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Social cohesion in heterogeneous neighbourhoods in the Netherlands: the cases of Bouwlust and Hoograven

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Abstract

In the Netherlands, post war housing estates have an increasingly heterogeneous population composition. Originally middle class families inhabited the areas but these people are now ageing. They have either left the estate or passed away and are mainly replaced by young couples, migrants and low-income families. This process of increased heterogeneity is enhanced by Dutch restructuring policy, which aims to improve the neighbourhood by replacing low-rent social dwellings by more expensive owner-occupied and more expensive rental homes. This will attract higher incomes, supposedly leading to better interaction between people and more activities within the neighbourhood.

This article provides some insight into the extent to which social cohesion is influenced by a heterogeneous population composition. Usually social cohesion flourishes in homogeneous neighbourhoods, where people have a common set of values and norms, where friends can be found within the neighbourhood and where people are attached to their neighbourhood. The current Dutch policy will not lead to more social cohesion, because attracting higher income groups in low-income neighbourhoods will lead to more variety among social-economical and social-cultural groups, thereby diminishing the chance of finding people 'like you' in the neighbourhood. Also, higher incomes are less focused on the neighbourhood. This paper aims to find out if there are differences between social-economic groups with respect to different elements of social cohesion. The paper is based on a fieldwork study undertaken in the cities of Utrecht and The Hague in the Netherlands.

Introduction

Literature on post war neighbourhoods stresses the facts that these are increasingly problematic areas. This also holds true for the Netherlands. Often, a crisis of social cohesion is mentioned as one of the causes of problems like:

"... rising crime rates, the growth of organised crime, long-term unemployment and underemployment particularly among young people, rising divorce rates and lone parenthood..." (Fukuyama, 1999)

In neighbourhoods where a concentration of these problems is found, cultivation of social cohesion is often seen as the solution. This is where difficulties arise: These neighbourhoods are characterised by a heterogeneous population composition

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whereas social cohesion is assumed to elevate in homogeneous population structures (Lewis, 1968; Parekh, 2000).

In a heterogeneous neighbourhood the chance of meeting people that are similar is smaller than in a homogeneous neighbourhood, which makes the chance of having social contacts in the neighbourhood smaller. Also, it is well known that the focus on the neighbourhood is different for different social-economical and social-cultural groups. The more social-economical differences, the more variety among residents and their focus on, and expectations of, the neighbourhood. Earlier research shows that the focus on the neighbourhood is lower for higher social-economical status groups. Therefore, attracting higher income groups can only be expected to have adverse effects. First, this is because the neighbourhood becomes more heterogeneous, which will 'force' people to move out of the neighbourhood to find people like them. Second, it is expected that people, who are less focused on the neighbourhood, will positively influence neighbourhood cohesion. All in all, it seems that the Dutch policy to attract higher incomes to the neighbourhood will not enhance social cohesion, in spite of the expectations.

This paper analyses the extent to which the degree of social cohesion is related to household- and individual characteristics. This assessment is based on an empirical research study of two post war estates, one in Utrecht and one in The Hague. The aim of the paper is to identify if there are differences between social-economic and ethnic groups with respects to different elements of social cohesion.

The structure of this paper is as follows. First, we will give a brief overview of theoretical approaches of social cohesion. This is followed by a description of the research areas and the research methods. Next the results of the research are given. Finally a number of conclusions is drawn.

Social cohesion: three elements

Social cohesion is often seen as 'something good' by politicians and social policymakers (Pahl, 1991). In the Netherlands, urban policy in general and urban restructuring in particular often has the implicit goal of enhancing social cohesion at neighbourhood level.

The concept of social cohesion has been defined in many different ways. Some elements keep coming back in most definitions; in one way or another, the definitions refer to the coherence of a social or political system, the ties that people have with this system and their involvement and solidarity. In the more personal sphere behaviour, perception, personal networks, identity and health play an important role. In our research, social cohesion is analysed at the neighbourhood level. In this section we will show which definition we use and which aspects are selected for further analysis.

First we will pay some attention to the different aspects of the concept. In the literature about social cohesion there are several elements that relate the individual to a wider social structure. First, Kearns and Forrest show that:

“a cohesive society ‘hangs together’; all the component parts fit in and attribute to society’s collective project and well being; and conflict between societal goals and groups, and disruptive behaviour, are largely absent or minimal” (Kearns and Forrest, 2000).

When social cohesion is analysed at the neighbourhood level, as we do, the individual is seen as the basis of the group process. The degree of social cohesion of the system

is based on the degree to which the members of society are prepared to participate in the system and identify with it (Hart, Knol et al. 2002). At the neighbourhood level this means that social cohesion refers to:

“The degree in which the residents share values and norms, there is a certain degree of social control, the existence and availability of networks (informally shaped in friendships, or formally in the sense of participation in organisations, associations and neighbourhood activities), the existence of trust between residents and the willingness to collectively find solutions to problems.” (De Hart, 2002, p.12)

At the micro level, the focus is on participation of individuals in larger contexts:

“The concept refers to participation of individuals in societal institutions, social contacts between people, but also to their orientation towards collective values and norms” (Schuyt, 1997).

This implies that residential-based networks are seen as the basic elements of social cohesion (Castells, 1997). For individuals this means that they participate in societal institutions in their neighbourhood and that they have social contacts there. People do this because they experience benefits from taking part in societal structures. Networks can be useful as they can give respect, help, exchange services, knowledge and information (Truijens and Reijndorp, n.y.).

The quotes show several elements which can be identified about the relation between the individual and wider social systems. First it is important that individuals have contacts with other individuals of the social system. Secondly it is about a shared set of values and norms. Third, it is about the identification of the individual with the wider social system. At neighbourhood level this results in the following three elements:

1. Spatially oriented social networks
2. A local solidary civic culture
3. Place attachment and identity

These elements are not to be studied separately from each other; they are interrelated. Also, an increase in one of the elements will not automatically lead to more social cohesion. Each dimension of social cohesion at neighbourhood level is explained into more detail now.

Social networks

With respect to the first dimension, *social networks*, social cohesion essentially refers to the ties between persons within society or within a city or a neighbourhood. Besides informal relations, the ties also refer to such things as belonging to voluntary groups or civic associations such as sports clubs or neighbourhood associations (Kleinhans et al., 2000; Friedrichs and Vranken, 2001). The basis of more formal participation are often the informal ties between people such as friends and family.

Policymakers that aim to improve the quality of social contacts through creating more mixed neighbourhoods assume that the neighbourhood is an important place for social contacts. Indeed, some authors focus on the positive functions of a neighbourhood in this respect. Macro developments such as globalisation or the threat of terrorism can enhance the meaning of the neighbourhood as a ‘safe heaven’ in troublesome times (Forrest and Kearns, 2001). Others show that social solidarity

between neighbourhood residents is considered important, as people can learn from each other and support one another (Portes and Sensenbrenner, 1993). Homogeneous ethnic communities for example are of great help through word-of-mouth information about finding jobs (Reingold, 1999).

On the other hand, social ties between homogeneous groups are not always desirable. Atkinson and Kintrea for example show that a communal set of norms and expectations in deprived areas can have negative impact on the work ethos, responsibility, fatalism (what's the point of education?), a lack of ambition, social immobility, restricted social and geographical horizons and underachievement within the context of economic change and employment (Atkinson and Kintrea, 2002). The fear of 'being different' from the rest of the neighbourhood is stronger than the urge to improve the situation.

Other studies show that social contacts within the neighbourhoods do not automatically occur just because people are in physically close to each other. Different social groups have different social networks and experience of involvement in the neighbourhood. This is related to age, household composition, gender, lifestyle and the time that one has lived in the neighbourhood. Young and old people have more contacts than people of medium age. Families with children and women are more involved in the neighbourhood (Campbell and Lee 1992). Others have shown that people with a low educational level, low income, high age and/or young children are more involved in the neighbourhood than others (Van Kempen and Beckhoven 2002).

Furthermore, people tend to become friends with others with similar characteristics. Laumann (1966) describes that most contacts take place in rather homogeneous relations, in which selection takes place based on age, social class, lifestyle, religion, ethnicity, and gender (Flap, 1999). When choosing a friend, that friend must be available, if there are no opportunities, there will not be contact, irrespective of the similarities or differences.

Summarizing, social networks between friends or within associations can lead to both inclusion and exclusion. On one side, social networks can be a source of information about new possibilities and therefore lead to inclusion. On the other side, social networks can restrict people through negative common values about work and education that prevail in their network. Mostly, people are part of rather homogeneous networks.

Solidary civic culture

With respect to the second dimension, social cohesion refers to a *solidary civic culture*, where people tend to have a common set of values and goals, a general idea about social order and social control and the feeling of social solidarity and reductions in wealth disparities. Kearns and Forrest (2000, p. 997) see civic culture in day-to-day relations between people:

“In the domain of culture and values, a socially cohesive society is one in which the members share common values which enable them to identify and support common aims and objectives, and share a common set of moral principles and codes of behaviour through which to conduct their relationships with one another.”

Kearns and Forrest's description is rather abstract, more practically it means that shared objectives can stem from shared needs, such as deriving income from work

and being responsible for a house and a family. Another shared need is a shared threat, such as the demolition of a housing block (Marissing et al., forthcoming). This results in a feeling of involvement, and a perceived need for order and regulation of society (Schnabel, 2000). So, social cohesion increases when people have responsibilities, when they are 'stakeholders' in society. According to Turner (1990) it is basically the routine of every day life that leads to pragmatic acceptance of order. Based on research in four English neighbourhoods, Docherty et al.(2001) found that civic culture is based in people's values about society in general and can be enhanced by a strong sense of community, strong social networks, trust and efforts from the government to support voluntary activity and participation in governance.

A result from, but perhaps also a reason for, civic culture, is that people share values about behaviour in daily situations, that they share interest in each other, such as recognizing each others needs, interest in other citizens well-being and willingness to provide assistance and to engage in collective action with one-sided benefits (Kearns & Forrest, 2000). On a more general level this means that societal redistribution systems are supported (Schnabel, 2000).

A socially cohesive neighbourhood is not necessarily characterised by a homogeneous set of values and norms. Although it is necessary that people agree on certain rules of behaviour, it is as important that they respect differences between each other (Kearns & Forrest, 2000). This makes people feel that they are allowed to exist and be part of the neighbourhood community even though they are not similar (Schnabel, 2000). This means that general conflicts are absent within the neighbourhood. According to Giddens (1994) this involves the very difficult question of how diverse groups can be integrated into societal order while simultaneously respecting cultural differences. Social cohesion comprises inter group co-operation, respect for differences and an absence of hatred and prejudice, for example between different ethnic groups or between generations.

Place attachment and identity

With respect to the last dimension that we identify, *place attachment and identity*, the idea is that people do not only have ties with others, but also feel attracted to their immediate living environment (Blokland-Potters, 1998). Place attachment leads to a feeling security, builds self-esteem and self-image, gives bond to people, cultures and experiences and maintains group identity (Altman and Low , 1992; Crow,1994). All this makes that people are attached to a place, that they belong there, and that people are territorial in their behaviour, leading to solidarity and cohesion (Taylor, 1988). Some scientists presume that a strong attachment to a place and the intertwining of people's identities with that of places (Massey, 1991) contribute to social cohesion through their positive effects upon such things as adherence to common values and norms and a willingness to participate in social networks and build social capital (Kearns & Forrest, 2000; Scheepers & Janssen, 2001).

The identity of the residents is partially derived from the neighbourhood they live in. The choice of neighbourhood can be a way of expressing an individual lifestyle (Horst et al., 2001). The choice of neighbourhood is then a way to show who you are and what kind of taste you have. Belonging to a certain group, neighbourhood or lifestyle is more important when the freedom of choice of the person or the household is larger: you are where you live.

Identification with a neighbourhood can also be fed by the experience of being part of 'something bigger'. Blokland-Potters (1998) speaks of 'imagined communities', meaning that the social value that the residents give their

neighbourhood is usually not based on real contact, but on perceived feelings of belonging to the street or the neighbourhood. Not the real contacts, but the perception of possible contacts makes people feel connected. According to (Hortulanus, 1995), a homogenous residents' composition in a neighbourhood is taken as a prerequisite for identification with the neighbourhood as it enables people to associate with people in a spatial sense and dissociate from others.

Except the residents' composition of the neighbourhood, the reputation of the area can also influence the possibilities of identification. There are two types of reputation: external (of residents in other areas) and internal (of the residents themselves). With respect to the first one, Suttles (1970) states that simplified ideas of the urban reality leads to exaggerated ideas of differences between neighbourhoods. In addition, Wacquant (1993) shows that the stigma on an area limits its residents in societal participation and diminishes the possibilities for social cohesion and the level of social organisation in the neighbourhood; in order to avoid identification with a non-popular area its residents will not show off their residence and refrain from becoming involved in social networks in the neighbourhood.

Whereas external reputation can be biased and based on prejudices, internal reputation is based on very exact ideas of social, spatial and economical circumstances in the neighbourhood. The social and cultural meaning of the area is important and residents can identify themselves with this internal reputation (Reitzes, 1983).

Summarizing, place attachment and identity are derived from the experienced image of the neighbourhood, either based on exact information about the area or more general ideas, which are not based on facts. The perception of the area leads to the experience of being part of a social structure, a larger entity than the individual, based on identification with the neighbourhood.

Social cohesion, forms of capital and household characteristics

Earlier research shows that heterogeneous neighbourhoods with a differentiated demographic composition are not so likely to have strong networks of highly involved residents (Kleinmans, Veldboer et al. 2000; Morrison 2003; Vandersmissen, 2003). Homogeneous population compositions foster aspects of social cohesion such as common values, attachment to place, identity, societal order and social control. More negative effects of a homogeneous population at neighbourhood level occur mostly at higher levels: social solidarity and a reduction of wealth disparities becomes more difficult in a segregated society in which democratic principles are not shared and mutual trust diminishes. In a society where social-economic and cultural differences are not acknowledged, internal group cohesion becomes more important and each group will take care of only its own needs (Gowricharn, 2003).

As Wirth (1938) describes in "Urbanism as a Way of Life" the city is not an environment in which communities foster. He claimed that the size, density and heterogeneity of the city were due to this. Later, others such as Fischer (1982) have shown that the pessimistic view of Wirth does not always hold true, but still heterogeneity of the population is shown to be of influence on social networks (Van Beckhoven & Van Kempen, 2003; Morrison, 2003).

In the description in the next section of the research areas it is shown that the population is highly diverse in terms of income, education, daily activity, ownership of the house, household composition, age and ethnicity. As people tend to build networks with people that have similar characteristics, different social groups will not easily be mixed. People choose friends that are like them; selection takes place based

on age, social class, lifestyle, religion, ethnicity and gender (Flap, 1999). In addition, some people are more focused on the neighbourhood than others, which is related to the social-economic and social-cultural characteristics of individuals.

The analysis in this paper focuses on identifying which characteristics influence the three elements of social cohesion that were described above. We expect financial capital (income), knowledge (education), daily activity, home-ownership structure, age, and children in the household, time lived in the neighbourhood and ethnicity to be of influence. We will shortly describe these factors below.

First, household composition can play an important role. Families with children will more easily meet others in similar situations, which will facilitate contact. Single parent households are limited in participation outside the neighbourhood, because of the child-caring responsibilities. Also large families, who need to spend a large share of their budget on childcare and housing, are less likely to participate in society due to financial constraints. Other households, such as singles, starters and students, spend most of their time, activities and networks outside the neighbourhood (Engelsdorp-Gastelaar and Vijgen, 1991).

Second, education is important. In a city with a university the general level of education is higher than in non-university cities. High-educated people are mostly oriented on the whole city for their activities and networks (Blokland-Potters, 1998). Often high-educated people have higher salaries than lower-educated people (except when the high-educated people are still students), which enables them to have a larger action radius.

Third, the expected time to live in the neighbourhood is important. People that have a short stay perspective usually do not invest much in contacts in the neighbourhood or in maintenance of their house and its direct environment. Starting households and students probably do not perceive this place as the final place to stay and are probably less likely to become involved in neighbourhood life (Campbell and Lee, 1992).

Then, the age of the residents is important. The elderly are most likely to have a stronger focus on the neighbourhood than younger people, because of their physical limitations and because they have spend a long time in this area and expect to stay. Also people who suffer from bad health, physical handicaps or psychological problems will be restricted in their possibilities to participate in society or make a housing career.

Also financial resources can be important. Residents with a low income are hampered in participation in activities that cost money (Musterd and Ostendorf, 1998). As a result, low-income households will have a smaller action radius (Wilson, 1987). Moreover, there is a strong relationship between income and the position on the labour market. Depending on the possibilities on the labour market, people will be able to derive a decent income from work or not.

Furthermore, and related to household composition, age and income is home-ownership structure. It is expected that home-owners are more than tenants inclined to invest in their direct surroundings if it were only to maintain the value of the house at the same level. Furthermore home-owners often stay longer than tenants in the same house.

Finally, ethnicity is important. As Fisher (1982) shows, people with the same race, religion and national origin tend to be part of the same network. Therefore, a physical concentration of ethnic groups can easily lead to homogeneous ethnic social networks, focussing on the neighbourhood. Segregation then enhances internal group cohesion. These social networks among migrants can offer support (Van Kempen,

2001). Also, ethnicity is often associated with low incomes. Language problems, discrimination and racism often lead to incomplete participation on the job market, in social networks and in political participation in decision-making (Essed, 1991). Especially illegal immigrants will have problems in participation because they lack the basic political rights.

The literature shows that the use people make of a neighbourhood is different for each individual and area. However, most literature relates individual- and household characteristics to the first dimension of social cohesion, *social networks*. It is difficult to say which individual or household characteristic is most important. Less is known about the relation with the other two dimensions of social cohesion, *solidary civic culture* and *feelings of belonging and identity*. Within one neighbourhood, people may have different focuses, depending on the forms of capital that they have (Van Kempen, 2001; Rowlands et al., 2003; Flint & Rowlands, 2003) and household characteristics (Fischer, 1982; Campbell and Lee, 1992; Van Beckhoven and Van Kempen, 2003).

This empirical research aims to find out which forms of capital and household characteristics can be considered influential in shaping the three elements of social cohesion in the areas that were selected. Also, it is investigated how the elements of social cohesion are interrelated. The results show that the differentiation between individual- and household characteristics is more relevant for the first dimension of *social networks*, than for *solidary civic culture* and *feelings of belonging and identity*. Also, we found two groups of indicators that are interrelated. Before presenting the research findings a brief overview of the areas is given, as well as an explanation of the research method.

Research areas & methods

The answers on the research questions are based on empirical research that was conducted in two post war areas in the Netherlands. The first prerequisite was that the area had to have a considerable share of BME groups. Also, a composition of different economic groups was a prerequisite. Furthermore, the areas needed not to be subject to restructuring activities at the moment of the fieldwork, they must have been finished at least two years ago in order to avoid a specific influence of the policy processes on the outcomes.

The survey was held between 17 February and 7 March 2003, and a second round for those that were not reached between 7 and 18 April 2003. A total of 821 households were in the sample. A personal approach to the respondents was chosen to raise the response level: the questionnaires were distributed and collected in person. Some of the questionnaires were filled in with the aid of an Arabic or Turkish speaking interviewer. This approach yielded a final overall response of 51.0 per cent: 54.1 per cent in Hoograven and 47.9 per cent in Bouwlust (a total of 419 respondents).

The research question which individual and household characteristics matter for social cohesion is answered on the basis of this survey. The response is good and allows us to draw conclusions for the residents, based on the population.

One of the research areas is located in the city of The Hague, which is the third largest city of the Netherlands and hosts the national government, as well as many international companies and diplomatic services. It is the most segregated city in the Netherlands with both the richest and the poorest neighbourhoods of the country. Employment is mainly in the public sector and higher services. Many low-skilled

people and illegals work in the nearby glass house agriculture. The other city, Utrecht, is the fourth largest city of the country and its position in the national economy is strong due to its physical central position in the country. Utrecht University and higher financial and ICT services are the most important employers.

The post-war estates where the research was carried out are situated in Utrecht and in The Hague. They were both built in the 1950s to help solve the shortage of homes after the Second World War. Both neighbourhoods have a mixed structure of single-family homes and four-floor apartment blocks without elevators, all in the social rented sector. Originally many reasonably well to do families moved into the neighbourhoods with for that time spacious houses as the average size was 65 m² and most units had four rooms. More recently these characteristics do not fulfil the requirements any longer as the houses are too small and facilities are outdated. Also, the original population has aged, leading to other housing demands and an increased number of inactive people. Moreover, the relatively cheap rental homes have attracted migrants and their families since the late seventies. The neighbourhoods are also popular for starters on the housing market.

Physical decline and changing population structures have led to restructuring processes in the estates. In both research areas multi-family dwellings in the rental sector have been replaced with single family home-owned houses. In Bouwlust this process has been of larger scale than in Hoograven. In both areas the aim has been to increase variation in the housing stock and to offer the more well to do residents the possibility to make a housing career in the neighbourhood and to attract new high-income families.

Hoograven

Hoograven is situated to the Southwest of the city centre. In the 1950s 4,274 housing units were built here. The neighbourhood is characterised by for this building period typical large public spaces and long sightlines. The Northern part (called Tolsteeg) is only one kilometre away from the centre, while the most Southern part is nearly three kilometres away from it. Tolsteeg has a stronger position on the housing market than the rest of Hoograven (Aalbers et al, 2003).

Our research area Hoograven cannot be seen as a homogeneous area with single features. Statistically the areas are separated. The part called Tolsteeg scores better than the city average on all indicators (table 1); low unemployment, less dependency on social welfare (2%), less low incomes, less low educated people, more native Dutch people. Nearly half of the housing stock is multi-family housing blocks, and the share of owner-occupancy has risen to nearly half of the stock due to privatization of rental apartments. Around a fifth is in the social rented sector.

The rest of Hoograven has a very different position within the city as it belongs to the worst neighbourhoods of the city with relatively high unemployment, high dependency on social benefits (10%), many low incomes and low educated people. The majority of the houses are multi-family homes within the social rented sector. Only six per cent of the people live in a home they own themselves. More than a third of the residents are Moroccans.

In Hoograven the expectations of the restructuring policies are high, as the more balanced population structure should have many positive effects on the neighbourhood. At the moment of the survey only a limited number of multi-family homes (188) had been replaced with single-family homes (102) in the middle expensive sector. In the future more social dwellings will be replaced by single-family homes.

Bouwlust

Bouwlust is part of the urban district Escamp in The Hague. Escamp is a very large post-war area with nearly 100.000 residents. The spatial characteristics are the same as in Hoograven: large green public areas, multi-family housing blocks varied with small single-family homes, built in the 1950s. Although the area is as big as a middle-sized city it lacks facilities that belong to such numbers. The distance to the city centre is rather long, it takes about 30-45 minutes by public transport to get to the city centre.

Within The Hague, Bouwlust is certainly not among the worst neighbourhoods, although the share of social housing is much larger with 81% in Bouwlust compared to 38% in the Hague (all data: 2002, gemeente Den Haag). Due to its restricted space many of the homes are multi-family homes, in the city and also in Bouwlust. Most of these do not have an elevator (69%).

Also with respect to the population characteristics Bouwlust is among the average neighbourhoods: the age structure is similar to the rest of the city, although there are more elderly people. The population is getting younger, and the share of BME-groups is rising as it was 33% in 1995 and 48% in 2002, only about 4% higher than in the rest of the city. The main immigrant groups are Surinamese (8%), Turks (10%) and Moroccans (8%). The relatively large and cheap rental apartments attract many new migrants from abroad.

Table 1: Characteristics of Tolsteeg, Hoograven and Bouwlust

Characteristic	Tolsteeg	Hoograven	Bouwlust
Number of housing units	1679	2595	11805
Number of residents	3161	5903	25435
Low income %	11	22	59
Low education %	22	45	na
Unemployed/disabled %	1	4	na
Multi-family homes %	44	75	89
Social sector %	21	86	81
Owner-occupied %	49	6	10
0-18 year-old %	10	25	25
> 55 year-old %	25	23	20
Dutch%	76	44	52

Source: Gemeente Utrecht, 2003; www.denhaag.nl, visited on March 31, 2004

Characteristics of the respondents

The characteristics of the respondents to our survey are summarized in the table below. In general, it shows that the residents of Hoograven are better educated than in Bouwlust ($V=0.203$)². Furthermore, the fact that in Hoograven about 10% students live, and in Bouwlust none, makes a difference for the daily activity ($V = 0.208$) and housing tenure ($V=0.177$). Furthermore a slightly larger share of the residents in Hoograven own their house compared to Bouwlust. There is a significant difference in Hoograven and Bouwlust in the age composition of the residents ($V = 0.204$). In Utrecht more than half of the population is younger than 39 years old, while in Bouwlust 40 per cent of the population is between 40 and 54 years old. There are slightly more elderly people in Bouwlust.

² Cramer's V is a correlation coefficient that indicates the relationship among two categorical variables. Cramer's V ranges from 0 to 1, with 0 indicating no relationship and 1 indicating a perfect relationship.

There is no significant difference between the research areas in the number of households with children. In both neighbourhoods the majority of the people does not have children, although the share of families with children is higher in Bouwlust (49 per cent) than in Hoograven (39 per cent). Related to this is the issue of household composition, which also differs significantly in the two research neighbourhoods. More single parents in Bouwlust than in Hoograven, more couples with children, more singles and less 'others' (students). Hoograven has more 'others' students and couples without children. There are no differences between the neighbourhoods in the share of BME-groups.

Table 2: Characteristics of population in Hoograven³ and Bouwlust

Characteristic	Hoograven	Bouwlust
Low income	32.2	31.5
Middle income	51.4	53.9
High income	17.4	14.6
Low education	23.1	28.1
Average education	27.5	42.1
High education	49.4	29.8
Fulltime job	46.8	48.3
Part-time job	10.4	11.9
Unemployed/disabled	8.4	13.6
Student	12.3	1.7
Pensioner	14.3	16.1
Other	7.8	8.5
Tenant	62.4	73.6
Owner-occupier	29.7	25.6
Student house	7.9	.8
18-39 year-old	51.2	31.5
40-54 year-old	25.6	40.3
> 55 year-old	23.2	28.2
Household with children	38.8	49.2
Single parent household	5.5	10.6
1-2 person household without children	50.0	48.0
Move to area < 1996	42.9	48.2
Move to area 1996-2000	32.5	31.9
Move to area > 2000	24.6	19.9
Dutch	75.3	71.5
Non-Dutch	24.7	28.5

Source: Survey 2003

Notes:

- Low income < 1295 euro net per month; middle income 1296-2590 euro net per month; high income > 2591 euro net per month.
- Low education: max. lower professional education; average education: middle professional education or advanced secondary education; high education: higher professional education or university.
- Division Dutch-non Dutch is a response to the question: "In terms of ethnicity, how would you call yourself?" (self categorisation).

The question is whether these differences and similarities influence the degree of social cohesion in the research areas. It is striking that although Hoograven is one of the worst neighbourhoods of Utrecht and Bouwlust is among the 'average' ones, they

³ Although the statistical data of the Utrecht municipality differentiate between Hoograven and Tolsteeg, we see it as one research area.

are not so different from each other. The most important differences are education, home ownership and age structure. To what extent do social economic characteristics make a difference for the degree of social cohesion? Below the fields of social cohesion as described earlier will be analysed empirically.

Social cohesion in the research areas

Social cohesion 1: Social Networks

The first dimension of social cohesion is central in this section: social networks both informally and formally. Although the neighbourhood is not important for most people as the place for social networks, this does not have to be true for all categories of residents. In this section we will look at which residents have many contacts in the neighbourhood and to which extent individual and household characteristics are an explanation for the focus on the neighbourhood.

In general, the importance of the neighbourhood for social contact is declining (Doorn 1955, 1970; Webber 1963; Stein 1964). Indeed, as table 3 and 4 reveal, in both research areas most people have the majority of their friends, acquaintances and family outside the neighbourhood. In Hoograven only 25 per cent has the majority of their friends in the neighbourhood, whereas in Bouwlust this some more with 35 per cent ($V = 0.114^{*4}$). Also the share of people that has family in the neighbourhood is different for Hoograven (27 per cent) and Bouwlust (39 per cent) ($V = 0.123$). So, the residents in Bouwlust are more focused on the neighbourhood for their social networks based on friends & family than the residents in Hoograven.

There are several explanations for the stronger focus on the neighbourhood in Bouwlust than in Hoograven. One of them is the higher percentage of high-educated people in Hoograven than in Bouwlust. We expected the higher educated population group to be orientated at the whole city, rather than the neighbourhood only. Indeed, in both areas the higher the education, the less often people have most of their friends within the neighbourhood. (Hoograven $V=0.377$; Bouwlust $V=0.262$). In Hoograven higher educated people also have less family within the neighbourhood than lower educated people ($V=0.382$). Probably these are students or starters that came to Utrecht to study and left their family behind.

Second, the higher percentage inactive people in Bouwlust compared to Hoograven can explain this. As was expected inactive people (unemployed, housewives, retired) more often have family and/or most of their friends in the neighbourhood than people active in work or at school. In Hoograven this relation is medium strong (friends $V=0.236$) or weak (family $V=0.182$). In Bouwlust this relation is not significant.

Third, having children supposedly creates ample opportunity to meet other people in similar situations. As Bouwlust has more families with children, this could be one of the causes for the stronger focus on the neighbourhood for social contacts. In Hoograven households with children more often have family ($V=0.282$) or most of their friends ($V=0.139$) in the neighbourhood than households without children. In Bouwlust these differences are not so relevant.

Fourth, building social networks takes time, therefore we expect people that have lived in the area for a long time, to have more friends in the neighbourhood. Indeed in Bouwlust more people have lived longer in the neighbourhood than in

⁴ All analysis are significant with 95% trustworthiness, if only 90% trustworthiness can be given this is indicated with a: *.

Hoograven. We did find a strong relationship in Hoograven between the length of living in the neighbourhood and having at least half of your friends in the area ($V=0.347$). There is no relation between the time lived in the neighbourhood and having family in the neighbourhood.

Finally we expected ethnicity to play a role as individuals belonging to a certain group might find support from people belonging to the same group living in the same neighbourhood (Kempen 2001). This proved to be true only in Hoograven where BME groups more often have most of their friends in the neighbourhood than Dutch people ($V=0.178$). BME groups also more often have family in this area ($V=0.224$). An explanation can be that the ethnic community in Hoograven consists mainly of a homogeneous group of Moroccans whereas in Bouwlust several ethnicities live. Fischer's idea that people choose friends based on the same ethnicity and nationality is then true.

Surprisingly age is not an important indicator. We assumed that as people grow older the neighbourhood plays a greater part in life. The population in Hoograven is significantly older than the population in Bouwlust ($V=0.204$), but older people do not have significantly more often family or a greater share of their friends in the neighbourhood.

Concluding, the difference with respect to the focus on the neighbourhood for social contacts in Hoograven is related to education, daily activity, ownership structure, household composition, ethnicity and time lived in the neighbourhood. Income and age make no difference. On the other hand, in Bouwlust all groups have a similar focus on the neighbourhood.

Table 3: Family in the neighbourhood (percentages)

Characteristic	Hoograven	Bouwlust
Low education	50.0	44.1
Average education	36.4	43.1
High education	10.1	27.0
Active ⁵	19.8	38.4
Inactive ⁶	37.0	35.6
Tenant	31.3	37.0
Owner-occupier	16.3	43.8
Household with children	42.9	38.3
Dutch	20.7	36.4
BME-groups	43.6	41.2
Average	27.2	38.7

Source: survey 2003

Table 4: Most friends and acquaintances in the neighbourhood (percentages)

Characteristic	Hoograven	Bouwlust
Low education	43.8	53.3
Average education	35.0	36.7
High education	7.8	20.0
Active	17.5	29.6
Inactive	39.5	42.9
Household with children	32.8	37.3
Move to area < 1996	41.3	38.9
Move to area 1996-2000	18.4	33.3
Move to area > 2000	5.3	26.1
Dutch	20.0	33.8

⁵ work or study

⁶ unemployed, disabled, retired, housewives

BME-groups	37.8	37.1
Average	24.8	35.3

Source: survey 2003

Most people have contact with their neighbours even if this is only limited to having a chat (table 5), independently from social networks with friends and family. On average, only twenty per cent of the residents lives without contact with their neighbours. In Hoograven students are an exception, only half of them chats with neighbours ($V=0.264$). In this area, income, daily activity, education, and home-ownership has no significant impact on chatting with the neighbours; basically everybody chats with the exeption that older people chat slightly more than younger people ($V=0.162$) and long stayers more than short stayers ($V=0.206$).

In Bouwlust age, education, time spent in the neighbourhood, household composition, daily activity and income do not make a difference. The only exception is that of BME groups nearly 40 per cent has no contact at all with their neighbours ($V = 0.271$), whereas for Dutch people this is just over 10 per cent.

Earlier analysis shows (Bolt & Torrance, 2004) that residents in newly built houses have more contact with their direct neighbours than those in the original buildings. A possible explanation can be that in new houses people put more effort into getting to know their neighbours. Also in the new houses the ethnic population composition (at least in Hoograven) is much more homogeneous than in the older buildings.

Table 5: "yes, I frequently chat with my neighbours" (percentages)

Characteristic	Hoograven	Bouwlust
18-54 year-old	76.0	79.5
> 55 year-old	91.7	82.4
Home-owners	84.0	81.2
Tenants	80.0	81.4
Students	53.8	-
Move to area < 1996	88.2	83.1
Move to area 1996-2000	73.1	80.6
Move to area > 2000	69.2	66.7
Dutch	79.5	86.2
Non-Dutch	79.5	61.8
Average	79.1	79.9

Source: survey 2003

Besides informal networks we focus on formal networks. One of the positive outcomes of more cohesive neighbourhoods is increased participation in the neighbourhood. More cohesive societies supposedly lead to more involved residents. We asked people if they participate in voluntary organisations and if they feel responsible for maintenance of the direct surroundings of their home. In Bouwlust slightly more people are involved (34 per cent) in voluntary activities than in Hoograven (27 per cent). There are no differences between groups in this kind of 'formal' participation.

Social cohesion 2: Solidary civic culture

The second component of social cohesion is based on communal values and norms. The neighbourhood is not the most important place to fulfil the needs for personal contact, as we saw in the previous section. It is therefore more important that people have shared values about behaviour in daily situations. The secret of successful

neighbourhoods is the agreement that people have and that are relevant for the quality of the living environment (Hortulanus 1995). It is also important that people are willing to provide assistance when needed and that they have the feeling they can count on each other.

In this section the question is central to which degree there is agreement on accepted behaviour and if there are differences between groups. We will also assess if people are prepared to help their neighbours and to ask a favour as indications.

We used five statements to analyse the values of the respondents and asked the respondents how they valued the situation:

1. Somebody puts the garbage outside on the street on the wrong day.
2. The corner of the street is a meeting point for youngsters. You see that the youngsters call names at a women.
3. An acquaintance single mother with three children depends on social benefits. She is offered a cleaning job in the black economy, which she accepts without reporting to the social services.
4. Imagine that you see a drunk person on the street frequently.
5. Your television set is old and nearly broken. Somebody offers you a television set which is probably stolen for half the normal price.

Of these statements we constructed a measure on a scale from 1 (very bad) to 4 (not bad at all)⁷. The scores were nearly similar in both neighbourhoods: Hoograven 2.6 and Bouwlust 2.5. Per statement the reactions were somewhat different. Calling names at a women is unanimously condemned by the respondents. About all other statements there is no consensus. About a quarter of the people have problems when an acquaintance works on the black market. The other three quarters does not mind. For the other situations the reactions are the reverse, although Hoograven is an exception at two points. First of all, half of the people does not mind if people put their garbage out on the wrong day and even few care about a drunken man in the streets.

To our surprise there were no differentiations between household characteristics such as education, income, daily activity, ownership of the home, age, time lived in the neighbourhood, having children or not and Dutch versus non-Dutch population groups. This was a surprise because the differentiation between ethnic groups of values and norms is mentioned as one of the big problems in Dutch society these days. The minister-president has even made this topic his personal spearhead. So, in our areas the average BME-person has the same values as the average Dutch person; the average pensioner has the same values as the average young adult; the average parent has the same values as the average single and so forth. There is differentiation between people in their values and norms but this does not run along lines of ethnicity or social-economic status.

Having similar values does not mean that unwanted behaviour does not take place. For example calling names at a women is condemned by many, but it happens frequently. The same applies to putting garbage outside on the wrong day. Apparently more is needed for effective social control than a united opinion about rules.

⁷ Analyses shows a Cronbach's α of 0.60 which indicates that the statements represent the same dimension.

Another indication of a civic culture is that people share interest in each other, and are willing to provide assistance with one-sided benefits. In order to facilitate analysis, the respondents were asked to answer this question:

“The shops are closed and you need butter because you want to bake something and you have run out of butter. Would you call at one of your neighbours to ask for the butter you need?”

Not all residents would ask a favour from their neighbours (table 6). In both neighbourhoods about half the people would go to their neighbours for favour (table 7). From the answers to this question we found that in Bouwlust higher incomes ($V=0.326$) and Dutch people ($V=0.316$) have less problems asking a favour from their neighbours than lower incomes and BME groups. In Hoograven owner-occupiers more easily ask a favour than tenants ($V=0.202$).

Table 6: Respondents that state that they would ask a favour from their neighbours (percentages)

Characteristic	Hoograven	Bouwlust
Low income	45.2	17.9
Medium - high income	61.1	52.5
Tenant	48.2	44.6
Owner-occupier	70.0	50.0
Dutch	62.8	55.7
Non-Dutch	30.8	20.6
Average	54.9	46.0

Source: Survey 2003

In line with the findings about asking for help, most people are generous in giving help (table 7) as three quarters of the respondents reacts positive to the question:

“Your neighbour suddenly has to leave for a moment. She asks if you would like to take care of the children. Would you do that?”

In Bouwlust there are no differences between population groups, whereas in Hoograven tenants ($V=0.169$) and BME groups ($V=0.226$) are more hesitant in helping out than home-owners and Dutch people.

Table 7: Respondents that would help their neighbours with a favour (percentages)

Characteristic	Hoograven	Bouwlust
Tenant	75.0	73.9
Owner-occupier	89.8	75.0
Dutch	85.1	76.5
BME groups	64.1	66.7
Average	79.5	73.6

Survey 2003

Although it should be noted that the categories of lower incomes, tenants and BME groups are partially overlapping, apparently lower incomes, tenants and BME groups rather keep a little bit more distance from the neighbours than higher incomes, owner-occupiers and Dutch people.

Caring for the direct surroundings of your house is also an indicator for a civic society as I related to feelings of being responsible for your surroundings. This happens quite often, as in both neighbourhoods about 70 per cent of the residents make sure that the outside of their home is in good order (table 8). In Bouwlust,

elderly people feel more responsible than younger people ($V = 0.177$) and the Dutch respondents pay more attention to this than non-Dutch respondents ($V=0.268$).

Table 8: "I always make sure that the outside of my home is neat and clean" (percentages)

Characteristic	Hoograven	Bouwlust
18-54 year-old	69.9	64.0
> 55 year-old	81.6	82.4
Dutch	70.5	78.4
BME-groups	82.5	51.4
Average		

Source: survey 2003

All in all a heterogeneous population composition does not lead to a variation in the values and norms about how to behave. But when it comes to relying on your neighbours, it seems that chances are best to ask for and receive help in a 'white' street where people own their homes and have some money to spend. Perhaps the more stressful and uncertain daily lives of less well to do people makes them feel less inclined to rely on others, and to be relied on.

Social cohesion 3: Place attachment and identity

The third component of social cohesion relates to the feeling about the neighbourhood. In general, a homogeneous residents' composition in a neighbourhood stimulates identification with it. Furthermore, the choice of the neighbourhood reflects the lifestyle because it offers the opportunity to distinguish from others. The image of the area is decisive: a positive image will enhance identification possibilities. A negative image on the other hand will make people dissociate from the area by disregarding the ties they have with it.

Two composed indicators of place attachment and identity are measured here. The first indicator⁸ relates to the more individual dimension of identification and is composed of the following statements:

1. I feel that I am a "Hoogravenaar";
2. A am proud of Hoograven;
3. People that live outside this neighbourhood have a positive image of this neighbourhood;
4. This neighbourhood goes well with my taste;
5. Most people that live in this neighbourhood live here because they have no other option;
6. Hoograven is a special neighbourhood;
7. It hurts when people make negative remarks about Hoograven;
8. Hoograven is a neighbourhood with a lively radiation;
9. Hoograven is a better neighbourhood than most other neighbourhoods in Utrecht.

Table 9 reveals that the feeling of identification is slightly higher in Bouwlust than in Hoograven, but it is not significantly different. The score can be 1 (no identification) to 5 (very strong identification). With a score around 2.80 both neighbourhoods score medium individual identification.

From the non-parametric test it became clear that individual identification is significantly different (Chi-Square = 7.36, Asymp Sig = 0.025) for students, tenants

⁸ For the sake of the homogeneity tests the scores of the fifth statements were reversed because this was negatively put. Analysis shows a Cronbach's α of 0.76, which show that the statements do indeed represent similar values.

and home-owners in Hoograven⁹. Students have a lower feeling of identification than tenants, who in turn have a lower feeling of identification than home-owners.

The feeling is not different for the other characteristics such as income, education, daily activity, age, household composition, time of residence and ethnic background.

Table 9: Individual identification per neighbourhood and household characteristics (means)

Characteristic	Hoograven	Bowlust
Active	2.73	2.79
Inactive	2.92	3.02
Tenant	2.77	2.88
Owner-occupier	2.75	2.86
Student house	2.64	-
Average	2.75	2.87

Survey 2003

The second indicator represents the social connectedness to the neighbourhood. It is a composition of the following statements¹⁰:

1. I feel at home in the neighbourhood;
2. Most people in this neighbourhood can be trusted;
3. In this neighbourhood we help each other out;
4. In this neighbourhood people live besides each other, not with each other;
5. I feel attached to this neighbourhood;
6. I think that this is a cosy neighbourhood;
7. I go out with my neighbours regularly
8. I say hello to everybody in this street.

The scores on individual identification and the scores on social connectedness are highly interrelated (correlation coefficient of 0.742). This was to be expected, as people will not identify with a neighbourhood (the second indicator) if it has a bad reputation (the first indicator).

Table 10 reveals that the feeling of connectedness is nearly the same in Bowlust and Hoograven. Again the score can be 1 (no identification) to 5 (very strong identification). Both neighbourhoods score 'medium identification'. The Kruskal-Wallis tests¹¹ showed that there are no differences between groups based on the characteristics income, education, age, daily activity, time lived in the neighbourhood, home ownership structure, household composition and ethnicity in the degree of social connectedness. Concluding, the feeling of belonging and identity is rather medium in the research areas and it is not influenced by most characteristics that we discerned.

Table 10: Social connectedness with the neighbourhood and household characteristics (means)

Characteristic	Hoograven	Bowlust
Average	3.03	2.98

⁹ We have performed the non-parametric Kruskal-Wallis test on the averages of the groups because the precondition of homogeneity in the Levene's test was not met, which made ANOVA tests not possible.

¹⁰ For the sake of the homogeneity tests the scores of the fourth statement was reversed because this was negatively put. Analysis shows a Cronbach's α of 0.83, which show that the statements do indeed represent the same dimension.

¹¹ As with the previous table it was not possible to run ANOVA variance analyses because there were not enough cases in all groups.

Relations between the elements of social cohesion:

The analysis above gives an impression of the extent to which the elements of social cohesion are related to individual and household characteristics. But, as was said in the theoretical part, these elements are interrelated and not to be studied separately. So how do the elements of social cohesion interrelate?

The first element of social cohesion is social networks based on family, friends and neighbours. Individuals with family in the area often also have most of their friends there, but contacts with neighbours are not related to having either family or friends in the area. Apparently contact with neighbours is of a different order than friends and family. This can also be seen in relation to the other indicators: Chatting with the neighbours relates positively to exchanging small services and goods, while those that have family and friends in the neighbourhood are less inclined than others to give help to a neighbour. Perhaps the relation with the family prevents feelings of solidarity with others.

Furthermore, there is a positive relation between social networks and feelings social identification with the neighbourhood. This means that there is no relation between contact with the neighbours and an individual feeling of identification with the neighbourhood, while there is a strong relation between chatting with the neighbours and feeling socially part of the area.

The second element of social cohesion was measured on two indicators: asking a favour and giving help to the neighbours. It is therefore not surprising that there is a relation with having a chat with the neighbours, as these indicators all concern contacts with the neighbours. All in all, the second dimension, *a solidary civic culture*, is only weakly related to the other two dimensions.

The third element of social cohesion, place attachment and identity, was measured on the basis of individual identification with the neighbourhood, and the feeling of being socially connected to it. Especially the indicator of social connectedness has a strong positive relation with the other elements; in fact it is the only indicator that is positively related to all other indicators. This means that if an individual feels socially connected to the neighbourhood, it will also have positive scores on the other indicators of social cohesion. The other indicator, individual identification with the neighbourhood, is positively related to having friends and family in the area. However, this does not relate to chatting with neighbours or exchanging favours.

Concluding, there seem to be two groups of indicators that are interrelated. The more superficial contacts with neighbours, exchanging small favours with each other and feeling socially connected seem to be interrelated concepts (marked grey). The strong ties with family and friends are related to feelings of place attachment and identity, but not to a solidary civic culture (yellow marked).

Table 11: Relations between the elements of social cohesion

	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	T8	T9
Social networks							
Family in the nbh (T2)	x	++	0	0	-	++	+
Friends in the nbh (T3)	++	x	+	0	-	++	+
Chat with neighbours (T4)	0	+	x	++	+	0	++

Solidary civic culture							
Ask favour (T5)	0	0	++	x	++	0	++
Give help (T6)	-	0	+	++	x	0	+
Place attachment and identity							
Identification (T8)	++	++	0	0	0	x	++
Social connectedness (T9)	+	++	++	+	+	++	x

Source: survey 2003

Conclusion

In this paper we aimed to analyse if there are differences between social-economical and ethnical groups in their degree of social cohesion. The background for this study was that a heterogeneous neighbourhood is considered to be of negative impact on social cohesion in that neighbourhood. Analysing the differences between the groups in Bouwlust (in The Hague) and Hoograven (Utrecht), we found that the first aspect, social networks, seems more related to household characteristics than the second aspect of social cohesion; a solidary civic culture. The third aspect of social cohesion, place attachment and identity, showed very little relation with individual and household characteristics.

Our findings in Hoograven were much in line with the expectations that we had and that were based on literature. A strong focus on the neighbourhood is enhanced by low education; no daily activity such as work or education, having children, a long time lived in the neighbourhood and/or being member of a BME-group. Furthermore, although no differentiations in values and norms can be found related to individual and household characteristics, there are some differences in sharing interest in each other and willingness to provide assistance; exchanging small favours works best between people with high incomes, Dutch ethnicity and homeowners. The elderly and the Dutch feel more responsible for the maintenance of the living environment than youngsters and BME-groups. Finally, place attachment and deriving identity from the neighbourhood where you live in, is slightly better for people without a daily activity such as work or education. Again, students feel less attached to their neighbourhood.

So, in Hoograven many ideas about who is more focused on the neighbourhood came true, but in Bouwlust less differences were found in the extent to which the three element of social cohesion are influenced by individual and household characteristics. It could very well be that the relative position of the neighbourhoods in their local context can explain this. Hoograven is at the bottom of the local neighbourhood hierarchy and hosts the most deprived groups in the city (the poorest, the most long-term unemployed), but also many students that have a very different social behaviour than other residents. Bouwlust on the other hand, has an intermediate position in its urban context and although the position of the residents is similar to the residents in Hoograven, they are much better off than the residents in other parts of The Hague.

Our research findings show that social cohesion is influenced by individual and household characteristics, but that the influence is different for each element of social cohesion. When formulating policies this implies that it should be clear which element of social cohesion is aimed at:

1. If the goal is to improve strong ties within the neighbourhood, even more low-educated BME households with children than currently live in the areas should be attracted. However, when the aim is to increase weak ties, the white elderly residents that have lived there for a long time should be kept.
2. If the goal of the policy is to improve the liveability in the neighbourhood, more high-income families with Dutch ethnicity and a home they own should be attracted. This kind of people will exchange small favours, keep the streets clean and care for the area. In this case, the current Dutch policy of replacing social multi-family housing with single-family home-ownership housing seems to be the right one.

Of course, in reality the options are not so black and white. It is not possible, nor desirable to replace the current population of low-income BME families and elderly with a typical suburban population of high-income white households, simply by demolishing and rebuilding the whole neighbourhood. The current practice of renewing small parts of the neighbourhood will lead to sub-areas with each its own focus, within a larger area. Although this will not lead to a cohesive neighbourhood, it might lead to a better neighbourhood in which there is a place for every one, as long as each group respects the differences with the other groups.

There are some things that we do not know from this research. This paper was not focused on the relation between social cohesion and participation in policymaking. One of the ideas is that social cohesion is enhanced when people participate in democratic processes and vice versa. How is belonging and identity related to communal values and norms, willingness to participate in social networks and built social capital? How is solidary civic culture related to strong sense of community, strong social networks, trust and efforts from the government to support voluntary activity and participation in governance? Also here further research is needed.

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