

Paper title: **Citizens and Citizenship: the Rhetoric of Dutch Immigrant Integration Policy in 2011 (panel 46)**

Contributors

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Keywords: immigrant integration policies, citizenship, category formation, exclusion

Abstract

The governance of migrants in the Netherlands in the 1990s to 2000s was marked by an early and striking switch to ‘radically harsh policies and public debates vis-à-vis migrants’ (van Houdt 2014: 163). From 2010 a new government with right-wing populist backing went further, to declare the centrality of proposed characteristic historic values of Dutch society, and (yet) to further reject the model of multicultural society. We investigate a key Netherlands government document of 2011 on immigrants’ integration, entitled *Integratie, binding, burgerschap* (Integration, Connectedness/Cohesion, Citizenship). Tools from discourse analysis as exploration of language choices help us to apply and test ideas from governmentality studies and from discourse studies seen as social theorizing. Overall, we consider whether and how a concept of citizenship could contribute to migrants’ marginalization and exclusion.

We look at several aspects of the policy document: its chosen problem formulation; its delineation, naming and predication of population categories; its central concepts of citizenship, community and integration; and its chosen metaphors and nuancing of emphases, the backgrounding of some matters and foregrounding of others, stitching together the argumentative elements into a meaning-rich world-picture with a particular emotional content and force. The analysis suggests how a reconceived—moralized, ‘neo-liberal communitarian’ (Schinkel & van Houdt, 2010)—conception of citizenship shapes migrants’ given identities, allocates positions in society, and can render many migrants subjects of marginalization and exclusion.

Schinkel, W., and van Houdt, F., 2010. The double helix of cultural assimilationism and neo-liberalism: citizenship in contemporary governmentality, *British Journal of Sociology* 61(4).

van Houdt, F., 2014. *Governing Citizens. The Government of Citizenship, Crime and Migration in The Netherlands*. Doctoral thesis, Erasmus University Rotterdam.