

# Even neighborhoods with higher-educated ethnic minorities arouse resistance

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The resistance towards ethnically mixed neighborhoods decreases if higher-educated people from ethnic minorities live there. Yet even then a large proportion of the autochthonous Dutch population still prefer to avoid neighbourhoods with a high concentration of people from ethnic minorities. This is the conclusion of Dutch researcher Marieke van Londen who defended her PhD thesis on 12 January at the Radboud University Nijmegen.

Van Londen studied the [resistance](#) Dutch people have towards living in ethnically mixed neighborhoods. Participants in a representative large-scale questionnaire survey were asked to what extent they would object to living in neighbourhoods with various concentrations of people from ethnic minorities. The assumption is that autochthonous Dutch people are reluctant to live in ethnically mixed neighbourhoods as they associate these with an educational disadvantage. They are then supposedly afraid that the lower-educated ethnic minorities will have different norms and values.

"My research partly confirms this view," explains Van Londen. "If people hear that higher-educated minorities live in black [neighborhoods](#) then their resistance towards living in such a neighborhood does indeed decrease. However, at the same time one-quarter of the [respondents](#) indicated that if more than half the residents from such a neighborhood were from ethnic minorities then they would still rather leave the neighborhood irrespective of the [educational level](#) of the people concerned." Just like any research into ethnic prejudices I can imagine

that people give socially desirable answers says Van Londen. "In practice this means that the resistance towards ethnically mixed neighbourhoods could be even greater still."

## Education

Van Londen also investigated people's feelings towards the policy of supporting ethnic minorities in education. She concludes that people's resistance to this depends on how the policy is presented. For example, the resistance is higher if it is emphasised that the policy can be to the detriment of attention for autochthonous children. However, the resistance drops slightly if the message clearly states that the policy increases the chances for children from ethnic minorities. "Yet the effect of how you present the policy is relatively weak," states Van Londen. Furthermore, the resistance to the ethnic schooling policy increases if both the advantages for the ethnic minorities and the disadvantages for the autochthonous pupils are emphasized. "This situation is closer to the everyday reality where people often hear several partly conflicting arguments with respect to the same [policy](#) issue," says Van Londen.

Van Londen did her doctoral research at Radboud University Nijmegen. Her work was funded by the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO).

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