Beyond national identities: the discontinuous sense of identity in immigrant communities

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Abstract: In the past, the research focus on ethnic identity implied looking at national identity (a feeling of connection to a nation state) or at identification with the people of a nation state. The regional, provincial and local identities of members of immigrant communities were ignored, even though they too are based on territorial and/or social-cultural characteristics. Furthermore, these identities also shape the self-images of members of immigrant communities, and their process of integration. In this paper we will answer three research questions: (1) how strongly do members of Turkish and Moroccan communities in Flanders have a sense of the national (Belgian) identity, the regional (Flemish) identity and the local identity (of Antwerp, Ghent and Genk); (2) are (some of) these identities more strongly developed in one minority than in the other; and (3) what factors promote or inhibit the sense of these three identities among members of immigrant communities. Our results make clear that the identity pattern of both the Moroccan and the Turkish community aligns with what Groenman (1960) calls the 'discontinuous worldview'. Further we find that those from Moroccan backgrounds have a much stronger sense of Belgian and Flemish identity than do those from Turkish backgrounds. Of the four social-cultural factors we tested, two are highly important for the development of a national, regional and local identity: knowledge of Dutch and chatting with native neighbours.

Key words: identity, immigrant, integration, Belgium, Flanders.

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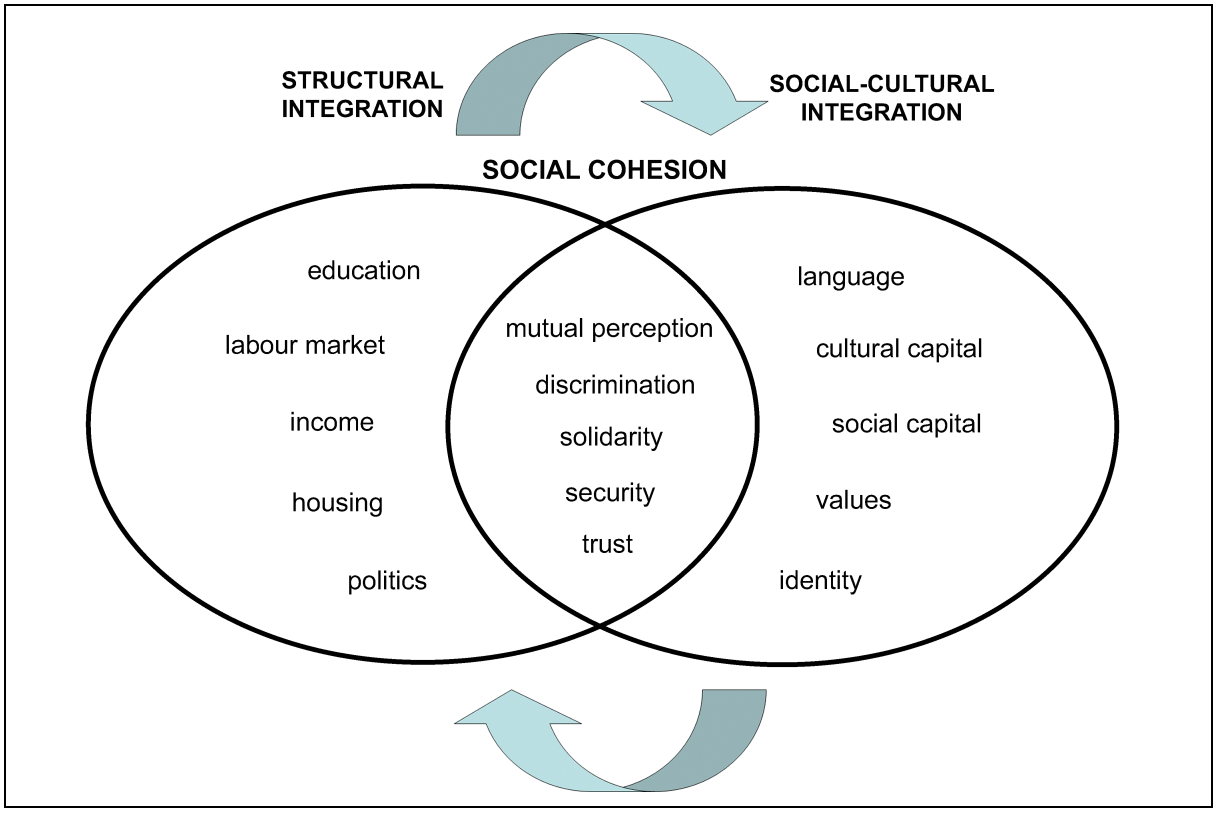
1. Introduction: identity and integration

In recent decades the concept of integration has received considerable attention in the framing of policies and research concerning immigration in Western Europe. Because of the controversies surrounding its various meanings and definitions, we have previously characterized integration as an 'essentially contested concept' (Van Craen, Vancluysen & Ackaert, 2008: 1). Essentially contested concepts unavoidably lead to disagreements about appropriate use and correct interpretation, because of their multidimensional and evaluative character. The difficulty is that the concept of integration is used in scientific research as well as in national policy-making regarding immigration, and therefore the term 'bundles analytic concepts together with normative notions or idealised projections of society, which are weighted with very different emotional and attitudinal valences in different groups and contexts' (Phalet & Swyngedouw, 2003: 779).

In the academic literature a great many authors regard the identities of immigrants or the groups with which they identify as an essential element of integration. Thus Odé (2002: 36) states that 'the degree of self-identification or ethnic identity is acknowledged as a principle component of the ethnic-cultural position of minority groups'. Heckmann (2003: 47) uses 'identificational integration' to refer to 'feelings of belonging and identification, particularly in forms of ethnic and/or national identification'. Esser (2004: 46) sees identification as one of the four types of social integration, alongside culturalization, placement and interaction. Identification says something about the mental and emotional relationship of minorities to the country they live in. According to Esser it includes feelings of loyalty, belonging, and so forth. Numerous empirical studies also include identification with the majority group or the land of settlement as an indicator of social-cultural integration (Korys, 2005; Snel, Engbersen & Leerkes, 2006; Van Craen, Vancluysen & Ackaert, 2007; Entzinger & Dourleijn, 2008), or what is known in social psychology as acculturation (Nesdale & Mak, 2000; Nesdale, 2002; Persky & Birman, 2005).

We share the opinion that it is meaningful to study the identities of members of immigrant (and indigenous) communities in order to understand the process of integration. In the conceptual framework that we have developed over the past few years to carry out research into how immigrant and indigenous groups get on together, sense of identity takes an important place (Van Craen, Vancluysen & Ackaert, 2008). It is one of the five subdimensions of social-cultural integration (see figure 1).

Figure 1: Integration and social cohesion



In our research we focus on the process of integration for members of Turkish and Moroccan immigrant communities in Belgium. Like may other researchers (see below) we have in the first instance concentrated on national identities when analyzing experienced identity: the degree to which immigrants feel Belgian and/or Turkish/Moroccan (Van Craen, Vancluysen & Ackaert, 2008). In this paper, however, we would like to ask whether this research focus is not too narrow.

Should immigrants try to connect with the sense of national identity in their country of settlement in order to integrate? In Flanders, where a large proportion of the indigenous population has a stronger sense of regional identity (Flemish) than of national identity (Belgian) this question is more than pertinent (Maddens, Beerten & Billiet, 1994; Meersseman, Billiet & Depickere, 2002). But for other countries or regions this question is no less important. The feeling of connectedness with the indigenous population can also be expressed in a regional, provincial or local identity. Some provincial and local authorities are themselves beginning to be more aware of this and attempt to advance integration and social cohesion by promoting a shared civic or provincial identity. Thus in Belgium the city of Antwerp in 2004 introduced a new logo with the slogan *'t Stad is van iedereen* (the City is everybody's). The explicit aim of the new logo was to contribute to a communication strategy (including a revamping of the city newspaper, *De Antwerpenaar*) that was actively intended to promote a feeling of togetherness, an inclusive sense of "us". In 2007 the province of Limburg had the same aim when launching its *Allemaal Limburgers* campaign. A scientific analysis of these developments is clearly called for.

2. Research tradition and research questions

According to social identity theory the self-image of individuals consists of two parts: personal identity and social identity (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Personal identity relates to individual characteristics, irrespective of the groups to which the subject belongs. Social identity is that part of self-image that relates to characteristics of membership of categories such as gender, age or ethnic affiliation, and the values and emotional involvement that these bring. A sense of identity rooted in ethnic background is therefore the entirety of characteristics and of evaluative and/or affective reactions to these characteristics contained in the prototypical image of the ethnic-cultural group. Ethnic identity therefore includes both awareness of membership of an ethnic-cultural group and an evaluative and/or affective element that emphasizes a certain feeling of connectedness with that group. Social identity theory teaches us that individuals have a whole series of 'identity markers' beyond their ethnic-cultural background. In this regard, a number of authors have pointed to heightened awareness of religious identity among certain immigrant groups (Fadil, 2002; Kanmaz, 2003; Phalet, 2003).

Theorization and research regarding immigrants' sense of ethnic identity has traditionally assumed that people (have to) choose between various ethnic identities. Classic assimilation theory promoted the idea that identification with the original ethnic-cultural group would fade over time, to be replaced by stronger identification with the country of settlement (Gordon, 1964). Central to this theoretical framework was a one-dimensional identity pattern in which stronger identification with one group was thought automatically to entail weaker identification with another group. A double ethnic identity (for instance both Belgian and Turkish) would be seen as impossible in classic assimilation theory.

But in recent decades the insight has developed that many members of immigrant communities, especially in the second generation, develop a more complex pattern of identity. For members of immigrant communities in Belgium, for instance, the question is no longer *whether* they identify themselves as Moroccan (or Turkish) or as Belgian, but *to what extent* they feel Moroccan/Turkish and to what extent Belgian (Vanbeselaere, Lagrou, Van de Sande, Snauwaert & Soenens, 2003). The view that it is possible to develop a dual ethnic identity is based on the two-dimensional identity model proposed by Hutnik (1991). This model contains four different patterns of identity: a dissociative, an integrative, a marginalized and an assimilative pattern of identification. A *dissociative* pattern of identification means that immigrants identify strongly with their own minority and only weakly with the majority population. An *integrative* pattern of identification is when immigrants strongly identify with both their own immigrant group and with the majority group. In the case of a *marginalized* pattern of identification, immigrants identify with neither group. Finally, with an *assimilative* pattern of identification there is a strong sense of identification with the indigenous majority and weak identification with the immigrant group. The following table provides a schematic overview of these patterns of identification.

Figure 2: Hutnik's identity model

		Identification with minority	
		Strong	Weak
Identification with majority population	Strong	integrative	assimilative
	Weak	dissociative	marginalized

More recently – partly as a result of events on 11 September 2001 – researchers have acquired new insights into the relationship between religious identity and the ethnic identities of immigrant communities (Fadil, 2002; Kanmaz, 2003; Peek, 2004; Sheikh, 2005; Jensen, 2008; Sheikh, 2008). In-depth interviews and informal conversations with Moroccan youths led Kanmaz (2003) to conclude that there has been a shift from an identity constructed on the basis of ethnic culture (namely being Moroccan) to one based on religion (namely being Muslim). The more central place that Islam has taken in immigrant Muslims' sense of identity is seen as a consequence both of internal dynamics within the Muslim community itself and of external, contextual factors. The internal dynamics proper to the diaspora include, among other things, a lack of religious socialization in the country of origin for second-generation members of immigrant communities, and to the abandonment of the thought of return among first-generation immigrants. An important contextual factor is that the majority population has developed a more negative image of immigrant Muslims (especially since the attacks of 11 September 2001). Kanmaz states that under the influence of these factors there has in Europe been a de-linking of Islam and the home country. European Muslims are more directed towards Europe and transcend ties to their ancestral countries. The success of mosques that are not organized on a purely ethnic-cultural basis seems to be a concrete indication of this evolution (Dassetto, 1996). According to Kanmaz, the de-linking of Islam and the countries of origin means that for a number of members of immigrant communities their shared ethnic-cultural origins are no longer central, but rather their shared religion.

Fadil (2002) also observes "a revival of Islamic identity", but in her view this development is not paired with a weakening of the original ethnic identity. In-depth interviews conducted in Antwerp with adolescent girls of Moroccan descent led the researcher to conclude that Moroccan identity was in most cases the 'primary' identity. She further found an increased sense of Islamic identity. This 'Islamic revival' is not, in Fadil's view, at the expense of Moroccan identity, the zero-sum outcome that would a one-dimensional pattern of identity would predict. Moroccan identity seems rather to be complementary to Islamic identity.

A few years ago, inspired by Hutnik's theoretical model and the qualitative research carried out by Kanmaz and Fadil, we developed a model of identity that should enable social scientists quantitatively to map the relationship between ethnic identities and the sense of religious identity (Van Craen, Vancluysen & Ackaert, 2007).

Figure 3: Ethnic-religious identity model

		Muslim identity	
		Strong	Weak
Turkish identity Moroccan identity	Strong	Complementary	Selective
	Weak	De-linked	Assimilative Marginalized

Members of immigrant communities who have a strong sense of Moroccan/Turkish identity and a strong sense of Muslim identity have a *complementary identity*. Our choice of label derives from the observation of Fadil (2002) that the Moroccan identity of adolescent girls of Moroccan descent is complementary to their Muslim identity. We speak of a *de-linked identity* when members of immigrant communities develop a strong Muslim identity, but have only a weak sense of Turkish/Moroccan identity. This label derives from the terminology applied by Kanmaz (2003), who states that in Europe a 'de-linking' is taking place between Islam and countries of origin. If members of immigrant communities have developed a strong

sense of Turkish/Moroccan identity, but have little sense of Muslim identity, we use the label *selective identity*. It is, finally, possible that some members of immigrant communities have neither much sense of a Turkish/Moroccan identity nor much sense of Muslim identity. This could mean that they have developed a *marginalized identity*, if they also fail to identify with the majority population. If their identification with the majority population is strong we can speak of an *assimilative identity*.
An exploratory quantitative investigation among Turkish and Moroccan communities in Flanders suggests that in both communities the complementary pattern of identity is by far the most important (Van Craen, Vancluysen & Ackaert, 2007). In their pure form the selective and de-linked identity patterns were found only very sporadically. For the present marginalized and assimilative patterns remain purely theoretical constructs, which are not (yet?) to be found in social reality.

Just as, in recent years, interest has grown in the relationship between religious identity and ethnic identities (Fadil, 2002; Kanmaz, 2003; Peek, 2004; Sheikh, 2005; Jensen, 2008; Sheikh, 2008), yet another angle sheds new light on the sense of identity in immigrant communities. In the past, the focus on ethnic identity implied looking at national identity (a feeling of connection to a nation state) or at identification with the people of a nation state (Nesdale, 2002; Ono, 2002; Snel, Engbersen & Leerkes, 2006; Diehl & Schnell, 2006; Zimmermann, Zimmermann & Constant, 2007). The regional, provincial and local identities of members of immigrant communities were ignored, even though they too are based on territorial and/or social-cultural characteristics. They can be based on the circumscription of a territory, specific languages or dialects, symbols such as colours and flags, and so forth. Furthermore, these identities also shape the self-images of members of immigrant communities, and their process of integration. This is made clear by, among other things, the intercultural model developed by the Dutch anthropologist Van Bekkum to map the complex world of adolescents. He distinguishes five spheres of life in which youngsters have to find their own balance between loyalties and interests. Van Bekkum states that in the fourth sphere of life local identity (for instance being an Amsterdammer), Dutch national identity, and the ethnic identity indicating a history of migration all have to be put in the balance (cited in Tjin A Djie, 2001).
In the psychological literature the idea of regional, provincial and local identities goes under the name ‘place identity’ (Lalli, 1992; Wester-Herber, 2004; Hernández et al., 2007). This concept emphasizes that identities can be grounded on the basis of the places or geographical entities where people live (Prohansky, Fabian & Karminoff, 1983). According to Lewicka (2008: 212) place identity can be understood as a ‘self-categorization in terms of place’. Bases for place identity can be different in scale: resident of neighbourhood, city, region, country, continent or even a citizen of the world.
In Belgium, there have since the early nineties been regular polls of the extent to which members of the indigenous population identify with Belgium and Flanders/Wallonia (Maddens, Beerten & Billiet, 1994; De Winter, Frognier & Billiet, 1998; Billiet, Doutrelepont & Vandekeere, 2000; Billiet, Maddens & Beerten, 2003). The revision of the constitution in 1980 and subsequent state reforms led to the creation of devolved government institutions in Flanders and Wallonia, and the Flemish government has been particularly active in promoting a Flemish identity (Maddens, Beerten & Billiet, 1994). At the present time various political parties continue to push for a greater devolution of competences to Flanders and for a stronger Flemish identity. Researchers have also grown more interested in European identity (Cinnirella, 1997; Medrano & Gutierrez, 2001; Schild, 2001). Jacobs and Maier (1998) point out that this identity is actively promoted. They distinguish three clear strategies: references to a shared culture, development of a supranational juridical structure, and the awarding of rights

that give content to a sort of European supranational citizenship. The most important boost to European identity was undoubtedly the introduction of a common currency (the euro) in 2002 (Risse, 2003).
These strategies and the campaigns by local and provincial authorities mentioned earlier are likely to have some effect on members of immigrant communities. In our attempts to gain insight into the integration process and of social cohesion in our society we therefore have to pay some attention to the way in which immigrants experience and combine local, provincial, regional, national and supranational identities. We must, in other words, find out how their 'multiple identity' is composed and what factors promote or inhibit the various identifications. In this paper we would like to contribute to such an investigation by answering three research questions: (1) how strongly do members of Turkish and Moroccan communities in Flanders have a sense of the national (Belgian) identity, the regional (Flemish) identity and the local civic identity (of Antwerp, Ghent and Genk); (2) are (some of) these identities more strongly developed in one minority than in the other ; and (3) what factors promote or inhibit the sense of these three identities among members of immigrant communities.

3. Data

The data we have analysed to answer the research questions formulated, were gathered as part of a survey about social-cultural integration and social cohesion in the cities Antwerp, Ghent and Genk (face-to-face interviews; Vancluysen, Van Craen & Ackaert, 2009). We focused on members of the Moroccan and Turkish communities, as these are the two largest non-EU immigrant communities in Belgium. At the national level and based on nationality at birth, Belgium in 2006 had a population of 249,623 people with a Moroccan background and 141,570 people with a Turkish background (Perrin, 2007: 14). Because they share a similar history of labour migration in the 1960s and 70s, followed by a process of family reunification and marriage migration (Reniers, 1999: 680), it is interesting to compare the experiences and opinions of citizens of Moroccan and Turkish descent. Our choice of Antwerp, Ghent and Genk as research locations was due to the geographical spread of these cities and the high concentration of inhabitants of Moroccan and Turkish descent. These cities are in Flanders (region) and Belgium (nation state).
We decided to interview the same number of people from each ethnic-cultural group in each city. This would give us sufficient respondents in each subcategory to make meaningful comparisons between the different ethnic-cultural groups, and to use regression analysis to calculate the effect of the variable 'city'. [2] In total the sample comprised 840 persons. The whole sample – a disproportionately stratified random sample – consisted of six partial samples: per city and per ethnic-cultural group a separate sample (representative with regards to age and gender) was made within the age category of 18 to 70 years old.
The criteria applied by the civic population services to determine ethnic-cultural background, are 'current nationality' and 'nationality at birth'.[4] In Genk the population office also filtered on '(former) nationality of parents' and 'country of birth'. For other Turkish or Moroccan-sounding names a manual check was made against data in the National Register. These additional possibilities were not available in Antwerp or Ghent.

[2] For purposes other than answering the questions addressed in this paper, a comparative sample of members of the indigenous population in Antwerp, Ghent and Genk was also interviewed. The sample was a subgroup of the entire indigenous population, consisting of respondents with a comparable frame of reference in terms of living environment. Members of the indigenous community were selected in neighbourhoods where the proportion of long-termed unemployed is higher than the urban average and where the average taxable income is lower than the urban average. Given the focus of the research questions formulated in the previous section, there is only limited occasion to refer to the indigenous comparative sample in this paper.

The fieldwork was carried out between 4 March and 22 July 2008 and produced 358 usable face-to-face interviews with individuals of Turkish descent and 260 with individuals of Moroccan descent. Respondent drop-out could have skewed the results if it was systematic in particular subcategories. A control showed that the answers of members of the Moroccan and Turkish immigrant communities had to be weighted according to gender and city. There was no need to weight the groups for age, and as there were no reliable data available it was impossible to check the spread of the variable 'level of education' for members of immigrant communities.
Respondents' sense of national, regional and local identity was measured on the basis of the following questions:

- Do you have a very strong, strong, moderate, slight or no feeling of being Belgian?
- Do you have a very strong, strong, moderate, slight or no feeling of being Flemish?
- Do you have a very strong, strong, moderate, slight or no feeling of being from Antwerp/Ghent/Genk?

We are aware that this operationalization is open to criticism. It might be pointed out that no use was made of an extensive scale to measure identifications. In the literature, however, there is no unanimity concerning the operationalization of the concept (ethnic) identity (for an overview, see Phinney, 1990; Billiet, 2004) and fine distinctions – certainly when used to calibrate abstract concepts – are difficult to apply in groups characterized by low educational attainments and low rates of literacy. For this reason we opted for a simple operationalization in which the affective aspect was central. The main issue was that the three senses of identity be measured in the same way.

4. Senses of national, regional and local identity

Which identity, then, is most strongly felt by members of immigrant communities: national (Belgian), regional (Flemish) or local (Antwerp, Ghent and Genk)? A number of indications provide grounds for three alternative hypotheses with regard to the first research question. *On the basis of the factors 'migration history' and 'official status' one might expect that Belgian identity will be by far the most strongly developed and the other two identities felt only to a far more limited extent.* For first-generation immigrants, the reference point of their hopes for the future was Belgium, not Flanders or a particular city. The recruitment flyers that the Belgian government distributed in Morocco and Turkey in the 1960s, for instance, bore headings such as 'Come and work in Belgium as a miner', 'Living and working in Belgium', and 'Information for workers going to Belgium' (Parthoens & Manço, 2005). Furthermore, Belgian nationality is the only official identity on the passports of a number of members of the immigrant community.
On the basis of the factor 'closeness' one might, however, expect local identity to be most strongly developed and Belgian identity least strongly. A Flemish sense of identity would lie somewhere in between. For this hypothesis we base ourselves on, among others, the assumption of Maddens, Beerten and Billiet (1994) that contact with bodies of a particular level of government strengthens the identity tied to that level. Members of immigrant communities (like the indigenous population) have more frequent contact with the city authorities than with the Flemish government or the federal government, and so would develop a strong local identity. Regional and local radio and television broadcasters also stimulate interest in what is closest. Since the end of the 1970s Belgium has had no national radio or television corporation, but separate Flemish and French-speaking services. There are, furthermore, a plethora of local stations. Both the regional and the local media focus primarily on reporting from their own geographical area. A sense of local and Flemish identity is presumably also encouraged by learning and using a local dialect (informally: in the social

environment) and standard Dutch (formally: in education). It is to the detriment of Belgian identity that Belgium has no single official language for the whole country. In Belgium there are three official languages and four language areas: the Dutch language area, the French language area, the bilingual Brussels Capital Region (French and Dutch) and the German language area.

We will, finally, formulate a third hypothesis, reflecting what Groenman (1960) calls the 'discontinuous worldview'. This Dutch sociologist posits that the family dwelling and its immediate environs form the centre of every individual's interaction and concern and that besides that attention is directed primarily to large collectives, namely the state. Between the immediate environment and the large collective there are, according to Groenman, 'rarified zones'. On the basis of an overview of empirical studies, Lewicka (2008: 212) reaches a comparable conclusion: local identity is high and regional identity tends to be lower than national or local identity. *Adapting this to our research questions, it would mean that the local identity of immigrant communities is strongly developed and that they also have a relatively strong sense of Belgian identity. Flemish identity, on the other hand, would barely touch members of immigrant communities.*

Table 1: Senses of national, regional and local identity

Feeling of being Belgian	**Moroccan background**	**Turkish background**	**Total**
Very strong	15,4%	3,3%	8,4%
Strong	24,3%	17,8%	20,5%
Moderate	30,8%	41,1%	36,8%
Slight	8,5%	9,5%	9,1%
None	21,1%	28,4%	25,3%
Total P < .000 (Chi-Square)	247 100%	338 100%	585 100%
Feeling of being Flemish	**Moroccan background**	**Turkish background**	**Total**
Very strong	10,6%	1,5%	5,4%
Strong	15,5%	10,2%	12,5%
Moderate	33,1%	24,0%	27,9%
Slight	12,7%	8,4%	10,2%
None	28,2%	55,9%	44,1%
Total P < .000 (Chi-Square)	245 100%	333 100%	578 100%
Feeling of being from Antw./Ghent/Genk	**Moroccan background**	**Turkish background**	**Total**
Very strong	27,9%	15,0%	20,4%
Strong	27,9%	42,4%	36,3%
Moderate	23,1%	25,1%	24,2%
Slight	6,4%	6,6%	6,5%
None	14,7%	11,0%	12,5%
Total P < .000 (Chi-Square)	251 100%	347 100%	598 100%

Table 1 makes clear that the identity pattern of both the Moroccan and the Turkish community most closely aligns with the pattern of the 'discontinuous worldview'. Of members of the Moroccan community, 56% had a (very) strong sense of being from Antwerp, Ghent or Genk. Almost 40% had a (very) strong sense of being Belgian and only 26% felt Flemish. The figures for members of the Turkish community were respectively 57%, 21% and 12%.

This pattern is most likely shaped by a number of the factors mentioned above: the place of residence as the focus for social activities and communication with the authorities, Belgium as a point of reference in the personal histories of immigrants, Belgian nationality as the only official identity, and so on. But the most remarkable thing – particularly among those with Turkish backgrounds – is the great difference between a sense of local identity and the other two identities, so that civic identity is far stronger even than Belgian identity. The explanation is probably tobe sought in a factor that has not yet been mentioned. In the public discourse of some Flemish political parties, Belgian and Flemish identity are placed over against Turkish/Moroccan identity. In this discourse, integration is seen in terms of assimilation, meaning that members of immigrant communities would have to surrender their Turkish/Moroccan nationality and identity to take on a Belgian – and for preference Flemish – identity. Some members of immigrant communities are therefore likely to regard Belgian and Flemish identities as a threat to their Turkish/Moroccan identity. Local identity is no part of this antagonistic discourse and therefore does not convey the same threat.

The party that conducts this discourse in its most extreme form is the far-right Vlaams Belang (previously known as Vlaams Blok). This party combines radical anti-immigrant positions with demands for Flemish independence (Van Craen & Swyngedouw, 2002). Besides the fact that members of immigrant communities know little about the Flemish level of government and it can therefore be regarded as a 'rarified zone' – a study carried out in 2000 among Moroccan adults in the city of Mechelen indicated that approximately 38% could name the Belgian prime minister and the mayor of Mechelen, while only 6% could name the minister-president of Flanders (Van Craen, 2000) – the electoral success of the far right in Flanders has probably also given some members of immigrant communities an aversion to Flemish identity. The massive support of the indigenous population for this discourse – at its height in 2004 Vlaams Blok was polling 24% in Flanders – has done nothing to make a Flemish identity any more attractive.[3]

With regard to our second research question, bivariate analyses suggest a significant link between the three identities measured and the ethnic-cultural background of the respondents, in the sense that members of the Moroccan community have developed stronger local, Belgian and Flemish identities than have members of the Turkish community. With regard to Belgian and Flemish identity the differences are pronounced: 40% as against 21% with a strong or very strong sense of being Belgian, and 26% as against 12% with a strong or very strong sense of being Flemish. It is also striking that many of the respondents from Turkish backgrounds explicitly state that they have "no" sense of being Flemish (56%, as against 28% from Moroccan backgrounds). The difference is less pronounced with regard to local identity: there the difference is primarily in the nuance between a strong or a very strong identity. In the following section we will apply regression analyses to investigate whether these statistical correlations remain after controlling for other variables.

5. Determinants of the three senses of identity

The hypotheses formulated above and the discussion of the descriptive analyses have brought to the fore a number of elements that might influence the three senses of identity. We will now use regression analyses systematically to test the effect of a number of social-cultural

[3] The most recent Flemish elections (2009) – which enabled a less extreme Flemish nationalist party (N-VA) to take part in government for the first time – suggest that Flanders and Flemish identity are becoming increasingly attractive for the indigenous population. The pressure of N-VA, in particular, has in recent years led the traditional political parties to move increasingly towards a Flemish discourse and Flemish policies, which is expressed in the most recent Flemish coalition pact. Our research also shows that Flanders is by no means a 'rarified zone' for the indigenous population, interviewed in the same cities as members of immigrant communities, where 66% felt strongly or very strongly Belgian and an identical percentage felt strongly or very strongly Flemish. About 58% had developed a very strong local identity.

factors on the sense of Belgian, Flemish and local identity. We will do so step by step: first testing a number of background variables, then, in turn, looking at the effect of linguistic fluency, of consumption of Dutch-language media, and of contact with members of the indigenous population, and finally examining the impact of value orientations. Social science theories from earlier studies will help us flesh out and test hypotheses.

5.1. Background variables

Ethnic-cultural background: Research in Belgium has shown that members of the Moroccan community have a stronger sense of being Belgian than do members of the Turkish community (Ackaert & Deschouwer, 1999; Van Craen, Vancluysen & Ackaert, 2008). This is due in particular to members of the Moroccan community being more fluent in the majority language and using it more frequently (see too Van Craen, Vancluysen & Ackaert, 2007). We expect that this effect will also be reflected in our analysis of a sense of Belgian identity, but particularly in the analysis of a sense of Flemish identity. As has already been indicated, Belgium has not one but several official languages (Dutch, French and German), while Flanders has only one official language (Dutch). That ethnic-cultural has an indirect effect on the sense of local identity is less to be expected, as interactions in the immediate residential environment (with members of one's own ethnic-cultural group) can also be conducted in the native tongue. For communication with local authorities, however, knowledge of Dutch is required. To make interpretation of the results easier, it is useful to know that the ethnic-cultural background variable was coded as follows: 0 = Turkish descent and 1 = Moroccan descent.

Generation: We have already mentioned that Belgium was the point of reference in the future hopes of immigrants, which might mean that first-generation immigrants deliberately chose to come to Belgium and therefore have a greater sense of Belgian identity than does the second generation. In the recruitment propaganda (and thus the plans and expectations of immigrants) there was no or hardly any mention of Flanders or of particular cities, which might have inhibited, or at the least failed to stimulate, the development of a Flemish or a civic identity among first-generation immigrants. With regard to the influence of the generation variable on a sense of Belgian identity, an alternative hypothesis is also possible. Second-generation members of immigrant communities have been socialized in Belgium from an early age, which might have stimulated a stronger sense of Belgian identity. A shared process of socialization could also have considerable influence on the sense of Flemish and local identity felt by the children of immigrants. Phalet, van Lotringen and Entzinger (2000) found for the Netherlands that second-generation members of immigrant communities felt less exclusively Turkish or Moroccan than their first-generation forebears, and were more likely to combine this identity with some sense of Dutch identity. Ono (2002) also shows a generational effect on descendants of Mexican immigrants in the United States. Third and later generations of immigrant descendants are less likely to identify themselves as 'Mexican' than second-generation immigrant descendants. In Germany, Diehl and Schnell (2006) found differences between the first and second generations in immigrant communities of Turkish descent, Yugoslav descent, and EU descent. To be clear, we should mention that the generation variable used in our analysis consists of one category of respondents not born in Belgium (immigrants properly so-called; code 1) and another category of respondents who were born in Belgium (second-generation members of immigrant communities; code 0).

Years of residence: The longer members of immigrant communities live in a place, the more they are socialized to the environment and therefore the more strongly they will feel attachment to that environment. This general hypothesis derives from classic assimilation

theory (Gordon, 1964) and was confirmed with regard to Canadian identity by the research of Walters, Phythian and Anisef (2007). The longer members of immigrant communities have lived in Canada, the greater the likelihood that they will regard Canadian identity as their only identity. Studies in the Netherlands (Snel, Engbersen & Leerkes, 2006) and Germany (Zimmermann et al., 2008) have also shown an effect on identification with the host society. With regard to our own analysis, we expect that members of immigrant communities will feel more strongly Belgian the longer they have lived in Belgium. We include a comparable variable (number of years lived in Antwerp, Ghent or Genk) in the analysis of local identity and predict a comparable effect. A sense of Flemish identity will in all likelihood be positively influenced by the number of years that a member of an immigrant community has lived in Flanders, but strictly speaking we cannot test this, as the question was not included in the questionnaire. The vast majority of immigrants have lived in Flanders for as long as they have lived in Belgium, so we have simply included the latter variable in the analysis of Flemish identity.

City: Research in support of urban policy in Flanders in both 2004 and 2006 showed that inhabitants of Antwerp have less faith in the civic authorities than do inhabitants of Ghent and Genk. In these last, about 50% of the population had a great deal or a very great deal of trust in the civic authorities in both years, while in Antwerp the figures were, respectively, 30% and 36% (Block et al., 2007). The low figures for Antwerp are partly a result of the city's greater size: a greater distance between residents, a greater sense of political disenfranchisement, more worries about safety, and so forth (Verlet, Reynaert & Devos, 2005). On the basis of these findings we would expect residents of Antwerp to have a less strongly developed sense of local identity than residents of Ghent and Genk. The fact that the far-right political party Vlaams Belang has for more than 20 years had its powerbase in Antwerp – both with regards to electoral base as political personnel (Van Craen & Swyngedouw, 2002) – might also inhibit the development of a strong local identity among immigrant communities in the city. The success and prominent presence of this Flemish-nationalist anti-immigration party in Antwerp could also undermine the sense of Belgian and, especially, Flemish identity in Antwerp's immigrant communities. Conversely, it might be mentioned that recent years have seen Antwerp's mayor (Patrick Janssens of the Socialist Party, in office since 2003) initiate an extremely active promotion of local Antwerp identity understood in an inclusive way (see above). This might neutralise the negative effect of the local urban context or even mean that inhabitants of Antwerp have a stronger local identity than those of Ghent and Genk. To test this hypothesis, we have included Antwerp as a reference category for the analyses.

Level of education: Studies in the United States and the Netherlands have shown that members of immigrant communities identify with the majority population more strongly the more highly educated they are (Ono, 2002; Entzinger & Dourleijn, 2008). In the case of Belgium, it has already been demonstrated several times that members of the Turkish and Moroccan communities identify more strongly with Belgium the higher their level of education (Ackaert & Deschouwer, 1999; Van Craen, Vancluysen & Ackaert, 2008). As this effect is partly indirect, through mastery and use of the majority language (the more highly educated learn Dutch in school or pick it up more quickly), we would also expect level of education to have a positive (indirect) effect on Flemish identity. As already indicated, knowledge of Dutch probably has less influence on local identity, which would also suggest that the indirect influence of level of education is similarly limited.

Durkheimian theory states that placing trust in others and in institutions is a specific skill that has to be acquired (for instance by knowledge transfer and socialization through education), one might expect that level of education will have a positive effect on all three identities.
Elchardus and Smits (2002), however, indicate that an alternative hypothesis can be formulated concerning the positive link between education and trust. This is that education makes people more critical and will therefore lead to less trust. It is possible that the more educated will be more aware of negative media comments about immigrants and be more alert for signs of discrimination than the less educated. Education could therefore ensure that the more educated members of immigrant communities would be slower to identify with groups in which some indigenous members adopt negative attitudes to ethnic-cultural minorities. This could have a negative impact on Belgian, Flemish and local identity, but the discourse of the Flemish-nationalist anti-immigrant party Vlaams Belang probably makes Flemish identity least attractive to more highly educated members of immigrant communities.

Gender: Research by Sabatier (2008) makes clear that the gender of members of immigrant communities has no direct effect on their sense of Frenchness. Nesdale and Mak (2000) found neither direct nor indirect effects on the sense of Australian national identity. We will not, however, rule out the possibility that the gender variable plays some role. As earlier research has shown that women from Turkish and Moroccan backgrounds are less fluent in Dutch than are men, and have fewer friends among the majority population (Van Craen, Vancluysen & Ackaert, 2007), we would expect gender to have an indirect effect on sense of identity. Men probably have a stronger sense of Belgian, and particularly Flemish, identity than women. As the interaction in the local environment can to a large extent consist of contacts with members of one's own ethnic-cultural group and therefore (partly) be conducted in a minority language, the (indirect) effect of gender on local identity would presumably be less strong. The variable gender was coded as follows: 0 = female and 1 = male.

5.2. Social-cultural factors

In figure 1 we indicated that we consider social-cultural integration to be an interaction of 5 factors: identity, language, cultural capital, social capital and values. These factors influence society's social cohesion, but perhaps also influence one another. We will here examine the extent to which language, cultural capital, social capital and values influence the sense of national, regional and local identity.

Knowledge of Dutch: In the international literature, language is perhaps the most frequently cited determinant of a sense of ethnic identity (see e.g. Giles, Bourhis & Taylor, 1977; Gudykunst & Schmidt, 1987; Phinney et al., 2001; Fishman, 2001). Ackaert and Deschouwer (1999) state that language can play a role in the development of immigrant identities in two ways. In the first approach the instrumental nature of language is central. By learning the language of a group one gets to know that group's culture (in a broad sense: both music, films, literature, and so on, and values and standards) and interact with members of that group, giving a greater sense of connection with it. The second view emphasizes language's function of differentiation: it makes it possible to divide a social environment into different groups.
On the basis of the first approach we would expect knowledge of Dutch to have a positive effect on the three identities, but particularly on Flemish identity. Dutch enables members of immigrant communities to enter into contact with only a section of the Belgian population and to encounter only part of 'Belgian culture'. At a local level the instrumental nature of the Dutch language is possibly less important, as the Turkish and Moroccan communities form considerable sections of the local population and therefore a lot of interactions in the

immediate environment can be conducted in their native languages. In contrast to Belgium and Flanders, the cities of Antwerp, Ghent and Genk have a strongly 'multicultural' character and Dutch is therefore much less of a cultural passport. As has already been stated, Dutch remains a necessary means of communication with the local authorities. On the basis of the second view we might expect knowledge of Dutch to have a positive effect on Flemish, but not on Belgian identity. Not all Belgians speak Dutch. With regard to local identity, the function of differentiation is fulfilled by local dialects rather than by standard Dutch. Our dataset contains no specific information about mastery of the local variant of Dutch.
The variable that has been included in the analyses is a general scale that says something about the (passive) knowledge of Dutch. The scale consists of an item measuring the degree to which respondents understand letters and folders and an item measuring the degree to which respondents understand words spoken to them in Dutch. In both cases degree of understanding is self-assessed by the respondent.

Consumption of Dutch-language media: Numerous studies have identified the consumption of media in the majority language as an important determinant of the integration process of ethnic-cultural minorities, and in particular their sense of identity (Peeters & D'Haenens, 2005; Clement et al., 2005; Sinardet & Mortelmans, 2006; Bonfadelli, Pucher & Piga, 2007). It is therefore of some importance that our analyses should include consumption of Dutch-language media as an indicator of the degree to which members of immigrant communities have contact with the majority culture. In her book *Media, cultuur en burgerschap* (Media, culture and citizenship) the Dutch communication scientist van Zoonen (2005) indicates that a society's media – in a narrow sense (film, music, literature, and so forth) and in a broad sense (shared customs, standards and values) – both reflect and influence its culture. This occurs both directly (for instance through journalism) and indirectly (through the content of soap operas, humorous programmes, etc.). To clarify the relationship between media and culture, van Zoonen also refers to the American communication scientist Gerbner, who claims that cultural reproduction takes place through 'story telling'. Important stories were once passed from generation to generation by parents, priests, singers, and so on. That role has now been colonized by the media – especially television. Van Zoonen states that the media in contemporary society have a ritual function and contribute to the creation of a 'cultural citizenship', because they (re)construct various sorts of grouping and exclude or include people in particular collectives. This is "the cultural construction and acceptance of individual and collective identities, social integration that goes beyond a collection of legal, political and social rights and duties" (van Zoonen, 2005).
The media variable included in the analyses is a scale with two items: the first measures the frequency of reading Dutch-language newspapers, the second the frequency of watching Dutch-language television channels. We have only two general items, which means that we have no information about the nature of the newspapers or television channels (commercial/public, local/Flemish, and so on). This somewhat limits the hypotheses that can be proposed. It nevertheless seems likely, in light of the process described by van Zoonen, that the consumption of Dutch-language media will have a positive effect on all three of the identities studied in this paper. As there are no longer any newspapers or television channels serving the whole of Belgium, we would expect that the impact on Flemish identity would be greater than that on Belgian identity. The large share of local reporting in the media also leads us to expect considerable impact on local identity. We are not entirely certain that the impact will be positive. As we have already indicated above, it is conceivable that the consumption of Dutch-language media will make members of immigrant communities more aware of the expression of negative attitudes (political or otherwise) regarding ethnic-cultural minorities, thus discouraging the development of the three identities. Given Vlaams Belang's electoral

success and political programme (Flemish-nationalist and anti-immigrant), the attention given to this party in the media could particularly inhibit the development of a Flemish identity among members of immigrant communities.

Chatting with indigenous neighbours: The well-established 'contact hypothesis' of social psychology states that direct, personal contacts between members of different ethnic-cultural groups can contribute to a positive image and correct a negative image (Allport, 1954; Hamberger & Hewstone, 1997; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006). Personal meetings and relationships stimulate mutual understanding and mutual respect. It is therefore likely that they also contribute to a common sense of identity.
As an indicator of inter-ethnic contact – or what Putnam (2000) calls 'bridging social capital' – we have included in the analyses the frequency with which respondents chat with members of the indigenous community in their neighbourhood. We expect that the more often individuals from immigrant backgrounds chat with indigenous neighbours, the more they will have a sense of identification with Belgium, Flanders and Antwerp/Ghent/Genk. If it is indeed the case that the family home and its immediate environs form the focus of interaction between individuals (Groenman, 1960), then the effect of inter-ethnic neighbourly contact will probably be strongest on local identity. It is however questionable whether – given improved communication techniques and transport options – the immediate neighbourhood retains the same social primacy that it held in the past.

Attitude to headscarves: Values and standards and the central explanatory factors in 'belief congruence theory'. According to this theory categories and groups form spontaneously on the basis of what convictions are commonly shared or rejected (Rokeach, Smith & Evans, 1960). The desire for 'belief congruence' leads members of the in-group to adopt more negative attitudes towards out-groups with convictions that deviate from their own than towards out-groups with shared or similar convictions. It is likely that they will more readily identify with the latter than with the former.
In academic literature and in public debate recent years have seen considerable discussion of the question whether the value system of Islam is compatible with the value system of Western societies. Adherents of the Huntington-paradigm are pessimistic in this regard and perceive increasing cultural conflict between Muslims and non-Muslims (Huntington, 1996). An issue that has roused considerable public feeling in Belgium is that of headscarves. A number of civic authorities have banned the headscarf for civic employees dealing with the general public, and some schools have introduced a similar prohibition for pupils. For this reason we have introduced into our analyses a variable regarding attitudes to headscarves. These are particularly significant because the issue has taken on the status of a symbolic question, and identities are closely linked to symbols (flags, songs, colours, etc.).
We have, specifically, included in the analyses the question whether Muslim women should wear a headscarf when out of the house (a five point scale from 'agree entirely' to 'disagree entirely'). A simple frequency distribution shows that a narrow majority (60%) of respondents from Moroccan backgrounds agreed with the statement ('agree entirely' or 'tend to agree') and that the opinions of those from Turkish backgrounds are divided. Of the indigenous group interviewed for comparison, only 5% agreed that Muslim women should wear a headscarf out of doors. On the basis of 'belief congruence theory' we would therefore expect members of immigrant communities to feel more of a connection with Belgium, Flanders or Antwerp/Ghent/Genk the less they feel wearing a headscarf to be an obligation. As headscarves are part of the daily street scene in Antwerp, Ghent and Genk, the impact on the sense of local identity will perhaps be less than on the sense of Belgian or Flemish identity.

5.3. Results

As expected, ethnic-cultural background has a strong effect on the sense of Belgian and particularly Flemish identity. Those from Moroccan backgrounds have a much stronger sense of Belgian and Flemish identity than do those from Turkish backgrounds. Our doubts about the influence on a sense of local identity were also confirmed. Controlling for the other background variables, ethnic-cultural background has no effect on local identity.

The generation to which members of immigrant communities belong, has a strong influence on Flemish identity, limited influence on Belgian identity, and no influence at all on local identity. First-generation immigrants clearly have less sense of being Flemish than do second-generation members of immigrant communities, and also seem to feel slightly less Belgian. In the following stage of the analyses it will become clear whether this is an indirect effect.

In accordance with out prediction, the results show that members of immigrant communities have a stronger sense of Belgian, Flemish and local identity, the longer they have lived in Belgium, Flanders and Antwerp/Ghent/Genk respectively. The fact that the effect on Flemish identity is somewhat less strong than the other two effects, is most likely due to the fact that we took the variable 'number of years resident in Belgium' as a proxy variable for the variable 'number of years resident in Flanders' (see above).

The results for the variable 'city' are remarkable. The sense of identity of respondents living in Antwerp is no different from that of respondents living in Ghent, but there is a difference between Antwerp and Genk. The contrast in urban context is largest between these two last: Antwerp is by Belgian standards a large city (population circa 472.000), Ghent is a medium-large city (approximately 224.000 inhabitants) and Genk is a small city (approximately 64.000 inhabitants). But the influence is not only felt on local identity. Members of immigrant communities from Genk have a more strongly developed sense of local, Flemish and Belgian identity than do those from Antwerp. The next stage of the analyses will largely explain why this should be so.

In line with our first hypothesis concerning education we find that level of education has a positive impact on a sense of Flemish identity and no influence on local identity. More highly educated members of immigrant communities will have a greater sense of being Flemish, but no greater sense of being from Antwerp, Ghent or Genk. In contrast to expectations, we find no significant link to sense of Belgian identity.

The results are analogous for the variable gender. As predicted, the gender of members of immigrant communities influences their sense of Flemish identity and has no effect on their local identity. Men are more likely to feel Flemish than women, but no more likely to identify with Antwerp, Ghent or Genk. It is remarkable that gender has no influence on a sense of Belgian identity. Contrary to our expectations, this result confirms earlier findings from France and Australia (Sabatier, 2008; Nesdale & Mak, 2000).

Table 2: Determinants of the three senses of identity (background variables)

** p < .05 - * p < .1	Feeling of being Belgian			Feeling of being Flemish			Feeling of being from Antw./Ghent/Genk	
	R^2 = .13			R^2 = .21			R^2 = .10	
	Standar-dized coefficients	**Std. Error**		**Standar-dized coefficients**	**Std. Error**		**Standar-dized coefficients**	**Std. Error**
(Constant)		0,214			0,205			0,201
Ethnic-cultural background	**0,191****	0,103		**0,271****	0,099		0,052	0,100
Generation	*-0,085**	0,118		**-0,178****	0,113		-0,021	0,114
Years resident	**0,198****	0,005		**0,138****	0,004		**0,230****	0,004
Ghent (ref. Antwerp)	0,076	0,135		-0,008	0,128		-0,057	0,130
Genk (ref. Antwerp)	**0,111****	0,125		*0,078**	0,120		**0,112****	0,121
Level of education	0,053	0,016		**0,146****	0,015		0,072	0,016
Gender	0,063	0,104		**0,082****	0,099		0,055	0,101

As predicted, knowledge of Dutch has a strong influence on a sense of Flemish identity: the greater a respondent's mastery of Dutch, the greater their sense of Flemishness. Somewhat surprisingly, the effect on Belgian identity is almost as strong. We would point out that the variable knowledge of language provides greater additional explanatory variance in the analysis of Flemish identity. That the impact on local identity is less strong, confirms the indications formulated above.

Table 3: Determinants of the three senses of identity (impact of language)

** p < .05 - * p < .1	Feeling of being Belgian			Feeling of being Flemish			Feeling of being from Antw./Ghent/Genk	
	R^2 = .14			R^2 = .24			R^2 = .11	
	Standar-dized coefficients	**Std. Error**		**Standar-dized coefficients**	**Std. Error**		**Standar-dized coefficients**	**Std. Error**
(Constant)		0,268			0,253			0,257
Ethnic-cultural background	**0,181****	0,104		**0,265****	0,098		0,056	0,101
Generation	-0,002	0,132		*-0,083**	0,125		0,046	0,128
Years resident	**0,150****	0,005		**0,104****	0,005		**0,209****	0,005
Ghent (ref. Antwerp)	0,057	0,137		-0,025	0,128		-0,052	0,132
Genk (ref. Antwerp)	*0,082**	0,127		0,055	0,120		**0,106****	0,123
Level of education	-0,003	0,017		*0,086**	0,016		0,035	0,016
Gender	0,033	0,105		0,059	0,099		0,036	0,101
Knowledge of Dutch	**0,197****	0,053		**0,223****	0,050		**0,136****	0,051

It is also of interest to consider the relationship between linguistic competence and the background variables. Thus we find that the addition of the language variable barely weakens the effect of ethnic-cultural background. The influence of ethnic-cultural background therefore barely seems to be exercised through knowledge of Dutch as such. As an earlier study suggests, this influence is probably exercised in large part through the use of Dutch (Van Craen, Vancluysen & Ackaert, 2008). Additional analyses, omitted from this paper out

of considerations of length, only partially confirm these indications. When we replace the variable 'knowledge of Dutch' with the variable 'use of Dutch', the standardized regression coefficient in the analysis of Flemish identity falls to 0,212 and in the analysis of Belgian identity to 0,124.[4] In both analyses, however, the effect of ethnic-cultural background remains significant. As the variable 'use of Dutch' correlates strongly both with 'knowledge of Dutch' and with 'chatting with indigenous neighbours', we decided not to include this variable in the further stages of the analyses, to avoid the problem of multicollinearity.

The addition of the variable 'knowledge of Dutch' considerably weakens the effect of the generation variable and also – but to a lesser extent – that of number of years resident in a place. First-generation immigrants therefore feel less Belgian and Flemish than do second-generation members of immigrant communities because their mastery of Dutch is less. And the longer members of immigrant communities have lived in Belgium, the more their knowledge of Dutch has increased, increasing their sense of being Belgian and being Flemish. But the effect of the number of years that respondents have lived in a place, is not only felt through linguistic competence. The influence of living in Genk disappears almost completely when the language variable is included the in the analyses of Belgian and Flemish identity. The same occurs with the influence of level of education and of gender in the analysis of Flemish identity. This means that members of immigrant communities in Genk feel more Belgian and Flemish than members of immigrant communities in Antwerp because their Dutch is better. The more highly educated and men have developed a stronger sense of being Flemish than have, respectively, the less highly educated and women, because their Dutch is better.

Table 4: Determinants of the three senses of identity (impact of media consumption)

** p < .05 - * p < .1	**Feeling of being Belgian**			**Feeling of being Flemish**			**Feeling of being from Antw./Ghent/Genk**	
	R^2 = .14			**R^2 = .24**			**R^2 = .12**	
	Standar-dized coefficients	**Std. Error**		**Standar-dized coefficients**	**Std. Error**		**Standar-dized coefficients**	**Std. Error**
(Constant)		0,278			0,262			0,264
Ethnic-cultural background	**0,168****	0,106		**0,252****	0,101		0,049	0,102
Generation	0,009	0,133		-0,068	0,126		0,059	0,129
Years resident	**0,137****	0,005		**0,113****	0,005		**0,199****	0,005
Ghent (ref. Antwerp)	0,080	0,140		-0,015	0,132		-0,045	0,134
Genk (ref. Antwerp)	*0,088**	0,129		0,051	0,122		**0,109****	0,123
Level of education	-0,010	0,017		*0,083**	0,016		0,038	0,016
Gender	0,021	0,106		0,059	0,101		0,037	0,102
Knowledge of Dutch	**0,145****	0,060		**0,209****	0,057		*0,122**	0,058
Use of media in Dutch	**0,110****	0,058		0,042	0,055		0,064	0,055

The consumption of Dutch-language media has no significant effect on Flemish identity or on local identity. In the analysis of Belgian identity we do find a positive influence, but the additional explanatory variance is extremely limited. We see the effect of linguistic

[4] The variable 'use of Dutch' is a scale with one item measuring the frequency with which respondents speak Dutch in their daily lives and another item easuring the frequency with which they write things down in Dutch.

knowledge slightly weakened by the addition of the media variable, indicating that there is a connection between mastery of Dutch and the consumption of Dutch-language media. The fact that we find hardly any effects in this stage of the analyses could imply that the two processes hypothesized (the creation of cultural citizenship and the reinforcing of alienation through the dissemination of negative attitudes) cancel each other out. It is however also possible that our scale is too general and that specific information about the nature of the media consumed would reveal stronger effects. This is a point that can only be clarified with further research.

Table 5: Determinants of the three senses of identity (impact of neighbourly contact)

** p < .05 - * p < .1	**Feeling of being Belgian**			**Feeling of being Flemish**			**Feeling of being from Antw./Ghent/Genk**	
	R^2 = .17			**R^2 = .25**			**R^2 = .14**	
	Standar-dized coefficients	**Std. Error**		**Standar-dized coefficients**	**Std. Error**		**Standar-dized coefficients**	**Std. Error**
(Constant)		0,297			0,286			0,283
Ethnic-cultural background	**0,191****	0,107		**0,269****	0,102		0,058	0,103
Generation	0,008	0,133		-0,072	0,127		0,070	0,129
Years resident	**0,128****	0,005		**0,100****	0,005		**0,201****	0,005
Ghent (ref. Antwerp)	**0,104****	0,140		-0,006	0,134		-0,046	0,134
Genk (ref. Antwerp)	**0,119****	0,129		0,068	0,124		**0,122****	0,124
Level of education	-0,003	0,017		*0,086**	0,017		0,039	0,016
Gender	0,008	0,106		0,050	0,102		0,016	0,102
Knowledge of Dutch	*0,110**	0,061		**0,178****	0,058		*0,115**	0,059
Use of media in Dutch	*0,104**	0,058		0,028	0,056		0,051	0,056
Contact with native neighbours	**0,157****	0,034		**0,138****	0,033		**0,124****	0,033

The results in table 5 confirm that the contact hypothesis applies not only to image-formation, but also for the development of identity. Chatting with indigenous neighbours has a significant effect on Belgian, on Flemish, and on local identity. In contrast to one of our sub-hypotheses, this influence is not greatest with regard to local identity. This is probably due to neighbourhood interactions also consisting of contacts with individuals from one's own ethnic group (Vancluysen, Van Craen & Ackaert, 2009), so that local identity has broader content than 'the identity of the local majority group'. We further find that the addition of the variable 'chatting with indigenous neighbours' slightly weakens the effect of linguistic competence on the sense of Belgian and Flemish identity, making it clear that there is a connection between mastery of Dutch and inter-ethnic contact.

Table 6: Determinants of the three senses of identity (impact attitude to headscarves)

** p < .05 - * p < .1	Feeling of being Belgian			Feeling of being Flemish			Feeling of being from Antw./Ghent/Genk	
	R^2 = .17			R^2 = .24			R^2 = .14	
	Standar-dized coefficients	**Std. Error**		**Standar-dized coefficients**	**Std. Error**		**Standar-dized coefficients**	**Std. Error**
(Constant)		0,322			0,313			0,308
Ethnic-cultural background	**0,188****	0,113		**0,276****	0,110		0,042	0,109
Generation	0,002	0,138		-0,082	0,134		0,065	0,134
Years resident	**0,124****	0,005		**0,102****	0,005		**0,193****	0,005
Ghent (ref. Antwerp)	*0,093**	0,145		-0,014	0,141		-0,062	0,140
Genk (ref. Antwerp)	*0,103**	0,133		0,058	0,130		**0,107****	0,128
Level of education	-0,027	0,018		0,060	0,017		0,015	0,017
Gender	0,026	0,110		0,064	0,107		0,030	0,106
Knowledge of Dutch	*0,124**	0,063		**0,175****	0,061		**0,141****	0,060
Use of media in Dutch	*0,099**	0,060		0,018	0,058		0,046	0,058
Contact with native neighbours	**0,145****	0,035		**0,141****	0,034		**0,105****	0,034
Attitude to headscarves	0,061	0,038		0,068	0,037		-0,007	0,036

Contrary to what 'belief congruence theory' would lead one to expect, attitudes to headscarves have no impact at all on the identities investigated in this study: not on Belgian, not on Flemish and not on local identity. When the attitude to the headscarf is replaced in the analyses with other items measuring personal religious practice (frequency of prayer, frequency of attendance at the mosque) we find no significant effect at all. We can therefore conclude that the sense of being Muslim has no influence on the development of Belgian identity, or Flemish identity, or local identity.

6. Conclusion

Our results make clear that the identity pattern of both the Moroccan and the Turkish community aligns with what Groenman (1960) calls the 'discontinuous worldview'. Of members of the Moroccan community 56% had a (very) strong sense of being from Antwerp, Ghent or Genk. Almost 40% had a (very) strong sense of being Belgian and only 26% felt Flemish. The figures for members of the Turkish community were respectively 57%, 21% and 12%. So, the local identity plays an important role in the integration process of non-natives. It is an inclusive identity, as we found no effect of ethnic-cultural background, generation, level of education or gender on the sense of being from Antwerp, Ghent or Genk. However, all of these background variables have an influence on Flemish identity and some on Belgian identity. Even after controlling for social-cultural factors (knowledge of Dutch, consumption of Dutch-language media, chatting with native neighbours and attitude to headscarves), the ethnic-cultural background has a strong effect on the sense of regional and national identity. Those from Moroccan backgrounds have a much stronger sense of Belgian and Flemish identity than do those from Turkish backgrounds.

Of the four social-cultural factors we tested, two seem to be highly important for the development of a national, regional and local identity (knowledge of Dutch and chatting with native neighbours) and two seem to have hardly any impact (consumption of Dutch-language media and the attitude to headscarves or more general the sense of being Muslim). The greater a respondent's mastery of Dutch, the greater their sense of Belgian, Flemish and local identity. Our results also make clear that the contact hypothesis applies not only to image-formation, but also for the development of identity. Chatting with native neighbours has a significant effect on Belgian, on Flemish, and on local identity. Knowledge of Dutch has the strongest direct impact on Flemish identity. For this identity it can fulfil its function of differentiation. For the Belgian identity it seems to fulfil a more instrumental function (knowledge of Dutch enables members of immigrant communities to consume Dutch-language media and to enter into contact with natives). The influence of knowledge of Dutch and chatting with native neighbours is weakest with regard to local identity. This is probably due to neighbourhood interactions also consisting of contacts with individuals from one's own ethnic group – using the mother tongue –, so that local identity has broader content than 'the identity of the local majority group'.

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