The Economic Returns of Immigrants’ Bonding and Bridging Social Capital

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Abstract
This thesis aims at analyzing to what extent different forms of social capital can help immigrants in the Netherlands and Germany to make headway on the labour market. Two forms of social capital are identified. Bonding refers to a dense network with thick trust and is measured as the strength of family ties, co-ethnic ties and trust in the family. Bridging implies a crosscutting network with thin trust and is measured as inter-ethnic ties and outward orientation. Making use of quantitative research methods, it is examined to what extent bonding and bridging for immigrants in the Netherlands and Germany explain a higher likelihood of employment, higher income, higher occupational status and shorter unemployment duration.

Results show that 1) bridging networks positively affect all economic outcomes identified; 2) bonding networks do not affect economic outcomes; 3) levels of trust (neither thick nor thin) do not explain economic outcomes; 4) returns to social capital are much higher for men than for women; 5) findings are similar for Germany and the Netherlands. Limitations and implications are discussed.
The Jury consists of Jaap Dronkers (Maastricht University), Martin Kohli (EUI, Supervisor), Irene Kogan (University of Mannheim), and Anthony Heath (University of Oxford).

Bio

Before starting his dissertation at the EUI, Bram Lancee was teaching at the department of Communication Science at the University of Amsterdam (2002-2006), and at the School of Journalism in Utrecht (2006). He graduated in Policy, Communication and Organization (MA) at the Free University Amsterdam (2000) and in Human Geography and International Development Studies (MSc) at the University of Amsterdam (2005). For an academic year, he attended the master program of the School of Communication at the Simon Fraser University in Vancouver, Canada.

His academic interests include social capital, ethnic minorities and the labour market, inequality and social participation, attitudes towards immigration and ethnic diversity in neighbourhoods. He published in *International Migration Review, Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies, and Social Science & Medicine*.

Bram Lancee will continue his research as a postdoc at the Department of Sociology and the Institute of Advanced Labour Studies of the University of Amsterdam. See also www.bramlancee.eu.