Slipping through the cracks: identifying the voters of BIJ1: A study into BIJ1's voter base and their reasoning for supporting the party

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A study into BIJ1's voter base and their reasoning for supporting the party

Master Thesis

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Abstract

BIJ1 has recently joined the political arena with one seat in Parliament. This marked the formalization of a movement that has risen worldwide but mainly originated in the United States. This anti-racist movement aims to create awareness of institutional social and racial inequality. This research analyses the reasons for members of the Dutch electorate chose to vote for BIJ1. By conducting a binary logistic regression this research strives to shed light on the propensity of citizens with a migration background to vote for BIJ1. This results in a strong relationship between voting for the party and ethnic background. Furthermore, fifteen semi-structured interviews with BIJ1 voters and people who have considered voting for the party. These were used to examine the reasons behind voting for BIJ1 along the three dimensions in Dutch politics: namely the socioeconomic, cultural and moral dimensions. The socio-economic and cultural dimensions proved to be paramount to BIJ1 supporters. Although BIJ1 voters and non-voters mentioned reasons that fell within the three dimensions these categories seem to provide incomplete explanations in connection to other issues that were discussed. The results of the interviews with BIJ1 voters, as well as non-voters, have demonstrated that their reasons for voting and considering the party were predominantly connected to identity. The group of voters who considered voting for BIJ1 were often held back by the identity of the party and did not identify with these issues as deeply as BIJ1 voters did.

Introduction

Europe has experienced a rise in crises, tensions and social movements over the last decade. The migration crisis in 2015 resulted in millions of displaced refugees. The rising Islamophobia originating from terrorist attacks and the rise of ISIS combined with the subsequent ascendancy of right-wing populist nationalist parties in European countries has created social upheaval and has challenged Europe´s position on identity and culture (Ferguson & Lavalette, 2014). The present crises all confront Europe with the one uncomfortable subject it deliberately avoids; namely race and how we deal with people from different backgrounds (De Genova, 2018, p. 1765). Race is an underlying theme that is inextricably linked with Europe's history. The notion of race has taken up an important space within the public dialogue and therefore within politics (Sully & Aristide, 2021). Before 2014, the wider public was not familiar with terms such as Critical Race Theory, Black Lives Matter (BLM), or the term 'woke'. These theories or social movements attempt to highlight the colourblindness of the existing paradigm and emphasise the importance of race within society and the way institutions and policies continue to bolster inequality. This has resulted in the popularization of the term 'identity politics', which can be understood as "the use of our racial identities in political discussions" (Sully & Aristide, 2021).

Despite Europe and the Netherlands inheriting colonial histories, the public conversation pertaining to the subject of race was nearly non-existent before the BLM Movement took off in 2013. Following the high-profile homicide of Treyvon Martin, an unarmed 17-year-old black teenager who was shot and killed in the United States by a neighbourhood-watch volunteer in February 2012, the hashtag #BlackLivesMatter became frequently shared on social media platforms such as Twitter, earning the status of a 'trending topic' on Twitter's algorithm (Britannica, 2022). The second wave of the BLM movement gained momentum after the killing of George Floyd in May 2020 by a white police officer. This event inspired protests across the U.S. and internationally, inspiring conversations about race and institutional racism. In the Netherlands in particular, the discussion about racism reached an all-time high with protests against the tradition of Black Pete in the Netherlands starting at the beginning of the 2010s (Rodenberg & Wagenaar, 2016). Although race has become one of the most important factors within global and Dutch politics, the Dutch Social Democratic party (PvdA) and the Green party (Groenlinks) did not succeed in the full inclusion of topics such as anti-racism, inclusion and diversity, which led to the formation of different parties that were able to fill this void.

Due to the representative and proportional nature of the Dutch political system and the low threshold to enter Parliament, the Netherlands can be seen as a breeding ground for new parties (Otjes & de Wardt, 2020, p. 6). Recently, the Netherlands has seen an emergence of new political parties and especially so-called "ethnic-minority-interest parties" (Lubbers et al., 2021, p. 2). In 2017, DENK entered the national Parliament with three seats in the Dutch legislature and kept these during the 2021 elections. The party was established after a split from the Social Democratic party (Partij van de Arbeid) by Tunahan Kuzu and Selçuk Öztürk. DENK has enjoyed great support from the Dutch-Turkish, Dutch-Moroccan and Muslim communities (Otjes & Krouwel, 2019, p. 1159). The entrance of these ethnic-minority-interest parties has given rise to a body of literature regarding the political participation and representation of citizens with a migration background in the Netherlands (Otjes & Krouwel, 2019; Lubbers et al., 2021; Vermeulen et al., 2020). These parties signal a break from the usual perception that immigrants vote for left-wing parties and in the case of the Netherlands mainly for the Social Democratic party (Bird et al., 2011, p. 76).

Another party that actively seeks to embrace the political inclusion of immigrant voters is BIJ1 (formerly known as Artikel 1), which first obtained a seat in the municipality of Amsterdam in 2018. BIJ1 became the second Dutch political party to focus on citizens' migration backgrounds to join the national Parliament in the national elections in 2021, obtaining one seat. Because of the Surinamese roots of the party leader and the focus on the Dutch-Surinamese and the Dutch-former Antillean community, great support from within these groups for BIJ1 would be expected. The Dutch-Surinamese is the second largest ethnic community in the Netherlands, accounting for four seats in Parliament (Lubbers et al., 2021, p. 5). However, despite the fact that over half of the candidates on BIJ1's list had a Dutch-Surinamese or Dutch-Antillean background, these communities have not been found to show great support to the party (Otjes and Spierings, 2021). The statistical model that can be deployed on immigrant parties like DENK, does not provide a consistent explanation of the voter base for BIJ1. The existence of ethnic and immigrant identity and the explicit political representation of citizens from these backgrounds also manifestly assumed political allegiance, however in the case of BIJ1 the prospect of voting for the party is not as strongly correlated with these communities as it is with other immigrant parties (Lubbers et al., 2021, p. 14).

Where the support for DENK can be found in the Dutch-Turkish and Dutch-Moroccan communities, there has been no evidence that the electoral base of BIJ1 can be exclusively

found in migrant communities. The citizens that vote for BIJ1 seem to be more diverse than voters with a Dutch-Surinamese or Dutch-Antillean background. This signals that BIJ1 is not a clear-cut example of an ethnic-minority-interest party, but rather a party that strives to represent radical equality. Due to the progressive, intersectional and anti-racism agenda of BIJ1, the party has institutionalized the notion of race into Dutch politics. The combination of anti-racism, anti-capitalism and the focus on migrant communities the way BIJ1 has showcased, cannot be found in any other party. The lack of understanding of BIJ1 supporters indicates a gap in the knowledge about these voters.

The people who did vote for BIJ1 have remained largely undetected, including their reasons for choosing to vote for this party. This thesis will deploy a multi-method analysis into the voter base of BIJ1. Firstly it will quantitively examine the inclination to vote BIJ1 for citizens with migration backgrounds. This will be based on the Dutch Parliamentary Election Study (DPES/NKO), in order to determine whether the conclusions produced in the analysis based on the Dutch Ethnic Minority Election Study (DEMES) by Lubbers et al. (2021) are the same. This intends to examine whether BIJ1 differs from other immigrant parties and therefore requires an alternative analytical approach with regard to their migrant voter base.

Since quantitative research has not provided definitive answers about who votes for BIJ1 and why qualitative research will be employed. Therefore, this thesis will analyse fifteen qualitative semi-structured interviews to gain insight into the voters of BIJ1 and their reasoning for voting for this party. BIJ1 voters will be used for the interviews, as well as people who considered voting for BIJ1. The latter will be useful as a control group and in understanding potential BIJ1 voters better and their reasoning for choosing a different party than BIJ1. In conclusion, this thesis will try to answer the research question: *What are the reasons for voters to choose to vote for BIJ1?*

The case of BIJ1

BIJ1 (previously known as *Artikel 1*) is a relatively new political party in the Netherlands. It was founded on the 24th of December 2016 by Sylvana Simons after she announced a break with DENK. She expressed that she did not feel supported by the party after receiving multiple death threats. She also revealed that DENK did not uphold their promises for a more progressive stance toward LGBT+ rights and the female perspective. After having to change the name of the party due to legal affairs from Artikel 1, named after the first article in the Dutch Constitution that outlaws discrimination, the party continued under the name BIJ1. The list of candidates that was drawn up for the elections of 2017 included public-figures people with Surinamese heritage, such as Gloria Wekker, a writer and professor in gender studies and sexuality. Even though the party did not receive any seats in the 2017 national elections it did receive a seat in the Amsterdam municipality elections of 2018. After winning a seat in Parliament during the 2021 national elections, Sylvana Simons gave up her seat in the Amsterdam municipality and claimed the seat in Parliament. For the national elections of 2021, the candidate list included Quinsy Gario, co-founder of the group Kick Out Black Pete.

BIJ1 was founded on the principles of intersectionalism and anti-discrimination and aims to end all forms of discrimination, including racism, sexism, validism, homophobia and transphobia, in all layers of society (Wekker & Schinkel, 2022). The intersectional approach of BIJ1 tries to highlight the interaction and connection between gender, race, ethnicity, class, sexuality, religion and age (p. 15). These factors lead to a difference in wealth, health, education and overall ability to flourish in society. Intersectionality highlights the power differences between people within society. Day-to-day life for a black lesbian female does not look the same as a middle-class white heterosexual male. According to BIJ1, Dutch society was formed under colonialist and racist pretences that influence society to this day. These effects are seen in healthcare, the police, education and the job market. By highlighting institutional and systemic discrimination, BIJ1 connected with movements like BLM, Critical Race Theory and being 'woke'. Sylvana Simons even stated that she "was not born woke", but needed time to undergo her journey to understand and see all the systemic oppression in the Netherlands (EenVandaag, 2022).

Theoretical Framework

Ethnicity

As previously mentioned, BIJ1's electoral support does not seem to be predominantly composed of members of the Dutch-Surinamese or Dutch-Antillean community. BIJ1 rather emphasise their ties to and focus on ethnic minorities. The party displays broader support based on cultural and ethnic diversity than parties such as DENK. As demonstrated by Lubbers et al. (2021), based on DEMES, there is no statistical connection between the propensity to vote for BIJ1 and being part of the Dutch-Surinamese or Dutch-Antillean migrant communities. This can partially be explained by the mismatch of values held by the party and the citizens of the Netherlands with Dutch-Surinamese and Dutch-Antillean backgrounds. These communities can be broadly described as morally conservative (Lubbers et al., 2021, p. 9-10). The values that BIJ1 articulates are conflicting with these values and the party can be characterized as an anti-capitalist, anti-discrimination, feminist far-left party (p. 5). According to the Dutch voting advice website *Kieskompas*, BIJ1 is even more left-wing and progressive than the Greens or the Socialist Party (SP).

The party emphasises the power relations and oppression that can be identified among class, gender and race. An additional explanation put forward in the current literature for this mismatch between the immigrant community and BIJ1 is that the Suriname population is diverse and consists of several ethnic groups. The largest groups were Afro-Suriname or Creoles descended from former slaves that were transported from Africa as part of the transatlantic slave trade. By contrast, there is also a significant Indo-Surinamese or Hindustani population. This community formed in Suriname following the abolition of slavery with the signature of the Anglo-Dutch Treaties in the 1870s. As a result, indentured servants from India were sent to work under indentured servitude in Suriname in order to inexpensively replace the free labourers lost by plantation owners with the abolition of slavery in the Dutch colonies (Vermeulen et al., 2020b, p. 771). This means that the Dutch-Surinamese community is not as homogenous as other communities such as the Dutch-Turkish or Dutch-Moroccan communities.

With Surinamese independence imminent, in the span of a year, in 1974, more than 50.000 Surinamese citizens migrated to the Netherlands and primarily settled in a concentration in the southeast of Amsterdam (Vermeulen et al., 2020b, p. 771). When examining the municipal elections of 2018 in Amsterdam, BIJ1 was the largest party in *Stadsloket Zuidoost.* This suggests that even though there is no statistical relationship between

voting for BIJ1 and a Dutch-Surinamese and Dutch-Antillean background, one of the groups voting for BIJ1 are citizens with a migration background.

1. *Ethnic hypothesis: the propensity to vote for BIJ1 does not increase with citizens that have a migration background*

Three dimensions

Originally, the Dutch political landscape could be seen as a two-dimensional space, characterized by the socio-economic left-right distinction and morally progressive or conservative values (Pellikaan et al., 2007). Socio-economic leftist values are defined by a drive to narrow the wealth gap between rich and poor people and the strive for a welfare state. The political right, on the other hand, supports the maintenance of a free market economy and small government. Morally progressives are proponents of policies regarding abortion, euthanasia, feminism and the LGBT+ community, whereas conservatism emphasises family values and individualism.

However, since the introduction of migration issues in the Dutch political system, the economic and moral dimensions have fallen short. A new, cultural dimension, has been introduced to the political domain (Pellikaan et al., 2007; Pellikaan et al., 2018). This dimension is defined by immigration and integration. Some parties value globalization and multiculturalism, while others favour a closed immigration policy. The current Dutch political system can be explained along these three dimensions, socio-economic, cultural and moral (Andeweg, 2014). When examining the position of BIJ1 within the political landscape, the party has a prominent voice in all three of these dimensions. Therefore, it would be expected that the reasoning for voting for BIJ1 will fit within this conception of the Dutch political sphere. To explore the reasoning for voting for BIJ1, these dimensions will be used as a guide to the expectations within this thesis. By using the qualitative method of interviewing, this thesis will investigate the electorate of BIJ1 and their reasoning for voting for this party during elections and therefore will gain insight into the political space occupied by this new party.

The traditional left-right distinction of political parties has long been associated and almost accepted as synonymous with the socio-economic dimension (Van der Brug & Van Spanje, 2009, p. 317). However, this approach has been criticized and the existence of a cultural dimension has been emphasized (Kriesi et al., 2006). Van der Brug and Van Spanje (2009) have argued that voter preferences are complex and support for leftist economic

policies is not identical to support for progressive cultural values. However, an even broader and multidimensional conception of voting preferences might be more successful. As highlighted by DENKs support base, voters might have a positive attitude towards immigration but hold more conservative views on subjects like female emancipation, abortion and LGBT+ rights. Therefore, a threefold approach will be applied to understand the reasoning for voters to vote or consider voting for BIJ1. Not only will the socio-economic and cultural dimensions be considered, but also the moral dimension.

The socio-economic dimension

With respect to the socio-economic dimension, the left favours a more equal playground and actively supports government intervention and welfare redistribution (Otjes, 2018, p. 647). The socioeconomic dimension will be operationalized by concepts such as social equality and government intervention. BIJ1 has been characterized as a far-left party, with a socialist economic agenda (Lubbers et al., 2021, p. 5). On an economic level, BIJ1 advocates increasing the national minimum wage to 14 euros per hour as well as an increase in wages for the public sector, a 30-hour work week, greater taxation of high incomes, the nationalizing of banks, pension funds and public transport (Programmacommissie BIJ1, 2021). Since BIJ1 has established itself on the far left of the political spectrum and expressed a definitively anti-capitalist position, it has likely drawn support from voters that support leftist ideas. Given the anti-capitalist standpoints that BIJ1 portrays, the expectation is that voters who identify with the (far) left ideology will consider voting for BIJ1.

2. *Socio-economic hypothesis: voters who support far-leftist economic views are more likely to vote for BIJ1.*

The cultural dimension

The progressive cultural dimension will be operationalized by concepts such as pro-immigration and globalization (Häusermann & Kriesi, 2015, p. 9; Van der Brug & Van Spanje, 2009, p. 310). BIJ1 believes in the notion that no human being can be illegal and that travelling is a universal human right (Programmacommissie BIJ1, 2021). BIJ1 supports a wider migration policy with European cooperation at the heart to combat human exploitation. BIJ1 believes that Western countries are actively participating in conflicts around the world, making it their responsibility to humanely care for asylum seekers by ensuring that the EU is more accessible to refugees, that safer flight routes will be put in place and asylum procedures will be simplified. BIJ1 is also in favour of the broadening of the term refugees, to include

climate refugees, who were displaced due to major climate changes in their country of origin. Since BIJ1 promotes a pro-immigration policy and focuses on immigrants, this will appeal to voters who hold progressive cultural values.

3. *Cultural hypothesis: voters who hold progressive cultural views are more likely to vote for BIJ1.*

The moral dimension

Since the beginning of BIJ1's political program, the party was established on the premise of non-discrimination. BIJ1 initially launched its political platform symbolically using the name Article 1 (*Artikel 1*) – a reference to the first article in the Dutch constitution. Their party program has been largely focused on black citizens (Lubbers et al., 2021, p. 2). According to Lubbers et al. (2021), BIJ1 voters tend to encounter more discrimination (p. 18). BIJ1 does not only focus on issues surrounding migrant communities, such as anti-discrimination but also on affairs such as LGBT+ issues and policies to strengthen the position of women (Lubbers et al., 2021, p. 4). Not only people with a Dutch-Suriname background were represented on the candidate list of BIJ1, but also people who identify as gay, transgender and queer (p. 5). BIJ1 holds more progressive views within the moral dimension, including the LGBT+ community and the feminist agenda than other immigrant parties. When it comes to the voting behaviour of people within the LGBT+ community, there is a higher probability of voting for leftist parties and in particular social democratic parties (Turnbull-Dugarte, 2020). These voters display a more positive attitude towards the EU and immigration than their heterosexual counterparts (Turnbull-Dugarte, 2021, p. 1844). Therefore, the expectation is that the electorate of BIJ1 will consist of people who hold moral progressive views. The morally progressive dimension is characterized by a pro-LGBT+, feminist, pro-abortion and euthanasia position. BIJ1 supports an intersectional position and states that concepts such as feminism, discrimination and economic inequality are linked and can be viewed as one, which is one of the party's core issues (Lubbers et al., 2021).

4. *Moral hypothesis: voters who hold progressive moral views are more likely to vote for BIJ1.*

In sum, this thesis will employ a multi-method analysis of the voters' base of BIJ1. Starting with an examination of the ethnic hypothesis in connection to immigrant communities by employing a quantitative analysis of the NKO. Furthermore, it will analyse the broader electorate using a multidimensional conceptualization of voter preferences,

looking at the socioeconomic, cultural and moral dimensions. Voters who hold progressive, leftist views on these dimensions might consider voting for BIJ1. The electoral support for BIJ1 will come from multiple directions, within migrant communities and outside of them, something that is unique for an ethnic-minority-interest party.

Case selection

The Netherlands has experienced multiple waves of immigration, starting as early as the sixteenth century with Protestants, Jews and Huguenots. In this era, the Dutch were praised for being a tolerant and accepting nation, providing a safe haven for people with differing interpretations of the world (Berkvens-Stevelinck et al., 1997). Immigration continued into the 20th century, with Italian, Portuguese, Turkish and Moroccan guest workers migrating in the 1960s (Jennissen, 2013, p. 15). Separately, following the independence of the former Dutch East Indies in 1949 and Suriname in 1975, a stream of postcolonial migration of citizens from these countries began (p.12). These large streams of immigration to the Netherlands resulted in a multicultural composition, where more than 25% of the population has a migration background (CBS, 2022). In spite of this, how does a historically tolerant country such as the Netherlands. with such a diverse population and multicultural history, resulting in a political climate in which citizens from these communities do not feel represented enough by mainstream political parties?

One of the reasons why the discussion pertaining to race and discrimination takes place within the Netherlands is explained in the book White innocence by Gloria Wekker (2021). Wekker argues that in the 400 years of colonial rule, the Dutch did not open up the societal conversation up about race, but rather, have been ignoring the topic altogether. The tolerant reputation of the country has worked against itself. This tolerance paradox stems from the long history of pillarisation *(verzuiling).* This separation of Dutch society into religious groups and their related political ideology resulted in almost no contact between certain pillars and their supporters. This segregation did instil a level of tolerance, but no acceptance. This notion of tolerance is also applied to immigrants, where the majority is keeping the minority at a safe distance. Tolerance is therefore inherently hierarchical and keeps the substantive conversation about institutional racism at bay, due to the common belief that the Dutch think of themselves as post- or non-racial, but this notion only keeps systemic racism alive.

The Netherlands has one of the most proportional political systems in the world (Andeweg & Irwin, 2014, p. 98). Due to its low electoral threshold, a large number of political parties have emerged. For parties to gain access to Parliament, they need to acquire at least one of the one hundred and fifty seats during the elections. Because of the minimal entry barrier, the lower house of Parliament currently consists of 20 political parties. Therefore, the Netherlands can be seen as a perfect system to study small parties that have recently appeared

in the political landscape and represent a group of voters who have not been represented before.

As a result of the representative nature of the Dutch political system, there has been a rise in ethnic-minority-interest parties since 2017, such as DENK and BIJ1 (van der Zwan et al., 2020, p. 3). Since BIJ1 does not draw the same support from immigrant communities as other ethnic-minority-interest parties, their rise to Parliament has remained largely unexplained. BIJ1 does not draw exclusive support from voters with an immigration background but also finds its electoral support elsewhere. The party has a unique character, considering its focus on anti-racism, anti-capitalism and their intersectional agenda (Lubbers et al., 2021, p. 5). It tries to break open the conversation about institutional racism and discrimination that happens within Dutch society. This party identity differentiates BIJ1 from other migrant parties across Europe and therefore can be considered a deviant case (Gerring, 2007, p. 105-106). Since previous models poorly explain the success and entrance of BIJ1 in Parliament, this thesis will attempt to explain the reasoning and explanations for considering voting for BIJ1.

Due to the intersectional agenda of BIJ1, they have filled a gap within the political landscape that has not been occupied by other political parties. Even though other parties support anti-capitalism and oppose discrimination, BIJ1 holds a distinct place in Dutch politics due to its emphasis on the immigrant community and its interconnected view of the world. Intersectionalism, developed by Black feminist Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989, is a framework that examines the social and political aspects concerning discrimination and privilege (Thompson, 2020, p. 248). The intersectional agenda is by nature closely tied to global movements, such as Black Lives Matter (BLM) because it highlights systemic oppression that is connected through all layers of society (Thompson, 2020, p. 241). This issue, which focuses on racial inequality, systemic racism and police violence has started in the U.S. but has also progressed to European countries. In the Netherlands, around 5000 people joined a BLM protest in Amsterdam on the 1st of June 2020, even though only 500 were expected. This unexpected turnout has shown that these movements have reached the Netherlands and a substantial amount of citizens are in support of this movement. An example that originated in the Netherlands is the protest against Black Pete (*Zwarte Piet*). This character is displayed as the companion of Saint Nicholas (*Sinterklaas*) and is characterized by blackface, gold earrings and red lips. This increasingly controversial figure and its racial markers have caused protests and been the centre of discussion since 2011 (Rodenberg &

Wagenaar, 2016, p. 717). Sylvana Simons, the party leader of BIJ1 has spoken out against Black Pete on multiple occasions and has proposed to ban him from the public space and media. The entry of BIJ1 into the Dutch political landscape can be seen as a political translation of this movement. By entering Parliament, BIJ1 has presented itself as a culturally progressive option for voters on the left. The rise of intersectional politics has first become formally established in Parliament by the emergence of BIJ1 in the Dutch Parliament. This formalization provides the opportunity to study this phenomenon and especially its voter base. By examining the reasoning for people to consider voting for BIJ1, new light can be shed on the motivations of people to vote for parties that are on the far left end of the political spectrum and might not have felt represented in politics before.

Research Methods

To understand and examine the reasoning for voting BIJ1, this study will benefit from both quantitative and qualitative research. Not only will this thesis use statistical data to examine the ethnic hypothesis but also qualitative research in the form of semi-structured interviews will be conducted.

Quantitative research

Firstly, this thesis will conduct a quantitative study, using the Dutch Parliamentary Election Study (DPES/NKO), which was conducted in 2021 for the Parliamentary elections. The research will assess whether citizens with a non-western migration background have a higher probability of voting BIJ1, in comparison to Dutch citizens without this background. Since the NKO does not differentiate between different non-western migration backgrounds, the analysis will treat the group with first and second-generation migration backgrounds as a unitary group. Using a quantitative model that will estimate the likelihood to vote for this party, this research will aim to analyse the migration background of BIJ1 supporters and whether this is statistically relevant. As shown by Lubbers et al. (2021), using the Dutch Ethnic Minority Election Study (DEMES), there has been no significant relationship between voters with a Dutch-Surinamese or Dutch-Antillean background and voting for BIJ1. As BIJ1 voters have been proven to be more diverse than just the migrant community which its leadership is predominantly derived from, this research does not expect to provide a comprehensive explanation of BIJ1's voter base.

In addition to the assessment of the migration background hypothesis, this thesis also endeavours to analyse the economic, cultural and moral dimensions. These will be examined by using questions that reflect the dimension as a proxy. For the economic dimension, the statement 'Income differences should be smaller' is used. The answers to this statement range from 1 to 7, with the answers from 4 to 7 will be coded as economically left-wing. For the cultural dimension, the statement 'foreigners should keep their own culture' is used. The answers for this statement have the same range and answers from 1 to 3 are coded as culturally left-wing. For the moral dimension, the statement 'same-sex couples should have the same right to adopt as heterosexual couples' is used. The range for this statement is from 1 to 5, with answers 1 or 2 being coded as morally left-wing. Furthermore, independent variables such as age, gender and level of education will be used as control variables. In this analysis, primarily the ethnic hypothesis will be examined, but it will also shed light on the

economic, cultural and moral dimensions of Dutch politics and their relationship with BIJ1 voters.

Interviews

Moreover, in order to explore the reasoning for voting for BIJ1, multiple in-depth semi-structured interviews will be conducted. To ensure that the reasoning can be understood sufficiently, the choice for the interviews to be semi-structured assures a profound comprehension that could not be achieved with a structured interview. Since the interview will be about personal preferences and stories, the semi-structured form ensures that further questions for clarification can be asked if the conversation goes to a particular topic that the interviewee wants to discuss. Voters who voted for BIJ1 in the national elections in 2021 or the municipal elections of 2018 or 2022 were asked to participate in the interview.

During the interview, the questions will be structured around an interview guide. This will provide a guide during the semi-structured interview and provide follow-up questions. Since the respondents will be separated into a group who voted for BIJ1 and a group who only considered voting, the question list for the latter will contain additional questions to identify the reason behind why they eventually voted for a different party and which party this was. The questions that are used in this guide have been based on the theoretical framework and the literature and can be found in Appendix A. Since most participants will hold leftist economical and progressive moral and cultural views, the questions will not ask about their views on these respective dimensions, but rather let the interviewees explain their reasoning and most important aspect to vote for BIJ1 or why they did not vote for the party.

The objective of understanding the exact justification for voting for the party will be achieved by comparing two groups. In total, fifteen interviews will be held. Firstly, one group voted for BIJ1 and a second group will include participants who considered voting for the party but in the end did not. The first group consists of eight participants and the second group of seven. This will ensure that the drivers behind this choice can be identified by not using too few people within one group. By comparing these two groups, the exact reason for deciding to vote for BIJ1 can be traced. The answers of the group of voters who considered voting for BIJ1 will showcase the difference between people who stuck to the party and people whose interest was sparked but in the end, decided that a different party fitted better with their ideological disposition. Firstly, the interviews with BIJ1 voters will be held and if certain topics surface consistently that are not mentioned in the interview, these can be added and

posed to the voters that only considered voting for the party. To achieve a representative result, only people who are not active members[1] of BIJ1 will be interviewed.

Due to ethical considerations, this study cannot ask about certain identifiable characteristics. When conducting the interviews, diversity in interviewees will be taken into account. By spreading the call for interviews on different platforms and separate locations, diversity will be pursued. The interviewees were found using online platforms, such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Furthermore, flyers were put up in student housing, Leiden University campuses and community centres. These public locations will ensure the replicability of the research. Since voters with a higher level of education have a greater probability of voting for BIJ1, the interviews were mostly with people attending universities (Lubbers et al., 2021, p. 16). Since BIJ1 voters have been mostly found in cities and the party booked great successes in student cities like Utrecht and Nijmegen, the expectation is that most of its supporters are of a younger age. Therefore, the recruiting of respondents that are between 20-30 will not pose a problem. In Appendix C all the details of the interviewees can be found.

The data analysis will entail three steps: data reduction, coding and drawing up conclusions (Halperin & Heath, 2017, p. 304) Unstructured interviews will require the systematic organization of the categories that are presented in the theoretical framework. A codebook will be used to analyse the raw interview data after the transcription of the interviews. This process can be seen as circular, where open coding is used to initially develop the themes that will most likely appear in the interview (DeCuir-Gunby, 2011, p. 139). However, these themes need to be re-examined after the interviews have taken place to analyse whether the expectations have been set correctly or the concepts need to be widened. Firstly, theory-driven codes will be used and together with data-driven codes will be formed into a codebook. The codebook can be found in Appendix B. After the coding is complete, the analysis will take place and conclusions can be drawn from the answers that the respondents gave.

After carrying out this quantitative and qualitative research, the understanding of BIJ1's supporters will be broadened and better explained. By combining multiple methods, the research gap will first be tested by the ethnic hypothesis using a quantitative binary logistical regression. Whereafter, the qualitative research will delve deeper into the reasoning

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[1] A so-called *sleeping member (slapend lid),* somebody who does not actively engage in the political party.

for choosing to vote for BIJ1. Due to the nature of the research, it will not present irrefutable conclusions, but rather provide a compelling insight into the reasoning behind voting for BIJ1.

Results

Quantitative research

By conducting a binary logistic regression, the likelihood to vote for BIJ1 was analysed through the lens of a select number of factors. Firstly, a migration background was included to determine whether this is linked to the likelihood to vote for BIJ1. Since the NKO does not distinguish between different groups of migrants, the group of first- and second-generation non-Western immigrants were used for this analysis. This dictates that the migration background of the respondents cannot be further divided into specific groups, nonetheless conclusions on the effect on non-western migration backgrounds can be demonstrated.

The three earlier mentioned dimensions, the socio-economic, cultural and moral have been assessed. For the socio-economic dimension, the statement 'income differences should be smaller' has been used to indicate the respondent's opinion on the economic dimension. The cultural dimension was applied through the statement 'foreigners should keep their own culture'. For the moral dimension, the statement 'same-sex couples should have the same right to adopt as heterosexual couples´ has been used. This gauges the stance on progressive moral values of the respondents. The dependent variable was coded as 1 = voted for BIJ1 and 0 = voted for a different party. Several control variables have been added, such as age, gender and education level.

Results of Binary Logistic Regression			
	B	**S.E.**	**Sig.**
Age	-.187	.093	*
Gender	.476	.614	
Highest level of Education	.300	.178	
1st or 2nd generation non-western migration background	2.180	.619	***
Economically left-wing	16.136	1107.167	
Culturally left-wing	1.947	.778	*
Morally left-wing	-.492	.739	
N			2528
-2 Log Likelihood			123.485
Cox & Snell R^2			.020
Nagelkerke R^2			.295

*Note: *** = p<0.001; ** = p <0.01; * = p<0.05*

Table: Dependent variable = Vote for BIJ1. Independent variables: Age, Gender, Highest Level of Education (completed), 1st or 2nd generation non-western migration background, economically left-wing, culturally left-wing, morally left-wing.

When analyzing the binary logistic regression, it becomes evident that there are positive relationships between voting for BIJ1 and gender, education, and the economical dimension, but a negative relationship concerning the moral dimension. However, these results are not statistically significant at the (p<0.05)-level.

On the other hand, the results for the following variables are significant at the (p<0.05)-level: Age, Culturally left-wing voters and those of a first or second-generation non-Western migration background. Age shows a weak negative relationship with voting for BIJ1. Meaning that as the age of respondents increases, the likelihood of voting for BIJ1 decreases. This indicates that BIJ1 does draw support from younger voters. Furthermore, the cultural dimension is displayed as having a strong positive relationship. This implies that when voters are in favour of progressive cultural values, the likelihood of voting for BIJ1 increases significantly. In addition, the interaction between having a non-Western migration background and voting for BIJ1 also shows a strong positive relationship. Since the NKO does not differentiate between migration backgrounds, it is impossible to know which migration background in particular is attracted to BIJ1. This implies that unlike previous research suggested, the likelihood of voting for BIJ1 does increase when the voters have a non-Western migration background. Therefore, the *ethnic hypothesis* that suggests that the propensity to vote for BIJ1 increases with citizens that have a migration background can be refuted.

Interviews

The results of the interviews will be discussed according to the three dimensions proposed earlier. Since the interviews were conducted in Dutch, all quotations that are used in this research are translated.

The socio-economic dimension

In both groups, BIJ1 voters and non-BIJ1 voters, the socio-economic dimension was mentioned frequently. For example, a BIJ1 voter indicated:

 "My background is one from the lower classes within the economy and there used to be little money. Therefore, I attach great importance to equal opportunities."

Some voters deem their left-wing political position as part of their identity and therefore voting for BIJ1 becomes a logical choice. For instance, another participant declared:

"A friend of mine is enjoying a very elite master's program in Switzerland, while I also know another friend of mine who grew up in Osdorp had the exact same dream but of course can never do this program"

Since BIJ1 promotes equal economic opportunities, voters often found this to be a reason to vote for the party. Furthermore, participants who did not vote for BIJ1 were also stating the importance of their position against anti-capitalism. A non-BIJ1 voter stated:

"It is one of the few parties that dares to resist very hard and others might see this as a taboo, such as flirting with anti-capitalism."

Additionally, a theme that was mentioned in multiple interviews was the fact that BIJ1 presented an alternative to the current capitalist system. BIJ1 puts forward a different framework than the other parties in Parliament and openly criticises capitalism. Even non-BIJ1 voters state that the parties that they voted for were not as vocal on anti-capitalism as BIJ1. Therefore, the *socio-economic hypothesis* that suggests that voters who support far-leftist economic views are more likely to vote for BIJ1, can be accepted.

The cultural dimension

Within the cultural dimension, BIJ1's slogan of 'radical equality' was often mentioned. In some cases, this was referred to in the economic sense, but this most frequently referred to the equal rights of marginalised groups. When asked about the main reason why participants voted for BIJ1, many mentioned reasons within the cultural dimension. One voter explains it as:

"I think a lot of people don't have a voice in politics. For example, you don't see a lot of people of colour, you don't see people who have a physical disability and few people who have a different religion."

Another prominent recurring factor which motivated interview participants to vote for BIJ1 was its diversity and inclusion of people with different backgrounds. Many people experience high levels in everyday life. One voter stated:

"It's literally my life and that of so many more"

The issue of anti-racism and anti-discrimination that is central to the party is also often mentioned. According to the interviewees, BIJ1 successfully provides a party for people who value diversity and inclusivity the most. Many participants reveal that other parties are not as

convincing on the issue of including people with a migration background. One BIJ1 voter voices:

" I would never vote for a party that isn't firmly committed to people of colour."

Even for non-BIJ1 voters, the radical equality that BIJ1 stands for is a very important issue. Combined with the anti-capitalist position of BIJ1, the equality that BIJ1 expresses for marginalized groups is one of the most frequently mentioned reasons for considering voting for BIJ1. A non-BIJ1 voter discloses:

"Because they [BIJ1] want a society where everyone is included and where everyone is free to be whomever they want to be."

Accordingly, the *cultural hypothesis* claiming that voters who hold progressive cultural views are more likely to vote for BIJ1 has to be accepted.

The moral dimension

The principle justification that voters and non-voters of BIJ1 discussed related to the socio-economic and cultural dimensions, however, a few also mentioned the moral dimension. One female BIJ1 voter declared:

"I live for the fact that women are always five-zero behind and all we want is that the score is zero-zero."

Not only female voters described reasoning within the confines of the moral dimension. A male BIJ1 voter expressed:

'Some people may think [that BIJ1] is against the white man, but that's not true at all. I think that if we arrange [equality], it will also be a nicer country for me as a white man."

This reiterated the message that BIJ1 is not just a party for people with a migration background, but other parts of society also support and endorse the message that BIJ1 conveys. Even though the moral dimension has not been mentioned nearly as much as the other two dimensions, the *moral hypothesis* that claims that voters who hold progressive moral views are more likely to vote for BIJ1 has to be accepted.

Discussion

Despite the fact that BIJ1 voters and non-voters mentioned reasons that fell within all of the three dimensions of Dutch politics as proposed by Andeweg (2014), these categories seem to provide an incomplete explanation for some other issues that were discussed. The results of the interviews with the group that voted for BIJ1 at the national elections in 2021 are mostly based on identity. According to Shayo (2009), people vote in accordance with their identity, instead of only conforming to their economic self-interest (p. 148). Therefore, voters choose BIJ1 because it is aligned with their identity. Identity issues are tied to culture, language, race or religion (Ansolabehere & Puy, 2016, p. 78), whereas positional issues are tied to a certain group that shares viewpoints and characteristics. This includes the traditional economic left-right dimension, which is more about policy choices (p. 80). The identity of a party is also more difficult to change than its left-right position.

The group of BIJ1 voters, especially those with a migration background, indicated that a large part of the reason for voting for the party was their stance against racism, discrimination and subsequently the intersectional agenda that they follow. Where other parties on the left do mention racism, BIJ1 has made the concept of inequality the focus point of the party ideology. It is no coincidence that their party program begins with their stance on racism and colonialism. Therefore, voters with a migration background maintain the belief that they are better represented by BIJ1 than by other leftist parties.

For interview participants who eventually decided to vote for political parties other than BIJ1, it seems that their position on the economic, cultural and moral dimensions did not prevent them from choosing the party. The group of voters who considered voting for BIJ1 were often held back by the identity of the party and did not identify with these issues as deeply as BIJ1 voters did. Potential voters agreed with the ideology of the party overall but found that certain issues were underexposed compared to racism. Therefore, they found themselves better represented by other parties that did highlight the concerns that these voters had.

The voters who considered voting for BIJ1, but chose not to often found other issues better represented by the party that they eventually voted for. Issues such as animal rights, climate change and poverty reduction. These parties include the Animal Party (Partij voor de Dieren), The Green Party and the Socialist Party (SP). Although BIJ1 does include these topics in their party programme, the interviewees found that these subjects were better represented at other

parties. Moreover, voters mentioned that another reason to not vote for BIJ1 is their continuous focus on issues surrounding identity. These voters did not have the same connections to topics such as discrimination or the LGBT+ community.

Separately, this group of interview participants also frequently mentioned their perception of the party´s success. It was suggested that there was uncertainty as to whether BIJ1 would receive the minimum number of votes to obtain a seat in Parliament. The new character of the party influenced these voters to approach the party with reluctance in order to avoid ´losing´ their vote in the event that the threshold was not met. The parties that the potential BIJ1 voters ended up deciding on were parties that were more established than BIJ1, but these voters indicated they would vote for the party if it was more established within the Parliamentary democracy.

Additionally, the interviewed potential voters found that the image of BIJ1 was often one of radical activism, which resulted in an image that BIJ1 would be less capable and less willing to collaborate with other political parties. This is a practical element that many deem essential in the Dutch political system of its multiparty nature. However, this radical nature did result in more trust from potential voters. These voters expressed that BIJ1 would not compromise on their values as rapidly as other parties, increasing the difficulty of working with other political parties.

As demonstrated in the results, the way in which the current Dutch political system is organised does not lend to the success of BIJ1 and its voters. The primary reason for voting for BIJ1 is inextricably linked with their identity politics and the way in which their voters are attracted to this, not because their values align on the three political dimensions.

Conclusion

BIJ1 has recently joined the political arena with one seat in Parliament. This marked the formalization of a movement that has risen worldwide but mainly originated in the United States. This anti-racist movement tries to create awareness of institutional social and racial inequality. It gained momentum and piqued public interest after the death of George Floyd and the rise of the Black Lives Matter movement. The Netherlands was not immune to the influence of this development either. In June 2020 more than 5000 people gathered on the Dam square for a BLM protest and the Black Pete discussion had culminated in increasingly intense protest. The institutionalisation of BIJ1 as an established factor within Dutch politics, which is possible due to the low threshold to enter Parliament, grants the opportunity to examine the voter base of the party. This can bring about an interesting insight into the reasoning behind voting for BIJ1 and who those voters are. Despite the fact that BIJ1 has been commonly characterised as an "ethnic-minority-interest party", this seems to be a shallow interpretation of the party. BIJ1 is centred around the theory of intersectionalism. This framework highlights that factors such as class, gender and race intersect and create different experiences for different people, resulting in both privileges and discrimination within society.

Since intersectionality is not solely based on race, it is understandable that a Dutch-Surinamese or Antillean background is not an indicator for voting for BIJ1. Even though previous research suggested that there is no significant relationship between the likelihood of voting for BIJ1 and particular migration backgrounds, there is a statistical connection between first- and second-generation non-western immigrants and voting for BIJ1. Paired with a statistically significant positive relationship for the cultural dimension, regarding immigration and the tolerance for foreign cultures. Additionally, age also plays an important role in the likelihood to vote for BIJ1. In connection with the results from the interviews, identity also plays a significant role in the reasoning for voting for BIJ1. As its previous name, *Artikel 1*, already suggested, anti-racism is an important subject within the party. This focus on equal treatment has also resulted in strong advocacy of rights for other marginalized groups within society. Because of this, BIJ1 attracts a lot of identity voters. These people consider themselves as part of a group that fights for the same cause. BIJ1 voters are attracted mostly by the party's stance on racism. Also, the fact that BIJ1 promotes a different system than the neoliberal capitalist system that other parties advocate for or at least acquiesce to, provides

them with an additional base of support. The moral dimension seems to be the least mentioned reason for voting for the party.

Since this research is conducted for a master's thesis, there are some limitations to the study. While the analysis does provide insight into the reasoning of BIJ1's voter base, the restricted scope of this research, consisting of fifteen interviews, would benefit from a more representative sample. Further and more extensive research is needed as well in general within such hard-to-reach migrant communities. Furthermore, voters who responded to the call for interviews are probably people who have an interest in politics and/or are able openly to discuss their reasoning for voting for a party quite easily. Therefore, this research can draw conclusions from the interviews but it must remain sensitive to this bias. Other groups might have voted for BIJ1 but are more difficult to approach for research such as this than those that were interviewed for this study. In addition, the NKO only has 21 respondents that voted for BIJ1, which makes the number of respondents in that dataset quite low. To ensure a more representative result, more extensive research must be conducted. For further research, BIJ1 voters could be asked whether they voted before, and which party they voted for if they did. Asking these kinds of questions could build upon the literature on how BIJ1 mobilizes and reached communities that other parties were not able to reach. By investigating this, more insight could be gained into the origin of these voters.

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Appendix A: Interview guide

A. Questions for respondents who voted for BIJ1:

1. General questions
   a. How old are you?
   b. What is your gender?
      i. How do you identify?
   c. Do you have a migration background? If yes, could you elaborate?
   d. What is your education level?
2. How did BIJ1 first get your attention?
3. Why have you voted for BIJ1?
4. How would you prefer to see the economy structured?
5. How do you view the coexistence of different cultural backgrounds in Dutch society?
6. How do you view the roles of men and women in society? Are they equal at this moment in time?
7. Do you think that people are treated differently in society because of their skin colour or other characteristics?
8. What do you think is the most important point of view that BIJ1 promotes?
9. Have you voted before and why is BIJ1 a better match?
10. Do you feel represented by the candidates of BIJ1? How important is this for you?
11. Are there any other things that have not been discussed in this interview that need discussing? Are there any other reasons which have not been mentioned?

B. Questions for respondents who considered voting for BIJ!:

1. General questions
   a. How old are you?
   b. What is your gender?
      i. How do you identify?
   c. Do you have a migration background? If yes, could you elaborate?
   d. What is your education level?
2. How did BIJ1 first get your attention?
3. Why have you considered voting for BIJ1? And why did you not end up voting for BIJ1?
   a. Which position of BIJ1 attracted you the most?

b. Between which parties have you hesitated to vote? Which party did you eventually vote for?

c. What is the reason you did not end up voting for BIJ1?

d. Are there any points of view that you disagree with from BIJ1?

4. Do you think that people are treated differently in society because of their skin colour or other characteristics?

5. Are there any other reasons or points that made you consider voting at BIJ1 that have not yet been discussed?

6. Are there any other things that have not been discussed in this interview that need discussing? Are there any other reasons which have not been mentioned?

Appendix B: **Codebook for interviews**

Socio-economic dimension		
Group	Patterns	Interview number
Voted for BIJ1		
	Equal economic opportunities	1; 14
	The negative effect of capitalism on healthcare	13
	The negative effect of capitalism on ecology	3
	Equality within the education system	8
	Anti-capitalist position	14; 12; 8; 15
Voted for a different party		
	Anti-kapitalst postition	2; 4; 6; 5; 7
	Equality within the education system	6

Moral dimension		
Group	Patterns	Interview number
Voted for BIJ1		
	Feminism	1; 8
	Anti-validism	12
	LGBT+ inclusion	3
Voted for a different party		
	Anti-validism	5
	LGBT+ inclusion	9

Cultural dimension		
Group	Patterns	Interview number
Voted for BIJ1		
	Decolonisation/Reparations for former colonies	13; 14
	Anti-racism/ anti-discrimination	1; 13; 14; 8; 11
	Diversity	1; 13; 8; 11; 15
	Intersecionalism	1; 11
	Radical equality	1; 3; 14; 12
	Inclusion	12; 8; 15
Voted for a different party		
	Radical equality	5; 7
	Anti-racism/ anti-discrimination	4; 7

Appendix C: Overview of interview participants

Interview number	1	2	3	4
Age	27	22	26	27
Gender	Female	Male	Male	Non-binary
Residence	Amsterdam	Zwolle	Amsterdam	The Hague
Education level	HBO	HBO	MA	BA
Migration Background	Yes Vietnam	No	No	No
Voted for	BIJ1	PvdD	BIJ1	PvdD
Interview Lenght	21:09	15:16	25:50	04/07/2022

Interview number	5	6	7	8
Age	25	22	27	21
Gender	Female	Male	Male	Female
Residence	Amsterdam	The Hague	Delft	The Hague
Education level	MA	MA	MA	HBO
Migration Background	Yes Serbia	No	No	Yes Algeria
Voted for	GL	Volt	GL	BIJ1
Interview Lenght	21:17	11:50	10:21	27:36
Interview date	05/07/2022	20/07/2022	06/07/2022	06/07/2022

Interview number	9	10	11	12
Age	23	24	23	33
Gender	Male	Female	Female	Female
Residence	Delft	The Hague	The Hague	Leiden
Education level	HBO	MA	HBO	HBO
Migration Background	No	No	No	Yes US
Voted for	PvdA	GL	BIJ1	BIJ1
Interview Lenght	20:52	12:52	10:24	10:59
Interview date	07/07/2022	07/07/2022	07/07/2022	18/07/2022

Interview number	13	14	15
Age	54	29	40
Gender	Female	Male	Female
Residence	Almere	The Hague	Rotterdam
Education level	MBO 4	PhD	HBO
Migration	Yes	Yes	Yes
Background	Suriname	Curacao	Dominican Republic
Voted for	BIJ1	BIJ1	BIJ1
Interview Lenght	15:63	18:05	20:02
Interview date	17/07/2022	18/07/2022	19/07/2022