

One foot in, one foot out: Dual identification and Immigrants' Sense of Belonging in the Netherlands

A quantitative study on how labor market participation, religious participation, and social contacts influence the sense of belonging of European and non-European migrants with dual identities.

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Abstract

The aim of this thesis is to understand the relationship between dual identification and sense of belonging to the host country. Hereby, a distinction is made between migrants with an EU background (Polish, Bulgarian, Spanish) and migrants with a non-EU background (Turkish). Additionally, multiple factors have been identified that could moderate this relationship, namely labor market participation, religious participation, social bonding, and social bridging. This study is embedded in previous research on the social identity theory (Turner, 1979) and self-categorization (Hogg, 2006). This thesis employs a quantitative data analysis of the large-scale survey New Immigrant Survey The Netherlands 2018. The third wave is used to explore the two groups, and the data were analyzed using a hierarchical multivariate regression analysis in IBM SPSS Statistics 29. The findings indicate that there is a significant positive relationship between the level of dual identification and the sense of belonging in the host country, which is slightly higher for EU migrants. Labor market participation has been shown to have a negative moderating effect on this relationship, whereas social bonding has a positive moderating effect. Religious participation and social bridging were found not to have any significant impact on the main relationship. Other factors such as Dutch language use and perceived discrimination, were found to impact sense of belonging in the host country in all regression models. This thesis is scientifically relevant as it fills a research gap by focusing on the impact of migrants' dual identification on their sense of belonging in a new country, shedding new light on the integration of new immigrants in the Netherlands. Lastly, multiple policy recommendations are given, among which are the conservation of migrant cultural heritage and facilitation of ethnic group gatherings.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

With the rise of nationalism in Europe over the last decade, questions about who belongs and who does not, seem to have taken over the national public and political debates on immigration (Knott, 2017). At the same time, the world's societies have become increasingly multi-cultural, with more than 281 million people in the world being migrant (IOM, 2020). The amount of people with multiple backgrounds will increase as the world becomes even more globalized and conflicts across the globe push people out of their homes (Klingenberg, 2020). However, receiving societies have not necessarily welcomed this trend of multiculturalism with open arms. Having multiple backgrounds has often led to discussion on loyalty towards the host country (Verkuyten et al., 2019). At the same time, 'being both' has been used as a strategy by migrants to find a balance between their national and ethnic group (Wiley, 2019). The concept of dual identity emerges from the need for migrants to navigate and reconcile their heritage culture with the culture of their host country. This bidirectional process involves maintaining a connection to one's origin while simultaneously adapting to the social and cultural norms of the new environment (Verkuyten et al., 2019). Therefore, navigating these dual or multiple connections and belongings has become an increasingly relevant question (Rifkin, 2009).

This study focuses on the Netherlands, a country with a long history of immigration. As of 2023, 15% of its population was born outside of the Netherlands, and an additional 12% has at least one parent who was born in a foreign country (CBS, 2023). Feeling Dutch-Turkish, Dutch-Moroccan, or Dutch-Polish is not uncommon. However, as Wiley (2019) notes, "it is important to emphasize that not all immigrants are dual identifiers [...] Immigrants and non-immigrants alike debate the boundaries, relations, and meanings between social categories, and they incorporate these meanings into their sense of who they are. As a result, the study of dual identities has important consequences for our understanding of the immigrant experience and intergroup relations in increasingly diverse societies" (p. 613). Nevertheless, those with dual identities have more chances of thriving in their host country (Wiley, 2019).

With this thesis, an attempt is made to add to this research body by examining the relationship between the level of dual identification and immigrants' sense of belonging in the host country. A strong sense of belonging is a key indicator of successful social integration (Laurentsyeve & Venturini, 2017). When migrants feel accepted and valued in their host country, they are more likely to participate in social, economic, and political activities. This active participation enriches the host society, fostering diversity and cultural exchange.

Understanding the factors that enhance or hinder this sense of belonging can help create more inclusive communities where migrants can thrive and contribute fully, especially those who ‘feel to be both’ (Verkuyten et al., 2019). Little research has been done on this relationship, especially in the field of public administration (Wiley, 2019). The majority of studies have been conducted in the psychological field, which have shown that group identities have a positive effect on migrants’ psychological wellbeing (Fleischmann, 2016; Zhang et al., 2018). Studies also have shown that integration strategies targeted at dual identities result in better wellbeing than others, such as classical assimilation, separation, and marginalization theories (Fleishmann & Verkuyten, 2016).

Furthermore, a distinction will be made between different migrant backgrounds: European and non-European. Non-Western immigrants often face discrimination, lower income, and reside in less affluent neighborhoods, which impacts their sense of belonging (Picher, 2011). Additionally, migrants with a European background tend to feel a stronger sense of belonging in other European countries (Eurobarometer, 2024). Social integration is a mutually exclusive process whereby both migrants and the host society have a part to play (Laurentsyeve & Venturini, 2017). Therefore, this study attempts to make use of a micro-oriented, immigrant-centered approach as opposed to previous research that mainly focused on the native attitudes towards immigrants (e.g., Dražanová & Gonnot, 2023). All in all, the main research question for this study is: *To what extent does dual identification affect the sense of belonging of immigrants in their host country, and how does this differ between different migrant backgrounds?* To answer this question, this study focuses on various factors that may influence immigrants’ sense of belonging, outlined in the following chapter. Therefore, the following sub-questions are asked:

1. How does labor market participation influence the relationship between dual identification and sense of belonging to the host country?
2. How does religious participation influence the relationship between dual identification and sense of belonging to the host country?
3. How does social bonding influence the relationship between dual identification and sense of belonging to the host country?
4. How does social bridging influence the relationship between dual identification and sense of belonging to the host country?
5. How do the two migrant groups differ regarding the main relationship and the moderating factors?

Understanding how immigrants identify themselves, either as weak or strong dual identifiers, and how this affects their sense of belonging in the receiving country is essential for developing policies and practices that support immigrants in their integration journey, fostering a stronger connection to Dutch society, especially in a time of growing negative attitudes towards immigrants (Verkuyten et al., 2019). Furthermore, this study uses a data set on new immigrants in the Netherlands (NISNL, 2018), often a group that has to balance multiple identities the most because they recently arrived in a new country and might feel closely connected to their origin country (Fleischmann & Verkuyten, 2016). Also, they might struggle with different aspects such as “lack of language skills, insufficient economic or time resources, uncertainty regarding their length of stay, and direct obstacles to access certain areas of social life, such as voting or political activities” (Laurentsyevea & Venturini, 2017, p. 285). Putting special emphasis on the initial years following migration offers valuable insights into what are likely the most dynamic years, laying the groundwork for future integration into the country of residency (Kristen, Mühlau, & Schacht, 2016).

In the following sections, the relevant theories will be outlined, the methodological choices explained, and the relevant concepts operationalized. Thereafter, a quantitative analysis is used to answer the main research questions. To conclude, recommendations for future research and policymakers will be given.

Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework

2.1 Understanding Dual Identification

This study uses the following definition of dual identification: “Dual identity is defined as identification with both one’s ethnocultural minority in-group and one’s society of residence” (Simon, 2013). It is part of the socio-cultural domain of the integration process of immigrants, specifically the emotional dimension (Vermeulen, 2021). Dual identity should not be confused with dual citizenship, as the latter is a legal status and the former a (self) ascribed sense of being (Conway et al., 2008). Dual identification should not be seen as a yes or no box to tick. Instead, it is a scale on which a person can move in-between a weak and strong dual identity (Fleischmann & Verkuyten, 2016). Dual identification of migrants has become an increasingly researched topic, especially in the fields of psychology and sociology (Fleischmann & Verkuyten, 2016). On the one hand, studies have shown that dual identities can lead to

“radicalism and outsider feelings” when identities are incompatible (Simon, 2013). It may also lead to categorization and racism if the dual identification is not self-selected but imposed by others (Klingenberg, 2020). According to Wiley and others (2019), “immigrants and their descendants who hold strong dual identities face particular vulnerabilities. They are at greater risk of having their identities questioned or being threatened by members of both their ethnic (or religious) and the national groups, with consequences for psychological well-being, academic performance, and political engagement” (p.612). On the other hand, studies have shown that holding a strong dual identity actually increases psychological wellbeing (Fleischmann & Verkuyten, 2016) and stimulates political participation (Simon, 2015). This is because, when identities are compatible, immigrants may actually live more fulfilling lives in their new country and are better able to cross gaps between the many groups they are a part of (Wiley, 2019; Nguyen & Benet-Martínez, 2013). Additionally, people who strongly identify with both social groups are better equipped to deal with different (cultural) situations, giving them the ability to be reflexive and critical towards different groups and cultures (Wiley, 2019).

2.2 Dual identification and sense of belonging

Sense of belonging is a broad and vague term and is often used interchangeably with the terms membership and identity. However, within the social sciences, the concept of identity has been highly problematized as being too narrow and undifferentiated (Brubaker & Cooper, 2000). Furthermore, the term membership does not hold the same meaning as sense of belonging does, as it does not include the emotional aspect of belonging to a particular group or polity. According to Vera-Larrucea (2015), “belonging could be multiple, whereas membership is traditionally unique and limiting” (p. 168). Therefore, this study uses the concept of sense of belonging to relate to immigrants’ different identities. The following quote from a study by Hou and others (2018) adequately summarizes the concept of sense of belonging:

“Sense of belonging is regarded as the key component of group identity (Phinney and Ong 2007). Sense of belonging is also viewed as a general feeling of inclusion and the desire to be close to the object of positive attachment (Hidalgo and Hernández 2001; Pearce 2008). For immigrants in particular, sense of belonging to the receiving society reflects whether they feel accepted, secure, and “at home” in their adopted country (Wu, Hou, and Schimmele 2011). Unlike cultural attitudes and behaviours, which often are group-specific, a person’s sense of

belonging transcends ethnicity and culture (Ward 2013), and it is a better measure in studies involving diverse immigrant groups” (p. 1615).

This definition relates closely to the social identity theory, developed by Tajfel and Turner (1979). This theory suggests that people categorize themselves and others into social groups, which influences how they perceive themselves and others. According to this theory, when individuals identify with a particular social group, they adopt the norms, values, and behaviors associated with that group, which in turn can shape their sense of belonging. Hogg's (2006) work extends this theory by emphasizing the importance of social comparison in shaping one's sense of belonging. Regarding self-categorization, individuals categorize themselves into social groups based on various factors such as gender, race, nationality, profession, and so on. Once individuals identify with a particular social group, they adopt the group's identity, which influences their behavior and perceptions. This can lead to a sense of belonging to that group. Social comparison involves evaluating oneself in relation to others. People compare themselves to others within their social group (in-group comparison) as well as to those outside their group (out-group comparison). These comparisons can affect their sense of belonging in two ways. First, through in-group comparison. When individuals compare themselves to others within their social group, it can strengthen their sense of belonging if they perceive themselves as similar to other group members. Second, through out-group comparison. Comparing oneself to individuals outside the social group can also influence belonging. If individuals perceive their group as superior to others (positive distinctiveness), it can enhance their sense of belonging. Conversely, if they perceive their group as inferior (negative distinctiveness), it can undermine their sense of belonging (Pettigrew, 1998).

According to a cross-national study, immigrants typically identify less strongly with their new country than with their ethnic background and less strongly with their country as a whole than with the majority group (Verkuyten, 2019). Furthermore, dual identity may create an “in-between” place, making their sense of belonging vague and uncertain (Klingenberg, 2020). Research has shown that identifying with more than one identity “[..] provides people with a sense of belonging, a sense of meaning and purpose, a sense of control and agency, and a source for self-affirmation [...]” (Zhang et al., 2018, p.67). Assimilationists argue that immigrants cannot both belong to the host country and origin country (Verkuyten, 2019). Multiculturalists, however, argue that there does not exist a conflict between these two belongings. According to them, dual identification is necessary to respect the uniqueness of ethnic and religious groups while maintaining a sense of shared national identity (Ng Tseung-

Wong, 2015). Based on the previously discussed theories, it is expected that the stronger one identifies with both their country of origin as well as their host country, the stronger one feels a sense of belonging to the host country (H1).

2.3 Migrant group differences: EU vs. non-EU

In order to make assumptions about the relationship between dual identification and immigrants' sense of belonging, this study differentiates between two different groups: those with an EU country background and those with a non-EU country background. Due to the availability of the data set, the EU country background group consists of Polish, Bulgarian, and Spanish migrants, and the non-EU country background group consists of Turkish migrants (NISNL, 2018). Dual identity is namely closely linked to and influenced by identity compatibility (Wiley et al., 2019; Fleischmann & Phalet, 2015). This means that some identities are assumed to be more compatible than others. When migrants are familiar with the host country's culture upon arrival, they hold on to a cultural capital that helps to promote their participation in that society. However, migrants who experience a large cultural distance from the host society generally have fewer contacts with people outside their own group, are less influenced by other cultural patterns (which are distant from them), and will generally identify less with the host society (Saavedra, 2023).

Furthermore, previous research has established clear reasoning for the importance of making this distinction. Non-Western immigrants frequently face discrimination, earn lower incomes, and reside in less favorable neighborhoods, which results in their inequality compared to Dutch natives and immigrants from Western backgrounds (Wiertz, 2014). Furthermore, research indicates that migrants with a European background tend to exhibit a stronger sense of belonging in other European countries compared to their non-European counterparts (Spadavecchia & Yu, 2021). Many people with a Turkish background in the Netherlands "explicitly distance themselves from, and do not want to be identified with, their host nation" (Verkuyten & Yildiz, 2007, p. 1450). Within the Turkish community in the Netherlands, approximately 80% strongly identify with their country of origin ethnicity, whereas only 41% identify strongly as Dutch (Dagevos et al., 2016). Consequently, as this study takes place in the Netherlands, we anticipate a positive correlation between migrants of European background and their sense of belonging, while a negative correlation is expected for those with a non-European background (H2).

2.4 Factors that influence sense of belonging

To gain more knowledge about European's and non-European's dual identity attitudes with regard to their belonging in the Netherlands, the central research question needs to be answered. To do so, it is necessary to put the dependent variable, sense of belonging, in an existing framework. Sense of belonging as a concept does not exist on its own but is instigated or thwarted by many different factors. Nonetheless, there seems to be no consensus on what exactly influences migrants' sense of belonging (Van den Berg & Beune, 2021). Research has focused on various factors of influence such as ethnic and religious identity, race, motives for immigration, years in the country of settlement, native language proficiency, subjective wellbeing, bonds with people in the country of origin, or labor market participation (Amit & Bar-Lev, 2014). In line with the social identity theory, the following factors are expected to influence the main relationship between dual identification and sense of belonging: labor market participation, religious participation, and social bonding and bridging. As this study focuses on identities, these factors are most relevant as studies have shown that "immigrants and their descendants typically identify with ethnic, national, religious, and/or regional groups, in various combinations and with varying degrees of compatibility or conflict" (Wiley, 2019, p. 611), and these factors stimulate interactions between newcomers and host society.

2.4.1 Labor market participation

Hou et al. (2018) highlight that unemployment and very low income are typical markers of social marginalization within a society. When individuals are unemployed or earn very low incomes, they often face challenges in meeting their basic needs, accessing resources, and participating fully in social activities. This marginalization can lead to feelings of isolation, exclusion, and a weakened sense of belonging. Given this understanding, it is expected that participation in the labor market has a positive impact on the sense of belonging of immigrants. Employment provides individuals with a source of income, contributing to their economic stability. With a steady income, immigrants can afford basic necessities, housing, and other essential resources. Economic stability reduces financial stress and enhances their overall wellbeing, which positively influences their sense of belonging (Aycan & Berry, 1996). Furthermore, participation in the labor market facilitates social integration. Through work, individuals interact with colleagues, supervisors, and customers from diverse backgrounds. This interaction fosters social connections, builds networks, and promotes a sense of community. Citizens who are actively engaged in the labor market have more opportunities to

form social bonds, feel included in society, and develop a sense of belonging. Also, employment allows individuals to contribute to society and feel valued for their work (Caron, 2014). On the other hand, according to the integration paradox theory (Verkuyten, 2016), migrants who are structurally integrated are more likely to turn away from the host society as they have become more aware of the inequalities between immigrants and natives. Citizens who are employed have a sense of purpose and accomplishment, as they make meaningful contributions to their workplace and society as a whole. This recognition and sense of contribution enhances their sense of belonging by affirming their place in the community. Therefore, based on the findings of Hou et al. (2018) and the understanding of the role of employment in individuals' lives, it is reasonable to expect that participation in the labor market positively affects the sense of belonging of migrants with compatible dual identities (H3), which in this study is expected to be the group of EU-migrants.

2.4.2 Religious participation

According to the religious social capital theory, individuals and groups have social resources available to them through their social connection with religious communities. Religious communities constitute a social space that may be important holders and distributors of social capital since they are based on enduring social connections within a setting of shared beliefs (Maselko, Hughes, & Cheney, 2011). First, religion can help people create a feeling of social identification and belonging that gives immigrants emotional and social support. As a result, while in their new nation, religious immigrants engage in religious activities, which enhances contact with natives who share those interests, as the self-identification theory explains. Second, religious content has the power to shape people's core beliefs and values, which can vary depending on the religion. However, these customs and beliefs also influence what and who immigrants identify with in their new community. Greater similarity fosters a feeling of community and, consequently, promotes interaction with like-minded individuals. Third, engaging in religious activities may help the accumulation of wealth even more, which influences people's sense of belonging (Amit & Bar-Lev, 2014). Religious centers are venues where newcomers can meet people who can help with housing, employment, language acquisition, and other things. On the other hand, religion can make integration more difficult by fostering discriminatory attitudes and prejudices. Therefore, a fifth issue is that religious membership can become a symbolic boundary if it is associated with certain names or clothes that deviate from the majority group in the host nation, which can lead to an increase in

xenophobia and prejudice (Kogan, Fong, & Reitz, 2019). Nonetheless, most research has shown that there is an overall positive relation between religious participation and sense of belonging. Thus, it is expected that religious participation positively affects the relationship between migrants' dual identification and their sense of belonging in the host country (H4).

2.4.3 Social contact

Lastly, according to Pearce (2008), individuals' sense of belonging is influenced by two main factors related to social contact: social bonding and social bridging. First, social bonding refers to the connections and networks formed within the same ethnic group. These bonds are typically strong and provide a sense of community and support. The origin group or community plays an important role in both the networks and the pursuit of group identity in these strategies. However, it is important to note that some refugees perceive the origin group as unsafe because the conflict situation from the country of origin continues to affect the community in the host society. Furthermore, they can also lead to segregation, as individuals tend to interact primarily with those who share their ethnic background. In the context of immigrants in the Netherlands, it is expected that strong social bonding within ethnic communities may negatively affect immigrants' sense of belonging in the Netherlands. This is because reliance solely on social bonding can limit interactions with the broader society and hinder integration (Svendsen & Nannestad, 2008). Therefore, it is expected that social bonding has a negative effect on the relationship between dual identification and sense of belonging in the host country (H5).

Contacts with members outside one's own community could be more valuable in that regard. According to the intergroup contact theory (Allport, 1954), these networks can provide new information and foster social cohesion (Christ & Kauff, 2019). Additionally, it is expected that cultural influence occurs through direct positive contact and exposure to other norms, views, and beliefs. This is also known as social bridging which involves forming connections across different ethnic groups. It refers to interactions and networks that include individuals from various cultural backgrounds. Social bridging encourages diversity, cross-cultural understanding, and integration. As found in a study in Germany, positive contact with people from the majority group in the host society create stronger perceptions of weakening of boundaries between differences (Sixtus et al., 2019). Therefore, it is expected that social bridging has a positive effect on the relationship between dual identification and sense of belonging (H6).

Conceptual framework

The hypotheses as explained in the previous sections, are illustrated in a conceptual framework (*figure 2.1*). Hereby, hypothesis 1 refers to the main relationship between dual identification and sense of belonging to the host country. Hypotheses 2 to 6 refer to the moderating variables that are expected to have an influence of the main relationship.

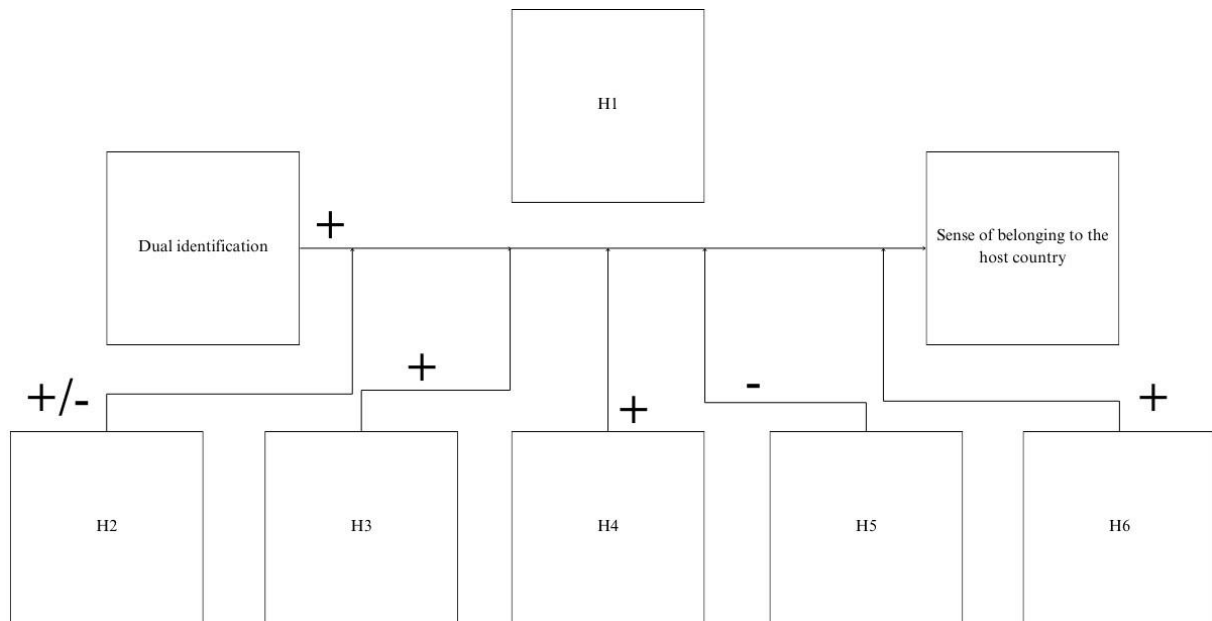


Figure 2.1: conceptual framework

Chapter 3: Research Design

In the following section the research design is discussed including the choice of methods of data collection, analysis and sampling strategies as well as limitations and ethical considerations of the use of data. Furthermore, the relevant concepts are operationalized and presented (*see table 3.1 in appendix*).

3.1 Research questions

This research focuses on the relationship between dual identification and immigrants' sense of belonging in the Netherlands influenced by four factors: labor market participation, religious participation, social bonding, and social bridging. The main research question for this study is:

To what extent does dual identification affect the sense of belonging of immigrants in their host country, and how does this differ between different migrant backgrounds? To answer this question it is necessary to ask the following sub-questions based on the theoretical framework provided in the previous chapter:

1. How does labor market participation influence the relationship between dual identification and sense of belonging to the host country?
2. How does religious participation influence the relationship between dual identification and sense of belonging to the host country?
3. How does social bonding influence the relationship between dual identification and sense of belonging to the host country?
4. How does social bridging influence the relationship between dual identification and sense of belonging to the host country?
5. How do the two migrant groups differ regarding the main relationship and the moderating factors?

3.2 Case selection

This study focuses on the case of the Netherlands, a country moving from a multiculturalist to assimilationist agenda. This case is interesting as it has been found that immigrants who have a strong level of dual identification have more difficulty embracing their duality in assimilationist countries (Verkuyten, 2017). Moreover, The Netherlands is a representative country for other (North-Western) European countries, which could be a useful starting point for generalizing the results of this study. Furthermore, the study focuses on new immigrants in the Netherlands from the European Union (EU) as well as from outside the EU. The reason for distinction is because there remains to be a “dichotomy between migrants who are in a favourable situation with easy access and rights in Europe (e.g., EU free movers and highly skilled migrants) and those in less favourable situations (mainly those arriving from outside Europe for other reasons). Development of this dichotomy has important consequences for the lives of individual migrants and for social cohesion” (Garcés-Mascreñas & Penninx, 2016, p. 52). As the data set limits the research to four ethnic groups this study makes a distinction between respondents from Poland, Bulgaria and Spain (EU) and Turkey (Non-EU). This allows for a comparison between a more established migrant group (Turks), new migrants groups from Eastern Europe (Poles and Bulgarians) and migrants from Southern Europe (Spaniards). The sampling strategy will be discussed in more detail below.

3.3 Methods

3.3.1 Data collection

To understand the relationship between migrants' level of dual identification and their sense of belonging to the host country, this thesis uses a quantitative methods approach. This type of methodology is known for making larger samples feasible and resulting in the ability to ask a large variety of questions in a shorter amount of time to a larger group of participants (Babbie, 2014). Thereby, this study makes use of secondary data as it is cost and time efficient. The data set that is utilized is the New Immigrant Survey - the Netherlands (Lubbers, M., Gijsberts, M., Fleischmann, F., & Maliepaard, M, 2018). It is a longitudinal panel study on early integration processes of recent migrants to the Netherlands. It was orchestrated by Marcel Lubbers of Radboud University Nijmegen, Mérove Gijsberts from the Netherlands Institute for Social Research (SCP), and Fenella Fleischmann and Mieke Maliepaard of Utrecht University. The project has been financed by the Dutch Science Foundation, NWO, under the program Medium-Sized Investments. The survey was distributed in the period 2013-2018 with in total four waves of data collection in The Netherlands. The survey question for the main independent variable has only been incorporated in the third and fourth wave. Since the third wave has more respondents, this study will only use that wave ($n=446$).

3.3.2 Sampling strategy

The survey was distributed by Veldkamp Marktonderzoek BV and I&O Research BV. In all, 18626 immigrants were contacted based on random sampling, with a total number of 4808 respondents that filled in the questionnaire during the first wave. Respondents received the survey by mail in their native language and could choose to complete it either online or on paper. The survey includes Polish, Turkish, Bulgarian, and Spanish immigrants that newly arrived in the Netherlands and who are officially registered in a Dutch municipality. The addresses of the respondents were retrieved from the municipal registry (Basis Registratie Personen, BRP). As noted before, this study uses the data of the third wave ($n= 446$). The target group of the third wave consists of four immigrant groups, namely Bulgarian ($n=97$), Polish ($n= 203$), Spanish ($n=92$) and Turkish ($n= 124$) immigrants who recently moved to the Netherlands. Thus, this study only incorporates first generation migrants as they are born in one of the four mentioned countries. From the total amount of respondents this study only uses those

that are considered being of working age in the Netherlands (18-67) to ensure that the variable *labor market participation* is included. A selection has been made of migrants with an EU country background (Spain, Bulgaria or Poland) and a non-EU country background (Turkey).

3.3.3 Data analysis

To get a grasp of the sample population, first a descriptive analysis is done based on the different immigrant groups (*see table 4.1*). This is a depiction of the values that organize and describe the characteristics of a collection of data. For the analysis, this study uses a multiple regression analysis within IBM SPSS Statistics 29 to understand the interactions between the independent variables and dependent variable. A multiple regression is chosen for a multitude of reasons. First, it allows for several independent variables to be tested against the dependent variable. Second, it is the most useful analysis for when the dependent variable has a continuous scale measurement, and the independent variables have continuous and categorical scale measurements (Field, 2013), which is the case in this study.

3.3.3.1 Representativeness of the sample

At the end of 2023, there were 4,850,598 people with a foreign background residing in the Netherlands. Of this number there were 240,784 Poles, 454,634 Turks, 60,724 Bulgarians, and 60,620 Spanish migrants (CBS, 2023). In wave 3, the distribution of male and female respondents is illustrated in the following pie charts (*figure 3.1*):

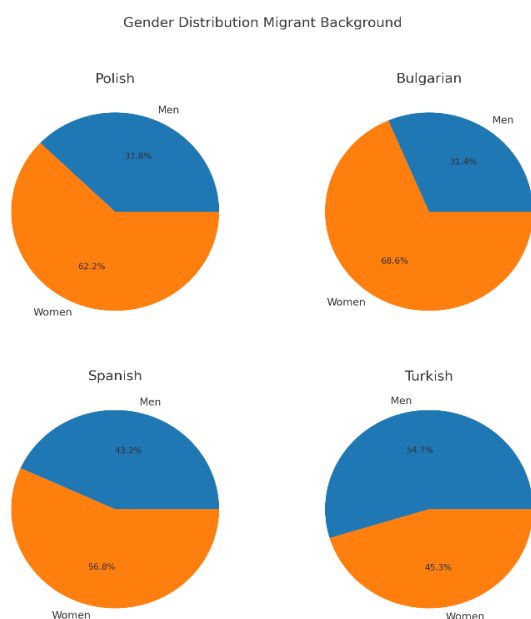


Figure 3.1: distribution of male and female respondents per migrant group

The distribution of gender is only representative for the sample of Turkish immigrants, as more male than female respondents participated in all four waves compared to the other three migrant groups (Lubbers et al., 2018).

3.4 Limitations

The survey does involve some limitations. As the survey was distributed between 2013-2018, results might be outdated. A more recent survey was not found that fits the purpose of this study as well as the NISNL survey does. Also, the survey is targeted at only four immigrant groups, namely Bulgarian, Polish, Spanish and Turkish immigrants who recently moved to the Netherlands. Therefore it does not capture the full picture of all immigrants residing in the Netherlands, limiting the generalizability of the results. Thereby, the number of respondents per migrant group is not equal which could affect the results. Also, by using secondary data the study is limited to the questions and answers from this specific questionnaire which does not allow for a personalized view in the research. Nonetheless, the data is strong on reliability, because of the fact it is an open-access source. But it is weak on validity because it can be difficult to get a full picture of immigrants' opinions and therefore difficult to assess if the variables measure exactly what they are supposed to measure. Lastly, SPSS is unable to generate marginal effects graphs, which would have made the moderating relationships visually more clear.

3.5 Ethical consideration

When dealing with large data sets it is important to acknowledge and deal with inconsistencies in the answers of respondents. Especially when data has been selected in multiple waves, which is the case for the NISNL-2018. According to the owners of the data set, there have been some discrepancies in the answers across the different waves that users need to look out for (Lubbers et al., 2018). Another issue that requires attention is choosing variables that fit with the theoretical concepts. This takes some form of personal choice of the researcher. Therefore, an adequate theoretical framework and conceptual model is highly important to ensure the choice of statistical indicators. Furthermore, in order to make sure all variables measure the same number of respondents, all observations with a missing value on at least one of the variables included in the models are listwise deleted. Finally, this study uses a p-value of 0.1 (or 10%) which is also known as a Type I error in quantitative analysis, to analyze certain results in the

following chapter. The results should therefore be viewed with caution and verified through additional research.

3.6 Operationalization

To grasp the research concepts in quantitative terms, the variables are operationalized (*see appendix table 3.1*).

Dependent variable: Sense of belonging

The dependent variable sense of belonging to the receiving country is defined as the extent to which a person feels attached to the host country (Duyvendak, 2009). It was measured on a 4-point Likert scale: 1 = totally disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = agree; 4 = totally agree; 3 and 6 = 0 (reversed coding).

Independent variable: Dual identification

The main independent variable, dual identification, is defined as the identification with both one's ethnocultural minority in-group and one's society of residence (Simon, 2013) and was operationalized as "I feel [CO background]-Dutch citizen", which is a direct measure that has been used more often in other studies (Verkuyten, 2017). It was measured on a 5-point Likert scale: 1 = totally disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neither, 4 = agree, 5 = totally agree (reversed coding). Thus, if someone scores a '5' on this scale it means that they strongly identify with both their origin country as well as the new home country, which in this case is the Netherlands. Consequently, scoring a '1' on this scale means that the level of dual identity is either very low or non-existent. It is unclear from utilizing this data whether this indicates that someone just feels a connection to their place of origin or to being Dutch, which is a limitation. Additional research is required to comprehend the left side of the scale. However, as this study explores a relatively novel subject in the field of quantitative public administration studies, the dual identification measurement is presumed to be sufficient for this investigation.

Besides the main variables, this study uses four moderating variables to research the main relationship between dual identification and sense of belonging. These factors are operationalized below.

Labor market participation

One of the independent variables, labor market participation, is measured to obtain a clear understanding of how migrants' labor market participation affects their sense of belonging. The labor market participation of the respondents is assessed for which an item is used that measures the respondents' main activity. The item allows eight answers, being: "1 = working; 2 = unemployed; 3 = in education; 4 = retired; 5 = long-term sick or disabled; 6 = looking after home or children; 7 = on maternity or paternity leave; 8=something else; 9 = I don't know". A dummy variable is created to measure participation in the labor market with 1=employed 0=unemployed.

Religious participation

The second independent variable, religious participation was measured as the frequency count of how many times the respondent goes to a religious center of worship. Respondents can answer "7 = more than once a week", "6 = once a week", "5 = once a month", "4 = only on specific holy days", "3 = once a year", "2 = less often", and "1= never" (reversed coding).

Social contact

Social contact was operationalized into two different items: time spent with people from the receiving country and time spent with people from country of origin. These were both measured on a 6-point Likert scale: 1 = never; 2 = less often; 3= several times a year; 4= a few times a month; 5= several times a week; 6 = every day (reversed coding).

Control variables

Furthermore, some other variables that might influence the main relationship were controlled for. Gender was recoded into a dummy variable (woman = 1; man = 0). The age of respondents is controlled, using a calculated variable that indicates the approximate age of the respondents. The education levels were categorized and coded according to the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) into eight categories, where 0 = Early childhood education, 1 = Primary education, 2 = Lower secondary education, 3 = Upper secondary education, 4 = Post-secondary non tertiary education, 5 = Short-cycle tertiary education, 6 = Bachelor's or equivalent level, 7 = Master's or equivalent level and 8 = Doctoral or equivalent level. A reason for controlling for education is that "highly educated immigrants are better at picking up new skills and knowledge, have a stronger motivation to adapt to their new surroundings, and are more inclined to interact with natives" (Wachter & Fleischmann, 2018).

Consequently, which is come to be known as the integration paradox, migrants with a higher level of education are more prone to experience negative associations with the host country, and therefore have a lower sense of belonging to the host society (Geurts, et al., 2021). Language proficiency is measured by the statement: “how often do you use the RC [receiving country] language in your daily life?” with answers, after reversed coding, ranging from “1 = never” to “6 = always”. The better one speaks the host country’s language, the better they will be integrated (Zorlu & Hartog, 2018). Children in the residence, measured by “1 = yes; 0 = no”, was included since immigrants who have children may be more motivated to assimilate into the new society in order to improve their children's chances (Heath et al., 2008). Partner in the residence, measured by “1 = yes; 0 = no”, may influence the time spent with natives, by decreasing it when one has a partner (Aalto, 2013). The months spent in the Netherlands since the initial immigration date is controlled, since those who have spent more time in the Netherlands are more likely to have settled down and have had the opportunity to feel more at home in their new home country or even have obtained the Dutch nationality (Simonsen, 2017). Also, the level of perceived discrimination was controlled for, as those who often perceive discrimination, might experience a lower sense of belonging (Hou et al., 2018). Respondents were asked how often they perceive discrimination in their daily activities. The answers ranged from 1 = never; 2=almost never; 3=sometimes; 4=often; 5=very often (reversed coding). Lastly, the sense of belonging to the country of origin was controlled for as it might affect how one feels in the receiving country. The respondents were asked whether they agree with the following statement: “I have a strong sense of belonging to [country of origin]”, and could answers on a 6-point Likert scale. This was recoded into a 4-point Likert scale: 1 = totally disagree agree; 2 = disagree; 3 = agree; 4 = totally agree.

Chapter 4: Results

In the following section the results of the hypotheses are discussed. Before examining the relationship between dual identification and sense of belonging, it is helpful to get a sense of the sample population for these variables as presented by performing a descriptive analysis (see table 4.1). The descriptive statistics have been separately analyzed per migrant background (EU and non-EU migrants), which was done by splitting the file in SPSS (“split file by cases”). The mean for sense of belonging to the receiving country is higher for EU migrants (2.85) compared to non-EU migrants (2.67). The mean for feeling CO-Dutch is very similar between both groups, 2.97 for EU migrants as compared to 2.95 for non-EU migrants. Perhaps this is due to the fact that immigrants in general feel a sense of duality, which does not have to be different for various backgrounds. As for the mean for employment, EU migrants score higher on average (0.76) as compared to non-EU migrants (0.57). This is representative for the majority of the same groups in the Netherlands, as 4.3% of migrants with a Western background were unemployed last year compared to 7.0% of the non-Western migrants (CBS, 2022). The time spent at a worship center is higher for non-EU migrants (3.93) compared to EU migrants (2.94). This also represents the wider population, as 63.7% of religiously active people comes from outside of the EU, compared to 47.2% of those from within the EU (CBS, 2023; De Coninck & Solano, 2023). Additionally, the mean for time spent interacting with people from their country of origin is higher for non-EU migrants (4.73) compared to EU-migrants (4.32). This could be due to the fact that non-EU migrants spent more time in religious worship centers where they can interact with people from the same origin country. As for the time spent with people from the receiving country the average is the same for both groups (4.01). Furthermore, slightly more females have responded for the EU-migrant group (.62) as compared to the non-EU migrant group (.44). As for household composition, migrants with a non-EU background tend to be more likely to live with a partner (.84) and children (.47). Moreover, migrants from with an EU background have resided in the Netherlands for a longer period of time (58.00) and also tend to use the Dutch language more on a daily basis than their non-European counterparts (4.19).

Table 4.1

Descriptive statistics comparing EU and non-EU migrants. Source: NIS2NL 2018 (N=446)

	EU migrants* (N=325)			Non-EU migrants**(N=121)		
	Range	Mean	SD	Range	Mean	SD
Dependent variable						
Sense of belonging to the receiving country	1-4	2.85	.716	1-4	2.67	.83
Independent variables						
Feeling CO-Dutch	1-5	2.97	1.20	1-5	2.95	1.27
Employed	1/0	.76	.43	1/0	.57	.50
Times per month at worship center (1 = never; 6 = more than once a week)	1-6	2.94	1.67	1-6	3.93	2.35
Time spent with people from country of origin	1-6	4.32	1.40	1-6	4.73	1.34
Time spent with people from receiving country	1-6	4.01	1.64	1-6	4.01	1.71
Female	0/1	.62	.49	0/1	.44	.50
Age	22-67	34.44	9.38	22-54	33.78	7.45
Highest educational attainment (1 = primary education; 8 = master or equivalent)	1-8	4.85	1.88	1-8	4.27	2.02
Month in NL at survey since reported immigration date	1-304	58.00	30.00	1-267	50.63	34.00
Dutch language use in daily life (1 = I cannot speak; Dutch 5 = always)	1-5	4.19	1.35	1-5	4.07	1.34
Partner living in household	0/1	.70	.46	0/1	.84	.37
Children living in household	0/1	.34	.47	0/1	.47	.50
Perceived discrimination	1-5	3.02	1.01	1-5	3.01	.89
Sense of belonging to country of birth	1-4	3.31	.703	1-4	3.22	.842

*EU migrants = Poles, Bulgarians and Spanish; **Non-EU migrants = Turks

In addition, a Pearson's correlation test was performed between the dependent variable and independent variables (see table 4.2). The reason for doing this is to identify whether there are variables that are highly correlated. In that case, they should be removed from the analysis as this could negatively affect the reliability of the study (Field, 2013). There was a moderate, positive correlation between feeling CO-Dutch and sense of belonging to the receiving country ($r=.502$, $p<.001$). This indicates that higher levels of dual identity are associated with a greater sense of belonging to the receiving country. The time spent with people from the receiving country is significantly positively correlated with sense of belonging to the receiving country, where this correlation is slightly stronger for non-EU migrants. Furthermore, the time spent with people from the country of origin shows a negative correlation with sense of belonging to the receiving country, however this is not significant. On the other hand, sense of belonging to the country of origin has a relatively strong negative correlation with sense of belonging to the receiving country for non-EU migrants, which is significant compared to a very low and positive correlation for EU-migrants. Age is significantly correlated with the dependent variable, but only for EU migrants. Dutch language use is for both groups positively correlated with their sense of belonging, whereas perceived discrimination shows a negative correlation, which is somewhat stronger for non-EU migrants compared to the other group. In conclusion, all variables show a low enough correlation for them to be included in the multivariate regression analysis.

Table 4.2

Pearson's correlation for sense of belonging to the receiving country per migrant group

Independent variables	EU-migrants	Non-EU migrants
Feeling CO-Dutch	.500**	.513**
Employed	-.010	.117
Religious participation	.094	-.054
Time spent with RC people	.117*	.284**
Time spent with CO people	-.012	-.105
Sense of belonging to CO	.090	-.454**
Gender	.061	-.030
Age	.176**	.073
Educational level	-.105	-.050
Dutch language use	.338**	.202*
Perceived discrimination	-.102*	-.346*
Months in NL	.055	.046
Partner in household	.026	-.063
Children in household	.027	-.043

*correlation is significant at .05 (two-tailed), **correlation is significant at .01 (two-tailed)

Visual insight into the data

The following graphs give a visual overview of the difference between EU and non-EU migrants for the dependent variable and every main independent variable.

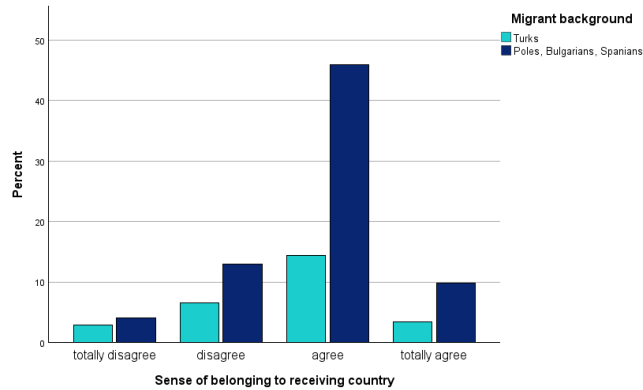


Figure 1: Sense of belonging to the receiving country by background

First, a key factor of the study is whether there is a difference between migrants with an European country background and migrants with a non-European country background. The first bar chart shows that there does not exist a substantive difference between these groups with regards to their sense of belonging to the receiving country.

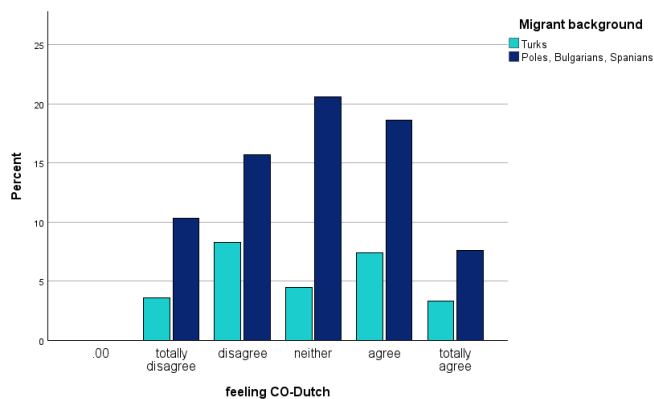


Figure 2: Feeling CO-Dutch

With regards to feeling CO-Dutch, those with a non-European background tend to feel a little less dual identity compared to those with an European background (Figure 2). As expected, those with a non-European background are more likely to attend a religious center (Figure 3, appendix). Also, both groups tend to spend most of their time with people from their country of origin (Figure 4, appendix). This is a little bit less for their time spent with people from the receiving country, however the difference is not substantively big (Figure 5, appendix).

Differences between groups: Independent t-test

To understand if there is a difference between the two measured groups, an independent t-test was conducted to compare the variable scores for EU and non-EU migrants (see appendix, table 4.5). There was a significant difference in the mean scores for EU migrants and non-EU migrants regarding their sense of belonging to the receiving country, with non-EU migrants having a lower mean score. Also, there is a significant difference in employment status between non-EU and EU migrants, with non-EU migrants having a lower mean score. As for religious participation, non-EU migrants significantly have a higher mean score than EU migrants, as well as for their time spent with people from the country of origin. The main independent variable that measures dual identity did not result in significant different mean scores, if there was, non-EU migrants would score lower. All in all, it can be stated that there is a significant difference between the two measured groups.

Assumptions check

To ensure that the regression results are reliable and valid, one must first check for certain assumptions. First, it was checked whether the different variables do not correlate too much with each other, which would result in multicollinearity. This is done by the VIF check, which indicated that all scores are under 2.5, a common threshold that is used to detect multicollinearity. Thus, it can be assumed that there is no multicollinearity and all variables measure independently from one another. Second, the data should have a normal distribution also understood as a bell-shaped curve. The histogram (*figure 6*) indicates that the residuals of the regression model are approximately normally distributed, which is a good sign that the model's assumptions are met.

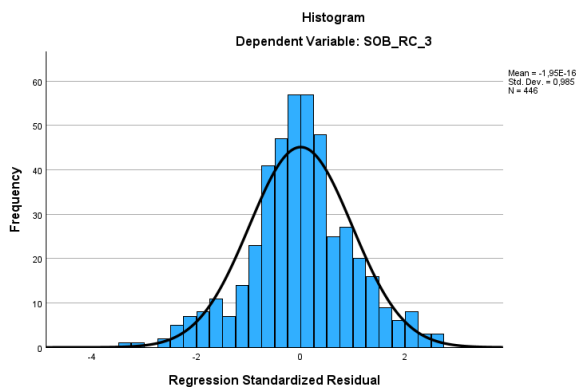


Figure 6: Histogram of the dependent variable, testing for normality

Overall, the assumptions check suggests that the model is likely a good fit for the data, and the results of the regression analysis are reliable.

Hierarchical multivariate regression analysis

Next, the multivariate regression analysis is discussed using ten models (table 4.4). First, the regression between the dependent variable (DV), the main independent variable (IV) and the control variables is presented (table 4.4, model 1). Then, the moderating factors are added separately as well as the interaction effects (table 4.4, model 2 – 9). Lastly, the interaction effect between non-EU and the only significant factor, being employed is presented (table 4.4, model 10). All models were shown to be significant, meaning that the chosen regression is suitable for this particular study.

Model 1 shows the regression between the DV, the main IV and the control variables ($R^2 = .309$, Adj. $R^2 = .292$, $F(11, 434) = 17.676$, $p < .001$). The R-squared value of .309 indicates that 30.9% of the variability in sense of belonging to the receiving country can be explained by the main IV, dual identification. This is a moderate linear relationship suggesting that dual identification is an important predictor, but other factors also significantly influence the sense of belonging. Furthermore, there is a positive significant relationship between dual identification and sense of belonging to the receiving country ($B = .266$; $p = .00$). This means that a one-point increase in the level of dual identification results in a .266 increase in sense of belonging to the host country. Therefore, we can reject the first null hypothesis. Model 1 also shows a negative significant effect between being non-EU and the DV ($B = -0.152$; $p = .032$), meaning that a one-point increase in having a non-EU background results in a -.152 decrease in the level of sense of belonging in the host country. This indicates a lower sense of belonging among non-EU immigrants as compared to migrants with an EU background. Therefore, we reject the second null hypothesis. Furthermore, model 1 shows that those who speak the Dutch language on a daily basis feel a stronger sense of belonging to the receiving country ($B = 0.100$; $p = .000$). It also shows that perceived discrimination has a significant negative relationship with the sense of belonging to the receiving country ($B = -0.083$; $p = 0.01$).

Model 2 shows the regression between the DV, the main IV and the first moderating factor, being employed, as well as the control variables ($R^2 = .313$, Adj. $R^2 = .294$, $F(12, 433) = 16.423$, $p < .001$). The R-squared value indicates that 31.3% of the variability in the DV can be explained by the linear relationship with the level of dual identification and being employed. The variance is stronger than in the previous model, indicating that adding the moderating variable (labor market participation) improves the overall model fit of the regression analysis.

Again, dual identification ($B = 0.266$; $p < .001$) and Dutch language use ($B = 0.097$; $p = .000$) show a positive significant relationship with sense of belonging to the receiving country, whereas having a non-EU background ($B = -0.129$; $p = .073$) and perceived discrimination ($B = -0.085$; $p = .009$) show a negative significant effect. The B-value for perceived discrimination is slightly higher than in model 1, suggesting that being employed increases the level of perceived discrimination. This could be explained by the fact that those who are employed are more aware of the discrimination happening around them and are in closer proximity to situations in which they can experience discrimination, especially when they speak the Dutch language (Hadley & Patil, 2009). Additionally, to understand whether labor market participation has an effect on the main relationship, the interaction between dual identification and being employed is added in model 3 ($R^2 = .317$, Adj. $R^2 = .297$, $F(13, 432) = 15.452$, $p < .001$). It indicates that 31.7% of the variability in the DV can be explained by the linear relationship with dual identification, employment and the interaction effect between these two variables, which improves the overall model fit compared to the first two models. Model 3 shows a negative significant relationship between the interaction variable and the DV ($B = -0.094$; $p = 0.088$), however this effect is very small and the significance is at the .1 level. Thus, based on this result, being employed would decline the relationship between dual identification and sense of belonging to the receiving country, which is not in line with the second hypothesis, which states that it would strengthen the relationship. Therefore, we fail to reject the third null hypothesis.

Model 4 shows the regression analysis when the factor of religious participation is added to the main effects ($R^2 = .309$, Adj. $R^2 = .290$, $F(12, 433) = 16.166$, $p < .001$). The model summary shows that 30.9% of the variability in the DV can be explained by the linear relationship with dual identification and religious participation, however this somewhat deteriorates the overall model fit. Adding religious participation as a factor that moderates the main relationship is found to be negative but insignificant ($B = -.004$; $p = 0.813$). Model 5 also shows an overall model fit ($R^2 = .310$, Adj. $R^2 = .289$, $F(13, 432) = 14.896$, $p < .001$). The R-squared value of .310 indicates that 31% of the variability in DV can be explained by the linear relationship with dual identification and religious participation, and their interaction effect. However, adding the interaction effect in model 5 between dual identification and religious participation does not change the significance between the two variables and the DV ($B = 0.003$; $p = 0.809$). Thus, we fail to reject the fourth null hypothesis.

Model 6 ($R^2 = .311$, Adj. $R^2 = .292$, $F(12, 433) = 16.279$, $p < .001$) shows the factor of time spent with people from the receiving country, which was not found to have a significant

effect on the relationship with the DV ($B = 0.019$; $p = 0.334$). When adding the interaction effect in model 7 ($R^2 = .311$, Adj. $R^2 = .290$, $F(13, 432) = 14.996$, $p < .001$), there was also no significant moderating effect ($B = -0.003$; $p = 0.843$). Thus, we fail to reject the fifth null hypothesis.

In model 8 ($R^2 = .310$, Adj. $R^2 = .291$, $F(12, 433) = 16.216$, $p < .001$), the factor of time spent with people from the origin country was added to the main relationship, giving an insignificant result ($B = 0.015$; $p = 0.521$). However, when adding the interaction effect in model 9 ($R^2 = .314$, Adj. $R^2 = .294$, $F(13, 432) = 15.243$, $p < .001$) of this variable there was a significant (at .1 level) positive moderating effect ($B = 0.029$; $p = 0.092$). Also, the R-squared value of .314 indicates a slight increase in the variability when adding the interaction effect. This suggests that spending time with people from their origin country positively strengthens the relationship between the level of dual identification and sense of belonging to the host country. However, it was expected to have a negative effect on the main relationship. Therefore, we fail to reject the sixth null hypothesis. Lastly, model 10 ($R^2 = .314$, Adj. $R^2 = .294$, $F(13, 432) = 15.229$, $p < .001$) shows the interaction effect of non-EU migrants and being employed, showing no significance ($B = 0.126$; $p = 0.389$). Thus, this implies that being employed does not have a significant effect on the relationship between migrant background and their sense of belonging to the receiving country.

All in all, all models in the hierarchical regression analysis are significant, which indicates that each stepwise addition of predictors significantly enhances the explanatory power of the model. Each moderator adds unique and meaningful variance to the dependent variable, leading to a more thorough and validated understanding of the factors influencing the outcome. Specifically, it was found that dual identification, which was measured as the level of feeling [country of origin]-Dutch has a positive significant effect on immigrants' sense of belonging in the Netherlands. Thus, the stronger one feels attached to both their country of origin as well as to their Dutch identity, the stronger their sense of belonging to the Netherlands is. This relationship is found to be influenced by labor market participation, migrant background and the time spent with people from the country of origin (*see appendix, table 4.3*). The meaning of these findings will be discussed further in the following chapter.

Hierarchical Multivariate Regression on sense of belonging to the host country (NISNL, 2018)

[illegible]

[illegible]

Chapter 5: Conclusion & Discussion

The aim of this thesis is to understand the relationship between dual identification and migrants' sense of belonging in the host country. This is done by answering the research question: "*To what extent does dual identification affect the sense of belonging of immigrants in their host country, and how does this differ between different migrant backgrounds?*" To comprehensively answer this question, several sub-questions were explored, each shedding light on specific aspects influencing this relationship. Thereafter, the significance and implications of the results are discussed as well as some limitations that might impact the overall study. Using large-scale survey data on new immigrants in the Netherlands, this study focuses on two distinct groups: EU migrants and non-EU migrants. To conclude, several policy recommendations are given.

5.1 Answering the research questions

To formulate an adequate answer to the main research question, the sub-questions need to be answered first. The first sub-question examined the moderating influence of labor market participation on the relationship between dual identification and sense of belonging by asking: *How does labor market participation influence the relationship between dual identification and sense of belonging to the host country?* Surprisingly, the findings revealed a significant negative effect at a .1 significance level. This implies that immigrants who actively participate in the labor market experience a lower sense of belonging despite identifying strongly with both their heritage culture and the host country. Previous studies, on the contrary, that focused on merely the effect of labor market participation on sense of belonging found that labor market participation provides a pathway to integration and an enhanced sense of belonging (Aycan & Berry, 1996). However, other studies have also shown that participating in the labor market can have a negative impact on the sense of belonging of immigrants, due to confrontation with exclusion and discrimination (Eijberts & Ghorashi, 2014; Verkuyten, 2016). This exclusion could undermine the positive aspects of a stronger dual identification by reinforcing a sense of "otherness" and reducing the feeling of belonging in the host country, arising from societal biases and the perception of divided loyalty (Verkuyten et al., 2019).

The second sub-question is as follows: *How does religious participation influence the relationship between dual identification and sense of belonging to the host country?* In exploring this question, the role of religious participation as a moderator was found not to have

a significant effect on the relationship between dual identification and sense of belonging. This outcome may reflect broader societal trends, such as the declining levels of religious activity among immigrants in countries like the Netherlands. This trend underscores the evolving nature of identity dynamics among migrants and the decreasing relevance of religious affiliations in shaping their sense of belonging (Fleischmann & Khoudja, 2023).

The third sub-question, *how does social bonding influence the relationship between dual identification and sense of belonging to the host country*, was answered as follows. Social bonding, particularly through interactions with people from the country of origin, emerged as a significant moderator with a positive effect on sense of belonging among migrants with a strong dual identification in the Netherlands. This finding aligns with previous research by Alba and Nee (1997), who highlighted the role of ethnic group solidarity in fostering a sense of community and integration. Such social networks provide a safe haven where migrants can find support and protection against the challenges of integrating into a new society (Vermeulen, 2021; Verkuyten et al., 2019).

Sub-question four is as follows: *How does social bridging influence the relationship between dual identification and sense of belonging to the host country?* Contrarily to social bonding, social bridging, measured by interactions with people from the receiving country, did not demonstrate a significant moderating effect on the relationship between dual identification and sense of belonging. This finding suggests that mere exposure to the majority population may not necessarily enhance the sense of belonging of those with a strong dual identity. Factors such as perceived discrimination or cultural differences might counteract the potential benefits of social bridging activities. Especially in the context of the Netherlands, the shift from multiculturalism to assimilation creates such a hostile environment, making it difficult for immigrants to merge their ethnic and national identities (Verkuyten et al., 2019).

The final sub-question is as follows: *How do the two migrant groups differ regarding the main relationship and the moderating factors?* This was answered by examining the variations across different migrant backgrounds which revealed notable differences. Non-EU migrants consistently reported lower levels of belonging in the Netherlands compared to EU migrants. This can be explained by various factors. First, as the moderating factor of labor market participation has shown, the employment rate among non-EU migrants tends to be lower than EU migrants which is in line with previous studies (De Coninck & Solano, 2022). Contrary, non-EU migrants score higher on religious participation and social bridging. As for social bonding, both EU and non-EU migrant groups spent approximately the same amount of time with people from their country of origin.

Beyond the hypothesized moderators, other influential factors were identified that have an effect on the sense of belonging to the host country. First, the results show that the daily use of Dutch language has a significant positive effect on the sense of belonging of those immigrants. Being able to speak the language of the host country has been found to be an essential part of migrant integration. Not only does it help forming social connections, it also helps in finding employment and fostering a sense of independence (Vermeulen, 2021). The use of the Dutch language is slightly higher for EU migrants compared to non-EU migrants. Second, it was found that the level of perceived discrimination negatively impacts one's sense of belonging in the host country. This aligns with previous research, as a multitude of studies across the globe have shown that discrimination, whether based on race, sexual orientation, or other factors has significant negative effect on the sense of belonging of immigrants (Wu, 2021; Aerts, 2012; Freire, 2023; Mulvey, 2022). Stigmatization and discrimination give immigrants the feeling that they are not welcome and not a part of the majority population. This can contribute to migrants turning away (or continuing to turn away) from mainstream society (Vermeulen, 2019). Perceived discrimination has found to be slightly higher for non-EU migrants compared to EU migrants. Though these factors have shown to be of influence on migrants' sense of belonging, it does not shed light on the relationship between dual identification and sense of belonging. Thus, future research should shed more light on this.

All in all, this research found that dual identification has a positive effect on migrants' sense of belonging to the host country, which is slightly lower for non-EU migrants as compared to EU migrants. This is in line with other studies on dual identification that suggest that maintaining a dual identity can provide psychological advantages for immigrants. It posits that having a strong sense of ethnic belonging, alongside a connection to the host country, can enhance well-being and help individuals cope with the stress associated with migration and cultural transition (Verkuyten et al., 2019), especially for those migrants with compatible identities (Fleischmann & Phalet, 2015). The moderating factor of labor market participation shows a significant negative effect (.1 level) on the main relationship, thus implying that those who identify more with both countries and who are active on the labor market, feel a lower sense of belonging. There was no significant difference between the two migrant groups regarding this moderating effect. Furthermore, spending time with people from their country of origin has also shown to have a significant effect on the main relationship, however positive instead of the negative expectation, which is the same for both migrant groups. All other moderating variables have not found to have a significant impact on the relationship between dual identification and sense of belonging to the host country.

5.2 Social and Scientific Implications

In answering the research question, this paper adds to a growing body of literature on dual identification (Fleischmann & Verkuyten, 2014). Furthermore, it makes an attempt at incorporating a migrant-centered approach instead of a nativistic approach towards migrant integration. The study reveals a significant negative effect of labor market participation on migrants' sense of belonging, which contrasts with earlier research suggesting that employment facilitates integration and belonging. This contradiction necessitates further investigation into the nuanced experiences of migrants in the labor market. The finding that religious participation does not significantly influence the sense of belonging reflects broader societal trends of declining religious activity. This suggests that identity dynamics among migrants are evolving, with less emphasis on religious affiliations. As religious participation becomes less relevant, there is a need to explore other identity markers and community bonds that contribute to a sense of belonging.

5.3 Limitations & Future research

However, some findings may also be caused by the limitations of this study. First, this study uses a significance value of 0.1 (or 10%), which is typically known for as a type 1 error (Field, 2013). The reasoning behind this is that this thesis is an exploratory research, serving as a precursor to future studies on this particular topic. Therefore, we have taken the risk of rejecting the null hypothesis when it is actually true. Second, this study is based on one wave, making it impossible to see the impact of the relationship over time. Future research should use a longitudinal approach to overcome this issue. As the topic of dual identification and sense of belonging is highly personal, future research could also use a qualitative approach to identify underlying factors that could impact the main relationship as data analysis is unable to do that in a detailed manner. Lastly, one should also consider the reverse relationship, namely that sense of belonging to the host country can affect immigrants' dual identities. Dual identities are not static and can emerge or deteriorate based on other factors, such as a sense of belonging. This can impact the degree to which one feels more towards their ethnic identity or their new host country identity. Someone who has a stronger sense of belonging to the host country might experience their dual identity differently than someone who has a lower sense of belonging. However, this interpretation remains tentative as other scholars have suggested before as well (Fleischmann & Verkuyten, 2015). Additionally, though this study uses a migrant-centered approach to study their sense of belonging, it is also important to acknowledge that sense of

belonging partly involves the recognition of the host society (Laurentsyeve & Venturini, 2017) and future studies should keep that into account when studying migrants' integration processes. Lastly, as it remains unclear what is meant by a weaker dual identification, future research should focus on defining the points on the scale with more attention.

5.4 Conclusion

Regardless of the shortcomings of this study, strong evidence is provided that dual identification positively affects migrants' sense of belonging in their host country. For many respondents, dual identification offers a promising framework that blends the support and security of their ethnic community with opportunities for building a new life in the Netherlands. As perceptions of national identity evolve to embrace cultural diversity, dual identities can serve as bridges that connect individuals to both their cultural roots and their adopted homeland.

Chapter 6: Policy recommendations

The above research has aimed to investigate the relationship between dual identification and immigrants' sense of belonging in the host country. This final chapter will outline the policy recommendations that have stemmed from this research.

With increasing globalization, the phenomenon of dual identification is becoming more common. Therefore, it remains important that national governments of receiving societies develop policies that foster cohesion. The overall positive effect of dual identification on sense of belonging suggests that policies should support the maintenance of migrants' heritage culture alongside integration into the host society (UNESCO, 2023). The positive role of social bonding with people from the country of origin suggests that community support systems should be encouraged. These networks provide essential support and enhance migrants' sense of security and subsequently their belonging. Local governments and organizations should facilitate activities that strengthen ethnic community bonds while also promoting integration with the broader society (Verkuyten et al., 2019). However, close attention must be given in order for those communities not to become isolated from the host society. Even though, social bridging did not have a significant effect on the overall outcomes, it remains an important factor in social integration (Lessard-Phillips et al., 2020). Moreover, the significant positive effect of language proficiency on sense of belonging reinforces the need for comprehensive language education

programs for migrants. Integration programs should prioritize language training to help migrants build social connections, access employment, and achieve independence (Pont-Grau et al., 2023).

Conversely, the negative impact of labor market participation on sense of belonging highlights the need for inclusive workplace practices and policies that combat discrimination. Employment programs should include support systems for migrants to navigate workplace challenges and foster a sense of inclusion (Verkuyten, 2016). The significant negative impact of perceived discrimination on sense of belonging underscores once more the importance of strong anti-discrimination policies and practices. Initiatives aimed at fostering an inclusive society, where diversity is valued and discrimination is actively combated, are essential for enhancing the sense of belonging among migrants.

Lastly, this study highlights significant differences in the sense of belonging between non-EU and EU migrants, with non-EU migrants reporting lower levels of belonging. This variation calls for tailored approaches in integration policies to address the specific needs and challenges of different migrant groups.

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Appendix

Table 3.1

Operationalization of theoretical concepts (NISNL, 2018)

Theoretical concept	Conceptual definition	Dimensions	Indicators	Survey questions
Sense of belonging (DV)	Is an extent to which a person feels attached to a country (Duyvendak, 2009)	I have a strong sense of belonging to the receiving country	Likert scale: 1 = totally agree 2 = agree 3 = neither agree nor disagree 4 = disagree 5 = totally disagree 6 = don't know 9 = missing	To what extent do you agree with the following statement?: I have a strong sense of belonging to the receiving country
Dual identification (IV)	The identification with both one's ethnocultural minority in-group and	Feeling CO country-Dutch	1 = totally disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neither, 4 = agree, 5 = totally agree	To what extent do you agree with the following statement?:

	one's society of residence (Simon, 2013)			I feel like a [Country of origin]-Dutch citizen
Labor market participation (mediator)	Representing the proportion of the population either employed or actively seeking work (Powell & Murphy, 1997)	Employment	Those who indicated that they were working at the time of the survey Nominal scale: 1=yes 0=no	Are you currently working or unemployed?
Religious participation (mediator)	people's (active) participation in religious activities (Connor, 2011)	The frequency count of how many times the respondent goes to a religious center of worship	"7 = more than once a week", "6 = once a week", "5 = once a month", "4 = only on specific holy days", "3 = once a year", "2 = less often", and "1 = never" (reverse coding)	How often do you spend time at a religious worship center per month in the receiving country?
Social bonding (mediator)	the connections and networks formed within the same ethnic group (Pearse, 2008)	The time spent with people from the country of origin	1 = every day 2 = several times a week 3 = a few times a month 4 = several times a year 5 = less often 6 = never 9 = missing	How often do you spend time with [country of origin people] in your free time?
Social bridging (mediator)	forming connections across different ethnic groups (Pearse, 2008)	The time spent with people from the receiving country	1 = every day 2 = several times a week 3 = a few times a month 4 = several times a year 5 = less often 6 = never 9 = missing	How often do you spend time Dutch people in your free time?

Social demographic factors (control variables)	Social demographic factors are general characteristics of a given population (Check Market, 2023).	Gender	1=woman 0=man	Sex of respondent
		Age	Open answer ranging from 1-67	Ordinal scale indicating a respondent's age (Field, 2013).
		Educational level		Highest level of education obtained in RC measured by using the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED, 2011)
		Children in residence	measured by 1 = yes 0 = no	Do you have children living in your household?
		Partner in residence	measured by 1 = yes 0 = no	Do you have a partner living in your household?
		Time since migration (in months)	Interval scale	How many months have you been in the receiving country?
		Language proficiency	4-point likert scale: 1=not at all; 2=not well; 3 = well; 4=very well; 0=blanc	How well would you say you speak/write /read/understand Dutch?
		Perceived discrimination	1 = never; 2=almost never; 3=sometimes; 4=often; 5=very often	Some say that people from [country of origin] are being discriminated against in the Netherlands. How often do you think [country of origin] people

				are discriminated against in the Netherlands?
		I have a strong sense of belonging to [country of origin]	Likert scale: 1 = totally agree 2 = agree 3 = neither agree nor disagree 4 = disagree 5 = totally disagree 6 = don't know 9 = missing	To what extent do you agree with the following statement?: I have a strong sense of belonging to [country of origin]

Figure 3

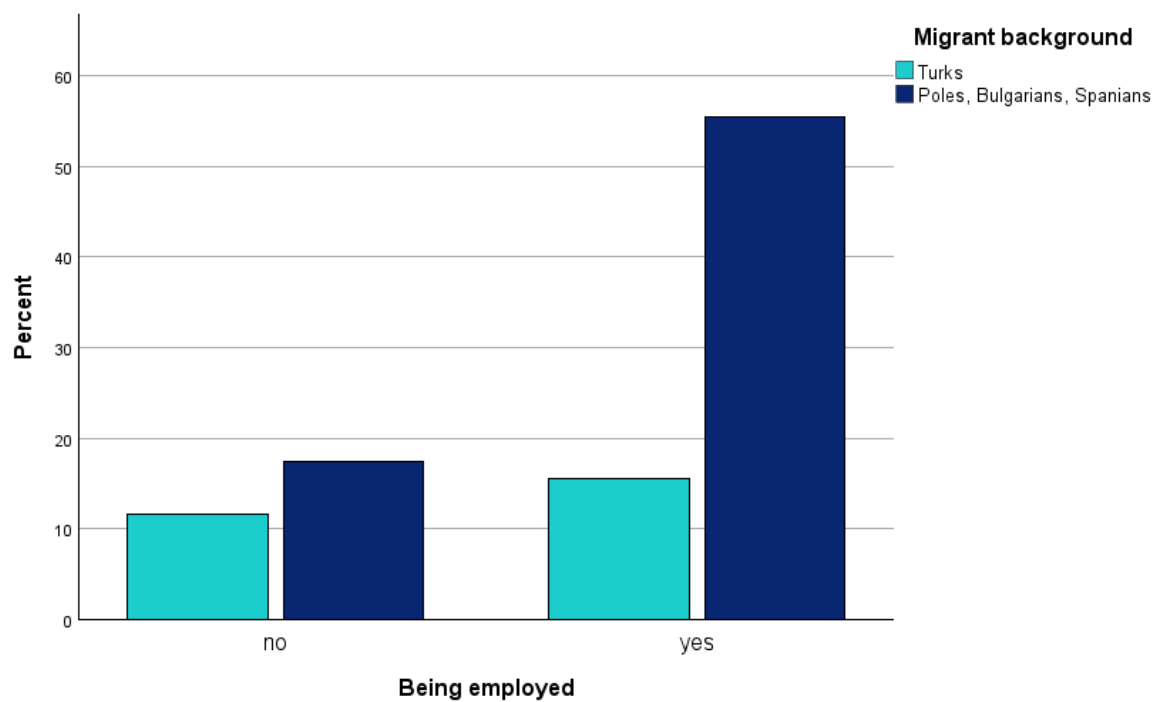


Figure 4

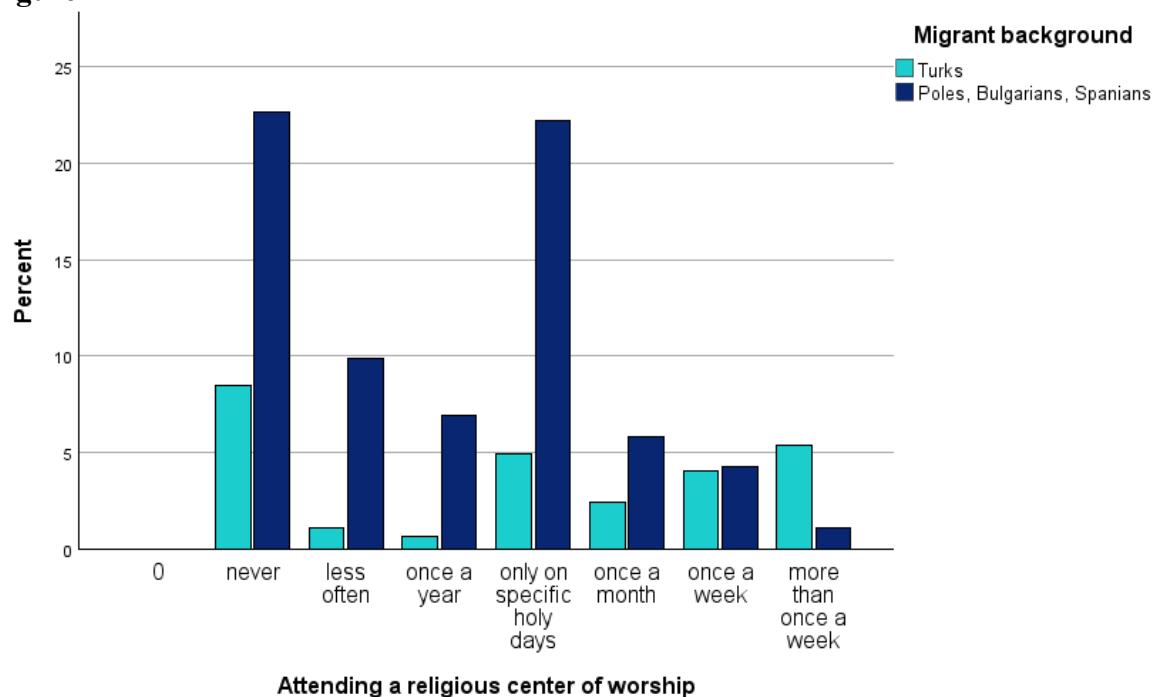


Figure 5

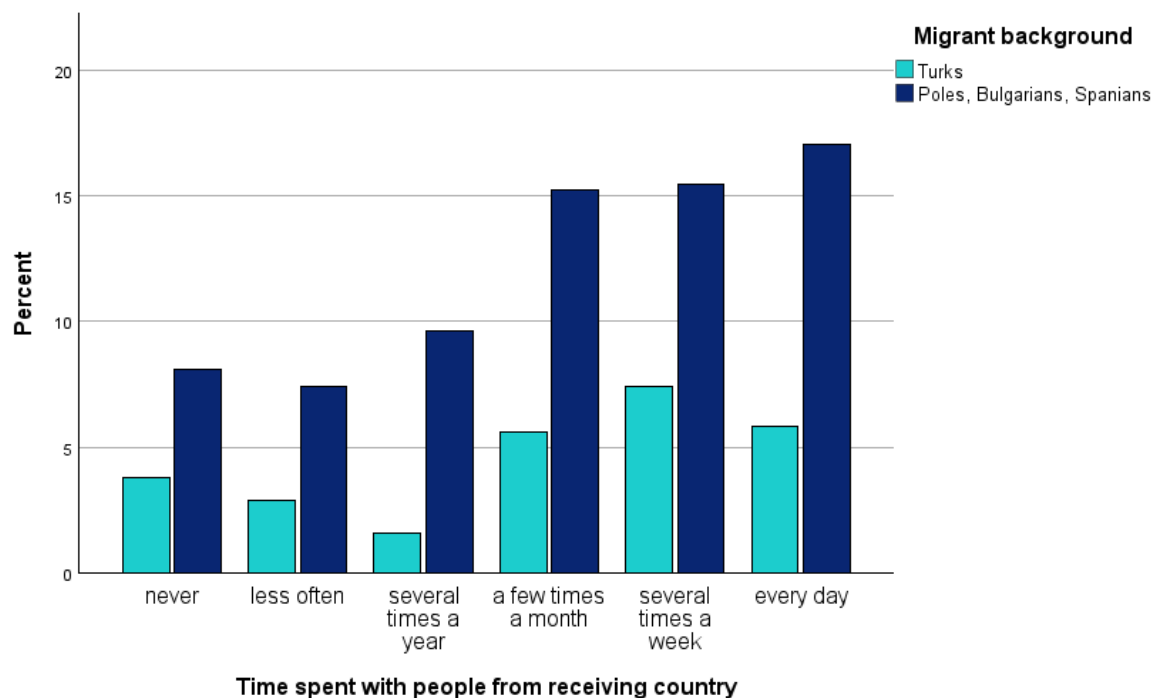


Figure 6

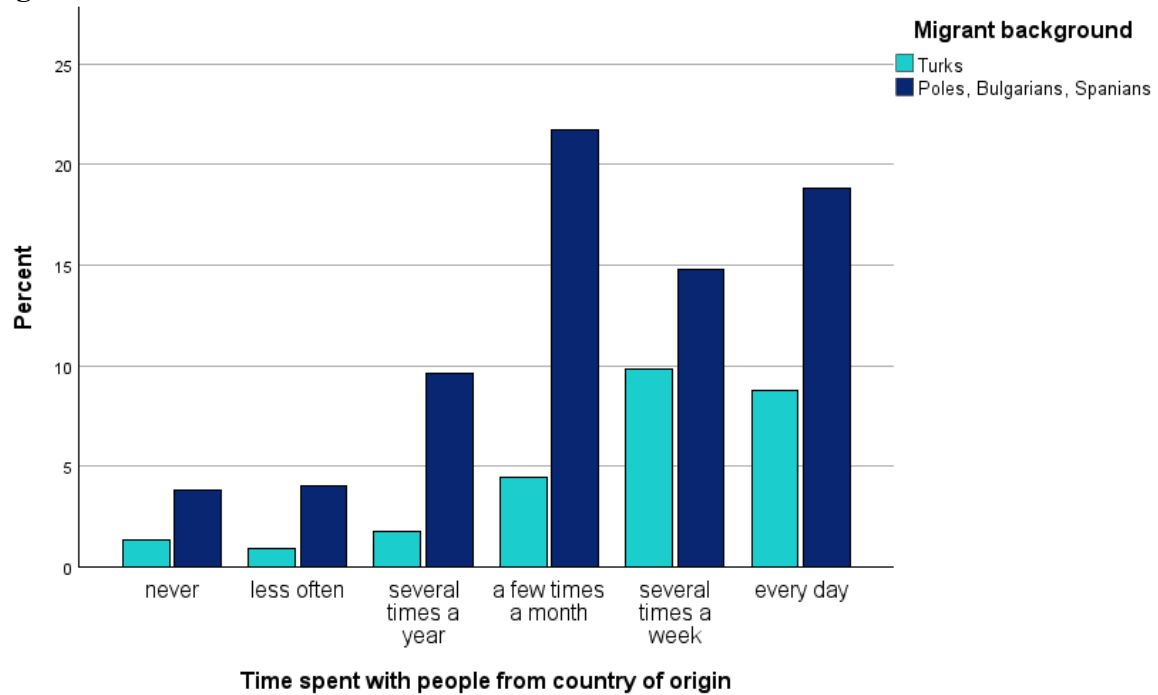


Table 4.3

Overview of supported and rejected hypotheses

Hypothesis	Supported	Rejected
H1: the stronger one identifies with both their country of origin as well as their host country, the stronger one feels a sense of belonging to the host country	X	
H2: migrants with an EU background have a stronger sense of belonging to the host country than migrants with a non-EU background	X	
H3: participation in the labor market positively affects the sense of belonging of migrants with compatible dual identities		X
H4: religious participation has a positive effect on the relationship between dual identification and sense of belonging to the host country		X

H5: social bonding has a negative effect on the relationship between dual identification and sense of belonging to the host country		X
H6: social bridging has a positive effect on the relationship between dual identification and sense of belonging to the host country		X

Table 4.5

Independent t-test comparing EU migrants and non-EU migrants

		p-value	t	df
Sense of belonging to the receiving country	Equal variances assumed	0.001	-2.216	444
	Equal variances not assumed		-2.071	190.290
Dual identity	Equal variances assumed	0.093	-0.121	444
	Equal variances not assumed		-0.118	205.708
Employed	Equal variances assumed	0.000	-3.981	444
	Equal variances not assumed		-3.718	189.933
Religious participation	Equal variances assumed	0.000	4.949	444
	Equal variances not assumed		4.247	166.981
Social bonding	Equal variances assumed	0.151	2.763	444

	Equal variances not assumed		2.825	224.659
Social bridging	Equal variances assumed	0.633	-0.023	444
	Equal variances not assumed		-0.022	207.793
Gender (female)	Equal variances assumed	0.065	-3.460	444
	Equal variances not assumed		-3.423	210.507
Perceived discrimination	Equal variances assumed	0.039	-0.098	444
	Equal variances not assumed		-0.104	242.622
Highest level of education	Equal variances assumed	0.005	-2.810	444
	Equal variances not assumed		-2.720	202.167
Sense of belonging to the country of origin	Equal variances assumed	0.062	-1.147	444
	Equal variances not assumed		-1.056	185.759
Months in NL since reported immigration date	Equal variances assumed	0.194	-2.245	444

	Equal variances not assumed		-2.106	191.499
Partner living in the household	Equal variances assumed	0.000	3.170	444
	Equal variances not assumed		3.521	269.356
Children living in the household	Equal variances assumed	0.000	2.586	444
	Equal variances not assumed		2.521	204.770
Age	Equal variances assumed	0.075	-0.653	444
	Equal variances not assumed		-0.726	269.593
