

Summary

Giving, volunteering and helping among migrants in the Netherlands

In the debate on shifting responsibilities from governments to citizens, an important assumption is that people are willing to participate in society. Migrants are a relatively undiscovered target group for voluntary organisations, and this study explores their actual and potential contributions to civil society in different ways: organised, by donating to charities and by doing volunteer work, and unorganised, by giving remittances and other informal gifts and by offering informal help. Using survey data from the Giving in the Netherlands Immigrant Survey (GINIS) 2012 we examine giving, volunteering and informal helping among the four largest non-western migrant groups in the Netherlands: Turks, Moroccans, Surinamese and Antilleans.

Giving, volunteering and helping

- Of the migrant groups in the study, 83% donates money and/or goods to voluntary organisations. On average, people who donate give €298 a year. The largest share of these gifts go to organisations in the field of religion. Migrants give more often and higher amounts of goods, but less often and lower amounts of money than native Dutch.
- About a third of all Dutch migrants volunteers. They spend 14 hours per month on volunteering. Migrants volunteer less than native Dutch.
- About a half of all migrants give remittances to their countries of origin, with an average worth of €930 per year. Besides this, around 40% of Dutch migrants give money and/or goods to people they know in the Netherlands; on average those gifts are worth €946 per year. Native Dutch don't give remittances but do give more often and higher amounts to people they know in the Netherlands.
- About 71% of Dutch migrants sometimes offers informal help to someone he/she knows, for example by household work or personal care. More migrants than native Dutch offer informal help.
- A vast majority displays different ways of participation. People who volunteer or people who give informal help almost always donate money too. There is a group of 24% that not only donates money, but also volunteers and offers informal help.

Giving norms

- It is not self-evident to give among migrants in the Netherlands. Almost a third agrees with statements on the social pressure around giving. Among native Dutch giving is even less self-evident.
- Charitable giving is surrounded by social norms. We know what we ought to do, and find some donations better than others. In a unique survey experiment we examined how these 'giving norms' vary between situations and groups of people.
- Migrants have a more positive attitude towards giving than native Dutch.
- A gift by a Moroccan donor is perceived as more desirable than the same gift by a native or a Turkish donor.
- Turks, Moroccans and native Dutch do not prefer gifts by donors from their own group.
- Both migrants and native Dutch think gifts to organisations in the Netherlands are more desirable than gifts to organisations abroad.
- Gifts to religious organisations are perceived as less desirable than gifts to non-religious organisations. Among Moroccans it is the other way around, however: they think gifts to religion are more desirable.

Conclusion

Migrants show quite strong participation: 93% gives to voluntary organisations in the Netherlands, volunteers and/or offers informal help to people they know. Migrants relatively often participate in unorganised ways. Native Dutch donate more often and higher amounts of money to organisations, as well as volunteer more often. Migrants however donate more often and higher amounts of goods to organisations, and more often offer informal help. Migrants also send high amounts of remittances to their countries of origin. Participation of migrants in the Netherlands relatively often flows through informal channels. Migrants show a more positive attitude towards giving than native Dutch, but are less often participating in organisations. This offers chances for civil society organisations to track down these 'forgotten donors'. Fundraising could target more on migrant donors, and volunteering organisations could raise their diversity levels.

Credits

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