Summary

Muslims in the Netherlands

This report on Muslims in the Netherlands (Moslim in Nederland 2012) is concerned with the way in which Muslim groups in the Netherlands experience and practise their religion. What is the impact on the practising and expression of their faith for Muslim immigrants to a secular society such as the Netherlands or for those born to Muslim immigrants in the Netherlands? The central question addressed in this study is how the different Muslim groups in the Netherlands experience their religion and whether (and to what extent) there is evidence of religious changes within the various groups. Does their relationship with their religion change depending on the length of time they have lived in the Netherlands and whether or not their children grow up in the Netherlands?

According to the most recent estimate by Statistics Netherlands (CBS), there are around 825,000 Muslims living in the Netherlands (CBS 2009). A key characteristic of Muslims in the Netherlands is that, almost without exception, they have a migrant background: either they themselves or their parents were not born in the Netherlands. They originate from countries where the Islamic faith plays a central role in the life of society and now find themselves living in a relatively secular environment. The vast majority of Muslims in the Netherlands are of Turkish or Moroccan origin, and both groups are a central focus in this study. There are also a number of smaller Muslim groups in the Netherlands, originating from Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran and Somalia, and this study also explores the way in which these four groups experience and practise their religion. Together, these six groups make up an estimated 80% of the Muslim population in the Netherlands. Muslims from countries such as Surinam, Indonesia and the former Yugoslavia, as well as the small group of native Dutch Muslims (estimated at 13,000) are left out of consideration in this study due to a lack of research data.

Earlier Dutch research on and among Muslims

We attempt in this report to present an impression of recent research among the Muslim population in the Netherlands. There has been a sharp increase in the amount of research on this topic since the start of this century, ranging from small-scale qualitative studies to large-scale survey research. The emphasis in earlier research (before the turn of the century) lay heavily on the organisational aspects of Islam in the Netherlands, such as the development of religious organisations and mosques and differences in the degree of involvement of governments from the countries of origin. For example, the Turkish government is much more involved in the organisation of mosques in the Netherlands than the Moroccan authorities. In more recent research, the emphasis has switched to how Muslims in the Netherlands experience and practise their religion.
Although many results are already available, the existing research also has limitations. Much of it is based on specific subgroups, and respondents are regularly recruited through religious organisations and mosques. Although most researchers do not themselves generalise their findings to the entire Muslim population, a lack of representative data means there is a great temptation to extrapolate trends and processes found to the broader population. The vast bulk of recent research targets younger people, primarily second-generation migrants of Moroccan origin. However, the first generation of Moroccan migrants still constitute half of all Muslims living in the Netherlands. Moreover, in addition to groups of Turkish and Moroccan origin there are also many other ethnic groups with a high proportion of Muslims. A growing number of studies has also been focusing in recent years on radicalisation tendencies among Muslims in the Netherlands in a bid to gain a clear understanding of the extent to which the Netherlands provides a fertile breeding ground for Salafism.

The empirical research described in this report focuses on the Dutch Muslim population as a whole, not on these radical subgroups. That would not have been possible in any case, given the research methods used. In our literature review, however, we do discuss the existing research in this field, which to date has focused chiefly on the nature and extent of radicalisation and the motives driving it.

Some questions have thus far been inadequately answered. A relatively large amount of research is for example being carried out into the religious practices and attitudes of Muslims, but there is still uncertainty regarding the trend over time and across generations. A broad social-scientific study of Muslims in the Netherlands was published in 2004 by the Netherlands Institute for Social Research | SCP (Phalet & Ter Wal 2004). The report focused on the two biggest Muslim groups in the Netherlands, those of Turkish and Moroccan origin. One of the central conclusions in the report was that a trend towards secularisation could be observed. However, only two points in time were studied (1998 and 2002), so that any conclusions about religious change by definition had a somewhat weak empirical basis. Moreover, a large number of national and international events occurred around and especially after the second measurement moment which if anything appeared to suggest a revitalisation of the importance of Islam for at least some Muslims in immigration countries. Research since then also appears to point to something of a trend away from the notion of secularisation which dominated earlier research. In particular, recent studies have found a high degree of continuity in religious engagement (e.g. Güngör et al. 2011). As yet, however, too little large-scale research has been carried out to be able to draw any conclusions about the direction of this trend. Several studies have also posited either implicitly or explicitly that the negative climate surrounding Islam in the Netherlands (as in many other Western countries) plays a role in the degree to which Muslims are withdrawing into their own religious group, though here again there is too little empirical evidence to support firm statements.
Survey data on Muslims in the Netherlands

Time has since moved on, and more recent (national) survey data have been gathered among various Muslim groups in the Netherlands. This enables us to provide better answers to questions about differences between Muslim groups and also about religious changes. Based on quantitative material, in this study we describe the significance of Islam for Muslims in the Netherlands and discuss the trends that can be identified in religious experience and participation. To do this, as far as possible we have brought together nationally representative survey data in this field that have been collected over the years. We used data on more than 2,600 Muslims of Turkish and Moroccan origin taken from the 2011 Survey of the Integration of Minorities (SIM), and on more than 2,700 Muslims from Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran and Somalia covered by the Survey of the Integration of New Groups (SING), collected in 2009. To pinpoint developments over time, we also used data from 1998, drawn from the precursors of the 2011 SIM study. In each of these surveys, too, large numbers of Turkish and Moroccan Muslims were interviewed using representative samples (approximately 1,000 per group in each case).

Measurements of religious participation and religious behaviour in survey research among Muslims were originally copied from research on the religious practices of Christian groups. Over the years, these measurements have become increasingly focused on Muslims and have been continually refined. Information is now available on various forms of religious practice, such as mosque attendance, praying, taking part in Ramadan and eating halal. Respondents themselves report whether and how often they observe the religious rules. We also know something about the way in which they practise their religion and about their views on observing those religious rules. There is also a lack of relevant data, however, such as information on the role of Islamic popular belief, the reading of the Koran and the belief in angels and prophets.

The empirical section of this report is followed by a reflection on the findings from two perspectives. Martijn de Koning – who has carried out a great deal of (qualitative) research on Muslim groups in the Netherlands – reflects on the findings based on his knowledge of the religious practice of Muslims, while Joep de Hart compares the findings on the religious engagement of Muslims with research findings relating to other religions.

High religious participation among Dutch Muslims of Turkish and Moroccan origin

Almost all people of Turkish and Moroccan origin living in the Netherlands regard themselves as Muslim (see table S.1). This does not however mean that they almost universally practise their religion. A considerable proportion of self-identified Muslims never or almost never visit the mosque (to attend a religious gathering) and say they never or almost never pray. On the other hand, 40% visit the mosque every week. By way of comparison, 16% of the Dutch population report that they attend a church or religious service on a more or less regular basis (Bernts et al. 2007). Older men attend most often, but members of the second generation and well-educated Muslims of Turkish and Moroccan origin also visit the mosque regularly. It is estimated that there are 242 Turkish and 179 Moroccan mosques in the Netherlands (Van Oudenhoven et al. 2008). As is well-known,
women attend the mosque less often than men, but on the other hand they report more often than men that they pray five times a day. Just as characterising oneself as a Muslim, participation in Ramadan and eating halal are very widespread among Muslims in the Netherlands of Turkish and Moroccan origin.

There is a difference between Turkish and Moroccan-origin Muslims in their religious behaviour. Those of Moroccan origin display a substantially higher degree of religious behaviour than their Turkish-origin counterparts, while Moroccan-origin women also wear the headscarf more often than Muslim women of Turkish origin.

Table S.1
Religious practice and religious attitudes among Muslims of Turkish, Moroccan, Afghan, Iraqi, Iranian and Somali origin, 2009 and 2011 (in percentages)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Turkish</th>
<th>Moroccan</th>
<th>Afghan</th>
<th>Iraqi</th>
<th>Iranian</th>
<th>Somali</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>regards self as Muslim</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>visits mosque at least once a week</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>prays five times every day</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>participates all days during Ramadan</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eats halal every day</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wears headscarf (women)</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘My religion is an important part of who I am.’ (agree)</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘It’s wrong for a daughter to marry someone from a different religion.’ (agree)</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Muslims must live according to the rules of Islam.’ (agree)</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* This is the proportion of Muslims in the population as a whole; the other indicators in the table relate exclusively to Muslims.

Source: SCP (SIM’11; SING’09)

Religion is important for Muslims of Turkish and Moroccan origin
Religion plays a very important role in the lives of many Muslims: they identify strongly with their religion. A majority also believe that the rules of Islam must be observed and that their children should marry a Muslim partner. These opinions are once again held more strongly by Muslims of Moroccan origin than by their Turkish-origin counterparts. It is very likely that some of the difference in religious perceptions between Muslims of Turkish and Moroccan origin has its origins in differences in the position accorded to Islam in society; whereas Islam is the state religion in Morocco and church and state are very closely related, these two estates have traditionally been very segregated in Turkey.
Wide difference in religious engagement between refugee groups

Dutch Muslims of Somali origin exhibit the highest degree of religious participation of the four smaller Muslim groups in the Netherlands, and by some margin. They visit the mosque most often, pray the most, women frequently wear the headscarf and a large majority participate in Ramadan. Given the relatively small number of Somalis in the Netherlands (a fraction of the Turkish and Moroccan-origin population groups) – and the correspondingly lower number of Somali mosques – it is remarkable that their mosque attendance is at the same level as in the other groups. It is also apparent from their religious views that Islam plays a pivotal role in the lives of virtually all Somali Dutch citizens. In this respect, they most closely resemble Muslims of Moroccan origin on all the dimensions of religion that we studied. Muslims of Iranian origin participate by far the least on all fronts. They are also the least religious in their views on the role of their faith. Those of Afghan and Iraqi origin occupy an intermediate position; their religious participation is substantially lower than that of Muslims of Somali, Turkish and Moroccan origin, but their identification with their religion is relatively strong.

Selective migration processes go some way to explaining the lower religious participation by the majority of refugee groups compared with Muslims of Turkish and Moroccan origin. Migrants from Iran, for example, are to some extent an elite group (the less religious, better-educated Iranians migrated). In addition, a proportion of the group fled their country of origin precisely for religious reasons. Another possible explanation could lie in the smaller influence of the ethnic community because the refugee groups are much smaller and less geographically concentrated than migrants of Turkish and Moroccan origin. The lower mosque attendance could also be connected to the relative lack of mosques specific to their own ethnic group. However, no figures are available on the number of mosques among these groups in the Netherlands.

Well-educated Muslims of Moroccan and Somali origin are consciously engaged with their religion

For most groups the maxim applies that the better educated people are, the less strong their religious affiliation is. Muslims of Turkish origin with a higher education qualification, for example, participate substantially less and observe the rules less strictly than their compatriots who are less well educated. The exception to this maxim are well-educated Muslims of Moroccan and Somali origin; some of this group of (young) well-educated Muslims in the Netherlands engage with their religion in a very conscious way. They seek out a lot of information about Islam on the Internet, talk a lot about their religion, wear the headscarf as a sign of that Muslim identity and are more often dissatisfied with the social climate for Muslims in the Netherlands. If we look at mosque attendance by higher and lower-educated Dutch Muslims of Turkish and Moroccan origin, it is striking that until 2004 the better-educated members of these groups visited the mosque less often than their lower-educated counterparts; since 2004, however, this difference has disappeared and those with high and low education levels visit the mosque with equal frequency.
Observing religious rules remains important for second generation
Among second generation Moroccan Muslims 63% prays five times a day. This percentage is higher among the first generation (83%). The number of Turkish Muslims that pray five times a day is considerably lower: 10% of the second generation pray five times a day compared with 35% of the first generation. There is little difference between the generations when it comes to fasting and eating halal: both are strongly observed by both generations.
Women from the first generation do wear the headscarf more often: 58% of Muslim women of Turkish origin and 79% of those of Moroccan origin, compared with 20% and 38%, respectively, among second-generation Muslim women. The first generation are stricter in their religious views, though the differences between the generations are relatively small. Religious identification is also high in the second generation, and more so among those of Moroccan than of Turkish origin. Among the refugee groups, the second generation is still too small to make any statements in this regard.

No change in the proportion who regard themselves as Muslim
Virtually all Dutch citizens of Turkish and Moroccan origin regard themselves as Muslim: 94% of those of Turkish origin and 97% of the Moroccan-origin group held this view in 2011. These figures remained remarkably stable between 1998 and 2011, at no time falling below 90%. In terms of ‘religious self-classification’, therefore, there is no question of secularisation. It is still unusual for Dutch citizens of Turkish and Moroccan origin to describe themselves as ‘not religious’, and this applies to virtually the same degree for the first and second generations.

Mosque attendance no longer declining
Although virtually all Dutch citizens of Turkish and Moroccan origin describe themselves as Muslim, there are wide differences in the degree of religious participation. Attending religious gatherings in the mosque is one indicator of religiosity. Between 1998 and 2011, mosque attendance initially declined slightly across the entire population, but after stabilising in 2004 the number of visits to the mosque by Muslims increased again slightly, so that by 2011 Muslims were attending the mosque just as often on average as in 1998. If the trend is broken down into subgroups, an increase in mosque attendance becomes visible among second-generation Moroccan – and to a lesser extent second-generation Turkish – Muslims. Where 9% of second-generation Muslims of Moroccan origin and 23% of the Turkish second generation visited the mosque weekly in 1998, in 2011 this held for a third of both groups. This is a marked increase, especially among the Moroccan second generation. This increase is not due to the rise in the average age of the second generation. The proportion of second-generation Muslims of Turkish origin who never visit the mosque also increased between 1998 and 2011. In other words, there is growing diversity in religious behaviour within this group. This does not apply for the Moroccan second generation. Mosque attendance in the first generation, after initially falling, has recently increased again.
The average increase in mosque attendance by the second generation has led to a reduction in the differences between generations. In terms of mosque attendance, therefore, there appears to be little evidence of a decline in religiosity either over time or between generations.

Marrying within the faith remains important for Dutch Muslims
The attitudes of Dutch Muslims of Turkish and Moroccan origin to marrying someone within their religious group and to attending a Muslim faith school showed some fluctuations between 1998 and 2011, but no clear trend can be discerned. Marrying within their own religious group remains extremely important for many Muslims. By contrast, only a small minority regard it as important that their children attend a Muslim faith school. This may be due in part to the limited number of Islamic schools in the Netherlands, so that many Muslims do not regard attending such a school as a realistic possibility.

Different categories of Muslims
Based on the different forms of religious behaviour, several categories of Muslims can be identified (see table S.2). First, there is a group of strictly practising Muslims; they participate to the full in all aspects of religious behaviour: praying daily, eating halal, participating on all days during Ramadan. This group is most commonly found among Muslims of Moroccan and Somali origin. This group can be further divided into a subgroup who also frequently visit the mosque and a subgroup who do not. The first subgroup is largest among Muslim men of Turkish, Moroccan and Somali origin (accounting for 51%, 58% and 46%, respectively). The second subgroup – those who participate fully but do not visit the mosque – consists partly of women, for whom the religious rules do not make mosque attendance mandatory. This subgroup also contains Muslim men; some of these are from refugee groups, but a quarter of Muslim men of Moroccan origin also fall into this category. A principal reason for these men not visiting the mosque appears to be that they are unable to combine it with working. Another factor which may play a role, especially in the smaller Muslim groups, is that they do not live near a mosque. The group of ‘practising’ Muslims not only exhibit a high degree of religious participation, but also a strong sense of religious identification. Faith plays an important role in their lives. The women in this group frequently wear the headscarf. Strictly practising Muslims more often belong to the first generation, are older and have a lower education level.
Table S.2
Distribution of Muslims of Turkish, Moroccan, Afghan, Iraqi, Iranian and Somali origin across the profiles of religious practice, 2009 and 2011 (in percentages)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Turkish</th>
<th>Moroccan</th>
<th>Afghan</th>
<th>Iraqi</th>
<th>Iranian</th>
<th>Somali</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Practising Muslims</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practising Muslims in private life</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslims who only follow the dietary rules</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-practising Muslims</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: scp (sim’11; sing’09)

A second clearly identifiable group are those who follow the Islamic dietary rules (eating halal and participating in Ramadan), but who do not take part in the ritual religious practices: they do not pray, do not go to the mosque and virtually none of the women wear the headscarf. Despite this, the religious identification of Muslims in this group is relatively high. This category is relatively common among those of Turkish origin (approximately 20%) as well as among Muslims from refugee groups. Roughly 10% of Muslims of Moroccan origin fit into this category.

Finally, there is a group of non-practising Muslims, mainly found within the refugee groups: although they call themselves Muslims, they do not practise the religion (no praying, no mosque attendance, no Ramadan, no eating halal, no headscarf). This group is far and away the largest among Muslims of Iranian origin, though there is also a sizeable non-practising group (almost 20%) among Muslims of Turkish origin. By contrast, non-practising Muslims of Moroccan origin are rare. It is notable that a substantial proportion of these non-practising Muslims still attach importance to their religion, although their religious identification is lower than that of practising Muslims. Non-practising Muslims are the highest educated and most often employed of all Muslim groups studied here.

Practising Muslims more traditional in their views and more focused on own group
Practising Muslims are more conservative in their views on women’s emancipation and homosexuality than Muslims who follow only the dietary rules and non-practising Muslims. This is in fact a general finding in research on religion: the more ‘orthodox’ members of any religion are more conservative in their views on homosexuality and the position of women than those who are less religious or non-religious. Opinions on homosexuality are relatively negative across the board among Muslims, including those who do not practise. Clear differences can again be observed on the social front. Practising Muslims are much more embedded in their own ethnic community than non-practising Muslims and Muslims who follow only the dietary rules; they socialise much more
with friends and neighbours from their own ethnic group. This does not however mean that they have fewer contacts with the native Dutch population than the other categories of Muslims.

**Religious identification high in second generation**

People of Turkish or Moroccan origin are primarily seen as Muslims in the Netherlands, especially in recent years, and therefore as an exception in the secular Dutch society. Their religious identity is very prominent in the perceptions of the native Dutch majority, and is in fact also found to be very important for Turkish and Moroccan Muslims themselves, playing a central role in the self-image of many believers. The importance of this religious engagement does not diminish when migrants have spent longer in the Netherlands, and the second generation identify with their religion almost as much as the first generation. There is thus virtually no decline in the importance of religious identification as people spend longer in the Netherlands. On the other hand, migrants do generally start to feel more Dutch as their period of residence in the Netherlands increases. This is a relatively gradual process in all groups, taking place over many years. In addition, second-generation Turkish and Moroccan migrants feel more Dutch than the first generation, whether they have been in the Netherlands for a short or longer period.

The less religious someone is, the more Dutch they feel

Muslims in the Turkish and Moroccan group who identify more strongly with their religion also feel more Turkish/Moroccan and less Dutch. Conversely, Muslims who identify less with their religion feel more Dutch. This relationship is weaker in the refugee groups. There thus appears to be a stronger relationship in the Turkish and Moroccan group between religion and identifying with the country of origin. Although there are differences in religious involvement between people who identify themselves as Dutch to a greater or lesser extent, these differences are relatively minor. It therefore seems likely that religion will not lose much of its importance for Muslims in the near term, even if they begin to see themselves more as Dutch. If later generations identify less and less with the country of origin and at the same time attach a great deal of importance to their religion, however, it is possible that Islam will become increasingly separated from the country of origin. On the other hand, it is becoming ever easier for migrants and their children to maintain transnational ties, making complete separation from the country of origin unlikely. Whether or not this will lead in time to a sort of ‘Dutch Islam’ or more likely to an international Muslim community which is distinct from the individual countries of origin of migrants and their descendants, is a question that cannot be answered at this point in time.

**Muslims do not experience any more discrimination than non-Muslims**

A high proportion of migrants of Turkish and Moroccan origin (63% and 80%, respectively) feel the Dutch are too negative in their attitudes towards Islam. Around half the members of the refugee groups share that opinion. Muslims might therefore be expected
to feel that they are discriminated against more than non-Muslims in these groups, but this is found not to be the case for those of Turkish and Moroccan origin: the small group of non-Muslims experience just as much discrimination as the Muslims. In the refugee groups, Muslims actually experience discrimination less often than non-Muslims. Muslims also do not feel any less accepted in Dutch society than non-Muslims from these groups. Unlike skin colour, religious affiliation is not externally visible. This study therefore also looked at whether people who are visibly Islamic, and specifically women wearing the headscarf, experience more discrimination than female Muslims who do not dress in this way. This was found not to be the case; wearing the headscarf is not associated with experiencing more discrimination or less acceptance. In some cases (ranging from 15% of Muslims of Afghan origin to 29% of Muslims of Turkish origin), Muslims do however ascribe the discrimination they experience to their religion.

Among both Muslims and non-Muslims, there is a sizeable group who believe that in general non-western immigrants are often subject to discrimination in the Netherlands (ranging from 15% of the Somali to 28% of the Turkish group believe discrimination (very) often takes place). The percentage that feels personally discriminated against is considerably smaller (between 5% and 11% of these groups feel they are often or very often subjected to discrimination).

Little or no association between experienced discrimination and heightened religious identification

Do Muslims react to discrimination by identifying more strongly with their Muslim faith, as it were seeking refuge in their religion? For Dutch Muslims of Turkish and Moroccan origin, no correlation is found between experiencing discrimination and increased religiosity; experiencing discrimination thus appears not to lead to a withdrawal into the religious group. In the refugee groups, by contrast, there is a weak association between discrimination and religious identification: the more discrimination members of these groups experience, the more strongly they identify themselves as Muslim. In this study it is not possible to ascertain in which direction the association operates, i.e. whether discrimination leads to an increase in religiosity or whether strongly religious Muslims more often feel they are victims of discrimination.

The social context of religion

In this study we have seen that the social context is important for the way in which Muslims experience and practise their faith. It is often asserted that Islam is distinct from other religions because of its heavy emphasis on the social ties formed by its followers, and the associated codes of conduct (see e.g. Phalet & Ter Wal 2004). This may explain why the religious prescripts are so avidly observed: it fits within the social character of the Islamic faith. Moreover, Muslims practise their religion primarily within their own ethnic groups, for example almost exclusively visiting mosques used by their own ethnic group. We observed that Muslims who are more embedded in their own ethnic group display a higher degree of religious behaviour. This applies both for living in a neighbourhood with
a high proportion of members of the same ethnic group and for maintaining friendly contacts with members of that group. Having a mosque in the neighbourhood moreover prompts Muslim women of Turkish and Moroccan origin, in particular, to visit the mosque more often.

Religion and integration
In this report we have looked at the religiosity of Muslims in the Netherlands, with the central focus being on how Muslims practise their faith in the Netherlands. Yet there is no escaping the fact that there is a fierce public debate about the relationship between religion and integration into Dutch society. Our study shows that the regularly propounded view that integration and religion (Islam) do not go together needs to be put into some perspective. It depends on how integration is defined. The importance of religion does not diminish among the better-educated, especially those of Moroccan and Somali origin. Integration in terms of education level attained is thus not accompanied by a decline in religious fervour. Second-generation Moroccan migrants, who are better integrated than the first generation in all kinds of areas (language, education, etc.), also identify themselves strongly with the Muslim faith and visit the mosque with increasing frequency. These well-educated people were born in the Netherlands, have a good command of the Dutch language and often play an active part in Dutch society. Moreover, no association is found between degree of religiosity and engaging in social ties with the native population: Muslims who are religiously active do not interact less with the native population than Muslims who are not religiously active.

At the same time, Muslims who attach more importance to their religion also feel more strongly connected with their country of origin and less so with the Netherlands. They also more often stay focused on their own ethnic group and are more conservative in their views on the position of women and homosexuals. Like orthodox followers of other religions, Muslim women are less active on the labour market.

What trends are likely in the future?
The presence of Islam in Western Europe, including in the Netherlands, is a relatively recent phenomenon, developing over the last 40 to 50 years. This is very different from the situation in other parts of the world where large Muslim minorities live. Muslims have for example lived in the United States for much longer than this; a sizeable proportion of the Muslim population in the US are African-Americans. In some Eastern European countries, Muslims have been part of the native population for centuries and Islam has become completely institutionalised within society (see Berger 2011). The situation in Western European countries is completely different. Muslims are generally migrants to these countries who arrived at some point in the past in order to work in industry. They originate from countries where Islam is the state religion and have ended up in a relatively secular setting where their religion is not interwoven in the host society. History has shown that for some religious groups – such as Jews and some Protestant groups in the United States – migration has in some cases resulted in fairly isolated religious communi-
ties which have preserved their own (religious) context. For other groups of migrants, religion has steadily lost its meaning over time and from generation to generation. This latter point does not apply for Muslim migrants in the Netherlands. A key aspect of our findings is the high degree of religious affiliation reported among Muslim groups in the Netherlands, especially compared with other religious groups (mainly Christian). Religion plays an important role in the life of almost every Muslim in the Netherlands. There is also a good deal of diversity, especially in the way Muslims express their faith. Muslims of Moroccan and Somali origin most often follow the rules of their religion, and a majority in both groups are strictly practising Muslims. The situation is very different for Muslims of Turkish origin and Muslims from the other refugee groups. 38% of those of Turkish origin follow only the dietary rules or do not practise their religion at all; this applies for 40%, 47% and 60%, respectively, of Muslims of Afghan, Iraqi and Iranian origin (the percentages are substantially lower for Muslims of Moroccan and Somali origin, at 14% and 15%, respectively).

In the Netherlands of the 1950s, Catholics and Calvinist protestants went to church twice on Sunday, attended schools that represented their own faith and married within their own religion. With the exception of a small orthodox group, that situation has changed greatly. Compared with other countries, many residents of the Netherlands are not religious and church attendance is low. What will happen with Dutch Muslims in the future in this regard? We have seen that the dominant trend towards secularisation identified in the 2004 report on Muslims in the Netherlands (Moslim in Nederland) is not continuing – at least as measured by mosque attendance, which has actually increased since 2004 among the second generation. Unfortunately, we have little information on other indicators of religious behaviour and attitudes to point to developments over time. We do however see clearly that the identification with the Islamic faith is as high as ever, including among the second generation. There has been a much more marked decline in that identification among the new generations of Dutch Protestants and Catholics in recent decades. Islam continues to be important for the identity of Dutch Muslims, and remains an important guiding principle in life, including for non-practising Muslims. This is evident among other things from the undiminished percentage of Muslims who marry a partner from their own faith (and from their own ethnic group). All in all, therefore, both over time and across generations, we find little support for the secularisation hypothesis. It is unlikely that Islam will lose its key role in shaping the identity of Turkish and Moroccan Muslims in the near future.

On the other hand, there is clear evidence of diversity within the Muslim community. Sunnis, shi’ites and alevis and Muslims from different countries of origin practise their religion in different ways. Several findings appear to point to growing diversity within the Dutch Muslim community. For example, the proportion of Turkish migrants who attend the mosque weekly has increased, while at the same time there are more Muslims who never go to the mosque. There is also a distinct group of Muslims who adhere only to the Islamic dietary rules, and also a group who do not practise their religion at all (but who still regard themselves as Muslim), while at the same time there is a group who practise to
the full. Other research has also shown that there are groups of (mainly Moroccan) young people in society who have increasingly immersed themselves in Islam. They place more emphasis on the rules of Islam, pray and fast more often and have become stricter in their behaviour (Entzinger & Dourleijn 2008; Korf et al. 2007). This is reflected in our study in the high religious participation by a large part of the Moroccan-origin second generation, and the same applies for their identification with their religion.

There are thus also groups of what we have termed ‘non-practising Muslims’ who engage very little if at all with their religion. There are grounds for wondering whether being Muslim is used by this non-practising group as a sort of cultural identity label, rather in the way that secular Jews use the Jewish faith. Time will tell whether Islam is becoming a form of symbolic identity for this group (Gans 1994). The fact that many Muslims who do not practise their religion (still) consider it to be important, appears to suggest that there is currently little sign of a purely symbolic religious identity, except perhaps among the Iranian Muslim group.

To what extent diversity is also increasing in the way in which people express their religion falls outside the scope of this study. Whether a more individual Islam will for example emerge, shaped by Muslims themselves, cannot be confirmed on the basis of our study and would require further research. We have shown in this study that religion is and remains important for many Muslims, but that there is also a great deal of diversity in the way different groups of Muslims in the Netherlands experience and practise their religion.