on the survey will be discussed in section 2 of this thesis. To answer the second sub-question, a framing analysis of two House of Representatives debates has been done. The choice for this research method will be elaborated in this chapter. First, it will be clarified why framing analysis is used to answer the second sub-question, instead of discourse analysis. This is followed by an explanation of how the two different House of Representatives debates are selected and what they discuss. This chapter ends with a description of how the debates were analyzed.

#### **3.1. Research design**

In this thesis, two House of Representatives debates will be analyzed to discover the possible different frames Dutch politicians use when discussing Ukrainian and other refugees. This type of research is both qualitative and inductive, since it aims to distill frames from existing texts. An important advantage of doing inductive research when analyzing frames to answer this research question, in contrast to deductive research, is that it focusses on distilling frames from texts, instead of creating frames beforehand and trying to find them in the texts. This allows an open mind and the ability to find frames that were not expected to be present in the text beforehand.

### **3.1.1. Framing analysis**

Framing analysis differs from discourse analysis in the sense that it looks at how already existing topics are framed by different actors, bending their meanings, whereas discourse analysis focusses more on how objects are brought into being by looking at interrelated sets of texts and their production (Lindekilde, 2014). As Lindekilde (2014) puts it: “frame analysis is less ambitious than discourse analysis in terms of uncovering the process of social construction of reality, but more targeted in terms of explaining the effect of the more manifest content of texts on mobilization and participation” (p. 200-201). In this case, refugees are the existing topic that is framed differently by different Dutch politicians, both in the way that the same refugees are framed differently depending on the political party’s identity and in the way that Ukrainian and other refugees are framed differently.

### **3.2. Data collection**

The first debate that was analyzed took place on October 14, 2015, and was titled: Debat over de Europese Top van 15-16 oktober 2015 (Debat on the European Summit of 15-16 October 2015) (Tweedekamer, 2015). As the name suggests, this debate was on the European Summit of 2015, which focused on the European migration and refugee ‘crisis’ of 2015. This debate was selected to answer the second sub-question, since it discusses the refugee ‘crisis’ at one of its peaks. In 2015, refugees were met with much resistance, expressed in demonstrations and aggression towards them. Moreover, the European Summit is important in determining the migration approach in the EU as a whole, but also the Netherlands, being an EU member state. This makes this debate an important one to analyze. The following parties were present during this debate: GroenLinks, SP, D66, PvdA, PVV, SGP, ChristenUnie, CDA, VVD, PvdD, GrKÖ, 50PLUS, and GrBvK. Both rightwing and leftwing parties, along with progressive and

conservative parties were present in this debate, meaning there is framing from several different perspectives.

The second debate that was analyzed took place on April 21, 2022, and was, among other subjects, mainly focused on the reception of Ukrainian refugees (Tweedekamer, 2022). This debate was selected, since it was the first debate on Ukrainian refugees since Russia invaded Ukraine on February 24, 2022. Similarly to the first debate, this debate discusses the challenges of housing a large number of refugees at once, along with possible solutions, which makes it relevant to compare. Most political parties that were present during the first debate, were also present here. All the parties that were present are the following: GroenLinks, SP, D66, PvdA, PVV, SGP, ChristenUnie, CDA, VVD, PvDD, Groep van Haga, DENK, Ja21, Volt, FVD, and BBB. Again, there is a representative mix of different ideologies, meaning Ukrainian and other refugees are framed from different perspectives.

### **3.3. Procedure**

The House of Representatives debates were first inductively analyzed using Atlas.ti, creating codes for every frame that could be distilled. This was followed by creating overall frames to be able to group similar codes. Finally, the debates were coded once more to make it more coherent and to clarify which frames were (indirectly) used. The frames that were distilled from both House of Representatives debates will be elaborated, and more importantly, compared, in the next chapter using quotes from both debates.

## 4. Framing analysis

In this chapter, the frames distilled from the House of Representatives debate about the refugee ‘crisis’ in 2015, along with the House of Representatives debate about Ukrainian refugees will be discussed. The debates will first be discussed individually, focusing on the frames used to portray these refugees, along with their counter frames. These frames will then be compared, aiming to see which frames are used for both Ukrainian and other refugees, and which are specific to one of these refugee groups.

### 4.1. House of Representatives debate refugee ‘crisis’ 2015

#### 4.1.1. Not here, our responsibility, and innocent victim

The frame that was used most often in this debate, is the ‘not here’ frame. This frame contains 26 quotes (see Table 1) and describes three different types of quotes: one saying that refugees have passed several ‘safe’ countries in the region, one saying that the Dutch or European borders need to be closed to refugees, and one saying that shelter in the region is important. The first type is a more indirect approach, saying that refugees come to the Netherlands by choice, while having passed more countries they were safe in. Sometimes politicians even imply they are migrants instead of refugees, since they choose to travel to the Netherlands instead of another safe country. An example is the following quote from Geert Wilders from the populist right wing party PVV.

*“However, if these people leave Syria, for example, and go to Turkey or Greece, then surely they are already in safe countries? When we don’t need to feel sorry for those people if they don’t stay there but come here, do we? They then pass through six safe countries before knocking on the door of the Netherlands. Surely then we can say: you were already safe, so leave because you are not a refugee but a migrant.” – Wilders, PVV*

*Source: Tweedekamer, 2015*

Not only the most extreme right wing parties said this during the debate, but also right-wing party VVD mentioned something similar, but in less extreme words:

*“We see that many people who come to the Netherlands – although they come from a warzone and are therefore refugees in that sense – have sometimes already spent quite some time in a safe country. So they have travelled on for reasons other than primary safety.” – Zijlstra, VVD*

*Source: Tweedekamer, 2015*

This frame creates a problematic image of refugees not primarily being occupied with fleeing from war, but more importantly travelling to the Netherlands specifically to exploit the welfare state, implying they are ungrateful when provided with safety in their region.

The second type of quote found is a more direct approach politicians used to indicate that refugees do not belong here, saying that the Netherlands or Europe should close their borders to keep refugees out. An example is the following quote:

*“We must protect our community of values Europe from unsafety. That means border controls and we all need to work on that, including the Netherlands.” – Van Haersma Buma, CDA*

*Source: Tweedekamer, 2015*

The previous quote focusses on European values and border controls, which has been repeated by several other politicians in the debate. Specifically, the PVV and Groep Bontes/Van Klaveren put more emphasis on closing the Dutch borders, instead of the European borders.

This is evident in the following quote:

*“A country without borders is like a house without walls: it collapses. This is also happening in the Netherlands. It leads to complete disruption of society. This government refuses to close our borders.” – Bontes, Groep Bontes/Van Klaveren*

*Source: Tweedekamer, 2015*

These examples create the image that closing the European and/or Dutch borders is necessary to protect Dutch society from unsafety, implying that refugees cause unsafety. This type of quotes within the *not here* frame often go hand in hand with the *danger to safety* frame that will be discussed later.

The last type of quotes within this frame, relates to the emphasis on the need for shelter in the region of the conflict. This is once again a more indirect way to say refugees are not welcome here and should stay close to their own country, preferably not within the European borders, as much as possible. The following quote is an example of this frame.

*“The second step is that you obviously have to provide very good, safe areas in the region where people can be accommodated.” – Roemer, SP*

This quote is by a left-wing party and discusses the importance of safe areas in the region, resulting in refugees not entering the Netherlands. This again creates the problematic image that refugees do not deserve to enter and receive shelter in the Netherlands and should stay as far away as possible.

A frame that can be seen as a counter frame to the *not here* frame, is what in this research will be named as the *our responsibility* frame. This is the most frequent counter frame that was used in the debate, with a frequency of 10 (see Table 1). In this frame, emphasis is usually put on the part the Netherlands played in the conflict that caused people to flee. Thus, it is our

responsibility to provide shelter for the refugees that enter the Netherlands. Examples are the following quotes:

*“At that time, we already proposed to work with a distribution key for the European countries. After all, we cannot look away from a conflict for which the Netherlands is partly responsible.” – Roemer, SP*

*Source: Tweedekamer, 2015*

*“If you are responsible for waging war, you should also feel responsible for solving the refugee flow.” – Roemer, SP*

*Source: Tweedekamer, 2015*

This creates the image of refugees being the consequence of Dutch involvement in wars and being worthy of receiving shelter in the Netherlands. There are also examples of politicians using the *our responsibility* frame without putting emphasis on the Dutch involvement in the wars that cause the refugees to flee.

*“So it is nothing new that we find it difficult, that we find it inconvenient. But that does not diminish an ounce of the responsibility we bear to do what is within our power to contribute to solving and supporting all those people who are victims of that terrible struggle that has been going on in Syria for years.” – Slob, Christenunie*

*Source: Tweedekamer, 2015*

This frame is usually paired with the *innocent victim* frame that will be discussed next, claiming that we share a responsibility for innocent victims of the war (that we contributed in). The *innocent victim* frame is, besides the *our responsibility* frame, the most used counter frame in this debate, with a frequency of 7 (see Table 1). This frame usually puts emphasis on the terrors of war and having to flee those circumstances.

*“Chairman. Parts of the Middle East and the head of Africa are on fire. Terrible images and stories are flying around the world. Where there is war, people flee. We saw that in the former Yugoslavia, in Afghanistan and in Iraq. We see it now in Syria too. People are leaving hearth and home to bring their families to safety. Most people would like to stay close to home, in a place with the same customs and habits. But another part of the population is coming our way, especially now that reception in neighboring countries is still so inadequate.” – Roemer, SP*

*Source: Tweedekamer, 2015*

In this quote, refugees are portrayed as victims of the war and fleeing for safety. This counters the *not here* frame, since it highlights the circumstances under which these people flee their countries, meaning they deserve shelter in the Netherlands.

#### **4.1.2. Danger to safety and incidents**

The *danger to safety* frame is one that was also mentioned often, as it is the second most frequent frame in this debate. There are 24 quotations for this frame (see Table 1), a few important ones will be discussed in this section. The *danger to safety* frame is an obvious one, it depicts refugees as a (physical) danger to Dutch citizens.

*“We will not put up with this prime minister risking our security, our freedom, our culture, our identity, our money and our future by allowing this Islamic invasion, for that is what it is. Enough is enough. The borders must close.” – Wilders, PVV*

*Source: Tweedekamer, 2015*

This quote combines several different frames (*danger to safety, at the expense of Dutch citizens, cultural differences, costs*), which will be discussed in next sections. Most of the quotes within this frame are examples Geert Wilders gives to illustrate that Dutch citizens are feeling unsafe

or have negative encounters with refugees. He reads several messages he has received from people that are mainly focused on (sexual) violence against women, children, the elderly and gay men. A few examples are the following:

*“A man from Arnhem says: “Since a week, my two daughters have been regularly harassed by asylum seekers sitting here in the Koepel of Arnhem. What can I do about it? Help, a concerned father.”” – Wilders, PVV*  
*Source: Tweedekamer, 2015*

*“A lady from Wassenaar writes: previously, as a single young woman in my own village, I could walk down the street in the evening without any problems, but recently I have been increasingly harassed by men from the local shelter as I walk down the street; they hiss, they accidentally bump into me, they follow me annoyingly, they speak to me and ask, ‘Do you have a boyfriend? Do you have sex?’; then when I don't respond they suddenly shout in Dutch that I am a dirty whore.” – Wilders, PVV*  
*Source: Tweedekamer, 2015*

*“A gentleman from Emmen says the following: when I was waiting at the station with my boyfriend - I am a homosexual - for the train to Zwolle, we were treated unfairly; we were shouted at; we were spat at; someone wanted to hit my boyfriend; I was pushed over and the most disturbing part of this fiasco was that after I complained, the official on duty said that this just happens and that these people are not used to homosexuality.” – Wilders, PVV*  
*Source: Tweedekamer, 2015*

These direct quotations from messages he received are used to create the image of refugees being violent against vulnerable groups and are therefore a threat to Dutch society. These quotes were quickly countered by the *incident* counter frame. This frame is used to describe these quotes as they are, incidents.

*“But with this, you are acting as if all these refugees are exactly the same. Surely you can also point out that these are incidents? You could also say that people who make a mess in the Netherlands should be dealt with harshly. We could agree on that too. Surely they are the same as racists who daub swastikas? Surely both should be punished equally harshly?” – Klaver, GroenLinks*

*Source: Tweedekamer, 2015*

As the left-wing politician Jesse Klaver points out in this quote that the examples Wilders used are incidents, and are similar to extreme right violence and racism. According to this frame, these incidents should not be generalized to all refugees.

#### **4.1.3. At the expense of Dutch citizens**

The *at the expense of Dutch citizens* frame occurred 17 times during the debate (see Table 1). This frame claims that Dutch citizens receive less because refugees take a lot and cost the Netherlands a great deal of money. According to this frame, refugees make existing problems in the Netherlands worse; Dutch citizens receive less pension, have a hard time finding a house, cannot receive adequate healthcare, etc., because refugees receive houses and money.

*“They were chanting: come all in. That costs billions, Mr. Roemer. Billions that we cannot spend on the people in the Netherlands, that we cannot spend on healthcare, that we cannot spend on pensions.” – Wilders, PVV*

*Source: Tweedekamer, 2015*

*“So what I am hearing now is that you treat one housing seeker differently from another housing seeker. One is just on the list and gets to wait for his turn and the other might get temporary housing and is treated entirely differently, because arrangements are made for him and he gets living allowance. I cannot but conclude that contrary to what the PvdA has always said here in the House until yesterday, there is a dichotomy and we are therefore talking about second-class citizens.” – Roemer, SP*

*Source: Tweedekamer, 2015*

Both quotes illustrate how refugees receive services that Dutch people do not receive and how they therefore receive special treatment. Instead of focusing on the tackling the roots of these problems, refugees are blamed for issues Dutch citizens face. There was no counter frame present in the debate that fits this frame.

#### **4.1.4. Austere shelter and right to better shelter**

The *austere shelter* frame claims that refugees deserve austere shelter, meaning the bare minimum that is required. This frames refugees as not deserving of better shelter than the minimum, predominantly to make them to return as soon as possible. The idea behind this is that austere shelter will force refugees to return to their home country as soon as they are able to, because they do not desire to stay here. This assumes that refugees want to stay here because of everything they receive in the Netherlands.

*“If you have neat, but austere facilities, then people who come here not for safety but for economic reasons, namely for social services, will make a different choice.” – Zijlstra, VVD*

*Source: Tweedekamer, 2015*

*“The core of our plan is that this is done on a neat but austere basis. In doing so, it should be clear that we continue to keep in mind and emphasize the temporary nature of this group’s stay. After all, the starting point is that, when the situation allows, they will return.” – Zijlstra, VVD*

*Source: Tweedekamer, 2015*

Both examples show how they create the frame of refugees only deserving austere shelter, to stimulate return and to avoid exploitation of social services. Both are also separate frames that will be discussed in a following section.

A counter frame that was derived from the debate is the *right to better shelter frame*, which was only used once to counter the previous discussed frame.

*“I wonder if Mr. Zijlstra has been to a crisis shelter. We are talking about sports halls where there are often hundreds of people at once. They have two square meters with a cot and a chair to hang their clothes. Does Mr. Zijlstra think that is austere enough? Does he find it austere if eighty people have to use one toilet? Is that not austere enough?” – Kuzu, Groep Kuzu/Öztürk*

*Source: Tweedekamer, 2015*

Kuzu points out that the austere care other politicians discussed, are often not even meeting basic rights, implying that refugees deserve more than this.

#### **4.1.5. Costs**

Another frequently used frame is one that focusses on *costs*, which was used 14 times throughout the debate (see Table 1). Like the name suggests, politicians use this frame to emphasize the high costs that come with providing shelter and care for refugees, when they try to legitimize keeping refugees out of the Netherlands.

*“They are not pathetic refugees coming here. They are often young men full of hormones coming into this country. There is no room for them all. They should not come in here and they cost us tons of money.” – Wilders, PVV*

*Source: Tweedekamer, 2015*

*“Last month, 13,000 people entered this country. If I am correct, that was the number in September. If we continue like this for several more years, it will cost us billions. We could have spent that money on pensions for the elderly and care, but the SP says: Ali, come in with your servant; we’ll give you those billions.” – Wilders, PVV*

*Source: Tweedekamer, 2015*

In these quotes, Wilders is legitimizing not providing shelter for refugees in the Netherlands, by saying that it will cost the Netherlands billions, which cannot be spent on Dutch citizens. This creates the image of refugees being expensive and therefore negatively influencing a country’s economy and citizens. In this debate, there was no frame distilled which counters the *costs* frame.

#### **4.1.6. Return**

A frame which was used an equal amount of times as the previous two frames mentioned, with a total of 14, is the *return* frame (see Table 1). This frame consists of quotes focusing on the return of refugees as soon as possible, and return when they do not receive the right to shelter.

*“From the first day in the Netherlands, a refugee must be made absolutely clear that the Netherlands will fulfil its moral duty towards refugees, but that this is temporary reception, aimed at post-conflict return.” – Van Haersma Buma, CDA*

*Source: Tweedekamer, 2015*

*“But we should also give people with temporary permits that clarity: you have to go back. If we give those people the hope – I sense this is Mr. Klaver’s words, but perhaps wrongly – that, if they have integrated well, they really don’t have to go back, even if they don’t have an asylum status, then we are doing it wrong. For those people too, we have to be crystal clear: temporary is temporary and when it is safe again, you have to go back.” – Zijlstra, VVD*

*Source: Tweedekamer, 2015*

In both quotes it becomes clear that refugees should immediately know they do not belong here and are not allowed to stay here. There are two counter frames that go against this frame: the *they want to return* frame which was said twice and the *built a life* frame which was said only once. When comparing that to the return frame being used 14 times, the counter frames are underrepresented and possibly less effective.

The *they want to return* frame counters the *return* frame by saying that refugees themselves want to return as well, but the circumstances make it impossible. This puts the decision to return in the refugees’ hands instead of the Dutch government.

*“I read in the paper this morning that the Minister of Social Affairs has said about 80% want to go back. When I talk to asylum seekers, I hear the same thing: I very much want to go back.” – Klaver, GroenLinks*

*Source: Tweedekamer, 2015*

*“I can hope that in two years' time, the situation in Syria will be such that people will be able to go back. In fact, I think many people will want to go back when the time comes in two years. The reality today is that it is only getting more complex by the day. It is realistic to say that it might take 10 years for the situation there to improve and people to be able to go back. In the meantime, people don't put their lives on hold, they don't sit still. They might start a family and have children who grow up here. The fact remains that those people have built a life here, started over. It is not realistic to send those people back after 10 years. Those children have no idea where their parents are from and don't speak the language.” – Klaver, GroenLinks*

*Source: Tweedekamer, 2015*

The previous quote combines the *they want to return* counter frame and the *built a life here* counter frame, by saying that refugees want to return but probably will not be able to for a long time, which causes them to build a life here. According to Klaver, these people cannot realistically be sent back to their country of origin, since they no longer have ties there. This goes against what the *return* frame wants to convey.

#### **4.1.7. Other migrants**

The *other migrants* frame, with a frequency of 12 times during the debate (see Table 1), is a frame that is not necessarily directed towards refugees, but it does influence how they are perceived. Quotes within this frame discuss the arrival of other, most often described as ‘economic’, migrants, along with refugees. According to several politicians, these migrants are not fleeing from war, which makes them economic migrants who are only here to build a better life for themselves. This frames refugees in a way that not all of them can be trusted and only people who flee from war are actual refugees. This raises a debate on who deserves to receive shelter in the Netherlands and who does not.

*“Crisis and emergency shelters are meant for people fleeing war and violence, but something goes wrong when a sports hall in Vlissingen, where I was last Sunday, contains not only 150 war refugees from Syria, but also 30 people from a safe country like Albania.” – Pechtold, D66*

*Source: Tweedekamer, 2015*

*“Somewhere between these easygoing extremes lies the plodding reality of the difficult but necessary distinction between refugees and economic migrants and of European cooperation.” – Samson, PvdA*

*Source: Tweedekamer, 2015*

Another part of this frame does discuss refugees, but frames them as migrants, since they have passed through several safe countries before reaching the Netherlands. This portrays the refugees as ungrateful and completely ignores the reasons they fled.

*“Again, they are not just refugees. People are coming from safe countries, so they are indeed migrants rather than refugees.” – Wilders, PVV*

*Source: Tweedekamer, 2015*

There was no counter frame in this debate that fits this frame.

#### **4.1.8. Cultural differences**

Like the name suggests, the *cultural differences* frame focuses on the differences in culture and religion between refugees and Dutch citizens. This frame occurs 7 times throughout the debate (see Table 1). In all circumstances, this frame was combined with the *danger to safety* frame, the *costs* frame and/or the *at the expense of Dutch citizens* frame. A few examples are:

*“This is not an incident. I have bins full of this kind of thing. I am the last person to say that all asylum seekers do this, but we are importing a culture. We are importing a mass of Muslim immigration – you will see this in other examples – of testosterone bombs. I’ve mentioned that before. That is the reality of women in the Netherlands suffering from that culture. We are important people who do not want to integrate here, who want to colonize us.” – Wilders, PVV*

*Source: Tweedekamer, 2015*

*“The story of hundreds of thousands coming and millions, tens of millions, in Europe is recognized by heads of state and presidents. Unlike Mr. Pechtold, I do not want those people to come to the Netherlands. We cannot cope with that. We cannot handle that Islamization. We can better spend those billions on our own people. We cannot cope with the criminality that this entails. We cannot handle that with 600,000 unemployed. We need those jobs for our own people, not for those illiterate Middle Easterners coming here. We cannot cope and we should not. I fight with my group every day to stop that.” – Wilders, PVV*

*Source: Tweedekamer, 2015*

These quotes show Geert Wilders using cultural and religion differences as a reason to legitimize not receiving refugees in the Netherlands. He says that women are suffering from the culture they bring and even says that refugees want to colonize and Islamize the Netherlands. This frames refugees as being culturally very different from Dutch people and their culture and religion even affecting vulnerable groups in the Netherlands.

#### **4.1.9. Exploiting the welfare state and refugees contribute**

The *exploiting the welfare state* frame occurred an equal amount of times as the previous one (see Table 1). This frame was often combined with either the *not here* frame or the *austere shelter* frame, which were previously discussed. Quotations within this frame are for example:

*“We don't want them to come here because of the level of social services you get when you have a permanent permit or are naturalised. We want a more austere level for that.” – Zijlstra, VVD*

*Source: Tweedekamer, 2015*

*“For that, we have to dissect it first, as I just said. It is a fact that many people fled their homeland. But it is also a fact that they had mostly already found safety in another place: in their home region or in a southern European country, where their boat landed. Yet these people chose to leave that safe place and to travel on again, often through several safe countries, on their way to a place where they would prefer to build their future. That place, in many cases, is in our country, in Germany or in Sweden; in other words, in the countries that are furthest away, yet most popular. In our view, the reason why they travel on is twofold ... The second reason is that asylum seekers want to come to the Netherlands. This is partly because of our extensive social benefits.” – Zijlstra, VVD*

*Source: Tweedekamer, 2015*

In these two quotes, it becomes clear that this frame is used to emphasize that refugees consciously choose the Netherlands to stay in, because of the social service system within the welfare state. According to this line of thought, because refugees have already passed through several safe countries, they enter the Netherlands only to exploit the social service system. This creates the image of refugees not only fleeing from war, but more importantly, trying their best to find the country with the best social service system, making them seem ungrateful for what they are given in other ‘safe’ countries.

A frame that counters this frame, is the *refugees contribute* counter frame. However, similar to other counter frames, the negative frame outweighs their positive counterparts, with the counter frame only occurring once (see Table 1). This quote is as follows:

*“And we see that across generations, those people can find a place in society. We see that the grandchildren of those immigrants are working in different sectors and contributing to this country. That may also be highlighted when we talk about the flow of refugees.” - Kuzu, Groep Kuzu/Öztürk*

*Source: Tweedekamer, 2015*

This quote goes against the *exploiting the welfare state* frame by showing that refugees can also contribute to the economy, instead of merely taking.

#### **4.1.10. Too many and we can handle it**

The *too many* frame was used three times (see Table 1), and it is used to emphasize the amounts of refugees, implying that the Netherlands cannot house that many refugees. An example is:

*“We can't handle it. We had 13,000 in the month of September alone. We had weeks when 4,000 came in. Last week I think it was 2,500, the week before that 3,000 came in. Per week! We can't afford that. There are buses of asylum seekers driving from place, to place, to place, while they don't even know where to sleep. Municipalities are being forced, as we have seen in Oranje, to accommodate people against their will. Only a blind person cannot see that the Netherlands can no longer cope and that our society is saying a resounding no.” – Wilders, PVV*

*Source: Tweedekamer, 2015*

This frame emphasizes the amounts of refugees, and creates the image that the Netherlands is overflowing with refugees. A frame that counters this frame is the *we can handle it* frame, which occurred four times (see Table 1), making it more frequent than the *too many* frame. This counter frame sees the amount of refugees coming to the Netherlands as manageable, because the Netherlands has done it before.

“Chairman. Can our country cope? To this question, Dutch people want an answer. I have no doubt. We have faced a task like this before, not so long ago. In the past, we have had many more people in reception.”

– Klaver, GroenLinks

Source: Tweedekamer, 2015

Table 1. House of Representatives debate refugee ‘crisis’ 2015

Frames	Freq.	Counter frames	Freq.
At the expense of Dutch citizens	17		
Austere shelter	14	Right to better shelter	1
Cultural differences	7		
Costs	14		
Danger to safety	24	Incidents	3
Exploiting the welfare state	7	Refugees contribute	1
Not here	26	Our responsibility	10
		Innocent victims	7
Other migrants	12		
Return	14	They want to return	2
		Built a life	1
Too many	3	We can handle it	4
Total	138		29

Source: Tweedekamer, 2015

#### 4.2. House of Representatives debate Ukrainian refugees 2022

In the case of the House of Representative debate on Ukrainian refugees, the frames are divided in two separate categories: negative frames, and positive frames. The negative frames paint Ukrainian refugees in a negative light, whereas the positive frames do the opposite. The frames and their frequencies can be found in Table 2.

Something that stands out when comparing the frequencies to those of the House of Representatives debate about the refugee ‘crisis’ in 2015 (see Table 1), is that the latter debate contains much more quotations, with a total of 138 quotations of frames and 29 quotations of counter frames. However, the House of Representatives debate about Ukrainian refugees in 2022 only contains a total of 17 quotations of negative frames, and 32 quotations of positive frames. These differences have a simple explanation. Although the debates are roughly the same

length, the largest part of the debate on Ukrainian refugees was actually about other refugees instead of what it should be about: Ukrainian refugees. This immediately makes it evident that, according to politicians, other refugees are a bigger problem than Ukrainian refugees. In some circumstances, other refugees are even blamed for the Netherlands being unable to house all Ukrainian refugees, meaning one group of refugees is seen as more worthy and important when it comes to shelter. This will be fully discussed in one of the following sections.

By taking a look at Table 1 and Table 2, it is also noticeable that in the case of other refugees, the negative frames outweigh the positive, with frequencies of respectively 138 and 29. In the case of Ukrainian refugees, the positive frames seem to outweigh the negative frames, with frequencies of respectively 32 and 16. To put differently: there are a lot more negative quotations when politicians speak about other refugees, whereas there are more positive quotations when politicians speak about Ukrainian refugees.

#### **4.2.1. At the expense of Dutch citizens**

The *at the expense of Dutch citizens* frame is the negative frame that is used most often, with a frequency of 8 (see Table 2). This frame is the same as the *at the expense of Dutch citizens* frame that was discussed with regards to the previous debate. In this case, it is mostly used when discussing an imbalance between what Ukrainian refugees receive and what Dutch people receive, along with housing.

*“It is very important that we arrange good accommodation for Ukrainians. At the same time, you also have to avoid crooked eyes, for example in the situations I mentioned in my term, that people are taken out of their homes to accommodate Ukrainians. That seems a bit strange to me. I also hear stories from municipalities that the living allowance for people in debt restructuring is €50 a week and for Ukrainians €60. Can you imagine that could lead to crooked eyes? Shouldn't we straighten that out, preferably at the highest level?”*

*– Van Dijk, SP*

*Source: Tweedekamer, 2022*

This quote is not necessarily negative towards Ukrainian refugees, but it does discuss them receiving more money than Dutch citizens and that Dutch people are taken out of their homes to create room for Ukrainian refugees.

*“The whole country is being built up. In every empty meadow comes another new housing estate. The whole character of the country is disappearing. Starters can't find housing, can't start their lives. And we just have to go and help the whole world. I find it impossible to explain. Perhaps it is not a popular story, because everyone wants to be good and help pathetic people. That's all very well, but there are also a lot of Dutch people who need help. There are a lot of starters who cannot start their lives. There are a lot of young people facing a hopeless procedure with social housing. That is totally inexplicable.”* – Jansen, FvD

*Source: Tweedekamer, 2022*

This quote does state that Ukrainian refugees should not be helped, because of existing problems in the Netherlands. Instead of trying to solve these problems, Ukrainian refugees should be kept out to avoid these problems getting worse. This frame is therefore similar in how it is used when comparing it to the previous debate. They both portray refugees as taking goods and services that Dutch people deserve.

#### **4.2.2. Not here, own region, our responsibility, innocent victim and incorporate into society**

The *not here* frame is the same as discussed in the previous debate. It occurred 3 times during the debate, and has been countered more than mentioned (see Table 2). As in section 4.1.1., the *not here* frame is used to emphasize that Ukrainian refugees do not need to enter the Netherlands to receive shelter, but can go to other countries in their own region.

*“To end on a positive note, I say: of course these people must be helped. That is why Forum voor Democratie, as always, advocates reception in the region. There are lots of countries near Ukraine, where, for instance, Ukrainian is recognised as a minority language, where the culture is very similar to that of Ukraine. Let those people find a temporary home there. Let those people stay there temporarily, so that they can also return safely to their own countries.” – Jansen, FvD*

*Source: Tweedekamer, 2022*

With this quote it becomes evident that the same argument is used as in the refugee ‘crisis’ debate, namely that there are countries in the region that are similar to their culture to which these refugees should go. This indirectly says that Ukrainian refugees should stay out of the Netherlands and find another place closer to Ukraine. In this frame, there is no distinction being made between the origin of refugees, but it emphasizes the need for all refugees to find shelter in their own region.

Interestingly, a positive frame that occurred the same amount of times (see Table 2), says, on the contrary, that the Netherlands is their own region and should therefore provide shelter for Ukrainian refugees. This is the *own region* frame.

*“With the miserable images we see daily, it is not surprising that millions of Ukrainians have sought safety in Europe and also in the Netherlands. We always shout: shelter in the region first. And today, we are the region.” – Van der Plas, BBB*

*Source: Tweedekamer, 2022*

As mentioned in the quote, the Netherlands is now the region, which is why there is a moral duty to provide shelter for Ukrainian refugees. Meaning they deserve to enter the Netherlands.

Another positive frame that counters the *not here* frame, is the *our responsibility* frame, which occurred only once and is similar to the previously discussed *our responsibility* frame (see section 4.1.1.).

*“We have a moral duty to give proper shelter to Ukrainians. This is about sheltering people from our region.”*

*– Kuik, CDA*

*Source: Tweedekamer, 2022*

In this quote, the *our responsibility* frame is combined with the *own region* frame, saying that it is our responsibility to provide shelter to Ukrainian refugees, since they are from our region.

The third positive frame that can be seen as a counter frame, is the *innocent victim* frame. Again, this is the same frame that was discussed in section 4.1.1. this creates the image of Ukrainian refugees needing help, because of the horrible situation they are fleeing from. This frame occurred 7 times during the debate (see Table 2).

*“Since the Russian attack began, millions of Ukrainians have fled. About 40,000 of them have arrived in the Netherlands. For the vast majority, these are women. Most of them also have children. Many of those who arrived last have experienced shelling and fighting at close quarters.” – Ceder, ChristenUnie*

*Source: Tweedekamer, 2022*

This can be seen as a counter frame to the *not here* frame, since it portrays Ukrainian refugees as innocent victims to the war that need protection and shelter in the Netherlands. It is interesting to see that the *innocent victim* frame in the context of the debate about Ukrainian refugees, was used an equal amount of times as in the debate about the refugee ‘crisis’, while the latter has more than three times the amount of quotations.

The last positive frame that could be seen as a counter frame to *not here* is the *incorporate in society* frame, which has only been used once (see Table 2). This frame counters the image that the *not here* frame gives, in the way that it encourages Ukrainian refugees to be incorporated in society instead of leaving them out of it.

*“Can the government pledge that we will commit to mixed living as much as possible instead of placing Ukrainians outside society?” – Podt, D66*

#### **4.2.3. Too many and not enough room for all migrants**

The *too many* frame was mentioned five times (see Table 2), and it similar to the *too many* frame that was discussed in section 4.1.10. However, the frame in combination with the positive frame *not enough room for all migrants* differs from the previously discussed *too many* frame.

*“I asked the State Secretary in committee earlier for a limit. Is there now a limit for the Netherlands of which we say: that's about the limit of what we can meet in receiving Ukrainians? Is there a limit at all? Because you expressed in the committee: no, for me there isn't. Now we see what numbers we are being met with. It seems right to me to say: this is the limit for the time being to be able to guarantee reception for people who come here.” – Eerdmans, JA21*

*Source: Tweedekamer, 2022*

This quote illustrates the framing that the amount of Ukrainian refugees entering the Netherlands is too many for the capacity. The *not enough room for all migrants* frame is not a positive not negative frame for Ukrainian refugees, but a negative one for other refugees and migrants. It poses that there is not enough room for Ukrainian refugees, because there are too many other refugees and migrants in the Netherlands. This along with increase in the amount of Ukrainian refugees seeking shelter in the Netherlands, creates too many refugees in total.

*“No, I did not say that there is one solution that will allow everyone to return at once tomorrow. What I have said is that there are a lot of people coming here from Ukraine and other countries, and that our reception and our housing are coming under enormous pressure, and that it is therefore important, right now, to also work harder on return.” – Brekelmans, VVD*

*Source: Tweedekamer, 2022*

This quote indirectly emphasizes the need for other refugees to return, to be able to house Ukrainian refugees. A quote that says this more directly, is one by Markuszower from the PVV.

*“We as the PVV say: if Ukraine's neighbours can no longer cope, then we in the Netherlands can make temporary and limited space for the reception of Ukrainian women and children by stopping the influx of all those foreign invaders from Africa and that dark Middle East, by throwing all those illegal immigrants out of our country and sending the Syrians and other safe-landers back to where they came from.” – Markuszower, PVV*

*Source: Tweedekamer, 2022*

This quote directly says that room can be made for Ukrainian refugees by throwing out all refugees and migrants from Africa and the ‘dark Middle East’, even going as far as saying that Syrian refugees are ‘safe-landers’. This makes the distinction between the Ukrainian refugees that do deserve shelter and the other refugees that do not, while fleeing from similar situations,

very clear. The PVV is the party that has received the most votes during the last Dutch elections, meaning that a large number of Dutch citizens probably agree with such statements.

#### **4.2.4. Safe shelter**

A positive frame, which was only mentioned once (see Table 2), is the *safe shelter* frame.

*“President, thanks. Since the outbreak of the horrific war in Ukraine - which was exactly eight weeks ago today - 5 million Ukrainians have fled their country, more than 90% of whom are women and children. JA21 believes it is very important that they are simply safely and humanely received until they can hopefully return to Ukraine.” – Eerdmans, JA21*

*Source: Tweedekamer, 2022*

This quote mentions that it is very important that Ukrainian refugees are received safely and humanely. This is in stark contrast with what was said about other refugees, focusing on austere shelter to make them not wanting to stay in the Netherlands.

#### **4.2.5. Difference attitudes too big**

The last positive frame that will be discussed is the *difference attitudes too big* frame. With a frequency of 13 (see Table 2), it is the most used positive frame towards Ukrainian refugees. This positive frame is quite unique, since it addresses the differences in attitudes between Ukrainian and other refugees, and views this as wrong.

*“This is not only for Ukrainians, but also for all those other people who are entitled to reception. Indeed, the contrast between the reception for Ukrainians and the reception for people from Syria, Yemen and Afghanistan, for example, is really terribly distressing. On Monday evening, news came out that 300 people from Ter Apel had to be lured out or they would end up on the streets.” – Kröger, GroenLinks*

*Source: Tweedekamer, 2022*

*“When it comes to that emergency law, we see that there are 10,000 beds available for Ukrainians that are currently unfilled, while we have to demolish a tent in Ter Apel where small children are sleeping for whom we have no reception place. The logical reasoning would then be, if there are beds available, to bring all asylum seekers, all refugees who are entitled to reception, under the same scheme at this time.” – Piri, PvdA*

*Source: Tweedekamer, 2022*

*“It is heartwarming to see how many people are willing to accommodate refugees from Ukraine to the best of their ability. There is an unprecedented unanimity, solidarity and compassion from the Netherlands and the rest of Europe when it comes to the arrival of Ukrainian refugees. The Netherlands then turns out to be able to be caring and empathetic after all. Many Dutch people thus show their true solidarity with refugees, in a way we have not seen for a long time. Chairman. This generous and superhuman effort for the Ukrainian refugee shows painfully clearly that in recent years we have seriously failed in the reception and humane treatment of other refugees. The difference is truly shocking. We have seen other refugees being met with burning torches, municipal administrators being threatened and intimidated by groups for providing space and shelter to refugees.” – Azarkan, DENK*

*Source: Tweedekamer, 2022*

Previous quotes show left-wing politicians pointing out the sharp contrast between how Ukrainian and other refugees are treated, pointing out that it is nice to see all the support for Ukrainian refugees, while at the same time seeing the harrowing circumstances at Ter Apel.

While most left-wing politicians agree with this, it is important to note that the majority of people in the Netherlands voted for (extreme) right-wing parties, which are represented by the politicians that said the majority of the negative frames during the refugee ‘crisis’ debate in 2015. These parties still, in this debate about Ukrainian refugees, discussed other refugees for the majority of the debate, nearly all painting them in a negative light.

Table 2. House of Representatives debate Ukrainian refugees

Negative frames	Freq.	Positive frames	Freq.
At the expense of Dutch citizens	8		
Not here	3	Own region	3
		Our responsibility	1
		Innocent victim	7
		Incorporate in society	1
Too many	5	Not enough room for all migrants	6
		Safe shelter	1
		Difference attitudes too big	13
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>		<b>32</b>

Source: Tweedekamer, 2022

To conclude this chapter, other refugees are framed in a predominantly negative way by Dutch politicians, while Ukrainian refugees are framed in a predominantly positive way. For other refugees, a lot of emphasis is put on them aiming to exploit the welfare state, them being a threat to safety in the Netherlands, and their attempts to enter ‘better’ countries, when they are assumed to have already received shelter in a safe country. For Ukrainian refugees, most emphasis is put on the negative frame of helping them comes at the expense of the Dutch population, but also the positive frames such as claiming they are innocent victims of the war. The largest frame used in the debate about Ukrainian refugees is that politicians think that the differences in attitudes towards Ukrainian and other refugees is too big. However, another frame that was used often is that there is not enough room to provide shelter for Ukrainian refugees, since there are too many other refugees/migrants.

Moreover, some parallels with the section on framing through EU policies can be drawn from both results. Similar to EU policies, Dutch politicians use more ‘othering’ when discussing other refugees than when discussing Ukrainian refugees. In EU policies, other refugees experience a more difficult and dangerous procedure than Ukrainian refugees, which is an ‘othering’ practice. Dutch politicians put more emphasis on other refugees being different from our religion and culture than they consider Ukrainian refugees to be. This shows that both EU policies and Dutch politicians are framing other refugees in such a way that they seem more dangerous to Dutch society and paint a picture of them being unwanted in the Netherlands, while Ukrainian refugees receive help fast and are seen as more similar to the Dutch population.

## **Section 2: Individual and societal mechanisms**

The second and final section of this thesis will focus on the individual and societal mechanisms that might explain the differences in attitudes towards Ukrainian and other refugees. The first chapter of this section will delve into theoretical explanations and assumptions on how four possible mechanisms can affect these differences: culture, religion, identity, and fear of the aggressor. Hypotheses will be formulated to conclude the literature. In the next chapter, the methods to research these hypotheses will be discussed, followed by a chapter focusing on the results and answering the hypotheses.

## **5. Individual/societal mechanisms**

### **5.1. Differences in culture and religion, and the importance of identity**

As discussed in the introduction, another possible explanation for the differences in attitudes towards Ukrainian refugees and other refugees might be (perceived) differences in culture and religion, along with identity and group belonging. This section will first delve into the importance of culture through the symbolic threat theory, followed by differences in religion, and lastly, the importance of identity and group belonging through the social identity theory.

#### **5.1.1. Culture as a discrimination criterium**

De Coninck (2022) mentions the symbolic threat theory as a factor in explaining the overwhelmingly positive reaction towards Ukrainian refugees in 2022 opposed to the rather negative reaction towards Afghan refugees fleeing the Taliban's violent takeover in May 2021 from the European and American public. The integrated threat theory (Stephan & Stephan, 2000) suggests migration causes two different types of threat in the receiving society: symbolic threat and realistic threat. Symbolic threats are to cultural differences (e.g. values, morals, cultural homogeneity, and worldview), while realistic threats are to the physical well-being and the economic and political power of the in-group (e.g. job opportunities, financial burdens, etc.) (Croucher, 2017). Moreover, according to research (Landmann, Gaschler & Rohmann, 2019), another distinction can be made: individual threats and group-based threats. Individual threats relate to one's own situation (e.g. threat to one's own job, house, education, etc.), while group-based threats relate to an in-group as a whole, (e.g. threat to the entire economy of a country, housing market, etc.). No matter if the threat is perceived or real, it is a major source of prejudice (De Coninck, 2022).

One of the most essentialized social categories is cultural background (Albada, Hansen & Otten 2021). Culture is defined as “a multilayered, interacting, dynamic system of ideas,

institutions, interactions and individuals” (Albada, Hasen & Otten, 2021, p. 1351). However, the majority of people in society see culture as something that is fixed and unchanging. This results in them overestimating similarities within their culture and between their culture and other cultures. This oversimplification of culture can promote stereotyping and out-group threat. The study of Albada, Hansen and Otten (2021) speaks of ‘Perceived Cultural Differences’, because cultures might be similar on objective measures, but can still be perceived as dissimilar. This perception is important in shaping the intergroup relation between the host society and immigrants.

Thus, cultural differences between an in-group and out-group can be perceived as threatening for the host society. This may be rooted in the fear that these cultural differences will destabilize their own Western culture and values. In the case of Ukrainian and other refugees in the Netherlands, it can be assumed that Ukrainian refugees are perceived to have similar cultural beliefs, opposed to the different cultural beliefs other (mainly Arabic/African) refugees hold. According to the Government of the Netherlands (Rijksoverheid), the core norms and values in Dutch society are: freedom (of religion, opinion, lifestyle, association, and self-determination); equality (equal treatment for e.g. men and women and lgbt+ members, and prohibition of discrimination for the same categories); and solidarity and work (help one another and job security) (Rijksoverheid, 2014). Europeans generally believe that most refugees hold more conservative values regarding societal areas that much of the Western population, including the Netherlands, finds as important, such as: gender equality, sexual orientations, and power balances (De Coninck, 2023). This divergence in values is likely to trigger feelings of perceived symbolic threat. This in turn decreases support and positive attitudes towards these refugees. On the other hand, Ukrainians, being Europeans, are believed to have similar cultural beliefs as the rest of Europe. Moreover, Ukraine has been taking steps to join the EU and the NATO recently, which hints at a similar value system between Ukrainian people and Europeans

(De Coninck, 2022). This likely contributes to Europeans having more sympathy towards Ukrainian refugees.

According to previous literature, culture could be an underlying mechanism in the differences in attitudes towards Ukrainian and other refugees. Therefore, the second hypothesis of this research is:

*H2: The differences in attitudes towards Ukrainian and other refugees in the Netherlands can be partly explained by perceived differences in culture.*

### **5.1.2. Religion as a discrimination criterium**

According to Pepinsky, Reiff, and Szabó (2022), the main distinction between the 2015 and 2022 refugee crises is the identity of the refugees. The refugees entering Europe in 2015 were “not Europeans, mostly not Christians, and racialized as non-white” (Pepinsky, Reiff & Szabó, 2022, p. 6), while the refugees fleeing from Ukraine were mostly white Christian Europeans.

Especially Muslim immigrants face significantly high levels of prejudice and discrimination since their arrival in the West (Kaya, 2015). This is also visible in the rise in popularity of far-right parties in many European countries. In Hungary, far-right parties share 59% of the seats in the parliament, in Poland 35%, and in Italy 30% (Armstrong, November 23, 2023). The Netherlands is in fourth place with 23%, but this trend is visible in many other European countries. Democracies should, by definition, hold “equality, tolerance and religious freedom among their core values” (Kaya, 2015, p. 451), which makes such high levels of discrimination, prejudice, and exclusion concerning. Since many refugees flee from Muslim countries, with 46% being Syrian, 9,6% Turkish, 5% Yemini, and 4,4% Sudanese (Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek, 2023), Islamophobia could be an explanation for the differences in

attitudes towards fleeing Ukrainians, being predominately Christian, and other refugees, being predominately Muslim. The third hypothesis is therefore as follows:

*H3: The differences in attitudes towards Ukrainian and other refugees in the Netherlands can be partly explained by perceived differences in religion.*

### **5.1.3. The importance of identity and group belonging**

Identity is also an important, and similar, factor to consider when trying to explain the differences in attitudes towards Ukrainian and other refugees. According to the Social Identity Theory, the process of construction of the ‘self’ implies the construction of an ‘other’ (Paré, 2022). People strive for a positive social identity, which is formed by first belonging to a specific group and then comparing this group to other groups aimed at positively differentiating the in-group from the out-groups (Scheepers & Ellemers, 2019), meaning the sense of group belonging is always paired with ‘othering’. The ‘other’ is rejected on the basis of being inferior and abnormal (Paré, 2022). Paré (2022) defines ‘othering’ as: “a social process insofar as ‘self’/‘other’ dichotomies are often activated on perceived differences in gender, ethnicity, race, nationality, language, religion, skin colour, sexual orientation, political affiliation, or socio-economic background, which all contribute to (national) identity” (p. 44). These differences are often embedded in the mainstream discourse and policies, and result in a discriminatory attitude towards the out-group. In the case of Ukrainian and other refugees, it can be argued that the process of ‘othering’ mainly happens towards other refugees, since they often have a different ethnicity, race, religion and skin colour, while Ukrainian refugees often share these characteristics with people in the Netherlands. This leads to the fourth hypothesis:

*H4: The differences in attitudes towards Ukrainian and other refugees in the Netherlands can be partly explained by identity and group belonging.*

## **5.2. Fear of the aggressor**

The final possible mechanism this research will focus on is the fear of the aggressor and geographical proximity of the conflict. De Coninck (2022) also mentions this as a possible contributor to the differences in attitudes towards Ukrainian and, in his research, Afghan refugees. This mechanism, contrary to the other mechanisms that are previously discussed, does not take prejudice, framing or discrimination into account, but focusses on fear of the conflict instead.

The Russo-Ukrainian war is taking place on European ground and borders quite a few NATO countries: Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, and Romania. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) was formed shortly after the Second World War (1949) to ensure the safety and freedom of all member countries and played a large part in the Cold War (Rijksoverheid, 2023). It is a military and defensive alliance. Article 5 of the NATO treaty ensures the principle of collective defense and ensures that every member state protects each other (NATO, 2023a). It means that an attack against one member is considered an attack against all members, which simply means that when one country is attacked, all NATO countries are at war. Up until now, this article has only been invoked once: after the 9/11 attacks against the United States, but there is fear among Europeans that it will be invoked again soon.

The NATO has already condemned “Russia’s brutal and unprovoked war of aggression against Ukraine, which is an independent, peaceful and democratic country, and a close NATO partner” (NATO, 2023b) and they say to continue to support Ukraine. Along with the support for Ukraine in this war, European leaders have also warned for the possibility of a war between Russia and NATO.

According to I&O Research (Van der Schelde, 2022), half of Dutch people are afraid of Russia using nuclear weapons and many think this is a likely scenario. The research also concludes that a majority is following the main events of the war closely. Moreover, 84% of the Dutch population is worried about the war in Ukraine. This shows that there is fear of a war with Russia among the Dutch population.

This fear is not unfounded, since army leaders and European leaders warn for the possibility of a war between NATO and Russia. For instance, Michel Hofman, Army Chief of Staff of the Belgian army, warns for a war with Russia (Huyghebaert, December 19, 2023). He says that Russia has transferred to a war industry and if they win the war with Ukraine, they might want to expand their territory more. It seems to him that Russia is preparing for more than just a war with Ukraine. Moreover, the NATO Secretary General, Jens Stoltenberg, has also warned that Russia will seek war elsewhere once Ukraine is defeated (Lau, December 14, 2023). Recently, even the Dutch NATO-Admiral Rob Bauer has said not only the armies of NATO countries, but also the societies of these countries should prepare for the ‘unexpected’, and therefore a change to a war economy might be necessary (NOS, January 17, 2024).

Since there are reasons to fear for a war between Russia and the Netherlands, and because Dutch people already seem to be fearing a war, this could be an important mechanism. The last hypothesis that will be researched therefore is:

*H4: The differences in attitudes towards Ukrainian and other refugees in the Netherlands can be partly explained by fear of a war with Russia.*

## **6. Methodology survey**

To provide an answer to the last three research questions, being: *To what extent are the differences in attitudes towards Ukrainian and other refugees influenced by experienced differences in culture?*; *To what extent are the differences in attitudes towards Ukrainian and other refugees influenced by experienced differences in religion?*; *To what extent are the differences in attitudes towards Ukrainian and other refugees influenced by identity and group belonging?*; and *To what extent are the differences in attitudes towards Ukrainian and other refugees influenced by fear of Russia?*, a survey will be used. The research design and data collection will be mentioned in this chapter. Moreover, all survey questions will be discussed in this chapter, along with the reason these questions were chosen. Afterwards, the operationalization of the variables will be elaborated.

### **6.1. Research design**

The aim of this research is to discover the underlying mechanisms to explain the differences in attitudes towards Ukrainian and other refugees that seem to be apparent in Dutch society. To discover these underlying mechanisms and empirically test the theories that were discussed in Chapter 5, a survey was made. Since this part of the research does not try to map out differences over time, but focusses on explaining the differences in attitudes towards Ukrainian and other refugees, a cross-sectional design was used. Meaning there was one measuring moment.

### **6.2. Data collection**

As stated before, a survey was used to discover which societal and individual mechanisms lie at the roots of the differences in attitudes towards Ukrainian and other refugees. The survey was made using Qualtrics, which is a survey software that can be used by students of Radboud University. The survey was spread using several different social media platforms (Facebook,

Instagram, and WhatsApp), to try to reach an optimal amount of diversity in the respondents, regarding age, political preferences, and other characteristics. In the next chapter, the frequencies and descriptives of all variables will be discussed, showing how diverse the respondents actually are. A total amount of 145 respondents have filled in a valid survey. It was decided to not weigh for unequal distributions on the background variables (gender, age, and educational level), because of the relatively low number of respondents. Weighing is usually done when the distribution of certain variables is different from the distribution in the Netherlands as a whole. However, when dealing with a relatively low number of respondents, weighing could cause the answers of only a few respondents to heavily influence the outcomes.

### **6.3. Survey**

In this section, the survey questions that were made will be discussed, along with the possible answer categories. First, the questions about the differences in attitudes towards Ukrainian and other refugees are discussed, followed by questions about culture, religion, identity, and lastly, fear of a conflict with Russia. Moreover, the choice of questions about background characteristics will be elaborated. The survey is in Dutch, since the aim is to reach Dutch respondents. For this chapter, the questions are translated to English. A copy of the Dutch survey that was used can be found in Appendix A.

#### **6.3.1. Attitudes towards Ukrainian and other refugees**

Following the questions about background characteristics that will be discussed later on, the substantive survey starts with questions which will determine whether respondents have different or similar attitudes towards Ukrainian and other refugees. It has been decided to use the term ‘non-European refugees’, instead of ‘other refugees’ to make it more clear to

respondents that the questions are about refugees that are not from Europe, but from countries in Africa, Latin America or Asia.

The first question following this description is the following: *How do you feel about the reception of non-European refugees in the Netherlands?* Respondents could answer with the following options: *very positive, positive, not positive nor negative, negative, or very negative.* The second question was: *How do you feel about the reception of refugees from Ukraine in the Netherlands?* Again, the possible answers were: *very positive, positive, not positive nor negative, negative, or very negative.* The choice of these questions was largely based on a poll by I&O Research on behalf of the Dutch ministry of Justice and Safety (ministerie van Justitie en Veiligheid (JenV)) about the attitudes of the Dutch population towards the arrival and reception of Ukrainian refugees. They asked the following question: “How positive or negative do you think it is that refugees from Ukraine are hosted in the Netherlands?” (I&O Research, 2022, p. 3). It was decided to adapt the question to make it more neutral by leaving out the “positive and negative” part of the question, since it might already push respondents in a certain direction.

### **6.3.2. Perceived differences in culture**

To decide whether cultural differences are an important underlying mechanism for the differences in attitudes towards Ukrainian and other refugees, questions were formulated to determine to what extent respondents view Ukrainian and non-European refugees cultures as similar or dissimilar to Dutch culture and why. First, respondents were asked the following question: *To what extent do you think the culture of non-European refugees differs from the Dutch culture?* They could answer with one of the following options: *very little, a little, neutral, a lot, or very much.* The aim of this question was to discover whether Dutch people think the culture of non-European refugees is different from what they view as the Dutch culture. When

respondents have answered with one of the last two categories, they receive the following question: *You have indicated that you find the culture of non-European refugees different from the Dutch culture. On which aspects do you think this is the case?* Respondents now had the opportunity to write the specific aspects on which they think the cultures differ within their own frame of what the Dutch culture is and what the non-European culture that refugees bring is. This has been done to avoid pushing respondents in a certain direction of what culture means. Instead, it allows them to answer within their own frame of reference.

The same has been done for Ukrainian refugees, to be able to compare the two and see whether Dutch people view one group of refugees as having a more similar culture to Dutch culture than the other. By doing this, it can be determined whether this explains the differences in attitudes. They were asked the following question: *To what extent do you think the culture of Ukrainian refugees differs from the Dutch culture?* Again, they could answer by choosing one of the following answer options: *very little, a little, neutral, a lot, or very much*. The respondents who answered with the latest two categories, got a follow-up question, being: *You have indicated that you find the culture of Ukrainian refugees different from the Dutch culture. On which aspects do you think this is the case?*

These questions were followed by a question aiming to determine whether respondents view these differences as problematic. Respondents can view cultures as being different, but it differs per person whether they see this as a problem or a positive thing. The following question was used: *What do you think if refugees have a different culture?* They could answer with the following options: *no problem at all, not a problem, neutral, a problem, a very big problem*.

Finally, the last question about culture was a statement, being: *I consider cultural differences an important criterion for determining which refugees should and should not be received in the Netherlands*. Respondents could answer this statement with one of the following options: *completely disagree, disagree, neither disagree nor agree, agree, or totally agree*. The

aim of this question was to find out whether the respondents found culture to be an important criterion when deciding which refugees are ‘allowed’ to enter the Netherlands and which refugees are not.

### **6.3.3. Perceived differences in religion**

The questions on religion are largely based on the previous questions, since it is a similar possible mechanism. Respondents were first asked to answer the following question: *To what extent do you think the religion of non-European refugees differs from religion in the Netherlands?* They had the opportunity to answer using one of the following options: *very little, a little, neutral, a lot, and very much*. The aim of this question is to discover whether respondents think the religion of non-European refugees is different from what they think the predominant religion in the Netherlands is.

The same was asked about Ukrainian refugees, being: *To what extent do you think the religion of Ukrainian refugees differs from religion in the Netherlands?* Once again, the following options were the ones they could choose from: *very little, a little, neutral, a lot, and very much*. Both questions were asked to be able to see if there is a difference in the religion respondents think Ukrainian and other refugees have, when comparing them to the religion they think is predominant for Dutch people.

The second to last question about religion was also based on a question about culture. This question was as follows: *what do you think if refugees have a different religion?* The possible answers were: *no problem at all, not a problem, neutral, a problem, or a very big problem*. The aim of this question was, similar to the same question about culture, to see whether people actually view possible differences in religion as problematic.

The last statement was once again the same as the last statement about culture. It went as follows: *I consider religion an important criterion for determining which refugees should*

*and should not be received in the Netherlands.* Respondents could answer with one of the following options: *completely disagree, disagree, neither disagree nor agree, agree, and totally agree.* This question was added to see if respondents found religion of importance when determining which refugees should or should not find refuge in the Netherlands.

#### **6.3.4. Identity and group belonging**

To answer the sub-question on identity, it was important to first discover to what extent the respondents felt connected to the Dutch identity. Therefore, the first statement on this topic was: *I consider the Dutch identity to be an important part of me.* Respondents could answer with one of the following options: *completely disagree, disagree, neither disagree nor agree, agree, and totally agree.* With this question, respondents could determine for themselves what a Dutch identity entails and whether this applied to them.

After determining the connection with the in-group, it was important to discover whether respondents view Ukrainian and other refugees as an out-group or not, and whether one of these refugee groups is viewed as more of an out-group than the other. The respondents were first asked the following question: *To what extent do you think the identity of non-European refugees differs from your own (Dutch) identity?* They had the following answer options: *very little, a little, neutral, a lot, very much.* The purpose of this question was to indirectly indicate to what extent respondents view other refugees as an out-group.

The same was done for Ukrainian refugees. The last question on identity was: *To what extent do you think the identity of Ukrainian refugees differs from your (Dutch) identity?* Again, the answer options were: *very little, a little, neutral, a lot, very much.* With this question, the extent to which Ukrainian refugees are seen as an outgroup could be compared to other refugees to see if there are any differences.

### 6.3.5. Fear of the aggressor

The last possible mechanism that was analyzed in this research is fear of the aggressor, meaning the fear Dutch people feel for a potential (nuclear) war with Russia. These questions were largely based on questions research institute I&O Research used in their article on the Dutch populations' fear of a war with Russia in 2022 (Van der Schelde, 2022). One of the questions they asked that is also relevant for this research is: "I am afraid Russia will use nuclear weapons" (Van der Schelde, 2022). Respondents had the chance to answer with the following options: agree, neutral, disagree, along with an option they could use when they did not know. It was decided to use this question, since literature in the theory section of this thesis suggests that fear of a war with Russia could influence the differences in attitudes towards Ukrainian and other refugees. The fear of Russia using a nuclear weapon is an aspect of this that is important to research. Therefore, the first statement to discover the extent to which people fear the aggressor in the conflict and how this influences the differences in attitudes towards Ukrainian and other refugees is: *I fear Russia will use nuclear weapons*. Respondents could choose from the following answer options: *completely disagree, disagree, neither disagree nor agree, agree, and totally agree*.

Since the literature in the theory section mainly discusses fear of a war between Russia and the NATO breaking out, a question was added on this topic. The second question of this topic, and the last question of the survey, was the following: *I am afraid of war breaking out between Russia and the Netherlands*. The possible answers were: *completely disagree, disagree, neither disagree nor agree, agree, and totally agree*. By this question, the extent to which Dutch people are afraid of a war breaking out between Russia and the Netherlands could be measured, along with the influence this has on the differences in attitudes towards Ukrainian and other refugees. This question was inspired on the previous question by I&O Research, but was adapted to fit this research.

### 6.3.6. Background characteristics

Lastly, it is important to elaborate on the control variables that were added in this research, and how they were formulated in the survey. The start of this survey consisted of a couple of questions on background characteristics. This was done to be able to control for these variables in the analysis, since they might influence the differences in attitudes. When control variables are omitted, a wrong assumption might be made on one of the mechanisms that was researched. An effect might be attributed to a mechanism, but in reality this is the effect of a control variable. When adding these to the analysis, this can be ruled out, meaning there is more certainty that the mechanisms are truly at the roots of the differences in attitudes.

The following control variables were added to the survey: gender, age, and level of education. The survey starts out by this question: *What is the gender you identify with?* The respondents could answer with one of the following options: *male, female, and other*. The reason this research controlled for this variable, is because it can be expected that men and women differ in the extent to which they have different attitudes towards Ukrainian and other refugees. Research by Statistics Netherlands (Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek), shows that men have more negative attitudes towards refugees in general (Kloosterman, 2018).

Another characteristic that influences the attitudes towards refugees in general, according to the research by Statistics Netherlands, is age. It was discovered that younger people more often think that refugees provide an enrichment of Dutch culture than older people (Kloosterman, 2018). Therefore, the following question in the survey was: *What is your age?* This was an open ended question to which the respondents could answer with a number.

To discover the educational level of respondents, the following and last question was asked: *What is your highest completed education?* The answer options were: *primary education; vmbo, havo, vwo undergraduate education, mbo1; havo, vwo, mbo2-4; HBO, wo-*

*bachelor*; and finally *HBO-, wo-master, doctor*. These categories were based on the Survey Working Population by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science of the Netherlands (Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap), which was conducted by Statistics Netherlands (Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek) (ocwincijfers.nl, 2023). The reason for adding this specific control variable is because research has shown that lower educated people have more negative attitudes towards refugees in general than higher educated people (Kloosterman, 2018).

#### **6.4. Operationalization variables**

The operationalization of the variables is largely the same as the previously discussed categories per question. Each variable has a starting value of 0, meaning that for example the variable that measures the fear of war breaking out between Russia and the Netherlands has the following values: (0) completely disagree, (1) disagree, (2) neither disagree nor agree, (3) agree, and (4) totally agree. This was done to simplify the interpretation when doing a regression analysis, meaning the starting value of every variable is the same. There are a few exceptions, because some categories were never chosen. For example, the variable *reception of Ukrainian refugees* does not include a ‘very negative’ category, which would have been the fourth value, causing this variable to have four values instead of five, missing the last category (4). The same is the case for the following variables: *cultural differences problem*, *differences religion Ukrainian refugees*, *differences religion problem*. The variable *cultural differences non-European refugees*, however, misses the first category. Meaning this variable also has four categories instead of five, but in this case, the value 0 is the second category in the survey ‘a little’ instead of the first category ‘very little’. The descriptive statistics in the next chapter of this thesis will visually display all variables and their values.

With the exception of *gender*, *education* and *age*, all variables are assumed to be linear, since they follow a Likert scale construction. The variable *gender* is not linear, since it is a nominal variable, meaning it has two or more categories that cannot be ranked in a certain order. In the case of this survey, no respondent has answered they identify with another gender besides male and female, making this variable a dichotomous variable. No dummies must be made for this variable, since the variable is already a dummy: men have a value of 0 and women have a value of 1. Therefore, men are the reference category.

The variable *age* was divided into separate categories: 18 to 19 years old, 20 to 24 years old, 25 to 29 years old, 30 to 39 years old, and 40+ years old. This was done to make a somewhat equal number of respondents per category. Since the categories do not all include the same number of ages, this variable is now ordinal and has been made into dummies. A dummy was made for all the categories, meaning the category in question had a value of 1 and all other categories had a value of 0 for all dummies. The reference category in the analyses was 18 to 19 years old.

For the variable *education*, the categories were first assigned to new categories, to be able to compare them better: 'low', 'middle', and 'high'. The new classification can be found in Table 6 Appendix B. Since this is an ordinal variable, dummies were made. Low education is the reference category for both dummies. The dummy *middle education* was made by assigning everyone that fits into this category the value 1, and everyone else the value 0. The dummy *high education* was made by assigning everyone that fits into this category the value one, and all other respondents the value 0.

For the dependent variable *difference in attitudes*, the two questions about reception were combined. Respondents scored 0 on this new variable when their answer to both questions was the same. Respondents scored 1 when their answer to the question about non-European refugees was one category more negative than their answer to the question about Ukrainian

refugees. When there chose a category that was two categories more negative than their answer to the question about Ukrainian refugees, they received a score of 2. Lastly, respondents who had an answer that was three categories more negative than their answer to the question about Ukrainian refugees, received a value of 3. Since no respondents answered the question about Ukrainian refugees with the final category 'very negative', there could not be a difference of more than three categories. There were six respondents that felt more negative towards the reception of Ukrainian refugees than non-European refugees. These respondents were deleted before the bivariate analyses, because including them would not give information about why people in the Netherlands are more negative towards other refugees than they are towards Ukrainian refugees.

## 7. Results survey

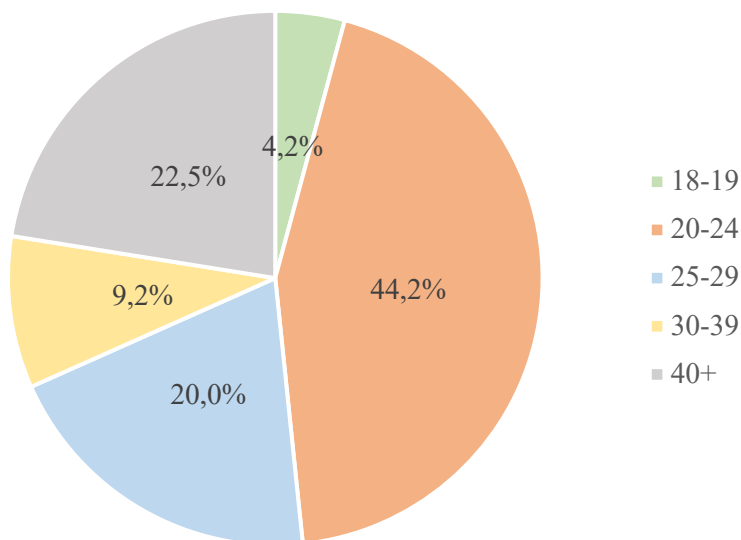
### 7.1. Descriptive statistics

#### 7.1.1. Background characteristics

For the variable *gender*, Figure 13 (see Appendix C) and Table 3 show that 28.3% of respondents who filled in the survey identified as male, while the remaining 71.7% identified as female. This means that no respondents identified with a gender other than male or female.

Figure 1 and Table 3 shows the distribution of percentages per age category. This shows that the ages 20 to 24 are overrepresented, with a percentage of 44.2 respondents fitting into this category.

Figure 1. What is your age?

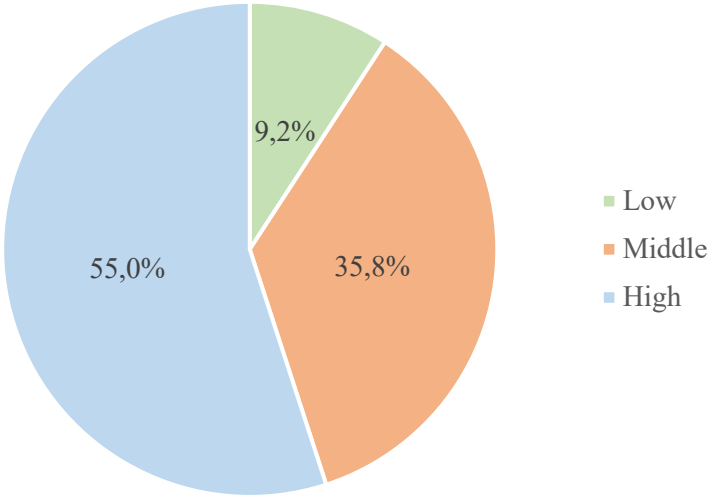


$N=120$

Figure 2 and Table 3 show that the last background variable *education*, is divided accordingly: 9.2% of respondents is low educated, 35.8% is middle educated and 55% is higher educated.

Meaning higher educated people are over represented and lower educated people are underrepresented.

Figure 2. What is your highest completed education?

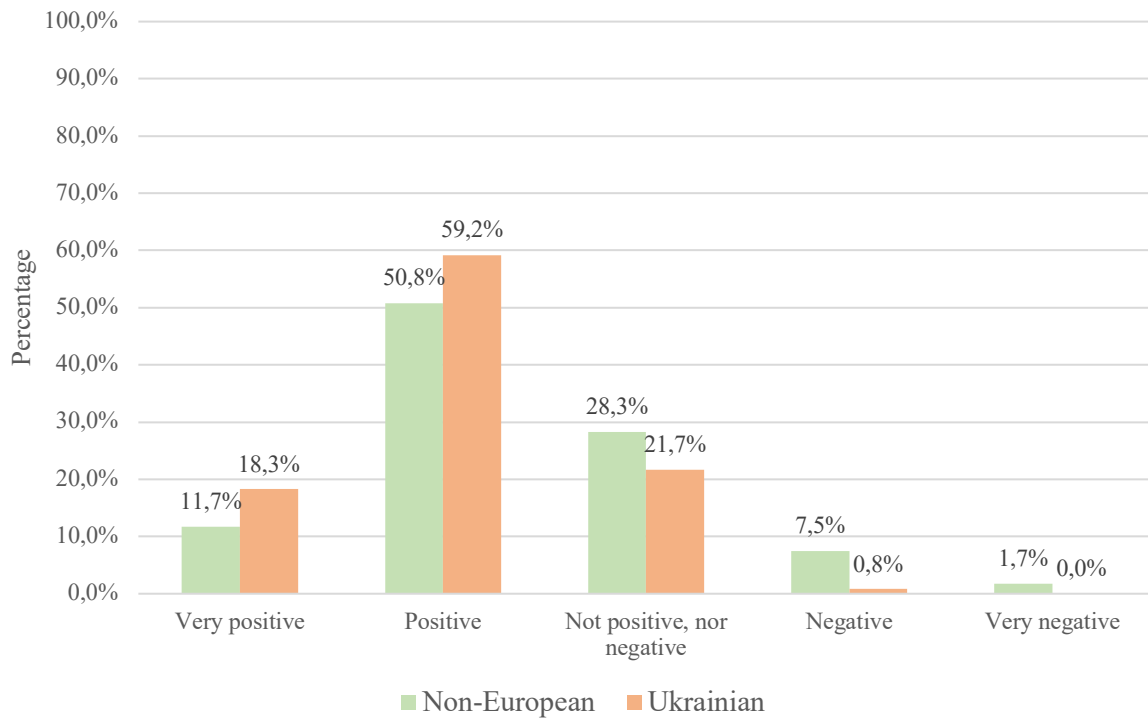


N=120

**7.1.2. Reception refugees**

The dependent variable *differences in attitudes* consists of two separate questions, measuring how positive respondents are towards the reception of Ukrainian and non-European refugees in the Netherlands. These questions were combined in Figure 3, which can be seen below. This figure shows that more respondents feel very positive (18.3%) and positive (59.2%) towards Ukrainian refugees, compared to non-European refugees (respectively 11.7% and 50.8%). It can also be seen that more respondents feel not positive nor negative (28.3%), negative (7.5%), and very negative (1.7%) towards other refugees, compared to 21.7%, 0.8% and even 0% towards Ukrainian refugees. These statistics already show a difference in attitudes: respondents seem to be more positive towards the reception of Ukrainian refugees than non-European refugees.

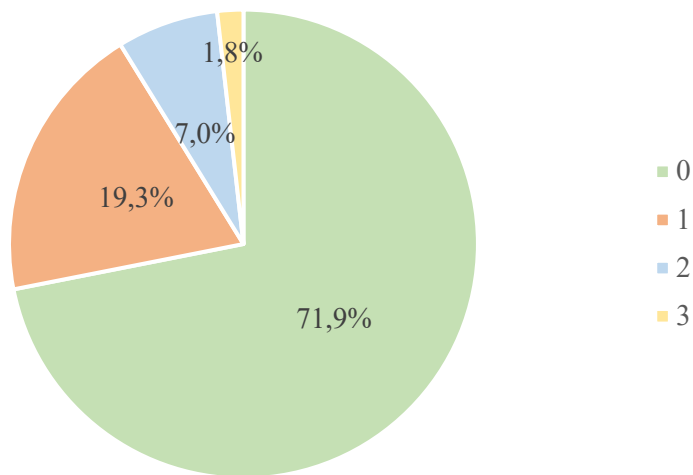
Figure 3. How do you feel about the reception of refugees in the Netherlands?



$N=120$

The variable *difference in attitudes* is distributed according to Figure 4. The majority of respondents (71.9%) answered the same category when asked about their opinion about the reception of both groups of refugees in the Netherlands. 19.3% of respondents have answered with one category more negative when asked about their opinion about the reception of non-European refugees, compared to their answer when asked the same about Ukrainian refugees. 7% has two categories between these questions and 1.8% has three categories between these questions.

Figure 4. Number of categories difference between attitudes reception Ukrainian and non-European refugees



*N=114*

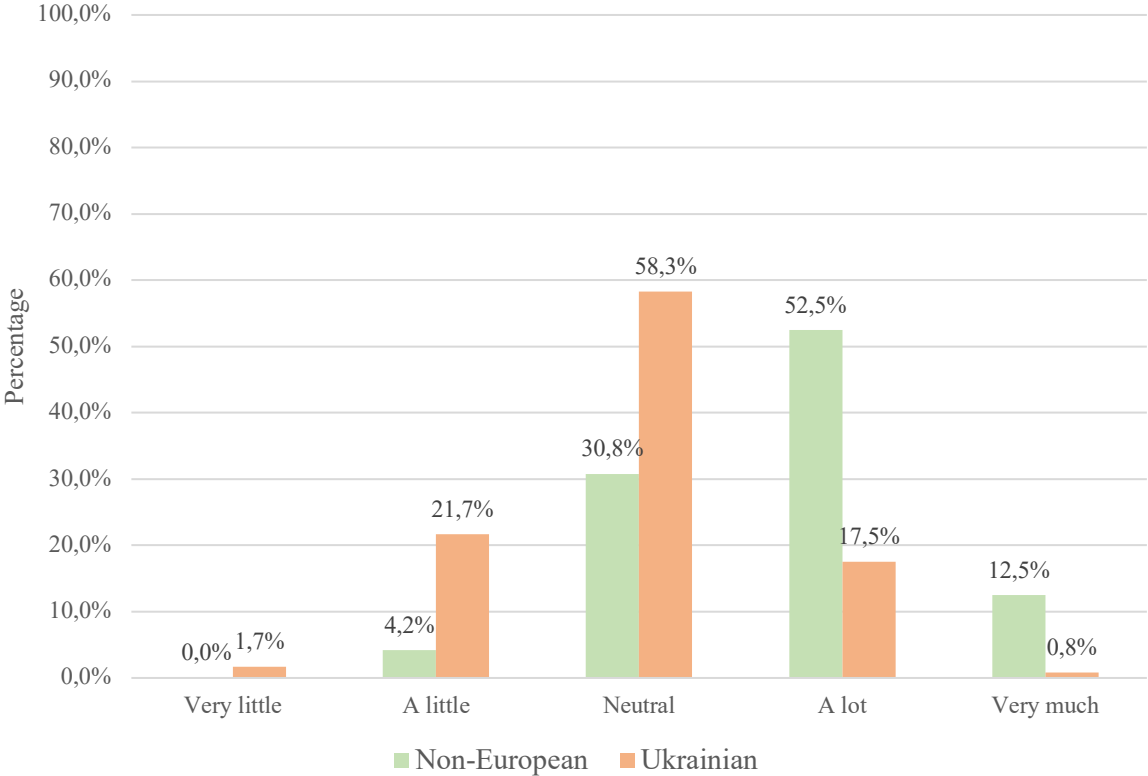
The two previously discussed results, along with the literature study in the first part of this research, indicate that the first hypothesis can be accepted: *The differences in attitudes towards Ukrainian and other refugees in the Netherlands are similar to the differences in treatment of both groups through EU policies.*

### 7.1.3. Culture

Figure 5 shows both questions aimed to measure to what extent respondents think the cultures of non-European and Ukrainian refugees differ from the Dutch culture. In this figure, we can see that 52.5% of respondents think the culture of non-European refugees and Dutch culture differ ‘a lot’, compared to 17.5% of respondents who think the same about Ukrainian culture. Similarly, 12.5% of respondents think the culture of non-European refugees differs ‘very much’ comparing to Dutch culture, while 0.8% of respondents think this about Ukrainian culture. Interestingly, more than half of respondents (58.3%) are neutral towards the differences in culture between Dutch and Ukrainian culture. A similar trend to what was previously discussed

can be seen when comparing the percentages of the ‘very little’ and ‘a little’ categories. No respondents thought non-European refugees’ culture differs very little when comparing to Dutch culture, while 1.7% thought this was the case for Ukrainian refugees. 21.7% thought the culture of Ukrainian refugees differs ‘a little’ from Dutch culture, while 4.2% though this of non-European refugees. This shows that respondents think there are more differences between the culture of non-European refugees and Dutch culture, than between the culture of Ukrainian refugees and Dutch culture.

Figure 5. To what extent do you think the culture of refugees differs from the Dutch culture?



*N=120*

Respondents who have answered the questions with either the ‘a lot’ or ‘very much’ option, were given an open question, since Dutch culture is not a fixed phenomenon and people interpret it differently. Considering there is a higher amount of respondents who answered either

of these options when being asked about non-European refugees (65% - 78 respondents) than when they were asked about Ukrainian refugees (18.3% - 22 respondents), there were more answers to the open question about non-European refugees than Ukrainian refugees. A word cloud has been made to show which answers were most prevalent for both non-European refugees and Ukrainian refugees, see Figures 6 and 7 below. In Table 7 in Appendix C an overview of terms mentioned, along with their frequencies, can be found.

When comparing the figures, it becomes evident that norms and values is the most mentioned cultural difference respondents mention for both groups. For non-European refugees this is closely followed by religion, but also women's rights and customs are mentioned often. A cultural difference that closely relates to women's rights, is male-female gender roles. A lot of respondents see the (negative) treatment of women and LGBTQ+-people and the (inferior) position of women in families as one of the biggest cultural differences between the Dutch and non-European refugees' culture. Differences in male-female gender roles is something that was also mentioned for Ukrainian refugees, but it is only mentioned once. When asked about the culture of Ukrainian refugees, the differences that were mentioned most often were language, food and religion. These answers are more neutral, thus had less negative connotations, when comparing them to the answers about non-European refugees. Interestingly, the answers are in some ways similar to the House of Representatives debates that were discussed in part one of this thesis. An example is that in the debate about other refugees in 2015, Geert Wilders from far-right party PVV put a lot of emphasis on other refugees being a danger to women and members of the LGBTQ+ and treating women differently. These two aspects were also highlighted in the open questions that were discussed. This shows that some answers respondents gave to the open question were similar to the frames used by politicians.

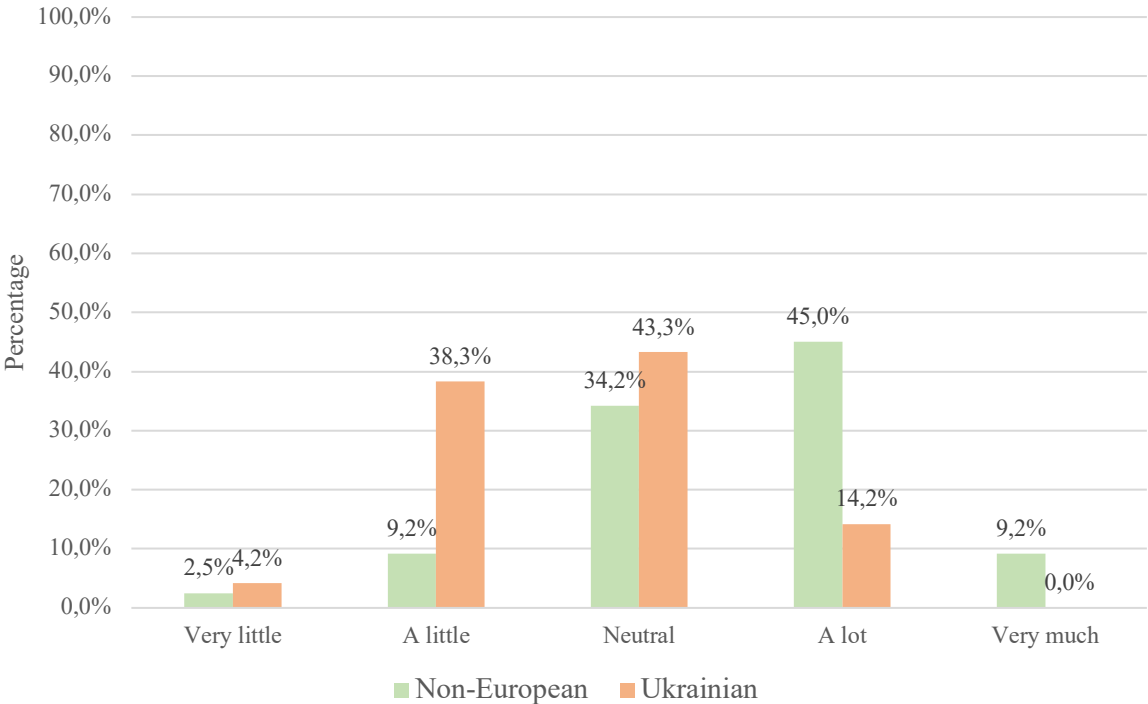


differences are not an important criterium in determining which refugees should and should not be received in the Netherlands. 16.7% do not agree nor disagree with this statement and 15.8% do consider it an important criterium. So while the majority of respondents see cultural differences between the culture of non-European refugees and the Dutch culture, only a minority seems to mind these differences.

**7.1.4. Religion**

Figure 8 shows that most respondents think the religion of non-European refugees differs a lot from religion in the Netherlands, or they are neutral about it. When asking about Ukrainian refugees, we see that most respondents think the religions differ a little, or they are neutral about it.

Figure 8. To what extent do you think the religion of refugees differs from religion in the Netherlands?



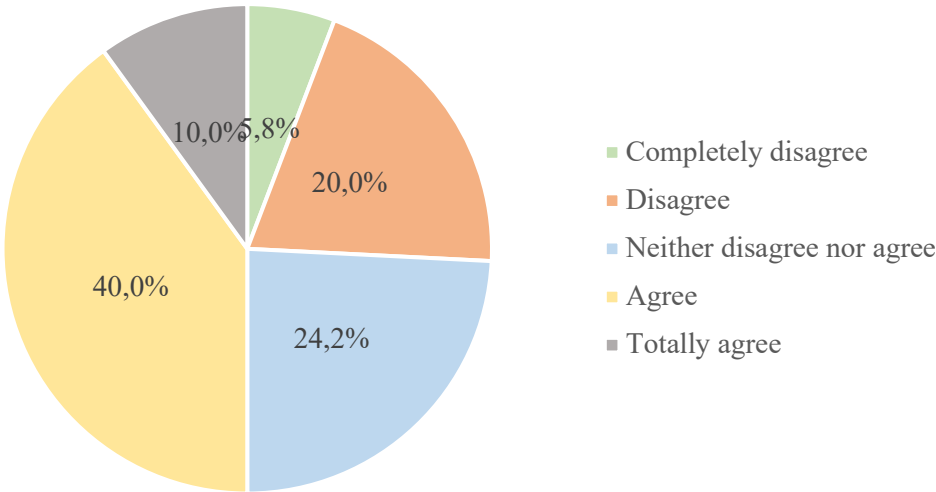
N=120

When asking respondents whether they think differences in religion are a problem, 76.6% do not think it is a problem, 15% is neutral and 8.3% see it as a problem (see Figure 16 in Appendix C). No respondents think it is ‘a big problem’. Once again, there is a similar trend in respondents who consider differences in religion an important criterium to determine which refugees should and show not be received in the Netherlands. 76.6% do not agree with this statement, 15% is neutral and 8.4% (completely) agrees. This shows that, similar to the opinions on culture, respondents do see more differences in religion when they compare it to non-European refugees than to Ukrainian refugees, but the majority do not think it is a problem, nor a criterium to determine if refugees should be received in the Netherlands.

**7.1.5. Identity**

In Figure 9, we see that half of respondents see the Dutch identity as an important part of them. 24.2% neither disagree nor agree with the statement and 25.8% do not think the Dutch identity is an important part of them.

Figure 9. I consider the Dutch identity to be an important part of me



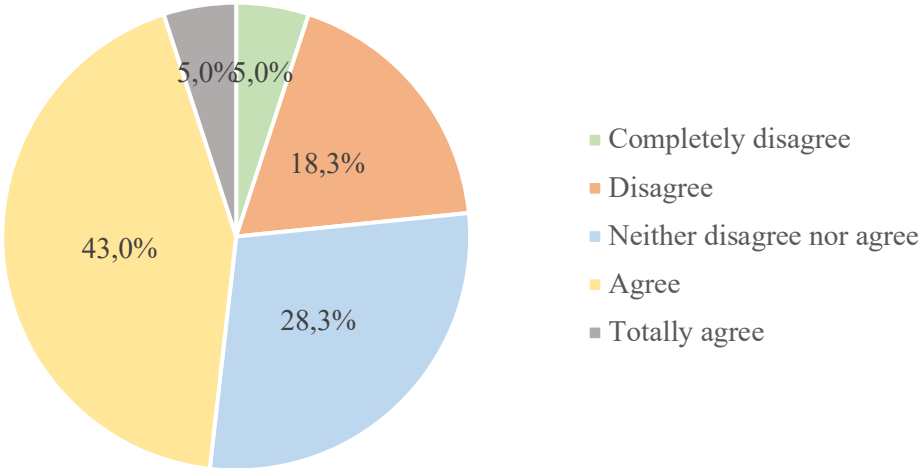
N=120

In Figure 18 (see Appendix C), it can be seen that most respondents either think the identity of non-European refugees differs a lot with their own (Dutch) identity, or they are neutral. About Ukrainian refugees, we see that most respondents are either neutral about this or think the identity of refugees differs a little with their own (Dutch) identity. This is similar to the previous questions about the differences in culture and religion.

**7.1.6. Fear of the aggressor**

Figure 10 shows that 47% of respondents are to a certain extent afraid of Russia using nuclear weapons, 28.3% is neutral, and 23.3% is not afraid. This means the majority is afraid of the possibility of this scenario.

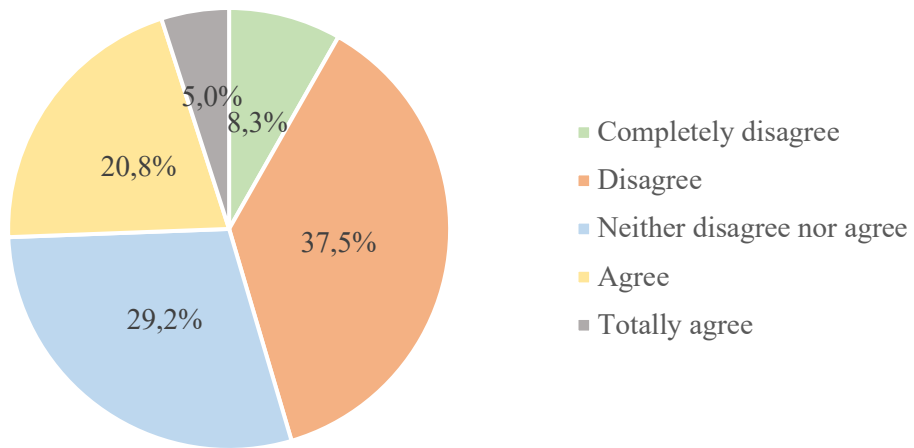
Figure 10. I fear Russia will use nuclear weapons



*N=120*

Figure 11 shows the distribution of the question whether respondents are afraid of a war breaking out between Russia and the Netherlands. 25.8% are afraid of this, 29.2% are neutral and the majority (45.8%) are not afraid of this.

Figure 11. I am afraid of war breaking out between Russia and the Netherlands



*N=120*

Table 3. Descriptive statistics

Variables	Categories	Min.	Max.	%	Mean	St. dev.
Gender	Man	0	1	28.30		
	Woman	0	1	71.70		
Age	18-19	0	1	4.20		
	20-24	0	1	44.20		
	25-29	0	1	20.00		
	30-39	0	1	9.20		
	40+	0	1	22.50		
Education	Low	0	1	9.20		
	Middle	0	1	35.80		
	High	0	1	55.00		
Reception non-European		0	4		1.37	0.85
Reception Ukrainian		0	3		1.05	0.66
Difference attitudes		0	3		0.39	0.70
Cultural differences non-European		0	3		1.73	0.73
Cultural differences Ukrainian		0	4		1.94	0.70
Cultural differences problem		0	3		1.08	0.88
Cultural differences criterium		0	4		1.17	1.07
Religion differences non-European		0	4		2.49	0.88
Religion differences Ukrainian		0	3		1.68	0.77
Religion differences problem		0	3		0.98	0.91
Religion differences criterium		0	4		0.88	1.01
Dutch identity		0	4		2.28	1.08
Identify differences non-European		0	4		2.28	0.86
Identity differences Ukrainian		0	4		1.87	0.81
Fear nuclear weapons		0	4		2.25	0.98
Fear war Russia		0	4		1.75	1.01

*N*=120

## 7.2. Bivariate statistics

For the bivariate statistics, the independent variables *cultural differences non-European*, *religion differences non-European*, *Dutch identity* and *fear war Russia* have been chosen. The reason for these variables to be the independent variables in the analyses is because they represent the theories discussed in the theory chapter the best.

The results of the separate regression analyses between the independent variables and the dependent variable are shown in Table 4 below. From the four independent variables, three

variables have a significant relationship with the differences in attitudes, without controlling for other variables or the control variables. This means that there are indications that the following variables have a relationship with differences in attitudes: *cultural differences non-European*, *religion differences non-European*, and *Dutch identity*. The first result can be interpreted as follows: when the value of cultural differences non-European refugees increases with 1, the value of difference in attitudes increases with 0.263, meaning that when people think that there are more differences between the culture of non-European refugees and the Dutch culture, they also experience more differences in attitudes.

In the case of differences in religion between non-European refugees and religion in the Netherlands, there are indications that this has a relationship with differences in attitudes. When the value of religion differences non-European refugees increases with 1, the value of differences in attitudes increases with 0.132. in other words: people who think there are more differences between the religion of non-European refugees and religion in the Netherlands also experience more differences in attitudes.

The final significant b-coefficient is the one of Dutch identity. Its value of 0.196 means that, similar to the previous two discussed b-coefficients, when the answer to this question increases with a value of 1, the difference in attitudes increases with 0.196. Thus, people who identify stronger with a Dutch identity, experience more difference in attitudes

The significance of these analyses means that the sample data provides enough evidence that the relationship between these three variables and the independent variable is not zero for the entire population, meaning there is a relationship in the Dutch population. On the basis of the bivariate statistics, the following hypotheses can be accepted: *The differences in attitudes towards Ukrainian and other refugees in the Netherlands can be partly explained by perceived differences in culture; The differences in attitudes towards Ukrainian and other refugees in the Netherlands can be partly explained by perceived differences in religion; and The differences*

*in attitudes towards Ukrainian and other refugees in the Netherlands can be partly explained by identity and group belonging.* However, to rule out the effect of other variables have on these relationships, the hypotheses can be accepted when these relationships remain significant in a multivariate analysis.

Table 4. B-coefficients bivariate analyses on difference in attitudes

	B	St. Error	Sig.
Cultural differences non-European	0.263	0.086	**
Religion differences non-European	0.132	0.077	*
Dutch identity	0.196	0.058	***
Fear war Russia	-0.016	0.065	

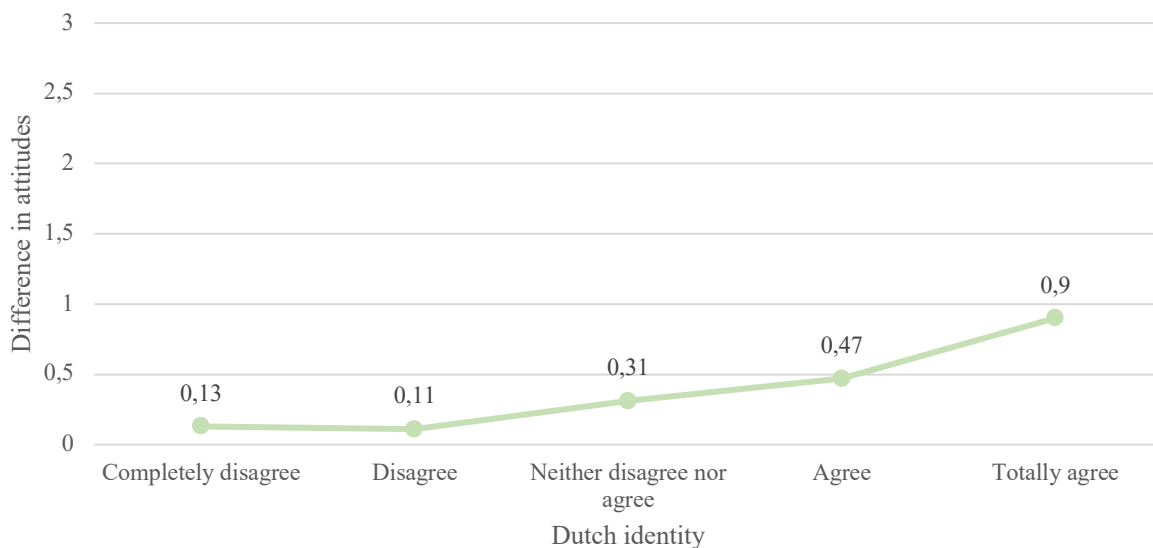
*N=114*, \*\*\*: $p<0.001$ , \*\*: $p<0.01$ , \*: $p<0.05$

### 7.3. Multivariate statistics

Table 5 shows the multivariate regression analysis, including all dependent variables and control variables. When controlling for gender, education and age, it seems that perceived cultural differences between non-European refugees and Dutch people, and perceived differences in religion between non-European refugees and Dutch people, have lost their significance. It has been checked if there was collinearity with these two variables, because a large number of respondents see culture and religion as similar, which can be seen when taking a look at the answers to the open questions in Figure 6 and 7. Collinearity means that there is a strong linear relationship between these variables (they predict each other), causing the coefficients to be estimated wrongly. This was, however, not the case, meaning that the following two hypotheses are not accepted: *The differences in attitudes towards Ukrainian and other refugees in the Netherlands can be partly explained by perceived differences in culture;* and *The differences in attitudes towards Ukrainian and other refugees in the Netherlands can be partly explained by perceived differences in religion.*

The variable *Dutch identity* is still significant, meaning the relationship between these two variables is not zero and is also present in Dutch society as a whole. The b-coefficient is 0.113, meaning that when controlling for other variables, people who score 1 higher on the variable *Dutch identity*, experience 0.113 more differences in attitudes towards non-European refugees and Ukrainian refugees. In other words: people who identify stronger with a Dutch identity, view the reception of non-Ukrainian refugees more negatively compared to Ukrainian refugees. To visualise this relationship, a predicted value of the independent variable *difference in attitudes* was made based on this multivariate regression model. Meaning this predicted value controls for all variables that are included in this analysis. The mean scores of this variable per *Dutch identity* category has been requested. These values can be seen in Figure 12. This means that the following hypothesis can be accepted: *The differences in attitudes towards Ukrainian and other refugees in the Netherlands can be partly explained by identity and group belonging.*

Figure 12. Means of predicted values of differences in attitudes by Dutch identity



*N=114*

Table 5 also shows significant results for level of education. People who have a medium level of completed education score 0.469 lower when it comes to differences in attitudes compared to people who have a low level of completed education. People who have a high level of completed education score 0.603 lower on differences in attitudes compared to people who have a low level of completed education. This shows that the higher someone is educated, the less likely they are to experience large differences in attitudes between non-European and Ukrainian refugees.

Table 5. Regression analysis

	B	St. Error	Sig.
Intercept	0.832	0.416	*
Cultural differences non-European	0.147	0.098	
Religion differences non-European	0.016	0.082	
Dutch identity	0.113	0.066	*
Fear war Russia	-0.073	0.062	
Gender (ref=male)	-0.162	0.137	
Age (ref=18-19)			
20-24	-0.393	0.299	
25-29	-0.287	0.330	
30-39	-0.281	0.357	
40+	-0.021	0.322	
Education (ref=low)			
Middle	-0.469	0.222	*
High	-0.603	0.223	**

*N*=114, \*\*\*: $p < 0.001$ , \*\*: $p < 0.01$ , \*: $p < 0.05$

To conclude this chapter, when controlling for all variables, only the variable *Dutch identity* remains significant, along with the control variable *education*. The interpretation of these results with their respective theories discussed in Chapter 5 will be done in the next chapter.

## 8. Conclusion and discussion

### 8.1. Conclusion

The differences in attitudes towards Ukrainian and other refugees have become evident through policies and civil initiatives. While Ukrainian refugees were received with open arms in the Netherlands, other refugees had to live in inhumane conditions in Ter Apel, forced to sleep outside. The opening of refugee centers was met with backlash and protests, while people were prepared to open their homes for Ukrainian refugees. These differences are what inspired this thesis, which focused on the differences in attitudes towards Ukrainian and other refugees, but especially on the underlying mechanism behind these differences. The research question was as follows: *What are the differences in attitudes towards Ukrainian and other refugees in the Netherlands, and how can they be explained?* This question will be answered in this chapter by answering the individual sub-questions.

The first mechanism that was researched, was European Union policies on migration and refugees. The following sub-question was formulated: *To what extent do the EU policies on Ukrainian and other refugees differ and how does that translate to the differences in attitudes towards Ukrainian and other refugees in the Netherlands?* According to the theory, policies on migration and asylum decide who is allowed to enter and how many restrictions they face, they automatically create a frame of which refugees are more deserving of asylum. Thus, policies on migration and asylum enforce othering, “a process that identifies those that are thought to be different from oneself or the mainstream, and it can reinforce and reproduce positions of domination and subordination” (Johnson, Bottorff, Browne & Grewal, 2004, p. 253). Several EU policies were analyzed to see whether they differ in how they frame these two groups of refugees. One of the most telling examples that was highlighted was the Schengen Agreement and its white and black Schengen list. These lists determine which refugees require a visa to cross the external EU border and who does not. Policies like these make it easier for

Ukrainian refugees to seek shelter in EU countries, but more difficult for other refugees to do the same. This frames other refugees as being a risk that needs to be contained to preserve security (De Haas, 2008). It also ties in with ‘othering’ and ‘bordering’, meaning there is a threat that needs to be left outside the EU borders, because it differs too much from ‘us’ (Van Houtum, 2013). Therefore, the EU discriminates people by their country of origin. When assuming that policies can create a frame about which refugees are deserving and which refugees are not, and when looking at the results of the survey, it can be assumed that the way refugees are framed in EU policies is similar to the differences in attitudes towards Ukrainian and other refugees. This answers the first sub-question.

The second research question was the following: *What are the differences in frames Dutch politicians use when discussing Ukrainian and other refugees?* Moreover, there has been a shift throughout the entirety of Europe, but also in the Netherlands, towards far-right political parties, who often criticize the arrival of refugees. To research the differences in frames Dutch politicians use, two House of Representatives debates were analyzed, one concerning the refugee ‘crisis’ in 2015 and one shortly after the arrival of Ukrainian refugees following the start of the war in Ukraine. Both debates discussed how the groups of refugees should be received. Interestingly, the House of Representatives debate which was supposed to focus on Ukrainian refugees, was largely made about other refugees. This is already a telling example of how Ukrainian refugees are met with much less backlash from politicians and are not seen as an equally important issue to discuss than other refugees. Most comments were negative comments made about other refugees. The number of times certain frames were used per debate also differs greatly. Regarding the debate about other refugees, negative frames were mentioned 138 times, while positive/counter frames were mentioned 29 times, compared to 16 negative frames in the debate about Ukrainian refugees and 32 positive frames. By comparing these frequencies and the severity of the quotes and frames, it has become apparent that politicians

talk more negatively about other refugees than Ukrainian refugees, and thus frame them in a more negative way. This answers the sub question. When comparing this result to the answers of the survey, we see that the differences in attitudes towards Ukrainian and other refugees are similar between politicians and Dutch citizens. This is not surprising, because framing from politicians, according to the theory section, influences opinions in society, but also because Dutch citizens vote for politicians to represent them in the House of Representatives.

The third sub question was as follows: *To what extent are the differences in attitudes towards Ukrainian and other refugees influenced by experienced differences in culture?* According to the theory section, it was expected that experiences differences do influence these differences in attitudes. The symbolic threat theory poses that experiences threat is a source of prejudice (De Coninck, 2022). This threat is more apparent towards other refugees than Ukrainian refugees, because people see differences in culture as threatening (De Coninck, 2022). Moreover, people often see culture as something that is fixed and unchanging, which can result in stereotyping and out-group threat (Albada, Hansen & Otten, 2021). Cultural differences can instill the fear that they can destabilize the Western culture and values. Since people think the Ukrainian culture is more similar to the Dutch culture, and because most Europeans believe that other refugees hold more conservative values, it was expected that this would trigger more feelings of perceived threat towards other refugees than Ukrainian refugees. Therefore, it was expected to be an underlying mechanism to the differences in attitudes. However, the results showed no significant relationship between the experiences cultural differences and the differences in attitudes, when controlling for all other factors. This means that according to this research, there is no reason to believe that perceived differences in culture is an underlying mechanism to explain the differences in attitudes towards Ukrainian and other refugees. This also means that the theories that were previously discussed do not apply in this case.

Regarding religion, the sub-question was: *To what extent are the differences in attitudes towards Ukrainian and other refugees influenced by experienced differences in religion?* The reason for this is simply because Ukrainian refugees are predominantly Christian, and other refugees as predominantly Muslim. Muslim immigrants face significantly high levels of prejudice and discrimination in the West (Kaya, 2015). The rise of in popularity of far-right anti-immigration political parties in Europe demonstrates this. Therefore, it was expected that perceived differences in religion were an underlying mechanism to explain the differences in attitudes. The results did not show a significant relation between the two, when controlling for the other factors. To conclude, in this research there was no evidence that religion is an underlying mechanism to explain the differences in attitudes. This also means that, according to this research, the theories on religion are not applicable to the context of the differences in attitudes towards Ukrainian and other refugees.

The next sub question was: *To what extent are the differences in attitudes towards Ukrainian and other refugees influenced by identity and group belonging?* The theory section mainly focused on the Social Identity Theory, in which the process of construction of the ‘self’ implies the construction of an ‘other’ (Paré, 2022). The other is then rejected on the basis of being inferior and abnormal. Since literature suggested that Ukrainian refugees are seen as more similar to Dutch citizens, while other refugees are seen as different, it was argued that people who identify stronger with a Dutch identity, which also means they have a stronger sense of group belonging, experience more differences in attitudes. According to the results, this was the case: people who identified more strongly with a Dutch identity, had more differences in attitudes towards Ukrainian and other refugees. Therefore, according to this research, the Social Identity Theory is applicable in the case of the differences in attitudes towards Ukrainian and other refugees.

The last research question focused on fear of the aggressor, with the sub question being: *To what extent are the differences in attitudes towards Ukrainian and other refugees influenced by fear of Russia?* Army leaders and European leaders warn for the possibility of a war between NATO and Russia, which was expected to instill a fear in people. I&O Research showed there is a fear of a war with Russia amongst the Dutch population, because half of Dutch people are afraid of Russia using nuclear weapons and many think this is a likely scenario. Therefore, it was expected that Dutch people have more sympathy for Ukrainian refugees, because they are afraid of the possibility of war themselves. The results showed that there was no connection between fear of a possible war between Russia and the Netherlands and differences in attitudes. Therefore, the theories that were discussed are, according to this research, not applicable in this case.

It is crucial to discuss that all results have shown a similar trend: Ukrainian refugees are looked upon in a much more positive light than other refugees. EU policies have shown this by Ukrainian refugees being freer in their movement throughout the EU, while the majority of other refugees are restricted due to their country of origin being on the 'black Schengen list'. Through border control, a frame is being created of them being a danger that should be contained and them being an unwanted and undesired refugee. Ukrainian refugees not experiencing the same limitations, makes them seen as a lot less dangerous and unwanted. The analyses of the Dutch House of Representatives debates on both groups of refugees paints a similar picture. Other refugees are framed in a more negative, dangerous, and selfish way than Ukrainian refugees, who are mostly seen as innocent victims. The Netherlands having trouble with housing the Ukrainian refugees is even blamed on the shelter of other, less deserving, refugees. Moreover, the survey results have shown that people are more negative towards the reception of other refugees than towards the reception of Ukrainian refugees. The results about

Dutch identity have also indicated that the social identity theory, in which ‘othering’ plays a significant part, is an explanation for the differences in attitudes. In all three of these researched mechanisms that are assumed to hold a relationship with the differences in attitudes, ‘othering’ plays a central role. EU policies actively ‘other’ other refugees and do this to a lesser extent to Ukrainian refugees; Dutch politicians ‘other’ other refugees more considering the frames they use to describe them as different from the Dutch population; and the Dutch population use processes of othering to create an own identity, and this results in more negative attitudes towards the reception of other refugees than Ukrainian refugees.

## **8.2. Discussion**

While this research has showed some significant results that are connected to the differences in attitudes, it would have been better to have more respondents. The chance for significant results is larger when there are more respondents, which might explain why some results are not significant in this research. Since the target population of this research was all Dutch citizens, 114 respondents are a small sample. Follow-up research could try to have a larger group of respondents. It is also recommended to have a group of respondents that is more representative for Dutch society, since higher educated people, women and young people were overrepresented. A suggestion would be to try to reach the groups that are more difficult to reach: lower educated people and men.

Another suggestion for follow-up research is to find a connection between the frames politicians use in their speeches, and the differences in attitudes. In this research, both were done separately, while some connections were made. However, these connections were not empirically tested, meaning the actual relation between the two remains unknown. This could be done in future research by centering part of the survey on the influence of framing (from politicians), maybe by giving examples and testing whether respondents believe the frame.

Altogether this research gave insight into factors that are connected to the differences in attitudes towards Ukrainian and other refugees. A strong side of this research is that it empirically tested theories that were assumed to be of influence on these differences in attitudes. Because the survey was made based on the underlying theories, it could test exactly what was meant to be tested. Another strong side is that this research gained insight into the frames politicians use to frame these two groups of refugees. Since a large number of differences were found, it gains insight into the specific negative and positive frames used to describe both Ukrainian and other refugees and how they relate to each other.

Lastly, this thesis added onto the existing academic and theoretical debate by testing which existing theories and literature on negative attitudes towards refugees were applicable in the case of the differences in attitudes towards Ukrainian and other refugees. It became evident that EU policies enforce ‘othering’ by determining who is welcome and under which circumstances, resulting in other refugees experiencing more difficulties fleeing war. Moreover, Dutch politicians frame other refugees in a more negative way than Ukrainian refugees, putting more emphasis on their differences compared to the Dutch population. This can also be seen as a form of ‘othering’. The survey shows that that ‘othering’ also exists in the Dutch population, since most people view the reception of other refugees more negatively than the reception of Ukrainian refugees. Therefore, this research has contributed to existing literature on ‘othering’, by applying it to the relatively new case of different attitudes towards Ukrainian and other refugees. Lastly, it has also shown that the Social Identity Theory is applicable in explaining the differences between the attitudes towards Ukrainian and other refugees. To conclude, this research has contributed to the existing academic and theoretical debate on this topic, since it shows which theories are and are not applicable in this relatively new topic by empirically testing them. More research should be done on this topic to see if more mechanisms could be discovered. This would also make it possible to create a theoretical model specifically for the

differences in attitudes towards Ukrainian and other refugees, by combining several proven mechanisms into one. This research has created a start to this.

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## Appendix A: Survey

### Dutch survey

*Voor de master Sociale Geografie aan de Radboud Universiteit doe ik onderzoek naar de houdingen ten opzichte van Oekraïense en niet-Europese vluchtelingen. Uw meningen en ervaringen dragen bij aan het onderzoek. Het invullen van de vragenlijst zal ongeveer 10 minuten in beslag nemen en is geheel anoniem. Dit betekent dat het onmogelijk is om de antwoorden naar u terug te herleiden. U mag op elk moment tijdens het invullen van de vragenlijst stoppen. Alvast bedankt voor het deelnemen aan dit onderzoek.*

- 1. Ik heb uitleg gekregen over het doel van het onderzoek.**
- 2. Ik neem vrijwillig aan het onderzoek deel.**
- 3. Ik begrijp dat ik op elk moment tijdens het onderzoek mag stoppen als ik dat wil.**
- 4. Ik begrijp hoe de gegevens van het onderzoek bewaard zullen worden en hoe ze gebruikt zullen worden.**
- 5. Ik stem in met deelname aan het onderzoek zoals hierboven beschreven.**
- 6. Ik ben boven de 18 jaar.**

Als u toestemming geeft, vink dan 'ja' aan. Geeft u geen toestemming, dan kunt u de vragenlijst afsluiten.

  - a. Ja
- 2. Wat is het gender waarmee u zich identificeert?**
  - a. Man
  - b. Vrouw
  - c. Anders
- 3. Wat is uw leeftijd?**
- 4. Wat is uw hoogst voltooide opleiding?**
  - a. Basisonderwijs
  - b. Vmbo, havo-, vwo-onderbouw, mbo 1
  - c. Havo, vwo, mbo2-4
  - d. Hbo-, wo-bachelor
  - e. Hbo-, wo-master, doctor
- 5. Hoe staat u tegenover de opvang van vluchtelingen uit niet-Europese landen in Nederland?**
  - a. Heel positief
  - b. Positief
  - c. Niet positief, niet negatief
  - d. Negatief
  - e. Heel negatief
- 6. Hoe staat u tegenover de opvang van vluchtelingen uit Oekraïne in Nederland?**
  - a. Heel positief
  - b. Positief
  - c. Niet positief, niet negatief

- d. Negatief
  - e. Heel negatief
- 7. In hoeverre vindt u de cultuur van niet-Europese vluchtelingen verschillen van de Nederlandse cultuur?**
- a. Heel weinig
  - b. Weinig
  - c. Neutraal
  - d. Veel
  - e. Erg veel
- 8. U heeft aangegeven dat u de cultuur van niet-Europese vluchtelingen vindt verschillen van de Nederlandse cultuur. Op welke aspecten vindt u dit het geval?**
- 9. In hoeverre vindt u de cultuur van Oekraïense vluchtelingen verschillen van de Nederlandse cultuur?**
- a. Heel weinig
  - b. Weinig
  - c. Neutraal
  - d. Veel
  - e. Erg veel
- 10. U heeft aangegeven dat u de cultuur van Oekraïense vluchtelingen vindt verschillen van de Nederlandse cultuur. Op welke aspecten vindt u dit het geval?**
- 11. Wat vindt u ervan als vluchtelingen een andere cultuur hebben?**
- a. Helemaal geen probleem
  - b. Geen probleem
  - c. Neutraal
  - d. Een probleem
  - e. Een groot probleem
- 12. Cultuur vind ik een belangrijk criterium om te bepalen welke vluchtelingen wel en niet moeten worden opgevangen in Nederland**
- a. Helemaal mee oneens
  - b. Oneens
  - c. Niet mee oneens, niet mee eens
  - d. Eens
  - e. Helemaal mee eens
- 13. In welke mate vindt u de religie van niet-Europese vluchtelingen verschillen van de Nederlandse religie?**
- a. Heel weinig
  - b. Weinig
  - c. Neutraal
  - d. Veel
  - e. Erg veel

- 14. In hoeverre vindt u de religie van Oekraïense vluchtelingen verschillen van de Nederlandse religie?**
- a. Heel weinig
  - b. Weinig
  - c. Neutraal
  - d. Veel
  - e. Erg veel
- 15. Wat vindt u ervan als vluchtelingen een andere religie hebben?**
- a. Helemaal geen probleem
  - b. Geen probleem
  - c. Neutraal
  - d. Een probleem
  - e. Een groot probleem
- 16. Religie vind ik een belangrijk criterium om te bepalen welke vluchtelingen wel en niet moeten worden opgevangen in Nederland**
- a. Helemaal mee oneens
  - b. Oneens
  - c. Niet mee oneens, niet mee eens
  - d. Eens
  - e. Helemaal mee eens
- 17. De Nederlandse identiteit beschouw ik als een belangrijk deel van mijzelf**
- a. Helemaal mee oneens
  - b. Oneens
  - c. Niet mee oneens, niet mee eens
  - d. Eens
  - e. Helemaal mee eens
- 18. In hoeverre vindt u de identiteit van niet-Europese vluchtelingen verschillen van uw eigen (Nederlandse) identiteit?**
- a. Heel weinig
  - b. Weinig
  - c. Neutraal
  - d. Veel
  - e. Erg veel
- 19. In hoeverre vindt u de identiteit van Oekraïense vluchtelingen verschillen van uw eigen (Nederlandse) identiteit?**
- a. Heel weinig
  - b. Weinig
  - c. Neutraal
  - d. Veel
  - e. Erg veel
- 20. Ik ben bang dat Rusland kernwapens gaat gebruiken**
- a. Helemaal mee oneens

- b. Oneens
- c. Niet mee oneens en niet mee eens
- d. Eens
- e. Helemaal mee eens

**21. Ik ben bang dat er een oorlog tussen Rusland en Nederland uitbreekt**

- a. Helemaal mee oneens
- b. Oneens
- c. Niet mee oneens en niet mee eens
- d. Eens
- e. Helemaal mee eens

## English survey

*For the Master's degree in Social Geography at Radboud University, I am conducting research on attitudes towards Ukrainian and non-European refugees. Your opinions and experiences contribute to the research. Completing the questionnaire will take about 10 minutes and is completely anonymous. This means that it is impossible to trace the answers back to you. You may stop at any time during the completion of the questionnaire. Thank you in advance for participating in this survey.*

- 1. I was explained the purpose of the study.**
- 2. I am participating in the study voluntarily.**
- 3. I understand that I may stop at any time during the study if I want to.**
- 4. I understand how data from the study will be stored and how it will be used.**
- 5. I agree to participate in the study as described above.**
- 6. I am over 18 years of age.**

**If you consent, please tick 'yes'. If you do not give consent, please close the questionnaire.**

- a. Yes
- 2. What is the gender you identify with?**
  - a. Male
  - b. Female
  - c. Other
- 3. What is your age?**
- 4. What is your highest completed education?**
  - a. Primary education
  - b. Vmbo, havo, vwo undergraduate education, mbo1
  - c. Havo, vwo, mbo2-4
  - d. HBO, wo-bachelor
  - e. Hbo-, wo-master, doctor
- 5. How do you feel about the reception of refugees from non-European countries in the Netherlands?**
  - a. Very positive
  - b. Positive
  - c. Not negative, not positive
  - d. Negative
  - e. Very negative
- 6. How do you feel about the reception of refugees from Ukraine in the Netherlands?**
  - a. Very positive
  - b. Positive
  - c. Not negative, not positive
  - d. Negative
  - e. Very negative

- 7. To what extent do you think the culture of non-European refugees differs from the Dutch culture?**
- Very little
  - A little
  - Neutral
  - A lot
  - Very much
- 8. You have indicated that you find the culture of non-European refugees different from Dutch culture. On which aspects do you think this is the case?**
- 9. To what extent do you think the culture of Ukrainian refugees differs from the Dutch culture?**
- Very little
  - A little
  - Neutral
  - A lot
  - Very much
- 10. You have indicated that you think the culture of Ukrainian refugees differs from Dutch culture. On which aspects do you think this is the case?**
- 11. What do you think if refugees have a different culture?**
- No problem at all
  - Not a problem
  - Neutral
  - A problem
  - A very big problem
- 12. I consider cultural differences an important criterion for determining which refugees should and should not be received in the Netherlands**
- Completely disagree
  - Disagree
  - Neither disagree nor agree
  - Agree
  - Totally agree
- 13. To what extent do you think the religion of non-European refugees differs from religion in the Netherlands?**
- Very little
  - A little
  - Neutral
  - A lot
  - Very much
- 14. To what extent do you think the religion of Ukrainian refugees differs from religion in the Netherlands?**
- Very little
  - A little

- c. Neutral
- d. A lot
- e. Very much

**15. What do you think if refugees have a different religion?**

- a. No problem at all
- b. Not a problem
- c. Neutral
- d. A problem
- e. A very big problem

**16. I consider religion an important criterion for determining which refugees should and should not be received in the Netherlands**

- a. Completely disagree
- b. Disagree
- c. Neither disagree nor agree
- d. Agree
- e. Totally agree

**17. I consider the Dutch identity to be an important part of me**

- a. Completely disagree
- b. Disagree
- c. Neither disagree nor agree
- d. Agree
- e. Totally agree

**18. To what extent do you think the identity of non-European refugees differs from your (Dutch) identity?**

- a. Very little
- b. A little
- c. Neutral
- d. A lot
- e. Very much

**19. To what extent do you think the identity of Ukrainian refugees differs from your (Dutch) identity?**

- a. Very little
- b. A little
- c. Neutral
- d. A lot

**20. I fear Russia will use nuclear weapons**

- a. Completely disagree
- b. Disagree
- c. Neither disagree nor agree
- d. Agree
- e. Totally agree

**21. I am afraid of war breaking out between Russia and the Netherlands**

- a. Completely disagree
- b. Disagree
- c. Neither disagree nor agree
- d. Agree
- e. Totally agree

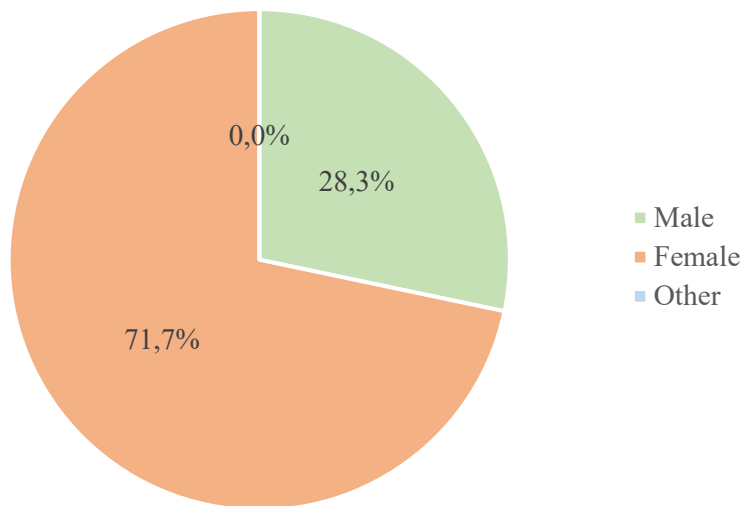
## Appendix B: Data preparation

Table 6. Classification categories education

	Education level
Low	Primary education Vmbo-, havo-, vwo-onderbouw, mbo1
Middle	Havo, vwo, mbo2-4
High	Hbo-, wo-bachelor Hbo-, wo-master, doctor

## Appendix C: Results

Figure 13. What is the gender you identify with?



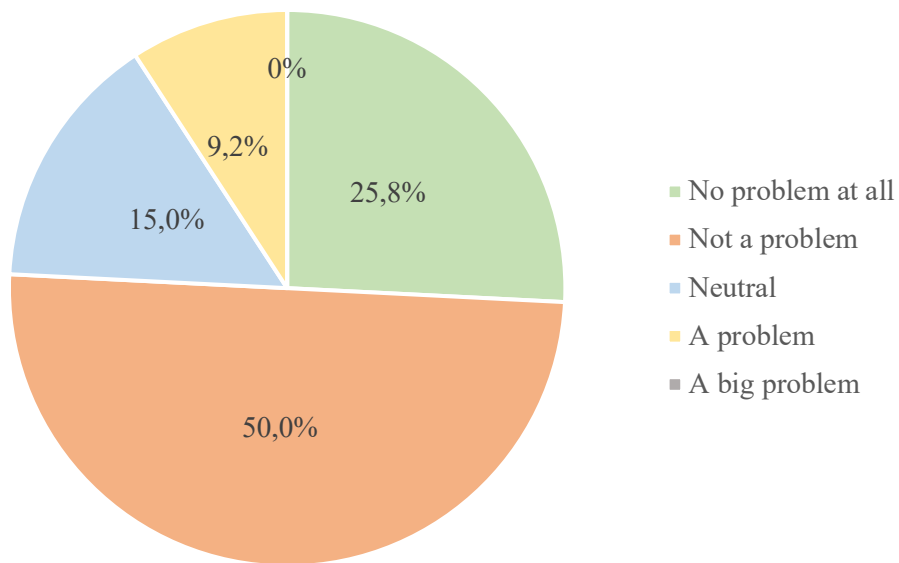
*N=120*

Table 7. Responses to the open question and their frequencies

	Non-European	Ukrainian
Religion	29	3
Customs	15	3
Norms and values	33	6
Women's rights	17	
Manners	11	2
Lifestyle	3	1
Sociality	1	1
Language	7	5
Behaviour	1	
Traditions	5	3
Clothing	3	1
Food	11	3
Acceptance other cultures	2	
Knowledge of society	1	
Laws	1	
Family relations	8	
Attitude towards lgbtq+	5	
Celebrations	5	
Parenting	2	1
Male dominated	1	
Progressiveness	3	
Individualism vs. collectivism	1	
Perception of freedom	1	
Verbal communication	1	
Frame of reference	1	
Rules of conduct	1	
Rituals	1	1
Moral	1	
Rule of law	1	1
Democracy	1	1
Male-female gender roles	9	1
Work	2	1
Education	1	1
Communication	2	1
Expectations	1	
Work ethic	2	
Symbols	1	
More respect for the elderly	2	
Interior design of house	1	
Politics		1
Society		2
Everything except religion		1

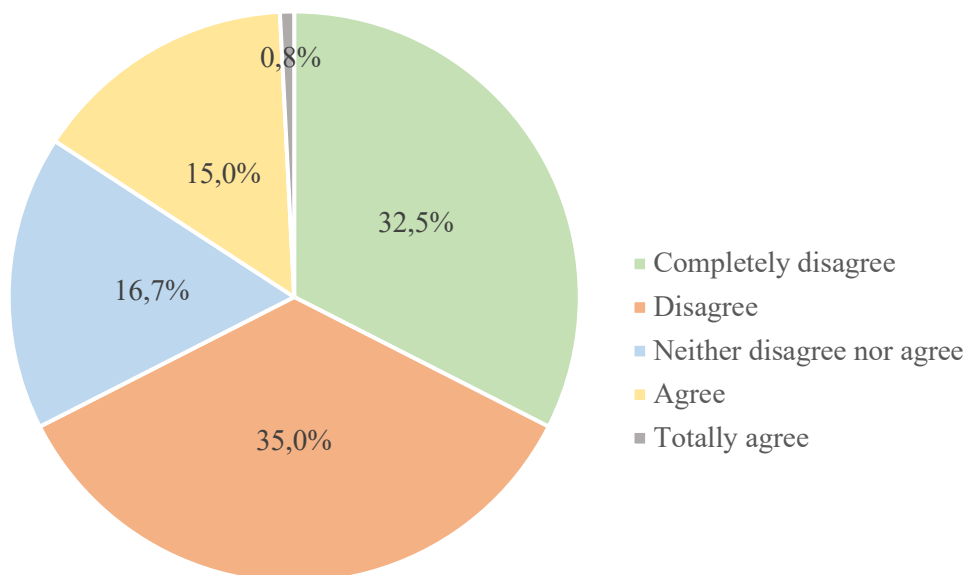
*N*=120

Figure 14. What do you think if refugees have a different culture?



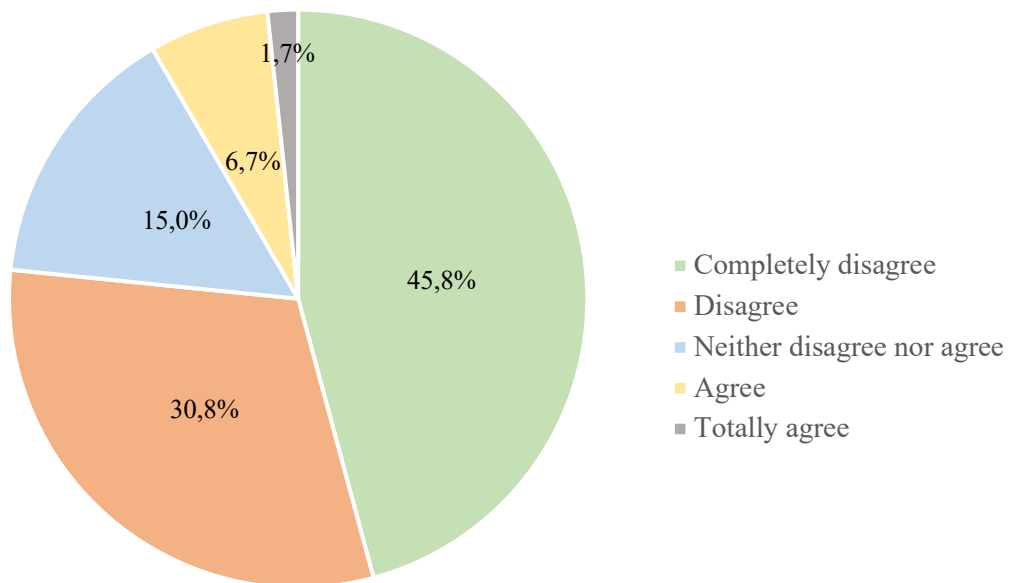
*N=120*

Figure 15. I consider cultural differences an important criterium for determining which refugees should and should not be received in the Netherlands.



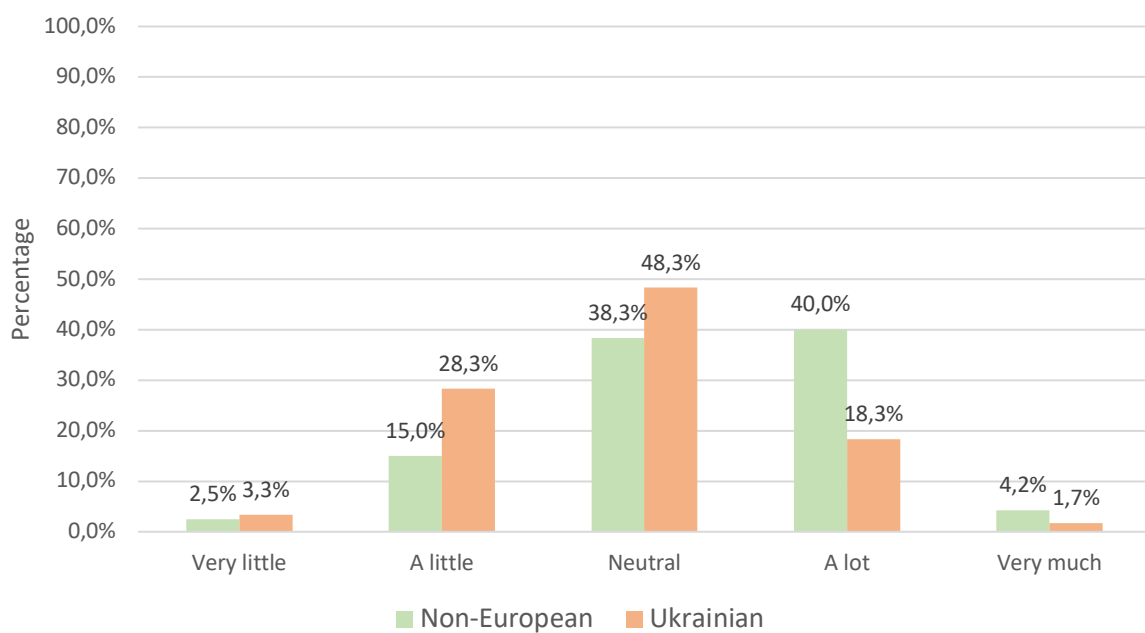
*N=120*

Figure 16. I consider differences in religion an important criterium for determining which refugees should and should not be received in the Netherlands



*N=120*

Figure 18. To what extent do you think the identity of refugees differs from your own (Dutch) identity?



*N=120*