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and  
their contacts with the police

dr. Josine Junger-Tas

The Hague - Netherlands  
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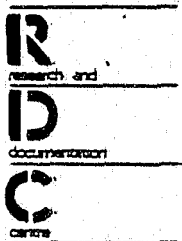
YOUNG IMMIGRANTS IN THE NETHERLANDS  
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MINISTRY of JUSTICE  
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## 1. Introduction

Ethnic minorities in the Netherlands fall into various categories: firstly there are the migrant workers, of whom the Moroccans and Turks make up the most sizeable groups; then there are the former inhabitants of Surinam (Dutch Guyana), a Dutch colony which acceded to independence in 1975.

In addition to these major groups, there are other foreign nationals, some of whom come from the Mediterranean countries, but these are far fewer in number and are not included in this report.

The young people of these groups have in many respects an exceptional status within the Dutch community: they differ from their Dutch colleagues in cultural background, outward appearance, language, education, housing, work situation and future prospects. Also, as migrants, they are foreign nationals, whereas most of the young people from Surinam have Dutch nationality.

But according to one section of public opinion, the differences between young people belonging to the ethnic minorities and young Dutch nationals go further than that: many people, for instance, are convinced that the former come more frequently into contact with the youth welfare services and the juvenile courts.

This is the crux of the problem about which so much has been said and written.

The first question to answer is whether the services mentioned really have to deal with disproportionate numbers of young people from ethnic minority groups.

If there is such disproportion, it would be useful to know its nature and scale and also whether all the ethnic groups are equal in this respect.

A further important point to consider is what the reason for this disproportion might be: is it the behaviour of the young people in question, or do other factors enter into the decision-making process of the judicial authorities? At the next stage - once evidence of deviant behaviour or family or other problems has been assembled - it is permissible to ask what causes them. Can they be traced to the conflicts between distinct cultures or to the disadvantaged socio-economic situation in which most of those groups live, as do certain sectors of the Dutch population?

These are crucial questions which unfortunately I am unable to answer fully. Our research team has carried out a number of investigations, but not all of these have been completed.

This report will therefore do no more than introduce the problem under review.

I shall start by giving general information about the situation of the three groups mentioned above in the Netherlands.

I shall then examine the ways in which the young people belonging to those groups become the concern of the juvenile criminal justice system, and more precisely with the juveniles police department.

I shall end by suggesting a number of possible explanations for delinquent or anti-social behaviour forms.

As research into this topic is still in progress, care must be taken to avoid drawing hasty conclusions. Even so, the findings so far available reveal a number of major lines of inquiry to which it may be helpful to draw attention.

2. Population data

2.1 Ethnic groups and their sizes

Unlike many European countries, the Netherlands did not become a host country for immigration until comparatively recently.

In the 1970s there was a sizeable flow of migrant workers from the Mediterranean countries, while the great influx of Netherlands nationals from Surinam and the Antilles occurred between 1969 and 1975.

Since 1981, there has been a sharp decline in immigration (Penninx, 1983). Where immigration from Surinam is concerned, the bilateral treaty permitting the arrival of unlimited numbers of Surinam citizens terminated in 1980, and new regulations of a more restrictive kind were introduced.

Since 1981 a restrictive admissions policy has also been applied to the Mediterranean countries: Turkish citizens are already required to possess visas, and there are more stringent conditions with regard to their housing and means of subsistence.

Also, the economic recession has curbed immigration and even caused a number of immigrants to return home.

The nature of immigration has also changed.

Since 1980, there has been no further recruitment of foreign workers, and most migrants who now enter the country do so under the scheme for reuniting families. In 1981, for instance, half of the total number of migrants were unmarried children of migrant workers, most of them aged under 20. According to estimates, 72% of Turkish workers and 45.5% of Moroccan workers have brought their families to Holland. The following table (CBS, monthly statistics 1980/12) gives population figures since 1960 and shows the extent to which foreign nationals have contributed to population growth.

Table 1. Netherlands population and foreign population, 1960 to 1982

	Netherlands population	Foreign population	Foreign population as % of total
31 May 1960	11,500,000	117,500	1.0
28 February 1971	13,000,000	255,000	2.0
1 January 1976	13,700,000	350,000	2.6
1 January 1978	13,900,000	400,000	2.9
1 January 1980	14,000,000	475,000	3.4
1 January 1981	14,200,000	520,000	3.7
1 January 1982 (1)	14,300,000	544,000	3.8

(1) Estimate quoted by Penninx, op. cit.

These figures show a levelling off since 1981 of the foreign population as a proportion of the total population.

The foreign population consists of approximately 500,000 persons, of whom about 150,000 are Turkish nationals and about 100,000 Moroccan nationals.

Approximately 60,000 immigrants are from Italy, Spain and Yugoslavia, and the remainder are from other countries, chiefly those bordering on Holland. About 300,000 persons in all migrate from the Mediterranean countries.

Immigrants from Surinam and the Antilles number approximately 200,000, most of whom have Dutch nationality.

From this we may infer that the ethnic minorities account in all for about 5% of the population of the Netherlands.

## 2.2 Length of stay of migrants

By far the majority of foreign workers have been residing in the Netherlands for a considerable number of years.

According to Shadid, 54% of Moroccan workers have been in Holland for more than seven years (Shadid, 1979). Another survey conducted among workers from seven Mediterranean countries shows that over half have been resident in Holland for ten years or more (Wentholt, 1982).

All investigations show that the duration of the foreign workers' stay has been fairly long: taking all ethnic groups together, about 60% have been living in Holland for six years or more (Government Information Service, 1983).

Although the economic recession will cause a number of migrant workers to return to their countries of origin in the years to come, one can say with certainty that the majority of them are permanently established in this country.

## 2.3 Distribution of ethnic minorities

Although the foreign population accounts for only a very small proportion of the total population, there are considerable differences of concentration according to locality.

The highest concentrations are in the country's four main towns.

Table 2. Foreign residents in the four main towns in 1980

	% of total population
Amsterdam	9.3
Rotterdam	8.4
The Hague	6.9
Utrecht	7.2
TOTAL for the Netherlands	3.4

This applies not only to the foreign nationals but also to the minorities of Antillean and Surinamese origin. Half of the people belonging to these groups live in the four main towns (Reubsaet, 1981).

If we include these groups with the rest, we can conclude that in towns such as Amsterdam and Rotterdam, ethnic minorities make up at least 10-12% of the population.

A survey of the Turkish and Moroccan populations has shown that two-thirds of the Turks are from the country and that one third consists of town-dwellers; among the Moroccans, the breakdown is approximately 50% to 50%.

#### 2.4 Some demographic data

From a demographic standpoint, the minorities differ appreciably from the Dutch population. Firstly, their birth rate is higher.

Of the 178,600 births recorded in 1981, 8% were of foreign nationality. About 60% of this group were of Turkish or Moroccan parents.

These populations also have a different demographic structure: children under the age of ten account for 23% of the foreign population, as compared with 13.5% in the case of the Dutch population.

However, a distinction must be drawn between growth due to the reuniting of families and growth due to a high birth rate. Until 1977, both phenomena were apparent.

In 1977, the birth rate of the Turkish group was three times as high as that of the Netherlands population, and that of the Moroccan group five times as high.

However, after that date, the birth rate began to decline slowly in both groups, although more appreciably in the Turkish group than in the Moroccan group.

According to Penninx, both groups tended to form «closed» populations; in other words, there was virtually no immigration or re-emigration. One would therefore expect the birth rate of both ethnic groups to become level with the birth rate of the Dutch population within a period of 15 to 20 years (Penninx, 1983, page 38).

The same applies for the Surinam group: in 1979 to 1981 the birth rate in this group was only 29% higher than that of the Dutch population, and in recent years this difference has been reduced still further (Tan, 1983).

Consequently, the forecast is that the proportion of ethnic minorities in the total population will continue to increase slightly but not appreciably.

### 3. Socio-economic situation

#### 3.1 Standards of education

Most foreign workers are recruited to do unskilled work, and most have had very little education. In the Moroccan group, the majority was illiterate on arrival in Holland; the level of education of the Turkish

group was slightly higher and that of the migrants from Surinam considerably higher. What is the present situation with their children? Figures quoted by the Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) which, unfortunately, make no distinction between Surinamese and Dutch children - both groups having Dutch nationality - show that the Turkish and Moroccan children attend primary school normally. In the 12 to 15 year age group, a comparatively large number are still in primary education. Those who transfer to secondary education tend to be mainly in establishments of vocational training (SCP, 1984).

A survey conducted among 600 young people from Morocco and Turkey, aged between 16 and 20, revealed that three-quarters had not been able to complete their courses of vocational training or intermediate level secondary education.

Of these, only 18% received day-time education; 75% were in vocational training establishments and 10% were in intermediate level education. Many of these young people stayed away from school (Brassé and others, 1983). Other surveys have shown that, among 15-year-olds living in Rotterdam, 25% of Turks and Moroccans often failed at school, as compared with only 5% of Dutch nationals. In the case of the young groups of migrants from Surinam, the figure (7%) did not differ greatly from that of the Dutch group. The percentage of girls attending school (de Jong and others 1982) was only 30% in the case of Turks and 40% in the case of Moroccans.

The following table, taken from this survey, gives an idea of the differences between the various groups where educational standards are concerned.

Table 3: Educational standard of 15-year-olds by ethnic group, 1981 (%)

		Dutch	Surinamese	Turkish/Moroccan
		N = 141	N = 68	N = 78
Primary school		-	2	9
Training college	- 1	1	3	17
" "	- 2	10	31	41
" "	- 3	21	27	24
Intermediate level school	- 3	29	24	8
Intermediate level school - 4; Athenaeum	- 3	28	15	1
Athenaeum/Lyceum	- 4	11	-	-
		100	100	100

As we can see, the Turkish and Moroccan children have the lowest standard of education. After primary school they generally go on to vocational training. They are virtually absent from intermediate level education and the Athenaeum and Lyceum.

The young people from Surinam are also backward in comparison with the young nationals, but the difference is less great: at 15, they have a considerably higher standard of education than those of their contemporaries from the Mediterranean regions.

However, one survey conducted among 1,093 Surinamese (Reubsæf and others, 1982) has shown that most of these attend vocational training institutions; only a very small number go to the Lyceum.

The age of the Surinamese is invariably higher than that of the young Dutch nationals at any given level of education.

The final table is based on data compiled by the Amsterdam Juveniles Police Department and includes young people who have had contact with the police.

Table 4: Standard of education of young people of school age having had contact with the police in 1981 (Source: Annual report of the Amsterdam Police)

	Dutch	Surinamese	Moroccan	Turkish
	N = 910	N = 27	N = 174	N = 78
Primary school	15	23	50	16.5
Vocational Training	37.5	48	45	60
Intermediate level education	25.5	23	4.5	19
Athenaeum/Lyceum	12	6	0.5	4
	100	100	100	100

Although no data are available about the age structure of the different groups, they are in every case under the age of 18.

This table bears out what we said earlier: the Moroccan group shows the widest deviation from the indigenous group, the Surinamese group being closest to the latter. Here, again, the young foreign nationals are nearly all in vocational training, and only a very few enter secondary education.

It is impossible to be optimistic about prospects for the near future. The majority of foreign children leave school either after primary education or before obtaining a vocational training diploma.

The greatest problem is posed by the children who arrived in Holland at the age of 12 or over. A special service is provided for these young people, known as the International Transition Classes. The purpose of these classes is to qualify them for admission to regular secondary education. However, a survey of the way this service operates has shown that most of the young people attending the classes do so as the final stage of education before entering the labour market (Bouwmeester, 1979).

The Office of the Social and Cultural Plan has drawn attention to a study, shortly to be published, in which it is shown that children of Turkish and Moroccan parents, who arrive in Holland before the age of 12, have a much better record of school achievement than those who arrive at a later age (SCP, 1984).



### 3.2 Employment situation

Where employment is concerned, it is interesting to compare the situation of the older workers with that of the younger ones.

In the case of the older workers, a survey conducted among 1,240 immigrant children in the sixth year of primary education gives the following data on the father's occupation (van Esch, 1983).

Table 5: Children in the sixth year of primary education: father's occupation (%)

	Turkish	Moroccan	Surinam/ Antillean	Total Population
	N = 517	N = 172	N = 196	N = 1046
Unskilled workers	79	81	42	11
Skilled workers	17	17	32.5	35.5
Lower grade employees and self employed	3	1	11.5	39
Executive and professional	1	1	14	14.5
	100	100	100	100

The table shows that by far the majority of foreign workers are unskilled labourers. Where the migrants from Surinam and the Antilles are concerned, we find a smaller proportion of unskilled labourers and twice as many skilled labourers.

We shall now examine the differences between young migrant workers as to occupational levels. Brassé and others have compared the distribution over various industrial sectors of young Turkish and Moroccan nationals on the one hand and young Dutch nationals on the other. The Dutch nationals were divided into two groups: those under 25 and those under 35 who have attended vocational training or intermediate level secondary education.

However, the Turkish and Moroccan group differed from the others in that it consisted of people who arrived in Holland comparatively late, that is to say after the age of 11. The term «transition generation» was applied to this group.

Table 6. Distribution of young Turks, Moroccans and Dutch nationals between sectors of employment (%)

	Turks and Moroccans 16-24 years	Dutch under 25 years	Dutch under 35 years Vocational and intermediate level secondary education
Scientific occupations; specialist disciplines	0.3	14.6	3.8
Top-grade executive and managerial sector	-	0.1	0.3
Administrative sector	2	25.5	20.8
Commercial sector	0.6	9.4	10.7
Service sector	25.9	12.8	13.1
Agriculture	4.8	2.6	5
Industry	66.7	34.9	46.3

The differences between the foreign nationals and the Dutch nationals are considerable, and they subsist even when one compares the young people from abroad with the Dutch nationals who have attended vocational or secondary education only.

In fact, the foreign nationals are mainly employed in manufacturing and, to a lesser extent, in the service industries (cleaners). There are very few indeed in the administrative and commercial sectors. The majority of Turkish and Moroccan workers are employed in the motor-manufacturing, metal-working and food-processing industries. Where workers from Surinam are concerned, the picture is more varied: rather less than half are engaged in manufacturing, about a third work in the administrative sector and some 10% are professionals in the medical or social field (Reubsaet, 1982).

Brassé and his assistants have also made a comparison of fathers' and sons' occupations in an attempt to discover whether the latter have achieved a higher level and whether their social status has improved (Brassé and others, 1984).

Table 7: Occupational grades of immigrant fathers and their sons aged 16 to 20 (%)

	Fathers N = 305	Sons (16-20 years) N = 219
Unskilled workers	63.3	55.6
Skilled workers	33.7	40.2
Lower-grade employees	0.7	3.2
Self-employed (small businesses)	1.7	0.5
Middle-grade employees	0.3	0.5
Top-grade executives	0.3	-

Even bearing in mind that the sons arrived in Holland comparatively late, there is little upward social mobility. The sons are slightly more numerous among the skilled workers, but the difference is not really very great.

To end this section, here are some data on unemployment.

The Office of the Social and Cultural Plan reports that, despite high unemployment among workers from Surinam, the Antilles and the Moluccas over a fairly long period, unemployment among foreign workers dates only from the late 1970s. Calculations based on CBS statistics show that early in 1983, 32% of the Turks and 29% of the Moroccans were unemployed, whereas in 1979, unemployment affected 25% of all Surinamese workers. In relation to the total working population, the level of unemployment in 1983 was 17%.

An age breakdown for 1981 gives the following data (CP, 1984).

Table 8: Percentage unemployed, by age and ethnic group

	18-29 years	20-44 years	45 years and over	45+ including sick and disabled
Turkish and Moroccan	17.7	11.4	21.1	31.5
Surinamese/Antillean	35.6	16.7	12.6	43.3
Indigenous population	10.9	4.9	4.9	23.3

In 1981, unemployment among workers from Surinam and the Antilles was already very high: there was twice as much unemployment in the Surinamese group as in the Turkish and Moroccan group: it affected more than 35% of the people in the 18-30 year age group. In the higher age groups, almost one foreign worker in three was unemployed. Where the Surinamese group was concerned, the high percentage of sick and disabled persons was the main factor accounting for the unemployment rate.

### 3.3 Housing

A simple comparison of ethnic groups where housing is concerned can best be done by awarding points according to quality. Quality points take account of items such as the type of accommodation, surface areas, conveniences installed, and structural and environmental features.

Table 9: Average number of quality points awarded to the accommodation of the different ethnic groups (Source: SCP, 1984)

Turkish and Moroccan	80
Surinamese and Antillean	105
Indigenous	139

It is clear that the Dutch nationals are the best housed, while the Surinamese hold an intermediate position. The Turks and the Moroccans, who are mainly concentrated in the four main towns, generally live in flats built before the second world war.

Another criterion of accommodation quality is the number of family members per dwelling and per room.

Table 10: Number of persons per dwelling and per room, by ethnic group (SCP, 1984)

	Average number of persons per dwelling	Average number of persons per room
Turkish and Moroccan	4.57	1.18
Surinamese and Antillean	3.57	0.96
Indigenous	2.78	0.71

Here again, it is clear that the situation of the Dutch nationals is the most favourable, while the worst off are the Turks and Moroccans. The Surinamese group lies between the two.

One final important factor is the percentage of income spent on rent.

For the Surinam group, this percentage is comparatively high. According to the Office of the Social and Cultural Plan, there are two reasons for this: incomes are low and rents fairly high. Many members of this group are also in receipt of an individual rent subsidy. At the end of 1981, their proportion was 30%.

The Turks and Moroccans are in a completely different situation: their incomes - in 1981 - were comparatively high, but their rents are low. The individual rent subsidy is payable to only 6% of the members of these groups.

Of the Dutch population, the subsidy is payable to 15.5%. They normally spend a greater proportion of their income on rent than do the foreign workers, and about as much as the Surinamese.

Briefly, the housing situation of the ethnic minorities is worse than that of the indigenous population. They live in dwellings of inferior quality, there is greater over-crowding and rents are comparatively high. Bearing in mind that, in addition to this, educational standards are low, the labour market situation unfavourable and unemployment rates high, we can picture the disadvantaged socio-economic situation of the ethnic minorities in our society.

The situation of the Surinamese and Antilleans is better, but still well behind that of the indigenous population.

#### 4. Contacts between young immigrants and the police

Is it true that young immigrants come into contact with the police more frequently than their contemporaries of Dutch nationality?

This is an important question since the police generally have a key role in deciding between three basic alternatives: (1) to send the young person home - possibly after being given a reprimand; (2) to make a report leading to the person's prosecution or (3) to refer the person to one of the social services or to a specialised assistance agency.

In other words, the police has to choose whether the case is one for official prosecution or whether an informal solution is to be preferred. Thus it is the police who decide the size of the influx into the juveniles' criminal justice system.

The first thing to find out is whether, from a quantitative standpoint, the contacts which young people of the ethnic minorities have with the police give cause for alarm.

According to the annual reports of the juveniles' police department in the major towns, there is indeed cause for alarm.

For instance, the Amsterdam police notes that in 1981 young immigrants accounted for between 35 and 40% of all police contacts with under-age people. If we assume that ethnic minorities make up about 12% of the population of Amsterdam, then these figures are clearly disproportionate.

By far the majority of those coming into contact with the police are boys: girls of Mediterranean origin have virtually no such contacts, while in the case of girls from Surinam, the number of contacts with the police is about the same as for girls of Dutch nationality, and is very small.

However the age distribution is not the same in the case of the young immigrants as for nationals, and this must be taken into account.

A survey concerning contacts between young people and the juveniles' police in Rotterdam showed that the ethnic minorities were represented in 28% of these contacts. This figure seems high, but the proportion of young immigrants in the total population in the 0 to 17 age group was 20% at the time. This throws a different light on the statistics, although the question of disproportion does still arise (Van Loon, 1981).

In a study of literature on the subject of deviant behaviour among juveniles from ethnic minority backgrounds, another author lists the factors taken into account by the police in compiling their statistics and explains why these give a misleading picture and scale of misbehaviour on the part of young immigrants (Maliapaard, 1985):

- the ethnic groups tend too often to be considered as a single, homogeneous group;
- too little account is taken of the different groups' very specific age-pyramids;
- distinctions are seldom drawn on the basis of the type of offences, committed;
- the fact that the ethnic minorities are very largely confined to the lower social categories tends to be disregarded.

Research workers studying the contacts which young immigrants have with the juveniles' police have endeavoured to take account of the factors mentioned above (Van der Hoeven and others, 1985). Their project was carried out in three Dutch towns, Rotterdam, Eindhoven and Utrecht, on the basis of representative samples of cases reported to the juveniles' police department in 1983.

In the first part of the study, all acts committed by young people from Surinam, Turkey and Morocco were recorded, together with acts committed by young Dutch nationals. A comparison was then made between the distribution of these groups within the total juvenile population and within the population coming into contact with the police.

The following findings concern Rotterdam and Eindhoven.

Table II: Distribution of the ethnic groups within the total juvenile population (0 to 19 years) and within the population coming into contact with the police (%)

Ethnic group	Rotterdam		Eindhoven	
	Juvenile population N = 131,622	Police contacts N = 667	Juvenile population N = 49,699	Police contacts N = 605
Dutch	74.8	56.2	91.2	80.8
Surinamese	5.6	21.1	1.5	2.8
Turkish	8.7	7.3	4.2	6.8
Moroccan	4.2	7.5	1.8	4.8
Others	6.7	8	1.6	4.8
	100	100	100	100

This table shows a disproportionate number of contacts with the police among the Surinamese and Moroccan nationals by comparison with the percentage of the total juvenile population represented by those groups.

The investigators then calculated the arrest rate of young Dutch nationals, that is to say the number of young people as a percentage of the total juvenile population having been in contact with the police: this rate was taken as the basic index.

They then compared the arrest rates of the other groups with the basic index and noted the variations.

Table 12: Percentages and arrest rates of various ethnic groups (aged 0 to 19 years) in two towns

	Eindhoven		Rotterdam	
	%	index	%	index
Dutch	2.2	1	2.1	1
Surinamese/Antillean	4.2	1.9	10.4	4.9
Turkish	3.9	1.8	2.5	1.2
Moroccan	6.3	2.9	5.5	2.6

For the Turkish and Moroccan group, the findings are more or less the same in both towns (Rotterdam and Eindhoven): the arrest rate in the case of Turkish and Dutch nationals does not differ widely; on the other hand the young Moroccans have 2.5 times more contacts with the police than their Dutch contemporaries.

The findings for the Surinamese group differ from one town to the other. In Rotterdam, where this ethnic group forms a higher percentage of the population than in Eindhoven, the arrest rate is five times that of the Dutch group, while in Eindhoven the rate is only twice as high.

If we distinguish between types of offence, we find disproportionately few violent offences (a category mainly including vandalism and acts involving bodily harm) among the young immigrants: in fact these people hardly commit any aggressive offences.

In the «simple larceny» category we find above-average representation of the Surinamese group: the arrest rate in this group is six times that of the Dutch nationals, whereas the arrest rates of Moroccan juveniles for this offence is 2.5 times as high.

If we look at «compound larceny», we find the highest rate among the young Moroccans: it is four times that of the Dutch nationals in the same age group. Where this type of offence is concerned, the arrest rate of Surinamese is three times that of the Dutch nationals.

These data seem to suggest that petty theft and shoplifting are the offences most frequently committed by the Surinamese juveniles, and that compound larceny - that is to say a more serious form of delinquency - is more frequent among the young Moroccans. The young Moroccans also commit larger numbers of burglaries than the other groups.

A further point to make is that there is practically no difference between the arrest rates for young Turkish and Dutch nationals. In fact, where compound larceny is concerned, the rate is lower in the Turkish group than it is in the Dutch group.

The most interesting research has been done in Rotterdam, where a comparison was made between arrest rates in various neighbourhoods. This showed that the neighbourhoods in which the police records of young immigrants compare unfavourably with those of the young indigenous population are for the most part neighbourhoods in which the ethnic minorities account for only a small percentage of residents.

In neighbourhoods with large foreign and Surinamese populations, the police records differ much less widely between one group and another. The Turkish group actually has fewer contacts with the police than the Dutch group.

Table 13: Proportions of different ethnic groups in two types of neighbourhood and their contacts with the police (Rotterdam)

	Neighbourhoods with small numbers of immigrants		Neighbourhoods with large numbers of immigrants	
	Population	Contacts with police	Population	Contacts with police
	N = 20,898	N = 82	N = 12,807	N = 163
Dutch	92.5	74.5	60	48.5
Surinamese/ Antillean	4	14.5	12	18
Turkish	1	6	13.5	8.5
Moroccan	0.5	2.5	6	11
Others	2.5	2.5	8.5	13
	100	100	100	100

If we again take the arrest rate of young Dutch nationals as the basic index 1, we find the following indices for the ethnic minorities in the neighbourhoods where they reside in large numbers: 1.8 for the Surinamese group, 2.3 for the Moroccan group and 0.8 for the Turkish group.



It is important to note that the neighbourhood in question is one that suffers from a particular socio-economic disadvantage, to judge by such indicators as the percentage of 17 and 18-year-olds attending normal day-time education, the number of residents living on a social security allowance, the percentage of unemployed, the age of the dwelling-houses and the geographical mobility of the population. One of the conclusions of the report is that if one looks closely at the police statistics relating to a certain number of factors - of which the socio-economic ones are the most important - one cannot maintain that the involvement of young immigrants with the juveniles criminal justice system has as yet assumed alarming proportions.

In all, the Turkish has the same number of contacts with police as the Dutch group. The Surinamese and Moroccan groups have the largest number, but the differences are not as great as expected. The future is obviously very uncertain. In view of the present socio-economic situation and the very slender chance that these groups have of assuming a full role in the life of our community, it would be wrong to be over-optimistic. But it cannot be said at present that the juveniles' criminal justice system and welfare services are unduly overworked as a result of the large influx of ethnic minorities.

The investigators examined a further question, namely whether there is any difference in the treatment of cases by the police according to whether they involve young Dutch nationals or young immigrants.

Table 14: Treatment of cases by the police according to the ethnic groups involved

Rotterdam

	Dutch	Surinamese	Turkish	Moroccan
	N=334	N=121	N=42	N=42
reprimand	54	50.5	62	52.5
report	46	49.5	38	47.5
	100	100	100	100

Eindhoven

	N=484	N=17	N=40	N=27
reprimand	62	59	55	52
report	38	41	45	48
	100	100	100	100

Where the type of offences is concerned, it has been found that the offences over which the Moroccan group comes into contact with the police tend to be more serious than in the case of the other young people. The Moroccans and Surinamese show a higher second offence rate than the Dutch and Turkish nationals. The period of time in which the second offence is committed also varies from group to group.

This period is shortest among the young Moroccans: half of them committed a second offence within three months, as compared with half in the case of the other groups. A high proportion of Surinamese committed no further offence for a year or two, and the period is even longer in the case of the Turks. The majority of young Netherlands nationals committed a second offence within a year. This study, which will be followed by a series of observations of contacts between young immigrants and the police - has so far revealed no marked tendency on the part of the juveniles' police department to treat the indigenous young people either more or less favourably than their contemporaries from abroad. It is too soon to conclude that there is no selectivity in the decision-making procedures, but the records we have examined reveal no clear evidence of such discrimination.

##### 5. Explanations offered: some working hypotheses

Some years ago, when the authorities began to devise a better-structured policy in regard to persons migrating to the Netherlands, an appropriation was made to enable research to be conducted into the situation and problems of each ethnic group.

Our «youth welfare and juvenile delinquency» research team also undertook a number of investigations in this field. The starting point was generally the existence of problems and obstacles that make it particularly difficult for these groups to work within the Dutch community. Those responsible for youth protection in particular were starting to become alarmed, and there was a prospect of increasing numbers of children from ethnic minority backgrounds entering the Dutch system and institutions. Another starting point was the idea that this phenomenon might chiefly be explained in terms of cultural differences and the shock experienced by these young people when confronted with Dutch culture.

The youth welfare services have repeatedly appealed to the authorities to allow their senior workers to improve their skills. They wish to gain a more thorough knowledge of the various cultural traditions and of the standards and values associated with each culture, so as to be better equipped to provide the young people in their care with help and treatment.

The assumption is that immigrant children living in the Netherlands inevitably find themselves caught up in a conflict between two different cultures.

Being obliged to abide by the standards and values of their own country as well as those of the host country - even though the two may sometimes be totally opposed - they were bound to become confused in their minds. This choice between two cultures could have serious repercussions on their sense of identity and engender deviant behaviour.

The idea that all deviant and delinquent behaviour forms are due to differences between cultures or sub-cultures was expounded first by Sellin, at a time when the United States was continually being brought up against new groups of immigrants and new crime waves (Sellin, 1938).

According to Sellin, crime is always a result of friction between two cultures: it is, he maintains, inconceivable that an immigrant would violate the standards of his own culture since one invariably acts in accordance with the values and standards of one's cultural group.

Most theorists assume that conflicting values, rather than conflicting interests, are the cause of crime and that in our multifarious society there is a degree of variation in sub-cultural values where crime is concerned; this variation, they argue, is not due to differences of socio-economic position but to membership of different cultures and sub-cultures (Sutherland, 1973).

This explanation is not wholly satisfactory. However frequently certain behaviour forms may occur in a specific group, one cannot conclude that those behaviour forms are rated highly by the members of that group.

Also, these theorists seem to confuse cultural values and social causes because they ignore the place of human behaviour in a social structure characterised by considerably inequality of social position with regard to income, educational standards, work, housing and access to other cultural assets. In fact, the theories of cultural conflict have very little to do with reality (Kornhauser, 1978).

The findings of our own research have prompted us to look for alternative hypotheses.

Firstly, we found to our surprise that a number of conventional ideas about these groups as a subject of research were not borne out by the facts. For instance, practically all the young people interviewed (12-18 years) spoke quite good Dutch, so that interpreters were not required. We also found that it was possible to approach the young people directly. Only in a few cases was a father's mediation necessary.

We realise that the validity of the replies given during interview is a controversial matter. However, most surveys of the «self-report» type allow the conclusion that the answers are satisfactory, and we have so far had no reason to suppose that this is not the case with the young immigrants. We were aware of no resistance on their part when required to answer sensitive questions on the subject.

Furthermore, in two of our investigations it was possible, without too much difficulty, to approach the parents of young people placed in institutions. In examining the results of this research we were particularly intrigued by the following findings:

- the social, economic and psychological situation of young immigrants placed in homes for juveniles differed little from that of young Dutch nationals placed in these establishments;
- the same applied to the behaviour of the young people in these homes;
- the differences between young immigrants and nationals where contacts with the police were concerned were considerable to start with but diminished steadily as allowance was made for specific socio-demographic factors;

- when allowance was made for the residential neighbourhood - a factor that determines social class - the gap narrowed still further;
- differences were apparent between one immigrant group and another regarding the nature and scale of contacts with the police.

These findings are borne out by the results of investigations abroad (Maliepaard, 1985). In one recent Dutch study concerning the presence of socio-emotional problems and identity problems among young immigrants living in a historic quarter of Rotterdam, the results are found to be comparable (Verkuyten and others, 1984).

When attempting to identify specific problems among young immigrants, the investigators were hard put to find any, and those they did find proved not to differ widely from those of the young people of Dutch nationality.

If we look at all the findings of recent research among young immigrants, they do not appear indicative of cultural factors but of two distinct sets of factors: firstly, factors associated with their disadvantaged socio-economic situation, and factors associated with their specific situation as migrants.

At this point I should like briefly to indicate the general trend of our ideas with regard to the deviant behaviour of young immigrants. It must be borne in mind that we are concerned here only with working hypotheses.

Firstly, there are serious signs of socio-economic factors exercising a determining influence on the perception of problems and on forms of behaviour.

For instance, the Rotterdam research team found at first that the young people (aged between 11 and 20) were well integrated at school and in their families, had few family problems or conflicts and were generally quite happy at school. The only group to report serious problems consisted of school-leavers for whom no institutionalised facilities existed and who were, in addition, unable to find work (Verkuyten and others, 1984). Similarly, they have found that certain groups of young Surinamese who have left school and have not found jobs, drift almost automatically into a «hustler» sub-culture, committing petty theft and larceny (Buiks, 1983).

As we have seen, the study by van der Hoeven shows that the young nationals and immigrants who come into contact with the police come from the same lower-class sections of the population. The more the different ethnic groups come to resemble what Penninx calls a «closed population» - one whose structure has ceased to be modified by immigration or emigration - the more they tend to differentiate socially, so that the trend indicated earlier is reinforced.

While there are grounds for assuming that the police are to a degree selective in their dealings with young immigrants, there is no evidence to suggest that the criteria of selection differ basically from those applied to young people of Dutch nationality.

In this field there would not seem to be any major difference in the way the police treat young people, whether nationals or immigrants.

The criteria for selection have a certain part to play, but do not turn the balance; nor do they explain the nature and scale of the young immigrants' contacts with the police (Junger-Tas and others, 1983).

This interpretation of the facts rests on the assumption that if certain groups find it extremely difficult to secure a full position in our society, a position that confers a certain social status and the right to participate in the existing social institutions, then behaviour forms - especially those of the young people - are bound to be affected.

In addition to these factors there are specific circumstances associated directly with, or derived from, the migrants' situation.

Several investigations - including the one conducted in Rotterdam - point to the importance of the person's age on arrival in Holland and the duration of his residence in the country. People who have attended primary school in the Netherlands experience the fewest problems; those who arrive between the ages of 11 and 13 years and then go on to the international transition classes have far more problems and are more often than not unable to cope with education above the primary level. Lastly, those resident in Holland for less than two-and-a-half years experience more problems than those who have lived here for a longer period.

Also, the welfare services point out that there are specific elements of a migrant's experience, such as the legal situation and the residence permit, that largely decide whether or not there are problems.

Uncertainty and the fear of being sent home engender apathy, so that the ability of migrants to influence events is considerably lessened (Hesser, 1984).

Unemployment and invalidity make it difficult for them to send money to their families at home or to bring their families to join them (Junger-Tas, 1983). With the economic recession, serious consideration is again being given by some to the prospect of returning home, but this has a destabilising influence on the children and aggravates feelings of uncertainty and passive attitudes.

Hesser finally mentions the large number of families disrupted by immigration: this applies particularly to the Creole families from Surinam; but an increasing number of Turkish and Moroccan families where the father is not living at home are also affected.

To summarise, it seems clear that the earlier investigations into the situation of ethnic minority groups in Holland were concerned with fairly new arrivals.

If the investigators talked mainly to people of rural origin, it is not surprising that they detected a cultural shock and a number of ensuing conflicts.

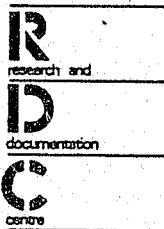
The most recent research - especially that concerned with young people - is directed at groups who have achieved at least some degree of social integration in the Netherlands. Thus it is highly probable that the nature of the problems investigated will have changed. In our opinion, problems arise more than before out of structural factors that determine the position of the immigrant groups within our community, and from specific factors relevant to their legal situation and the conditions attached to their residence in the host country.

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