# ISLAMOFOBIA IN THE NETHERLANDS

Ineke van der Valk

*With a foreword by*
*Ernst Hirsch Ballin*

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# Contents

# Foreword

The Iranian lawyer Shirin Ebadi, who was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2003 for her work in campaigning for human rights, visited the University of Amsterdam in late 2011. In the midst of her concerns for human rights in her country, she has not lost sight of another side to history. The issue of the relationship between Islam and human rights, she remarked, was only seriously raised in the West when the world order that had been dominated by the USSR collapsed in 1989. Until that time, the Taliban and all kinds of other dubious regimes had been welcome allies of the West in its fight against communism.

In a single sentence, she highlighted the role of generalised depictions of enemies in power politics. After 1989, people were looking for a new enemy, says Shirin Ebadi, and found it – Islam. In 1993, Samuel Huntington wrote an article on 'The Clash of Civilizations?' – with a question mark. Three years later, his book entitled The Clash of Civilizations became a bestseller; the question mark had disappeared from the much-discussed title. Another five years later, a very small but dangerous minority in the world of Islam under the command of Osama bin Laden provided the apparent justification for the ever-larger exclamation mark that publicity had placed at the end of the title of Huntington's book.

In this day and age, research of the kind carried out by Ineke van der Valk is most welcome. Her study has highlighted the real extent of the various guises of Islamophobia, and describes where they lead to discrimination based on faith. In the process, she examines the changes in how Islam and Muslims are depicted. At the end of the nineteenth century and the start of the twentieth century, Islam was mostly regarded as an exotic phenomenon by Westerners. People were often unaware of the intense cultural exchanges that had taken place – primarily in Andalusia and, at the time, in the Balkans. Ineke van der Valk reminds us here of the criticism by Edward Said of Western European Orientalism. Nonetheless, many Orientalists, of whom Dutchman Snouck Hurgronje was one of the most important, bore strong feelings of deep respect.

The historic conflicts between Islam and Christianity – or perhaps we should say, between competing ambitions for building imperia: see Henk Boom's book on Süleyman the Magnificent, published in 2010 – still affect the way in which images are formed to this day. In the context of a democratic country that is subject to the rule of law, freedom of religious criticism is a fundamental right, even if such criticism is perceived as offensive to religious people. Everyone is free to determine which aspects or manifestations of religion they aim their criticism at. However, anyone tarring major religions and ideological movements with the same brush is committing a great disservice. Each has peace-loving elements, as well as intolerant or even violent ones.

The worst thing now is not the inaccurate (as judged by academic criteria) images that are being formed, but the result produced by prejudice in the relationships between people. If, for example, a Dutch political party claims that Islam is a political ideology and another says that it should be regarded as a religion, one opinion may well be more intolerant than the other, but it should also be said that both are simplifications. Like Christianity, Islam manifests itself in all sorts of different ways. Although some manifestations with links to political and economic power have acquired a political and ideological character, the vast majority of them are, in the current context, primarily religious in nature.

In an honest discussion, both merit attention. A survey by the University of Amsterdam Institute for Migration and Ethnic Studies that was published in September 2010, showed that Muslims in the Netherlands – like Christians and Jews – from all kinds of backgrounds observe a strict or less strict form of their religion. However, by some distance, most do not, just like the adherents of other broad-based movements. Anyone who thinks there is a clear dividing line behind believers and non-believers is mistaken. The definition of a sensible policy is therefore one that is aimed at pernicious elements who harm other people, and which seeks to encourage everyone in our country to show mutual respect, regardless of religion, gender, or sexual orientation.

For this reason, it is unfair to subject people to an extra loyalty test on account of their religion. Sometimes, attempts are made to hinder them in aspects of their way of life (such as by discrediting the wearing of headscarves), and these sometimes take on more subtle forms. When a European Convention set up by the EU and its member states was drawing up a preamble to the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, consideration was given to the idea of including a reference to the Judeo-Christian tradition of Europe. Because of the separation of church and state – which is particularly strictly observed in France – the choice eventually fell on the open formulation that the Union is "conscious of its spiritual and moral heritage", which certainly includes the Judeo-Christian tradition. In recent years, however, references to the Judeo-Christian heritage have started to re-emerge, sometimes with unpleasant undertones of a barrier against Islam. Against this background, 'the' Muslim community and their leaders are invited to distance themselves from radical and negative tendencies – as if most of them had not already long since done so, and as if this were not the task of every religious leader. When tensions rose because of the Fitna film, the Dutch ministers who were at that time responsible followed a different approach. They organized discussions with representatives of all religious and faith movements, not just representatives from Islam. The unity of their declaration after these discussions underlined the democratic and rule of law-based values contained in it.

Luckily, we can still experience positive events of this kind, but we should realise that Islamophobia, like anti-Semitism, homophobia and other forms of discriminatory behaviour, are putting strains on society. Ineke van der Valk's thorough research highlights the troubling behaviour of intolerant people. By doing so, she brings into focus the importance of the value of mutual respect for each other.

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# 1 Introduction

On 22 July 2011, a Norwegian Islamophobic right-wing extremist[1] carried out a massacre of young social democrats on the island of Utoya near Oslo, resulting in the deaths and injuries of dozens of people. He also planted bombs in Norwegian government buildings, which also led to fatalities. The perpetrator's motives were ideological: he wanted to bring an end to the Islamisation of Norway and to hit back at those people he believed were responsible for it. His attack was political in nature. His actions were aimed not just at a young multicultural generation and the future politicians among them, but also at the institutions of Norwegian democracy, against the basic values of diversity and openness.[2] As far as is known, the marksman operated alone, but his views and motives are shared by a wider, mostly virtual network that has set itself against Islam and Muslims, as revealed by a widely distributed manifesto with many references, which was written by him. It concerns an Islamophobic ideology that many people and movements all over the world share and disseminate, not least through new media. A significant part of this virtual movement depicts not only Islam and Muslims as the enemy, but also holds social democracy responsible for the perceived Islamisation of Europe. This ideology comes in different guises. There are extremist, extreme, and moderate versions. It was primarily the extremist version that prompted the Norwegian attacker to commit his acts of violence. He is an extremist, in terms of his deeds, his words, and his agenda. Hardly anyone in the Netherlands openly voiced support for what he had done, although a few people did.[3] Messages of approval and understanding for his ideas and motives were more frequently found on Internet forums. There is a ready audience in the Netherlands for an Islamophobic ideology in different variants, be they extremist, extreme, or moderate, as demonstrated from the statements and messages of support in the various new media. Traditional national boundaries count for very little, and they are becoming increasingly meaningless. Worldwide, the Netherlands is regarded by Islamophobic ideologues as the front line in the 'clash of civilisations'.[4] When the attacks took place in Norway, this book was already taking shape. It was not the attacks themselves that prompted the need to conduct further research into this ideology, but they did provide an extra reason for doing so.

In recent years, expressions of racism and extremism have been identified and highlighted by the Monitor Racisme & Extremisme, among others.[5] Concerns have been voiced on a regular basis by those involved in these studies about the rise of Islamophobia and discrimination of Muslims.[6] This refers not just to the negative climate of opinion about Muslims, but also to the increasing level of violence against the Muslim community and the greater tolerance of offensive language aimed at Muslims.[7] According to available data, anti-Islamic violence in the Netherlands actually showed a slight quantitative decrease in

2009, but was still relatively common in comparison with other targets and victims.[8] For several years now, the Meldpunt Discriminatie Internet (Dutch Complaints Bureau for Discrimination on the Internet – MDI) has been highlighting the large number of reports of discriminatory comments on the Internet. "Although the public debate about Muslims on the streets, on television and in the newspapers is already fairly heated, the threshold for making offensive remarks on the Internet is low, and Muslims are grossly insulted there on a frequent basis."[9]

From surveys taken in the 1990s it was clear that the views about Muslims among the Dutch population were fairly negative. After the attacks by extremist Islamists on the WTC in New York in 2001 in particular, followed by the murder of Theo van Gogh in 2004, Muslims and Islam came very much under the social, political, and publicity spotlight, and since then their image has only worsened.[10]

Compared with the inhabitants of other western nations, the Dutch have a relatively low opinion of Muslims. The Pew Research Center, an independent American research organisation, says that the proportion of the Dutch population with negative views on Muslims has been reasonably steady since 2005, at around 50%. By way of comparison, the figure in the United Kingdom was 14% in 2005, and 22% in the United States, although there were similar percentages in Germany to those in the Netherlands.[11] As far as those who had been on the receiving end of discrimination were concerned, a survey commissioned by the European Union in 2008 reported that one in three Muslims of Turkish or North African origin in the Netherlands had experienced such discrimination on the grounds of faith or ethnic origin.[12] In 2007, ECRI, the European body that monitors developments relating to racism and intolerance, reported a worrying hardening of the tone of public and political debates on integration issues in the Netherlands. The reporting of Muslim communities in the media was described as stigmatising and unbalanced.[13] Other international organisations like Human Rights Watch and the Council of Europe were also critical about the situation and policies that were being pursued in the Netherlands.[14]

Nonetheless, there is also information from the survey that put these concerns into some kind of perspective. A 2011 report from the Pew Research Center noted a worldwide increase in religious-related social tensions between 2006 and 2009. It is striking that several Western European nations experienced a substantial rise in tensions of this kind; this applies to Denmark and the United Kingdom, which scored high, and to Sweden, which ranked at a more moderate level. The Netherlands, meanwhile, was one of the countries that achieved a low score.[15] A greater aversion to Islam among public opinion does not automatically mean a greater ethnic distance with regard to immigrants. According to a study

by the Netherlands Institute for Social Research from 2005, interethnic distance actually showed a decrease. Nor do negative views about a group always lead to discriminatory conduct. The findings from the 2008 European Union Minorities and Discrimination Survey, the EU-MIDIS survey, suggest that the level of discrimination experienced by Turks and Moroccans in the Netherlands is the same as the European average. One in three people in these groups encountered discrimination on one or more occasions on the basis of their faith or ethnic background. At the same time, national surveys by the Monitor Rassendiscriminatie (2005 and 2009) into experiences of discrimination found that Turks (17% in 2009) and Moroccans (25% in 2009) in the Netherlands experience discrimination on the grounds of their belief significantly more often than do other ethnic groups. However, data from a variety of sources do not provide a clear picture as to whether this form of discrimination is increasing or decreasing.[16] Why is it that an Islamophobic ideology seems to have gained such a strong foothold in the Netherlands – a country that until recently was well known for its tolerance? Various academics have looked into this question. According to some researchers, negative perceptions about Islam/Muslims are related to the process of secularisation that the country has been going through since the 1960s. Van Stokkom points to the gap in values between a secular emancipated majority and orthodox Muslim communities.[17] He suggests that a cultural conflict with Islam in the libertarian Netherlands, with its cultural freedoms and strong sense of equality, is perhaps felt more strongly here than it is elsewhere. Religion in the Netherlands, he says, is regarded very much as a private matter, a lifestyle element that does not lend itself to public display, especially as religion is associated with social inequality, repression, and intolerance. Kennedy points out that there is another side to the process of secularisation that the Netherlands is going through: the differences between the compartmentalised communities have disappeared, and with them, the ability to deal with cultural differences. In his vision, the foundations of tolerance begin to totter when that tolerance, which used to be an attitude, becomes the generally accepted ideology of a majority culture that does not believe it should be extended to groups that are suspected of being intolerant.[18] Bovenkerk, too, points to the importance of not just taking a one-sided look at prejudices, but also of including a more two-sided cultural conflict in the analysis of Islamophobia. He refers to the degree of conformism among a large proportion of the Dutch population and the associated tendency to follow politicians in their increasingly negative views on Islam/Muslims.[19] In other respects too, the rise of Islamophobia is not an isolated phenomenon. In recent years, there have been major changes in the way people think about the integration of minorities. The change in attitudes towards Islam should also be considered in this more general context; Prins talks here of a discursive turn.[20] I too have analysed in more detail the speeches of politicians who contributed towards this in the 1990s.[21] Others, like Vasta, look not so much at their speeches but rather at shifts in proposed

policy models, from multiculturalisation to assimilation.[22] In the same context, De Zwart analyses the role of the finely woven system of ethnic categorisation that the government has developed since the 1970s. The system was set up deliberately in order to target policies at particular groups, with a view to reducing the social disadvantages of members of ethnic minorities, but has resulted in a series of unintended social consequences. It has led to ethnic differences becoming institutionalised – these have now become widespread, rigid, and almost 'natural'.[23]

Conformism, secularisation, the related perceived gap in values or cultural conflict, and generally changing policies are certainly processes that play a role in the increasingly negative picture of Muslims. In order to understand why an Islamophobic ideology has found so much fertile ground in the Netherlands of all places, it is important first and foremost to establish that this ideology has gained an ever-stronger political interpretation over time. From the utterances of Bolkestein of the VVD (the People's Party for Freedom and Democracy), to Fortuyn, Hirsi Ali, and finally Wilders and the PVV (the Party for Freedom), in which Islamophobia is an key element, there is a clear pattern.[24]

Before answering the question of why Islamophobia is appearing with ever-greater frequency in the Netherlands, other questions need to be answered. What exactly is Islamophobia? What is the nature of and background to this phenomenon? How can it be defined? How does it manifest itself? These are the questions that will be examined in this book.

There is no long tradition of research into the phenomenon of Islamophobia. Apart from the afore mentioned survey by the Monitor Racisme & Extremisme and opinion polls, little has been published on the subject in the Netherlands.[25] Most studies on the topic have focused primarily on the social context which, since 11 September 2001, has led to an increase in this form of racism, on opinion polls, and on Islamophobic statements made in response to shocking events such as the murder of Van Gogh. Other themes that have been examined include young people, image-forming, and government policies. There has been relatively little analysis of theory formation of the phenomenon.

This book discusses the phenomenon of Islamophobia and a number of ways in which it is expressed. Chapter 2 looks at the extent of theory formation in international literature, with an examination of both the concept and the phenomenon. Expressions of Islamophobia in the political and public arena are covered in Chapter 3 with the help of analysis of documents, including statements and publications found on the Internet. This is followed by an assessment of the PVV in particular, and then of more traditional extreme right-wing and right-wing extremist groups. Chapter 4 provides an overview of acts of violence

against the presence, or proposed presence, of Islamic places of worship that have been perpetrated in recent years. It looks at whether there are any patterns in this behaviour – do such acts occur more frequently in certain towns and cities than in others? Do they feature the same actors? Non-violent actions against mosques – to the extent that they are reported in the written media – are the subject of Chapter 5. It is certainly true to say that actions of this kind do not always involve Islamophobia, although this may well be the case. The political initiatives launched by the PVV against mosques, and the building of mosques, are also discussed. Chapter 6 deals with legislation in the Netherlands that relates to discrimination, and also covers recent changes in the immigration, integration, and asylum policies of the Dutch government. The central question here is whether there is a structural rise in discrimination. What is the state of play in important areas like the labour market, education, and housing? The book concludes with a summary, a reflection, and recommendations. It was written before the collapse of the government of CDA/VVD with support of Wilders' PVV in april 2012.

# 2 What is Islamophobia?

Islamophobia is a complex phenomenon and theory formation on the topic is at a relatively early stage. This chapter looks at the topic of theory formation.

The phenomenon and the term Islamophobia are the subject of debate both inside the Netherlands and internationally. The term was originally used primarily in the world of social movements. It was not until mid-1990s that it gradually came to be adopted by politicians and academics.[26] A pioneering role in this was played by the publication Islamophobia: a challenge for us all, by the British think tank the Runnymede Trust.[27] The Trust identified a number of essential elements, which it used to define Islamophobia as an 'unfounded hostility towards Islam, and therefore fear of and aversion to all or most Muslims'.[28] Following the publication and the wider recognition of the phenomenon that resulted from it,[29] the term has been discussed in many academic works, each with their own emphasis, but almost all of which have referred to the Runnymede Trust.[30] Nor has there been any lack of critical analysis.[31] Such criticism is related primarily to the following four points:

1. the restriction of the definition of the phenomenon to the emotional component of hatred and aversion;
2. the difficulty in making a distinction between a prejudiced attitude towards Islam and Muslims on the one hand, and justified criticism of the religion on the other;
3. the observation that discrimination is directed at Muslims and not at Islam;
4. the way in which the Trust's approach towards Islam is to treat it as an essentialised whole and Muslims as a homogenous group in the same way that Islamophobic rhetoric, against which it is aimed, does.

While the use of the term Islamophobia is becoming increasingly commonplace, including in the work of international organisations engaged in the task of monitoring forms of discrimination, the observation that it had not been sufficiently analysed from a theoretical perspective remained applicable for a long time. This has recently changed, however.[32] In the context of this book, it would not be appropriate to go into a detailed examination of the various contributions to the academic discussions on the term Islamophobia. Nonetheless, I would like to outline a number of contours, each with their own accent. Racism and the process of stigmatisation in which prejudices and stereotypes play a role are also looked at. I subsequently arrive at a definition of Islamophobia in which the cognitive element is given priority over the emotional and behavioural components that were emphasised in the initial attempts by the Trust at establishing a definition. Given the degree to which the term Islamophobia has been generally accepted, the idea for an alternative term that some researchers have suggested seems neither sensible nor realistic.

## 2.1 Examination of the term

The etymology of the term is based on an analogy of the much more widely accepted terms of xenophobia and homophobia. But even for these words, the term 'phobia', from the Greek for 'fear', is not the most ideal and it is, literally speaking, too narrow for the purpose of capturing the phenomena in question. However, terms take on a contemporary meaning based on the historical social context in which they evolve. Of greater importance than the term is the definition of the phenomenon.

One aspect about which universal agreement exists is that the term Islamophobia, in the context of ethnically diverse societies, relates to the discrimination of immigrants and their descendants as Muslims. As a feature of society, discrimination is inextricably linked with the post-colonial movements and labour migration to Western nations. However, in the course of the past half-century, there has been a change with regard to the groups that have been targeted, as well as the nature and intensity of prejudices and discriminatory behaviour. There have been times when the focus shifted from one group to another. In the Netherlands in the 1960s, for example, it was chiefly guest workers from southern Europe who were the object of discrimination, followed by people from Suriname in the 1970s and, later, Moroccans and Turks. At other times the phenomenon was redefined, or the grounds for discrimination shifted, but not the groups who were affected. Instead of nationality, ethnicity or status (refugees, for example), religion came to be seen to an increasing degree as the determining factor behind group identity. Turks, Moroccans, Somalis, and Afghans were therefore 'Muslims', regardless of whether they were or not. The influence of international events played a part in this. In 1979, the Shah of Iran was overthrown to make way for the Islamic regime of Ayatollah Khomeini. Ten years later, there was the Rushdie affair in the United Kingdom, quickly followed by the Gulf War. The end of the Cold War in the late 1980s marked the introduction of a new adversary in the Western world: Islam.[33] This perception has since been sustained and adapted to national contexts by a series of national and international events. It has fostered the growth of prejudices about ethnic minorities in European countries and caused those prejudices to be framed in terms of the Islamic faith. To an increasing degree, Islamic citizens are being seen as a threat not only to security but also to European cultural values and its supposed cultural homogeneity. Although this development had been underway for some time, the growth of Islamic extremism[34] and terrorism from the start of the new millennium helped play a role as the trigger to these developments, as did the response by governments – the 'war on terror'.[35] As a result, Muslims became more and more associated in the public eye with violence and terrorism. Policies aimed at preventing radicalisation had a secondary effect: an increase in discrimination, which is sometimes the unintended effect of such policies,

can actually fan radicalisation. Local factors, too, have contributed to the perception of Islam/Muslims as a threat. Examples that come to mind are the widespread problems facing young people and the high level of criminality among certain groups of young immigrants. At the same time, intellectuals, politicians, and the media have played a role of their own in the development of Islamophobia,[36] while developments in immigrant communities have also enhanced their visibility as Muslims. There has been a rise in the number of initiatives in which they emphasise their Muslim identity more prominently than was previously the case. It may be that they felt encouraged to do so by politicians and policymakers who advocated a more clearly defined Muslim pillar in society. The transition from first to subsequent generations is likely to have played a role in this process.[37] The increasing emphasis on Islamic identity became visible in the rise in the number and types of organisation, in the setting up of mosques, Islamic schools, broadcasting stations, and other bodies.[38] Despite the broad trend towards secularisation, a significant majority of immigrants from Islamic countries, and their descendants, identify primarily as Muslims. The rise in discrimination has, in turn, contributed towards a spiral of self-perpetuating tendencies of ethnicisation between the indigenous majority and the Islamic minority.[39] As a result, the Muslim minority has found itself more and more excluded.

Does this mean that Islamophobia is not just a recent term, but also a recent phenomenon? No, that is not the case. If we go back beyond the post-War period, there are forerunners to the phenomenon of Islamophobia, even though they were not described as such. This history has helped shaped today's Islamophobia, via two routes. On the one hand, there is the culturally oriented Islamophobic rhetoric that goes back to colonial Orientalism,[40] by which Muslims are supposed primarily to be exotic, and on the other is the Islamophobic vision that regards them as marauding aggressors.[41] The colonial Orientalist way of thinking is seen in this vision as one that constructs the Orient as an object of knowledge, based on a deep gulf and a relationship of inequality between the Orient and the Occident – East and West. The Islamophobia that is targeted primarily against the supposedly aggressive character of Islam has its origins in the Crusades and the danger posed by the conquering Turks in the late Middle Ages.[42]

Various aspects of the phenomenon of Islamophobia contribute towards its complexity. Prejudice, discrimination, and racism are always complex, of course, but there are some additional elements at play when it comes to Islamophobic discrimination.

- Opinions about Islam, and the essence of Islam, differ and affect the degree to which someone tends to exclude adherents, or supposed adherents, of the religion. Contrasting the view that Islam is a world religion is the increasingly popular idea that it is a 'culture' or even an 'ideology' (political or otherwise). Research has shown

that people are more inclined to keep themselves to themselves and to exclude others, the more that Islam is seen as a culture than as a religion. If it is seen as a religion, people are more likely to look for common aspects, in view of their own religiosity.[43] In her comparative research into Muslims in Europe and the United States, Cesari examines an important substantial difference between the two regions. Islamophobia in the United States is, according to Cesari, aimed much more at aspects of the religion, while in Europe it is targeted more towards aspects of Islamic culture.[44] This appears to have changed of late. Since the court verdict on the expression 'Stop the cancer that is Islam',[45] and influenced by Wilders' transatlantic sources of inspiration,[46] Islamophobic rhetoric in the Netherlands has increasingly targeted both culture and religion. Nonetheless, it is still not easy to mark the boundary between religious criticism and Islamophobic ideology, not least because it is possible that the latter hides behind or controls the former.

- Religious dimensions of discrimination are often interwoven with ethnic and gender aspects.[47] Religion has taken on a new sociological relevance, as Meer and Modood put it, because it is associated with issues of ethnicity and ideas about 'where home is', with ethnic-national solidarity.[48] Similarly, religion has started playing a role in processes of stereotyping and in the formation and development of prejudices that form the basis for expressions of discrimination. At the same time, it is clear that there is more to this than hostility towards another religion. To put it another way, Islamophobia is an articulation of religion, ethnicity and gender. Various reasons for discriminating interact and are difficult to distinguish.[49] Discrimination founded on multiple interrelated reasons is sometimes referred to as intersectionality.[50] This multidimensional, intersectional character of discrimination is experienced primarily by Islamic women, who are particularly vulnerable to discriminatory treatment as a result.[51] Islamic women in the Netherlands, for example, often have difficulty in finding work or internships because of prejudice among employers. Such prejudice includes the significance of the headscarf, the supposed dependency on their husbands, their submissiveness, and the expected number of pregnancies.[52] Victims of discrimination are often not identifiable as Muslims, but are regarded as such on account of external features such as the colour of their skin or cultural aspects such as how they are dressed. This is more evidence of intersectionality.[53] It is in this context of intersectionality that Bloul compares Islamophobia with anti-Semitism, which also involves discrimination on the basis of religion and origin. This is why anti-Semitism is internationally recognised as ethno-religious discrimination, a specific f orm of racism.[54]

Although Islamophobic rhetoric makes regular references to the history of the Crusades, Turkish attempts to conquer Europe, and colonial Orientalism, Islamophobia today should be regarded primarily as a relatively recently flourishing form of the culturally oriented racism that first overshadowed the more biologically oriented variant of racism in the 1980s. This has been described by Barker as 'new racism'.[55] A frequently made observation with regard to 'new racism' is that biology and ethnicity were interlinked in earlier forms of racism as well. Both then and now it is more a question of historical shifts of emphasis.

In his book Islamophobia, Chris Allen distinguishes three layers or components in Islamophobia: an ideology that informs and gives meaning; then the way in which and the means by which these ideological meanings are disseminated and substantiated; and finally, the third component, the practices that exclude, in which category fall acts of violence.[56] This analysis corresponds to the approach taken by various academics who have specialised in the study of racism and other excluding mechanisms.

## 2.2 Racism

The term racism started to be used in the 1930s as a concept by which thinking in terms of race was analysed and criticised. With the development of academic racism, the idea of thinking in terms of race as a way of explaining the differences between groups of people really took off.[57] To this day, no generally accepted definition has been developed for this complex and continually changing phenomenon known as racism. Various disciplines, such as sociology, social psychology, and economics have developed different theories about the phenomenon of racism on the basis of their own specific perspectives.[58]

After the Second World War, racism was often taken as an irrational prejudice in which minority groups were regarded as inferior on the basis of racial and biological features. Although prejudice is an important underlying attitude, racism is something else and more than just that. Racism is currently seen in academic analyses primarily as an ideology, an ideological construction that is historically specific and informs social practices in which unequal power relations are expressed.[59] This means that it changes continually throughout history, depending in part on the politico-economical and sociocultural circumstances in which it occurs.

In his book Racism, which has now become a standard work in the field of research into the subject, Miles examines the complexity of the process in which racism is produced and reproduced as an ideology.[60] He describes practical applicability as an important as-

pect.[61] Ideologies are not reproduced uncritically, but they are constructed and changed by people continually, depending on their material and cultural circumstances, and with a view to a greater understanding of those circumstances. It is precisely for that reason that racism takes on different forms, in different countries, at different times, and among different social groups.[62] Racism is therefore not a uniform, one-dimensional, static and ahistoric phenomenon, but a complex, often contradictory, multi-dimensional, and dynamic phenomenon that adapts to the circumstances in which it fulfils a function. Goldberg talks in this connection of the chameleonic characteristics of racism.[63] In the post-War period, for example, there was a shift from the accent on biological, external features such as skin colour, to more cultural aspects. These function as markers or symbols of 'difference' or 'being different'.[64] This is not to say, incidentally, that the development of academic racism was solely about physical features. In the debate that took place at the time, references to physical features were interwoven with cultural interpretations and psychological speculations about human nature. 'Race', culture and language were seen as different expressions of an inherited biological identity.[65] Racism varies in appearance under the influence of two important dimensions: first, the relative position that it takes through physical and/or cultural features, and second, different patterns of articulation occur with ideologies about nation, gender, and class relationships.[66] These variations are in turn related to historically determined contextual differences between the societies in which racism occurs and to differences between the minority groups at which racism is targeted.[67] It is therefore becoming more frequent to talk of racisms, in the plural.

In order to understand how racism works, it is necessary to gain an idea of various sub-processes and underlying attitudes. What do the different forms of racism have in common? It is invariably about an ideology that seeks to stigmatise, marginalise, make inferior, depersonalise and ultimately to dehumanise outgroups of those who are ethnically different on the basis of their physical and/or cultural features. It occurs in order to dominate them to various degrees and to exclude them from material and/or immaterial goods. Converse to the inferiority of the 'other person' is the central and fundamental conviction of the superiority of one's own group, nation, or culture. This ideology of inferiority/superiority is aimed at the production, reproduction and affirmation of unequal power relationships, at affirming the dominance of the majority group. The exclusion from material goods concerns such matters as employment, income and housing. Immaterial goods concern education, knowledge, information, access to the nation state and citizenship, and access to and control of networks and channels of communication that play a role in public debate, thereby providing political influence.[68] At a socio-cognitive and discursive level, group polarisation is an important dimension in this process. First of all, individuals are turned into a homogenous group on the basis of a particular aspect of their identity – being part of a minority group on account of their colour, ethnic origins, culture, or faith – which group

is supposed to be essentially different in a number of important ways from the majority group. Their unique personalities, which are composed of multiple identities (gender, nationality of origin, profession, sexual orientation, age, political views), disappear in order to make way for a group identity. An attempt is made to assign an aura of naturalness and unchangeability to the differences that are regarded as essential and decisive.[69] In this process of emphasising the 'difference' and 'being different', visual markers or symbols play an important role. These may be physical or material, but also discursive, textual. To give an example of each: skin colour functions as a physical marker, a headscarf as a material symbol, and 'Islamisation' and 'hate palaces' (a term that has been used in the Netherlands to describe mosques) are discursive markers. The next step concerns negative connotations. The symbols increasingly acquire an emotional value and, to an increasing degree, the group in question is ascribed all kinds of negative characteristics: the members become stigmatised. This facilitates the process of exclusion.

## 2.3 Stigmatisation

Different groups that are socially excluded have in common the fact that they are the object of a socio-psychological process of stigmatisation.[70] The highlighting of difference and the devaluation of 'others' because they are 'different', as well as the threat that they are presumed to represent, are key aspects in the process of stigmatisation. At an individual level, this process in itself leads to an increase in fear, aversion, and sometimes hatred on the part of members of the stigmatising (majority) group. The process involves a transformation of 'the other person' into a stereotypical and caricatural part of a group. He or she is increasingly depersonalised and dehumanised. Neuberg et al, who wrote a study on stigmatisation, point out that this tendency to stigmatise is universal and founded in evolutionary rules that are essential for the functioning of groups.[71] Stigmatisation occurs wherever these basic principles of effective group function are perceived to be, or actually are, breached. These evolutionary rules are based on the principles of reciprocity, trust, common values and of care for the well-being of the ingroup. The principle of reciprocity means that people are not to get more than they give in terms of social goods. The principle of trust means that people may not cheat or betray each other. According to the principle of common values, people are deemed to respect and support them, and not to undermine them. Finally, people are supposed to promote the general well-being of their group. In his discussion of the predominant anti-Semitic image of Jews in nineteenth-century Germany, Goldhagen points to similar dimensions of the stigma of which Jews were the victim: they were said to contribute nothing towards society but instead only to take from it, at the expense of the 'Aryan' Germans, and to undermine the morals and values of society and deliberately cause disorder to the extent that society would fall into decay.[72]

## 2.4 Prejudices

Prejudices, as a socio-cognitive phenomenon, play a crucial role in the stigmatisation process. Early definitions of prejudice primarily emphasised their morally reprehensible nature and the phenomenon was seen as a personal characteristic of certain individuals. More than anything, prejudices were seen as rigid, irrational, and generalising. The 1950s saw the emergence of definitions of a more neutral nature, although the accent remained on the negative character. It gradually came to be recognised that prejudices originated from generally human cognitive characteristics.[73] In addition, there was a realisation that they were less an individual feature of a certain type of person, but rather a social fact of life resulting from the tendency to fulfil social norms.[74] Prejudices are essentially criticisms of an outgroup and the members of that group. They are formed and expressed via ethnic stereotypes, which are a generalisation, or overgeneralisation, of the behaviour or (presumed) features of a group.[75] They are relatively durable, often rigid, and inflexible images of the members of an outgroup. Features or characteristics of a group are represented in a selective and often distorted manner, and in many cases the characteristics are not genuine, but supposed. It is assumed that every member of the group will possess the general features. The process entails unjustified generalisations. Stereotypes describe not just supposed features of a group, they also explain them, thereby fulfilling a function in the cognitive process of categorisation and simplification. They focus attention on the perception of features of groups and on the evaluation and recollection of them. This means they discolour the views of and expectations about the conduct of the members of the outgroup. But as well as having an individual cognitive function, stereotypes also fulfil a social and ideological function.[76] Stereotypical images of social groups are culturally determined and socially shared, and not individual representations. The content of the images depends in particular on the socio-economic positions of ingroups and outgroups, majority groups and minority groups, and their mutual relationships. They in turn influence these positions and relationships. With regard to prejudices, too, similarities are visible – alongside the differences, of course – between pre-War anti-Semitism and present-day Islamophobia. Meer et al point out the image of the poor levels of assimilability, for example. Groups are accused of living too much according to traditions and customs that are considered detrimental to society, and of cutting themselves off too much from regular society. The majority and the Jewish or, as the case may be, Islamic minority, are alleged not to be able to live alongside each other successfully because of intrinsic cultural characteristics. In addition, both forms of racism invoke, or invoked, an external political threat. Jews were associated with communism and anarchy – attacks by anarchists in various European countries were a regular occurrence in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries – while Muslims today are linked with the threat of Islamic extremism. The reference to a hidden power also occurs with both forms of racism.[77]

Duckitt distinguishes four types of factor that are involved with the creation and continued existence of prejudices at a social and individual level.[78] It is, first of all, potentially a general human tendency to develop prejudices. The generalisation and categorisation that lie at its heart make the world more clear-cut. Whether the potential for a prejudice is then actually activated, depends, secondly, on the dynamic of social processes between groups, on the contacts and interactions in specific social situations in concrete societies. Third, prejudices are learned and passed on in socialisation processes. They are passed down from parent to child, and communicated in education and through the media or political organisations. In addition, people are receptive to prejudices to varying degrees, as a result of which they do not react to the transfer of prejudices in the same way. The transfer and development of prejudices is not just a socio-cognitive process, but also an emotional one, both of which interplay with each other.[79] The susceptibility of individuals to prejudices is influenced in emotional terms by feelings of fear, aggression, frustration, dissatisfaction, hatred, and hostility.[80] Even after many years of research, there is no evidence for the assumption made by Allport, the founder of theory formation about prejudices, that prejudice causes discrimination. Although prejudices do play a role, the causes of discrimination are more complicated. Research into the relationship between attitude and behaviour has shown that there is no direct link: no more than ten per cent of the variation in behaviour is caused by attitudes. If anything, the reverse is true. It is not infrequent for attitudes to adapt to behaviour.[81] Prejudices increase the likelihood of discrimination, but discrimination can also occur as a result of other causes.[82]

## 2.5 Motives and political exploitation

The most far-reaching expression of racism is violent crime. Research into the motives for hate crimes distinguishes four: a desire for sensation or excitement, defence against supposed attackers, a feeling of having a mission to liberate the world, and hatred or revenge for an act committed against the attacker's own group by a member of the other group.[83] According to Hoogerwerf, the psychological background to crimes of this kind lie in a feeling of disappointment or frustration, bitterness or resentment against perceived injustice, a feeling of not being appreciated, the feeling of being threatened oneself, and stress. This stress can itself be caused by social tensions that are related to shocking events or as negatively perceived social developments. The emotional and the social aspects exercise a mutual influence upon each other. Like prejudices and hatred itself, social stress can be deliberately stoked by people and organisations who have an interest in doing so, such as certain politicians. From research it appears that people have a tendency to comply with social norms and to follow and obey those in authority.[84] It is precisely for that reason that

the impact of politicians is great. In this process of stoking stress, prejudices and hatred against a stigmatised group, there are various mechanisms at work, one of which is the search for a scapegoat for everything that is wrong in a society. Reference should also be made to the role of the use of conspiracy theories, while the creation of myths plays an important part. Myths are non-fact based accounts that take on the character of an article of faith, with a special significance being ascribed to events and acts.[85] This means that people who are receptive to such myths are carried along in a socio-political process in which hatred and exclusion gradually increase through the deployment of various instruments. Language plays an important role here. The relationship between the use of language and the mechanisms of social exclusion has been extensively researched.[86] In summary, Hoogerwerf states that language in a culture of hatred is more extreme, more black and white, more generalised and more simplistic. The language of the culture of hatred, he says, does not exist for the purpose of exchanging arguments and looking for agreement, but to denigrate, to offend, and to insult, for which all kinds of figures of speech are used.[87]

## The effect of language

Examples of the trivialisation of violence, distortion, and blaming the victim are evident in the following anonymous responses on Twitter to a report by the Haaglanden police on violence against a mosque in Zoetermeer in August 2010. In recent years, the mosque had been the subject of violent attacks on several occasions.

"You can see that tempers are running high. Twice it has been set on fire, and now this. I don't think the Zoetermeer city council understands – let's get rid of it! It only attracts lowlife and I've no wish to see people like that in my neighbourhood. Now they are actually going to build a new mosque in full view – why? How is it going to be paid for? What is it going to cost? It'll all being charged to the taxpayer, no doubt. Geert." Another response reads as follows: "The mosque is not used for preaching religion, but rather an ideology that promotes… there are plenty of examples. Sleep well, then, residents of Zoetermeer, and when you wake up, read fifty verses from the Koran, and you'll know where you are. A great danger to our society." A third shows his approval: "Yes, let's get rid of the hatemongers – build a children's farm instead, something that would be of use to the local residents."[88]

Racism is primarily a historically socially determined ideology which, with the help of stigmatising processes where stereotypes and prejudices fulfil a role, forms the basis for discriminatory behaviour and practices by both individuals in everyday interactions and social institutions.[89] At the same time, it is an ideology and a dimension of the instruments and social practices that express that ideology. As it is a phenomenon that has developed historically and which changes as social circumstances change, there cannot be said to be one form of racism, but rather a plurality of racisms. Modern forms of xenophobia, anti-Semitism, and Islamophobia are different manifestations of racism as an ideology of exclusion; they are different sides of the same coin.

## 2.6 Ideology

It is a good idea at this juncture to briefly consider the concept of ideology. Ideology fulfils a linking role between social, economic, cultural and historically developed structures and processes, and the everyday functioning of people and groups, including the interests and social positions that are important to them. Ideology forms and structures the perception of the economic and socio-cultural reality that has evolved throughout history so that it is easier to understand in everyday life. Ideology is about convictions, norms and values, representations and discourse, and dimensions of social practices that contribute towards legitimacy and reproduction, and indeed it is also about the questioning of existing relationships in society, including institutions, power relationships and social relationships.[90] According to Allen, who applied Thompson's ideology theory on Islamophobia, various strategies are at play as ideologies are constructed and disseminated.[91] These strategies are themselves not ideological in character, nor are they unchangeable or irreplaceable. I will mention a number of strategies here, including the instruments that they use. The most important is legitimacy. Legitimacy seeks to present a vision, measure, or judgement as justified, correct, and free of prejudice. The instruments that are used for this are rationalisation and the deployment of anecdotes, stories and events from the past which are supposed to explain the present in a self-evident way. A related strategy is reification, where meaning is given through the representation of a phenomenon as a natural and historic fact and one that is unchangeable, or as the logical consequence of the natural characteristics of the outgroup. Another strategy is concealment – mostly through euphemisms, metaphors and other figures of speech. Transfer is also an instrument and form of concealment: through the constant and repeated use of certain symbols, negative connotations are attached to individuals, a group, or objects. Transfer occurs, for example, where the entire group of Muslim believers is gradually equated with a minority of extremists. Unification is a similar strategy by which individuals or groups of individuals are lumped into one collective identity, in spite of all their differences, which comes to be regarded as the essential, all-defining characteristic of the members of the group.

Early theories about ideology always assumed the existence of incorrect ideas, or 'false awareness'. This notion has long been abandoned. Ideologies use not just incorrect ideas, they also occur alongside the representation of facts and less inaccurate or even accurate ideas that are articulated in the aforementioned strategies, and which are moulded into a more or less single cohesive ideological whole. Examples that come to mind are the criticism concerning the position of women, the use of certain quotations from the Koran, or an unjustified action on the part of an individual that is ascribed to Muslims collectively. Allen rightly points out that the prevention of distorted images is not necessary.[92] However, a number of misrepresentations do frequently appear. It is therefore a good idea to discuss the most important here.

Muslims are often presented as one large homogenous group without any recognition of existing differences in terms of nationality, those who are practising and non-practising, liberal or fundamentalist, Shi'ite or Sunni. This view of Islam sees it as a closed monolithic whole that is immune to external influences like political and social processes; this indicates an essentialist, closed understanding of culture. In addition, the 'Islamic culture' is depicted as one that is at a hierarchically lower level in comparison with 'western culture'.[93] Islam is regarded implicitly or explicitly as under-developed, backward and medieval. The fact that Muslims are different and have a different lifestyle is overemphasised. Muslims are often depicted as 'deceitful', as 'a fifth column', committed to creating a 'parallel' society, or at the very least, as unreliable – the ultimate Trojan horse, serving the interests of foreign rulers who seek the destruction of European culture and civilisation.

Practices that affect the position of women in Islam are the leading target at which Islamophobic rhetoric is aimed. A number of issues stand out here. Honour killings and arranged marriages and other practices that involve the repression of women are generalised as inherently and inextricably linked to Islam. At the same time, it is implicitly or explicitly assumed that, if gender equality is not an attribute of Western culture, then it is at least widespread and the result of a process of emancipation that has been completed there. A secondary effect of this is that the patriarchal aspects of western culture and society that still exist, and the repression that continues as a result, remain largely ignored. Repressive actions committed by Muslims, by contrast, are ascribed exclusively to their religion, without any consideration for the influence of socio-political or cultural factors. Attributing these practices solely to religion means potentially tarring all Muslims with the same brush. In other words, Muslims are deemed to be responsible for the practices of their fellow believers, simply on account of their shared religion. The autonomy and ability of Islamic women to take action is denied by allowing them no scope for their own

experiences and interpretations. This means they are construed only as victims.[94] This creates a paradoxical situation that in the name of their liberation, they are repressed as their own position is defined. Both racism and sexism remain in the shadows as a result of these image-forming processes.[95] It is clear that this will do nothing for the necessary fight against practices that repress women worldwide, not least in the Islamic world.

## 2.7 In conclusion

In closing this chapter, I conclude that Islamophobia is a relatively recent term, but not a recent phenomenon. It is a phenomenon that has its roots in history but which has undergone a revival in recent times due to international developments and developments in our ethnically diverse society. As a result, Muslim minorities are finding themselves increasingly isolated. Islamophobia is a modern version of racism that is being shaped by social processes of stigmatisation in which prejudices and stereotypes fulfil a central function. Islamophobic rhetoric is aimed at religion – often viewed as an ideology – and at culture, alternately or simultaneously. The notion of Islamophobia as an expression of feelings of fear or hatred is too limited. That is to focus only on the emotional component, and neglects the cognitive components. One example is the deliberate portrayal of groups as suspicious in order to exploit vague feelings of fear among citizens. Such a limited view does not lead to a better understanding of the phenomenon. I have formulated the next definition on the basis of what has been set out above, and with the help of theory formation about racism in general and its detailed development into Islamophobia by Chris Allen in his book Islamophobia.[96]

Islamophobia is a socio-historically determined ideology that gives a negative meaning to 'Islam' and 'Muslims' with the help of images, symbols, texts, facts, and interpretations. This way, people's perceptions, the meanings they give, their understanding, their attitudes and their behaviour towards Islam and Muslims promote the social exclusion of Muslims as 'different', and discriminatory and unequal treatment in the cultural, social, economic and political domains. This often also affects people who are considered as Islamic on the basis of their external appearance or their ethnic origins, but who are not. Islamophobia as a modern version of exclusion and discrimination necessarily entails religion-related aspects, and often ethnic and gender ones. These aspects are closely interrelated.

# 3 Public and political statements

This chapter is about Islamophobic statements in the political and public arena. First, an examination is made of statements made on the Internet, including reports of discriminatory comments made to the Meldpunt Discriminatie Internet (Dutch Complaints Bureau for Discrimination on the Internet – MDI); this is followed by an overview of Islamophobic sites based on research into discrimination on the Internet, and an analysis of the themes around which Islamophobic sites profile themselves. Coverage is then given to the way in which the PVV (Party for Freedom) discusses Islam and its attitude towards Muslims. Finally, attention is focused on the position of the extreme right with regard to Islam/Muslims. This involves a look at the extent to which the growth of anti-Islamic ideas influences extreme right-wing and right-wing extremist organisations. The same analysis could be made of the parliamentary political parties in the Netherlands, but I have not done so for the following reason. Every political party in parliament, with exception of the PVV and the SGP (Reformed Political Party) adhere to freedom of religion and the equal treatment of Muslims.[97] The SGP rejects the equal treatment of religions. The party's opinion is as follows: "For reasons of principle and history, Islam in the Netherlands does not merit the same protection as that afforded to Christianity".[98] However, this anti-Islamic position is not a major political or policy-driving force for the SGP (see box). For the PVV it is, although it is not a single-issue party, and it can by no means always be termed an extreme right-wing party when it comes to other areas. A comparison of the PVV and traditional extreme right-wing groups and parties reveals big differences. However, they share a chauvinistic core and a willingness to discriminate on ethnic grounds. It is therefore important to investigate the degree to which Islamophobic viewpoints have been adopted by traditional extreme right-wing groups as a result of the rapid rise in electoral success of the PVV.

## The SGP and Islam

The SGP (Reformed Political Party) is very hostile towards Islam. As far as the party is concerned, Christians in the Netherlands are fighting on two fronts – non-believers and Islam. Islam is seen as 'alien to the Netherlands'. For this reason, and because it 'is not infrequently hostile towards Christians and Jews, the increasing visibility of Islam in public in the Netherlands causes us great concern', according to the party's 2010 election manifesto.[99] The SGP says that to make a distinction between religions is not incompatible with tolerance and religious freedom. Nor does the party believe that it prevents all people from being treated equally.[100] P. op 't Hof, the chairman of the Landelijke stichting tot bevordering van de staat

kundig gereformeerde beginselen ('the national foundation for the promotion of reformed principles'), said at the foundation's annual meeting in May 2010, that 'love for Mohammedans as people' should be seen in combination with a 'complete rejection of Mohammedanism' in public life.[101]

The SGP advocates restraint when it comes to the building of mosques and minarets.[102] Its outgoing chairman Kloosterman, who wants to see religious freedom for Muslims confined to the private domain: "I am bound to God and His word. We have to obey God more than we obey people. A large, new mosque does not fit into that scheme of things, because you are then facilitating something that is not good for people."[103] The SGP regards so-called mega-mosques and the loud calls to prayer from the minarets as a form of alienation and an expression of non-integration. The non-indigenous population have to be able to retain their own identity, says the party in its integration memorandum. They can do this at Islamic schools. The party favours restraint when it comes to utterances in the public domain and would like to see a ban on burqas[104] that cover the face.[105]

## 3.1 Islamophobia on the Internet

Politics contribute substantially to the existing climate of opinion, but this has certainly been the case in the last decade for more or less organised or individual statements on Internet websites, blogs, and forums. Whatever their political persuasion, people these days generally make extensive use of interactive web pages, forums, MSN, Facebook and Hyves to form their opinions. The same thing applies to other applications on the Internet, such as peer-to-peer programmes, Internet news pages, blogs and video-based sites like YouTube. These media all regularly feature Islamophobic messages. There are also closed chat programmes and forums from which outsiders are excluded. The use of the Internet is decreasingly becoming a matter of finding information passively, and is instead becoming a place for actively seeking out other people who share views similar to one's own, and websites and forums are skilfully exploiting this. Forums in particular are doing well and are attracting a great deal of interest. This section is about Internet statements and Islamophobia. After an introduction with a number of general and quantitative details based on notifications to the MDI, I will examine a study into the extreme right on the Internet, which was carried out on behalf of the Dienst Nationale Recherche, the Dutch national police detection service.[106] A number of forums and sites will then be examined to see how negative connotations about Islam and Muslims are constructed. What are the main themes to be covered?

### *3.1.1 Notifications*

For many years now, most of the notifications made to the Dutch Complaints Bureau for Discrimination on the Internet (MDI) have concerned Islamophobia and anti-Semitism.[107] One notable difference is that anti-Semitism occurs almost exclusively on extremist websites, both extreme right-wing and extreme Islamist sites, while Islamophobia appears on all kinds of websites, including those of newspapers and magazines where people post responses to news stories. In its annual reports, the MDI refers to the fact that many of the views expressed on the Internet often talk about Muslims in the same breath as Moroccans and sometimes as Turks, who make up the largest Muslim groups in the Netherlands. Here too, then, the intersectionality mentioned in Chapter 2 is visible. At the same time, the separate registration of the different reasons conceals the quantitative extent of discrimination that affects Moroccans and Turks.

Table 3.1 **Number of (illegal) statements for each discrimination ground, 2003-2010**

| | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | | 2006 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Statements | Statements | Statements | Illegal | Statements | Illegal |
| Muslims | 231 | 409 | 371 | 171 | 473 | 275 |
| Moroccans | 59 | 268 | 186 | 85 | 202 | 157 |
| Turks | 47 | 309 | 56 | 25 | 98 | 74 |
| Total | 337 | 986 | 613 | 281 | 773 | 506 |

| | 2007 | | 2008 | | 2009 | | 2010 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Statements | Illegal | Statements | Illegal | Statements | Illegal | Statements | Illegal |
| Muslims | 365 | 276 | 346 | 204 | 182 | 75 | 276 | 104 |
| Moroccans | 208 | 184 | 259 | 229 | 109 | 69 | 210 | 123 |
| Turks | 36 | 25 | 104 | 91 | 52 | 35 | 22 | 14 |
| Total | 609 | 485 | 709 | 524 | 343 | 179 | 508 | 241 |

*Source: MDI*

Figure 3 .1 **Number of statements for each discrimination ground, 2003-2010**

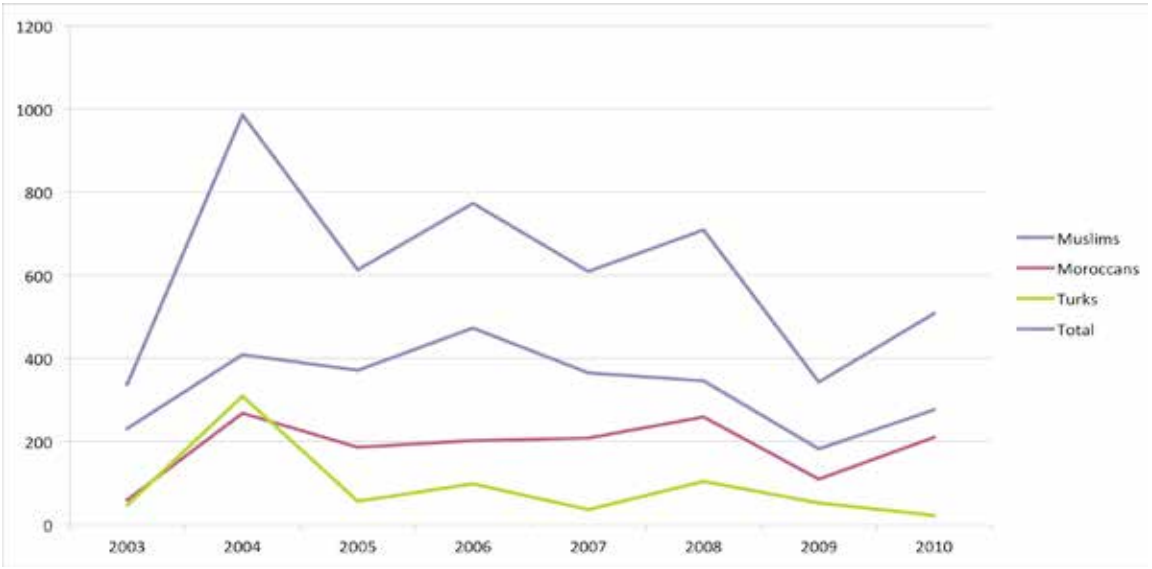
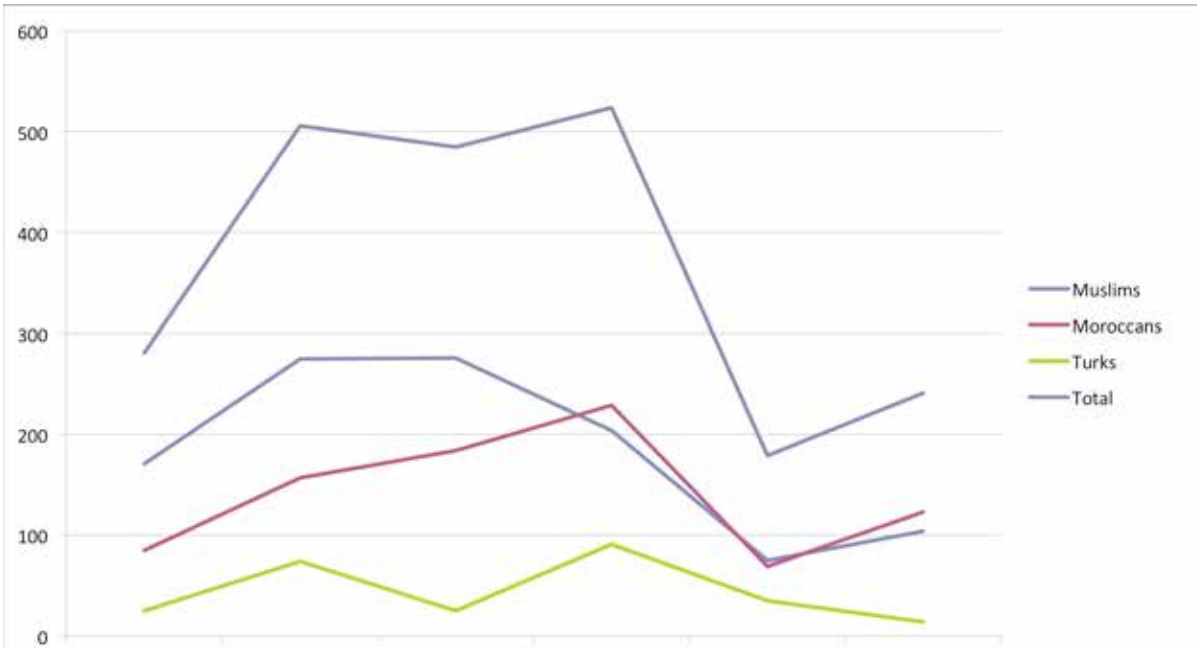



Table 3.2 **Illegal statements for each discrimination ground, source: MDI.**

| | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Muslims | 171 | 275 | 276 | 204 | 75 | 104 |
| Moroccans | 85 | 157 | 184 | 229 | 69 | 123 |
| Turks | 25 | 74 | 25 | 91 | 35 | 14 |
| Total | 281 | 506 | 485 | 524 | 179 | 241 |

Figure 3.2 **Number of illegal statements for each discrimination ground, 2005-2010**



For that reason, Table 3.1 and Figures 3.1 and 3.2 show details of reported discrimination on the Internet against Muslims as well as of discrimination against Moroccans and Turks on the Internet where records are kept on the basis of ethnicity/origin, and the totals.

As the tables and figures show, the number of reports of Islamophobia on the Internet decreased for the first time in 2009 after a period of strong growth starting in 2003, only to resume a substantial level of increase in 2010. The same picture – a drop in 2009, followed by an increase in 2010 – is visible in the case of reports about discrimination against Moroccans.[108] The question arises as to how the year 2009 saw such a sharp decrease. This can perhaps be explained in terms of the greater efforts at more effective moderation, so that statements would be removed before they were noticed, and therefore reported.[109] On the other hand, it is of course possible that it was not the number of illegal statements that fell, but the extent to which they were reported. In the case of the latter, it may be that 'reporting fatigue' was at play, or the assumption that there was nothing to be gained by reporting illegal statements.[110] Additionally, the significant increase in the number of anti-Islamic statements made in the public domain is making people more accustomed to hearing them. A large proportion of the reported statements on the Internet are illegal and are removed at the request of the MDI,[111] and reported to the police if necessary. At the same time, the MDI points out in its annual report for 2010 that the nature of discriminatory comments has been becoming more and more hard-line in recent years, with the number of statements inciting violence showing a very large increase.

Taking all this into account, Islamophobic statements are still a frequent occurrence on the Internet. In recent years, it is the anti-Islamic sites and forums that have shown the greatest rate of growth among extreme right-wing web media.[112] But do they have any influence? In order to be able to estimate the scope of a forum, it is important to bear in mind that a large proportion of their users are inactive, with most items often being posted by a small core of hardliners. Not every post on extreme right-wing sites is of an extreme right-wing nature, either. Moreover, there is a high turnover rate among the users of these sites and forums, so the picture can vary from one moment to the next. Details about membership numbers and the number of items posted on forums (as far as was known in the autumn of 2011) have been added to the overview below.

### *3.1.2 Sites and forums*

In his study of extreme right-wing websites, according to their size Branderhorst made a distinction based on nationalistic, anti-Islamic, and Nazi/anti-Semitic web media. In addition, three of the sites have a hybrid anti-Islamic/nationalistic character. His report gives

a general description of the sites/forums, discusses texts and image elements, examines the extent to which they go beyond the law, the degree to which activities are in any way developed, and links to other sites. During the period under review, fifty extreme right-wing websites were online, including twelve forums. Of the fourteen anti-Islamic sites, ten were still active in August 2011. Below is a summarising discussion of the most important anti-Islam sites, static websites and forums, based on the details of the report by Branderhorst, to some of which my own observations have been added.[113]

Clear ideological dividing lines separate these three types of website – this was shown not only from the content, but also from the way in which they referred to other sites. While there was some overlap with nationalistic sites, anti-Islamic sites never referred to Nazi sites, and vice versa. Anti-Islamic sites referred mostly to other Dutch sites and sometimes to anti-Islamic sites in the United States. Nationalistic sites did regularly contain anti-Islamic statements. On three anti-Islam sites, Freespeech, Pim-Fortuyn.nl and Forza!Nederland, the researcher regularly found statements which in his judgement were criminal, although they were generally removed by the moderator after several hours. Other comments that the researcher considered illegal were found more frequently on websites without an organisation in the physical world than on those where such an organisation did exist. In this context, the report makes reference to three anti-Islamic sites – United Dutch Alliance, United European Alliance and !Uitkijk. The latter was the only one still active in 2011.

## *Forum-voor-de-vrijheid*

This forum was founded in 2006. It gives the impression of being the main and the largest forum on the topic of Islamophobia. It is a forum used by supporters of Wilders, concentrating on anti-Islamic news reports while also casting insults at the political left. During the period under review, the Forum showed a relatively fast rate of growth in terms of membership, from 154 to 185 (twenty per cent in one month). An average of 55 posts were added daily. The number of members posting items was relatively high (35 per cent – 54 members). Of the statements that were seen, 1.6 per cent (22) were considered illegal, while eight per cent of all the posts on the forum were of an extreme right-wing nature. Although the moderators removed any posts that incited violence, as well as any that used excessively offensive language, they themselves took an active part in creating negative images about Muslims. Discrimination based on religion, nationality and culture were very common. "Although some topics do not contain explicitly discriminatory comments, the overall content of slurs, insults and negative comments against Muslims and Islam does create an atmosphere in which hate prospers."[114] Frequent images of Wilders accompan-

ied other images that were intended to discredit Muslims, such as women in niqabs, and photographs of attacks and violent demonstrations by Muslims. The report noted 16,640 posts on 1 November 2007.

According to the Forum, there were 769 members in the summer of 2011, of whom 59 were active, and 116,570 posts, an increase of 584 and almost 100,000 respectively, in less than four years. Although membership numbers showed strong growth between December 2007, at the time of Branderhorst's research, and August 2011 (on the basis of these figures), this was not the case with regard to the number of active members, which rose from 55 to 59. It should be mentioned that the information regarding the number of non-active members of Internet forums is of limited value, given that it includes people who have signed up once, but who have never subsequently revisited the site or forum in question.

## *Altermedia*

Altermedia is the Dutch branch of a site that also appears in other countries, such as the United Kingdom. At the time of Branderhorst's research, every news item on this static website was aimed at discrediting Islam, immigrants and the multicultural society, substantiated by images. The report referred to the example of the depiction of a group of Muslims as a flock of sheep. News items featured a mixture of facts and opinions and figures taken out of context. The language was populist, biased, and full of circular reasoning. On average, thirty items are posted every month.

## *Dutchfaithfreedom*

This is a website with five new posts a month, and a forum with one hundred posts per month in 2008. The site claims to be against extremist ideologies but in practice, according to Branderhorst, it is against Islam, and nothing else. The site published book discussions, news articles, and commentaries. It made many references to other national and international anti-Islamic sites and forums. In the summer of 2011, it said it had 941 members and that the number of posts was 244,433.

## *Freespeechsite*

This concerns a website with images of Fortuyn and Wilders to the left and right of the Freespeech for everyone logo. The site also has a forum on which around five hundred messages were posted, not all of which had an anti-Islamic character. Although moderation was strict, some posts had racist or discriminatory undertones. In the autumn of 2011, there were 234,072 registered users and 495,530 messages.

### *Pim-fortuyn.nl*

This website plus forum was dominated by anti-Islamic and anti-immigration sentiments. About 150 messages were posted on the forum every day, although not all were anti-Islamic or anti-immigration.

### *Uitkijk.net*

This static website with an average of thirty messages a month is the successor to Democrates.net. The site has a strongly anti-Islamic and anti-left wing character. In terms of text, Branderhorst notes a similar pattern to that of Altermedia. In the summer of 2011, the site included counters that kept an ongoing tally of the costs of immigration and the number of immigrants that were said to be coming into the country every day. There is also a link to a PDF file of the Islamophobic book by Mohamed Rasoel that appeared in 1990 amid much controversy.[115] The site claims to have 14,742 monthly visitors, and 75 daily – no explanation is given for the mathematical discrepancy!

Apart from the websites and forums already mentioned, Branderhorst found many more extreme right-wing manifestations on the Internet: inactive websites, closed websites, extreme right-wing statements on response panels of regular sites of so-called old media, such as newspapers. The task of moderating and removing illegal statements is, for some newspapers, a major one, concerning primarily anti-Islamic, xenophobic and nationalist messages. Branderhorst notes a clear anti-Islam tendency on the pages of De Telegraaf and the Algemeen Dagblad. Extreme right-wing sentiments are also a feature of popular weblogs like GeenStijl and mainstream online friend networks like Hyves and Fok!. Extreme right-wing images can be found on YouTube and are distributed via peer-to-peer programmes. Branderhorst points to the importance of more research into these Internet statements which, in absolute terms, far exceed the extreme right-wing forums: "The stream of insulting, discriminating, and illegal messages is so vast and persistent that they cannot be ignored."[116] No research of this type has yet been carried out.

## *3.1.3 Themes*

In Chapter 2, Islamophobia was defined as a socio-historically determined ideology that ascribes a negative connotation to Islam and Muslims with the help of images, symbols, texts, facts, and interpretations. It mentioned that the ideas presented are not always inaccurate. The question examined below is how such negative connotations are constructed on the Internet.

Between 2009 and mid-2010, a large number of sites and forums appeared that featured negative comments about Islam and Muslims. Below are forums that specifically profile

themselves around such themes as freedom of expression, Islam, criticism of Islam and the PVV, a number of which have been examined more closely for this investigation –www.hetvrijevolk.com, http://dutch.faithfreedom.org/, http://eurabie.punt.nl/, www.pim-fortuyn.nl and http://forum-voor-de-vrijheid.nl/. It turned out that there were several themes that keep recurring. These themes were the object of a search that was then conducted among the older pages of the sites; the themes were Islamisation, Eurabia, headscarves, the leftist church, and totalitarian. On the basis of the search results, a number of texts were selected, the content of which were examined in greater detail. The identity of the authors of the texts, whether an individual, a party, or a group, was not a factor – the criterion that mattered was the content that appeared on the Internet media. From this, it was possible to clarify the main aspects of an Islamophobic ideology.

A frequent feature of these texts was the accusation of the alleged totalitarian character of Islam. This was used as a basis for advocating the need to ban the religion and the customs associated with it, such as the wearing of the headscarf. An opinion posted on the www.hetvrijevolk.com site calls for Islam to have its status as a religion revoked, and for mosques to be regarded as associations: "It is much easier to ban an association than a religion". Daily prayers are dubbed as a "method of indoctrination" and mosques as "centres of propaganda".[117] The use of the term 'totalitarian' in this context underlines the view that Islam is a political ideology.

There is an extensive level of campaigning against what is described as 'Islamisation'. This process of Islamisation, of the Netherlands as well as of Europe and the entire Western world, is substantiated using a particular interpretation of history. The history of Islam is said to have been characterised by violence and repression. According to a contribution on pim-fortuyn.nl, entitled 'De re-islamisering in de nieuwe tijd' ('Re-Islamisation in the new age'), a principle of Islam is world domination. Reference is made to historic conquests to support the notion that 're-Islamisation' is a more accurate term than 'Islamisation'. The process is said to have occurred previously in history and to be now repeating itself. Islam wants to "undo Europe's Judeo-Christian identity and to undermine the foundations of the Enlightenment". Organisations like the Council of Europe and the UN are said to have "already been undermined by Islam". The contribution ends with a warlike call: "But I think I have been able to show that Islam, using all the means at its disposal, will fight to secure its position of dominance. The West will be powerless to resist if determined men and women cannot be found who are prepared to actively combat this."[118] This alleged aim on the part of Islam to dominate Europe is sometimes expressed by those involved in international Islamic rhetoric[119] as 'Eurabia'[120], a combination of Europe and Arabia. The

term was used in 2005 as the title of a book by a British writer living in Switzerland, publishing under the pseudonym Bat Ye'or. It stands for a supposed Islamic project by which Europe, which is seen as a doomed and decadent continent, is turned into a colony of the Islamic/Arabic world.[121] It is said to be a secret project that was developed by European and Arabic politicians during the oil crisis of the 1970s, as part of the Euro-Arabic dialogue. Since then, Muslim immigrants are said to have flooded Europe, with the consent of the same politicians, with the aim of destroying Western culture and civilisation, and of replacing democratic governments by autocratic regimes. Another purpose of the term is to highlight the idea that Europe and European organisations have already been 'undermined by Islam'. According to Bat Ye'or, European universities, for example, are already controlled by Palestinians and the churches are supposed to have voluntarily subjugated themselves to Islam.[122] The books and concepts by this writer achieved prominence mainly because of references by well-known American supporters of the anti-Islam ideology like R. Spencer, P. Geller and D. Pipes, who belong to Wilders' international network. Their work, translated or otherwise, also finds its way to sites in the Netherlands, supposedly the front line of the 'clash of civilisations'. The translation by H. Numan of an article by Pipes, entitled 'Europe or Eurabia', starts with an alarmist tone: "The future of Europe is at stake. Will it change into Eurabia, part of the Muslim world?" With approval, Pipes quotes an American columnist: "It is difficult to imagine any other future scenario for Western Europe than a civil war or Islamisation" and "Muslims can count themselves lucky if they get away with a mass deportation rather than being murdered".[123] In a contribution on dutch.faithfreedom.org, the term Eurabia is illustrated with an image of the Eiffel Tower surrounded by two minarets.[124] On Dutch-language sites, we also find the assertion that politicians in the past were said to have exchanged oil and guest workers for the acceptance of subjugation to the authority of Islam: "Spiritual and political leaders in the Netherlands who have given away our country to Islam under Eurabia, the exchange of oil and Muslim guest workers against the free development of Islam, I accuse you of not protesting against, but cooperating in this process."[125] The Eurabia thesis has been heavily criticised internationally because of its lack of any sense of reality, the lack of any scientific substantiation, and the conspiratorial character that is similar to the perception of international communism during the Cold War, or to anti-Semitic conspiracy theories.[126] In this context, the book by Bat Ye'or has been described by academic and journalist opponents as the 'The Protocols of the Elders of Mecca'.[127] This is a reference to the book entitled 'The Protocols of the Elders of Zion', which has played such a major role in the development of anti-Semitism into an ideology of genocide.[128] Nonetheless, this dangerous fantasy about Eurabia has become more and more mainstream.

The fictitiousness of the threat of Islamisation and the obsessive degree to which it is per-

ceived, including on Dutch Internet sites, are clear from the following dialogue. A certain 'Mahalinguam' regularly posts his contributions on dutch.faithfreedom.org, ending each of his texts with the words (translated): "Anyone using their brains in Islam will lose their head." In October 2007, he wrote: "Islamisation has just forced its way into my house. The postman brought me a light-purple document from Het Talenhuis in Drachten (…) the books below form a complex of the Islamic laws that we most frequently come into contact with (...)."

The response to this message from a certain 'Ariel' is sympathetic: "Unbelievable, Mahalinguam. This is an Islamic site. And from Drachten of all places. What possible benefit could sharia law be in the Netherlands? This is clearly an example of the second phase of the jihad."[129]

The mass immigration that enabled Islamic dominance to take hold is another recurring theme on the sites and forums that were examined.[130] The systematic use of the word 'mass' as a prefix to 'immigration' creates an exaggerated picture. It suggests uncontrollably large-scale immigration, which conjures up the notion of a threat. This mass immigration is said to lead to the collapse of the welfare state. The term mass immigration has a strong ideological significance. Lucassen & Lucassen trace the use of the term and put into perspective the degree to which it is realistic with regard to the extent of immigration to the Netherlands.[131] Before Wilders started using the term in his political rhetoric on a structural basis, it had already been used in the European context by Frits Bolkestein, the European Commissioner and VVD (People's Party for Freedom and Democracy) politician. Net immigration between 1990 and 2009 amounted to an average of less than 40,000 per year. However, the public debate, Lucassen & Lucassen note, is not so much about immigration in general as about groups that are seen as problematic, especially Muslims. The term mass immigration is used primarily with regard to these groups: Moroccans and Turks in particular, and sometimes Somalis and Antillians as well. Between 2001 and 2009, net immigration to the Netherlands among these groups averaged 3,900 people annually, while the numbers returning to Morocco in 2006 and 2007 actually exceeded those coming here. In 2008, net immigration of Moroccans was 52. The writers conclude "that the relationship between the political use of the term 'mass immigration' is not connected to the facts, and that politicians have constructed a completely different reality of their own (…)".[132]

In the context of 'mass immigration', many statements on the Internet make extensive reference to the integration of Muslims as being poor or impossible: "Why waste so much time and money on attempts at integrating incoming foreigners who have absolutely no

wish to integrate? They have not come to adapt to our way of living. The Asian or African way of life is in their DNA. Their Islamic compulsive-obsessive disorder fills them with repulsion for the all-pervasive decadence here. For them, integration is not a question of improvement, but of degeneration, of spiritual and moral decay. They make frequent visits to the mosque in order to keep alive their conviction that they must not allow themselves to fall into the pool of decadence."[133] Their inability to integrate is illustrated with the help of all kinds of issues, by postulating criminal tendencies that are supposed to be prompted by religion. This leads to discussions on the alleged psychological features and motives of Muslims. We, the 'dim Dutch', are discriminated against and are the victims of our own naïveté: "You want to become a police officer and you are Dutch? Forget it. We only need Mohammedans, a few women, and the occasional queer – in that order. And what if the candidates are equally suitable? No. If a Mohammedan is prepared to join the police, he does not need to be suitable at all (…) We, the dim Dutch, can really give ourselves a pat on the back! Not that we need to, because young Moroccans will do it for you. And not just a pat on the back, they'll hit you in your face or in your crotch. (…) If Ali Osram takes a knife to school, the whole school will be doing so within a week, as a matter of necessity. If Joe Schmoe does not take a knife to school, he will return home barefooted and without his wallet, mobile phone and a loose sphincter (…)"[134] Generalisation is a well-worn strategy. Naturally there is room for such themes as the repression of Muslim women through the headscarf and the veil: "When Saudi Arabia made funding available to promote the wearing of headscarves in Western Europe, things moved even more quickly. It is said – it has never been proved – that a father whose daughter started wearing a headscarf received a monthly payment from his mosque – a nice little earner on top of his child allowance, all tax free. (…) A tsunami of headscarves flooded the streets of the Netherlands (…) and it won't be long before we have a teacher standing at the front of a class, the only visible part of her being a pair of eyes (…)"[135] Finally, contributors regularly emphasise the paedophile tendencies of the prophet Mohammed, some illustrated with quotes from the Koran.[136] This is a deliberate attempt to appeal to the widespread social indignation that surrounds the topic of child abuse.

Islamophobic attitudes are often linked to those that exude a hatred of the political left. The aforementioned themes are frequently peppered with offensive references to statements by politicians, especially leaders of the Dutch Labour Party (PvdA), who are sometimes called "the new NSB" (the National Socialist Movement in the Netherlands that existed from 1931-1945), with Muslims as the "new Nazis". For example, the former Mayor of Amsterdam, Job Cohen, is described as a "cowardly left-wing Jew" and "protector of the new Nazis and more disturbed than Joran van der Sloot". He is compared with "Jews with courage, bottle, and balls who are absolutely not afraid and who do not

allow themselves to be led unquestioningly to the slaughterhouse by the new Nazis". The PVV is portrayed as the solution: "(…) Now you know why you should vote for the PVV. If not, the Netherlands will be governed by the party that wants to do all in its power to protect the new Nazis."[137] Former minister Ella Vogelaar was also threatened on the Internet: "(…) With comments like this, she is helping to pave the way for the Netherlands to be flooded by a tsunami of burqas. Although taking the law into your own hands cannot be condoned, the idea that the summary execution of Ella Vogelaar is perhaps the most sensible solution is certainly not something I would assert. After all, a remark to that effect can land you in prison for 118 days. Ironic criticism of politicians is now not allowed. In spite of this, I believe that Vogelaar should be locked up in a straitjacket! Then she will at least realise what it is like to wear a burqa."[138] The underlying reasons for the hostile attitude towards the 'left' and 'the elite' is the fact that responsibility for 'mass immigration' and its alleged disastrous consequences, such as Islamisation, is placed at the feet of left-wing politicians and the elite. They are said to be leading society to its demise and to be turning it over to the barbaric powers of Islam. A deeper reasoning can be found in the need to deprive regular politicians of their legitimacy. However, the idea of bringing in guest workers, which was initiated by employers, and the minorities and integration policies that were first officially laid down in 1983, were mostly formed by centre-right coalitions in which the VVD and the CDA (Christian Democrats) were dominant parties. The heart of the policies that have been pursued since 1983 has not been so much the 'preservation of our own culture', which has come under so much criticism in 2011, but the combating of socio-economic deprivation.[139]

## Cartoons

The images that can be found on the Internet often emphasise the violent character of Islam/Muslims. As an example, the images on the !Uitkijk website are discussed here. Every text on this site is framed by images and cartoons in which Muslims are mocked and insulted. The cartoons are signed by the spotprent.be website.

Image 1
A pack of cigarettes in a Marlboro-style packaging bears the text 'Mohammedans' in block letters, below which is written 'Mohamed can cause you / and those around you / serious damage / to your health'.

Image 2
Cartoon, with caption: DIALOGUE!!!
A man offers his hand to an Ali Baba figure who is armed to the teeth and carrying a scimitar in his mouth.

Image 3
Caption: 'Islam is a peace-loving religion'
An Ali Baba figure with blood-spattered clothing waves his blood-smeared scimitar about while dancing on skulls bearing cards with the words Hindus, Jews, Christians, or heathens.

Image 4
Caption above the image: Islam is peace?
An arm with a scimitar in the hand is raised in the air.
The caption below reads: 'If the founder of a religion was this violent, what will his followers be like?'

Image 5
A photograph of two women dressed in black niqabs in front of a 'no entry' traffic sign, below which are the words 'Go back'.

It was no coincidence that the most important themes that shape the Islamophobic ideology on various Internet sites and forums, such as the totalitarian nature of Islam, the concept of Eurabia, Islamisation, mass immigration, and the culpability of the political left and the elite, were the ones that Wilders addressed in his statement at the resumption of his trial in February 2011in relation to his statements about Islam/Muslims.

## 3.2 The PVV and Islamophobia

Over a period of several years, the PVV has stood out on account of its clear Islamophobic statements. Utterances by Wilders are summarised in various publications and sometimes commented on.[140] His remarks about Islam were the subject of criminal proceedings in 2010-2011, when he faced investigations into whether he had made deliberately insulting statements towards Muslims as a group because of their religion (Art. 137c of the Criminal Code) or whether he had incited discrimination and hatred (Art. 137d of the Criminal Code/ Art. 90 quater), or both, against Muslims on account of their religion. Although the court took the view that some of his comments were discriminatory in themselves, or offensive and insulting, and that one was of an inflammatory nature that went to the very limit of what was lawful, Wilders was acquitted in the light of the overall context of

his arguments and the wider social context, the hard-line debate about the multicultural society in the Netherlands, and the freedom of expression granted to politicians. An additional factor in the acquittal was that many of the statements concerned the religion itself rather than its adherents. The court also took the view that the degree to which utterances are allowed is greater, the fiercer the general level of public debate. The court considered that statements were only unlawful if they represented a threat to public order.[141] The opposing parties, including immigrant organisations, have lodged an appeal to the Supreme Court and to European bodies.

Internationally, too, there is concern about the stigmatising standpoint of the PVV. The parliamentary assembly of the Council of Europe expressed its concern in May 2010 about the increasing intolerance towards Islam and Muslims.[142] The Council referred in this context to extreme right-wing parties in various European countries, such as the French Front National, the Dutch PVV, the Belgian Vlaams Belang and the Swiss People's Party, which exploit people's fears of Muslims and contribute towards stigmatising them through simplifications and negative stereotypes. They use the terms Islam and Islamism interchangeably in their campaigns and they regard all Muslims as Islamist, according to the report by the committee. This section covers a selection of Wilders' statements and points in his programme on Islam/Muslims.

Wilders does not indeed seek to make any distinction between Islam and extremist Islamism, which misuses the religion for political ends. He describes Islam as "sick" and "fascist". In his view, Islam is not a world religion but a political ideology.[143] "I find the ideology of Islam to be contemptible, fascist, and wrong," he told the Vlaamse Nieuwsblad newspaper on 9 February 2008. At the end of the first day of the resumed court proceedings against him, Wilders talked of a "malevolent" and "totalitarian ideology".[144] He dubbed the Koran as "the Mein Kampf of a religion that sets out to destroy others", a book that was supposed to incite repression and murder, and which should therefore be banned.[145] The Islamic prophet Mohammed is described by him as "barbaric" and "a mass murderer".[146] He portrayed his opinions about the Koran in, among other places, in the film Fitna, which was released in 2008.

## Fitna and the responses to it

In the spring of 2008, Wilders brought out a film, Fitna. The initial response to it was that the Netherlands could breathe easy: it was not so bad after all. This was followed by a triumphalist response by Wilders himself who emphasised that it had all stayed within the law. Much of the public response centred on the idea that the film offered nothing new and consisted of old images that had already been extensively distributed on the Internet, not least by the kind of terrorist that the film's author claimed to be fighting.

These responses raise the question of what potential effect the images could have. First, the earlier availability of the images on the Internet did not mean that they had been seen by the same number of people as had watched the film, with its millions of viewers all over the world. Second, this cut-and-paste operation, turning old images into a new composition, is not as harmless as it first appears. The images of Islamist terrorist acts alternate with texts from the Koran that are taken out of context, and linked to the call to resist the process of 'Islamisation'. Not only did the film involve cutting and pasting, but extra 'colour' was added as well. In addition, the social context plays an important role in terms of the effects that images have, or potentially have. Wilders launched the film in a social context of increasing negative perceptions of Islam/Muslims. Last but not least, the images and texts are truly shocking in the sense that they arouse feelings of rage, fear, frustration, impotence and pity.

Nonetheless, the responses that regarded the hate-promoting character of the film as essential were very much relegated to the sidelines. They did not reach the front pages or the headlines: they were tucked away on the inside pages or in a small paragraph. Some historians referred to the hate-bearing nature of the images and texts because they knew from history what constituted a propaganda film, while many citizens, including Muslims, felt it intuitively: this is a film that encourages feelings of fear, hatred, and hostility. Some politicians realised this as well, but were unwilling to emphasise the fact. They believed it more important to maintain social order rather than to analyse the film in any depth. Social order was indeed maintained – which is no bad thing. What about the content?

"It is now time for Islam to be conquered ideologically," says the film as it nears the end. The film approaches Islam not as a religion but as an ideology, chronologically and substantively sequenced with fascism and communism, with all the connotations that that entails – dogmatism, indoctrination, lack of freedom and tolerance, violence and repression, dictatorship and domination.

Religions are complex social phenomena, with many aspects and components:

historical (their origins), theological (their teachings and relationship to God), social (their relationship to society and the degree to which they are interwoven with it, and their influence on political and social ideas) and their followers (their viewpoints and the way they behave). They do of course include ideological components, and they help determine views about society and politics, but they are not the same.

Most people have vague ideas about religions, except their own, and the same applies to Islam. The confrontation between the average citizen and Islam in Western Europe is still young – not much older than from the time of the guest workers. The most that can be said is that there is a collective memory of negative images that stem from the era of the Crusades, and which have since been passed on in stories and images. With this collective consciousness in the background, it is easier for images of the kind shown in Fitna to make an impact.[147]

The culmination of Wilders' ideas about Islam are clearly illustrated in the following extract of the statement with which he closed the first day of his resumed trial:[148] "Islam is an ideology that stands out primarily through murder and killing, and which only produces societies that are backward and impoverished." One particular quote from the same statement stands out: "The lights are going out all over Europe." While Wilders is alluding here to the loss of the values of the Enlightenment, he is describing with great drama an apocalyptic downfall of Western civilisation. He also gave his views on who was responsible for this: "the multiculturalist elites who are engaged in a total war against their peoples." These elites were said to be "protectors" of "an ideology that has been seeking to destroy us for fourteen centuries." In a speech in Rome, he said that it was not just about the Netherlands, not even the West, but the whole world: "Islam strives for world domination,"[149] he said, after an introductory discussion of the downfall of Roman civilisation to Germanic barbarians. "(...) The truth that Islam is evil has always been obvious to our ancestors. That is why they fought."[150] In his view, Muslims in the Netherlands have been selected as the pawns as part of an Islamic project to take over the world. We should be fighting against this evil in the way that our ancestors did, he suggests implicitly. We can see how Wilders uses theories about the succession of civilisations and about the history of crusades and other historic conquests to reach his ideas about Muslims as the enemy of society. He depicts immigration from countries with largely Islamic populations as an Islamic invasion. On 6 February 2007, for example, he said on www.GeenStijl.nl that '(…) the Netherlands as a country for an Islamic mission. A terrorist like Mohammed B. could not be stopped, and the tactics of penetration, propaganda, conversion and demographic change will indeed turn out to be successful if the cowardly political elite from the VVD

to the PvdA and from the SP (Socialist Party) to the CDA and their kindred souls in Europe remain silent on the subject and continue to denounce and demonise those who do not. There is enough Islam in Europe and the Netherlands. The PVV will do all in its power to resist this third attempt at an Islamic invasion."[151] In his statements, Muslims are credited not just with intentions, but also a power that in the reality of their minority status in society they do not remotely possess.

In Wilders' eyes, the Netherlands is the victim of a "tsunami of Islamisation".[152] He illustrates this flooding metaphor with such statements as, "District after district, street after street, school after school is becoming Islamised."[153] The use of the term 'Islamisation' strongly suggests the existence of a deliberate project for imposing Islam on the Western world. This idea of colonisation is sometimes stated in even more explicit language: "The elite romantically describes these Moroccans, who are spoiling everything here, as 'the new Dutch'. I prefer to call them 'colonists' – Muslim colonists. After all, they have not come here to integrate, but to take over, to subjugate us."[154]

As well as his Islamophobic rhetoric, Wilders speaks more generally of "what has come to the Netherlands and what is breeding here," as if he were not talking about actual people.[155] With the help of metaphors and rhetorical figures of speech, he succeeds in creating an atmosphere of urgency and danger: "(…) Muslims will move from the large cities to the countryside. We have to stop the tsunami of Islamisation. This will affect us to the core, our identity, our culture. If we do not resist, all the other points in my programme will prove to be in vain."[156] The subject of breeding is a regular feature: "The indigenous population have fewer children than immigrants. At present, immigrants, most of them Muslims, live in large cities. In twenty years they will be everywhere, from Apeldoorn to Emmen and from Weert to Middelburg. We are selling our country to a devil named Mohammed, and nobody is doing anything about it."[157]

## PVV and Islamophobic incidents

In July 2011 S. van Rooy, a PVV staff member in The Hague, uploaded a film he had made himself onto the Internet (onto YouTube and his own Facebook page), which showed him harassing a number of women wearing niqabs in a shopping centre in Scheveningen.[158] He wrote on Facebook: "I suddenly saw this scum walking by, so I decided to film them. Or am I supposed to simply accept that my leisure time in Scheveningen is spoiled by this kind of imported backwardness from the Islamic sandpit?"

To the question on Facebook as to why he described the women as 'scum' without even speaking to them, Van Rooy replied: "What nonsense that you cannot describe people as scum. People who reject Western values in favour of a racist, fascist and inhumane system like the sharia are scum, just like Nazis and other fascists."

A publicist, Van Rooy conducts an active campaign against Islam, together with his father. They put together the collection entitled, 'De islam: kritische essays over een politieke religie', ('Islam – critical essays on a political religion') among other things. The collection consists of contributions by a large number of critics of Islam, including some from the Netherlands. Several of the pieces are of a strongly Islamophobic character.[159]

After Elsevier had dedicated an article to the film and to Van Rooy's comments, the PVV said that it regretted the incident and suspended Van Rooy. "It is a shame that these women were wearing burqas, and indeed we are in favour of a ban on burqas, but these women are not scum," said the PVV in a response to the episode.[160]

I will now look at the four features of stigmatisation to demonstrate that the Islamisation arguments used by Wilders and his supporters have a strong stigmatising character. First, Muslims are depicted as scroungers who do not contribute to society. The following quotation is an example of this: "I am in favour of closing our borders to family members of non-Western, Islamic immigrants. Ninety-nine per cent of them add nothing to our society. The only thing they bring with them is problems."[161]

Second, Muslims are shown as unreliable, a fifth column, as illustrated in the following quotation in which doubt is expressed about the acceptance of the Muslim community of the Dutch system of law: "As long as it remains unclear that the Dutch Muslim community does not genuinely accept the laws and rules of the Dutch legal system, the basis of trust that is needed to be able to grant constitutional rights and freedoms to the same degree as to other groups in the Netherlands who have shaped and accepted these laws and rules, will be absent."[162]

The suggestion that they do not share our values is the third part of the stigmatising process. This aspect is apparent in the following quotation, for example: "(…) their conduct is the result of their religion and culture. You cannot view them separately. The Pope was absolutely right recently, when he said that Islam was a violent religion. Islam means subjugation and the conversion of non-Muslims. This interpretation applies in the living rooms of their juvenile delinquents, and in the mosques. It's all part of their community."[163] The

non-sharing of fundamental values is often symbolised by the headscarf. It is notable here that the fact that headscarves are worn by people is entirely lost sight of. In extreme cases, the headscarf is often the object of verbal aggression on the part of the PVV, with war metaphors regularly being used. Headscarves are said to pollute public areas – the streets have to be 'reclaimed'. This is why Wilders advocates the introduction of a tax on the wearing of headscarves, something he describes as the 'head rag tax'. "It is simply a matter of picking up a permit once a year and handing over 10,000 euros."[164]

Finally, the stigmatised group are not supposed to contribute towards the well-being of society as a whole, as highlighted in the following statement: "(…) who do not care about the interests of Dutch citizens and are working towards the transformation of the Netherlands into Netherarabia, as a province of the Eurabia superstate."[165]

In the examination of stigmatisation, it was made clear that it facilitates the process of unequal treatment and exclusion. Over time, Wilders has made proposals in various interviews and speeches aimed at treating Muslims unequally and excluding them. Among the things he has advocated, for example, are a ban on the sale and use of the Koran, in private and in public,[166] the closure of the country's borders to non-Western immigrants,[167] and a requirement that Muslims either assimilate or leave: "Everyone must adapt to our dominant culture. Anyone who does not will no longer be here in twenty years' time. They will be deported."[168]

The PVV included in their 2010 election manifesto the following policies that would directly exclude Islamic citizens and objects or subject them to unequal treatment: no new mosques, and the closure of mosques where violence is preached, a halt to immigration for people from Islamic countries, a ban on the wearing of headscarves in public functions, a tax on the wearing of headscarves and a ban on burqas, a ban on the Koran and on Koran lessons in school buildings, the closure of Islamic schools, the ending of grants for Islamic media, including media that are perceived to be Islamic, such as maroc.nl, and a ban on ritual slaughter. In addition, believes the PVV, "Islamisation of healthcare" must be stopped. Immigrant Muslims would also be indirectly affected by PVV election manifesto pledges relating to existing anti-discrimination measures, policies on foreigners and immigration, and the rights of immigrants and citizens with dual nationality. It is true that all these policies and measures would not affect only Muslims. Muslims would be among those impacted by PVV proposals aimed at non-Western immigrants in general. These concern plans for ethnic registration,[170] deportation for those without a job,[171] and the possibility of shooting young immigrants in the knees in the event of riots.[172] The PVV would also like to see the grandchildren of immigrants registered as non-indigenous.[173]

The fight against Islam completely prevails among the ideas of the PVV, as shown not only from their political statements, but also from all kinds of other signals that they give off, such as in their New Year tweet: 'Season's greetings and less Islam in 2011'.[174] Not quite as harmless is the warlike language that is used to incite citizens to join the fight. According to the Amsterdam Court, the incitement to self-defence in the following passage is of an inflammatory character, but is not unlawful given the context of the rest of the interview: "I have good intentions. We are allowing something to happen that will completely change our society. I also know that there will not be an Islamic majority in several decades. But it is growing, with aggressive elements, imperialism. Walk down the street and you can see where it is going. You don't feel as though you live in your own country any more. There is a battle going on and we have to defend ourselves. Soon there will be more mosques than churches!"[175]

## 3.3 The extreme right and Islamophobia

Research carried out by Dekker et al. into Islamophobia among young people has revealed that more than half of non-Muslim school-age children in the Netherlands have a negative to very negative image of Muslims and Islam.[176] This was in line with the high scores in the areas of 'national superiority' and 'nationalism'. Van Donselaar talks in this connection of an 'Islamophobic counter-culture'.[177] As is apparent from the last decade, a xenophobic youth culture forms a potential recruitment base for extreme right-wing and right-wing extremist groups and organisations.[178] This is one reason why it is very important that close attention be paid to these groups in their relationships towards Islam and Muslims. This section discusses the positions of various extreme right-wing and right-wing extremist groups with regard to Islam and Muslims, with an examination of whether, and if so how, the PVV has influenced their views. Has the electoral success of the PVV given an extra impulse to the debate on Islam and Muslims within traditional extreme right-wing groups? Do these parties believe that by presenting themselves as being against Islam and Muslims that they can gain new members? Or are these parties feeling the squeeze as a result of the pull of the PVV? The English-language report on the extreme right-wing in the Netherlands, published by the Dutch General Intelligence and Security Service (the AIVD) just after the murders in Oslo, mentions that the membership of traditional extreme right-wing and right-wing extremist organisations has halved.[179] In order to answer the question whether and to what extent Islamophobic viewpoints among traditional extreme right-wing organisations are more outspoken, a study was made of publications and statements by extreme right-wing and right-wing extremist organisations that were discussed periodically in Monitor Racisme & Extremisme publications. For the years 2009-2010, this was Nationaal-Socialistische Aktie ('National Socialist Action'– Racial Volunteer Force

(NSA-RVF), Blood & Honour-Combat 18, Nationale Jeugd Nederland (NJN, 'National Youth Netherlands'), Nederlandse Volks Unie (NVU, 'Dutch People's Union') and the Voorpost campaign group. The newspaper De Nationale Amsterdammer (DNA), which is linked to the Nationalistische Volks Beweging (NVB, 'Nationalist People's Movement') Amsterdam, now a more or less moribund organisation, was also looked at.[180]

Before going into the viewpoints among extreme right-wing groups towards Islam and Muslims in more detail, it is important to focus on the term extreme right-wing. What are the distinctive features of the extreme right-wing?

### *3.3.1 Extreme right-wing*

In order to answer this question, a study was made of international literature in which theories about right-wing extremism are covered.[181] On that basis, I have arrived at the following description. Right-wing extremism is a collective term for political opinions that are situated on the far right of the usual political left-right spectrum and for the groups – political parties, social and other movements, and other organisational forms such as Internet forums, publishers, media, specialist companies – that subscribe to and propagate these views. The term was not used before the Second World War (at least, not in the Netherlands), but it became fashionable thereafter. Academics who study or who have studied the extreme right and the political opinions associated with it are in broad agreement that such opinions, with some differences in degree and emphasis, have the following ideological features:

- Direct or indirect resistance to the recognition of the principle of the fundamental equality of people as laid down in human rights treaties. This is expressed primarily by assigning the greatest value to belonging to a 'race', 'people', nation, culture, or religion in social and political relationships. The resulting desire for the ethnic homogeneity of peoples subordinates the status of human and civil rights. The positive orientation towards what is 'ours' goes hand-in-hand with what is viewed as 'alien' or 'different': nationalism, ethnocentricity and racism are strongly developed. Today's extreme right-wing in Europe sees itself as a movement that seeks to represent the protection of its own, national or Western identity in a world that it regards as fundamentally hostile towards Western values and cultures.
- Direct or indirect resistance towards the prevailing political system of parliamentary democracy and the constitutional rule of law. In more and more cases, today's groups are not concerned so much about the institutions as such, but rather the way in which they actually function via the government of the day, the regular political parties and other bodies like the judiciary. This resistance is often expressed by denying legitimacy to regular political activity, and is frequently linked

to a populist claim of representing the 'ordinary people'.
- The tendency to use a strongly hierarchical organisational structure that is dominated by a strong, authoritarian leader.

In the Netherlands, Van Donselaar in particular has pointed out non-ideological aspects that are important for the purpose of identifying groups and organisations as extremely right wing.[182] He mentions here the indicators of social genealogy: extreme right-wing groups do not usually stem from nothing, but from earlier initiatives. He also refers to their function as a magnet: the power of a group in attracting people who are already known on account of their extreme right-wing sympathies. He also considers it of great importance that extreme right-wing groups often face an adjustment dilemma leading to differences arising between the way they operate in public and in private: to the outside world, they often show a different face to the one they wear internally.

As far as the post-War period is concerned, the types of organisation are distinguished between the traditional, often neo-Nazi parties and groups, and the post-industrial groups that started to develop from the beginning of the 1980s. The latter generally express themselves in more moderate tones than do the former, and have no fundamental objections to the democratic rule of law; in fact, they usually form part of the system. At the same time, they attempt to deprive the system of its legitimacy in the eyes of the people. In addition, there are more campaign-oriented street groups that consist primarily of young people.

Extreme right-wing groups certainly do not hold unambiguous, clearly demarcated and theoretically substantiated and closed views of the world; there are variations, different emphases, and degrees. The extreme right wing is a dynamic phenomenon, the concrete version of which changes according to time and local circumstances. As well as being oriented towards the party-political system, the extreme right may involve a diffuse mentality, as in the case of the unorganised groups of young people, or it may be prompted by the everyday experiences of ordinary citizens.

In the Netherlands, too, a great deal of discussion has taken place among academics and other experts about the definition and demarcation of the extreme right, and the groups that should be ranked in that category. In order to make a distinction between different groups, the discussion has treated right-wing radicalism and right-wing extremism as separate phenomena.[183] The Dutch Intelligence Service AIVD makes a distinction between the extreme right and right-wing extremists, with the key criteria being whether the goals are anti-democratic and the means undemocratic.[184] Extreme right-wing organisations operate on the edge of the democratic rule of law but remain within the limits of the

law. Right-wing extremist organisations cross these boundaries, for example through the use of violence and intimidation or by inciting hatred. As an example of anti-democratic goals, the AIVD describes the establishment of an authoritarian regime that would have no regard for freedom of expression or religion, or a political order in which the rights of some citizens, or groups of citizens, would be guaranteed, but not others. I have used this distinction in this study.

### *3.3.2 Views on Islam/Muslims*

The relationship of the extreme right to Islam has been a complicated one for some time, and is not without its contradictions. Under the influence of the German Nazi movement, a discussion arose some time ago as to whether radical Muslims should be regarded as allies rather than enemies. In the 1990s, several right-wing extremists visited the Libyan leader, Colonel Gaddafi, while some groups supported Saddam Hussein.[185] This did not stop the extreme right-wing parties and right-wing extremists of the time from responding in Islamophobic terms to the murder of Theo Van Gogh in 2004.[186] This was the case with the NVU ('Dutch People's Union'), the Nieuwe Nationale Partij ('New National Party', NNP), the Nationale Alliantie ('National Alliance', NA) and Nieuw Rechts ('New Right'). Extreme Islamophobic statements were also made on the extreme right-wing web forums of Polinco and Holland Hardcore. A moderator on Polinco spoke of "robber chiefs of collective Musulman clubs".[187] A peace-loving Muslim was described as a contradiction in terms, and calls went out to commit acts of violence on mosques: "Is there a mosque on fire? Bring a can of petrol!" A certain 'Antifahater' appealed for young people to "continue the attempts at destroying mosques and Islamic institutions. You don't have to succeed every time. Even failed attempts count. What is important is to put everyone on their guard and to force Muslims to reveal their true nature to the Dutch (...)." On Holland Hardcore, people were urged to join a crusade: "We must engage in a crusade across the Netherlands and kick off the head of every Muslim, and of all those dirty wannabe Muslims." Supporters of Pim Fortuyn also contributed to the climate of Islamophobia, albeit in less violent terms, generally speaking. Islam is out to conquer and is dangerous, Westerners are superior, Muslims must leave the country and mosques must be closed, according to various posts on forums dedicated to Fortuynism.

Today, too, there are two discernible attitudes among the extreme right. In the case of neo-Nazi groups in particular, no anti-Islamic influence can be detected. This applies to Blood & Honour, an international organisation of skinheads with racist 'white power' opinions that was active from the late 1980s, but which is now a shadow of its former self. It also applies to the radical and violent neo-Nazi street group, the NSA ('National Socialist Action'). Anti-Semitism and the consequent anti-Israel attitude are often the fac-

tors that prevent neo-Nazi groups from adopting an anti-Islamic approach à la PVV.[188] Among some groups, however, there are signs of some movement, as I will demonstrate below. This concerns the NVU ('Dutch People's Union') and the recent offshoot from the right-wing extremist tree, the NJN ('National Youth Netherlands'), the extreme right-wing campaigning group Voorpost, and the DNA newspaper that was until recently associated with the NVB ('National People's Party'). The discussion here concerns the substance of views about Islam and possible anti-Islam activities, and not the question of whether the parties concerned are able to reach out to many people on the basis of that substance. In other words, the analysis is of a discursive nature, and does not look at frequencies. The discussion of the viewpoints on Islam/Muslims of the various groups is introduced with a brief description of their backgrounds.[189]

## *Nederlandse Volks Unie*

The NVU (Dutch People's Union) has been in existence since 1971 and was founded by Joop Glimmerveen. The NVU describes itself as ethnicist, but according to the Dutch Intelligence Service AIVD it is still primarily neo-Nazi in character and seeks to establish a one-party state along the lines of the German national socialist NSDAP.[190] The party has successfully campaigned to be able to demonstrate after a long period during which it had been forbidden from doing so. Since the ban was lifted, the organisation has mostly appeared in demonstrations alongside other groups. The NVU publishes the Wij Europa newssheet, which is mostly written by the party's current leader Constant Kusters. For the purposes of this study, articles and excerpts from Wij Europa about Islam and Muslims from between 2003 and 2011 were looked at.

An item entitled 'Samenwerking met moslims' ('collaborating with Muslim') reveals an ambivalent attitude.[191] Of his comrades who wish to demonstrate with Arab nationalists, Kusters says: "In propaganda terms this is not good for the NVU, but tactically it is a good idea from an ideological point of view." He refers to the Waffen-SS divisions that enlisted Muslims, and wonders what Hitler would have done in this day and age. He emphasises the difference between the Hitler era and the present day and says: "(…) I think he would have sent them all back to their country of origin." Kusters returned to this theme after the murder of Theo Van Gogh. He further develops his rejection of radical Islam in particular with arguments about the repression of women, circumcision, and the willingness of extremist Muslims to blow themselves up.[192] In the process, he does not always make a clear distinction between Islam and radical Islam. Still, his following comment leaves little to the imagination: "We Europeans have nothing in common with Islam."[193] Islam is fine, but it should be practised in their own countries and not here – this is what Kusters' viewpoint amounts to. He also raises the topic of the misuse of religion by extremists. Again,

he mentions that the NSDAP has never expressed any view on collaborating with Muslims. The discussion article ends with the following observation, in bold type: "The only thing we share with radical Islam is our joint struggle against Zionism and the American policies of aggression, and the abolition of 'interest'. However, this should be fought out in their countries of origin, and not on European soil."[194]

In the spring of 2010, the NVU announced a change of course. The background to this was the repeated lack of electoral success on the part of the NVU, in stark contrast to the election victories of Wilders, something that did not go unnoticed by the NVU leadership. "At a time that Wilders (PVV) is more or less the largest party in the Netherlands in the opinion polls, partly as a result of his positions on Islam and foreigners, it is very worrying that we are unable to pick up a single vote," says the party leader in Wij Europa.[195] He describes Wilders and the PVV as "an icebreaker that [is] breaking open the political ice".[196] Meanwhile, a reporter from Nieuwe Revu heard him say: "Wilders is the only person in the House of Representatives to call a spade a spade." On the other hand, Kusters continues to refer to Wilders as an 'Islam basher', which makes clear that he distances himself from inconsiderate attacks on Islam.[197] The aforementioned ambivalence in the NVU is still very much in evidence: on the one hand the party is clearly against Muslims as immigrants but, on the other, it seeks to keep its own radical wing, which sees radical Muslims as allies, on board. While the radical tendency within Islam was being described in March 2008 as 'temporary allies',[198] one year later the NVU, in the words of Kusters, had completely turned against radical Islam.[199] However, it is not curbs on religious freedoms for Muslims that interest the NVU. Whereas Wilders concentrates on the rejection of Muslims, the NVU wishes to keep out all immigrants, Muslims and non-Muslims alike. The PVV does not want any new mosques. The NVU is against places of prayer for ethnic minorities in general, Muslim or non-Muslim, including synagogues.[200] "The NVU has put the problem of foreigners on the agenda, but Wilders and his PVV are set to implement it in government," says Kusters.[201] This did not prevent the NVU leader from advising people to vote for the PVV for the elections to the Dutch House of Representatives in 2010. Of this, Kusters said: "A vote for Wilders and his PVV is, as far as immigration policies are concerned, the most obvious choice for the average NVU member, but it is also a vote for an Israeli interest movement that receives financial support from the David Horowitz Freedom Center in Los Angeles."[202] Comments of this kind show that Kusters has given consideration to the factors that have brought Wilders his success. What is currently dissuading the NVU from following the PVV is Wilders' clear pro-Jewish and pro-Israel stance, which is entirely at odds with the anti-Semitism of the NVU. Wilders is described as a "true friend of Israel, a Zionist, and a philosemite".[203] Faced with a lack of electoral support that stands in stark contrast to the success of the PVV, the NVU is now seeking to adjust to the new realities primarily by distancing itself from a too clear-cut neo-Nazi

image, while placing an increasingly greater emphasis on anti-Islamic views.[204] Arguments for working with Muslims on the basis that Hitler did the same are presented in Wij Europa as more and more of a problem. A more explicit rejection of radical Islam is becoming increasingly visible, and the party is more frequently presenting itself as anti-Islamic. In September 2010, the party was involved in a demonstration against a mosque in Aachen. In May 2011, the NVU demonstrated in Nijmegen, with banners bearing the slogans 'Stop the terror of multiculturalism! Stop immigration now!'. German sympathisers carried a banner saying 'No Islam in Europe'. In Wij Europa, no. 37, 2011, an open letter to the board of Suikerunie was published, under the headline 'Islamisation of Campina and Suikerunie', in which the position of the NVU towards Islam/Muslims was articulated as follows: "As the ? Nederlandse Volks-Unie, we are not against Islam as such, as we cannot decide on the religious choices that individuals make. However, we do have clear views about the expansion of peoples who adhere to this religion across European soil. They originally come from another part of the world, and it is our firm conviction that people everywhere should practise their religion in their own territory." The change of course by the NVU appears to be more than a charm offensive involving a change of style of clothing, the abolition of the use of certain symbols, and less emphasis on demonstrations. It seems that the NVU has discovered its own anti-Islamic attitudes.

## *Nationale Jeugd Nederland*

Founded in early 2010, the NJN ('National Youth Netherlands') is a newcomer to the world of the extreme right. The group is national socialist in orientation, and seeks to safeguard individuality and identity for the benefit of a strong Dutch community. The NJN would like to keep the Netherlands 'white', and forcibly deport all those who do not meet that criterion.[205] So far, the group has manifested itself through campaigns against paedophilia and the building of a mosque. Its members regularly join extreme right-wing demonstrations organised by other groups in and outside the Netherlands.

On its website, the organisation places a heavy emphasis on anti-Islam views. Under the 'scholing' ('education') menu on the http://www.weerstand.org website, the subjects of 'islamcollaboratie' ('collaborating with Islam') and 'standpunt m.b.t. Islam' ('viewpoint in relation to Islam') are examined. According to the NJN, the organisation is not so much against Islam in itself ("Muslims are perfectly entitled to practise their own beliefs in their own cultures and countries"), but rather against "its influence beyond the cultural territories of Islam", and against Muslims in the Netherlands who are described as occupiers: "Whereas our forefathers defended the territory of Europe against Islam for centuries, nowadays the doors are pushed wide open for these Islamic occupiers. Islamic schools and mosques are shooting up everywhere, and entire urban districts are falling under the

yoke of Islam (…)". Muslims in the Netherlands are regarded as a 'fifth column' intent on domination, supported by 'multiculturalism' and 'Marxism'. The NJN is not particularly keen on Wilders, who is referred to as a "Zionist's friend". It appears that this movement is also struggling with contradictory viewpoints among its own ranks.

In the spring of 2011, the Nederlandse Jeugdbond voor Natuurstudie (NJN – the 'Netherlands Youth League for Nature Studies') took legal action to force the extreme right-wing NJN to change its name. Although the court rejected this, the (political) NJN has not used the name since, and appears to be continuing its activities under the name Netwerk Nationale Socialisten ('Network of National Socialists'), which claims to be an informal network of independent national socialists.

## *Voorpost*

The extreme right-wing organisation named Voorpost was founded in Flanders and would like to reunite Flanders and the Netherlands. A Dutch branch also became active in the 1970s, which functions mostly as a campaigning group. Voorpost attempts to generate publicity through its campaigns. It also seeks to educate its grass roots. The Dutch branch of Voorpost has been very active since 2004. Individual members have sometimes been involved with acts of violence, although the organisation formally rejects violence. Ideologically, Voorpost is first and foremost nationalistic. The organisation moves around in the so-called Dietsch tradition and that of Flemish solidarism. Solidarism is an anti-democratic movement that places the emphasis on corporative concepts. It came about in the 1930s and was oriented towards the fascism of Mussolini, and it attempts to organise young people with extreme right-wing sympathies. The themes involved are those commonly associated with the extreme right, or those issues with which society is currently preoccupied. They are against Islam, the consumption of drugs, and paedophilia, and they frequently have left-wing organisations and parties in their sights as well. A series of campaigns for animal rights in particular helped raised their profile. The organisation was protesting against the use of circus animals, against halal meat, and against hunting. A separate campaign group was set up for protests of this kind – Met de Dieren Tegen de Beesten ('For animals, against beasts', MDTB). More information about this organisation can be found in the periodic Monitor reports by the Anne Frank House/Leiden University.

Although Voorpost used sticker campaigns against mosques in the past, in recent years it has adopted a more prominent anti-Islam profile. This has been achieved by devoting more attention to the theme in its publications Revolte and Laagland, and through national campaigns. For this study, the volumes of Laagland from 2004-2010 and those of Revolte from 2003-2010 were consulted. A series of articles in Revolte in 2007-2008

examines Islam and other associated topics in detail. In Laagland, the Voorpost Nederland newssheet, the subject mostly features in the editorial comments in different issues, and in announcements of campaigns, in which a direct link is casually made between Islam, Islamic extremism and groups of young people: "Thousands of posters and tens of thousands of stickers will be spread throughout the country. The campaign is aimed against Muslim extremists and against the everyday street terror by young Moroccans in particular. (...) No jihad in our street!"[206]

Islam is emphatically not regarded as a religion but is characterised as an 'intolerant desert ideology'.[207] The language used is warlike, with Voorpost assigning the role of resistance heroes to those in its ranks, and that of collaborators to its political opponents. "Resisting the rise of Islam is the duty of every nationalist (...) the Occident has to fight if it wishes to survive."[208] And "(…) because of Schengen, everyone in Europe is in the same boat. Or rather, in the same minefield, held hostage by a left-wing elite that is prepared to sacrifice its own people in order to preserve peace. Wherever a shiny scimitar is held against the throat of the Occident, we have to do more than resist. That is why we must go on the offensive with Voorpost!"[209] Action against Turkey's entry to the EU is part of the same picture. The article entitled 'De Turken komen' ('the Turks are coming') talks of 'high treason' by politicians who favour entry, and equates immigration with conquest: "It has now reached the stage where it is impossible to stop them seeping in – not Turkish armies, but a constant flow of baby buggies and prams…"[210] In early 2005, the group launched its national sticker campaign entitled 'no jihad in our street'.[211] On 23 September 2007, Voorpost members demonstrated in Antwerp against the 'Islamisation of our cities and councils'.[212] This was followed in March 2008 by a campaign involving stickers and posters 'against Islamisation'. The material, which was printed in the organisation's newssheets, shows a mosque with an exceptionally high minaret through which runs a prohibitory traffic sign bearing the text 'stop Islamisation'.[213] A campaign against the construction of mosques was conducted in various towns and cities, while in November 2009 an education afternoon on Islamisation was held in Twente. In June 2010, Voorpost members disrupted a meeting about sharia law in De Balie in Amsterdam. Others took part in a picket line in support of Wilders at the start of his trial in February 2010.[214] The Met de Dieren Tegen de Beesten ('For animals, against beasts', MDTB) campaign group has been actively supported by Voorpost since 2006. This extreme right-wing group for animal rights was set up in 2003 by Tim Mudde, an old hand in the former extreme right-wing Centrum movement. They regularly carry out protests against ritual slaughter. In recent years, several campaigns entitled 'Stop Halal' have been conducted at supermarkets and companies that sell halal meat, at one of which a kind of play was performed in which a demonstrator dressed in a caricature of a Muslim – long white robe, turban, and fake beard –[215] slaughte-

red an animal with a scimitar. While viewpoints and campaigns against Islam have gained a much more central position than used to be the case with Voorpost, the group still sets itself clearly apart from the PVV: "Voorpost, on the other hand, will always continue to find these organisations [meaning CIDI and the Anne Frank House, IvdV] a nuisance, because Voorpost is different to the PVV. Voorpost has a completely different background and has different principles. Voorpost is much more than the fight against Islam. (…) Voorpost is fighting against the entire multiculture."[216]

## *De Nieuwe Amsterdammer (Nationalistische Volks Beweging)*

Wim Beaux is an old hand in the world of the extreme right. He has been associated with a variety of groups down the years, including the NVB ('Nationalist People's Movement') Amsterdam. The NVB Amsterdam demonstrated against the relocation of a war monument in order to allow the building of a mosque. However, little has been heard of the group for some time but, in spite of his advanced years, the same cannot be said of Beaux. For many years now, he has been distributing the De Nieuwe Amsterdammer (DNA) newssheet on behalf of the NVB, something he does to this day. The publication does not enjoy a large readership. During a trial against Beaux in 2005 in relation to a number of offensive comments in DNA, it was mentioned that it had one hundred subscribers. It is likely that this number has sharply fallen since that time, given the decline in the movement in which Beaux was active. The number of subscribers today is estimated at no more than a few dozen. The subject under examination here is the degree to which Islamophobic viewpoints reported in the newssheet have developed.

For this study, a number of editions of DNA from the year 2002 have been looked at, as have several copies from previous years. Even from 2002, DNA was clearly moving towards an anti-Islam position. In their report on the extreme right in Amsterdam, Van der Valk and Van der Schans give an analysis of DNA, in which the views on Islam and Muslims portrayed by the newssheet formed part of the study.[217] I have used analysis, with the permission of the Anne Frank House. If we look back at the newssheet in the period before the attacks on Fortuyn and Van Gogh, there is a clear difference. Before 2002, DNA concentrated on 'foreigners' and looked at other themes such as drugs, security and liveability through xenophobic eyes. Mosques were referred to as "centres for dealing in hash". They were featured as places where ethnic competition with the indigenous Dutch existed: the shops that were linked to the mosques were often cheaper. From 2002 onwards, however, the anti-foreigners sentiment was expressed almost exclusively in terms of a perceived danger from Islam. Other themes receded into the background. Muslims and Islam were ridiculed and insulted, either directly or indirectly, sometimes in the form of what was presumably a joke. In the eyes of Beaux and the DNA, a war situation currently prevails,

the fight being aimed at the Islamisation of the Netherlands. This war is directly compared with wars fought by the fatherland against Spanish, French and Nazi domination.[218] The DNA and its supporters see themselves as freedom fighters. The political programme put forward by the DNA reads: '1. All Islamites to leave the country. 2. The friends of the enemy, the traitors of the people and the country, the long-live-the-integration idiots to be locked up forever.'[219] Muslims are said to be 'intent on conquest', to be radical by definition, and their mosques 'bunkers of hatred'. Beaux evidently regards Wilders as an ally. Through his presence on the picket line in front of the court building at the start of the trial against Wilders in February 2010, he showed that he supported the PVV.

## 3.4 In conclusion

The number of complaints about Islamophobia on the Internet that are reported to the Dutch Complaints Bureau MDI has been high for many years. Islamophobic statements are found not just on extreme right-wing websites, but on all kinds of sites and forums. In many cases illegal comments are involved, which are usually removed following a request by the MDI. A feature of a number of sites and forums is the display of texts and images with slurs, insults and negative comments about Muslims and Islam. The tone of discriminatory comments has hardened, and the number of cases of incitements to violence has increased. Some forums are experiencing growth in their membership and an ever-rising number of posts, such as the Forum voor de Vrijheid, a forum for sympathisers of Wilders. The leading themes that shape the Islamophobic ideology on various Internet sites and forums have already been mentioned: the totalitarian character of Islam as a political ideology, the concept of Eurabia, Islamisation, mass immigration, the culpability of the left and the elites, and the repression of women. The philosophy of the PVV is marked by the central position of its viewpoints relating to Islamophobia. Islam is characterised as an ideology rather than as a religion. No distinction is made between Islam and extremist Islamism. This violent form of Islam is said to be intent on ruling the world and dominating the West. These ideas are formed in part in programme items aimed at combating 'Islamisation' and undermining Muslims' rights. Extreme right-wing and right-wing extremist organisations are not especially inclined to follow the PVV in this regard. Generally speaking, there is a two-way split in the traditional right-wing movement. One part is driven by Islamophobia, describes itself as nationalistic, and supports Wilders to a certain degree, while the other is primarily anti-Semitic and has national socialist sympathies – although this is not always publicly acknowledged.[220] This latter group is not, or is only slightly, preoccupied with Islam, and is emphatically in opposition to the PVV. For the time being, it appears that this dividing line is stable, with only those who describe themselves as nationalistic showing any signs of shifting, albeit very hesitantly, towards

the PVV, by presenting themselves as anti-Islam. This is the case with Voorpost and the NVB/DNA. NJN, the right-wing extremist newcomer, is also noticeably anti-Islam in its views, and a change in attitude and higher profile on the part of the NVU are also detectable. This group is weakening its stance on advocating collaboration with Muslims, which was based on military decisions made by Hitler, and it appears to be changing and hardening its views with regard to Islamic extremism. These changes represent a toughening of the line against Islam/Muslim which is becoming increasingly visible – freedom of religion is fine, including for Muslims, as long as it is practised in the adherent's own country, believes the NVU.

# 4 Acts of violence against mosques

This chapter is about acts of violence against mosques. In order to show that the Netherlands is part of a more general development, the chapter begins with a brief description of the situation in other Western nations countries. I will then look at acts of violence against mosques in the Netherlands, between 2005 and 2010 in particular.

## 4.1 In the Western world

Anti-Islamic prejudices and violence occur throughout the Western world.[221] I will restrict myself here to incidents and campaigns concerning places of worship. Many countries and towns and cities are seeing an increasing resistance to Islamic places of worship, including to the building of new ones. Conflicts relating to mosques, the visible symbol of Islam, are manifesting themselves in different ways, such as in campaigns by extreme right-wing organisations and neighbourhood groups, and in acts of violence.[222] In Western Europe, many of the initiatives for such campaigns have come from, and still do come from, populist far-right parties.[223] This was happening as early as the late 1990s in Denmark and Norway, where a motion called for a ban on the use of loudspeakers to call worshippers to prayer. In Austria, the extreme right-wing politician Haider, who was the governor of Carinthia at the time, was the first to call for a ban on the building of mosques, in 2007. Meanwhile in Switzerland, a petition aimed at prohibiting the erection of minarets was launched in the same year on the initiative of the Swiss People's Party (SVP) and the Federal Democratic Union (FDU). In a referendum in the country in 2009, 57.5 per cent of voters backed such a ban, which has been in force ever since. In Italy, the Lega Nord carried out campaigns against the building of mosques in various towns and cities.[224] The anti-Islamophobic organisation in France, the Collectif contre l'islamophobie en France (CCIF), counted 28 cases of vandalism, such as criminal damage, graffiti, and attempted arson in relation to mosques, between October 2003 and August 2004.[225] In 2008, the Collectif reported 21 Islamophobic acts against mosques and burial sites.[226] Similar events have taken place on the other side of the Atlantic, too. In the summer of 2010, there was much resistance in the United States to the construction of an Islamic centre in the vicinity of Ground Zero, the location of the terrorist attacks in 2001. Elsewhere in the country the number of anti-Islamic comments rose to unprecedented levels as well.[227] For the last six months of 2010, Islam Watch reported an exceptionally high number of cases of violence in the United States against Muslims and Islamic objects.[228] On 20 March 2011, Terry Jones, a preacher from Gainesville, Florida, burned a copy of the Koran in public. This was after a 'trial' in which he found the book guilty of spreading an evil message.[229]

On the basis of news reports, the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) made an inventory of 42 cases of violence against mosques between 2005 and September 2010, half of which took place in the first nine months of 2010.[230]

## 4.2 The Netherlands, 2005-2010

In the Netherlands, too, acts of violence are perpetrated against mosques. The data discussed below are based on systematic inventories by the Monitor Racisme & Extremisme, news reports in the press, details of court cases, information gathered by the Nationaal Coördinatie Centrum ('national coordination centre') of the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations, and annual reviews by the Kafka research group. The information as a whole is probably not complete and should really be seen as the tip of the iceberg. For example, the 2010 Poldis report, which highlights details of discrimination known to the police nationally, reports that 'a mosque' was listed on 32 occasions as the location of incidents in 2008, while according to my information this was the case in 23 instances.[231] Violent incidents often occur near mosques without their being reported to relevant bodies. Failure to report such incidents to the relevant bodies and lack of press publicity are sometimes the result of advice by the police or a decision by those responsible for the mosque in the hope of preventing a repetition.[232] The matter then remains out of the public domain, but may well be recorded by the police. This may be one of the factors that explains why the Poldis figures for 2008 are higher that my own.[233]

There are around 475 mosques in the Netherlands, of which 242 are run by Turkish, 179 by Moroccan, and 52 by Surinamese and Pakistani organisations.[234] The first mosque was built in The Hague in the 1950s and was intended primarily for the personnel of embassies and consulates of Islamic countries. From the early 1970s, an increasing number of places of worship were set up in towns and cities where guest workers lived, mostly in existing buildings.

Acts of violence against mosques did occur in the 1970s and 1980s, but this was very incidental. The frequency of the attacks started to rise in the 1990s. There were three events that led to an increase in their number and intensity: the outbreak of the Gulf crisis in the early 1990s, the attacks on 11 September 2001 in the United States, and the murder of Theo van Gogh in 2004. At the start of the 1990s, after the outbreak of the Gulf crisis, there was a series of acts of violence against Islamic centres of worship.[235] This was also the case after the 9/11 attacks in the United States. During the autumn of 2001, mosques were the object of various forms of violence, including eleven cases of arson and attempted arson, in various town and cities across the country.[236] After the murder of Van Gogh in November 2004, there was another upsurge of violence against mosques. In the space

of two months, 45 incidents of violence took place, including eighteen cases of arson or attempted arson. Since then, graffiti and arson attacks against mosques, as well as the placing of provocative objects at or near mosques, have been a regular occurrence. Apart from the aforementioned peaks, the number of acts of violence has fluctuated between seven and 25 per year since 2002. In 2010, various incidents persuaded Moroccan organisations to take action and introduce night watchmen.[237] Questions were asked and a debate held in the House of Representatives.[238] The government agreed to set up an inquiry.

The following information about violence against mosques between 2005 and 2010 gives a greater insight into the phenomenon. A total of 117 acts of violence against mosques in the Netherlands were recorded during this period, as Table 4.1 shows. Tables 4.2 to 4.5 give an overview of the type of acts perpetrated, the reasons, and the type of perpetrator.

## Table 4.1 Acts of violence against mosques

| | |
|---|---|
| 2005 | 25 |
| 2006 | 16 |
| 2007 | 23 |
| 2008 | 23 |
| 2009 | 19 |
| 2010 | 11 |
| Total | 117 |

## Table 4.2 Acts of violence against mosques: types of act

| | Graffiti | Arson | Vandalism | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2005 | 7 | 7 | 8 | 5 |
| 2006 | 6 | 4 | 6 | 1 |
| 2007 | 5 | 10 | 7 | 1 |
| 2008 | 12 | 3 | 6 | 7 |
| 2009 | 8 | 2 | 10 | 2 |
| 2010 | 5 | 3 | 0 | 4 |
| Total | 43 | 27 | 37 | 20 |

## Table 4.3 Acts of violence against mosques: type of perpetrator

| | Young people | Individual act | Unknown | Extreme right |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2005 | 4 | 2 | 18 | 1 |
| 2006 | 1 | 0 | 15 | 0 |
| 2007 | 3 | 3 | 17 | 0 |
| 2008 | 1 | 0 | 21 | 1 |
| 2009 | 2 | 0 | 17 | 0 |
| 2010 | 0 | 0 | 11 | 0 |
| Total | 11 | 5 | 99 | 2 |

## Table 4.4 Acts of violence against mosques: reasons

| | Plans to build a mosque | Incidents | Ideological | Unknown | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2005 | 1 | 1 | 5 | 19 | 0 |
| 2006 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 16 | 0 |
| 2007 | 2 | 1 | 4 | 15 | 1 |
| 2008 | 1 | 0 | 5 | 17 | 0 |
| 2009 | 3 | 0 | 4 | 12 | 0 |
| 2010 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 10 | 0 |
| Total | 8 | 2 | 18 | 89 | 1 |

Table 4.2 shows that (non-random) graffiti in particular was a frequent occurrence (43), followed by vandalism (37) and arson (27). There was one occasion when a letter containing a powdery substance was sent, four cases of threatening phone calls, and one incident involving a banner with an offensive text. Sometimes several acts were perpetrated at the same time, such as the occasion when a fire was started and swastikas painted. In such instances, the type of incident is recorded twice. In other cases, it involved a series of incidents that took place over a certain period of time. If no specific information about the nature or date of any particular incidents was available, then they were counted as one incident. This happened on six occasions. In cases of a series of incidents, this does not mean that Islamic objects were the target every time. In Zuid-Scharwoude, for example, there were long-standing tensions between youths of a non-indigenous background and 'Lonsdale youth'. In September 2005, this escalated into a mass brawl at a funfair.

On 6 November 2005, the situation really got out of hand when the windows of the Zuid-Scharwoude mosque were smashed. In one case, a confrontation between youths and mosque users prompted violence against a mosque. Some acts were perpetrated in more than one place at the same time; these have been counted separately. One exception to this was a flyer campaign; this was not counted for each municipality separately.
A particularly bad year was 2005, the year after the murder of Van Gogh in November 2004. The wave of violence that occurred in the wake of the killing continued during the following year. In 2005, there were 25 acts of violence. Violent acts against mosques, especially arson, formed part of the wave of acts of violence that followed the murder. In 2007 and 2008, too, the totals were high. Both years saw 23 violent incidents involving mosques. In general, the year 2007 showed a strong increase in racist violence against Islamic targets. This continued somewhat into 2008, before declining in 2009.[239] Taking the period from 2005 to 2010 as a whole, the number of violent incidents – or in some cases, series of incidents – involving mosques varied from eleven to 25 per year. Fire bombs or Molotov cocktails were often used in the cases of arson or attempted arson. The Turkish Turkyen mosque in Arnhem, for example, was twice set on fire in 2010, on 4 January and in the night of 1 to 2 August. On the second occasion, the target was an annex into which bottles containing a flammable substance were thrown.

Vandalism mostly entailed the throwing of stones through windows. In early hours of Sunday, 17 December 2006 in Axel, for example, eight windows in the local mosque were smashed. Graffiti, meanwhile, often took the form of anti-Islamic slogans, with extreme right-wing symbols such as swastikas being painted in a few cases.

One tactic that was aimed specifically against Islamic places of worship was the use of animal parts: a sheep placed against the front wall, the dumping of a pig's head, pig's feet or insides on the site of a mosque, and smearing buildings with blood. Similar incidents also occurred occasionally in the 1980s. A former member of the Centrumpartij, Vierling, once hung pigs' heads on the windows of a mosque in Amsterdam's Kinkerbuurt district.[240] Acts of this kind are clearly designed to be offensive or provocative, given the position of Muslims on these specific animals: pigs are regarded as unclean and are not eaten for that reason, while sheep are sacrificial animals that are eaten. Extreme right-wing bloggers on Stormfront described desecrations involving pigs' urine as an "effective means of driving out pious Muslims".[241] In 2003-2004, the Nieuw Rechts web forum also carried a similar campaign recommendation: "(...) simply desecrate the ground with waste from the abattoir... pigs' blood, pigs' heads, excrement, urine, etc. etc. ...that will delay the building … look for a new location … same thing all over again … this is something we should all be doing instead of just whining and complaining… time for action!!"[242] Allievi

has pointed out that anti-mosque acts involving the use of pigs occur all over Europe. He analyses them as expressions of contempt aimed at desecration, and draws a parallel with animal instincts for demarcating territory through smells.[243] This kind of provocative act took place five times – twice in 2008, once in 2009, and twice in 2010. One example involved a mosque in the Groningen district of Selwerd in March 2010, where protests were voiced against the plans for its construction. The walls of the building were smeared with blood, and a pig's head and insides were left on the site. Slogans such as 'No mosque!' had been chalked on the walls.

There were eighteen cases in which ideological motives clearly played a role (see Table 4.4). Acts are considered ideological if clear Islamophobic or racist remarks are made, which can generally be inferred from slogans that are used. A mosque in Haarlem, for example, was the regular target of graffiti involving SS symbols, swastikas, white power logos and racist comments such as 'kankerturk' (a derogatory description of Turks in Dutch). The acts carried out by Stop Islamisation of Europe (SIEO) 'against Islamisation' were also deemed ideological. Such explicit ideological motives sometimes played a role as a result of concrete circumstances, such as the existence of building plans. This is not to say that such motives did not play a role in the case of other acts. For a large number of violent acts (89), the background or motive remains unknown (see Table 4.4). This is related to the fact that the perpetrators of the vast majority of violent acts have not been identified, or at least not yet, in spite of the efforts undertaken to do so (99 out of 117). It is likely that violent acts of this kind were inspired by Islamophobic motives. In cases where the perpetrators were traced, they almost always concerned groups of youths (11). Five incidents were attributed to individuals, including a psychiatric patient and a homeless person (see Table 4.3).

It is notable that no connection has been established between any of the violent acts against mosques and extreme right-wing organisations. This is not to say that no such connection exists of course – after all, many incidents have remained unsolved. Is it possible that the extreme right has been involved in non-violent acts against mosques? This issue will be dealt with in the next chapter. Elements of the extreme right wing have sometimes responded to certain acts, such as in May 2010, when a dead sheep was hung on the front of a building in Roosendaal in protest against the proposed construction of a mosque in the town. The text 'No mosk' (sic) had been daubed onto its coat. The spokesman of Nationale Jeugd Nederland posted a report on the matter on the site of the extreme right-wing organisation, Stormfront. The site was also used to launch a protest action against the mosque. Meanwhile, an attempt to set fire in a mosque in Huizen in March 2007 elicited comments of approval on the site of Stormfront and that of the extreme right-wing Holland Hardcore.

The acts of violence that were recorded took place across the country. The box contains an overview of the municipalities concerned. In cases where more than one act was perpetrated, the number of occasions is listed.

## Municipalities and police regions in which acts of violence against mosques were carried out

< 40,000: small municipalities
Axel, Delfzijl, Edam-Volendam, Halderberge (2), Heemskerk, Langedijk (3), Nijkerk, Oude IJsselstreek, Oldenzaal, Rijssen-Holten, Veendam (2), Venray (2), IJsselstein, Zevenaar.

40,000-100,000: medium-sized municipalities
Alkmaar, Hengelo (2), Harderwijk, Heerenveen, Heerhugowaard, Den Helder, Huizen (2), Kampen, Leeuwarden, Noordoostpolder, Oosterhout, Peel en Maas (2), Ridderkerk, Roosendaal, Smallingerland, Soest, Terneuzen, Uden, Veenendaal, Vlaardingen, Vlissingen, Weert, Westland, Zeist (3).

> 100,000: large municipalities
Arnhem (2), Dordrecht, Ede (3), Eindhoven (2), Enschede, Groningen (2), Haarlem (2), Hilversum, Maastricht (2), Zaanstad, Zoetermeer (3), Zwolle (4).

Major cities
Amsterdam (2), Rotterdam (4), The Hague (2), Utrecht (3).

Police regions
Drenthe (2), Flevoland (6), Gelderland-Midden (2), Gooi en Vechtstreek (3), Hollands-Midden, Limburg-Noord, Midden- en West-Brabant (2), Noord-Holland-Noord (6), Rotterdam-Rijnmond, Twente (3), IJsselland, Zaanstreek-Waterland (2), Zeeland.
In these cases, the names of the municipalities in the police regions are not known.

## Table 4.5 Acts of violence against mosques: municipalities

| | small municipalities <40,000 | medium-sized <40,000-100,000 | large municipalities >100,000 | major cities | police region |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2005 | 7 | 4 | 2 | 5 | 7 |
| 2006 | 2 | 5 | 5 | 1 | 3 |
| 2007 | 3 | 10 | 3 | 5 | 2 |
| 2008 | 6 | 4 | 2 | 0 | 11 |
| 2009 | 3 | 3 | 5 | 1 | 7 |
| 2010 | 0 | 4 | 6 | 1 | 0 |
| Total | 21 | 30 | 23 | 13 | 30 |

Table 4.5 shows that acts of violence occur relatively noticeably more in small (21) and medium-sized (30) municipalities, compared to large municipalities (23) and major cities (7). This is remarkable as the number of mosques in the various sizes of municipalities varies markedly. In small municipalities, there is usually only one or, at the most, two mosques. The number of mosques is much greater in the large municipalities and the four major cities – there are ten in The Hague, twenty in Utrecht, 23 in Rotterdam and 25 in Amsterdam. Taking the number of mosques into account, there are therefore relatively many more violent incidents in smaller municipalities. It appears that in those towns and cities where mosques have been around for much longer, resistance to proposals for building mosques is slowly but surely making way for acceptance. This corresponds to the results of research in other Western countries that suggests that this kind of resistance is much less common in countries with a longer tradition of immigration such as France than it is in relatively newer immigration nations like Italy and Spain. The mosques themselves are adapting more and more to their Western context.[244]

Although information on the matter is incomplete, the available data shows that Turkish mosques are relatively more often the targets of attacks than are their Moroccan counterparts. A Surinamese mosque has also been targeted on the odd occasion. A closer study using Google Earth highlights the fact that mosques built in unusual architectural styles that can be easily recognised on account of their minarets or domes are more likely to be targeted than those that stand out less. Erkocu & Bugdaci distinguish three types of mosque in this connection: the 'homesickness mosque', the 'hidden mosque' – not particularly recognisable in the architectural landscape – and the 'polder mosque', with its modern

design and adapted to fit in with its surroundings.[245] "Hidden mosques" appear to be the least susceptible to acts of violence as they are less visible. It is not clear why Turkish mosques are affected by acts of violence relatively more often – one reason could be the fact that they are more clearly visible.

Finally, the large proportion of acts of violence against mosques that go unsolved brings me to the question of the efforts of the police and the justice system in charging and convicting the people responsible. The detection rate for racist violence is at a historic low (12% in 2007) in comparison with crime in general (22% in 2007), and certainly in comparison with unlawful acts of discrimination (43% in 2007).[246] This is also related to the fact that the perpetrators of the acts are rarely caught red-handed. Moreover, such crimes are not always given the highest priority as finding the perpetrators requires a considerable deployment of resources.

## 4.3 In conclusion

Acts of violence against Islamic places of worship in the Netherlands show that the country is part of a more general pattern that features an increase in Islamophobia in many Western countries during the past decade. As far as records show, there have been well over one hundred acts of violence in the Netherlands in the past five years. In 2005, 2007 and 2008 in particular, the numbers were high, although incidents of this kind have shown a decrease since 2009. Most cases involved graffiti, vandalism, and arson, with some acts being of a very offensive nature as far as Muslims were concerned. There was only a limited number of cases in which the perpetrators were caught and their motives established. Cases that were solved involved groups of youths with ideological motives. Acts of violence occurred relatively more frequently in smaller towns than in larger ones.

# 5 Legal protests against mosques

This chapter deals with non-violent protests against mosques. They emphatically do not occur because they are Islamophobic by definition, but it may be a factor. There are two major reasons for discussing the lawful forms of action that have taken place in the past five years in addition to violent protests. Underlying motives may have been prompted by an Islamophobic attitude – although it cannot be certain that this is always the case – or it may be that such an attitude is encouraged by deliberate interventions from outside that are not designed to provide solutions to conflicts but to aggravate them. Using literature-based research, I will first discuss non-violent protests in other Western countries. This will be followed by the situation in the Netherlands, and an overview of political initiatives by the PVV against the building of mosques.

## 5.1 In the Western world

In various Western countries, it is not just acts of violence that are carried out against the building of mosques: lawful protests are very common as well. In many cases, they are initiated by residents in the immediate vicinity, who have their own arguments for doing so.[247] There are those relating to the expected social consequences – an influx of people, noise, parking problems, and even the fear that property prices will be affected. The second category of arguments is of a more cultural character and concerns the perception of Islam as being 'different' and incompatible with Western values. Discriminatory motives are also a factor. Sometimes, in the words of Allievi, there may be 'Islamophobic entrepreneurs' involved, whether organised or not.[248] They exploit existing conflicts of opinion in order to stoke Islamophobic attitudes among the public. In addition, populist parties promote in their campaigns the options relating to municipal guidelines and building regulations in order to delay or obstruct the building of mosques.[249] Various international studies have shown that Islamophobic motives lurk behind apparently neutral infrastructural arguments that are used to oppose the building of mosques.[250] According to Cesari, the arguments that are used to justify a ban are the same throughout Europe – noise and traffic disruption, incompatibility with existing zoning plans, and failure to meet safety standards. "But beyond these technical obstacles, the resistance to new mosques is always linked to a meta-narrative about Islam." In the United States, the ACLU has also made reference to this phenomenon. However, a priori resistance against the building of mosques in countries where Muslims have lived for a long time, such as France and the United Kingdom, is markedly lower than in 'new' immigration countries like Italy, or countries that have only recently acknowledged that they are an immigration country, such as Germany.[251]

## 5.2 The Netherlands, 2005-2010

In the Netherlands, too, lawful action is sometimes taken against the presence or proposed building of mosques, in the form of protest meetings, for example, or a demonstration. The history of such protests goes back a long way – protest campaigns by local residents against turning existing buildings into mosques were being organised as early as the 1980s.[252] For the purpose of this study, anti-mosque acts have been compiled on the basis of reports in national newspapers. Campaigns that did not appear in the newspapers, because they were too small-scale, perhaps, or were the work of individuals, do not therefore feature in this study. Objections are often submitted without this being reported in the press. These, too, have not been counted.

In the past five years, there have been a total of 29 non-violent acts or campaigns that were reported in the press. The information has been categorised as follows: the type of action or campaign, the background, who the organisers were, and the location.[253]

Traditional extreme right-wing organisations were behind the protests against mosques on a total of twelve occasions. In every case, it concerned lawful protests such as demonstrations and flyer campaigns in which Islamophobic motives clearly played a part. Voorpost and the NVB were particularly active, with the former concentrating very much on flyer campaigns featuring the text 'no jihad in our street'. The NVB generated some publicity for itself with a demonstration in Amsterdam against the building of a mosque. Sixteen protest campaigns were led by nearby residents, and four by local action groups. Protest meetings were a favoured method, with fourteen being organised. Five demonstrations were held, while various other types of action were taken on eleven occasions, including the presenting of a petition or the handing out of leaflets. In every case, it was the building of a new mosque that prompted these campaigns. It is interesting to note that problems with existing mosques, such as those relating to parking or noise, have never given rise to any kind of campaign or action. However, the fear of problems of this kind was aired during protests against the proposed building of new mosques. Clearly the problems that occur in practice, once a mosque has actually been built, are not that bad after all.

Kik and Spoelstra have examined a case study into the events surrounding the protests against a building that was to be used as a social club and a mosque in Hillegom.[254] They show how, in this country, prejudices and various types of legitimate objections can sometimes intermix, how the latter can sometimes mask the former, and how as a result the decision to build such a location can become a long drawn-out process. It is clear with regard to the Hillegom example how an Islamophobic party exploits existing grievances

in order to stoke up prejudices. In the summer of 2011, the PVV group in the Provincial Council of Zuid-Holland got involved in the discussion, which by then had been dragging on for ten years. Even though the building work had actually started, the PVV advocated a different site for the mosque and expressed its opposition to a minaret. In doing so, the PVV was latching on to a long-standing grievance and exacerbating it at a time when the matter had already been settled. Provincial Council member Van Assendelft of the PVV produced a remarkable argument in his objection, stating that he feared that the new mosque building would set different population groups against each other. However, the sequence of events in Hillegom is by no means unique.

## 5.3 PVV and mosques

The Groep Wilders/Partij voor de Vrijheid manifesto for the elections held on 22 November 2006 listed the following policies with regard to mosques: a five-year moratorium on the building of new mosques and Islamic schools; the deportation of radical imams; a ban on foreign financing or foreign influences in mosques at managerial level; a ban on preaching by foreign imams; an obligation to use the Dutch language in mosques.[255] In the 2010 election manifesto, the PVV took things a step further. The idea for a moratorium was dropped: 'no more mosques at all', 'mosques where violence is preached to be closed', 'Islam is primarily a political ideology and has therefore no right whatsoever to claim the privileges afforded to a religion'.[256] At every level, the PVV is resisting the presence and building of mosques to an increasing degree. This mostly takes the form of asking questions and submitting motions – in the European Parliament, and at the national, provincial, and local levels. The political interventions made by the PVV in this area since 2007 are listed in the box below.[257]

### PVV and mosques

2007
Member of the House of Representatives for the PVV, Brinkman, asks the Minister of the Interior and Kingdom Relations to nullify a decision by the Mayor of Vlaardingen permitting the use of loudspeakers for the call to prayer: "In our own country, I don't understand why we have this bleating."[258]

Questions in the House about the 'misrule' of the Ede local authority because it gave permission for the building of a mosque. The PVV wanted to halt the building work pending an investigation.[259]

2008
The PVV demands the closure of ten mosques with links to the Turkish organisation, Milli Gorus.[260]

Questions to the Minister of the Interior and Kingdom Relations about the proposal to build a mosque in Klarendal, Arnhem. The residents were said to have not been consulted, and it was alleged that the mosque was being imposed upon them.[261]

2009
The PVV asks for clarification in the House of Representatives about grants to a number of mosques in Amsterdam designed to counter polarisation and radicalisation. It is described as "taxpayers' money for Islamic propaganda".[262]

2010
Councillor Ter Linden of the PVV in The Hague asks the Leiden city council to revoke building permits and its cooperation for two mosques. He describes one of the mosques as a "monster mosque" and expresses the expectation that the mosque will teach hatred and repression.[263]

Although the building of mosques is a matter for local authorities and not provincial governments, anti-mosque campaigns are conducted during the run-up to the provincial elections in 2010: 'The Islamisation of our wonderful provinces and the building of yet more mosques must end.'[264] Wilders campaigns in Limburg under the slogan 'Not for mosques – for carnival!'[265] In Overijssel, the leading PVV candidate is introduced with the words 'No more junkets, no asylum centres, no minarets: we want to liberate Overijssel'. The party also advocates ending plans for a mosque in Kampen.[266] The PVV Drenthe manifesto states its opposition to any new mosques and Islamic schools. Moreover, public-sector employees and members of the Provincial Government would not be allowed to wear headscarves in the provincial government building.[267] In Zuid-Holland too, the PVV favours blocking the building of large mosques like the Essalam Mosque in Rotterdam.[268]

2011
In February 2011, the PVV submits a motion calling for no new mosques to be built in The Hague. The motion is in response to a letter from the Municipal Executive proposing to expand the number of Islamic prayer locations in The Hague.[269]

In an interview with the press, a member of the Provincial Government, Stassen, describes a proposed mosque in Roermond as a "palace of hate".[270]

The PVV in Almere expresses the fear that the mosque will be financed by extremist Muslims: "(…) Almere Buiten will become a huge hotbed of Muslims (…)". [271]

The PVV group in the European Parliament requests the European Commission to ask for the reclamation of a grant for a mosque building in Amsterdam-Oost. It is alleged that it has not been spent on the purpose for which it was intended – a multi-functional amenity with activities designed to help people find work, and not for a mosque with a Koran school.[272]

In the summer of 2011, the PVV group in the Provincial Government of Zuid-Holland involves itself in a long-standing discussion concerning the building of a new mosque in Hillegom (see Section 5.2).[273]

In response to the public debate following the terrorist murders in Oslo and Utoya about the responsibility of the PVV for creating a negative climate of discussion on Islam and Muslims, Wilders describes mosques as "palaces of hatred" in De Telegraaf.[274]

## 5.4 In conclusion

Traditional extreme right-wing groups, motivated by Islamophobic attitudes, were responsible for initiating almost one-third of non-violent campaigns against mosques. The information that has been gathered is insufficient for the purpose of determining whether Islamophobia was a factor in non-violent action against mosques that was initiated by nearby residents and local action groups. This does appear to be true for a case history which was explored in more detail. It appears, provisionally, that a certain fear of the unfamiliar and the unknown has been more of a factor during campaigns of this kind by local residents than have explicit Islamophobic attitudes. More detailed and in-depth research into the various aspects of these campaigns may throw greater light onto the matter.

# 6 Increasing discrimination?

Discrimination is illegal in the Netherlands. The ban is part of the Constitution and is embedded in national, European and international law. This chapter examines the concept of discrimination and the laws that are designed to combat it. It then looks at the changes that have been announced in the field of immigration, asylum and integration in the coalition agreement of the current Dutch government, the 2011 policy memorandum, and other policy initiatives in these areas. Can the proposed measures and their effects be linked with the aforementioned growth in Islamophobia? With apologies to Groenendijk & Spijkerboer: if more and more citizens believe that they can exclude immigrants on the Internet and in the political arena, is this reflected in an increase in more structural and institutional forms of discrimination?[275] What is the situation in various social fields, in the employment market, in education, in housing? The chapter is rounded off with a discussion of these topics.

## 6.1 The concept of discrimination

Chapter 2 was about racism and Islamophobia as being primarily ideologies of unequal treatment and exclusion. In the case of discrimination, the accent is on visible and tangible forms of expressions, and on practical and behavioural aspects. In recent decades in the Netherlands, the concept of discrimination, like racism, has come to be perceived more and more as politically charged. Instead of this, and partly because of it, the term unequal treatment is used more often, or the more neutral term, distinction. The Constitution talks of equal treatment, while the term used in the Equal Treatment Act 1994 is 'distinction'. The Dutch Equal Treatment Commission also avoids the term discrimination for the same reasons. When the Equal Treatment Act was introduced, it was believed that the use of the term discrimination would have a negative impact on the support for the legislation. However, after a recommendation by the Council of State, the government decided in 2009 to use the term discrimination again, one reason being that it would bring it closer in line with European legislation.[276]

Discrimination entails three key elements, all of which must apply. One is unequal treatment. This is based on one or more aspects of a person's identity, such as gender, sexual orientation, age, and 'race'. In addition, the unequal treatment must have a detrimental impact.[277]

The criminal code, in its definition of discrimination, refers to every type of distinction, exclusion, limitation or preference that is intended to, or results in, or may result in the

recognition, enjoyment, or exercising of human rights and fundamental freedoms based on equality being nullified or adversely affected. Discrimination can be divided into individual discrimination, from person to person, and structural or institutional discrimination. In the case of the latter, it involves discrimination that forms part of institutions, laws, policies, norms, procedures and routines, and in the practices of the people who shape these institutions.[278] This form of discrimination is often indirect, which means it concerns the effects of rules and procedures, rather than any intent. Indirect discrimination is defined as 'a distinction on the grounds of an apparently neutral factor, criterion or method that affects people in particular in relation to one or more of the grounds referred to in law'.[279]

## 6.2 Treaties and laws

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted in 1948 in response to the horrors of the Second World War. The Declaration has often been the foundation for treaties and laws in which the right to equal treatment is laid down. In keeping with international efforts at ending all forms of racial discrimination the Dutch government, in close cooperation with social organisations and academics, has gradually developed a detailed system of legislation and related infrastructure in this area over the past forty years.[280]Both criminal law and administrative law contain legal instruments for combating discrimination. Instruments for self-regulation have also been devised, such as the anti-discrimination codes used by sectors of industry and trade associations.

Parallel to this, the Netherlands has committed itself to international treaties and declarations aimed at countering racial discrimination and achieving equal treatment. International human rights treaties generally play an important role in promoting equal treatment.[281] The declarations and treaties concerned are those of the United Nations, the ILO, UNESCO, the Council of Europe, and the European Community, and include the European Convention on Human Rights and the Fundamental Freedoms (ECHM, 1950), the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Article 3 and Article 26 (ICCPR, New York, December 1966), and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD, New York, 1966). The latter was ratified by the Netherlands in 1971, and forms the basis for the introduction of Dutch criminal law against racial discrimination.

## *Criminal law*

The law states that discriminatory insults, incitement to hatred or discrimination, and financial or material support for activities aimed at discriminating against groups of people on the basis of their race, religion or beliefs, sexual orientation, or handicap, are criminal offences. The same applies to the distribution of discriminatory comments and publications. If discrimination has featured in the committal of a particular crime, it is treated as an aggravating factor. However, criminal law is less suitable for combating more subtle forms of discrimination, and the burden of proof is high. Procedures are long, with victims and their supporters having virtually no say, as shown during the proceedings against Wilders in 2010 and 2011, for example. Parties that had been adversely affected were not allowed any part in the case itself – they were only permitted to state why they were said to have suffered harm. It is for this reason that civil proceedings are sometimes the preferred method for combating discrimination, such as by submitting a complaint to the Dutch Equal Treatment Commission.

## *The Constitution*

There were very few court cases in the years that followed the introduction of the criminal legislation against discrimination. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, however, discrimination was becoming a more frequent occurrence in the Netherlands, as were the emergence of extreme right-wing parties and racist violence.[282] Racism came to be regarded more and more as a persistent social problem, and the principle of equality and the ban on discrimination were therefore established in Article 1 of the Constitution in 1983. The article determines that every citizen of the Netherlands is treated equally in equal cases. Discrimination based on religion, beliefs, political views, race, gender, or on other grounds is prohibited. Nationality, sexual orientation, age, handicap and chronic illness are not mentioned explicitly in the Constitution.

In addition, an infrastructure of anti-discrimination organisations and bodies to which cases of discrimination could be reported was developed in the 1980s. Policies were devised at every level of government and in other bodies, in labour organisations, education and the media for the purpose of actively fighting discrimination. Meanwhile, civil society ran campaigns and activities and formed organisations.

### *The Equal Treatment Act*

An important milestone was the introduction of the Equal Treatment Act in 1994. The purpose of the act is to put Article 1 of the Constitution into practice – vertically (between the State and its citizens) and horizontally (between citizens themselves. At the time of its introduction, the Act banned discrimination and unequal treatment on the grounds of race, nationality, gender, sexual orientation, civil status, or political or religious convictions. The range of grounds has since been extended to include length of employment or type of employment contract, handicap, and age. In 1995, the Dutch Equal Treatment Commission was set up in order to implement the Equal Treatment Act in the fields of employment, education, and the provision of goods and services. The Commission is an easily accessible body to which victims and intermediary organisations may submit complaints at no charge and without the help of a lawyer. It deals with complaints, makes non-binding rulings (which nonetheless carry a great deal of weight), conducts research and advises government and other bodies. The Commission is bound to interpret the Act in accordance with international treaties. Between 2008 and 2010, the Commission received an average of 437 requests for rulings. Of these, an average of 122 (28%) concerned the grounds of race, nationality, and religion.[283] In January 2012, the Commission became part of the National Human Rights Institute.

All in all, the Netherlands has a reasonably extensive range of legal instruments giving protection against discrimination. However, there are also formal shortcomings and complications when it comes to implementing the law. Terlouw mentions the following factors that make implementation complex.[284] In general, basic rights such as the right to equal treatment are limited by the rights and freedoms of others. The ban on discrimination may clash with other basic rights, such as the freedom of expression or freedom of religion. In addition, there may be procedural obstacles that hamper people from being able to enforce their rights. Finally, the law is general, and not everything can be regulated by law. This applies in particular to behavioural norms and to matters that are regarded as part of a person's private life, says Terlouw. Meanwhile anti-discrimination legislation, provisions, and policies are coming under fire as a result of recent social developments and a change in political discourse.

## 6.3 Changes to policies and legislation

During the coalition negotiations that followed the 2010 general election, the liberal party VVD, the Christian Democratic Party CDA, and PVV signed a noteworthy declaration.[285] First, they remarked that they differed in their opinions about the nature and character of

Islam, but that they accepted each other's views on the subject and that they would act on the basis of their own opinions. The difference in perspective concerns the description of Islam as a religion or political or other form of ideology. The PVV embraces the latter viewpoint. The parties then declared that the PVV would support parts of a coalition agreement between the VVD and CDA, and that the VVD and CDA would acknowledge the wishes of the PVV in a 'support agreement'.This included 'concrete agreements on immigration, integration and asylum'. On top of this, the PVV stated its support in the declaration for cuts in public spending that were deemed necessary depending on 'the substance of the agreements made in the field of immigration, integration and asylum, security and care for the elderly'. It means that the PVV has had a significant impact on policy proposals, as shown below, and as claimed by Wilders in a speech in Berlin on 3 September 2011.[286] The package of measures that the government was going to take during its period of office (2010-2015) in the area of immigration, integration and asylum was substantial and far-reaching, and had similarities in many ways to the 'solutions' formulated by the PVV to the problems described by the party in the section entitled 'Kiezen voor islambestrijding en tegen massa-immigratie' ('voting to fight Islam and mass immigration') in its 2010-2015 election programme.[287] The aims of reorganising, controlling and reducing immigration were presented in the coalition agreement under the heading 'firm but fair'. The emphasis in the agreement lay primarily on restricting immigration and asylum and much less on integration policies, which are of such importance to minority groups who have been living and working in the Netherlands for a long time. The number of negative measures on integration outnumbered positive ones to a significant degree, while no mention whatsoever was made of discrimination in either the coalition or 'support' agreement. But there was another negative factor. The overall package of proposed measures would have required amendments to five EU directives and four international treaties, given that they were in conflict with them. During 2011, and especially after the elections to the Senate, the government put forward various proposals to the House of Representatives. In the summer of 2011 the relevant Minister, Donner, brought out a new integration memorandum that set out the plans of the coalition and support agreement in detail.[288] Below is an outlined selection of the plans of the CDA and VVD government, with the support of the PVV, in relation to immigration, asylum, and integration.

### *6.3.1 Rights of residency*

The most far-reaching plans concerned the reunification of families: the plans would have necessitated amendments to five European directives. The government wanted to raise the minimum age for both partners to 24 years. The relevant administrative fees were intended to be self-financing, resulting in the creation of a severe financial deterrent. Any

person wishing to be eligible to bring his family to the country would have had to reside in the Netherlands for at least twelve months. Only married people or partners in a registered partnership and their children who had not attained the age of majority would have been eligible to come to the Netherlands. In addition, those who coming here to join family members would have been subject to education requirements. A person who had immigrated to the Netherlands to join their family would have been able to obtain a residence permit in their own right after five years, instead of three.[289] The examination requirements in the Civic Integration Abroad Act (2006) were due to be made more difficult, and a test was being proposed for the purpose of providing evidence that the applicant's links with the Netherlands were greater than with other countries.[290] The government also wanted to tighten up the 'free movement of persons' directive.

A basic educational qualification would have become a precondition for obtaining a permanent residence permit, for which the EU directive concerning long-term residents (2003/109) would have had to be amended. The options for revoking temporary and permanent residence permits would have been extended, and would have covered such reasons as insufficient income, residence abroad, or because a candidate had not passed the civic integration exam. Repatriation and deportation policies were due to be intensified.

The government submitted a legislative proposal in which illegal residents would be subject to a fine of no more than 3,800 euros, or a term of imprisonment of no longer than four months. Anyone who had at any time resided in the country illegally would never be eligible for legal residency. Deportations of foreigners who had been convicted of a criminal offence would have been carried out more promptly and more frequently. Tough measures were also announced to combat human trafficking.

The requirements for naturalisation were planned to be tightened up. Dutch citizenship would only have been definitively available to those who had renounced their original nationality, insofar as this was possible. Any person convicted of an offence that carried a penalty of twelve years' imprisonment or more within five years of acquiring Dutch nationality would have had it withdrawn.

The process of making it more difficult to acquire Dutch nationality has been going on for some time now. The naturalisation test has already been made harder in the past, and is now one of the most rigorous in Europe. As a result, the number of candidates seeking to become Dutch citizens has shown a marked decline.[291] In addition, the question of dual nationality has frequently been the subject of discussion in recent times. In 2007, the PVV criticised the fact that two State Secretaries in the fourth Balkenende government, who

were of Moroccan and Turkish origin, had dual nationality. The discussion frequently saw nationality mixed with loyalty, with people with dual nationality being accused of insufficient loyalty to their country of residence.[292] The Scientific Council for Government Policy points out the paradox whereby the opponents of dual nationality deny the emotional value of the origins, history and roots of immigrants, but make them central issues when it comes to Dutch citizens.[293]

### *6.3.2 Integration and cultural utterances*

In its new integration memorandum, the government distanced itself from multiculturalism as a policy objective: "(…) multiculturalism has failed because, contrary to expectations, the various ethnic and cultural groups (…) have not grown mutually closer to become a new unity."[294] At the same time, the government distanced itself from "the exclusive relativism enclosed in the model of the multicultural society".[295] The cabinet ended the preferential policy based on gender and ethnic origin. The government's emancipation policies also disregarded the emancipation of ethnic minorities. The integration memorandum laid an important emphasis on immigrants' personal responsibility to adapt in and to the Netherlands and an obligation to take a civic integration course. Unlike in the past, the candidates had to pay the full costs of the civic integration themselves, although the fees for lessons can be borrowed from the government. It was never made certain to which groups the civic integration requirement would have applied. On 16 August 2011, the Central Appeals Tribunal ruled that the Netherlands, as an EU member, may not make any distinction between Turks and EU citizens. The civic integration requirement for Turks is contrary to the EU Association Agreement with Turkey.[296] Faced with this decision, the cabinet was looking for new ways of imposing an obligation on immigrants from Turkey to integrate.

In addition, the cabinet decided to introduce a ban on the wearing of burqas, with a fine of 380 euros for anyone defying the ban.[297] This provision forms part of a more general prohibition on clothing that covers the face. Members of the police and the judiciary may no longer wear headscarves. A protocol for 'culturally determined' domestic violence[298] and child abuse was to be introduced. If a person's conduct or clothing limits their opportunities on the employment market, then they may be refused or lose their Social Assistance Act benefits, or have them reduced. Benefit entitlement will be subject to the precondition that people who do not speak Dutch embark on, and successfully complete, a course as soon as possible. The cabinet wished to halt child benefit payments for children who live outside the EU, and was seeking to limit the child-related budget that is

paid to families according to their income to a maximum of two children. Subsidies for activities for specific, often nationality-related groups were abolished and cuts were made in the amount spent on subsiding integration activities. This meant, among other things, that many self-organisations that have actually played an important part in helping their grassroots integrate in recent decades do no longer receive the resources that enable them to continue fulfilling this role. Now that the subsidies for many immigrant organisations are being abolished, there will undoubtedly be fewer opportunities for enjoying cultural performances in the traditions and languages of their origin. Cultural diversity as a positive criterion for the recognition and subsidising of arts and culture projects by the government is also a thing of the past.

The various proposals and measures covered here affect cultural aspects of life. Culture enjoys none of the legal protection of the kind afforded to race, nationality and religion. Religion is generally seen as a part of culture. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights recognises freedom of religion as an important human right. In the light of Dutch history, in which various denominations have shared or held power to differing degrees, leading to the creation of the pillarised society as a means of settling mutual conflicts, this freedom has always been highly regarded. With the arrival of groups of immigrants, often with a different religion, this has taken on a new meaning. The freedom of religion and belief is protected in the Netherlands on the basis of Article 1 of the Constitution, of Article 6 concerning the freedom of religion, and of Article 23 concerning the freedom of education. This freedom is also explicitly laid down in a number of international treaties, especially the ECHR and the ICCPR. The rights under Dutch law that form part of the freedom of religion include the right to establish places of worship and, until recently, to engage in ritual slaughter. Dutch law protects the right to practise one's religion as well as the right to make religious statements. However, the latter is increasingly becoming the subject of debate.

In 2011, following a legislative proposal by the Party for the Animals, a debate flared up about the ritual slaughter of animals while conscious, as is customary in the Jewish and Islamic tradition. On 28 June 2011, a majority of the House of Representatives voted for the proposal to ban the ritual slaughter of conscious animals. However, an exemption possibility was inserted following an intervention by the opposition parties: if it can be demonstrated that an animal does not endure extra suffering through this method of slaughter, it is possible to obtain an exemption. A notable aspect of this exemption possibility is that the burden of proof lies with those conducting the slaughter. The government also had its doubts about the constitutional validity of the proposal, which was later rejected

by the Senate. In the discussion that preceded the approval of the proposal, the former leader of the VVD, Bolkestein, defended the Jewish tradition. He pointed out that periods in which anti-Semitism had flourished in history had always started with criticism of the slaughter method used by Jews. He reasoned that Islamic halal slaughter would, by extension, be affected by the ban on kosher slaughter.[299] The PVV, which had previously argued in defence of this right of the Jewish minority, but not that of Muslims, voted for the proposal (with the exception of one of its members). The Christian parties – CDA (Christian Democratic Appeal), CU (Christian Union), and SGP (Reformed Party) – voted against it.

In the context of the debate on integration, there has often been a greater focus in recent years on 'national identity' as a means of rediscovering or promoting social cohesion. The Scientific Council for Government Policy (Wetenschappelijk Raad voor het Regeringsbeleid, WRR) has countered that it is more important to look at multiple, dynamic processes of identification.[300] National identity is seen by the council as too static a concept, and regards its deployment as too limited a strategy for the purpose of developing policy.

In their analysis of the cabinet plans in their article 'Regulering van migratie en integratie à la Wilders: mag het, kan het en helpt het?' ('Regulating immigration and integration à la Wilders: can it be done, and would it help?), immigration experts Groenendijk and Spijkerboer show clearly where the plans in the coalition and support agreement will lead: a hampering of integration, structural exclusion, and the legitimisation and encouragement of day-to-day exclusion of citizens with an immigrant background, including (especially) Muslims.[301] They make particular reference to the fact that the implementation of the plans will mean there will be four types of Dutch nationals, with different rights with regard to keeping and losing their nationality, and rights of residency in the Netherlands: 1. Dutch citizens who were born in the country; 2. Antillean Dutch citizens who can be forced to return to the Antilles; 3. 'Conditional Dutch citizens' who may lose their nationality if they are convicted of a serious crime within five years; 4. Dutch citizens who were naturalised longer than five years ago and who have the same rights as those who were born here, as long as the government does not decide otherwise. In the third category, it is primarily people with dual nationality from countries that do not permit their subjects to renounce their nationality who run the risk of losing their Dutch nationality, say Groenendijk and Spijkerboer. This applies to people from a number of Islamic immigration countries (Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria, Iran, and Pakistan) and several Latin American countries. Groenendijk and Spijkerboer show that many proposed measures or variations of such measures have been considered in the past, but were not pursued because they were not legally or practically feasible. They conclude their analysis of the immigration, asylum, and integration aspects of the coalition and support agreement with the following observati-

on: "The agreement between the VVD, the CDA, and the PVV shows that three parties (and not just one of the three) have set themselves the goal of excluding specific groups of Dutch residents. That fact alone will strengthen the already existing exclusion of these groups of our fellow citizens."[302]

But what is the state of play now, in 2011, with regard to the exclusion of minority groups in various areas? Is discrimination on the rise? Below is an examination of the fields of employment, education, and housing, based on a literature study.

## 6.4 Employment

In spite of gradual improvements, the position of citizens with a non-Western immigrant background on the employment market is clearly worse than that of their indigenous counterparts. The improvements primarily concern the position of the second generation, who are generally better educated than their parents. They can be said to be gradually climbing the social ladder. More and more of their number have middle-ranking jobs, while the number of entrepreneurs from the group has shown a sharp increase. Nonetheless, research has repeatedly shown that members of minority groups permanently lag behind when it comes to entering the employment market and in terms of their employment participation. Unemployment in this group is relatively high, in comparison with indigenous Dutch citizens, especially during the low points of the economic cycle. Time after time, it appears that the group is more adversely affected by recessions. When the economy recovers after a recession, unemployment quickly falls, but it remains higher among the members of ethnic minorities than is the case with indigenous Dutch nationals. In 2010, 23 per cent of young people from immigrant backgrounds had no work, compared with ten per cent in the case of their indigenous counterparts. The rate for young people of Moroccan or Suriname origin was 25 per cent.[303] Once they have actually found jobs, they do not always hold on to them, and there are problems relating to the lack of promotion opportunities. The causes of this are partly objective: minorities work in vulnerable sectors. They often have temporary contracts and do heavy work in poor conditions. Non-objective factors, like discrimination, are also partly to blame.

In a 1990s survey, Bovenkerk et al. demonstrated that discrimination does occur on the Dutch employment market.[304] Since then, various efforts have been made to change the situation. In 2005, the government and social partners agreed to encourage participation in the employment market by people from immigrant backgrounds and to fight discrimination, through research, among other things. The position of these groups on the labour market has been systematically monitored since that time. The first Discriminatiemonitor

niet-westerse migranten appeared in 2007, and the second in 2010.[305] The studies show that discrimination still takes place. This was also highlighted in an experimental survey using real-life tests in which two candidates from different ethnic backgrounds, but who were otherwise identical, responded to a job vacancy.[306] The results of these studies, together with information about cases of discrimination that people had experienced and reports from the Monitor Rassendiscriminatie,[307] give a good picture about the state of play regarding discrimination on the employment market.

## *Actual discrimination and complaints*

The Monitor Rassendiscriminatie investigates actual cases of discrimination experienced by various minority groups. From the Monitor 2009, it appears that the level of discrimination encountered by Turks, Moroccans, Surinamese, and Antilleans on the employment market has fallen in comparison to 2005, from 83 per cent then, to 71 per cent in 2009. The same applies to the number of people in these groups who suspect discrimination in the job-seeking process, although a high number of Moroccans believe this is still the case. More than half of the members of this group suspected that discrimination played a part in their being turned down for a job. Between 2004 and 2008, anti-discrimination organisations received an average of 470 complaints a year about discrimination on the grounds of race (eighty per cent), religion (sixteen per cent), or nationality (five per cent).[308] Most complaints concerned insults or unequal treatment on the work floor (39 per cent), while 27 per cent were about discrimination in the recruitment and selection procedure. Islamic women encounter discrimination on the employment market relatively frequently because they wear a headscarf. Between 2005 and 2008, the Equal Treatment Commission issued rulings about discrimination on the grounds of race, religion, or nationality on the basis of 167 requests.

## *Results of employment market monitor*[309]

Discrimination particularly affects those coming onto the employment market. Research using real-life tests points to differences in the likelihood of being invited to a job interview between indigenous members of the population and applicants from an immigrant background. The difference is more pronounced in the case of men than that of women. Discrimination is more evident in lower and middle-ranking positions. In the case of higher-ranking positions, non-Western candidates have almost the same chance of being invited as 'Westerners'. Research into the presence of discrimination was carried out in five sectors of the labour market, of which the catering and retail sectors appeared to be the most hostile towards candidates with an immigrant background. Discrimination was also detected in the financial services sector and in healthcare, but not in local government

bodies. The way people are treated also varies from one sector to another. Although it is described as 'correct', any differences are nonetheless always to the detriment of non-indigenous candidates. The research did not encounter any form of crude or explicit discrimination.

## *Differences between groups*

There are major differences between groups in terms of the level of discrimination they face. Better educated people from immigrant backgrounds experience less discrimination than those with a lower standard of education, and the second generation less than the first. The employment market position of the second generation is not that much different from the indigenous population with similar attributes, such as level of education. However, there are differences between men and women. The degree to which women from immigrant backgrounds lag behind indigenous women with similar attributes is less than the corresponding position for men.

Moreover, there are variations between groups of different origins. Of all the ethnic groups in the Netherlands, Moroccans are the most affected by discrimination. This is the group about which employers have the most negative perceptions, in particular with regard to young Moroccans. It should be pointed out, incidentally, that the study involving a real-life test did not show any notable difference between minority groups from different backgrounds. In fact, Moroccans were certainly not the most discriminated against in the study, even though many other investigations have shown this to be the case. Forms of indirect discrimination also play a role. This concerns such matters as psychological tests with a cultural slant, or influences of cultural differences during job interviews. Discrimination relating to remuneration occurs hardly at all, if ever. Indeed ethnic groups, once they have succeeded in getting a job, attain the same professional level as indigenous members of the population with the same attributes. However, they do face discriminatory comments on the work floor, as well as harassment in relation to their origin or religion.

Research has indicated that employers discriminate not because they themselves have an aversion to minority groups, but because they suppose that their clients do. Unfavourable group stereotypes also appear to play a major role. While the reputations of Turkish and Surinamese Dutch are generally positive, Moroccans and Antilleans are mostly regarded in a negative light, being associated with criminality and unreliability. As well as stereotypical views based on previous bad experiences, another factor is the negative portrayal in the media. The effects of negative portrayals certainly have an influence when it comes to the job application process. Employers believe that people from immigrant backgrounds as a group will perform more poorly, and that the risks of failure are greater. This means that

individual candidates are less likely to receive an invitation to a job interview. They have to go to greater lengths than others in order to prove themselves. This is referred to as statistical discrimination.

On the other hand, there are also employers who value diversity as something positive. They aim for a more diverse workforce and actually prefer candidates from immigrant backgrounds as a result.

In 2010, the ICERD committee of experts that oversees compliance with the ICERD again called on the Netherlands to take measures against discrimination in important social fields that disproportionately affect specific groups. The committee expressed its concerns about, among other things, the disproportionately high level of unemployment among people from immigrant backgrounds.[310]

In addition to discrimination by employers, there are other factors that play a role in restricting access to the jobs market. The task of finding work is made more difficult for non-indigenous candidates because of the inadequate level of mediation by relevant bodies, insufficient cohesion between employee search channels and employer recruitment channels, and the squeeze caused by foreign labour.[311] These factors affect less well-educated candidates in particular. During periods of economic crisis with high levels of unemployment, employers can be more selective about who they take on. In such circumstances, they pay greater attention to educational qualifications, work experience, mastery of the Dutch language, and other qualities like presentation and physical characteristics that indicate religious preference, such as a headscarf or a beard.

## 6.5 Education

As with the employment market, the level of participation by children of a non-Western background in education has gradually improved in recent years. Nonetheless, they continue to perform less well than their Western counterparts. A relatively greater number of the former group study at VMBO ('preparatory secondary vocational education') level. However, each generation is performing better than did their parents. The proportion of non-Western pupils in HBO ('higher professional education') education has risen relatively sharply in the course of ten years, and more are now attending university. In 2007, nine per cent of Turks and Moroccans had high-level educational qualifications.[312] The most significant causes of non-Western children lagging behind in primary education are an inadequate command of Dutch, especially as regards vocabulary, and the low socio-economic position of their parents. However, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and

Development (OECD) has indicated that these factors do not tell the full story: it may also be down to discrimination.[313] Schools are obliged to provide a learning environment that is free from discrimination. This obligation forms part of the responsibilities of school for safeguarding security in general on their premises. The Monitor Rassendiscriminatie shows that discrimination does occur in education.

The Monitor Rassendiscriminatie, which was carried out on behalf of the Integration Directorate of the Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning, and the Environment in 2005 and 2009, also examined discrimination in the education sector. Unless otherwise stated, the information below has been taken from these Monitor studies.[314] Discrimination that has been experienced gives a good indication of actual levels of discrimination. Based on a survey of people aged sixteen and over into whether or not they had experienced discrimination, 2009 showed a significant decrease in discrimination in the education sector compared with 2005. Whereas ten per cent of pupils stated in 2005 that they had been discriminated against in the previous year, the figure in 2010 was six per cent. Moroccan and Turkish pupils encountered greater levels of discrimination than did those from Suriname or the Antilles. The discrimination primarily concerned discriminatory comments and the feeling of not being treated equally. Almost half these cases involved teachers.

Information from the Inspectorate of Education from the years 2005-2008 suggests a slight decline in the degree to which discriminatory incidents occurred in schools. Incidents of this nature take place primarily in the lower tiers of secondary education, in half of all schools. There are far fewer incidents at HAVO/VWO ('senior general secondary education' and 'pre-university education') schools.

Between 2005 and 2008, anti-discrimination organisations received more than two hundred reports of discrimination in education on the grounds of race, nationality, religion, or anti-Semitism. The complaints concerned admission, policy measures like clothing regulations, and relations between the various relevant parties – pupils, teachers, and parents. The Inspectorate of Education also received several dozen complaints every year. During the same period, the Equal Treatment Commission made seven rulings relating to discrimination based on origin, nationality, or religion.

There are two apparently persistent problem areas in relation to discrimination: in secondary education, it mainly concerns finding an internship, while segregation occurs in both primary and secondary education.

## *Internships*

In vocational education, there are problems when it comes to finding internship places, with discrimination by employers playing a role. In 2008, the Groen Links ('Green Left') political party published the results of research into discrimination for gaining internships in the construction, catering, and business sectors. A total of 336 companies in the Utrecht region were approached for the study, which showed that chiefly recognised practical learning companies discriminated against Moroccan students. Compared with indigenous students, they were 38 per cent less likely to be invited for an introductory interview. The obligation on schools to provide the necessary protection for their students against discrimination also applies to the companies or organisations where their students go on internships.[315] Schools neglect their duties in this regard, sometimes consciously. The Monitor Rassendiscriminatie says that, as a result, girls with headscarves in particular end up in a vulnerable position. It is sometimes the case that schools are insufficiently aware of this obligation, but also that they are afraid of losing a recognised practical learning company if they object to discriminatory preconditions surrounding the selection process. This was revealed in an exploratory survey in 2006, carried out by the Meldpunt Discriminatie Amsterdam ('Amsterdam discrimination reporting point').[316]

## *Segregation*

Another problem of involving discrimination is that of segregation in education. One-third of primary schools in the 38 largest municipalities do not properly reflect the social composition of the local district.[317] Children of Dutch and immigrant origin are not evenly distributed across the schools. This is related in part to housing segregation and with what is known as 'white flight'. Parents sometime deliberately send their children to schools with no or very few children of immigrant origin. However, they sometimes send them to a school in a different area for other reasons – they may prefer a school based on a certain religion or an educational method, such as Montessori education. Parents with an immigrant background are not always aware of the educational differences between schools. Academics do not always agree on the issue of whether segregation in education has a negative impact on children. Recent research by the Netherlands Institute for Social Research shows that ethnic diversity only has a slightly negative effect on achievement in primary schools and no negative effect in secondary schools.[318] However, performance is not the whole story. Growing up in a mixed school is, from a society perspective, good for children. In the wake of the periodic reports by the Netherlands about the implementation of the ICERD, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) has, for the third time, called on the country to take measures against discrimination in important areas of society that leads to specific groups being disproportionately affected. In addition to the disproportionately high level of unemployment among those of immi-

grant origin, the committee also expressed its concern about segregation in education.[319] According to the CERD, the Netherlands must take measures to counter this. To this end, the Primary Education Act has been reviewed following earlier directions in 2006. It was decided that schools would have to adopt policies that would result in a more balanced distribution of pupils who lagged behind in their education. For the current CDA and VVD government, with the support of the PVV, taking steps to counter segregation is no longer a priority of its education policies.

## 6.6 Housing

There is no evidence that discrimination occurs when it comes to the allocation of homes in the Netherlands.[320] As far as housing and minorities are concerned, the emphasis in research and public information lies much more on the tensions that exist within neighbourhoods. The fact that discrimination in the area of housing is much less a factor than in the case of employment is due to the housing allocation system in the Netherlands. However, the actual housing position of residents with a non-Western background is relatively less good. They are less likely to own their own homes, and more likely to live in the social rental sector. This is related primarily to their low socio-economic position. Some mortgage lenders will not provide funding to people from certain postal codes, and this may affect citizens with an immigrant background more frequently as they are more likely to live in such areas.

### *Segregation*

The largest groups of ethnic minorities live in the Netherlands' four largest cities – Amsterdam, Rotterdam, The Hague and Utrecht. Half of the Moroccans in the country live here, for example. They often live in certain areas of the cities, in districts where mostly the indigenous working class and other low-income groups used to live. However, this does not apply to every group in equal measure. Moroccans and Turks in particular live in these areas. Poverty, lack of safety (or feelings of lack of safety) and a low level of liveability are features of many of these neighbourhoods. The response of the original residents has in many cases been what is termed 'white flight'. They preferred to move elsewhere.

National and local government policies are designed to halt this segregation. This is being done in different ways. Attempts are underway at making the districts more attractive to higher-income groups, such as by building more expensive houses. Thanks to these policies, which are aimed at bringing about a greater mix of groups, ethnic segregation is indeed gradually diminishing. From a survey of Muslims, it appears that they themselves are not keen on their segregated housing situation.[321] They prefer to live in mixed areas.[322]

In Rotterdam, a different kind of measure was taken in 2005 on the initiative of the Leefbaar Rotterdam political party with the intention of countering the concentrations of ethnic groups. The measure – Bijzondere maatregel grootstedelijke problematiek ('Extraordinary measure for tackling urban problems'), more often known as 'Rotterdam Wet' ('Rotterdam Act') – empowers the local authorities in large cities to prevent the settlement of people on low incomes in certain nominated districts. As groups with an immigrant background are often on low incomes, they are particularly affected by the measure. Critics emphasise that this is more about exclusion (negative) rather than offering residents opportunities (positive). They also refer to the stigmatising effect on the neighbourhoods concerned.

Compared to other European countries like France and the United Kingdom, the Netherlands has not experienced many major eruptions of disorder resulting from the tensions between different population groups. However, members of ethnic minorities are regularly faced with discrimination on the street. According to the results of the Discriminatie-ervaringen ('Discrimination experiences') survey, this affected one person in five in 2009.[323] It happened to Moroccans significantly more frequently. It concerns mainly discriminatory comments, from both persons known and unknown to the victims. Conversely, discrimination is also perpetrated by members of minority groups.

Between 2005 and 2008, anti-discrimination bodies received an average of ninety complaints a year about discrimination on the grounds of race, nationality, anti-Semitism and religion, in relation to housing. In the same period, the Equal Treatment Commission issued eight rulings on discrimination in relation to housing on the basis of race, nationality, or religion; they concerned access to housing and unequal treatment.

## 6.7 In conclusion

In the past fifty years, anti-discrimination has gradually become more firmly embedded in legal regulations and procedures in the Netherlands. Institutions and organisations have been set up in order to implement policies aimed against discrimination. Nonetheless, this institutional framework is currently under pressure from a growing Islamophobic ideology, which has pushed its way to the heart of the political arena thanks to the government coalition with the PVV. The measures relating to immigration, asylum and integration that were announced in mid-2010 in the government and support agreement and which have since been gradually introduced, are aimed partly at excluding people who are not yet here, and at forcing people who do finally make it here to assimilate. In many cases, the measures are contrary to European treaties and directives. It is more difficult for families

to be reunited and for people to gain access to rights of residency and Dutch nationality. It seems more likely that the sustainable integration of citizens with an immigrant background, including (mainly) Muslims, will actually be hindered, that their structural exclusion will be justified and their day-to-day exclusion will be legitimised and encouraged. Is it possible that an effect of this development will be more discrimination in the field of housing, education, and employment? As far as we know, discrimination in these areas has always been around since the start of the post-War migration, although at the same time things have moved towards a more equal position for citizens with an immigrant background in comparison with those of Dutch origin. In education and employment in particular, however, discrimination still occurs. Anti-discrimination organisations record many complaints about discrimination on the labour market. Discrimination is a frequent occurrence for those seeking to join the employment market, with candidates from an immigrant background often being less likely to succeed in a job interview. Unemployment in this group is relatively high, especially in times of economic hardship. Discrimination in the employment market does not affect every member of minority groups to the same degree, but varies according to origin, gender, and economic sector. Moroccans are the most adversely affected. For employers, the supposed discrimination on the part of their clients plays a role, as do negative group stereotypes. In education, discrimination is a factor in internships and segregation. Complaints to the relevant agencies about the education sector concern admissions, policy measures, and relations between pupils, teachers, and parents. Discrimination occurs much less frequently in the area of housing, although there are occasional problems. The current situation in these areas has been set out above to the extent that information is available. It is still too early to be able to say whether, and to what degree, the development that has been described – the increasing influence of an Islamophobic ideology – will be of significance to the level of discrimination in these sectors. However, there are clear trends that point towards a rise in social inequality. A plan by school governors of the public primary school in Ede to deny children of families of non-Western origin access to the school following a renovation project, speaks volumes. Both the Minister of Education and the Ede Municipal Executive have rightly condemned the plans as unjustified and discriminatory.[324]

The extra focus on discrimination that the government of CDA/VVD with support of PVV has announced can hardly be expected to act as the necessary counterweight to this development, not least because it is not, or not much, aimed at structural discrimination.

# 7 Summary, reflection, and recommendations

This book is about the phenomenon of Islamophobia and the various ways in which it is manifested. The term Islamophobia refers to a historically and socially determined ideology that ascribes a negative connotation to Islam and Muslims with the help of images, symbols, texts, facts, and interpretations. This influences the meaning people give to Islam and Muslims and how they perceive them, as well as their attitudes and behaviour towards them, in a way that promotes the social exclusion of Muslims as 'different' and promotes discriminatory and unequal treatment in the cultural, social, economic, and political domains. This also often includes people who are presumed to be Islamic on the grounds of their outward appearance or ethnic origin, but who are not. As a form of racism, Islamophobia is primarily ideological in character. Ideology refers to this negative significance, to the means by which the construction and transfer of meaning operate, and to the practices of exclusion that are based upon this. Islamophobic dimensions of discrimination are often interwoven with other dimensions that are related to origin or ethnicity and gender. Islamophobia is similar to other forms of racism that affect other groups, such as anti-Semitism or antiziganism, which is directed at gypsies.

It should not be forgotten in this context that Muslims are a minority group in the Netherlands. Minority groups always face the risk of social exclusion and the related, or more often preceding, processes of stigmatisation. Fear and aversion are born of the observation of differences, of 'other' attitudes and forms of behaviour, and of the feeling of being under threat. The tendencies to stigmatise and to be prejudiced are universal, founded in evolutionary patterns.

This form of racism has evolved against the background of a negative climate of opinion towards Islam and Muslims in the context of international tensions that are influenced by Islamic terrorism and the war on terror. In recent years, there has actually been a deterioration rather than an improvement in the climate of opinion in the Netherlands. To an increasing degree, Muslims are becoming isolated, negatively portrayed, and depicted as enemies of society. This is illustrated in this book by discussing statements made on the Internet, on the basis of assertions by the PVV about Islam and Muslims, and by focusing on a steadily growing anti-Islamic attitude in the extreme right-wing movement.

The Internet nowadays plays an important part with regard to shaping opinions and developing visions. There is plenty of Islamophobic content to be found on the Internet, not just on extremist web sites, but on many others as well, and they have been the subject of a large number of complaints to relevant reporting authorities for many years. Unlawful sta-

tements are a frequently occurring feature. Some sites are seeing their membership numbers growing and are receiving an increasing number of postings. The more substantive contributions on Islamophobic sites and forums deal primarily with the following themes, which can be seen as the ideological heart of Islamophobic discourse:

- The totalitarian and violent nature of Islam. This is used to substantiate the notion that Islam is an ideology and to justify the calls for it to be banned.
- The Islamisation of Europe. This process is often expressed using the term Eurabia. Europe is said to be losing its European-Christian character as a result of deliberate acts by Muslims and to be having an Islamic identity imposed upon it. It is said that Muslims are intent on conquering and ruling Europe through force and violence. The aim of the notion of Eurabia is to make clear that the process is already well underway. History is often quoted as proof. This fictitious threat of Islamisation often takes obsessive forms.
- 'Mass immigration'. The addition of the word 'mass' is intended to emphasise the uncontrollable scale of the phenomenon. In addition, there is a great deal of reference to the poor level of integration on the part of Muslims, their unreliability, and their supposed criminal tendencies.
- The 'left-wing elite'. This group, and social-democrat politicians in particular, are said to be responsible for 'mass immigration' and its consequences, not least that of 'Islamisation'.
- The repression of women, symbolised most prominently by the headscarf.

A feature of the PVV is its strongly Islamophobic discourse. This is expressed in the party's view of Islam/Muslims and in its statements and the items in its programme in which the above themes are mentioned. The PVV does not regard Islam as a religion, but instead describes it as a violent ideology. It makes no distinction between Islam and extremist Islam. This violent Islam is said to be intent on world domination and conquering the West. These ideas are articulated in items in the party's programme, which are aimed at countering the supposed 'Islamisation' of the West and at the rights of Muslims. The PVV stigmatises Muslims with a view to excluding them and treating them differently. On 23 June 2011, Wilders was acquitted by the Amsterdam Criminal Court of inciting hatred and discrimination and of insulting a group on the basis of its race or religion. Referring to various statements, the court stated its view that they were offensive, vulgar, denigrating, shocking, repugnant and even inflammatory, but that it did not regard them as being unlawful. European Commissioner Cecilia Malmström said the following of populist parties that seek to determine European agendas: "(…) We must acknowledge that they provide oxygen – and increasing acceptance – for extreme views."[325] It should be noted that Wilders and his PVV are among those to whom this applies.

Under the influence of the PVV, a limited element in traditionally extreme right-wing and

right-wing extremist groups is attempting to latch onto the Islamophobic trend, although in some cases the process was already underway. This is emphatically not the case for anti-Semitic, neo-Nazi movements who believe it impossible to be simultaneously against Jews and Muslims. Their anti-Semitism prevents them from being able to adopt Islamophobic views. It is not out of the question that the influence of the increasing Islamophobic attitudes within traditionally extreme right-wing and right-wing extremist parties will lead to the emergence of more extremist variations of an Islamophobic ideology.

Islamophobia is also expressed in acts of violence. Compared with other targets, violent incidents involving Islamophobia rank high: regular cases of violence occur near mosques in particular, although there has been a decline in the number of incidents over the last two years. I have highlighted the pattern of this violence from 2005 to 2010, with a focus on the nature of the acts, their causes, their geographical distribution and the perpetrators. According to official information, there were between eleven and 25 violent incidents every year, with the total number being 117. Graffiti was particularly common, followed by vandalism and arson. One highly provocative method was to leave body parts and the insides of dead sheep and pigs. This occurred five times between 2007 and 2010. Sometimes, multiple acts were committed at the same time in different towns and cities, and sometimes one mosque would find itself targeted on several occasions over a longer period of time. In most cases, the underlying reasons and motives for the attacks would remain unknown, as did the identity of the perpetrators. Where those responsible were traced, they were almost always youths. In a number of cases, it was clear that ideological motives had played a role, but it is not easy to reach any conclusions on this because perpetrators and motives were usually unknown,.

Acts against mosques took place across the country in small, medium-sized, and large municipalities and major cities. In proportion to the number of mosques in each, there are far more acts of violence in smaller municipalities. There were relatively few acts committed against mosques in the major cities. This is probably connected to the fact that people there have been used to the presence of mosques for a longer period of time. Although information on the matter is not complete, it seems that Turkish mosques are the object of violence relatively more frequently than Moroccan ones. It is not clear why this is the case, but one possible reason is that acts of violence are more likely to be carried out against buildings that are visibly an Islamic place of worship, perhaps on account of their distinctive architecture, than on those that are less easily identifiable as such. Greater visibility makes mosques more susceptible to expressions of violence. It could be that Turkish mosques are more visually prominent.
The years 2005-2010 also saw non-violent acts against the establishment of mosques.

Only acts that fell into this category which were discussed in the written media have been covered in this study. In almost every case, the background to these protests was the building of a new mosque. They were usually initiated by local residents, but nearly one-third of such acts were also the work of extreme right-wing groups who were using them to give vent to their Islamophobic attitudes. It is notable that general disruption, parking difficulties and noise nuisance were never the reason behind protests against mosques – only the fear of such problems, in cases where the building of a mosque was being proposed. Problems of this kind are clearly not so bad in practice, once a mosque has actually been built, and it appears that fear of the unfamiliar and the unknown play a greater role among local residents than do Islamophobic attitudes. Such attitudes may be stoked by interventions by Islamophobic organisations like the PVV. In recent years, the PVV has taken political steps to prevent the building of more mosques on an ever more frequent basis.

Long after the Second World War, the slogan 'Never Again' was used to motivate citizens in Europe, whether on the left or right of the political spectrum, to resist the dangers of fascism, racism, and discrimination. As an extension of this, anti-discrimination policies in the Netherlands in the past fifty years have gradually been firmly embedded in legislation. Nonetheless, this is now coming under pressure from a growing Islamophobic ideology. Because of the alliance between the government coalition and the PVV, this ideology has forced its way to the centre of political power. This threatens to hinder the integration of citizens from an immigrant background, many of whom are Muslims, as well as to justify their structural exclusion and legitimise and encourage their day-to-day exclusion – all of which is clearly expressed in the measures relating to immigration, asylum, and integration that were announced in mid-2010 in the coalition and support agreement, and which have since been gradually introduced. Is it possible that this could lead to greater discrimination in areas that are crucial to people's lives, such as housing, education, and employment? As far as we know, discrimination in these fields has always existed ever since immigration took off in the 1960s, even though the position of citizens with an immigrant background in comparison to the indigenous population has gradually been improving, thanks to efforts on the part of society and politicians. Discrimination occurs especially in education and on the labour market. The same is true of the housing sector, but the level of discrimination here is declining all the time. The current state of affairs described above is based on the available data from research. It is still too early to be able to say whether the developments already described – the increasing influence of an Islamophobic ideology – will have any significant effect on the degree of discrimination in these areas. However, there are trends that point towards an increase in social inequality. In a general sense, too, it is clear that a permanent social focus will be needed if there is to be an end to exclusion and discrimination. That kind of focus has to be maintained. There is very little expectati-

on that the extra focus on discrimination that the present government has announced will provide the necessary counterweight to Islamophobia.

The increased influence of an Islamophobic ideology is one of the main elements of the political shifts that have been taking place in the Netherlands for some time now. The introduction discussed the reasons put forward by various Dutch academics for the greater level of sympathy in society for an anti-Islamic discourse. Reference was made to conformism, secularisation, and the associated perception of a difference of values, or a cultural conflict, and political discourse that is changing in a more general sense. In an essay, Heijne deals not so much with Islamophobia but with populism, even though he clearly has Wilders and his PVV in mind.[326] He analyses the shifts taking place in the Netherlands as a consequence of more general cultural shifts towards a culture of perception. The emphasis is moving more and more from the community to the individual, from politics to the market, from the objective to the subjective, he says. Riemen also points out this emphasis on the subjective element. He talks of a crisis of civilisation that is vulnerable to a kitsch culture dominated by the lack of any spiritual life and in which people think only in material terms.[327] In Heijne's eyes, values that are related to objectivity, the principle of equality and the rule of law are being pushed into the background to make way for subjectivity, the romantic, the dramatic, and also that which is sinister. He notes that enlightened thought is itself being called into question to an increasing degree. His vision essentially concerns two conflicting modernities: enlightened thought with the emphasis on shared human values like equality, individual freedom and tolerance, versus the interests of the community, history, and cultural and religious individuality. Enlightenment versus Counter-Enlightenment – two movements that have long been competing for prominence. He describes the thinking on the part of the PVV as a constant to-ing and fro-ing between these two views of modernity. The vision of new populism, of which the PVV is the most significant manifestation, is about identity and community in an age of globalisation and immigration. According to Heijne, these are two phenomena that progressive politicians have never managed to successfully get to grips with.[328] As a solution, he suggests the need to generate a new trust in the rule of law, with a focus on identifiability, proximity, and dialogue.

All the aspects put forward by academics, such as those given in the introduction and the analysis by Heijne, contain important elements for providing a picture of what is wrong in the Netherlands. They highlight the undercurrent, but to disregard those who have become dislocated is not to give a complete picture. This dislocation, the development of a modern form of racism of which Islamophobia forms the heart, must be included in the analysis, no matter how uncomfortable this may be. This book has sought to move things in that direction.

In the light of the results of this study, it seems a good idea to make a number of recommendations for initiatives that are needed in various sectors of society.

First of all, more research into Islamophobic radicalisation is necessary, and into its manifestation on the Internet. After the attacks in Oslo and on the island of Utoya in July 2011, various organisations have started taking action in this regard. The EU, too, made a budget available in the autumn of 2011 for research and sharing knowledge in the field of prevention of different types of radicalisation. As far as research into the Dutch situation is concerned, attention should be directed beyond the area where the Dutch language is spoken. By definition, there are no boundaries on the Internet. New media create new movements, or rather networks, which are significantly different to old social movements and organisations. Like-minded individuals meet each other on the Internet and create virtual communities with their own dynamics, which cannot be properly understood if the effect of language and ideology is not taken into account.

Regardless of the topical relevance of the issue, an independent, interdisciplinary team of experts is needed who can monitor, identify, and analyse developments in the areas of racism, radicalisation, and extremism in a sustained manner. This should be done from a broader perspective than just security, and with due regard for international theory formation. The results should be widely distributed and translated into activities aimed at awareness-raising and prevention in every sector of society, especially in education and among those who work with young people, as they are particularly susceptible to radicalisation, via the Internet or otherwise. It should include academic research into the effects and dynamics of ideology and language and their relationship with social interaction and violence. Comparative research, both historical and contemporary, is essential here too. History has shown that cases of genocide, regardless of any differences in their nature, extent or background, have always been preceded by long periods of time in which feelings of hostility and hatred were stoked against social groups. History never repeats itself exactly and this sequence may not be part of a predictable pattern, but one thing is certain – we are well and truly in a period in which feelings of hostility and hatred are building up.

As many cases of Islamophobic discrimination are not simply based on religion, and because it is usually not possible to distinguish what roles religion and ethno-cultural origin play in them, it is perhaps better, in the light of international developments, to talk of ethno-religious discrimination.[329] This means that Islamophobic discrimination is not just based on religion, but also on race – in the Netherlands, discrimination is formulated in this way in legislation and by the judiciary, with the definition of race being extended to include ethnic or national origin. The anti-discrimination organisations that record discri-

minatory statements should therefore include Islamophobia as a type of discrimination in their recording systems. This would give recognition to the multi-layered nature of this type of discrimination. Islamophobia as a reason for discrimination for recording purposes is comparable to that of anti-Semitism, which relates to both religion and origin.[330] To qualify as Islamophobic, of course, there has to be some reference, whether direct or indirect, to Islam or Muslims in the offending statement. If not, then it will be recorded as a simple case of discrimination on the basis of origin, so this category should certainly be retained. A detailed debate on where the demarcation line between the categories should lie is still needed, but such a debate would be useful and relevant.

It is not enough for politicians to respond to the development and growth of an Islamophobic ideology by being accommodating, denying, looking the other way, depoliticising, or hoping that things will improve, as they currently often do – instead, they should seek to uphold important democratic values like equality, tolerance, diversity, anti-discrimination, freedom, and responsibility. Politicians will have to give a fresh impetus to their position as role models. The core values of democracy and the rule of law and their unbreakable link should be emphasised time and again, but of course, this will have to be done in a way that is tailored to the modern age – as Heijne suggests, by generating a new trust in the rule of law, with a focus on identifiability, proximity, and dialogue. The political and social response in Norway to a merciless, Islamophobic, and anti-democratic act of terror was to emphasise the above values and to expressly state the intention of continuing down the road of diversity, equal rights and the constructive resolution of social problems. This response deserves deep respect, and is one that should be emulated.

In the Netherlands, too, it is important to put extra effort into finding constructive solutions to social problems: the disadvantages that many people from immigrant backgrounds still have to face, the unequal position of men and women, social segregation, the alienation and dislocation of young people in particular, and, last but not least, discrimination and racism. A more thorough understanding of how the mechanism of racism structures social inequality and exclusion, and how it works, is needed across society. In recent years, 'racism' has too often been reduced to a dismissive reproach in the political and ideological debate between opponents. The frequently-heard accusation, "if we say anything negative about foreigners we are immediately classified as racists", has itself helped to turn the phenomenon into a taboo. As far as insight into racism as a social mechanism is concerned, I believe it is something that is long overdue. The tendency to stigmatise and to be prejudiced is universal, embedded in patterns of evolution, and it is precisely because of this that awareness and knowledge of these processes, which can have such far-reaching social consequences, are so important. They require sustained efforts on the part of society across all its sectors.

There should be a greater focus in the public arena on what Islam means to Muslims themselves, and on the identities that citizens with an immigrant background consider to be important to them. More attention should be paid to the diversity and internal differences between immigrant communities, and more efforts should be made at countering the habit of lumping them all into one category. Members of minority groups should be regarded primarily as compatriots and fellow citizens. A policy of inclusion should be given the highest priority.

The police and the judiciary should be able to deploy greater resources for apprehending and bringing perpetrators of violence against mosques to justice. Where necessary, mosques, like other places of worship, should be able to ask the government for help with their security. It is important that youths seeking to leave the road to radicalisation and extremism are helped to do so by the government and society, as it is that the parents and other significant people in the lives of the young people in question are given support when faced with the radicalisation of their children. Internet extremism should also be tackled online using projects that provide counter-arguments and information, prevent radicalisation, and encourage deradicalisation.

If anything has become clear ten years after the terrorist attacks against the WTC in New York, then it is the extent to which Islamist extremism, Islamophobia, and the war on terror have maintained a stranglehold over each other in the past decade, holding the world to hostage, mostly at the expense of ordinary citizens. It is time to break the spiral of hatred and violence.

In a sense, the people in various Arab countries have already started the process. They not only deserve our support, but also a clear understanding of what is driving them: a desire to bring an end to oppression and repression by dictatorial regimes and the terror of extremists, resistance to the sacrificing of their interests to the war on terror, and a wish to release creative, democratic energy with a view to having a humane society.

# NOTES

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266. 'PVV-lijsttrekkers Provinciale Staten bekend', de Volkskrant 10 January 2011.
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281. 'Mensenrechten en Gelijke behandeling', in: Dutch Equal Treatment Commission, Jaarverslag 2010, pp. 77-80, http://www.cgb.nl/StippWebdll/Resources/Handlers/DownloadBestand.ashx?id=480.
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283. Dutch Equal Treatment Commission, Jaarverslag 2010, p. 22.
284. A. Terlouw, Gelijkheid en diversiteit in de multiculturele samenleving, pp. 183-186.
285. Statement by VVD, PVV, CDA in their Support Agreement, Appendix I, p. 20, 30 July 2010.
286. http://pvv.nl/index.php/component/content/article/36-geert-wilders/4617-speech-geert-wilders-in-berlijn-3-september-2011.html.
287. PVV Verkiezingsprogramma 2010-2015, pp. 13-15.
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289. This period used to be five years in the past. This provision is particularly disadvantageous to partners, especially women, who wish to divorce. As the situations that occurred were often of a harrowing nature, especially where domestic violence was involved (if a wife left her husband, she lost her residency status), the period was later lowered to three years.
290. A similar provision in Denmark led to desperate situations for mixed married couples who found themselves forced to seek refuge just over the border in order to achieve their wishes of working in the country of birth of one of them.
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296. De Volkskrant 16 August 2011.
297. It is estimated that there are one hundred full-time and four hundred part-time wearers of face-covering veils in the Netherlands who will be affected by this penalty; A. Moors, Gezichtssluiers, draagsters en debatten, p. 29.
298. The notable addition 'culturally determined' in the case of domestic violence was used in the coalition and support agreement, but is not mentioned in the integration memorandum.
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312. R. Bijl, J. Boelhouwer, E. Pommer, De sociale staat van Nederland, The Hague: Netherlands Institute for Social Research 2009, pp. 125-154.
313. M. Braakman, 'Onderwijs', in: I. Boog et al. (Ed.), Monitor rassendiscriminatie 2009, pp. 75-88.
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320. G. Walz & J. Kik, 'Huisvesting en Woonomgeving', in: I. Boog et al. (Eds.), Monitor rassendiscriminatie 2009, pp. 101-115. Unless stated otherwise, the information in this section is taken from the Monitorstudie.
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323. M. Coenders & I. Boog & W. Dinsbach, 'Discriminatie-ervaringen' in: I. Boog et al. (Eds.), Monitor rassen-discriminatie 2009, pp. 53-55.
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# List of abbreviations

| | |
|---|---|
| ACLU | American Civil Liberties Union |
| AIVD | Algemene Inlichtingen- en Veiligheidsdienst (Dutch General Intelligence and Security Service) |
| AWGB | Algemene wet gelijke behandeling (Equal Treatment Act) |
| B&W | Burgemeester en Wethouders (Municipal Executive) |
| CCIF | Comité Contre l'Islamophobie en France |
| CDA | Christen Democratisch Appel ('Christian Democratic Appeal') |
| CERD | Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination |
| CGB | Commissie Gelijke Behandeling (Dutch Equal Treatment Commission) |
| DNA | De Nieuwe Amsterdammer (publication) |
| ECHR | European Convention on Human Rights |
| ECRI | European Commission against Racism and Intolerance |
| EU | European Union |
| ICCPR | International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights |
| ICERD | International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination |
| ILO | International Labour Organization |
| LECD | Landelijk Expertise Centrum Discriminatie ('National centre of expertise on discrimination') |
| LJN | Landelijk Jurisprudentie Nummer (unique code given to every court ruling published in the Netherlands) |
| MDA | Meldpunt Discriminatie Amsterdam (Complaints Bureau for Discrimination in Amsterdam) |
| MDI | Meldpunt Discriminatie Internet (Dutch Complaints Bureau for Discrimination on the Internet) |
| MDTB | Met de Dieren Tegen de Beesten ('For Animals, Against Beasts') |
| NA | Nationale Alliantie ('National Alliance') |
| NJN | Nationale Jeugd Nederland ('National Youth Netherlands') |
| NNP | Nieuwe Nationale Partij ('New National Party') |
| NSA | Nationaal-Socialistische Aktie ('National Socialist Action') |
| NSDAP | Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei |
| NVB | Nationalistische Volks Beweging ('National People's Party') |
| NVU | Nederlandse Volks-Unie ('Dutch People's Union') |
| OM | Openbaar Ministerie (Public Prosecutions Department) |
| PVV | Partij voor de Vrijheid ('Party for Freedom') |
| RB | Rechtbank (Court) |
| SCP | Sociaal Cultureel Planbureau (Netherlands Institute for Social Research) |
| SGP | Staatkundig Gereformeerde Partij ('Reformed Political Party') |
| SIOE | Stop Islamisation of Europe |
| TK | Tweede Kamer (Dutch House of Representatives) |
| UN | United Nations |
| VVD | Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie ('People's Party for Freedom and Democracy') |
| WRR | Wetenschappelijke Raad voor het Regeringsbeleid (Scientific Council for Government Policy) |
| WWB | Wet werk en bijstand (Social Assistance Act) |

# About the author

Ineke van der Valk is an independant researcher specialized in racism, extremism, ethnic relations and diversity in multicultural societies. She holds degrees in Educational Studies and Ethnic Studies and a Ph-D in Discourse Studies from the University of Amsterdam. She obtained her doctorate focusing on the interplay between social sciences and discourse analysis with a comparative study of the perception of ethnic issues in the political discourse of the Netherlands and France, paying special attention to the extreme right. The title of the thesis was: Difference, Deviance, Threat. Before she worked as a senior researcher in the Research Department of the Anne Frank House, Monitor Racism & Extremism project where she studied processes of (de)radicalisation of right wing extremists, Islamic extremism and islamophobia. She also worked at the University of Amsterdam, where she participated in a joint research project with the University of Vienna on racism in European countries. She was a community worker and human rights activist in the 70-ies and 80-ies. She has published on issues relating to racism, right wing and jihadi extremism, political radicalisation, representation of ethnic issues in politics and the media, citizenship and integration, the post-war history of immigrants in the Netherlands, human rights in Morocco and intercultural education.

# About EMCEMO

This publication was written with the support of the Euro-Mediterranean Centre for Migration and Development (EMCEMO).

The Euromediterraan Centrum Migratie & Ontwikkeling ('Euro-Mediterranean Centre for Migration and Development'), which was formed in 1998, is an independent, transnational information and expertise centre that focuses on the relationship between Euro-Mediterranean migration and the social development of the regions from which immigrants originate. It also concentrates on encouraging social participation by the Moroccan diaspora in the countries where they have settled. The emphasis of their activities lies on reaching and involving the population in the country of origin and the immigrants in Europe, and on promoting closer ties between them.

## *Mission*

On the basis of respect for differences and a positive appreciation for diversity, EMCEMO seeks to create a world in which citizens – especially in the Netherlands and Morocco – regardless of their religious, cultural and political background, their gender or sexual orientation, have equal opportunities for political and social participation.

## *Objectives*

In relation to the Netherlands and Europe:

1. To improve the social position of the Moroccan diaspora in the Netherlands, in the fields of education, employment and political participation.
2. To encourage immigrants in Western countries to be socially active and to work for the community.
3. To promote the harmonious co-existence of different population groups and to counter discrimination and racism.
4. To prevent and fight all forms of extremism, religious and otherwise.

## *In relation to Morocco:*

5. To contribute to the economic, social, political and cultural development of southern Mediterranean countries, especially Morocco.
6. To give real meaning to the concept of transnational citizenship, based on the idea that Moroccan and other immigrants living in Europe can play a part as intermediaries and active participants in the development of democracy and the creation of a civil society. They can fulfil a unique bridging function between North and South.

## *Operations*

- Develops projects.
- Provides information and advice, both solicited and unsolicited.
- Develops and encourages working partnerships and networks.
- Encourages the formation of opinions and dialogue by organising debates.

The organisation attaches much importance to working with others in order to benefit from each other's strengths and to resolve conflicts. For that reason, EMCEMO works with social organisations such as trade unions, political parties, local government, women's organisations, the police, religious organisations of Muslims, Jews, and Christians, homosexual organisations, human rights and immigrant organisations, and citizens in the North and South.

**SINCE 11 SEPTEMBER 2001** – and especially since the murder of Theo van Gogh – Muslims and Islam have frequently been unfavourably portrayed at the heart of public debate. Manifestations of Islamophobia can be found on the Internet, in comments by the PVV, and in acts of violence committed against mosques. Dutch anti-discrimination policies are coming under pressure now that this ideology has forced its way to the centre of the political stage. How do negative connotations about Muslims come about? Where are the acts of violence taking place? Is the Netherlands the front line in the 'clash of civilisations', as has been claimed by politicians, opinion formers and others in the international arena? Or is it all about an exclusion mechanism? The author states that shifts in the political climate can only be fully understood if racism, ideology, and language are involved in the analysis. Her research for *Islamophobia and Discrimination* consisted of a study of relevant literature, an analysis of documents, and the gathering of data on the various methods people use to express their views.

**Ineke van der Valk is a researcher with a broad background in the social sciences and discourse studies, and who specialises in ethnic diversity, racism and extremism.**

*This book is about an issue that is very important for the Netherlands but about which remarkably little has been investigated or written. It offers an overview of theory formation about Islamophobia that is as thorough as it is accessible, and an overview of the actual situation in the Netherlands that is as up to date as it is complete.*

— Frank Bovenkerk, FORUM Frank J. Buijs Chair of Radicalisation Studies, IMES/University of Amsterdam

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