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From bridgeheads to gate-closers: How migrant networks contribute to declining migration from Morocco to the Netherlands

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Abstract

Migration research offers abundant research and theories to describe and explain why migration flows, once started, appear to have an inherent tendency to grow, but offers few insights why migration may also decline (De Haas 2010). This paper focuses on an example of declining migration: migration from Morocco to the Netherlands. Although the Netherlands houses a large Moroccan immigrant community (established by former guest workers who arrived since the mid-1960s and their offspring) immigration from Morocco to the Netherlands is steadily diminishing since the mid-1990s. One possible explanation of this decline in migration is the diminishing support of settled Dutch-Moroccan migrants in the Netherlands to potential newcomers. We try to explain these declining support intentions of Dutch-Moroccans in terms of their perception of the three 'contexts of reception' of Portes: governmental policies, labour market changes and societal reception. Data from 420 Moroccan-born respondents living in and around the city of Rotterdam (the Netherlands) show that the majority of them, although most of them received assistance from others during their own migration, do not intend to support potential newcomers from Morocco. These declining intentions are partly explained by their perception of a stricter migration policy in the Netherlands and the more hostile societal reception of Moroccans in the Dutch public opinion. These figures clearly show that settled Dutch-Moroccans are not only selective 'gatekeepers' anymore but in fact have inclined to be 'gateclosers'.

1. Introduction

A key finding of contemporary migration research relates to the crucial role of social networks and informal support within migrant networks in the initiation and particularly the continuation of migration flows between sending and receiving countries (Boyd and Nowak, 2013; Faist, 2010; Massey, 1990; Massey et al., 2005). Whereas ‘pioneer’ migrants have to find their own way to and in the destination country, by facilitating their successors – providing information about the destination country and how to get there, providing cheap housing and employment for newcomers, etc. – they make migration cheaper and therefore more attractive for potential new migrants. The result is continuous ‘chain migration’ or a self-perpetuating ‘migration system’ between sending and receiving countries or regions: “Once begun, international migration tends to expand over time until network connections have diffused so widely in a sending region that all people who wish to migrate can do so without difficulty” (Massey et al., 2005: 45) However, as De Haas (2010) rightly observed, the underlying assumption of this line of reasoning is that migration flows, once they start and reach a certain level, have an inherent tendency to increase *ad infinitum*. Contemporary migration research offers few insights into how and why migration may also decline. This paper focuses on one aspect of declining migration (or ‘migration-undermining feedback mechanism’): the under certain conditions declining willingness of previous migrants to support new migrants from their country of origin, instead discouraging potential new migrants from coming over.

Our analysis focuses on an actual case of a decline in an established migration system, namely the migration from Morocco to the Netherlands. The first Moroccan ‘guest workers’ came to the Netherlands in the late 1960s, early 70s. Also after the formal labour migration recruitment stopped in the mid-1970s, migration from Morocco to the Netherlands continued and even increased, partly as informal labour migration and to a larger extent as family-related migration (so-called ‘family reunion’). Also after 1990, migration from Morocco to the Netherlands continued because many children of guest workers families tended to find their spouses in their country of origin. However, as described extensively elsewhere (Engbersen et al., forthcoming), since the late 1990s migration from Morocco to the Netherlands decreased continuously. Whereas in the late 1990s, about 5000 Morocco-born immigrants arrived in the Netherlands annually, in the most recent period (2009-2011) this figure was less than half. Also the number of undocumented Moroccan migrants in the Netherlands is declining, as appears from the number of police apprehensions of undocumented Moroccans over the years. In the late 1990s, the Dutch police apprehended about 1200 undocumented Moroccans annually. In recent years (2008-2010) this figure dropped to about 400 annually (De Boom et al., 2013).

This paper focuses on one possible explanation for declining migration: the decreased willingness of previous Moroccan migrants to support potential newcomers. Our analysis draws on empirical data from a survey among Morocco-born residents in Rotterdam (N= 420). In the survey, we asked questions about both the informal support respondents received during their own migration and their willingness to support potential newcomers now. We shall see that Moroccan-born residents in the Netherlands are willing to provide far less support to potential newcomers than they received during their own migration, and we will explore some possible explanations for this dwindling willingness to support newcomers.

2. Social networks and migration: theoretical perspectives

An extensive literature shows how social networks and social support are beneficial for migrants and contribute to the increase and perpetuation of migration (see for overviews of this literature: Boyd and Nowak, 2013; Castles and Miller, 2009: 27-33; Faist, 2010; Massey et al., 2005: 42-50; Samers, 2010: 85-106). Social networks lower both financial and emotional costs of migration: the first by giving

access to housing and employment, the latter by providing an immigrant community in the destination country. Frequent visits to the origin country and transnational communication spreads information about the benefits of migration and contributes to the rise of a 'culture of migration' ("...it changes values and cultural perceptions in ways that increase the probability of future migration..."; Massey et al., 2005: 47). Family ties may help to satisfy certain migration requirements of receiving countries, for instance by providing spouses and thus legal entry to family members in the home country. In all these different ways, social networks and 'social capital' (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992; Portes, 1998) contribute to migration up to the situation that migration flows perpetuate, "...independent of their initial conditions" (Mabogunje, 1970: 14). For Massey (1990), the latter mechanism is the crux of what he calls 'cumulative causation'. This article, however, focuses on the flipside of the migration effects of social networks: how social networks may also contribute to declining migration.

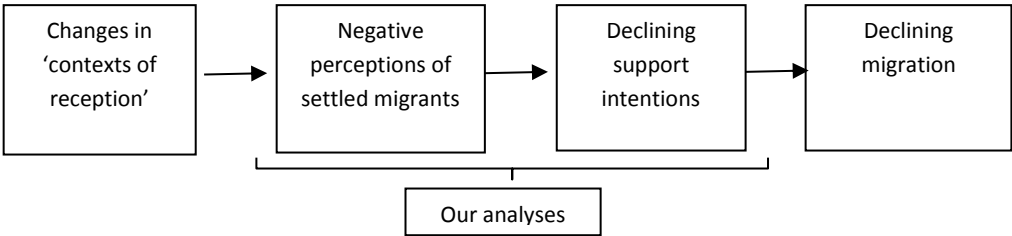
As our starting point we may take Portes's distinction between three 'contexts of reception' for immigrants: 1) the host country's government's policy toward migration in general or specific migrant groups; 2) the degree to which the host country's labour market offers opportunities for newcomers; and 3) the societal reception of migration or specific migrant groups in the public opinion of the host country (Portes, 1995: 23-25; Portes and Rumbaut, 1990: 85-90).¹ In this paper, we argue that the extent to which settled migrants are willing and able to provide instrumental and emotional support to potential newcomers (family, friends, co-ethnics) is related to variations in the three 'contexts of reception'. When settled migrants must decide to support newcomers or not, they may take several factors into consideration. For instance, hostile reactions against migration and/or specific migrant groups in the host country's public opinion make settled migrants more reluctant to support potential newcomers. Also rising unemployment or severe competition for migrant jobs in the host society may stimulate settled migrants to discourage newcomers from coming (Epstein, 2008). Portes's (1995: 15-16) notion of 'negative social capital' is also relevant here. As Portes argues, social capital literature generally emphasizes its positive effects but neglects its negative consequences. An example is found in excess claims on group members: for instance, successful immigrant entrepreneurs who are overloaded by claims and requests (for jobs, loans, or other benefits) by family or other co-ethnics. As a consequence, settled migrants may stop encouraging and supporting newcomers to come to and settle in the host society.

Immigration policies of the host country may also affect migration in both direct and indirect ways. The direct and often intended effect of restrictive migration policies is that less migrants are able to satisfy the enhanced migration requirements, so that less migrants will arrive. The Netherlands, for instance, increased the legal requirements for marital migration in recent years; first, by increasing the minimum age for marital migration and the income requirements for the partner already residing in the Netherlands; and second and especially, by introducing an obligatory language test that potential migrants must pass before entering the country). Obviously, these measures directly reduce the number of migrants coming to the Netherlands because they cannot meet these requirements (Leerkes and Kulu-Gasgow, 2011). However, here we are more interested in the indirect effects of these policy measures. We hypothesize that restrictive migration policies negatively affect the willingness and ability of settled migrants to support newcomers. After all, because of the restrictive policies newcomers have fewer possibilities to earn their own living, at least in a formal way, which makes them more dependent on the informal social support of settled migrants. The latter, in turn, will realise that newcomers may depend on them for a long time. This makes them reluctant to encourage and support new migrants to come. As a study about undocumented migrants in the Netherlands observes: "In the recent past, illegal guests were eventually able to find formal employment and a marriage partner, which enabled them to live on their own. However, this is becoming increasingly difficult nowadays. As a result, illegal migrants stay dependent on the family and acquaintances much longer. Due to the problems surrounding the provision of lasting support, members of ethnic communities

become more and more critical of illegal migrants and refuse to take the responsibility for the journey and stay of illegal compatriots” (Engbersen, 2001: 243).

When settled migrants are held responsible for the economic welfare of newcomers, they will be more critical when inviting new migrants to work or marry in the host country. Not only will they encourage less newcomers to come, they will also be more selective (for instance, not vague acquaintances, but only close friends and family). As Böcker (1994: 103) observes in a small-scale study on Turkish migrants in the Netherlands and their relatives in Turkey: “...settled immigrants are not always willing to act as bridgeheads for prospective migrants. They sometimes act more like gatekeepers for the (...) authorities”. And, as we shall see in this paper, under certain conditions settled migrants may even tend to close the gate for newcomers all together.

To summarize: this paper is about the role of social networks and informal social support in the migration from Morocco to the Netherlands. We argue that the migration corridor between both countries is a typical example of declining migration, which is an under-researched topic in contemporary migration research (De Haas, 2010). Against this background, this paper explores the willingness of settled Dutch-Moroccan migrants to support potential newcomers from Morocco in coming to and settling in the Netherlands. We shall also attempt to explain the intentions of Dutch-Moroccans to support newcomers or not, in terms of the other three ‘contexts of reception’ identified by Portes and others: governmental policies, labour market, and societal reception (Portes, 1995; cf. Portes and Rumbaut, 1990). In our survey we asked respondents (Dutch-Moroccan settled migrants) both about their intentions to support potential newcomers and about their views on Dutch migration policies, economic opportunities in the Netherlands, and the degree to which they think Moroccans are accepted by the Dutch public. We expect a negative correlation between negative views on the current developments in the Netherlands regarding the three ‘contexts of reception’ (strict migration policies, limited economic opportunities, and hostile societal reception) on the one hand, and the respondent’s willingness to support potential newcomers on the other. If this is the case, this may be one of the social mechanisms that explains the declining trend in Morocco-Dutch migration.



3. Data and methods

The data

The data used in this paper are derived from the research project Theorizing Migration Systems (THEMIS): a four-year (2010-2013) international comparative project that studies how migration patterns to Western Europe develop. The project collected data on twelve different migration ‘corridors’, connecting regions in three origin countries (Brazil, Morocco, Ukraine) to specific locations in four Western and Southern European destination countries (The Netherlands, Norway, the United Kingdom and Portugal). Some of these corridors were expanding migration flows, other corridors (like migration from Morocco to the Netherlands) were typical examples of declining migration.

This paper specifically focuses on migration from Morocco to the Netherlands. We use data from a survey among Moroccan immigrants in Rotterdam (N= 420). The survey used a structured questionnaire and was conducted by native-speaking interviewers between April 2012 and October 2012. The respondents were selected by the method of Respondent Driven Sampling (RDS). The RDS methodology has been developed to sample hard-to-reach populations whose boundaries are unknown (Heckathorn, 1997). It is therefore appropriate to sampling migrant populations (Friberg, 2010). The assumption behind the RDS methodology is that people are part of networks, through which a representative sample of the population can be achieved. To improve the willingness to participate, respondents are given primary and secondary incentives. In this case, the incentives were coupons of €20 and €15. Every respondent received one coupon of €20 if they participated. After the interview, they were given two recruiter coupons of €15. When they pass the coupons on to peers who come for an interview, they were paid €15 for each recruited peer, to a maximum of two respondents. Only respondents who were older than 18 years at the time of migration to the Netherlands were eligible to participate in the survey. As people were actually queuing to be interviewed, potential respondents were only accepted if they had made an appointment. In order to increase the number of employed respondents, one of the coupons handed out exclusively rewarded the recruitment of employed respondents, while the second coupon had no profile restrictions. At a certain point so many potential respondents showed up at the premises that we had to hire a watchman to ensure orderly procedures during the interviews.

Questionnaires were conducted individually and face to face, and lasted on average 42 minutes. The questionnaire was translated from English to classical Arabic and Dutch. Unfortunately, the language of the classical Arabic translation turned out to be too formal for some respondents to properly understand. As a result, interviewers were often compelled to rephrase the questions even if they were instructed not to do so. Also, the interviewers sometimes had to make use of Moroccan dialects (Darija) or Berber. Responses were noted on a paper questionnaire by the interviewer in Arabic or Dutch. For more information on the RDS methodology, survey and potential biases, see Jollivet (2013).

Measuring instruments

- Received assistance during migration

The questionnaire contains extensive questions about the assistance respondents received during their migration to the Netherlands. Respondents were asked whether they received support from others for (1) financing the costs of travelling to the Netherlands, (2) obtaining the needed visa or permits, (3) finding their first job, and (4) their initial housing in the Netherlands. Some respondents did not receive any support related to these issues (they financed their travel from their own savings, did not receive any support when applying for a visa or did not need a visa because they had Dutch citizenship, and found their own employment and first place to live. Other respondents received support (from other individuals or institutions like employers or financing organisations) in one or more of the four domains mentioned above. We constructed a new variable combining the answers to the four questions by counting the number of domains in which people received assistance during their migration to the Netherlands. The variable ranges from 0 (did not receive help in any of the four domains) to 4 (received help in all the four domains).

- Intention to provide assistance today

In the survey, we asked respondents whether they had supported Moroccan newcomers in the past, and whether they were willing to support newcomers today. In this paper we will only present data on the

latter question. We asked about the respondents' intention to offer support in five specific domains, namely (1) obtaining papers, such as a visa or residence permit, (2) covering travel costs, (3) finding a job, (4) finding housing, and (5) accommodating someone in one's own home. The answer categories were (0) 'never help', (1) 'help in some cases but not always', (2) 'always try to help'. Instead of studying the answers to the five domains separately, we constructed two variables in which the five domains are combined. The first variable represents the number of domains in which a respondent would 'always' try to help. The variable ranges from 0 (would not help in any of the five domains) to 5 (would always try to help in all five domains). The second variable is a scale, taking the mean of the five variables (using all three values of the variables). The mean score on the scale 'intention to provide assistance today' ranges from 0 to 2. The higher the score, the stronger the intentions to offer support in several domains to potential migrants from Morocco to the Netherlands. With a Cronbach's alpha higher than 0.8 (0.839), this is a reliable scale. We also asked respondents whether or not they, in general, would recommend people from Morocco to move to the Netherlands. The answer categories were yes (0), in some cases but not in others (1), and no (2).

- *Perceptions about the Netherlands*

The survey also asked respondents about their views on the political, economic and social situation in the Netherlands. Respondents were asked whether they agree or not with statements such as: '*In the Netherlands, immigration policies are strict*', '*In the Netherlands/Morocco, there are good economic opportunities*', and '*In general, people in the Netherlands see Moroccan] men/women in a positive way*'. Together, these questions cover the perception of respondents about the three 'contexts of reception' named by Portes. Respondents could either agree (1) or disagree (0) with these statements or they could reply '*Don't know*'. As it turned out, a relatively large part of the respondents chose the latter option. We therefore incorporated a separate category 'Don't know' into the analyses. We combined the two questions about how people in the Netherlands perceive Moroccan men and women into a scale measuring the societal reception of Moroccan individuals by Dutch public opinion. Respondents who answered Don't know at one or both questions (N=86) received the mean score at the scale (0.49). The index ranges from 0 to 1.²

- *Personal characteristics*

In the analysis of the personal characteristics, sex, educational level, duration of stay and frequency of contact with people in Morocco are taken into account. Males are coded with (0), females with (1). Educational level is divided into three categories: (0) lower education (primary education), (1) intermediate education (secondary and vocational school) and (2) higher education (tertiary education). Duration of stay is measured by the time elapsed since the respondent migrated to the Netherlands. Since duration of stay strongly overlaps with the age of respondents, we did not incorporate the variable 'age' into our analyses. Finally, frequency of contact with people in Morocco consists of three categories, namely (0) often (every day or once a week); (1) regularly (every month) and (2) rarely or never (less than every month or never).

Table 1 presents the descriptives of all variables included in the analyses.

Table 1 somewhere here

4. Results

The respondents

In all, we interviewed 420 Moroccan-born migrants living in or around the city of Rotterdam. We interviewed somewhat more female respondents (56%) than males (44%) (figures in Table 1). About one third of our respondents (32%) were between 20 and 40 years old (we only interviewed respondents older than 20 years), half of them (53%) were between 41 and 60 years, and one in seven respondents (15%) was older than 60 years. The age of respondents obviously strongly overlaps with their duration of stay in the Netherlands. On average, our respondents had been living in the Netherlands for not less than 23 years. More than half of them (59%) had lived in the Netherlands for at least twenty years. Only a small minority of the respondents (10%) arrived relatively recently in the Netherlands (in the last ten years). These figures suggest that a relative large share of our respondents belong to the generation of Moroccan guest workers and their spouses who arrived in the Netherlands in the 1960s and 1970s.

This background also explains the relatively low educational background of our respondents, at least as measured by current Dutch standards. The large majority of our respondents (73%) was low educated (or had not completed any education at all), one in four respondents (25%) had an intermediate educational level, and only 2% were highly educated. We also asked about the labour market position of our respondents: what are their main daily activities? A large minority of the respondents (44%) were working. This may seem little, but it is representative for the Moroccan-born population in Rotterdam. About 14% of our respondents were unemployed and looking for work, 13% were occupationally disabled or retired, and 22% were not working for other reasons (mainly housewives). Some respondents were either studying or following a language or civic integration course (4%), or were participating in voluntary work (3%). To conclude, we can say that particularly the older generations of (former) guest workers and their spouses were well represented in our sample, and that we interviewed relatively few recent migrants, particularly recently arrived highly skilled migrants.

Received assistance during migration

Our first research question was about the assistance that respondents received during their own migration to the Netherlands. As Table 1 showed, almost all respondents (96%) had received support during their own migration in at least one domain (financing travel expenses, obtaining visa or permits, finding the first job or initial housing). Only a small minority had not received any support from others. Almost half of the respondents (40%) had received assistance from others in at least two different domains. Table 2 shows per domain whether or not respondents received assistance.

***Table 2 somewhere here ***

Only a small part of respondents (21%) paid their traveling costs entirely from their own savings. The majority received support by lending money from others or had others to pay for their journey to the Netherlands. The same pattern emerges when examining whether or not respondents received help in obtaining the necessary visa or permits. More than 80% obtained their visa or permit with the help from others. Sixteen respondents did not need this support because they already had the Dutch nationality when moving to the Netherlands. Fewer respondents received assistance in finding their first job or housing in the Netherlands. More than half (55%) of the respondents received help in finding employment. Many of the other respondents did not need this kind of assistance because they already had a work contract before migration or because they never worked in the Netherlands. Even

fewer respondents (19%) received assistance in finding their first housing in the Netherlands. Many respondents did not need this kind of support because they came to live with someone who already had a dwelling in the Netherlands. Most respondents who needed assistance in this domain did receive this support.

Intentions to provide assistance today

The figures on the support received during one's own migration contrast sharply with the figures on the current intentions of respondents to support potential migrants from Morocco to the Netherlands (Table 1). The majority of the respondents (69%) have no intention to support potential newcomers from Morocco today; 11% only intends to support newcomers in just one domain, and another 11% intends to support newcomers in two domains. This implies that less than 10% of all respondents intend to support newcomers in three or more domains. Moreover, the large majority (79%) of our respondents would not encourage Moroccan people to come to the Netherlands; another 12% would recommend this only in some cases; and only 9% of all respondents would recommend friends and family in Morocco to come to the Netherlands right away.

***Table 3 somewhere here ***

Table 3 shows per domain whether or not respondents intend to offer assistance to newcomers from Morocco. The remarkable outcome is that for each domain the majority of respondents say they will 'never' provide assistance to potential newcomers. Table 3 furthermore shows that respondents are particularly hesitant to provide assistance when the financial or emotional costs of support are substantial (as is the case with paying for someone's traveling expenses or accommodating someone in one's own home). With regard to less demanding kinds of support (helping to find employment or housing), more respondents say they would try to help sometimes or even always.

***Table 4 somewhere here ***

Table 4 shows to what extent both issues – that is, the assistance respondents received in the past and their current intentions to support newcomers – are interrelated. The table again shows a sharp contrast between both issues: respondents who did not receive any assistance themselves generally do not intend to support potential newcomers either. Yet more than two-thirds of the respondents who received assistance in the past in 1 or 2 domains, or even in 3 or 4 domains, do not intend to support newcomers themselves. This contrast between formerly received assistance and present intentions to provide assistance suggests a declining willingness among Dutch-Moroccan immigrants to support newcomers.³ Moreover, the figures in the Tables 3 and 4 may even overestimate the support our respondents will actually give to newcomers. We asked for their intentions and respondents may have given socially desirable answers (saying they would give help when, in fact, they will not). However, regardless of whether or not the willingness to assist newcomers has declined recently, it clearly appears that our Dutch-Moroccan respondents are not very willing to assist newcomers from Morocco to come to and settle in the Netherlands nowadays. In the remainder of this section, we shall explore to what extent the intentions to offer help among Dutch-Moroccan respondents can be explained by their perception of contemporary Dutch society and the position of Moroccans in Dutch society.

Negative perceptions about the Netherlands and support for newcomers

Our main research question is to what extent the intentions of settled migrant to support potential newcomers to the Netherlands are related to their perception of the political, economic and social situation in the Netherlands. Whereas migration research tends to emphasise the role of social

networks and social capital in the rise and continuation of migration flows between sending and receiving countries or regions, here we want to examine whether migrants' negative perceptions of the political, economic and social situation in a host society result in a decreasing intentions to support potential newcomers, and thus contribute to a decline in the migration between both countries. In other words, are settled migrants, instead of functioning as bridgeheads for potential newcomers, under certain conditions turning into critical gatekeepers who support newcomers only limited and selectively? Or do they close the door completely for potential migrants? And what factors may explain the declining inclination of settled migrants to support newcomers?

Table 5 presents the outcomes of a regression model with 'intentions to give assistance nowadays' to potential newcomers as dependent variable. What factors contribute to more or less intentions to support newcomers? The first two models in Table 5 show the effects of various personal characteristics of respondents on their intentions to provide support. First, we see that females intend to support newcomers more than male respondents. This is not surprising, as a large body of literature indicates that women tend to give more social support than men. The models furthermore show that educational level has partly an effect on support intentions in the sense that only respondents with an intermediate level education are more inclined to offer support than respondents with a low educational level. Highly educated respondents – a small minority in our sample – are not more inclined to offer support than low educated respondents. Moreover, the effect of educational level on support intentions disappears when the respondents' perceptions of the political, economic and social situation in the Netherlands are introduced in the analyses (Model 3). Finally, with regard to the frequency of contact in the home country, only respondents who have rarely or never contact with their family and friends back home differ significantly from people who are very often in contact with the home country. Those with little or no contact intend to support newcomers to a much lesser extent than those with very much contact. There are no significant differences between those who have respectively regularly and often contact with friends and family in the origin country.

***Table 5 somewhere here ***

In Model 3, the perceptions of respondents of the political, economic and social situation in the Netherlands are included in the analyses. Respondents' perceptions of the Dutch migration policies have a particularly strong effect on their intention to support newcomers. Respondents who agree with the statement '*The Netherlands have strict migration policies*' and even those who answer '*don't know*' to this statement have much less intention of aiding newcomers than respondents who disagree with this statement. Another remarkable outcome is that the respondents' perceptions of the economic situation in both the Netherlands and Morocco have hardly any effect on their intentions to provide support. In other words, economic considerations seem not to affect the intentions of settled migrants to support newcomers. (For newcomers themselves, these economic considerations may of course still be crucial arguments to migrate or not). Model 3 finally shows that the support intentions of respondents are also related to their perception of the societal reception of Moroccans in the Dutch public opinion. Respondents who agree with statements that the Dutch public see Moroccan men or women in a positive way are more inclined to support newcomers than respondents who disagree with these statements. In sum, two of the three 'contexts of reception' identified by Portes – the respondents' perceptions of governmental policies and, to a lesser extent, of the societal reception of Moroccans in the Netherlands – are related to their intentions to support newcomers. The third 'context of reception', the labour market opportunities for newcomers both in the Netherlands and in Morocco, does not affect their intentions to support newcomers.

5. Concluding thoughts

Migration theory and migration research have a strong tendency to focus on increasing migration flows. Moreover, dominant migration theories such as Massey's theory of cumulative causation or migration systems theory assume that migration flows, once they reach a certain magnitude, become self-perpetuating processes (Mabogunje, 1970; Massey, 1990). There is little attention for the phenomenon of declining migration (De Haas, 2010). Our analysis describes one specific example of declining migration, the 'migration corridor' between Morocco and the Netherlands. Although Moroccans are a large and established immigrant community in the Netherlands, the number of new arrivals from Morocco in the Netherlands has decreased steadily in the last two decades. In this paper, we have argued that at least three different macro-developments in the Netherlands have contributed to the declining migration from Morocco to the Netherlands: the current economic crisis resulting in declining labour market opportunities for newcomers from Morocco, the Dutch immigration policies that have become much stricter in the past decade, and the growing hostility in the Dutch public opinion toward immigrants, in particular (though not exclusively!) toward those coming from Muslim countries such as Morocco. We argued that these macro-level developments have undoubtedly influenced migration to the Netherlands *directly*, for instance because fewer potential migrants meet the new Dutch immigration requirements, or because fewer potential migrants aspire to go to the Netherlands since the migration costs (both financially and emotionally) are now too high.

This paper also explored how the three negative macro-developments indicated above negatively affect migration *indirectly*, specifically through their negative effect on the intentions of settled migrants to support potential newcomers. Whereas many migration theorists tend to stress the positive contributions of social networks and 'social capital' to migration, we showed how social networks in the contemporary situation negatively affect migration from Morocco to the Netherlands. In De Haas's (2010) terminology: we showed how social networks became a 'migration undermining mechanism'. Our research found that the majority of the Dutch-Moroccans who we interviewed, while generally having received assistance from others during their own migration, do not intend to support potential newcomers from Morocco in any domain we asked about. We also saw that this unwillingness among settled Dutch-Moroccan migrants to support newcomers is closely related to their perception of the difficult situation of Moroccans in the Netherlands today (especially due to the stricter Dutch immigration policies of recent years and the perceived hostility of Dutch public opinion toward Moroccans, and not so much due to the decreased labour market opportunities for Moroccan newcomers). In fact, a large majority of the respondents would not even recommend Moroccans to come to the Netherlands; one in eight would recommend this only in some cases, and less than one in ten respondents say they would recommend friends and family to come to the Netherlands. These figures clearly show that settled Dutch-Moroccan migrants are not only selective 'gatekeepers' anymore, who invite some co-ethnics to come to the Netherlands while refusing others, but that they have actually become 'gate closers'; closing the door for potential newcomers by discouraging them and not supporting them (see Engbersen et al., 2013).

Our theoretical argument, to conclude, would be that social networks still matter for migration. Whereas dominant migration theory stresses the positive effects of social networks on the rise and continuation of migration flows, we here saw that social networks can also have negative effects on migration. The refusal of settled migrants to support newcomers *amplifies* the direct negative effects of the macro-developments in the three 'contexts of reception' on migration.

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Table 1. Descriptive statistics

	N	%	Mean	Std. error	Min.	Max.
Sex	420					
<i>Male</i>	186	44.3				
<i>Female</i>	234	55.7				
Education	420					
<i>Low</i>	305	72.6				
<i>Intermediate</i>	105	25.0				
<i>High</i>	10	2.4				
Age	420		47.00	11.40	22.0	87.0
Main daily activities	417					
<i>Working</i>	182	43.6				
<i>Unemployed, looking for work</i>	59	14.1				
<i>Disabled, pensioned</i>	54	13.0				
<i>Other non-working (household)</i>	93	22.3				
<i>Study/Language-/integration course</i>	16	3.8				
<i>Voluntary work</i>	13	3.1				
Duration of stay	420		23.07	10.13	1.0	47.0
<i>1-10 years</i>	42	10.0				
<i>11-20 years</i>	129	30.7				
<i>20+</i>	249	59.2				
Received assistance during migration	420					
<i>None</i>	15	3.6				
<i>1 domain</i>	46	11.0				
<i>2 domains</i>	193	46.0				
<i>3 domains</i>	146	34.8				
<i>4 domains</i>	20	4.8				
Intention to give assistance today	420					
<i>None</i>	290	69.0				
<i>1 domain</i>	45	10.7				
<i>2 domains</i>	46	11.0				
<i>3 domains</i>	15	3.6				
<i>4 domains</i>	14	3.3				
<i>5 domains</i>	10	2.4				
Scale	413		0.48	0.56	0.0	2.0
Recommends to move to Netherlands	411					
<i>Yes</i>	35	8.5				
<i>In some cases but not in others</i>	50	12.2				
<i>No</i>	326	79.3				
Frequency of contact	418					
<i>Often</i>	155	37.1				
<i>Regular</i>	142	34.0				
<i>Rare or never</i>	121	28.9				
Strict immigration policies	419					
<i>Disagree</i>	36	8.6				
<i>Agree</i>	366	87.4				
<i>Don't know</i>	17	4.1				
Good economic opportunities Netherlands	412					
<i>Disagree</i>	169	41.0				
<i>Agree</i>	219	53.2				
<i>Don't know</i>	24	5.8				
Good economic opportunities Morocco	417					
<i>Disagree</i>	144	34.5				
<i>Agree</i>	205	49.2				
<i>Don't know</i>	68	16.3				
Dutch see MO people in positive way (index 0-1)	417					

SOURCE: THEMIS, 2012, Destination countries data

Table 2. Received assistance in four domains during migration

	Assistance	No assistance	Not applicable	Total
Paying traveling expenses	78.8 (327)	21.2 (88)	-	100.0 (415)
Obtaining Visa/documents	81.0 (316)	14.9 (58)	4.1 (16) ¹	100.0 (390)
Obtaining first job	55.6 (232)	25.2 (105)	19.2 (80) ²	100.0 (417)
Finding housing	18.9 (79)	6.0 (25)	75.2 (315) ³	100.0 (419)

¹ This percentage includes respondents who already had the Dutch nationality during their migration.

² This percentage includes respondents who already had a contract during their migration and respondents who have never worked at all.

³ This percentages includes respondents who came to the Netherlands to live with someone who already had a dwelling.

SOURCE: THEMIS, 2012, Destination countries data

Table 3. Intention to provide support for newcomers

	Always try to help	Help in some cases but not always	Never	Total
Paying traveling expenses	8.2 (34)	22.1 (92)	69.7 (290)	100.0 (416)
Obtaining Visa/documents	10.6 (44)	29.2 (121)	60.1 (249)	100.0 (414)
Obtaining first job	23.0 (96)	17.3 (72)	59.7 (249)	100.0 (417)
Finding housing	20.9 (87)	16.8 (70)	62.4 (260)	100.0 (417)
Accommodating someone	6.5 (27)	15.4 (64)	78.1 (325)	100.0 (416)

SOURCE: THEMIS, 2012, Destination countries data

Table 4. Cross table with received assistance during migration in the columns and the intention to give assistance today in the rows, percentages (N=420).

Intention to give assistance today	Received assistance during migration			Total
	None	1 – 2 domains	3 – 4 domains	
None	80.0	69.5	67.5	69.0
1 – 2 domains	20.0	22.2	21.1	21.7
3 – 5 domains	-	8.4	11.4	9.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

SOURCE: THEMIS, 2012, Destination countries data

Table 5. Results of OLS regression analysis with ‘intention to give assistance today’ as dependent variable and statements about immigration policies, economic opportunities and welcome, frequency of contact and personal characteristics as predicting variables (N=399).

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
	B	S.E	B	S.E	B	S.E
Constant	0.709 ***	0.088	0.789 ***	0.092	0.988 ***	0.144
Sex (0=male)	-0.178 **	0.056	-0.172 **	0.055	-0.156 **	0.055
Education (ref=low)						
<i>Medium</i>	0.141 *	0.064	0.134 *	0.063	0.081	0.063
<i>High</i>	-0.279	0.186	-0.281	0.184	-0.339 ~	0.183
Duration of stay	-0.007 *	0.003	-0.006*	0.003	-0.006 *	0.003
Frequency of contact (ref=often)						
<i>Regular</i>			-0.090	0.063	-0.090	0.062
<i>Rare or never</i>			-0.284 ***	0.066	-0.288 ***	0.066
Strict immigration policies NL (ref=disagree)						
<i>Agree</i>					-0.269 **	0.093
<i>Don't know</i>					-0.458 **	0.163
Good economic opportunities NL (ref=disagree)						
<i>Agree</i>					0.099 ~	0.055
<i>Don't know</i>					0.127	0.119
Good economic opportunities MO (ref=disagree)						
<i>Agree</i>					-0.083	0.058
<i>Don't know</i>					-0.094	0.081
NL see MO people in positive way (index 0-1)					0.141 *	0.064
N	401		401		401	
Adj. R-square	0.048		0.086		0.128	

~ p<0.100* p<0.050; ** p<0.010; *** p<0.001 (two-tailed)

SOURCE: THEMIS, 2012, Destination countries data

Endnotes

¹ In fact, Portes and Rumbaut (1990) distinguish three ‘contexts of reception’: governmental policies, labour markets and ethnic communities, whereas in later work Portes (1995) adds societal reception of migrants as a relevant ‘context of reception’. Here, we do not use ‘ethnic community’ (to provide instrumental and emotional support to migrants) as a relevant perception because this factor is almost identical with the central independent variable in our analyses (the intentions of settled migrants to support newcomers).

² The value 1 means that the respondent agrees with both statements (‘*Dutch people see Moroccan men and woman in a positive way*’), the value 0 means that the respondent disagrees with both statements.

³ We should add, however, that we checked whether Moroccan migrants who arrived in the Netherlands in the 1960s and 1970s received more assistance than Moroccan migrants who arrived in later periods. This was not the case.