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Multiculturalism and multicultural citizenship : public views on national belonging, equality and cultural distinctiveness in the Netherlands

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MULTICULTURALISM & MULTICULTURAL CITIZENSHIP

Public views on national belonging,
equality and cultural distinctiveness
in the Netherlands

Igor Boog

This study concerns three central aspects of multiculturalism, which are closely related to fundamental debates on citizenship and are described as the principal dimensions of multicultural citizenship. The first of these dimensions relates to national belonging: the recognition that citizens of various ethnic and cultural backgrounds belong to the national group. The second dimension bears upon social equality, on grounds such as ethnic origin, religion, gender and sexual orientation. The third dimension is the most defining aspect of multiculturalism: the recognition of cultural distinctiveness of the various groups in society, which is considered necessary (by proponents of multiculturalism) to achieve citizen equality.

This study explores views in Dutch society on these potentially divisive issues. Essentially, this study provides insight into the question to which extent society attributes the quality 'Dutch' to Dutch citizens from various ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

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