Original Article

Mysterious multiculturalism: The risks of using model-based indices for making meaningful comparisons

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Abstract   In this article, we discuss key problems of model-based indices and their indicators used by the students of cross-national differences in the field of immigration, integration and citizenship policies. Model-based indices aggregate scores on a variety of indicators. We scrutinize the risks of aggregation by looking closely at the measurement of multiculturalism in the Netherlands. We do so through a critical analysis of the measurement of multicultural policies provided by the Multicultural Policy Index and the corresponding indicators used in the Indicators for Citizenship Rights for Immigrants for the Netherlands since the 1980s. Our findings demonstrate that problems lie not in faulty scoring of individual indicators, but with the aggregation of those scores as measurements of a larger model. Most indicators more or less adequately score for policy developments in the Netherlands, but can hardly be considered to indicate multiculturalism. As we show, a wide variety of indicators, scoring policies in differing domains, cannot be assumed to measure the same coherent, but abstract, entity: 'Multicultural Policies', let alone a 'Multicultural Model'.
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In recent years, a discussion has developed about the validity and reliability of indices used to measure cross-national differences in policy areas concerning immigration, immigrant integration and access to citizenship, mostly, but not exclusively, in the European context (Koopmans *et al*, 2005, 2012; Banting and Kymlicka, 2006; Helbling,

2008; Howard, 2009; Goodman, 2010). Explanations of cross-national variations in terms of national models have become very popular since the 1990s: France as an open and universalist culture versus the 'multicultural' cultures of Britain and the Netherlands, versus Germany's relatively 'closed' approach and so on (Brubaker, 1992; Favell, 1998; Koopmans *et al*, 2005). In this article, we analyse the limits of using model-based indices in comparative research, for both empirical and methodological reasons. Our question is whether model-based indices actually measure coherent conceptions of citizenship and integration – the model – when aggregating scores on policy indicators and, thereby, supply evidence for statements about cross-national policy differences.

Assuming that variations are differences across models necessitates a crucial methodological procedure: aggregation. The main risk here is tautology: researchers using model-based indices already assume a model to be relevant before having established that this way of conceptualizing policy differences is meaningful. The fact that there are cross-national differences has all too quickly led to the assumption that these differences can (or should) be measured as differences between national models. Subsequently, indices are taken to prove that models are retreating, extending or resilient, while the aggregation of indicators may itself be unwarranted.

To be sure, our discussion only pertains to one category of policy indices. We see three kinds of indices. First, there are indices that aggregate policy indicators into nationally distinguished frameworks c.q. models (MPI in Banting and Kymlicka, 2006, 2011, 2013; ICRI in Koopmans *et al*, 2005; CPI in Howard, 2009; CIVIX in Goodman, 2010). In this article, we will limit ourselves to this category. We do not discuss indices that measure policies in terms of 'stringency' (the forthcoming IMPALA), 'inclusiveness' (ICRI in Koopmans *et al*, 2012; Vink and Bauböck, 2013), 'restrictiveness' (LOI in Waldrauch and Hofinger, 1997) or 'opportunities to participate' (MIPEX), all without distinguishing between ideal-typically different, national philosophies of citizenship. Finally, we do not deal with indices that are aimed at measuring policy outcomes (Helbling, 2008; Janoski, 2010).

We focus on two indices that belong to the first category, namely, the MPI and the ICRI, and look at their scoring of the Dutch case. The measurements of Dutch policy efforts as performed by the MPI and the ICRI present an ideal case to investigate the hypothesis that policy differences are variations across models. In the case of the Netherlands, both MPI and ICRI claim that it is the measurement of a multicultural model that is at stake.

Multiculturalism is a highly contested object (Vertovec and Wessendorf, 2009). As contention over multiculturalism intensified, the question if, where and to what extent it is actually appropriate to assume it tends to be glossed over by the more pronounced effort to show where it persists, fails and succeeds. Much of the discussion over models centres on the retreat from multiculturalism, itself embedded in normative arguments (see also Banting and Kymlicka, 2013). The Netherlands serves as a country that many scholars, often on the basis of indices, have identified as the multiculturalist polity *par excellence* (Koopmans *et al*, 2005;

Sniderman and Hagendoorn, 2007). If the assumption of a strongly embedded model should hold up anywhere, it should be in the case of Dutch multiculturalism.

Anticipating our conclusions, we find that the policies captured by various indicators cannot be understood as indicative of a multicultural model in the Netherlands. What is more, we show that the main source of misinterpretation stems from the aggregation of scores and *not* from incorrect measurements of individual indicators *per se*. Aggregation assumes that the indicators are proof of – in this case – multiculturalism, but the assumption that the various indicators consistently measure one and the same policy philosophy falters upon closer inspection.

What are the Indices of Multiculturalism Meant to Measure?

We focus on two indices that have been very influential in the discussions about multiculturalism, namely, the MPI and the ICRI. Let us start with the work of Koopmans *et al* (2005). The authors construct an axis of cultural difference that 'concerns *differential* rights based on group membership' (p. 51). In order to distinguish between positive and negative recognition of cultural difference, Koopmans *et al* (2005, p. 10) conceptualize segregationism. Segregationism is concerned with indefinite exclusion, often with an eye to repatriation and typical for the 'guest worker' approach (idem). However, targeting cultural groups as part of *integration policy* – that is, beyond the status of the 'guest' – is also interpreted as segregationism. From this perspective, segregationism may include both the treatment of others as inassimilable guests *and* not-yet-integrated minorities. Multiculturalism, then, follows from a culturally pluralist definition of the nation: '[the] multicultural position is that such a privileging of the majority culture cannot be *normatively justified*, and therefore measures are necessary to help minority groups to preserve their language, culture, and religion and to combat disadvantages they suffer on the basis of their cultural or religious identity' (Koopmans *et al*, 2005, p. 51, emphasis added).

Even though Koopmans *et al* (2005) have claimed that they seek to conceive 'of citizenship not in the static categories of typological "models" or "regimes" but as a conceptual (and political) space in which […] policies can be situated and developments can be traced over time' (p. 9), this research strategy clearly fits in the literature of national models: the design of regime space still assumes that countries vary across a stable and coherent space of possible models. A country becomes more like one model by becoming less like another. This mutual exclusivity of model types still involves the *aggregation* of scores into a single position in the model space. The account of multicultural Netherlands takes the form of a structure of values, norms and beliefs that cohere around one single ideational core (see Bertossi, 2011, 2012).

Banting and Kymlicka (2006, 2011, 2013) state that multiculturalism 'covers a wide range of policies. what they have in common is that they go beyond the protection of the basic civil and political rights guaranteed to all individuals in

a liberal-democratic state, to also extend some level of *public recognition and support for minorities* to express their distinct identities and practices' (pp. 6–7, emphasis added). The value attached to multiculturalism in this perspective is positive – the objective of the MPI is precisely to prove the resilience of multicultural policies behind the image of 'a pivot towards a common model of civic integration', and that 'a form of multicultural integration remains a live option for Western democracies, both in the New World and in Europe' (p. 14).

Banting and Kymlicka emphasize that no country has a 'truly coherent incorporation regime' and that actual immigrant integration policy outputs can be the result of 'institutions created for other purposes' (Freeman, 2004, pp. 946–948, quoted in Banting and Kymlicka, 2013, p. 5). This claim is not an accident. It is central to their argument because they argue that what the literature views as two apparent mutually exclusive normative frameworks such as multiculturalism and civic integration can in fact co-exist and even be mutually supportive. In this strategy, the example of the Netherlands finds another utility. It is not the illustration of the failure of ill-based multicultural integration policies and the justification of *why* civic integration has begun to replace multiculturalism (as one can make out from Koopmans *et al*, 2005). It is instead an account of the persistence of multiculturalism despite of or, at times, conducive to the recent turn towards civic integration politics.

Methodology and Selection of Indicators

Let us turn in more detail to both indices and the indicators we propose to evaluate. The MPI consists of eight indicators that measure the extension of multiculturalism. Each indicator is scored between 0 (no multicultural policy), 0.5 (partial) and 1 (clear policy). We will go through each of the indicators one by one. Table 1 shows the indicators and their scores for the Netherlands.

Table 1: The indicators of the MPI and their scores for the Netherlands

	1980	*2000*	*2010*
Constitutional, legislative or parliamentary affirmation of multiculturalism	1	1	0
Multiculturalism in the field of education	0	0	0
The inclusion of ethnic representation/sensitivity in the mandate of public media or media licensing	0	1	0.5
Exemptions from dress codes	0	0	0.5
Allowing dual citizenship	1	1	0.5
Affirmative action for disadvantaged immigrant groups	0	1	0
The funding of bilingual education or mother-tongue instruction	0	1	0
The funding of ethnic group organizations to support cultural activities	0.5	0.5	0.5
Total scores	2.5	5.5	2

The ICRI does not contain a definite set of indicators on which the measurement of multiculturalism directly depends. The ICRI measures policies concerning cultural difference (a subset called ICRI_CD). In the conceptual design of the ICRI, high scores on the indicators for cultural difference may express multiculturalism *or* segregationism. Only in relation to another set of indicators concerning individual equality (called ICRI_IE) do high scores on cultural difference amount to a measurement of multiculturalism. We therefore take a second best approach: we pair ICRI-indicators to those of the MPI in order to select those indicators that should, at least, be indicative of multicultural policy extension or retrenchment. Even though ICRI measures 'multiculturalism' on the basis of combined scores on indicators for cultural difference and individual equality, we will evaluate specifically those ICRI-indicators that are clearly meant to capture the extent to which policies 'retain, or even stimulate, diversity and allow their subjects to follow a variety of cultural patterns' (Koopmans *et al*, 2005, p. 10). This also allows us to systematically compare the way in which both indices score crucial components of multiculturalism.

The ICRI_CD concerned with cultural difference contains a total of 23 indicators, three of which are clearly concerned with measuring negative recognition of cultural difference.[1] We disregard these as we want to test multiculturalism specifically.

Table 2: The MPI-indicators next to their counterparts in the ICRI_CD

MPI	ICRI
Constitutional, legislative or parliamentary affirmation of multiculturalism	None
Multiculturalism in the field of education	Number of Islamic schools (partly) financed by the state Share of costs of Islamic schools funded by the state Islamic religious classes in state schools
The inclusion of ethnic representation/sensitivity in the mandate of public media or media licensing	Programmes in immigrants language in public broadcasting Islamic religious programmes in public broadcasting
Exemptions from dress codes	Right of female teachers to wear headscarf Rights of female students to wear headscarf
Allowing dual citizenship	Allowance of dual citizenship
Affirmative action for disadvantaged immigrant groups	Affirmative action in the public sector
The funding of bilingual education or mother-tongue instruction	Mother-tongue teaching in public schools
The funding of ethnic group organizations to support cultural activities	Immigrant consultative bodies (local) Immigrant consultative bodies (national) Muslim consultative bodies

Table 3: The scores for the selected ICRI-indicators with their scores for the Netherlands

	1980	1990	2002	2008
Number of Islamic schools (partly) financed by the state	−1	x	1	1
Share of costs of Islamic schools funded by the state	−1	1	1	1
Islamic religious classes in state schools	−1	0	0	0
Programmes in immigrants language in public broadcasting	1	1	0	0
Islamic religious programmes in public broadcasting	−1	1	1	1
Right of female teachers to wear headscarf	x	x	1	1
Rights of female students to wear headscarf	1	1	1	1
Allowance of dual citizenship	−1	−1	0	0
Affirmative action in the public sector	−1	1	1	1
Mother-tongue teaching in public schools	1	1	0	−1
Immigrant consultative bodies (local)	1	1	0.5	0.5
Immigrant consultative bodies (national)	1	1	1	1
Muslim consultative bodies	−1	−1	−1	1

Note: Scores range from −1 (no policy) to 1 (clear policy). 'x' indicates missing values.

Thirteen of the remaining 20 indicators can be reasonably well paired to MPI-indicators. Table 2 shows them next to their MPI counterpart:

We omit the remaining seven indicators. These are all concerned with one or another form of allowance for religious communities, particularly Muslims.[2] They would fit most clearly with the 'exemption of dress codes' measured by the MPI. We leave them out of the picture, because our discussion of 'rights to wear a headscarf' is equally applicable to these indicators of religious allowances.

Table 3 shows the scores of the selected indicators from the ICRI_CD. In the remainder of the text, we will use a short notation for scores. For example, the allowance of dual citizenship in the ICRI: (−1/−1/0/0). We will now assess each indicator in the order of the eight indicators used by the MPI.

Formal Affirmation of Multiculturalism

Multiculturalism as such is hard to find in any Dutch constitutional or legal documentation, regardless of central, regional or municipal levels. When we look more closely at the way in which governments and parliaments responded to the advent of a Dutch multicultural society, we see something quite different from an affirmation of multiculturalism. The initial response by the government – its Minorities' Policy white paper (Dutch Parliament [TweedeKamer] (1982–1983)) – explicitly warned against and set out to avoid the creation of parallel arrangements on the basis of cultural or ethnic difference (see also Vink, 2007; Scholten, 2011, p. 133; Van Reekum and Duyvendak, 2012).

The minorities approach targeted state-devised population categories: Turks, Moroccans, Surinamese, Antilleans, Moluccans, gypsies and other all-too-mobile denizens called *woonwagenbewoners*[3], foreign workers and refugees. The aim of the Minorities' Policy was to prevent specific target groups from getting caught in a dynamic of socio-economic stagnation and ethnic segregation, which many in government feared would aggravate tensions in society and threaten public order (Rath, 1991, p. 159). Groups were not identified with the aim of accommodating their cultural particularities. From the 1990s onwards, the focus on minority groups was more and more abandoned for an emphasis on individual cultivation of citizenship, culminating in the most recent white paper (Ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken en Koninkrijksrelaties, 2011) that renounces any categorical policy frameworks (see also Schinkel, 2007; Scholten, 2011; Duyvendak, 2011; Uitermark, 2012). Insofar as groups are identified to this day, they are so on the basis of social problems presumed to be prevalent among them: radicalization, street crime, anti-gay sentiments and rejection towards mainstream society (De Zwart, 2012).

In parliament, the phrase 'integration while retaining identity' was – at least for a while – studiously reiterated as parties sought to depoliticize the electorally unpredictable issue of migration and cultural otherness. From the early 1990s onwards, depoliticization has been increasingly abandoned (Fermin, 1997; Uitermark, 2012) and calls for assimilation to 'Dutch culture' have emerged from left to right (Duyvendak, 2011; Van Reekum, 2012).

In summary, multiculturalism was never affirmed by Dutch government, nor was it widely or whole-heartedly pronounced in parliament. The governmental aim of integration policies has never been to accommodate, celebrate or preserve distinct practices and preferences of cultural minorities. Nor were ministries, departments or advisory organizations involved set up for that purpose. Much has changed in the politics of integration and diversity after 2002, but these changes cannot – as is implied in the MPI (1/1/0) – be measured as a declining political or governmental support for multiculturalism as there was no affirmation of multiculturalism to begin with. The ICRI contains no comparable indicator.

Multiculturalism in the School Curriculum

It remains somewhat vague how the 'inclusion of multiculturalism in school curricula' as measured by the MPI relates to its more general definition. Does intercultural education 'provide some additional form of public recognition, support or accommodation for ethno-cultural minorities to maintain and express their distinct identities and practices'? Where lies the difference between learning about the diverse world pupils live in and specific recognitions for the sake of ethno-cultural minorities? Banting and Kymlicka are correct in their assessment of curricular developments. In

general, there has been a shift from the notion that attention to immigrant's cultural heritage would precipitate integration, to an ever more pronounced idea that such attention only hampers integration (Rijkschroeff *et al*, 2005, pp. 424–425). However, attention to cultural differences has always been part of a long-term goal to integrate immigrant pupils into the national fold. Moreover, curricular adjustments were made for *all* pupils and, thus, do not constitute accommodations for specific groups.

The ICRI focuses on Islamic schooling. In its definite form, Article 23 of the constitution (established in 1917) grants associations of parents the right to establish and run schools fully funded by government. What the ICRI reads as the extension of cultural group rights for Islamic citizens (schools: −1/#/1/1 and funding: −1/1/1/1) is entirely part of a 'pillarization reflex' (Vink, 2007). Moreover, the indicators create an overestimation of extension. Both indicators measure changing effects, not changing policies. In this way, it seems like there was no multiculturalism in 1980, whereas there was after that date. However, the legal framework was already in place long before 1980.

Does Article 23 or its consequences constitute multicultural policy? The policy was, first of all, not put in place with that in mind. It was not a response to immigration. Moreover, establishing Islamic schools was actively resisted and obstructed by municipal governments (Sunier, 2010; Driessen and Merry, 2006; Rath *et al*, 1997a, b; Teunissen, 1990). Once inexperienced Muslim leaders got the hang of navigating government obstructionism, they did manage to establish some 45 schools. The fact that these schools exist is neither indicative of policy change, nor indicative of an intentional, let alone accommodative effort to help growing Islamic communities.

How about Islamic classes in state schools measured by the ICRI (−1/0/0/0)? The Primary Education Act stipulates that schools are compelled to provide religious and/or philosophical teaching when parents desire such education for their children. The policy is partly conceived to accommodate parents' cultural and religious preferences, but it is not always justified along multicultural lines. School administrators and politicians will defend the policy as a way of preventing separate, presumably more sectarian Islamic instruction (see Van Beek, 2010). The fact that the policy is not only about religious teaching and was not primarily set up to accommodate new immigrant groups does not take away that it partly institutionalizes cultural group rights *for their own sake*.

Summarizing, the MPI measures an inclusion of multiculturalism into school curricula for all pupils, which makes it rather hard to judge whether this uneven and declining practice qualified as multiculturalism in the sense of extending cultural group rights. The ICRI incorrectly measures a policy change, while also inviting the idea that this policy change was due to an accommodative response by government. Neither is the case. However, the ICRI is right to measure the Islamic classes in state-funded schools as the moderate existence of multicultural policy, even though the policy was not predominantly intended or justified along a multicultural logic.

Ethnic Representation and Sensitivity in Public Media Mandates

In the domain of media, the MPI and the ICRI use quite different indicators and come up with different measurements. Where the MPI is geared to group rights for minorities as part of government mandates (0/1/0.5), the ICRI is more concerned with the actual presence of minority language and Islamic content in the media landscape (respectively, 1/1/0/0 and −1/1/1/1).

The network of state-funded institutions actually governing and producing media broadcasting (television and radio) has considerable autonomy in relation to the central government. Directive policy making, multicultural or otherwise, simply does not exist in the Dutch media domain. However, the fact that a governmental design of the system did not take place in itself does not mean that the system did not accommodate ethnic and religious broadcasting.

Such programming existed long before central government drafted their minorities media policy in 1983. The goal had been to provide information about the migrants' country of origin, often in the mother tongue, in light of remigration. After 1983, the existing programming was refocused to better integrate ethnic minorities, stimulate Dutch language use and familiarity with Dutch society, more proportionally reflect a multi-ethnic society, and dampen animosities between natives and newcomers (Bovenkerk-Teerink, 1994; Bink, 2006). Although there is a consistent concern over a lack of diversity and visibility among policymakers to this day (for instance Plasterk, 2008), government policy has been increasingly aimed at making 'multi-cultural programming' a task of the existing broadcast associations as separate broadcasting is thought to hamper integration. Subsequently, the focus of policy-making has shifted from minority integration to diversity in media and content (Hamersveld and Bína, 2008; Leurdijk, 2008).

By 1993, a Muslim (NMO) and a Hindu (OHM) broadcast association were set up. The establishment of these associations, just like their schools, took place within the existing legal framework. Both NMO and OHM broadcast at least partly in languages other than Dutch, as does the local Frisian broadcaster. As the ICRI indicates, the Muslim broadcaster NMO has been up and running since the early nineties, providing Islamic programming.

In various respects, the Dutch media landscape bears some marks of multi-culturalism: ethnic groups have organized, gained entry, obtained facilities, built associations, broadcast in their own languages and provided, for instance, Islamic content. To some extent, cultural group rights have *de facto* materialized, while reasons other than recognition and accommodation were often most important in the policy process. The existing associational set-up has enabled but not intended ethnic representation: it recognizes civic associations, not cultural groups. These marks of multiculturalism were not the effect of focused, government policy. Therefore, although some *de facto* materialization of multicultural rights has (briefly) taken place, these rights are not indicative, nor the product of a broader justificatory logic.

Exemptions from Dress Codes[4]

In the MPI, policies related to exemptions on dress codes are perceived as a sign of multiculturalism (0/0/0.5). The ICRI focuses on the Muslim population, measuring a string of allowances for religious people and Muslims in particular. Here, we focus on the rights of teachers (#/#/1/1) and students (1/1/1/1) to wear headscarves. Koopmans *et al* (2012, p. 1210) consider the right to wear headscarves as a 'cultural and religious right that applies to the immigrant because of his or her belonging to a particular ethnic or religious group'.

Both indices seem to assume – without much justification – that exemptions from dress codes have to be considered as special cultural *group* rights beyond *individual* rights. By doing so, the authors give a very specific interpretation of religious rights and the state–church relations in the Netherlands. We do not have space here to summarize the history of state-church relations in the Netherlands and the nature of 'religious rights', but since 1798, the Dutch Constitution contains equality provisions for religious expression, and in 1815 it stated that any person in the Dutch territory is entitled to *public* religious practice. This has again been explicated in 1983 with the declaration of Article 6.[5] Any person in the Netherlands can rely on his right of freedom of religion to invoke his rights for exemptions from dress codes in accordance with his religious beliefs. This is an individual right that is conserved and protected ever since the eighteenth century.

The fact that a Muslim woman has the right to wear a headscarf is her individual right founded on religious rights that are valid for *all* Dutch citizens. Exemptions from dress codes are not 'special rights' implemented for minorities to maintain their distinctive identities. At least in the Netherlands, there have never been policies developed that grant 'special group rights' for dress codes.

The ICRI measurements are even more puzzling as they seem to imply that native Dutch people who invoke their religious rights make use of their traditional individual rights, whereas immigrant teachers and students who invoke the *same* religious rights are said to call upon multicultural rights, presumably because their religious expression, particularly when Islamic, are deemed culturally divergent. When scholars interpret this traditional individual human right as a 'differential group right', they *de facto* adhere to an essentialist view of culture and 'produce' multicultural policies by looking at immigrants primarily as group members instead of individual citizens of a country.

None of the other allowances and provisions measured in the ICRI (see footnote 3 for a list) are special accommodations for groups, nor were they justified as ways to preserve or stimulate difference. All of them exist because Dutch citizens have, for a long time already, extensive religious rights. The fact that some of them only slowly materialized for Muslims indicates the exact opposite of a multiculturalist environment.

Allowance of Dual Nationality

The MPI treats the allowance of dual nationality as a sign of multiculturalism (1/1/0.5) and the ICRI implies at least the same (−1/−1/0/0). However, how did the policies on dual nationality come about and is there a relation with support for ethnic groups to maintain their distinct identities?

The government replaced the law of 1892 in 1984. One of the main changes was that the new nationality law became gender-neutral. Subsequently, Dutch women married to foreign men could now also pass their nationality over to their children (Groenendijk *et al*, 2005). However, this new nationality law still contained the *afstands-eis*, which means one is expected to denounce one's original nationality. Newcomers who can, are mandated to do so in order to be eligible for naturalization. However, when this cannot reasonably be required, newcomers are exempted, as is the case of Morocco, Tunisia and Greece.[6]

In particular, left-wing parties were fierce proponents of this exemption. Their premise was that integration could only follow from access to full citizenship. As full participation was only deemed possible with Dutch nationality, allowance of dual nationality would be necessary for those migrants that could not denounce their original nationality (Dutch Parliament [TweedeKamer] (1990/1991), see also Groenendijk *et al*, 2005). Not the maintenance of cultural identity was the premise of this policy, but the successful integration of a specific category of immigrants in the new society. This policy was never meant as an instrument to maintain distinctive identities of immigrants.

Since the mid-1990s, criticism arose regarding the new nationality law. Because of changed views, Dutch citizenship is now no longer perceived as an instrument for promoting social integration, but as the final stage of a successful integration process (see also Schinkel, 2007; Van Houdt *et al*, 2011). The dominant idea is that Dutch citizenship has to be 'earned' (Vermeulen, 2007). In sum, the allowance of dual nationality only indicates a pragmatic acceptance of dual allegiances with respect to a very specific subset of immigrants and has nothing to do with any enthusiasm for ethnic groups maintaining distinct identities.

Affirmative Action for Disadvantaged Immigrant Groups

The indicator in the MPI focuses on specific policy measures such as quota and preferential hiring, although a clear link with the general definition seems to be missing. Why would affirmative action be considered a form of 'public recognition, support or accommodation for ethno-cultural minorities to maintain and express their distinct identities and practices', when the goal of affirmative action is most often equal labour market opportunities for everybody? The ICRI also assumes that affirmative action is a put in place for the *positive* affirmation of cultural group identities.

In response to increasing public and political contestation about the growing unemployment and crime rates among the immigrant minorities, the emphasis of the immigrant policy was placed even more on combating high unemployment and realizing a situation of full employment among minorities (Ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken en Koninkrijkesrelaties, 1990, p. 28). Minorities were targeted because socio-economic stagnation and associated social problems were thought to be prevalent among them. The government did not emulate the core of the Canadian Employment Equality Act, as was recommended by the Scientific Council for Government Policy, but instead introduced in 1994 the Act on the Promotion of Minority Groups in the Labour Market (WBEAA). Indeed, as acknowledged by Banting and Kymlicka (2011), there were no formal quotas as part of this law. As this Act did not help to decrease unemployment rates sufficiently, another law, the 'Wet Samen' was introduced in 1998. The purpose of this law was to combat unemployment among ethnic minorities and was also aimed at achieving proportional participation of all citizens in enterprises (Jonkers, 2003). This law lapsed as well, in 2004.

On paper, the government has been committed to affirmative action in the public sector with the intention to reduce unemployment among ethnic minorities. The government's premise has also been to act as an example for the private sector. Although concrete affirmative action policy has only rather sporadically been developed, there are targets for the number of immigrants in public functions. This ambition is exactly what is measured in the ICRI between 1980 and 2008 ($-1/1/1/1$). However, Dutch affirmative action is not an initiative 'that goes beyond non-discriminatory protection' or seeks to 'affirm cultural identities'. It is precisely an instrument to combat discrimination of certain target populations Dutch Parliament [TweedeKamer] (1989/1990). The aim of this temporary group-specific policy is to make group difference irrelevant. There is no evidence for the idea that that affirmative action in Dutch labour market policies is motivated by protecting and celebrating the special qualities minorities might bring to the labour market (as might perhaps happen in other countries in the context of 'diversity' policies or within corporate human resource management).

The Funding of Bilingual Education or Mother-Tongue Instruction

Both indices assume that state-funded bilingual education or mother-tongue instruction is a matter of cultural group rights (ICRI: $1/1/0/-1$; MPI: $0/1/0$). However, the crucial question is whether this instruction was motivated by an intention to create cultural group rights. As already mentioned, the rationale for mother-tongue instruction was never clearly established (Lucassen and Köbben, 1992, p. 152). Three kinds of objectives were in play: integration, remigration and acculturation (Tinnemans, 1994, p. 211). That is, in case government should fund mother-tongue instruction at all – there has always been strong opposition – it should do so because

it facilitates socio-economic mobility, remigration or assimilation to Dutch language use. Although mother-tongue instruction might be motivated elsewhere – Canada for instance – in relation to genuine cultural concerns regarding minority groups and their language rights, such concerns never effectively entered into the ongoing contention between proponents and opponents of the Native Language and Culture policy in the Netherlands (later relabelled the Education in Living Allochthonous Languages, see also Fermin, 1997).

Throughout the past 30 years, there has been constant disagreement about whether mother-tongue instruction augmented or undermined acquisition of Dutch (Lucassen and Köbben, 1992, p. 147). Proponents cited research showing that bilingual children perform better in both languages. To the extent that separate language courses were given, they were there to catalyse Dutch language skills. The policy was not put in place to accommodate, preserve or celebrate divergent language use among the target groups of integration policy.

As for actual instruction practice, separate language classes were set up in primary schools in line with the 1983 minorities policy, but no more than 5 hours a week. Language immersion was never an available policy option, nor was it ever funded. Instructors were often poorly trained and curricula remained under-developed (Tinnemans, 1994; Demirbas, 1990). As Banting and Kymlicka note, mother-tongue instruction 'became marginalized in the curriculum in the course of time, ultimately vanishing altogether' (citing Rijkschroeff *et al*, 2005, p. 425). One of the main reasons for its demise was the increasing contention that separate language courses, in fact, hampered socio-cultural adaptation and solidified ethnic boundaries.

To summarize, what the MPI and the ICRI read as an initial institutionalization of group rights to culturally distinct language education and subsequent demise of such rights amounts to a weakly designed, ambivalently justified and marginally practiced attempt to catalyse acquisition of Dutch among certain ethnic target groups through limited curricular space for mother-tongue instruction.

The Funding of Ethnic Group Organizations to Support Cultural Activities

Banting and Kymlicka conclude that state support for ethnic groups is limited as 'the funding may be restricted to supporting the delivery of integration and settlement programs' resulting in a constant score (0.5/0.5/0.5). The ICRI focuses on local, national and Islamic consultative bodies that, thus, need not support cultural activities at all.

In the Dutch case, this policy is embedded in a pre-existing policy framework; no new policy has been developed to fund ethnic group organizations for cultural activities. Financial support for ethnic group organizations does not stem from

integration policies, but from the constitution that provides all Dutch citizens the right to ask for financial funding for associational activities (Rijkschroeff and Duyvendak, 2006, p. 39). The funding of ethnic organizations is therefore not a form of public recognition of their cultural specificity, as all kind of associations, ranging from soccer clubs, the Boy Scouts to the YMCA may and do ask for public support. As in the case of broadcast associations, there is a legacy of civic associational recognition, which should not be conflated with multiculturalism.

As far as support for ethnic organizations more specifically developed, this support was not a sign of multiculturalism either. In the Minorities' Policy white paper (Dutch Parliament [TweedeKamer], 1982–1983), it was assumed that the forming of ethnic organizations is a condition for integration and bridging between minorities and the new society. Simultaneously, these ethnic organizations were frequently invited as representatives to deliberate with political office holders during societal tensions (Duyvendak and Scholten, 2011, pp. 340–341). This instrumental rationale – that begs for an interpretation from a 'governmentality' perspective (Schinkel and Van Houdt, 2010) – was explicitly promoted in the Ethnic Minority Policy during the 1970s and 1980s (Rijkschroeff and Duyvendak, 2006, p. 34). The consultative bodies that the ICRI measures are part of the same instrumental efforts by government to create means of contact and control.

Over the past decades, much discussion has gone into the question whether migrant organizations promote or oppose integration processes. Many municipalities confine the access to subsidies and provide them only under very strict conditions. Hence, ethnic organizations must directly contribute to the integration of their constituencies in order to receive state support (Heelsum and Penninx, 2004), and not perpetuate their own cultural or ethnic group identity, as that is not the objective of the policy.

Discussion and Conclusions

In this article, we asked the question if the indicators used in the MPI and their corresponding indicators in the ICRI actually measure multicultural policies given the definitions that multicultural policies 'go beyond the non-discriminatory protection of traditional individual rights of citizenship to also provide some additional form of public recognition, support or accommodation for ethno-cultural minorities to maintain and express their distinct identities and practices' (see www.queensu.ca/mcp/about/definitionsdata.html, viewed on 30 November 2012). We looked at how these indicators were scored for the Netherlands as the multicultural country *par excellence*. We were, however, not primarily interested in the resulting picture of the Netherlands as such, but in the question whether the indices give meaningful measurements of a model, in this case multiculturalism.

Logically, we could have four types of results:

(1) An indicator captures multiculturalism and the score regarding the Netherlands is more or less adequate.
(2) An indicator captures multiculturalism but the score regarding the Netherlands is inadequate.
(3) An indicator does not capture multiculturalism but is nonetheless adequately scored for the Netherlands.
(4) An indicator does not capture multiculturalism and the score regarding the Netherlands is inadequate.

In category 1

The following indicators do capture genuine concern in the Netherlands for cultural group representation, visibility and expression for their own sake. However, the extent and practice of these policies should not be overestimated.

- The inclusion of ethnic representation/sensitivity in the mandate of public media or media licensing (MPI)
- Programmes in immigrant language in public broadcasting (ICRI)
- Islamic religious classes in state schools (ICRI)

In category 2

- Constitutional, legislative or parliamentary affirmation of multiculturalism (MPI) is potentially an indicator of multiculturalism but the reading of Dutch political response to immigration was not adequate.

In category 3

Even though the scores are adequate, neither extension or retraction of these policies indicate anything about multiculturalism. This is either because the indicators as such do not fit very well with the general definitions…:

- Multiculturalism in the field of education (MPI)
- The three indicators on consultative bodies (ICRI)

… or because specifics of the Dutch situation show that these policy measures do not have to do with multiculturalism:

- Affirmative action for disadvantaged immigrant groups (MPI)
- Affirmative action in the public sector (ICRI)

- Exemptions from dress codes (MPI)
- Islamic religious programmes in public broadcasting (ICRI)
- Rights to wear headscarves and the other indicators of religious allowances (ICRI)
- Allowance of dual citizenship (MPI and ICRI)
- The funding of ethnic group organizations to support cultural activities (MPI)
- Mother-tongue teaching in public schools (ICRI)

In category 4

The following indicators are also inadequately scored:

- The funding of bilingual education or mother-tongue instruction (MPI)

Already in 2000, bilingual education and mother-tongue instruction was mostly abolished.

- Number of Islamic schools (partly) financed by the state (ICRI)
- Share of costs of Islamic schools funded by the state (ICRI)

The focus on practice rather than policy in these indicators suggests policy change, where there is none.

What to conclude on the basis of these results? At most, two MPI- and two ICRI-indicators can be considered indicative of 'multiculturalism' in the Netherlands, and even these few indicators are far from unequivocal as the misreading and/or multi-interpretability of the Dutch case shows. This outcome very seriously questions the 'construct validity' of both indices. We have to conclude that no less than 13 indicators (out of 17) do not accurately capture multiculturalism in the Netherlands. While only one of these indicator falls into Category 2, Categories 3 and 4 are by far the most prominent. This implies that the problem is not that individual indicators are scored badly. Instead, it means that indicators that are assumed to measure one and the same object, namely, a multicultural model, are not proof of such a model at all. Just as high scores on indicators are not proof of multiculturalism, low scores on these indicators do not show a retreat or absence of multicultural policies. Both indices – MPI and ICRI – might perhaps show a high level of interreliability, but most probably this is due to the fact that they make similar mistakes.

If indices produce such faulty measurements even in the Dutch 'most likely' case, what about other countries? What about the suggestion of an underlying coherent philosophy – 'multiculturalism' – informing these policies? Even those few policies that are partly multicultural, are not necessarily motivated by one and the same political ideology ('a deeper multiculturalism') but turn out to be far more topic- and field-specific, justified pragmatically and not in terms of abstract philosophical ideals.

To summarize, we find four recurring flaws in using model-based indices and the necessity to aggregate scores into measurements of entire policy philosophies (see also Vink, 2007; Maussen, 2012)[7]:

(1) Overlooking or misreading justifications for policies. Groups are recognized or targeted for a host of different reasons. Adding up the scores for these policies creates coherence where there need not be any.
(2) Missing the relevance of context. Apparently similar policies may be indicative of quite different regulatory and political developments.
(3) Lacking to differentiate between policy outputs and outcomes. New migrations and settlements create new outcomes for already existing policies. These changes should not be measured as indicative of policy change, even when outcomes may be similar to expectations about multicultural policy outcomes.
(4) Misrecognizing group policies. Although certain policies may, at first sight, be concerned with (cultural) groups, the actual or assumed claimant of such rights may be individuals, not groups.

In the case of the MPI, most of the confusion seems to stem from an insufficient distinction between *types* of group policies. Banting and Kymlicka misread many policies, at least in the Dutch case, as multicultural, whereas other motives unrelated to recognition of cultural difference played a role.

The problem with the ICRI is slightly different. The distinction between multiculturalism and segregationism turns out to be deeply problematic. It demands that any and all registration, identification, attribution, targeting, claiming, discrimination, recognition, preservation and celebration of cultural groups – for a host of different ideological and practical goals – need to fit somewhere on a line between segregationist exclusion from the political community and multiculturalist affirmation of plurality. This not only involves an often reality-warping reduction of complexity and context, but also the *a priori* rejection of the possibility that cultural difference is being made politically salient in ways that fit uneasily on this dimension. Where, to address a crucial conundrum, on the line between segregationism and multiculturalism should we place the targeting of state-devised ethnic target groups in order to combat inequalities in education, income and occupation? Moreover, where, for that matter, do we position the enforced assimilation to a self-proclaimed nation of highly diverse individualists in the conceptual space of Koopmans *et al* (2005)?

We hope to have shown that making the integration politics of different countries comparable cannot be achieved by assuming variation across stable and coherent models. Each policy measure presents highly idiosyncratic combinations of intentions, justifications, goals and practices. This makes integration politics *qualitatively* different across time, national contexts, policy fields and territorial scales. Our analysis has shown that assumptions of models run into key problems as aggregates of indicators are very unlikely to properly reflect why and how policies are adopted or discarded.

As Tilly (1984) has shown, comparative research is not limited to variation-finding. One alternative is making, what Tilly has called, individualizing comparisons that seek to identity what is unusual, what is particular, what is unique and what is immanent to a context through juxtaposition with other cases. The comparative analysis of integration politics lends itself very well to such comparisons. This does preclude, of course, the testing of grand, blanket statement about entire political ideologies, presumed to be reflected in a host of different policy fields. We do not see why this would be a drawback.

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Notes

1 They are: cultural requirements for naturalization; cultural requirements for family reunification; cultural requirements for granting of residence permit.
2 They are: allowance of Islamic ritual slaughtering; allowance of Islamic call to prayer; mosques with recognizable architecture; existence of Muslim cemeteries; allowance of burial without coffin; Imams in the military; Imams in prison.
3 People who live in mobile homes.
4 Originally, the MPI included the presence of Sunday-closing legislation as part of this indicator. Interestingly, Banting and Kymlicka dropped this indicator for the following reason: 'Although a number of countries were found to have provisions that allow shops to open and close on days of their choosing, it was often not clear whether such policies were a response to multiculturalism, or other – often economic – considerations'. We fully agree with this observation, but wonder why this sensitivity for a plurality of motives seems to be lacking in the case of almost all other assumed indicators: why are they so sure that the other policies are a 'response to multiculturalism'?
5 Article 6 states: 'Everyone shall have the right to profess freely his religion or belief, either individually or in community with others, without prejudice to his responsibility under the law. Rules concerning the exercise of this right other than in buildings and enclosed places may be laid down by Act of Parliament for protection of health, in the interest of traffic and to combat or prevent disorders' (see www.denederlandsegrondwet.nl/9353000/1/j9vvihlf299q0sr/vgrnbhimm5zv).
6 Dutch Nationality Act 1984, Article 9.
7 We thank the editors for helping us summarize these problem areas.

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