



University of Gastronomic Sciences
**Università degli Studi
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Graduate Degree in Food Innovation and Management

A Latin American Migrant Foodscape in The Netherlands
Central, South American, and Caribbean migrant citizens'
foodway in Almere

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DEDICATION

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Gracias con todo mi corazón, hermosas almas

INTRODUCTION

Food migration and diaspora, intended as a process that involves the relocation of people or communities among different geographical spaces and time spans, and so of their food cultures, is a complex and challenging phenomenon to theoretically frame and contextualize. The very term migration etymologically derives from the ancient Latin, in the grammatical form of accusative case, *migrationem* (nominative *migratio*) “a removal, change of abode”, a concept that implies not only physical relocation but also a loss of habits and familiar cultural local practices, in this particular case of foodways (Skeat, 2006). How to detect migrant foodways? What is the foodscape of a community of transnational culture in a European context?

Through the academic lenses of food studies, the type of food migration aspects that this anthropological research focuses on regard the culinary adaptation and cultural foodways of a portion of Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) migrant women (Sanabria, 2019). The respondents are part of a first-generation migrant community living in the Dutch city of Almere. In this context, the definition of foodways applied is cultural, social, and economic practices associated with food that invites us to think about the way food intersects with history, culture, and tradition (Koč, Sumner, Winson, 2022).

This portion of the community I had the pleasure to work with, represents some of the 192 nationalities that the Almere population belongs to, meaning that this urban fabric represents one of the four most culturally diverse cities in the Netherlands (Municipality of Almere, 2023), (van der Gaast, 2020). The multicultural foodscape of Almere translates into rich and complex patterns of food sourcing, where migrant citizens have been active stakeholders in shaping the food system of the city. According to anthropologist Holtzman, food is a cultural product that is highly intertwined with the dimension of memory in relation to identity and nostalgia (Holtzman, 2006; Renko, Bučar, 2014). Food and identity are triggers to influence food choices that ultimately translate into foodways which seem to be very diverse in Almere. Our current society population is represented by women as active players in shaping food systems and managing directly and indirectly food-related practices (Koch, 2019). Therefore, the following research question of such investigation are:

What strategies do first migrant LAC women living in Almere apply for their food sourcing practices?

- How do these women adapt their practices to fit the Almere foodscape?
- How do they change or influence the Almere foodscape?

The aim of this research was not only to provide Flevo Campus qualitative results about the LAC Almere community but to detect which products and services the citizen required to boost cultural food integration and to what extent the respondents adapted to the Dutch foodways. In addition, I wanted to uncover to what extent the respondents experienced a cultural shock in adapting their foodways to the local Dutch ones.

In Chapter One, an introduction to the social urban fabric of Almere will be presented to contextualize the territory and the unique history of the region of Flevoland. Followed by an introduction to Flevo Campus reality and projects, some demographic details of the migrant community in Almere will be provided. Consequently, I will discuss the ontological choice of referring to this community in such a broad cultural umbrella as the Latin American one, which according to anthropologist Harry Sanabria is a historical, cultural, and social construction, an outcome of sixteen-century European conquest and colonialist power relations (Sanabria, 2019).

Chapter two will display a theoretical framework regarding the notion of foodscape applied in this migrant food context and how emotional geography influences migrant foodways (Appadurai, 1996; Coakley, 2012). After presenting the research methodology adopted in Chapter Three, the results and discussion elaborated on the data analysis will be presented in Chapter Five.

Many different behavioral patterns in relation to respondents' cultural foodways will be described from a qualitative perspective. Starting with their circumstances and reason for migration, their perception of Dutch cuisine and foodways will be depicted together with gastronomic strategies to adapt to such different gastronomic local practices. Alternative strategies of food sourcing to purchase specific LAC food ingredients are part of a type of active agency to maintain familiar foodways.

Cooking practices are connected to the dimension of memory and food nostalgia but also display how Dutch foodways and culture can have a great impact on their daily food habits. Opinions and perceptions about women's cultural food identity will be shared, together with examples of how these two cultural gastronomic constructions, Dutch cuisine, and LAC cuisine, collided or fused or simply created a third place of personal food creativity. An example of a new frontier of gastronomy

may have just taken shape, where perhaps a dynamic foodscape constantly changes by sourcing local food products to recreate a recipe from the faraway country of origin and adapting to another food culture like the one in the Netherlands.

1. GEOGRAPHIC AND SOCIAL CONTEXT OF THE RESEARCH

1.1 Historical frame of Flevoland, the city of Almere and his multicultural social fabric



Figure 1. Almere city in the Netherlands. Map created by Wageningen Urban Environmental Planning Researcher Samuel Agyekum in 2023 for this publication.

Figure 1 illustrates the geographical location of Almere, to contextualize the geographical position of Flevoland and the city in relation to the Dutch national territory. In Northwest Europe, within the Dutch national territory, which is divided into twelve provinces, the city of Almere is part of Flevoland region. Flevoland is the youngest province of the Netherlands, established officially in 1986 (Nationaal Park Nieuw Land, 2023). However, the whole region of Flevoland is part of a unique national spatial planning which started already in 1918, as part of a legislative action aimed at reclaiming land from the “Zuiderzee”, or Southern Sea, a former inlet of the North Sea which penetrated the Dutch territory between the 13th and the 20th century (Jansma, Wertheim-Heck, 2020, Britannica, 2019). Flevoland is, in fact, a polder:

an area of lowland that was once under the sea but that has been separated from it by dykes (= walls or channels built to prevent water from covering an area):

-In the Netherlands, millions of people live in drained polders below sea level.

-More than 2500 km of dykes have been constructed to protect the Dutch polders from flooding. (Cambridge Dictionary, 2023)

Due to the high risk of extreme flooding in the shoreline of the northern part of the Netherlands, and the high level of salinization of the soil, the decision to create new polders took place (Flantua, 2018; Jansma, Wertheim-Heck, 2020). Moreover, the necessity to extract new Dutch territories was strictly linked to the historical need of creating fertile and wider agricultural land, especially after the severe food shortages that World War I and consequently World War II brought in all of Europe, including The Netherlands (Jansma, Wertheim-Heck, 2020). The winter famine that the Dutch people experienced in 1944, was one of the episodes that pushed Sicco Mansholt, the first Dutch minister of agriculture after the second world war, to invest in modern agriculture (Flantua, 2018). The creation of these new land polders was in line with the construction of a new agricultural system, where overproduction and quantity were priorities (Flantua, 2018). Therefore, Flevoland is often referred to as the “land stolen out of the sea”, an area that encompassed major engineering interventions such as the construction of dikes, built to pump out the seawater, and the creation of agricultural land (Flantua, 2018). The city of Almere is believed to be 2 up to 5 meters below sea level (Holland-Land of Water, 2023).

In 1924, under the supervision of engineer Cornelis Lely and the governmental approval of the Zuider Zee Act of 6 years before, the reclamation of Flevoland started (Nationaal Park Nieuw Land, 2023). The building of the first dike known as Amsteldiepdijk, connecting North Holland to the island of Wieringen, was the first step to complete in 1932 the creation of the artificial lake of IJsselmer (Nationaal Park Nieuw Land, 2023). Afterward, it followed a complex process of restoration of the Noordoostpolder, the first land area reclaimed, which was officially dry on 9 September 1942 (Nationaal Park Nieuw Land, 2023). After the Noordoostpolder was completed:

The workers began laying out Oostelijk Flevoland. This polder was meant to accommodate the population of the overfull Randstad.¹ That space was desperately needed. The urbanization in North and South Holland was taking on such a form that new land was required for residential building and recreation. After the successful completion of the eastern polder (1957), the southern polder soon followed (1968). On 1 January 1986, Flevoland officially became the newest and 12th province of the Netherlands. (Nationaal Park Nieuw Land, 2023)

In 1966, the Second National Spatial Plan document officially declared the process of urbanization of the Southern Flevo Polder as active (Jansma, Wertheim-Heck, 2020). Despite the original

¹ The Randstad is defined as a specific area, or megalopolis, that extends between the four largest Dutch cities (Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Utrecht and The Hague) and their satellites towns. The high levels of population density concentrated in this area, have been factors of concern for the interested municipalities. The creation of a new city as Almere, was a great opportunity to balance and redistribute livable surface for workers of the northern-wing Ranstad (Jansma, Wertheim-Heck, 2020).

intention to create new arable land in Flevoland to boost food production, the need of creating new cities for housing demand influenced the urban development strategies. As a result, with the governmental approval of 1971, the formal authorization to develop Almere in the Southern Polder was official (Jansma, Wertheim-Heck, 2020).

Unlike many urban settlements, Almere was designed to be a *poli-nuclear* city (Stadarchief Almere, 2023). Therefore, instead of expanding as the typical town around a main center in concentric circles, the planimetry of the overall city had to look like a puzzle of different smaller urban centers divided by green belts areas, such as parks and rivers (Tzaninis Y., 2019). Constituted by the Dutch government, the Flevo Polders Development Authority, FPDA, the team of agricultural and civic engineers responsible for the urban planning of Almere, highlighted the priority of dedicating 33% of the upcoming city space to these dividing green belts, known as *green intra-nuclear areas* (Jansma, Wertheim-Heck, 2020). In the first years of the seventies, a task force named POA, Project Office Almere, operating under the supervision of the FPDA, was responsible to carry out the urbanization process of the city. This professional team vision was in line with the environmental and social-political concern of the 1970s, where people's needs and healthy areas were priorities for the urban accessibility plan of the city (Jansma, Wertheim-Heck, 2020). The green intra-nuclear areas could be transformed into quality communal spaces, meant to be used by citizens for citizens, where agricultural gardens or outdoor activities could be combined. However, these modern liberalism orientations were sooner going to be shadowed by the choice of the city to expand private construction projects, increase financial profit and welcome new inhabitants (Jansma, Wertheim-Heck, 2020). In 1984, the municipality of Almere took shape, with the formation of a civil administration, council, and politicians (Jansma, Wertheim-Heck, 2020). The national housing program, which was providing many incentives to the province for the creation of more habitable areas, was a big driver for the municipality to rather collaborate with private real estate organizations than focus on the building of public facilities such as hospitals, libraries, or schools (Jansma, Wertheim-Heck, 2020). As scientist Jan Eelco Jansma and associate professor Sigrid C.O. Wertheim Heck clearly report, in almost 20 years, from 1984 to 2003, 150.000 inhabitants were registered and became part of the territorial extension of the city (Jansma, Wertheim-Heck, 2020).

The city's poly-nuclear layout started to be questioned and the explicit function of green intra-nuclear space gradually disappeared in urban spatial planning...Areas initially earmarked for agriculture were eventually sacrificed to urban expansion. (Jansma, Wertheim-Heck, 2020, p.7).

However, due to the 2008 economic crisis that slowed down the real estate building process in the country together with the political focus on the climate change crisis of those years, the management of the urban development of the city shifted again to its initial poli-nuclear composition (Jansma,

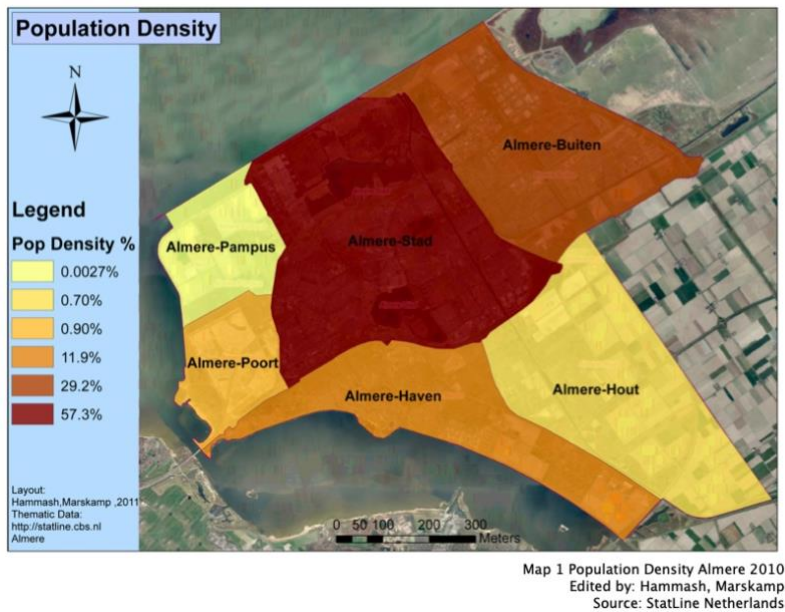


Figure 2. Population Density of Almere in 2010

area where citizens self-organize their private and communal infrastructures, where agricultural practices became vital parts of their routines and self-sustenance (Jansma, Wertheim-Heck, 2020). Nevertheless, as pointed out by Jansma and Wertheim-Heck, this area engages in a specific cluster of inhabitants, who are committed to alternative lifestyles and, I would observe, have the economic and cultural capital to access it. In January 2022, the inhabitants of Oosterwold represent 3.310 individuals, 1,49% of the overall estimated population of Almere, composed of 222.023 individuals in 2022 (Allcharts, 2023) (Gemeente Almere, 2023).

In terms of geographical technicality, the city is officially divided into 238 neighborhoods (CBS, 2023). Interestingly, when referring to wider areas of Almere, the city is segmented into five districts; Almere Haven, Almere Stad, Almere Buiten, Almere Poort, and Almere Hout, each of them developed in a different time span. Almere Haven was the first area that welcomed the first citizens of Almere, also known as pioneers, who received the keys to their houses in 1976 (Stadarchief Almere, 2023). To allow the expansion of new incomers and welcome them in other areas than Almere Haven, the building of Almere Stad started in 1979, followed in 1984, with the construction of the Almere Buiten area (Stadarchief Almere, 2023). According to a factsheet of the city of Almere published in 2011, 57.3 % of the population of the city was concentrated in the urban areas of Almere Stad and 29.2% in Almere Buiten (Hammash, Marskamp, 2011). This statistic shows that the majority of the Almere population lives in a highly urbanized area. Sourcing food for the local

Wertheim-Heck, 2020). After 2008, the urban consequences were a drastic reduction in house constructions and the implementation of the Almere 2.0 program. This new project was orientated to create an urban-rural area in the East of the city, named Oosterwold. Meanwhile, maintaining urban areas on the West of the city also was strategic (Jansma, Wertheim-Heck, 2020). Supervised

by the municipality, Oosterwold is an

citizens often translates into purchasing food items in supermarkets, open markets, tokos,² or restaurants (Flevo Campus, 2022). From a sociological perspective, the choice of the consumer to purchase specific a foodstuff is not simply driven by physical availability and economic affordability but influenced by complex individual and socio-cultural needs. As sociologist Paolo Corvo remembers, starting from Claude Levi-Strauss's theories related to the cultural and symbolic dimensions of food, anthropologists were the first academics to analyze and value the *strategic importance of phenomena linked to food in order to describe cultural identities and social dynamics* (Corvo, 2015, p.2). In an urban settlement such as Almere that counts 192 nationalities, the topic of food identities and food migration is a research field that offers many possibilities for ethnographic fieldwork (Municipality of Almere, 2023). Many interesting foodways and challenges arise in a city that represents so many young and international citizens. How to provide healthy, possibly locally sourced food items and at the same time respect so many food cultures? The current era of *hyper-globalization*, in which trade integration and the importance of services increased, has allowed a wide variety of food items to be available among different continents, and economically, to be accessible for many migrated people worldwide (Subramanian A., Kessler M., 2013). At the same time, the environmental impact that this economic hyper-globalized Western trade system has triggered, has reached harmful levels of ecological and social damage. Therefore, the Flevo Campus team is trying to address how to be sustainable and socially responsible in a city like Almere and provide healthy food services accessible to everyone. With a multidisciplinary approach, the Flevo Campus team is trying to address the former dilemma.

1.2 Flevo Campus reality

The research institute Flevo Campus (FC) was founded in January 2017, to analyze the current urban food system of Almere and provide accessible solutions for the local citizens. Initially implemented by Almere's city council, this scientific hotspot took shape thanks to the partnership with Flevoland province, the city of Almere, hence the municipality, Wageningen University, and its Research department, Aeres University of Applied Science in Almere and Horizon, the regional

² Despite having an unclear etymology, the word *toko* is likely to derive from Malay or Javanese "toko", hence, "bazaar". Brought by Dutch colonizers, when settled in Indonesia, nowadays in the Netherlands, the term *toko* refers to a food shop that sells a rich variety of imported ingredients usually coming from areas such as East or Southeast Asia. In the common Dutch language, *toko* is the synonym for Asian shop or Asian supermarket which are usually owned or managed by citizens with a migrant background. Tokos do not only sell canned, packed, or frozen food products at competitive prices but usually have a gastronomy counter with Indonesian ready-to-eat dishes such as nasi goreng. (Etimologiebank, 2023; Philippa M., et al, 2009).

development agency for Flevoland, which finances enterprises and boosts business development in the province (Flevo Campus, 2023) (Horizon, 2023). Under the supervision of CEO Lenno Munnikes, FC has an innovative and young approach to designing project and applying on-field research in the city. As they clearly state on their website:

Flevo Campus brings together entrepreneurs, educators, chefs, students, researchers, and policymakers in a single research institute. This interdisciplinary approach means we often uncover novel answers to the complex food questions cities face. By facilitating innovation, e, and applied scientific research, by supporting food researchers, and by promoting and streamlining food education, Flevo Campus helps address all manner of food-related issues. (Flevo Campus, 2023)

Different interventions have been taking place in the last 5 years, each of them related to three different fields: education, research, and entrepreneurship, applied through the lenses of multidisciplinary food studies and gastronomy.

The academic management and design of their applied research projects are supervised by researchers of the Aeres University of Applied Sciences in Almere, located between the districts of Almere Stad and Almere Haven, in the area where the Floriade Exhibition took place last year in 2022. The physical locations where the Flevo Campus team operates can be divided into two main areas: the first one is in the Floriade Expo quarter, where three main buildings are located: The Food Forum, a meeting place for food professionals provided with a dedicated kitchen and restaurant service; the Village, opened in 2021, a space for food entrepreneur, students to brainstorm and consult each other and the previously mentioned brand new and winner of the Circular Award 2022 for public buildings, Aeres University of Applied Sciences in Almere. Located 10 minutes by foot from the train station, the second area, where the Flevo Campus team operated in 2022, is a space in the city centrum of Almere Stad, known as FC The Future. This polyfunctional area, which used to be a Subway Sandwich shop, equipped with a professional kitchen, services, and dining area, hosted the week of on-field research and events for citizens of Almere and workers of FC. Moreover, from March 2022 until December 2022, every week from Friday to Sunday, FC The Future, turned into the location to pilot the project “De Volkskantine” (People’s Canteen). This open-buffet canteen provided organic, warm meals during lunch and dinner time, for affordable prices (8 € for a big plate, 5 € for a medium plate, and 3 € for a small plate). This initiative has been designed by Floris Visser, the founder of Public Food, a reality that tries to find solutions to make sustainable and healthy food economically accessible and socially inclusive for the Dutch population (Flevo Campus, 2023). The support of Flevo Campus consisted of financing and assisting Floris Visser in managing the logistic for the People’s Canteen to be operative, and offering the physical location in Traverse 1, equipped with a proper cooking space and dining area. Together with FC internal professional cooks who

created and adjusted the majority of the dishes, some plates of the canteen have been designed by international students at ROC College in Almere, who was part of a project, Wortel Schieten (Carrots Shooting), in which they were asked to share their food cultures and turn their favorite dish into a plant-based version to be proposed to the Volkskantine. This is an example of collaboration between local realities that usually cooperate with the Flevo Campus, which addresses the challenge of providing healthier food to future younger generations. Certain areas of the city centrum of Almere and other districts of the city risk being defined as partial *food swamps*, neighborhoods, or zones where fast-food or junk food shops overtake healthy and sustainable food options (Cooksey-Stowers K., Schwartz M. B., Brownell D. K., 2017). This is an example of a food challenge that Flevo Campus tries to address by delivering accessible services and not necessarily by transmitting food education notions up-front to the user. In this case, the choice of Flevo Campus is oriented to do not exchange or address to the consumer the responsibility of their food choice, because many portions of population may not have the cultural and financial capital to be triggered by ethical choices when it's about feeding and nourishing themselves. Without denying the importance of food education and the massive impact that individual food choice has, the poorest and most disadvantage minorities of citizens should not be discriminated against and have the same access to healthy food as the wealthier segment of the population. This responsibility is in the hand of the private sector, such as food retailers, companies, or food producers, and in the public system. In this frame, Flevo Campus positions his reality at the service of the people of Almere. In addition, many educational projects such as summer schools or the Think Tank activities, are addressed for food entrepreneurs, students, and start-ups to exchange knowledge and build awareness on food studies issues. Those initiatives usually attract individuals with former familiarity and awareness of food consumption themes or with an open mentality to learn new notions.

For this reason, in FC, sociologists, urban planners, nutritionists, students, and researcher collaborates with chefs, food activists, politicians, and banks, through a horizontal approach to try to find solutions to build a sustainable urban system for every citizen of Almere.

The results of this anthropological research can give interesting insights into the food preferences and foodways of the respondents, which is a portion of LAC citizens of Almere. The display of their food consumption for Flevo Campus may inspire interesting knowledge for developing future food products and services, or simply face and respect cultural differences that can be an interesting pattern to rethink the current local Dutch foodway.

1.3 Population of Almere and its migrant culture

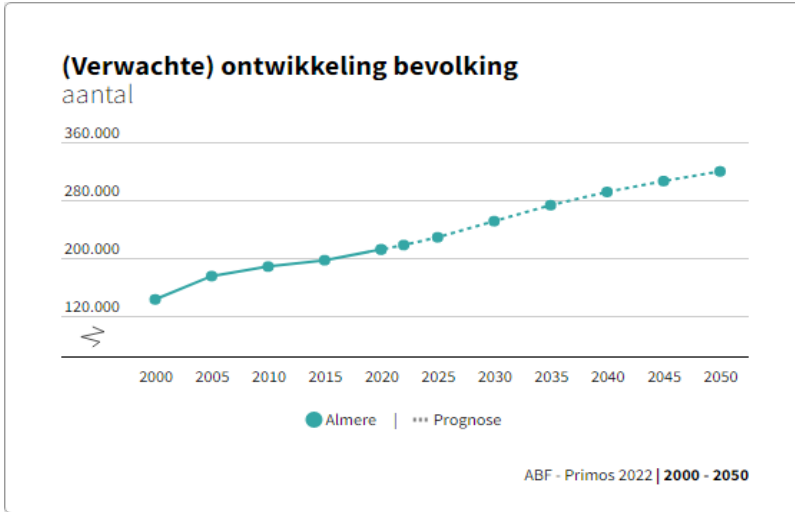


Figure 3. Expected development of Almere population: x= years, y=population (aantal), Gemeente Almere, 2023.

As previously stated, the population of Almere reached an overall number of 222.023 inhabitants, a number registered in November 2022 (Gemeente Almere, 2023). As the left graph shows, according to municipality estimations, after 2040, the number of citizens are expected to become more than 280.000 (Gemeente Almere, 2023).

According to Figure 4, the age pyramid shows that the current population of Almere is partially young, with the segment of the population between 30-39 years of age being predominant. People between 50-59 years old are also a large section of the population in the overall demographic of the city. Compared to a factsheet about Almere demographics of 2010, the overall population showed to be increased and additionally significantly older than 12 years ago. According to the same study from 10 years ago, the

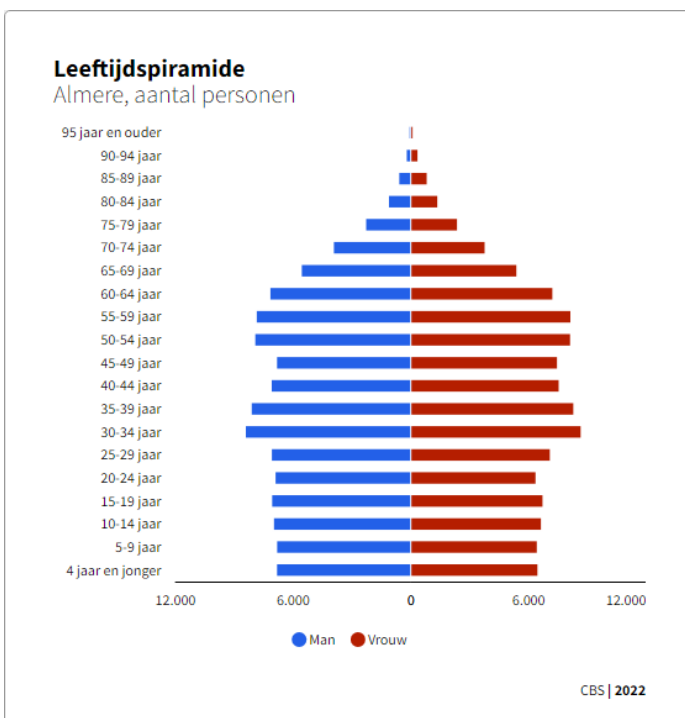


Figure 4. Age pyramid of Almere population. Gemeente Almere, 2023.

composition of the Almere population was represented by 37% of citizens with a no-Western origin, whereas the remaining 63% with Dutch origin (Hammash, Marskamp, 2011). From the same 2010 source, we do know that the non-Dutch population share was 74% no-Western origin and mainly represented by 40% of Surinamese, 31% of non-Western origin (a mixture of multiple extra-European nationalities), 13% of Moroccan, 9% by people from Aruba and Netherlands Antilles and 6% by Turkish background people (Hammash,

Marskamp,2011). Figure 5 depicts a map of the overall Almere population density and its distribution within the city. This map shows that some specific neighborhoods, especially in the districts of Almere Stad and Almere Buiten, together with some areas of Almere Poort and partially in Almere Haven, have a significant concentration of urban-settled citizens. The following maps of

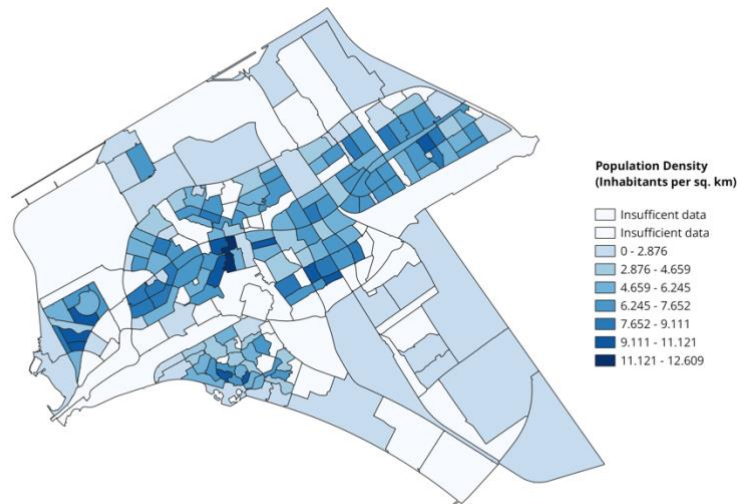


Figure 5. Population Density of Almere in 2022. Map created by Wageningen Urban Environmental Planning Researcher Samuel Agyekum in 2023 for this publication.

researcher Agyekum will instead show the density distribution of the population in 2022, according to their non-Western origin. The biggest group of migrant communities present in the city which seems to be the one detected ten years ago, are inhabitants with other non-Western backgrounds (a mixture of multiple extra-European nationalities), followed by citizens of Suriname origin. The third biggest nationality represented in the city is Moroccan, and eventually Turkish background

citizens. This set of general information regarding the main migratory groups of the population of the city, has the aim to highlight the multicultural social fabric of Almere.

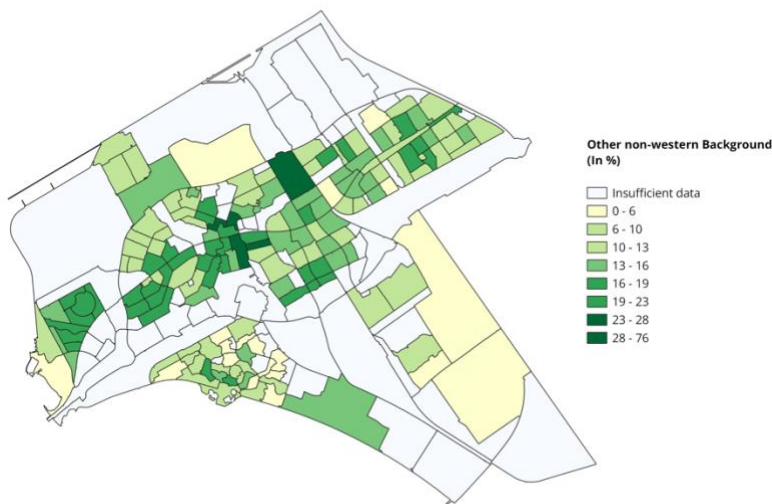


Figure 6. Almere distribution and density of non-Western origin population, in 2022. Map created by Wageningen Urban Environmental Planning Researcher Samuel Agyekum in 2023 for this research.

Figure 7. Almere distribution and density of Suriname origin population, in 2022. Map created by Wageningen Urban Environmental Planning Researcher Samuel Agyekum in 2023 for this research.

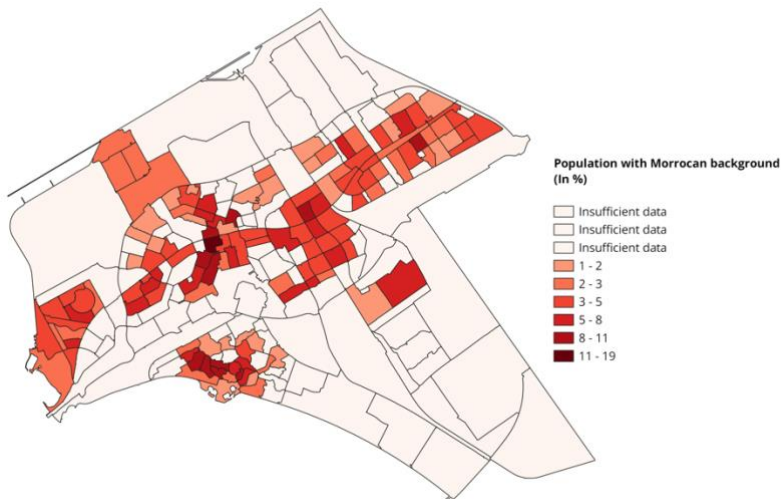
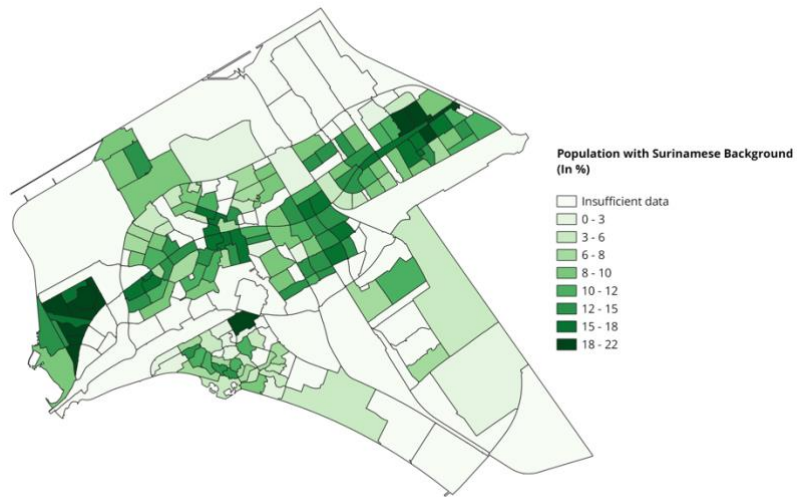


Figure 8. Almere distribution and density of Moroccan origin population, in 2022. Map created by Wageningen Urban Environmental Planning Researcher Samuel Agyekum in 2023 for this research.

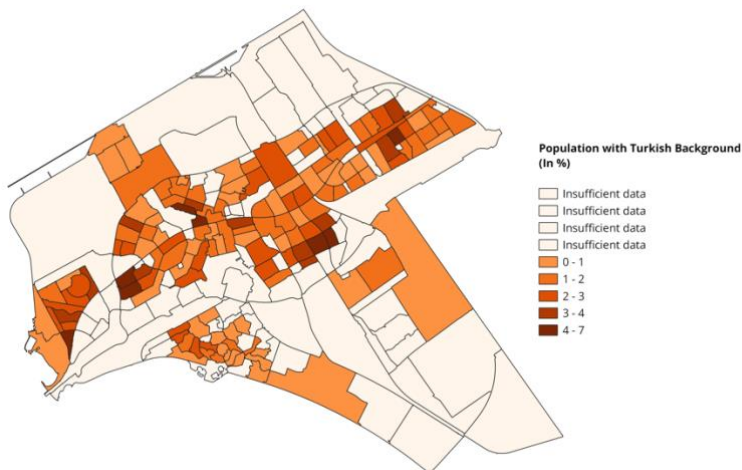


Figure 9. Almere distribution and density of Turkish origin population, in 2022. Map created by Wageningen Urban Environmental Planning Researcher Samuel Agyekum in 2023 for this research.

It is crucial to remember that many other cultural minorities live and co-exist in this international city³.

1.4 Latin American & Caribbean (LAC) dynamic imaginary and national cuisines

The very title of this essay, *A Latin American and Caribbean Migrant Foodscape in The Netherlands*, contextualize briefly and broadly where geographically the investigation took place. The adjectives “Latin American and Caribbean” is similarly referring to individual and yet common imaginary of land, socio-cultural practices, and therefore, foodways of a massive cluster of cultures. What does Latin American and Caribbean anthropology means? Social anthropologist Harry Sanabria, raises the ontological issues of even using the imprecise term *Latinos*, which he prefers to *Hispanics* to refer to the ethnic category of Latin American descents living in the United States (Sanabria, 2019). Therefore, he refers to immigrants documented or undocumented clusters of people who are broadly spread in the US. In a different context like the European Dutch one, I decided to use the term LAC migrant referring to this group of migrant women who though may not entirely or necessarily identify with the terms *Latinos* individually. Moreover, the complexity and diversity of the social and cultural aspects of the Latin American continent and Caribbean islands are so wide that it is a brave and approximate attempt to cluster them together in a cultural definition. Sanabria gives a rich list of images to describe the content of his book *The Anthropology of Latin American and Caribbean*:

Dozens of countries and territories with more than 600 million citizens; hundreds of languages; millions living in huge megacities, many others in small communities; and array of ecological niches

³ The term “minorities” does not refer to the formal but debatable cluster of immigrant citizens that the Dutch government formulated from the New Minorities Policy of 1980 onwards (Janssens, 2015). Many “ethnic” minorities have been defined and updated within political and cultural framework in the Netherlands, to create statistical social categories to study and quantify migration performances in education, job market and housing (Janssens, 2015). For instance, from 2009, refugees from Iran, Afghanistan, Somalia, were added as new categories of refugees and following Dutch Minister of the Interior indications, immigrants from Central and Eastern Europe became part of the statistics (Janssens, 2015). However, as professor of American Studies Ruud Janssens highlights *the definition of ethnic minorities contributed to the perception of social problems caused by the presence of immigrants...and how the way policy planners and makers defined minorities, minority problems, and threats to city life (if not Dutch society), drawing on the related statistics, shaped popular perceptions of immigrants and immigration policies* (Janseens, 2015). More interestingly *while policy planners used the word integration, they actually mostly meant assimilation, and expected immigrants to become similar to the Dutch.* (Janseens, 2015). This formulation of social taxonomy and creation of “otherness” with the use of the term ethnic when referring to different cultural groups, has been proved to be arbitrary and harmful in the ontological dilemma on how to create the *definition of “the” group, the assumption of groupness, and the implied explanatory framework* (Carter B., Fenton S. 2010). The display of the main cluster of migrant citizens in Almere, illustrated in the previous maps, does not want to imply that the nationality of birth defines necessarily the affiliation to the originating culture. Having a Moroccan background as Dutch citizen in Almere, does not entitle to be strictly Muslim religious or to follow halal diet, or to socialize with the Moroccan migrant community of the city.

spread over eight million square miles of land; diverse historical trajectories, some pointing to Africa, others to Europe, and many rooted in the new World; a long history of diasporas within and across national boundaries; hundreds of groups with their own sense of ethnic identity; a multiplicity of racial classifications; widely diverse views on sexuality and gender relations; dozens of religious traditions; different ways of understanding health and illness; hundreds of dissimilar foods and cuisines; numerous musical and dance traditions; a variety of secular and religious popular celebrations with African, European, and new World influences. (Sanabria, 2019)

A crucial consideration to remember is that all these overwhelming and colorful images are part of a culturally invented imaginary, the same cultural construction that defined national cuisines or what historian Eric Hobsbawm described as *invented traditions*:

a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past. In fact, where possible, they normally attempt to establish continuity with a suitable historic past. (Hobsbawm, 1983)

According to scholar Mignolo, the concept of *Latin America* and lately of *Latinidad* was formulated in France for reasons of power relations and conflict among imperial colonial nations in the second half of the 19th century (Mignolo, 2005). French colonizers needed to justify the intention to exploit raw materials reclaimed in South American space and create an imaginary of European colonizers' legacy of Latin countries involved in the Americas (Italy, Spain, Portugal, and France itself) against the Anglo-Saxon hegemony (Mignolo, 2005).

The question of Latin American identity is one that has long been debated in Latin America itself. For 300 years, from 1521 until independence in 1821, Latin American identity was defined in terms of the major colonial powers. (Hayes-Bautista, 1987)

From a decolonizing perspective, Latin American terminology was also used by white creoles and mestizos to shape their own notion of Latin America after the independence historical period (Mignolo, 2005).

LAC culture is big cluster of symbolic meanings and represents a multitude of social, ecological and economic diversity. Therefore, why use Latin American and Caribbean to refer to the interviewees of this research? The reasons are partially straightforward. The totality of the sample, with different degrees of linguistic proficiency, could communicate in Spanish. Although, speaking Spanish or a romance language is an arbitrary characteristic to define that a country is consequently LAC,⁴ the

⁴ As presented by Sanabria, showing how scholars debates on the criteria to define which areas can be defined as LAC, language predominance has its faults. In most Caribbean islands and some northern South American nations, like Suriname or Guyana, Romance languages are not spoken like other colonized region of the new world by Spaniards, Portuguese and French during 16th and 17th century. Moreover, *LAC is one of world's most linguistically and ethnically*

cultural diversity of the nationality origin of each respondent could be communicated in the same language and somehow became a common denominator of *Latinidad*. Some of the women interviewed have extremely close friendships with each other and the reason why they connected were not driven by an affiliation of national belonging but rather the condition of being LAC migrants in Almere. The shared cultural features of the interviewees were mainly related to:

- the possibility to communicate in Spanish or the willingness to create a situation where their children could learn and practice Spanish.
- the creation of a group in Almere to organize Catholic masses in Spanish. The Catholic religion has been a crucial gluing element of congregations and networking among many both Latin American and Caribbean respondents.

Eventually, the last reason to cluster this culturally rich group of respondents together is strictly related to the geography of their origin. Indeed, the women in the research are born in 13 different countries considered part of the 49 nations that, according to the United Nations, creates the imaginary of Latin American and Caribbean continent and territories (Sanabria, 2019). These are the reason that led me to take this ontological direction in using the term LAC women or cuisines. Nevertheless, it is important to stress that when referring to LAC cuisine it is not intended to relate to an approximate or generic imaginary of a single continental cuisine. During the investigation, the term LAC cuisine was used to refer to their foodways of origin but openly asked what LAC meant for them and how they perceive their food cultures. Therefore, it was asked if Latin American and Caribbean cuisine or Dutch cuisine existed for them and if they felt affiliated with the notion of national cuisines such as Nicaraguan, Peruvian, or Dutch. The research angle of perspective applied to the relationship of food and nationalism is an *unofficial/bottom-up* (Ichijo, Ranta, 2016). Therefore, the notion of national cuisine that we refer to is a mixture of *banal nationalism* and the concept of *nationalism in everyday life* (Ichijo, Ranta, 2016). As discussed by scholars Ichijo and Ranta, banal national symbols such as monuments, spaces, coins and mostly food images are a way to remind citizens that we live in nations (Ichijo, Ranta 2016).

Most of the restaurants we frequent and the cookbooks we read are related to a particular nation. The national branding and labeling of food are literally found everywhere, conveying a particular image of the nation, constructing and reproducing it in our everyday lives (Ichijo, Ranta 2016, p. 6).

diverse regions. Whereas Europe has three language families (clusters of related languages descended from a single ancestral language), the New World (North and South America combined) has about 70 (Sanabria, 2019).

As quoted previously through the words of Eric Hobsbawm, the reproduction or imaginary of traditions is similar to the narrative of *imagined qualitative differences and significance* of different national cuisines (Ichijo, Ranta 2016, p.6). Even in this context, the idea of nation is not static but rather dynamic.

The nation is not a monolithic entity: it is indeed made up of a variety of groups and people who at times promote competing perceptions and images of what the nation is, based on gender, class and ethnicity, among others (Ichijo, Ranta 2016).

Historian Jeffrey Pilcher highlights in *Planet Taco-A Global History of Mexican Food*, the notions of authenticity of Mexican food have changed throughout time and are debated among insiders and outsiders (Pilcher, 2012, p. XIV). Shaped by migrants' Mexican people in the US, the industrialization of Tex-Mex cooking and the creation of national Mexican cuisine in the 19th century during the independence period, *there was an attempt to forge a national cuisine between nostalgia for Creole traditions and the allure of European fashions* (Pilcher, 2012, p.XIV). The process of creating an imaginary of national cuisine is though not just an intellectual attempt but can translate into an everyday or festivities practice that goes through procurement and consumption of food (Ichijo, Ranta, 2016).

From the spaces in which we produce, procure and consume food to the timings and traditions of our meals, these banal and mundane food activities help sustain and build familiar sense of time, space and being... Taken together with the banal representations of the nation in food, our food constructs the time and space of our national identity while conveying meaning and symbolism to it... The nation as performed by individuals, is about practice, routine and repetition. When groups of people make choices, for whatever reason, on a regular and repetitive basis, whether once a year or once a day, it affects the way they and others view the nation... In many cases, performing the nation through food means taking part in food-related events, tradition or rituals. The feast, though performed at an "invisible" space such as home, provides a direct link to the nation's imagined history and traditions. (Ichijo, Ranta, 2016,p 6-10).

In the chapter on the results, it will be shown how festivities related to Catholics traditions are spaces in which the women recreate a sense of home. Moreover, some respondents shared a willingness to transmit a part of their childhood traditions experienced in their country of origin to their sons. This need translates into the preparation of complex or time-taking dishes perceived as LAC traditional (e.g. hallacas/tamales for Christmas, fish- based dished for Easter). The dimension of memory and partially nostalgia is highly interlinked with the consumption of specific familiar recipes. We will see in the next paragraph how food identity and memory are a dynamic phenomenon and at the same time, *liquid* as sociologist Zigmund Bauman would refer to our contemporary society (Bauman, Rovirosa-Madrado, 2010).

2.FOCUS OF THE ANTHROPOLOGICAL RESEARCH and THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Foodscape notion within food and migration

The decision to apply the term foodscape to this LAC migrant women comes from two different reflections. The first one is that the concept of foodscape goes beyond the topographic understanding that landscape refers to. The goal of the research is not orientated to merely understand where and when the food consumption of these 20 immigrant women in Almere took place. The symbolic and cultural meaning that drives the LAC group to specific food choices in Almere is part of a complex cultural phenomenon, where relational drivers are a crucial key of interpretation. The notion of foodscape connects with the theoretical framework of the concept of -scapes, elaborated by anthropologist Arjun Appadurai, in the book *Modernity at Large*. This post-colonial view considers specific dimensions of objects and people, through which globalization evolves. The *five dimensions of global cultural flows* described by Appadurai are:

-ethnoscapes, landscape of persons who constitute the shifting world in which we live: tourists, immigrants, refugees, exiles, guest workers and other moving groups (p.33);

-mediascapes, distribution of the electronic capabilities to produce and disseminate information (newspapers, magazines television stations, and film-production studios (p.35)

-technoscapes, the global configuration, also ever fluid, of technology and the fact that technology, both high and low, both mechanical and informational, now moves at high speeds across various kinds of previously impervious boundaries. (p.34).

-financescapes, disposition of global capital, so the complex and constant flux of money and financial transaction that takes place at micro and macro economical level (at national and international levels). (p.34)

-ideoscapes, concatenations of images, often directly political and frequently have to do with ideologies of states. (p.36) (Appadurai, 1996, p.33-36).

Intrinsically, a foodscape is therefore immersed in these five global and cultural streams and it reflects their knotted interweaving. According to author Alessandra Guigoni, the notion of foodscape can be added to these cultural, economic and political scapes and, as for academic Sylvia Ferrero, gives the possibility to conduct an analysis that deals with transnational food practices (Ferrero, 2002; Guigoni, 2004). A foodscape is for Mackendrick usually clustered around a food environment, which is not fixed, because the shape of this food environment boundaries contract and expand constantly (Mackendrick, 2004). This is a description of the foodscape given by the scholar in her article:

Where I live, my foodscape includes two grocery stores, a community garden, two food banks, several public-school breakfast and lunch programs, multiple bodegas, a farmers' market, food trucks, and several fast-food restaurants. Although these are all within walking distance of my front door, foodscapes are not always proximate spaces. In many rural and urban areas, shoppers must drive or ride a bus to get to the nearest grocery store, restaurant, or farmers' market. In the suburbs of major cities, shoppers can find "big box" grocery stores that offer deep discounts and substantial choices. For middle-class shoppers, foodscapes extend to online spaces that allow consumers to order food from distant warehouses through grocery delivery services or websites like Amazon.com. (Mackendrick, 2004)

It is clear from this description how the foodscape encompasses technoscape features, with online food services, financescape aspects in which the purchase choice is driven by convenience, but no ethnoscape features are really depicted. So where is the diverse *landscapes of people* that characterizes many foodscapes?

The second reflection regarding the choice to apply the analytical tool of foodscape related to Appadurai theory is to address the movement of the respondent's food choices in a confined geographical location such as the urban area of Almere and at the same time acknowledge the complex transnational food trade flow between Almere and importing countries. However, there is no intentionality in analyzing the complex macro food procurement system of Almere, but rather, recognizing this systemic complexity that influences the food choice of the respondent. For instance, purchasing specific LAC ingredients through online imports platforms or receiving food boxes from relatives in Bolivia are strategies of adaptation in a new environment where specific ingredients are not possible to source. Moreover, creating these *material transnational circuits* boost intimate spaces and connection with families and beloved who are still living in the country of origin (Mata-Codesal and Abranches, 2018). *Food-sending practices play a significant role in the development and maintenance of the affective and emotional geographies spurred by international migration.* (Mata-Codesal and Abranches, 2018). If exchanging food internationally is a strategy to adapt to the new cultural gastronomic context, on the other hand, scholar Linda Coakley stresses the importance to focus on the migrant relationships with food and how their food choice is strictly linked through the concept of *emotional geography* (Coakley, 2012). *Attention to how migrants encounter the material landscape of food—the foodscape—in their new location is a crucial aspect of an investigation into migrant foodways.* (Coakley, 2012, p.310). As scholar Ferrero explains in her chapter about her research of the Mexican foodscape in Los Angeles:

The daily lives of thousands of immigrants, who are spread all over the world, intermingle and intertwine with the transnational consumer and productive practices of their ethnic communities, their neighbors, their relatives, and their family members. (Ferrero, 2022, p.196)

Even if this research is qualitative and not quantitative (so not handling with an extended number of interviewees), depicting the foodscapes of these 20 women is a way to look at Latin American and Caribbean food as *a device to establish close ties within a community*, in this case concerning the Dutch one and more specifically within the city of Almere (Ferrero, 2002, p. 215). Under the notion of foodscape as a complex and cultural meshwork of dynamics movement, food plays a critical role in migrants' everyday life. Scholar Emma-Jayne Abbots brilliantly summarizes the symbolic meanings that multiple food practices can express:

Sourcing, preparing and consuming food, together with feeding the others, are some of the most immediate and pressing concerns migrants face and, the ethnography demonstrates, these processes can be a mechanism for security, empowerment, and affiliation with others, just as much they can be a site of difference, marginalization, and uncertainty. (Abbots, 2019, p.128)

Indeed, in this migrant foodscape of Latin American and Caribbean women, different dimensions of their foodway will be analyzed. The definition of foodways applied in the research refers to the following: *foodways refers to the cultural, social and economic practices associated with food and invites us to think about the way food intersects with history, culture and tradition.* (Koç et al., 2022). As much as foodscape, foodways are not isolated and static phenomena. Within the experienced foodway, indeed, the dynamics of cultural adaptation to the perceived current Dutch foodway (which constantly evolves throughout the years of staying for the women) comprehend different habits of food practices. In the theoretical framework of a research conducted with Syrian migrants living in different Dutch cities, among which Almere, it was highlighted how food habits of migrant people inevitably transform and adapt:

When migrants arrive into a new food environment with existing country-of-origin routines and competences related to food, de- and reroutinization takes place. This dis- and re-embedding means some practices persist, others disappear and new practices may appear. (Brons et al., 2020)

In these cultural interactions between migrant and host country, Abbots presents different cases of *acculturation, appropriation and hybridization* of food practices investigated by other anthropologists (Abbots, 2019, p.118). However, the attempt to quantify how much a migrant person has acquired or blended cultural food habits from the host community to the original one risks creating a dichotomy of mental association of cultural distance, where “our Latin American food” and “their Dutch food” are static, single categories (Abbots, 2019). Instead, food cultures here are intended as dynamic phenomena and migrant people have the potential to influence the environment in which they experience food adaptation (Muniz de Medeiros, 2012).

Dynamics is also the dimension of time concerning to cooking time. According to scholar Jonathan Martineau, *appears as a fundamental characteristic of existence itself, whether “human”, “social” or “natural”*

(Martineau, 2012, p.1). As much as culture, time is not static but is described as a dynamic social phenomenon, a *cluster of processes* (Martineau, 2012, p.1). In his socio-historical analysis, he highlights the relationship between time and capitalism. He gives a definition of *alienated time* described as a:

Formulation to describe capitalist conceptions and practices of time, since it points out an ongoing relationship in process between abstract and concrete times in capitalist social time relations.
(Martineau, 2012, p.278)

Martineau highlights how important is to focus more on human concrete time and critiques the “commodification of times” that collects *useful labour, socio-natural cycles and human bodies* (Martineau, 2012). The process of *decommodification* of concrete times can take place by:

Reclaiming human concrete times of emotions, work, social relationships, human bodies, friendships, love, parenting, childhood, laughter, sleep, childbirth, childrearing, food production, art, the concrete time of our ecosystems, and so on, thus forms an integral part of the reclaiming of our lives and our world. (Martineau, p.284)

Therefore, new *abstract clock-time-units* influence people throughout the day, both for work or leisure time, with an earlier shift of work and an earlier dinner meal (Martineau, 2012, p.281). For migrant people, cooking practices and food preparation undergo to a time adaptation in terms of social practices.

As claimed in many studies, the phenomenon of urbanization and migration are two dimensions that complementary influence each other (Volpato et al., 2022). According to author Julian Cribb, 55% of the human population already lives in cities, and by 2060 it is predicted that urban areas will host around seven and eight billion people (Cribb, 2019, p.224). Therefore, cities will become more and more crowded either for internal national migration or transnational immigration.

As scholar Elizabeth Horevitz describes, the term immigration usually refers to a state of permanence, it refers to the process of a person who is migrating into a host country and settling, spending the majority of their lifetime in the host society (Horevitz, 2009). Whereas a person labelled migrant travel back and forward between the community of origin and the host society (Horevitz, 2009). According to this epistemological distinction, most respondents of this research should be referred to as immigrants and technically 2 or 3 respondents as migrant people. However, the term immigrant will not be used often due to the negative semantic meaning that mainstream media associated to “immigrant people” creating a narrative of *mixophobia* (Bauman, 2005). The term *mixophobia* is the same that Zygmunt Bauman describes and denounce as the fear to have social interaction and coexist with people with different cultural background, anxiety triggered by living

next to foreign neighbors and therefore interacting with the dimension of social diversity (Bauman, 2005).

2.2 Food concerning cultural identity

Philosopher François Jullien in his provocative essay “*There is no such a thing as cultural identity*”, challenges the term “cultural differences” and suggests to rather refer to “cultural resources” which are created in a certain space, available to all and belong to no one (Jullien, 2016). For Jullien dynamism, exchange and permeability are characteristics of culture.

La cultura è contaminazione. Perciò questi scarti tra le culture ne garantiscono anche la vivacità e la sopravvivenza. Se, secondo Eraclito, nella vita non ci si può mai bagnare due volte nello stesso fiume, per Jullien non ci si può immergere due volte in una stessa cultura. Ogni cultura degna di questo nome può infatti considerarsi viva solo finché cambia, cioè finché è disposta a entrare in relazione con le altre, venendone influenzata almeno tanto quanto è in grado di influenzarle essa stessa.

[*Culture is contamination. Therefore, these gaps between cultures also ensure their vibrancy and survival. If, according to Heraclitus, in life one can never bathe twice in the same river, for Jullien one cannot immerse oneself twice in the same culture. Every culture worthy of the name can only be considered alive as long as it changes, i.e. as long as it is willing to enter into relations with others, being influenced by them at least as much as it is able to influence them itself.*] (Cattini, 2019)

This concept of dynamism related to food and identity is shared by scholar Khrishnendu Ray, who reminds the importance of referring to identity not as a static category but as a moving entity. In addition, similarly to the discourse of Jullien cultural resources, the subjectivity of the single individual exists in contraposition of other social encounters:

Identity production is a work in progress, both for groups and for individuals, and it is often developed in opposition to other identities, themselves also works in progress. Each individual is born and socially produced in a preexisting community imagined and arrayed in some relationship to other communities. Hence individuals do not produce their identities from scratch just as they do not choose to speak any of the world's many languages but grow up speaking that of the group into which they are born. Individual subjectivities are produced in tension with others and other selves. Sometimes subjectivities are asserted consciously as ideologies of self while sometimes they are practiced unself-consciously as everyday habits. (Ray, 2013)

According to sociologist and philosopher Zigmund Bauman, our communities, identities, and our socially constructed institutions becomes more and more unstable and elusive (Bauman, Rovirosa-Madrado, 2010). The concept of *liquidity* applied to modernity and contemporary society is a metaphor that Bauman uses to describe the important social and political transformation that took

place between the second half and at the end of the 20th century, in which neoliberalism is the trigger for the transformation of society from a cluster of producers to a cluster of consumers (Bauman, Rovirosa-Madrazo, 2010). According to scholar Llan Semo, for Bauman the substance of identity is temporary and *the Other*, is an anthropological construction and invention connected to a certain form of ethnocentrism (Semo, 2008). The result of the research shows how this form of liquid identity translates also in the perception of respondent food identities. The research interestingly confirms how *food is far too mobile and fluid to allow us to spend decades trying to reconstruct the genealogies and histories of individual “cultures”* (Garth, 2013). These theoretical perspectives do not want to undermine cultural studies of anthropology or ethnographies projects. The goal is to give a glance of the ontological complexity when food and identity discourse are displayed and remind to don't assume cultural or individual foodway as fixed categories.

3.METHODOLOGY

3.1 Qualitative approach to the sample

This current investigation is gastronomic and food anthropology oriented, focused on understanding how the food habits of these LAC women could influence the foodscape of the city. The research was conducted as a foreign intern student for the Dutch research institute Flevo Campus, implying that a relocation from Italy to The Netherlands was necessary. From March 2022 until June 2022, the whole first phase of the research inquiry (looking for the sample, interviewing, and starting transcribing) had been executed but the actual ethnographic fieldwork in Almere took place from March 2022 until May 2022. The main approach to the research was a qualitative one where semi-structured interviews were designed. In some cases, it was possible to have some observation phases in the household of the respondents.

My involvement in the Women of Almere project as an insider was crucial to build trust with the participants, who were migrant women with different cultural backgrounds, open to sharing their stories, and curious to meet new people in the city. The project Women of Almere organized by Lyla Carrillo Quan included many diverse activities and it originated back in 1997. The aim was for Lyla to investigate the migratory grief patterns of migrant women living in the city of Almere. So far, she managed to interview and photograph 88 women from 61 nationalities. In 2020, after many different phases, Lyla managed to write and publish the book “Latin Women of Almere-Tales of Migrants in a New Land”, which focused on the display of 20 migrant women with South American, Central and Caribbean cultural backgrounds living in the city (Carrillo Quan van der Kaaden, 2020). Their story of migration and cultural belonging were aimed at celebrating cultural diversity and highlighting challenges that the migration process triggers. The project consisted not only in taking pictures and collecting life stories but many activities that took place among the women involved in the group. Examples are the workshop on creative writing, painting sessions, an exhibition of the women's photographs taken, or cultural coffee afternoon. Between March and April 2022, some meetings of the project took place at “De Nieuwe Bibliotheek”, located in the city centrum of Almere. Interested women, who were open to being part of the project could join freely. Those events were the triggering moment to build trust and connect with some potential respondents who had a LAC cultural background. Meeting vis-à-vis with some of these women and the personal ability to speak Spanish, created a comfortable and protected atmosphere to get acquainted with each other. This element and the fact that Lyla introduced me to the group project, sped up the process of familiarity with some women who soon became interviewees. A snowball

sampling methodology took place, by asking the initial and most open respondents, if they could identify other potential subjects to contact, by sharing my email and mobile phone. The attempt to communicate using emails showed to not successful. After a couple of silent weeks in March, the use of WhatsApp technological platform seemed to be a much more informal way of communication and it showed to be much more effective. Sending well-detailed messages to introduce me and explain the content of the research, gave me the possibility to people to consider their time availability and consider their willingness to participate in the investigation.

When the respondents agreed on participating in the investigation, it followed an appointment to physically meet, get acquainted, and explain the research aim. The fact that this current investigation is about gastronomy and food consumption oriented helped in tickling the curiosity of the women. The topic of food seemed to function as a strong social glue, focused on understanding how the foodways of these LAC women could influence the foodscape of the city.

The meeting to get acquainted usually took place in their private houses or neutral locations in the city centrum of the city, such as in the “De Nieuwe Bibliotheek” or Traverse 1, at the Flevo Campus location FC The Future. Once the encounter with the respondent would take place, before proceeding with the actual investigation, a preliminary introduction of the research and informal conversation would take place. This approach gave the possibility to build trust and create the opportunity to hand over to the respondent, a participant consent form to sign. This document contained not only detailed information about Flevo Campus reality and the research content but informed about the management of data and the professional respect for their anonymity.

Being qualitative research, the investigation consisted of in-depth, semi-structured interviews. The interviews were registered through a professional recording machine. The interview questionnaire was composed by twenty structured questions, divided into four main topics:

1. Origin.
2. Modalities of Migration and Adaptation.
3. Current foodscape and foodway.
4. Food identity and nostalgia.

In case of interesting insights from the respondent on research-related topics or to respect their willingness to share intimate or emotional aspects of their life story, follow-up questions or long listening timespan usually took place. When the interviewee previously agreed on the consent form, at the end of the oral interview, it was usually asked to draw a map of their food consumption. The definition of food maps and the choice to apply such methodology will be given and elaborated on in the last paragraph of this chapter.

In the final phase of the investigation, to share the first research observations of the data and show gratitude to the respondent for their participation, a dinner with the respondent was organized in the city centrum of the city at the FC De Future location, in June 2022. The people that decided to participate in the event, prepared a homemade dish to represent their culinary identity or simply share a dish of their country of origin and enjoy it with those present. Some of the respondents already were familiar with each other, whereas others met for the first time. Each plate had on the side a sheet paper with hand-written on, the name of the dish, such as “aji de gallina” (classic Peruvian chicken stew) or “cordero con arroz y platano frito” (Curaçao dish with a stew of lamb, rice, and fried platano), and at the side the country of origin. Each participant was distributed a printed document with the first overall observations and critical topic of the investigation, displayed in the Spanish language.

During the phase of ethnographic fieldwork, I had the opportunity to live in Almere, therefore I could experience some episodes of participatory observation in the houses of some respondents. In addition, the role that was adopted as a researcher during the observation phase was of two kinds: moderate or peripheral membership and *participant-as-observer* (Baker, 2006). In the former role, as a moderate member, the researcher interacts with the insiders and engages in similar activities but balance between observation and participation by not becoming involved in their daily care (Baker, 2006). Whereas in the role of a *participant-as-observer*, the researcher becomes more involved with the insiders’ main activities but still does not fully commit to the respondents’ values and during this period of observation, the researcher may develop relationships with the insiders, such that they become friends (Baker, 2006).

I have tried to maintain a balance between acting as an insider of the group and being an outsider in convivial situations among the respondents (especially when some of them would meet during Women of Almere events). In the latter case, so in active participation, I became more involved with the respondent's central activity. I developed friendship relationships with a few respondents and intimate conversations or exchanges of their values, were freely shared when the participant-as-Observer role was adopted. However, not only as a researcher but as an individual with agnostic beliefs, I was not fully committed to sharing some respondent’s values such as deep Catholic ideals or associated religious practices. We will later see, in the following chapter, how Catholic religious belief was for some women a big driver for specific food choices and to what extent this factor influenced their diet during religious festivities.

3.1.1 Sampling characteristics

The respondents of this research are 20 women, between 41- 69 years old. The respondents of the research were born from 13 different countries located in South America, Central America, and Caribbean islands: Perù, Honduras, Venezuela, Colombia, Nicaragua, Argentina, Curaçao, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico, Bolivia, Ecuador, and Aruba. Unfortunately, general statistical data about migrant people resident in Almere from each of these countries were not equally available. For instance, we do have data about Colombian inhabitants in Almere, who seems to be in total 545 registered by the Municipality in 2022 (AlleCijfers, 2023). We also know that, in 2022, 4.588 citizens in Almere were from Curaçao, and that 833 had Arubans origin (AlleCijfers, 2023). However, data about the total number of registered citizens living in Almere in 2022, according to the other remaining 10 LAC countries of origin, were not available from the same statistics' online platform. Perhaps, the language barrier of not speaking the Dutch language limited the research access to the public platform of the municipality of Almere, where that information could have been extrapolated from their databank. In terms of quantification and purely based on estimations, the overall portion of migrant LAC citizens in Almere, coming from all the 13 countries mentioned before, may be referred to as a social minority, in comparison with the biggest migrant citizens representation like Moroccan or Suriname inhabitants.

Except for three respondents, the whole sample had sons or daughters. 45% of the sample was at the time married or had been married to a Dutch man, whereas 30% were married to a man from the same country of origin or non-Dutch background. The occupations of the respondents widely differed from each other, from part-time job Spanish teachers to retired grandparents or young homemakers or part-time IT head of operations. The common factors that every interviewee of the sample equally shared were the migration from their LAC country of origin to move and live in the Netherlands and ultimately settle in Almere and the fact that they could speak Spanish, as their first or second language. Some respondents arrived directly in Almere 20 years ago and others arrived after a few years or months spent in other Dutch cities. The cultural capital of the respondent was quite diverse, with different levels of educational degrees, the sample seems to have a medium-high educational background. 60% of the sample graduated at the university level, with master graduate people representing 35% of the sample whereas 15% attended high school and the other 15% went to vocational school. The following table gives a detailed overview of the sample characteristics in terms of age, educational degree, occupation, household composition, and total years lived in Almere. To preserve the anonymity of the sample, each respondent's name has been substituted with an identification code composed of an initial R (standing for respondent) and a number, which was given in a chronological order, from the first interviewee to the twentieth. This format will be

used in tables and graphs, whereas, in the section of the discussion and results of the research, the women will be addressed with an invented nickname.

Fig 10. Table of respondent's characteristic (R01-R20).

	AGE	COUNTRY OF ORIGIN	EDUCATIONAL DEGREE	OCCUPATION	HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION	TOTAL YEARS LIVED IN THE NETHERLANDS	TOTAL YEARS LIVED IN ALMERE
R01	53	Honduras	University Bachelor	Part-time head of IT operations	Married and living with Honduran man and mother-in-law, 2 adults son living independently	21	20
R02	51	Venezuela	Highschool	Assistant for elderly people	Living alone, not married, no sons	9	9
R03	63	Colombia	Vocational school	Retired	Divorced, living with her adult daughter	32	30
R04	52	Peru	University Master	Part-time content copywriter	Married and living with Dutch man and 1 son and 1 daughter	27	25
R05	69	Venezuela	University Master	Retired	Married and living with Venezuelan man, 1 son and 1 daughter living independently	20	20
R06	45	Nicaragua	University	Coordinator of food events at hospital	Married and living with Dutch man and 1 son and 1 daughter	21	21
R07	52	Argentina	Phd Doctorate	Teacher of Spanish	Not married, no sons, living with her Dutch partner	10	6
R08	41	Peru	Highschool	Part-time instructor of barre	Married and living with Dutch man and 1 son	8	6
R09	51	Guatemala	Currently Phd Doctorate	Cultural project manager	Married and living with Dutch man and 1 son and 1 daughter	21	17

Fig 10. Table of respondent's characteristic (R01-R20).

	AGE	COUNTRY OF ORIGIN	EDUCATIONAL DEGREE	OCCUPATION	HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION	TOTAL YEARS LIVED IN THE NETHERLANDS	TOTAL YEARS LIVED IN ALMERE
R10	59	Curaçao	University Master	Retired	Married and living with Curaçaoan man, 2 adult sons living independently	40	40
R11	60	El Salvador	Highschool	Homemaker	Married and living with Salvadoran man, 2 adults sons living independently	38	38
R12	69	Guatemala	Unkown	Retired	Widow of Dutch man, 4 adults sons living independently	47	41
R13	53	Peru	Vocational School	Part-time personal shopper	Married and living with Dutch man and 2 teenager sons	23	23
R14	45	Venezuela	Vocational School	Homemaker	Married and living with Spanish man and (?) sons	10	10
R15	53	Mexico	University Master	Part-time job of administration	Married and living with Iranian man and teenagers 1 son and 1 daughter	22	17
R16	42	Bolivia	University Master	Teacher of Spanish	Married and living with Dutch man and 1 child son and 1 child daughter	21	21
R17	56	Curaçao	Junior College	Part-time job administration and home food business	Not married, living alone with 2 adult daughters and 1 adult son living independently	35	35
R18	53	Venezuela	University Master	Instructor of Fitness and Zumba	Married and living with Dutch man and 1 adult son, 1 adult daughter living independently	25	12

Fig 10. Table of respondent's characteristic (R01-R20).

	AGE	COUNTRY OF ORIGIN	EDUCATIONAL DEGREE	OCCUPATION	HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION	TOTAL YEARS LIVED IN THE NETHERLANDS	TOTAL YEARS LIVED IN ALMERE
R19	56	Aruba/Curaçao	Junior College	Electrician worker	Not married, living with mother and brother	25	33
R20	60	Ecuador	University Master	Shop assistant	Married and living with Dutch man, 2 adults son living independently	31	29

3.2 Food mapping as theoretical framework

The notion of foodscape has been a crucial inspiration for the design of the research proposal of this investigation. From geographical studies and often used in urban studies context, foodscape refers *to places and spaces where you acquire food, prepare food, talk about food, or generally gathered some sort of meaning from food* (Mackendrick N., 2014). Therefore, a foodscape trace is not only a merely geographical environment, whose boundaries are always fluid and dynamic according to the subjects involved but includes intangible elements such as meaning, taste, and preferences of food consumption, that coexist with very tangible entities represented by people, material food and places (Fontefrancesco, 2021). The drawing of a food map and its application originated from the intention to be able to map a local food system, understand the role of its actors together with understanding the role of food for its actors. The methodology of this research included not only in-depth interviews and recorded videos but involved the request to the respondent to illustrate their foodscape, therefore, draw a food map. Based on anthropologist Lidia Marte's methodology of food mapping, it was decided to select the second kind of memory map of the eight typologies that she gathered in her research about the Dominican community in New York. The second map focused on drawing a *food route map of where they shop for food in the city (for cooking and when eating out)*, but moreover understanding the way respondents navigated local places, therefore, how Almere city was experienced and transformed through food relations (Marte L., 2007). To do so, it was asked to the women of the research, draw by hand an illustration of their food consumption, purchase, exchange, and food sharing. These kinds of maps were not geographically accurate or technically precise in terms of urban scale or mathematics proportion. The research food maps wanted to explore what geographer Nigel Thrift referred to as *spatialities of feelings*, how to affect, meant as a complex set of emotions and motion that goes beyond the individual psychological sphere, influences the space evolution of the city (Thrift N., 2007).

The context seems to be a vital element of the constitution of affection. Very often, the source of emotions seems to come from somewhere outside the body, from the setting itself, but this setting is canceled out by methods like questionnaires and other such instruments. The problem is that emotions are largely non-representational. (Thrift N., 2007)

The act of drawing on paper food ways functioned as a bridge to, if not representing, at least communicating emotional or cultural identity drivers through nonverbal means. The finished food maps given by the respondents depicted a quite rich diversity of locations in the city that included not only places where to buy food (e.g. farmers market, butcher, tokos, supermarket, restaurants, etc..) but also places where food was shared, served or prepared together, such as different friends' houses, or their kitchen. The display of the way respondent related to food sites showed their

individual and cultural identity and gave the impression that food choice played a significant role in the creation of a sense of home in a new society.

The food map methodology showed to be an effective manner of tracing the local food-paths of citizens in a specific municipality. While preparing the research proposal for Flevo Campus in January 2022, the choice to apply food maps as the methodology in the context of Almere naturally arise. The reasoning behind such decision was the willingness to implement innovative educational tools within an experience of the internship because the act of hand-drawn is a direct and accessible way that overcome different educational levels or intellectual capabilities. Simultaneously, it revealed to be an interesting exercise of awareness for the person involved, who could observe the individual foodscape and question his or her level of healthy eating habits or the level of sustainability impact in certain food choices. Therefore, in which way as a Master's student in Gastronomic Sciences I could bring my contribution to Flevo Campus and could test food maps in a different social context such as the Dutch one for immigrant citizens living in Almere?

During this Flevo Campus investigation, eventually, food maps were drawn by the majority of the sample (16 women out of 20). The same type of food map designed by combining the methodology of anthropologist Marte has been implemented in this investigation. It has been observed that some respondents who executed the food map in the presence of the researcher tended to create a more accurate and detailed work and had the possibility to ask vis-à-vis in case of uncertainty on ways of graphic representation.

4.RESULTS AND DISCUSSION of FIRST LAC GENERATION in ALMERE

The results of the analysis of such LAC migrant foodscape will be presented and discussed following this order. Firstly, the circumstances and modalities of migration of the women will be shortly given in the first section, to give some more detailed social context to understand why they selected The Netherlands as a country to move in and why specifically in Almere. The importance to stress the migration contexts of respondents is linked to the fact that migration and urbanization are intertwined phenomena playing a crucial role in shaping cities'foodscares (Appadurai,1996; Ferrero, 2002; Volpato et al.,2022). In this research, the women interviewed applied strategies to face cultural adaptation within the following dimensions:

- food sourcing (food grocery, the substitution of LAC fresh ingredients with processed ones, seeking for key ingredients, creation of a social network where food items are purchased informally or exchanged, transnational food parcel exchange with family for specific products).
- cooking practices (time of cooking reduced, meal timing adaptation, traditional preparation for special occasions versus weekly faster LAC dishes).
- food identity (dimension of conviviality, memory, and nostalgia around LAC food social practices).

It is important to highlight that the setting of the respondent's food practices is mainly urban. Therefore, with the term food sourcing we refer to the purchase of food products in supermarkets, open markets, butcher and fisher shops, tokos, and restaurants. Many studies have been investigating the dynamic of food sourcing within different migrant communities in urban settlements (Bailey, 2017; Bajic-Hajudovic, 2013; Coakley, 2012). Except for the Curaçaoan respondents who both tried to plant some specific seeds, (Lucita in the past grow her own vegetables in a garden for 10 years), no one of the women was producing food through direct involvement with farming practices. There is what Sage define as a *distanciation* issue, *the word suggests a high number of food miles that separates primary producers from final consumers within the contemporary agri-food system* and he argues that traceability and knowledge about food products are difficult to establish for final consumers (Sage, 2012). However, it is not intended to necessarily address or problematize *distanciation* per se or in relation to migrant food practices, but rather be aware that LAC migrant women in multicultural cities like Almere purchase food at *large processing, retailing and food services companies* (Sage, 2012). Consequently, it will follow an overview of the women's perception

of Dutch food from the first years of their arrival in Almere until the current times. Difficulties and adaptation strategies to cope with such different Dutch foodways are aspects related to the dimension of cooking time and consumption of meals in ways they did not experience before (Martineau, 2012). In the third paragraph, one of the other themes that emerge concerning the foodscape of this population is the way they actively sourced familiar food products from their culture of origin in Almere. The agency invested by the women in looking for or substituting LAC key ingredients shows different creative solutions such as importing food items and receiving key ingredients through *food-sending practices* from the country of origin, substituting certain ingredients with local ones, or going to LAC restaurants (Mata-Codesal and Abranches, 2018). The aspect of conviviality around food, dimension of memory and *nostalgia* are highly intertwined with food identity driven-practices (Holtzman, 2006; Renko, Bucar 2014). From specific food habits related to religious belief to the creation of new rituals with family around food, there is a constant and dynamic process in shaping their foodscape. Finally, women describe their ontological definition of their personal food identity and the perception and consumption of LAC foodways and ingredients. Despite being attached emotionally and intimately to LAC foodways compared to the Dutch perceived one, the women's opinion about their food identity seems to be rather *liquid* and reflecting a multicultural and international food system like the Almere one seems to be (Bauman, Rovirosa-Madrado, 2010).

4.1 Modalities and Circumstances of Migration in Almere

As previously mentioned in the methodology chapter, the respondents of this investigation are LAC immigrants women who currently live in Almere. Half of the women moved directly from their country of origin to the city of Almere and never moved to other Dutch cities, whereas the other 10 respondents lived firstly in other towns in The Netherlands, before settling in Almere. Most of the sample moved relatively young to The Netherlands. 65% of the sample were between 20-30 years of age, whereas 6 women were over 30 years old and one respondent was 49 years old of age when she first arrived in Almere. The youngest respondents, some of them as university students or young workers, was already married or soon became wife and eventually had children. The household composition of each respondent was usually formed by a minimum of two people to a maximum of five. Except for one working couple with no children, a single respondent living with her flatmate, and another living with her brother and elderly mother, the majority of the sample were composed by women living with their respective husbands and children or older relatives.

Most respondents migrated to seek opportunities for a better quality of life in terms of education access, and work availability for themselves and their families. Others escaped from dangerous and

unpredictable political scenarios. For instance, one of the respondents arrived in Almere as a 21-year-old political refugee from El Salvador in the 80s, together with other 5 or 7 Salvadorean families (Interview of R011, 2022). Except for Dina from El Salvador, who was a political refugee, the whole sample is represented by LAC immigrant women.

The reasons that led the respondents to migrate to The Netherlands can be listed in the following circumstances:

- Political and economic instability of the country of origin, which limited job opportunities and threatened daily sustenance.
- Dangerous and violent environment to cope with in LAC countries.
- Pursuing a studying or job career in The Netherlands.
- Willingness to give better life opportunities to their children in Europe.
- Moving with their (Dutch or non-Dutch) partner.
- Family or friends were already settled in the hosting country and invited the respondent to live in their Dutch houses.
- Giving proper health assistance to relatives with specific needs.

The choices instead to move specifically to Almere and buy houses were related to the following factors:

- The apartments or villas were economically more affordable and spacious to buy for a nucleolus family compared to the ones in big Dutch cities.
- The houses are nearby Amsterdam, where many husbands or respondents work or often visit.
- Relatives or friends were already living in the city.
- Compared to bigger cities, Almere is a quieter and greener environment to raise children in.

In this migratory context, there is an inevitable social impact for the women interviewed concerning the Dutch cuisine and Dutch foodways. An impact that starts with the perception of the local food context. Cultural novelties for a migrant person can be easily channeled through local foodways. Tangible at any time, whether at the supermarket or in a restaurant, the way people purchase food products, or organize their meals in the week, what and how they cook, these and many more practices are a constant reminder of both differences and similarities for a person experiencing a new culture. In these settings, which were the perceptions of Dutch cuisine for these women, and

how they faced such new foodways? Hopefully, the next session will give interesting pieces of information and reflections in such regard.

4.2 Perception of Dutch Cuisine and Difficulties and Adaptation to the Dutch foodway

The following section aims to showcase the perception of Dutch cuisine of migrant women and how they adapted to Dutch foodway. Foodscape is a reality in constant change and the definition of national cuisines is a cultural and abstract construction subject to change according to the cultural setting. Therefore, it was decided to don't provide a fixed ontological definition of Dutch cuisine to the respondents but rather ask directly how they would define Dutch cuisine and how they related to such cultural foodway. Moreover, I tried to investigate which were the difficulties for respondents in colliding with such different gastronomic social contests as the Dutch one since their moment of arrival in Almere. Different elements are emerging from the cultural clashing of LAC cultural food role and the Dutch one: perception of Dutch cuisine as boring and simple, change in cooking time, consumption of cold meals versus LAC warm dishes, lack of conviviality around food, Dutch food perceived as unhealthy or healthy. Consequently, the display of the adaptation strategy of these women to cope with the Dutch foodway will be provided.

Starting with the perception of Dutch food, the table represented in fig. 8 at the end of the paragraph, gives us important information about what is Dutch cuisine for women. Indeed, the table depicts the consumption of Dutch food dishes, the time-frequency of such food together with the definition and opinion about Dutch cuisine from the women. From these different opinions, important themes emerge such as the simplicity and efficiency of the Dutch foodway which collides with a LAC foodway's need for conviviality around food, Dutch food is often perceived as unhealthy and a very quick cuisine.

Regarding the perception of what Dutch cuisine was for the respondents, some common qualitative terms about plates, dishes, and tastes evoked for the sample were repeated. Usually, LAC women associated the adjectives *effective*, *practical*, or *simple* with the local way of cooking. When it was asked to define Dutch cuisine, they would often recall the image of potatoes as the king ingredient or part of many Dutch dishes like *boerenkoolstamppot met worst*⁸. *Stamppot*⁹, *erwtensoepp*¹⁰, and potatoes were the most cited words when it was about imagining what Dutch food was and referring to which main Dutch ingredients they consumed. The association between *erwtensoepp* and wintertime repeated throughout the sample. At the same time, they would not show much enthusiasm for the

⁸ Usually consumed during wintertime, this dish is one of the many types of stamppot dish. Boerenkoolstamppot is composed by boiled potatoes mashed with kale, served with Dutch sausage known as rookworst.

⁹ Stamppot stands for "mash pot" in English, it is considered a traditional Dutch dish that consist of mashed potatoes with one or different kind of vegetables.

¹⁰ It can be translated as Split Pea Soup, it is a popular winter soup in The Netherlands

taste of a simple course like AVG¹¹ dinner composition but have it among their Dutch dinner options. The table, it can be seen the frequency and variety of Dutch food that they consume and their opinion. Only one-third of the sample consume Dutch food weekly or multiple times a week, the rest seems to have it sporadically during mostly winter season. Overall, the imaginary of *Nederlandse keuken* (Dutch cuisine) was condemned as a bland gastronomic option, offering basic condiments such as salt and pepper on winter plates. Execution of Dutch plates is perceived to be quick and efficient. Belinda feels that the way Dutch people eat it expresses the Protestantism religious conception of being productive and humble:

Porque ellos comen para vivir, no viven para comer. Es una comida muy rápida, en media hora tienes que estar todo listo [Because they eat in order to live, they don't live in order to eat. It's a very fast cuisine, in half an hour everything needs to be ready] (R05 interview, 2022)

In terms of cultural adaptation, the process of acquaintance with a new food culture like in this case the Dutch one, cooking modality, and meal organizations appears to be strictly related to the dimension of time. As the results of the research shows, women repeatedly mention how challenging was to adapt to cold quick lunches and to switch from an abundant lunch they usually would have in LAC country to rather an abundant dinner in The Netherlands. According to a report about Dutch food habits, single people would on average spend 24 minutes when having dinner whereas households composed of an adult couple with children 31 minutes (Voedingcentrum, 2019). Although the report did not specify if the time was referred to merely consumption or preparation of food but referred to as *gemiddelde tijdsduur* [average duration], it seems clear that Dutch dinner meals are usually consumed quickly even if spent with the company of family or friends (Voedingcentrum, 2019). Employed women interviewed in the research explained how working outside the home typically reduced the amount of time dedicated to food preparation, especially for lunch. As results will show, LAC cooking preparation is described as complex, and time taking per se, and even longer compared to Dutch food habits. According to the cultural setting, modern capitalistic society does influence food time management. The new life in Almere for LAC women was affected by new *abstract clock-time-units*, therefore by a different time organization throughout the day, both for work or leisure time, with the earlier shift of work and earlier dinner meal (Martineau, 2012, p.281). Subsequently, cooking practices and food preparation underwent an adaptation to the new Dutch food social practices. Cooking time is an important topic emerging consistently in all interviews. Whether related to the cultural adaptation of cooking faster for dinner in The Netherlands or associate traditional LAC preparations as time taking, time spent cooking has changed or been remodeled by the new lifestyle in Almere. However, let's give a more details

¹¹ AVG is a Dutch acronym referring to a plate of *aardappelen, vlees, groente* (potatoes, meat and vegetables).

view of the main difficulties encountered by the women, especially during the first year spent in Almere, and the obstacles they still need to overcome.

Generally, research shows that 75% of the women struggled in the first years living in The Netherlands to adapt to the Dutch foodway or to source LAC ingredients they were familiar with. More specifically, 35% of the total interviewees experienced a significant cultural shock in terms of adaptation to Dutch foodway. What I mean is that they experienced intense emotional distress in changing food habits, and social foodways, experiencing unpleasant new flavors and the inability to consume meals as desired. During the first years spent in the Netherlands, the majority of the women recalled the difficulty in shifting their LAC food habits from having 2-3 hot meals a day to learning to have just one, dinner (usually settled around 5.30-7.30 p.m). The challenge of modifying their mealtime drastically, shifting from abundant and warm breakfast and lunch to consumption of a cold plate such as the *snelle broodje met kaas* are struggles that most of the sample undergone. From Venezuelan arepas to a plate of *arroz y frijoles negros*¹² and a wide variety of soups, breakfast, and lunch virtually turned into cold and fast solutions (e.g. yogurt with cereals, bread with cheese or ham). However, some respondents decided to resist such Dutch foodway and find other strategies to listen to their cultural and culinary needs. Some interviewees in Almere would prefer to still warm up leftovers from the dinner of the night before, substitute bread with tortilla, arepas or make salad or soup, to satisfy the need of consuming a hot, fresh meal rather than consuming a cold sandwich for lunch. The consumption of *calientado* (a Spanish word to refer to warm food leftovers) which were usually part of the dinner of the night before, would be the way for Alma from Peru to have her desired lunch and avoid food waste.

The most challenging was the not warming meal. I need something warm to feel that I ate. I would find a way to have a warm dish. Right now, when I have left over from the night before I would put it in a tupperware, put it in the fridge, and make it the next day. We would call it calientado, sometimes is nicer than the thing you cooked the night before. I am the only one doing that at home. The children would rather have bread and something like this. (R04 interview, 2022)

On the other hand, after 20 years of living in Almere, some respondents feel more emancipated and freer to handle their time, since they don't have to cook also for the lunch and spend so many hours in the kitchen. However, the practicality and simplicity of the *broodje* or *tosti met kaas* for lunch has been appreciated by few respondents throughout time and it was mostly criticized and remembered as *boring, repetitive* and far from being exciting and fulfilling. Many respondents enrich their lunch options with spices such as *aji amarillo* for Peruvian women or add more variety of vegetables like

¹² Rice and black beans.

tomato, avocados, or meat cold cuts. We will see in this paragraph the difficulties that some women have been experiencing concerning Dutch foodway and how some food strategies helped them to adapt and face their new gastronomic reality in Almere.

One of the most consistent themes occurring for women is the lack of conviviality around food practices. Miriam from Perú had major difficulties in adapting to Dutch individualism and a lack of spontaneous meal gathering. The Dutch cultural habits of taking appointments on the agenda for leisure time, to meet with friends and family to have a coffee or go out for dinner, created a great sense of non-spontaneity and loneliness for Miriam. In addition, in her opinion, in the Netherlands “there is no culinary culture” but just a mixture of other countries' dishes (R13, 2022). Since 1999 when she moved to Almere, she stated she cooked Peruvian food in her house daily for 18 years and only in the last 5 years she has been experimenting with Dutch dishes when she would be in a hurry. As she reported, the local foodway expressed a cultural gap in which Dutch individualism and social distance were perceived much higher compared to her previous social relationships in Peru:

Socially, I was affected, you had to make an appointment on the agenda, it's not something spontaneous. Normally, I'm used to being with friends, with neighbors, if they come by and see you, they invite you to dinner. Here, you have to make an appointment for everything. (R13 interview, 2022)

Besides Miriam's personal need for spontaneous food gathering, data shows that almost half of the sample missed the social aspect of sharing food with friends or family as an act of showing care and connecting with the other. Dominga from Venezuela, who had a catering business in Madrid and experienced a life reach of international exchanges, feels that eating is an expression of people's personalities and cultures. During the interview, we discussed the importance to have a warm lunch in Venezuela and Spain, where her husband grew up. Dominga reports that her husband experienced a little shock in adapting to the quick and cold lunch policy of the office in Amsterdam. While she was acknowledging that the Dutch working time structure allowed her husband to be home earlier, hence having the quick lunch meal, Dominga commented:

We find the way of working in Holland very efficient but at the same time, we miss the socialization. If you just eat bread, you are just feeding yourself and satisfying your hungry feeling, but you are not socializing. In our culture, it is very important to sit at a table, and sharing. I feel that it is really important sitting at a table as a foreigner...you finish the meal, and you turn as a friend most of the time. Maybe it is a romantic way to see food, but we are what we eat. This is fundamental for me, enjoy a good lunch, a good dinner. (R14 interview, 2022)

There is a perception of Dutch food that lose value in terms of conviviality, in the significance the importance to consume it together with others. Accordingly, not only certain LAC foodways could

not be applied but Dutch food is perceived as unhealthy in certain scenarios. Belinda from Venezuela recalls the difficulty of the whole family to adapt to consuming just one warm meal per day, having no choice but start to having cold sandwiches for lunch:

We were used to having 2 hot meals a day. Lunch and dinner. But the children were in school all day to learn Dutch very fast, and we also had to go to Dutch classes. We couldn't go back home to cook chicken, salad, or soup. None of that. So, we got used to having bread in the middle of the day for the children and for us as well. And we adapted to only one hot meal a day for dinner. Yes, it was a shock and it seemed to me that the children were not well-fed. We had to adapt to the system because we could not do anything else. (R05, 2022)

The association between unhealthy food habits and Dutch foodways is a theme that frequently repeats in the sample. Similarly, Maria from Honduras referred to Dutch cuisine has nonexistent, or rather very unappealing or unhealthy:

For me, the Dutch people don't have a cuisine. So that was a shock, because when you start to think what typical Dutch dishes and you are thinking of French fries and all of this frikandel and all of these fry stuff and stamppot... The first time I tasted frikandel, I took two bites and then throw it away. I had no idea what it was, but I find it terrible. To me Dutch cuisine is very limited, because it is mainly potatoes and boiled vegetables, which tend to be overboiled. Usually, it is a piece of meat, vegetables and potatoes. That would be the most common plate they would eat. Dutch family has the day when they would eat fry stuff. All this fried stuff, like cafeteria, a mix of frikandel and kroketten. Some family have this one day a week of snack bar food. I see Dutch cuisine very limited but also with Indonesian influence like chicken sate. (R01 interview, 2022)

Not the totality of the sample perceived Dutch cuisine as strictly unhealthy. As can be seen in the table below, opinions about what Dutch cuisine consists of are not just negative and are associated to unhealthy food habits. Some respondents think that Dutch people consume more vegetables and eat less meat than in their country of origin. Manuela from Venezuela happily remembers that since she moved to The Netherlands, she learned to measure calories and balancing carbohydrate intake, and be open to eating more variety of food. She also explored different diets with no lactose ingredients or gluten-free products, trying to get educated about nutritional aspects to tackle specific health issues she was undergoing. On the other hand, the Dutch food habit of eating bread for lunch daily affected one respondent who reported that undeniably affected her weight by gaining extra kilos. Similarly, unhealthy but culturally embedded practices coming also from LAC countries were reported. Valentina from Bolivia also remembers to have gained weight once she arrived in The Netherlands and lost it by learning how to drink beverages with no sugar in Europe. She describes the slow process of drinking coffee without sugar as shocking:

Coffee, and sugar, I think it was a culture shock as well. Sugar consumption in Latin America is quite high. And here they drink without sugar. I learned not to drink sugar in Holland, and out of shame, because here I drank a lot of coffee and had a lot of visits, and I saw that nobody used sugar, so I started to use less. It was normal for me to have 4 spoons of sugar in a cup of the, and because no one added sugar it became just one spoon and then the one became a half and then I didn't use any more.
(R16 interview, 2022)

In this specific case, Valentina underwent a substantial personal food consumption change through the acculturation adapting process of not adding sugar when having coffee at work or during leisure time. In this case, her adaptation strategy consists of embracing fully a local habit to feel socially comfortable and included. For some respondents, cultural shock manifested in very extreme ways. During the first three years in The Netherlands, Emilia from Guatemala, who spent her childhood in a rural setting such as the forest of Guatemala, belonging to an indigenous Mayan community, experienced a major cultural difference as far as taste is concerned. The food in Europe for her was way too fatty and salty. Besides being pregnant, she experienced the physical rejection of her meals due to the strong change in flavor:

I had problems that I was always vomiting with food, if you look at my picture back then I was very skinny, so my body was not fat-resistant either. I think it was more of a problem because I came from a city of 60,000 inhabitants but I couldn't buy all the things I knew. I ate more things from my field, simpler, we cooked only in water, not fat, not that, not the other. Not too strong flavors. Here the taste was so strong...the cheese, the salami, I did not like it and the herrings were so strong.
(R12 interview, 2022)

Nowadays, Emilia can eat cheese daily after almost thirty years spent in Almere. Interestingly, by combining the content of table 8 and the analysis of interviews, it seems that during the first years of living in the Netherlands, there was generally more resistance towards perceived Dutch ingredients like gouda cheese and the previously mentioned Dutch foodway. Many respondents share that a sense of acceptance of Dutch foodway is proportional to the amount of time spent living in Almere. However, acceptance and adaptation to different cultural foodways do not necessarily entail a lack of emotional distress. The peculiar example of Manuela from Venezuela shows that even doing grocery in supermarkets can be emotionally challenging. In the first period of living in the city, Manuela remembers she would deliberately not go to the supermarket because she felt guilty about having access to such an abundance of products, while her relatives back in Venezuela could not source any products. Still, now she manages to go quickly to Jumbo just every 15 days to buy vegetable flour.

I don't want to go to the supermarket because I felt homesick and sad for my family. I felt guilty for something that I was not responsible for. I felt guilty that I was here with everything, and then back home I could not source anything in Venezuela. (R02 interview, 2022)

In this case, the choice to purchase in certain food shops is not just an action driven by the necessity to respect a financial capability but a strategy to cope with emotional distress.

As previously described in this paragraph, many were and are the changes in LAC foodways that the women had to undergo. Cultural adaptation strategy often resulted in acquiring certain Dutch food habits; shifting their mealtime and organizing their cooking practices according to work schedule, having cold breakfast and sandwiches for lunch, and most importantly consuming it quickly. In other cases, women applied the strategy to have warm meals for lunch by warming up leftovers of the night before or at least toasting their bread and making sure there is something else than gouda cheese between those two slices. The lack of conviviality around food practices and socializing at the table is a cultural aspect heavily missing for the respondents. The cultural value for LAC women to recreate such gatherings around food with family and friends will be presented in the section on festivities and food identity. Dutch food perceived as unhealthy for some respondents or healthy for others is mostly depicted as not extremely appealing or with no strong symbolic value like instead, LAC foodways have. The cultural importance to eat specific LAC dishes is a big driver for respondents to source traditional LAC ingredients in the Netherlands. This is their perception of their past and current food Dutch context that they daily experience, but what is the strategy they developed to access different LAC ingredients in Almere? Hopefully, the next paragraph about food sourcing will be exhaustive enough to display different ways that women actively apply to find desired flavors.

Figure 11. Scheme representing frequency of Dutch food dishes, frequency of Dutch food consumption and perception of Dutch cuisine

	Frequency of Dutch cuisine consumption	Type of Dutch food they consume	Definition and opinion of Dutch cuisine
R01	7 time a year	Stamppot Erwten soep (perceived as not purely Dutch because consumed in Germany)	“For me Dutch don’t have a cuisine, if you think about typical Dutch food and you think of French fries, frikandel and all of this fry stuff.....To me Dutch cuisine is very limited because for me is mainly potatoes and boiled vegetables which tend to be overboiled. “
R02	1 time a week	Winter time: Stamppot Summer time: haring	“They have a very practical cuisine, very short and tasty. I learned how to calculate calories in The Netherlands and I learned to eat any type of food.”
R03	1-2 times a year	Andijvie, boerenkool, spekblokjes	“Dutch cuisine is based a lot on vegetables, meat, and potatoes. I think that Dutch cuisine is very fast. In less than one hour you need to done eating. It is the fastest cuisine I have ever seen, because in our culture to make something we need to cook for hours.”
R04	1 time every 2 months	During parties: bitterbollen, kroketten, kaas sufflè, haring, paling, worst	“If someone would come to visit us, I would bring them at the Febo at the Station Plein in Almere. Kroketten, kaas sufflè, things you put in the frier. I would bring them there and then they would say “Is that Dutch cuisine?”. For me that it is typical Dutch.”
R05	1 time a month	Potatoes, vegetables and a piece of meat	“Dutch cuisine for me is very simple, it is potatoes, a piece of meat, that can be chicken or something else. I have the feeling that it is in line with their religion. Because they eat in order to live, they don’t live in order to eat. It is a very fast cuisine, in 30 minutes everything needs to be ready.”
R06	1 time a week	Meat and vegetables Big meatballs with spinaches and potatoes	“Dutch cuisine is one type of meat and two types of vegetables. The plate my husband make is tasty. A big meatball that has her sauce on the side. I eat all the Dutch cuisine, all of it.”
R07	1 time every 2 months	Stamppot	“Dutch cuisine is very countryside, what I mean is boeren, it is vegetables and meat, not with many spices. I manage to eat some potatoes and stamppot and it’s ok, not everyday. I try a frikandel when I came here as a joke but I don’t eat it. One thing that I like in Holland is the bread.”
R08	1-2 time a year	Winter time: Stamppot, Erwten soep	“Dutch food is food for sick people. There is no Dutch food that you can say, oh so good. The erwten soep you can eat but is not my first choice. The stamppot, when you mix it with bacon and other things is tasty as well but the way they sell it at the supermarket has just salt in it and nothing else.”

	Frequency of Dutch cuisine consumption	Type of Dutch food they consume	Definition and opinion of Dutch cuisine
R09	4 times a week	Stamppot, hachee stew, a plate of meat with vegetables and potatoes	“Stamppot, putting with potatoes everything in, like endive. I like stoofperen, that we don’t have it similar in Guatemala. Pannenkoeken no, because we also have it, I don’t see it as something that it is Dutch.”
R10	3 times a week	Hamburger, minced meat, fried or stew chicken, spinach, carrot	“Dutch cuisine is nothing special, it is part of my life, of my culture. Vegetables like carrots and spinaches we eat them more here than in Curaçao.”
R11	1 time every 2 weeks	Cheese, stamppot	“At the beginning I did not like stamppot but now me and my sons really enjoy it. Dutch cuisine I think it is very healthy, Dutch people eat a lot of vegetables, they don’t eat much eat. I have various Dutch friends who eat more vegetables than meat.”
R12	Never	None	“Since my Dutch husband passed away, I don’t eat anymore Dutch. Before I would eat 2-3 times a week stamppot or boerenkool, andjive, hutspot with carrots and onions. “The first years she had big problem to adapt to Dutch food because it was too fat and salty, used to a rural indigenous diet. She would vomit every meal for the amount of fat and the strong flavours.
R13	Winter= 2 times a week Rest of the year= 1 time every 15 days	Boerenkool, stampoot	“What I learned here was to eat more vegetables. Here you eat the famous boerenkool, it is a very good vegetables, very well known. With the stamppot I learned to eat vegetables in another way. I this mashed way I make it for my children, who are difficult in eating vegetables, when I make it like this it is more easy.”
R14	Everyday Every weekend Not specified	Dutch cheese for lunch Pannekoeken Stamppot, pannenkoeken, bitterballen, haring	“I find stamppot, which is one of the traditional one, have remarkable taste, it is a different taste. The cheese everyday of the week. We integrate the cucumber, now I love the Dutch one, because it taste so different from the Venezuelan one and I love it. I also love the way they eat fresh, as a snack, I love this healthy way. I can highlight I feel fascinated that you can buy a banana as a snack, this is for me amazing.”
R15	3 times a week	Winter time: hutspot, ready-to-eat erwten soep in can, Dutch meat stew	“I make 4 or 5 Dutch dishes. The Stamppots they (referring to her children and husband) love it, the have their favourite one with carrots and onions, hutspot. The other one with spinach and endive. On the other hand, they have snack and they like kipsate, I don’t like none of that but I think they eat it. We eat three times a week Dutch or at least inspired by the magazine of Albert Heijn.”

	Frequency of Dutch cuisine consumption	Type of Dutch food they consume	Definition and opinion of Dutch cuisine
R16	1 time a week	Winter time more often: Stamppot Erwten soep	“Here in Holland, the process of cooking is of 20 minutes. That affect me in a positive and negative way. I could save a lot of time but the the taste...here I have the feeling chicken is less tasty. After many year I learned that a soup cooked for 4 hours, turns much more tasty than a soup of 1 hour. Dutch is to make a slice of meat or meat stew with fried potatoes. “
R17	Rarely	Erwten soep (perceived as not Dutch because consumed also in Curaçao)	“I don’t eat much from here, to be honest. It’s very rare that I make potatoes in my house. Panekoecken is not food. I need to eat meat, rice, vegetables and salad. I don’t know what is Dutch cuisine...potatoes, potatoes. Sometimes I make the green peas soup but that one belong to us as well, the erwten soup, it’s not Dutch Dutch, because we also make it in Curaçao.”
R18	1 time a month	Potatoes, worst, pork, stamppot with carrots	“Dutch cuisine is not so frequent for me.”
R19	2 times a week	Fried potatoes and fried fish (frozen products), boerenkool, Brussel sprouts,	“Potato and fish, I made them when I am tired. I have them in the freezer, I put it in the frier and the then the fish and I have a meal. Dutch cuisine for me is potatoes. Sometimes I can do boerenkool, spruitjes or kool. Than I cook potatoes and eat it with that.”
R20	3 times a week	Potatoes, vegetables and a piece of red meat or chicken or fish	“Dutch cuisine is very simple, especially potatoes with vegetables and a piece of meat or some type of fish or chicken. My mother-in-law lived in Indonesia, so my husband when he lived there he also ate Indonesian.”

4.3 Food sourcing as a strategy to consume LAC food

In the complex process of cultural adaptation of these women while being active in shaping their foodscape in Almere, a fundamental aspect of change of their food habits is not only related to adapt to different ingredients in a new context such as the Dutch one. The effort to recreate traditional LAC dishes and source related food is equally relevant. Therefore, food sourcing is an important practice in context of migrant foodscape (Bailey, 2017; Bajic-Hajdukovic, 2013; Coakley, 2012). The aim is to understand which kind of ingredients respondents' have been sourcing and what are the reasons or needs to look for specific foods. How these women used to procure food in the first years living in Almere and how they source it now? The type of adaptation in sourcing food is very active, with a lot of the women agency invested in different strategies to succeed in obtaining specific food items. In the first years living in Almere in order to source specific ingredients, some respondents will recall memories of weekly journey to Albert Cuyp, a widely supplied open food market in Amsterdam. However, the analysis of the food maps drawn by the women shows that, nowadays, purchase at tokos or supermarket in Almere seems to easily provide a wide range of ingredients that in the past were difficult if not impossible to source. Other women rely on the purchase of imported LAC products through online platforms. Importing food directly from the country of origin during holidays or asking relatives to send food packages, are other strategies applied to revive actively part of LAC culinary culture. Going to Tex-Mex or LAC restaurants is also a strategy to look and maintain familiar foodways. These LAC restaurants become a space to share with friends and relatives a certain familiar way of conviviality and a social atmosphere they can't easily access living in The Netherlands. However, let's start with order. Which are LAC key ingredients for the respondents?

An interesting starting point to identify key LAC ingredients is to mention Lupe memory when she found for the first in Almere corn flour.

La primera harina pan que yo comprè fue en un toko (puede ser 1993) y lo comprè aquí en Almere porque esa harina no la vendia en el supermercado, ahorita la vienden en el Jumbo y en el Albert Heijn. [The first harina pan (corn flour) that I bought was in a toko (it could be in 1993) and I bought it in here in Almere because that flour was not sold in the supermarket, right now they sell it in Jumbo and Albert Heijn.](R03 interview, 2022)

Lupe from Colombia mentioned an ingredient crucial for majority of women of the sample. Corn flour or *harina de mais* in Spanish, is widely known to be a staple food for multiple LAC countries. According to scholar Sanabria, *maize, beans, chilies, and squash were cornerstones of pre-conquest Mesoamerican diets*, meaning that corn plant is deeply embedded into the cultural culinary history of

Central and South America and the Caribbean (Sanabria, 2019). The results of the research confirm this connection among the sample and the processing of corn flour. In fact, corn flour is used to make many maize dough-based Latin American dishes such as arepas, empanadas, tortillas or Caribbean *funchi*. Especially for Venezuelan respondents, Maria from Honduras, Bibiana from Nicaragua and Lucita from Curaçao, corn is a key ingredient for their daily diet. Usually referred to as *harina pan*, from the famous Venezuelan brand Harina P.A.N.¹⁸, some of the respondents would import it in the first years of their life in Almere. Difficulties in sourcing it in Almere, were reported from the late 70s to the first years of 90s. Emilia from Guatemala stated that she could not find any avocado, coriander, sweet potatoes, and plantains in Almere until 1995. Respondents started to find *harina pan* in different tokos of the city, but soon corn flour and many other ingredients appeared in tokos and, from 2000s on, became available in supermarkets chain. During the first years spend in Almere, the strategy to source specific ingredients were many. Some respondents would ask relatives living in the country of origin to send packages full of different food ingredients. After spending holiday in their home country, other interviewees would import *harina pan* and other key ingredients in their luggages, when they were on their way back to The Netherlands. Some women would go to the food market of Albert Cuyp in Amsterdam from Almere to look for tropical fruits or very specific produces. Usoa from Curaçao remembered she used to go from 1989 until 1991 to Albert Cuyp to look for okra, tayerblad¹⁹, fresh ginger, laos²⁰ and trassi paste²¹. Dina from El Salvador went to Albert Cuyp to buy guayaba fruit when tokos were still not present in Almere in the 80s. Miriam from Peru often went to Albert Cuyp to buy shrimps and to Chinese neighborhood in Amsterdam to buy oriental spices for her Chifa cuisine inspired dishes. Nowadays, she orders aji amarillo, mirasol and aki pancha online and imports some products from Barcelona when she goes visiting her sister four times a year.

The contemporary trend of European society, open to different international culinary cultures and importing a wide range of multi-cultural food products, simplified the sourcing of certain ingredients for respondents. They started to find LAC ingredients in a more accessible way in different food shops. Overall, nowadays, the availability of specific food ingredients for the respondents in Almere seems to be very large and diverse. No respondent still frequently goes to

¹⁸ The brand P.A.N is part of the Venezuelan corporations Empresas Polar, founded in the city of Caracas in 1941, as a brewery it extends today globally, selling their varieties of pre-cooked corn flour in more than 60 countries.

¹⁹ Tayerblad or *Xanthosoma sagittifolium*, also known as elephant ear, is widely used in Surinam cuisine.

²⁰ Laos refers to the roots of the botanical variety of *Alpinia Galanga*, belonging to the plant family of ginger. It is used in Southeast Asian cookery.

²¹ Trassi paste refers to a Indonesian thick preparation usually composed by fermented shrimps, corn flour and salt. Sambal Trassi is the spicy variety with ground pepper or hot chili pepper as extra ingredient.

Albert Cuyp in Amsterdam, majority of women buys in different supermarkets chain, tokos and open markets in Almere Centrum or in the neighborhood where they live within the city.

As mentioned in the methodology chapter,

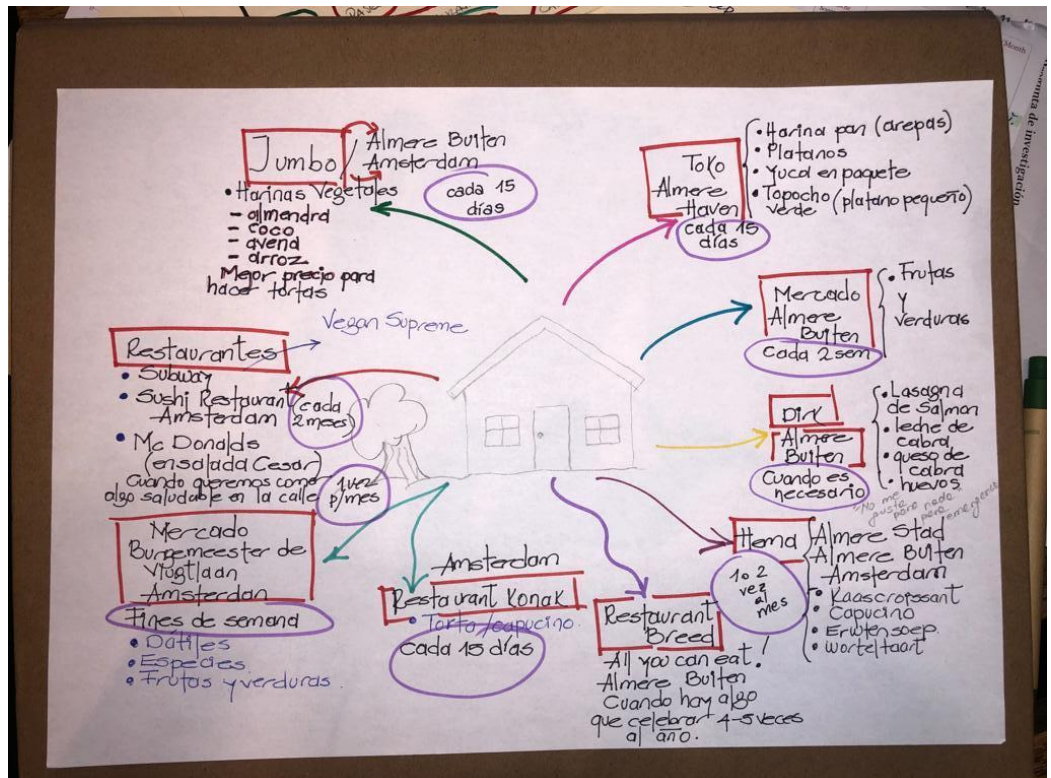


Figure 12. Manuela's food map. Cultural origin: Venezuela.

respondents drew individual food maps depicting their foodscape. The content of the food maps together with the analysis of the interview has been used to determine the physical location where they source, consume, prepare and share food. The analysis of the food maps shows that the proximity of food shops and price are important variables for the respondents to select their purchasing location. However, the relevance to source LAC ingredients²² is a big driver to exceed space proximity and purchase in tokos or supermarket even if not near buy women houses. In addition, quality is often also a determinant factor to select food shops, especially for the purchase of meat. Some respondents buy red and white meat at Sligro, because if you buy in big quantities, you save money and purchase higher quality products. Some buy at Tangerang for better ratio between price and quantity or at smaller Muslim butcher shop to buy halal meat which is perceived tastier and cheaper by Belinda. Manuela from Venezuela lives in Almere Buiten but goes to a Surinamese toko in Almere Haven to buy harina pan, yuca and *los mejores plátano porque no es fácil aquí encontrar un plátano bueno* [the best plantains because it is not easy to find good plantains here] (R02, 2022). Maria remembers that during the first years living in Almere, she would go to Amsterdam to buy American baking soda or macaroni with cheese because the American cuisine was familiar to her, and she could not find Honduran ingredients. Eventually she discovered tokos in Almere around 2005-2006:

²² By LAC ingredients we refer to the one mentioned by the respondent as such. Therefore, it is usually corn flour, plantain, yuca, varieties of tropical fruits, specific spices like cumin, jelly, jalapeños, avocado, banana leaves.

I used to go there in an American little shop in Amsterdam but eventually I have found the tokos, which were for me “Wow, finally!”, after 3 or 4 years I was in Almere. Most tokos were Indonesian and I realized that Indonesian is also a tropical country. Indonesia uses similar ingredients even if to make different dishes, but they also use similar ingredients like yuca, platano. I also used to go to an Egyptian shop because they used to have a couple of ingredients I recognized. (R01, 2022)

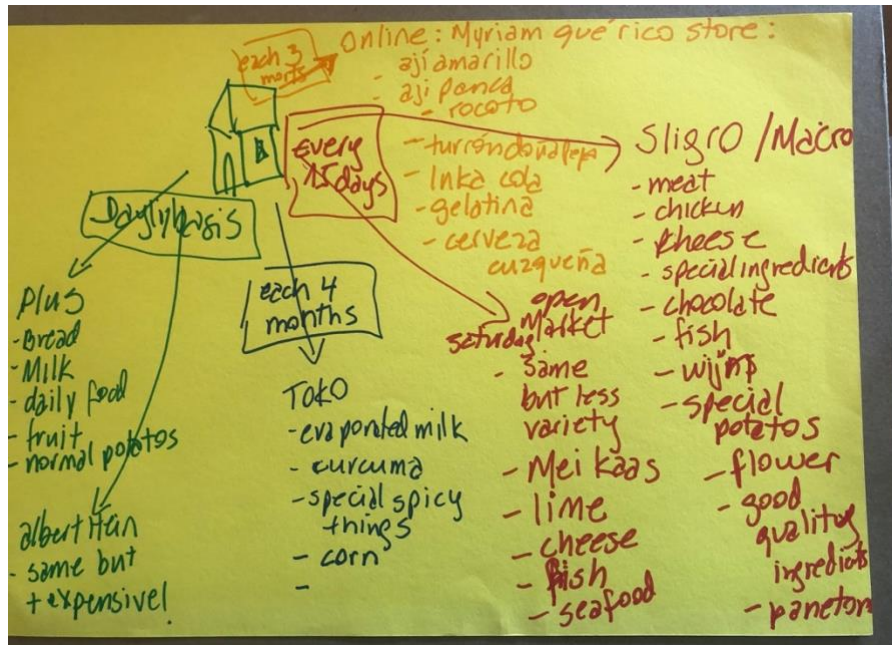


Figure 13. Alma's food map. Cultural origin: Peru.

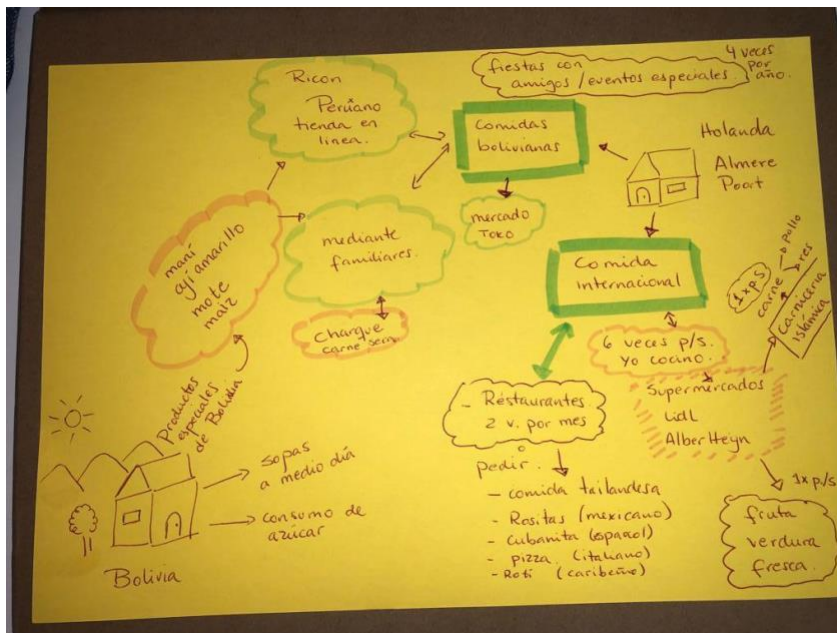


Figure 14. Valentina's food map. Cultural origin: Bolivia.

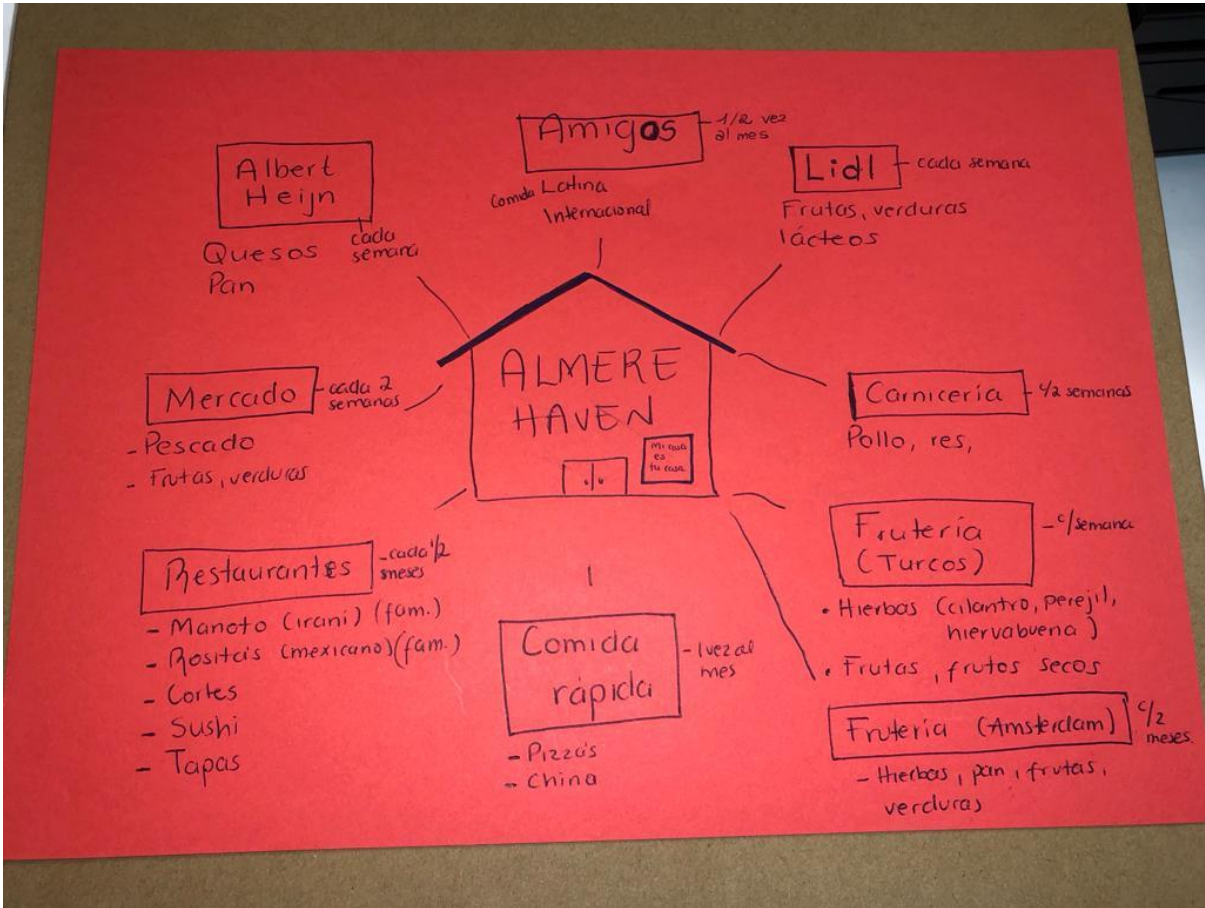


Figure 15. Ignacia's food map. Cultural origin: Mexico.

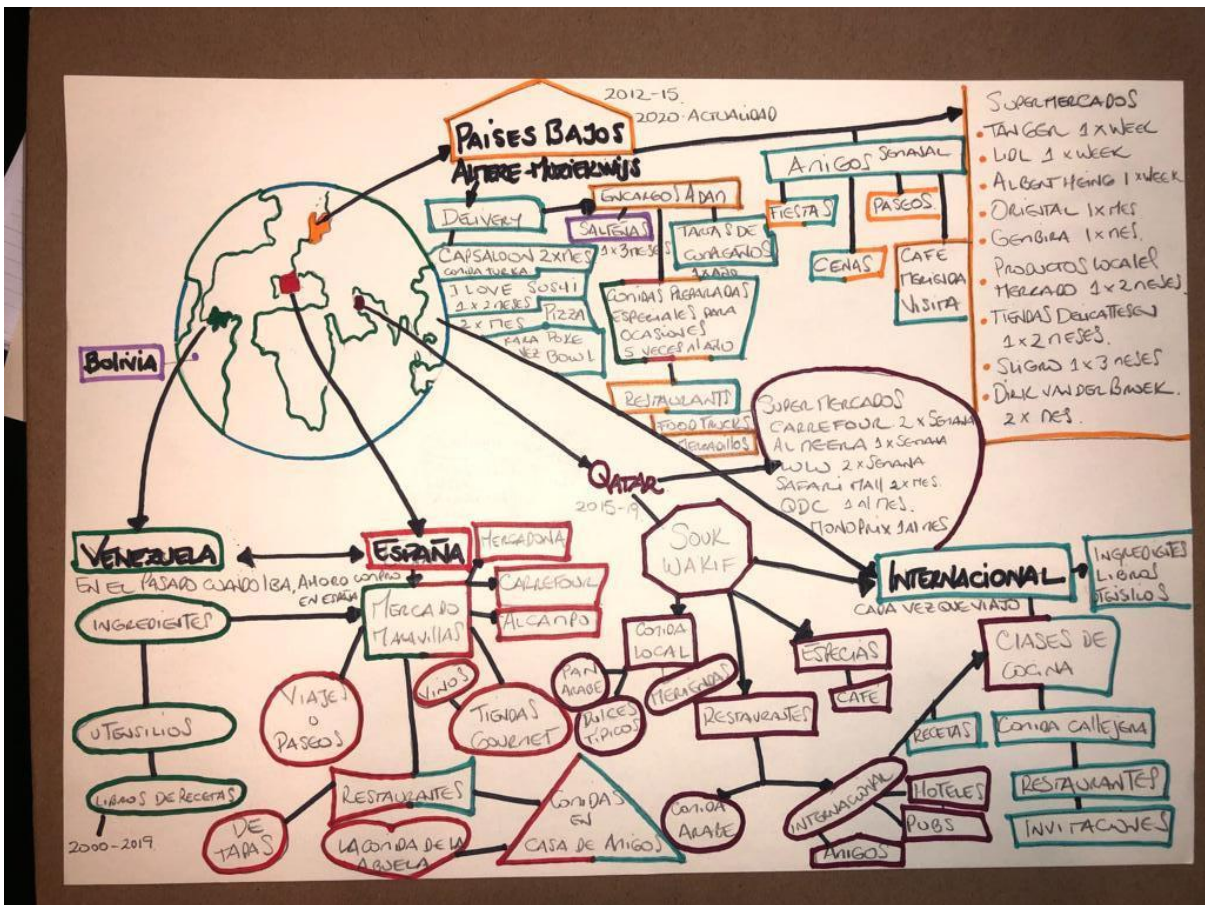


Figure 16. Domingo's food map. Cultural origin: Venezuela.



Figure 17. Food products imported from Peru that Alma order online at “Miriam que rico” website. Starting from the left the ingredients are: frozen aji amarillo, paste of aji amarillo, rocoto and aji pancha, Inka Kola soft drink, condensed milk, chancaca (sugar cane),Negrita brand jelly.

In addition, Maria remembers how important jalapeños were to source. For long time it was possible to find them just preserved in cans in tokos. Currently she doesn’t go that often to tokos to buy jalapeños in a can, but she can find them at the Albert Heijn in the Mexican department. Even *harina pan* can be found in Albert Heijn, Jumbo, Amazing Oriental and in any toko.

Certain products harder to source though can be purchased through online food shop platforms that imports specific ingredients from South America to the Netherlands. Peruvian respondents, María from Honduras, Vanny from Bolivia, Blasa from Ecuador are the ones that still struggle nowadays to source specific ingredients. As fig. 12 showa, Peruvian women like Alma order online frozen aji amarillo, or paste of different ajìs, Inka Kola, Peruvian choclo at the “Miriam que rico” website. Rocio from Peru usually order *papa seca*²³, lucuma fruit, *marciano* (Peruvian fruit popsicle), aji pancha, aji amarillo, aji rojo and purple corn. Almira from Argentina order yerba mate leaves and alfajores, dulce de leche, empanadas online at “La despencita” food shop based in Breda or at “Reinita” in Amsterdam. Valentina from Bolivia order online also ajì, corn choclo²⁴ through a Peruvian shop named “Rincon Peruiano” based in Utrecht or also through “Miriam que rico” website. In addition, Valentina explained how she discovered Latin food fair organized in different Dutch cities through the Facebook group “Latinas Olandisadas”. On that social media page, she could find people selling *sopa de mani*²⁵, *chicharron* ²⁶but those are plates she can make herself. She would love to find in Almere a place selling salteñas, because it is a complex and time taking dish to prepare.

A valid strategy for the women to source specific LAC food ingredients, which are difficult to source in Almere, is to import them through exchange of food packages from the country of origin.

²³ Literally meaning dried potatoes, papa seca looks like crystal flakes of potatoes and it is an ancient way used in the Andes to preserve potatoes after the harvesting throughout the year.

²⁴ A specific variety of Peruvian corn that has white and quite bigger grains.

²⁵ Peanut soup.

²⁶ Dish composed by fried pork belly or pork rind, it is usually

Valentina option is to source food products by asking her mother or brother to import ingredient like *carne de charque*, fresh meat from Bolivia a product that is illegal to import in the country or *seeds of quirquiña*, an herb that she uses in salads. Respondent Blasa usually goes to Gembira toko in Almere Centrum to source what she refers to as Latin American ingredients such as plantains but still import from Ecuador precooked morocho²⁷, dulce de leche, dark chocolate, soy sauce and yuca flour. Interestingly, Ignacia from Mexico imports certain products not because they are not available in the country, but because of emotional attachment or because preparation like mole sauce, she doesn't know how to cook it from scratch. Differently, fresh poblano pepper is a product she can't find in Holland but remember she saw it twice in the Netherlands and one time was at the 2022 Expo of the Floriade in Almere. Emilia imports cocoa beans from Guatemala to eat it raw during the day between meals. Similarly, Maria from Honduras never managed to find *naranja agria* [sour orange] a specific fruit used to marinate meat to grill that include a mix of spices such as cumin, black pepper, salt called *Don Julio*. Dry naranja agria and Don Julio are products that she always asks friends and family to send directly from Honduras or bring, when they come from Honduras and visit her in Almere.

The importance to source specific LAC ingredients is not necessarily linked merely to the possibility to find them in the city, regardless of their quality. Undeniably, the accessibility of sourcing these products in Almere is a fundamental aspect for the women to apply their LAC foodway. However, medium-high level of quality and pleasant taste of such ingredients has been depicted as equally relevant. In fact, many respondents complained about the quality of tropical fruits in Almere. Some respondents missed good quality of mango, lemons, guayaba sourced in Almere market or tokos. Lucita from Curaçao still criticizes the quality of okra and certain Antillean produces in Almere Haven market:

If you want quality you need to go to Amsterdam or Rotterdam, because there you have people of my race from Curaçao, Suriname, they sell it more. So, they import more. When I was first living in Almere Haven in 1987, there was not many Antilleans people. There was just Dulce from Curaçao, she was my neighbor. There were not many people of black color in Haven, and they were not selling so many products as now. (R17, 2022)

They also missed quite unique varieties of tropical fruits such as loroco, sapote or *spondas purpurea* named as ciruela de huesito. Some respondents find tropical fruits too expensive, many others expressed the desire to find street truck selling freshly made fruit shake during summertime in Almere. Belinda prefer to consume jelly of guayaba to substitute it to the fresh one which is too

²⁷ Spread in the Ecuadorian province of Pichincha, Morocho is a sweet beverage composed mainly by boiled corn called morocho, milk, sugar, cinnamon, and raisins. It is historically sold on street or in food markets, the consistency of the morocho reminds the one of a pudding and it is consumed usually for breakfast (Arca del gusto, 2023).

expensive for her in Almere. Clearly, it is acknowledged that food supply chain of supermarkets importing tropical fruits in The Netherlands is going to be much more complex compared to a local short supply chain in a LAC country. During long distances journey from the country of food production to the importing selling country, the necessity of preserving tropical produces leads to a serious of treatment and temperature condition that ultimately affects the final quality of the fresh fruit. Nevertheless, this qualitative jump affecting variety of available tropical fruits and the quality of those was of significant matter for the migrant women. The juicy and tasteful flavors of mango was a missing aspect of their foodway.

In the next table it can be observed in more details which kind of food services, ingredients, and food social practices they miss in the city. Interestingly the lack of LAC restaurants or street food vendors are consistently repeating topic for the respondents. Many respondents frequent Rosita Tex-mex restaurant in Almere centrum, some to have dinner and others to hang out with some friends to dance Latin American music and have some drinks:

I have been to Rosita for dance night, bachata night because I also like music, so when there is a merengue or bachata night I go, we go to dance and have a drink. The last Friday of every month they do a dance night, they have guacamole doritos, and tapas, I love avocado. I like Rosita and we go with some friends; Rosita is very cheerful. (R11, 2022)

What it is appreciated about Rosita is the atmosphere of the restaurant, some women think it is too expensive or that quality of the food too low for the price requested. Majority of the sample appreciate it and likes it but some women point out that in general restaurant in the Netherlands tend to be expensive and not so tasty. Furthermore, majority of interviewees complain about the lack of LAC restaurants in Almere. Except for Tamarindo bar in Almere Poort, there is no place where to buy empanadas and no restaurants that offers Venezuelan arepas in the city. Peruvian, Venezuelan, Nicaraguan, Guatemalan, Ecuadorean, Bolivian restaurant are missing in Almere. Among the services that the women would like to have in the city, restaurant from their home country are mentioned at least from eight women. Street food vendors of fresh fruits and food truck of LAC food are also services that the women would like to have in Almere. Lack of quality of vegetables and fruits at the open market in different Almere markets has been mentioned by three different respondents. The below table show in detail the request from the interviewees of specific food services that they would like to access to in Almere.

Figure 18. Table of food services and ingredients missing in Almere for the respondents.

Food services, ingredients respondents would like to have in Almere	
R01	Street vendors that sells also healthy option. A restaurant with more Carribean flavours (yuca, platano, coconut).
R02	Cultural exchange in a restaurant to share food culture. Once a week a food market with different cultural cuisines, a Cuban or Venezuelan restaurant. Online platform with indication for a specific restaurant or tokos. Food festival.
R03	Street vendors of tropical fruits and street food vendors of Colombian food
R04	Food workshops from different countries and a Peruvian restaurant.
R05	Street food of fresh fruits juices, and fruits shakes, as a healthier option for kids as a snack.
R06	More variety at the open market, especially of tropical fruits.
R07	Food event like the Fenix Food Festival in Rotterdam. The city centrum lack in atmosphere and the quality of food is very bad in general.
R08	Peruvian restaurant and that tokos would sell products from Latin America and Peru, and fruits like lucuma.
R09	Miss the rituals about food and the spontaneous way to eat together. Too difficult to make typical Guatemalan food in the household so to find it in the city.
R10	A good Antillean restaurant, street food vendors, so that you can walk an eat in the city.
R11	Street food vendors, like mobile ice-cream vendors but selling ready food like tamales o pupupas and to sell more variety of fruits. "It would be very important to import directly from my country those kind of unique fruits like loroco and sapote."
R12	Cultural lunch or dinner to know new people and cultures.
R13	In the market of Almere, more Latin American products and not just Asian or from Suriname, more variety of local Dutch veg and fruits, more healthy option like fresh juices in the market and not just in the caffè. There is too much junk food and fried stuff in the city centrum.
R14	Fresh coconut milk shake stand. I miss the family gathering and I would like to open a Venezuelan restaurant.
R15	A real Mexican restaurant, food truck as well.
R16	A Bolivian restaurant where they make empanadas.
R17	An open market with more quality of fruits and vegetables
R18	Good quality mango to buy and Adobo mix of spices.
R19	Tutu ingredient to buy and a Suriname food truck.
R20	More Latin restaurants, higher quality gastronomy restaurant, there is no Spanish restaurant in Almere.



Figure 19. Cachapas prepared by Belinda during the interview.



Figure 20. Harina pan bought at the Albert Heijn supermarket to make cachapas.

Lack of perceived good quality of certain LAC ingredients or no presence of LAC restaurants in Almere is not the only topic emerged while interviewing the respondents regarding pattern of food sourcing. The process of substitution of specific ingredients that cannot be found or that are very expensive is a typical pattern of many migrant communities. In the effort to find traditional LAC ingredients that are considered important for these women, sometimes the attempt is not enough. For this reason, mechanism of ingredient substitution took place for some women. An example is the missing of specific variety of fish, lacking for some respondents. In, tropical fish and seafood was missed by Dulce, Blasa, Alma and Belinda, who usually substitute it with cold fillet bought at the supermarket. The perfect example is the Venezuelan dish *pastel de chucho*, Belinda explains is a dish from Margarita Island and she makes it yearly for the Holy Friday during Eastern time. Chucho refers to stingray variety of fish. It is usually fished locally in the Caribbean Island. For Catholic believers, eating meat on Holy Friday is not allowed, so *pastel de chucho* became an interesting gastronomic option for Easter. Belinda quickly explains her recipe:

Pastel de chucho... chucho is a typical fish of Venezuela. The chucho is cooked with tomato, onion, garlic, and you make a thick sauce out of it. Then you remove it from the pan and you put mozzarella

cheese and then you put in a tray a layer of sliced fried plantains, a layer of the fish, cheese and another layer of fried plantains. Chucho is typical of the eastern part of Venezuela. I didn't find chucho here, so I make it with cod. (R05, 2022)

Belinda was not the only respondent to find strategies to cook and create dishes from her country of origin by substituting the LAC ingredient with available ingredients. For instance, the making of recipes by replacing the original ingredients with local ones is a phenomenon that other respondents applied. A creative example is Alma's improvised ceviche, the worldwide famous raw seafood dish, recognized in the common imaginary as typical Peruvian. Alma would replace the fish fillet Mahi-Mahi or sea bass, considered as typical Peruvian fish, with raw local Dutch herrings and onions. A very interesting way to reinterpret a Peruvian plate in the new imaginary of home in Almere. Likewise, Maria from Honduras substitutes queso fresco with feta cheese when she needs to complete the filling for Hondurian baleadas²⁸, composed by refried beans and sour cream. Belinda also substitute queso fresco with feta when she needs to feel cachapas or arepas. When naranja agria flavour is needed it, the only way to substitute it for Maria is using lemons perhaps mixed with oranges.

In conclusion, the variety of food shops and the strategy apply to source LAC key ingredients are the most diverse. It was interesting to observe how throughout time women could find more and more specific LAC ingredients such as corn flour, tortillas, black bean in supermarkets. For many women, trips to Amsterdam to source specific foods are not so frequent as it used to be in the first period of their arrival in Almere. Tokos purchase are still crucial to find LAC ingredients for affordable prices and variety in terms of quality. Nowadays, it seems though that some respondents can find ingredients they used to purchase in tokos also at supermarkets. Price, proximity and quality of products has shown to be the biggest driver of purchase for respondents. Alternative strategy to find ingredients impossible to source in Almere are buying imported LAC ingredient through online platforms or import food directly from the country of origin. In terms of which type of ingredients or plates the respondents would like to consume but aware it's complicated to source, Usoa from Curaçao shared that she misses soup of cactus and iguana lizard, and the side dish of tutu (a paste prepared with corn flour, black-eyed peas, onions, nutmeg, coconut milk, onions, butter). Emilia from Guatemala misses *hoja de achiote*, [annatto seeds] and pacaya palm flower²⁹. She said she would love to find them in tokos in Almere. Women who try to recreate certain familiar flavors substitute specific LAC ingredients with similar ingredient, such as tropical fish with cod or queso fresco with feta cheese.

²⁸ Baleada sencilla is a Honduran flour tortilla.

²⁹ Usually sold at street market in Guatemala, pacaya has a bitter taste and is the male inflorescence of pacaya palm (Atlas Obscura, 2023).

This strong agency in recreating gastronomic flavors is a way to express women cultural background that shows to be an intimate space for respondents. A space linked to food memories and episodes of food nostalgia. A space where cultural identities are expressed in social relations around food practices. These are themes that are going to be presented in the next paragraph regarding food identities.

4.4 Food identity: women in the kitchen, food nostalgia, food memory and Catholic Festivities

The life of the research migrant women has been depicted as strictly related to their family nucleus and attached to their LAC foodway. As migrant women, their perception of the Dutch food context showed a series of different foodways to which they had to adapt or resist to. The different strategies of adaptation to local foodways have been implemented in practices of food sourcing and gastronomic substitution. The main significance drivers of these activities we find them nested in phenomenon of food identity. Indeed, the connection of cultural value to practices of LAC ingredient sourcing within the characteristic of Dutch foodscape triggers a process on constant shape and reshape of food identity. Relations of food identity construction and migratory context is strictly linked to the intimate dimension of memory and remembrances of family in the country of origin (Bajic-Hajduvovic, 2013; Holtzman, 2006). Memories are intertwined in some cases with episodes of food nostalgia. By food nostalgia we refer to the consumption of specific LAC food item as a way to reduce a sense of loss of specific flavors and connect to an idealized past (Renko, Bucar, 2014). Maintenance or change in cooking practices, intentional abandonment of specific plates, creation of rituals around food in festivities are ways to express cultural identity and partially recreate them in a new context such as the one of Almere. Catholic religion plays a defining role in recreating or pursuing food choices during related festivities.

As mentioned in the paragraph regarding adaptation to Dutch foodway, some ways of cooking practices had to adapt to the new Dutch foodway. For instance, the time spent in the kitchen reduced to adapt to working schedule and eat dinner earlier in the evening. However, certain aspects of cooking did not change. Current cooking practices of the women highlight also interesting transgenerational LAC foodways in which the female presence in the kitchen is steadily significant. Despite the extension of the nuclear family, 70% of the women interviewed were daily cooking for themselves and their family in Almere. Only for 2 respondents, their husbands cooked daily for the household. In terms of gender division of labor in the kitchen, the stories of respondents' childhood memory did not differ much from this dynamic. The totality of the sample remembered their female

relatives being the ones cooking for the entire family. Grandmothers, mothers, and maids³⁰ of the respondents were responsible to feed the mouths of the entire household. A few grandfathers or fathers of the sample would be responsible for the food grocery but not for the cooking process. Colombian respondent Lupe, recalled during the interview that:

La cultura era que los hombres no se metían a la cocina, pero solo mujeres. Entonces mi mamá cocinaba y yo siempre la ayudaba. [“The culture was that men did not go in the kitchen, but only women. So, my mother used to cook, and I would always help her”] (Interview of R03, 2022).

As author Shelley L. Koch of “*Gender and Food*” book highlights how usually women’s cooking is linked to preparations of dishes consumed daily on a routine base whereas men’s cooking is perceived as special practice such as cooking as a hobby or performance on special occasions (Koch, 2019). Barbecues are often associated as a cooking practice traditionally executed by men (Koch, 2019). Indeed, Argentinian respondent Almira associated the preparation of the iconic Argentinian barbecued meat *asado* as a “man job” and as “the only thing that man cooks” (Interview of R07, 2022). Not only, but she shared critical memories linked to her mother and grandmother spending many hours in the kitchen:

I remember my grandmother and my mother cooking. That is why I hate cooking because I don’t want to be like them, so I said all the time in the kitchen that I just wanted to travel. (Interview of R07, 2022).

The dimension of memory and revoking of emotions is strictly linked to past food practices in the family. Despite feminist debates in gender and food studies about the act of cooking as empowering or as a space of inequality, foodwork shows to be an important component of relational affections and transmission of cooking knowledge.

Foodwork is a material practice, an important dimension of social reproductive labor; at the same time, it is also a symbolically laden process involving creativity, nourishment, political concern, and care for others. (Cairns & Johnston, 2015).

Care and affection showed to be very crucial emotional space linked to childhood memories set in the kitchen of their relatives. The aspect of conviviality around a food meal seemed to be a cultural

³⁰ With maid, we refer to a domestic worker, usually female, hired by the parents of the respondent to be responsible for daily cooking, handling the food grocery and or cleaning the house. 35 % of the women recalls childhood memories of a *mujer* (donna), who helped the parents, especially the mothers in the kitchen, managing the food preparations. Nowadays, a respondent specifies it is still a quite spread phenomenon to hire in informal conditions such *mujeres* in LAC medium-high wealthy households.

and trans-generational aspect of the foodways of majority of the sample. Curaçaoan respondent Dulce, depicted strong memories of joyful weekends spent with her family and friends, with live music and big pans of soups shared in the middle of the room:

“Todos los hijos de mis abuelos llegaban con sus hijos, los hombres se ponían a practicar a tocar a cantar o jugar domino. Los nietos jugando y en el medio día el plato de sopa, sopa de carne de res o sopa de pescado y después de la sopa el plato principal que era arroz, carne, verdura, sopa de frijoles o algo típico es el funchi, típico de Curaçao, aquí también lo hago... Los domingos era día de cantar mariachi, en cada casa en domingo, todos tenían mariachi, en la fiesta se bailava salsa, merenge, cumbia.” [“All my grandparents' sons would come with their children; the men would practice playing or singing or playing dominoes. The grandchildren would play and in the middle of the day they would have a bowl of soup, beef soup or fish soup and after the soup the main course was rice, meat, vegetables, bean soup or *funchi*³¹, typical of Curaçao, I also make it here... On Sundays it was mariachi singing day, in every house on Sunday, everyone had mariachi, at the party they danced salsa, merengue, cumbia”. (Interview R10, 2022)

Conviviality and socialization of LAC food practices and provisioning proved to be an embedded cross-cultural aspect for the totality of the sample. Memories of food consumption in the country of origin were linked to daily practices, emotional familiar gathering and daily purchase at street food market or rural struggle. From Peruvian old ladies selling filled bread with avocado, *queso fresco* and a glass of *avena líquida* on the street next to bus stations while going to work, to a Venezuelan paella dinner for the whole family or a giant plate of freshly fished seafood from the coast of Ecuador with friends, to afternoon refreshing snack of fresh harvested pink guayaba fruit with her sister or learning as a child how to dominate fire in the Maya forest in Guatemala in order to set a fire to boil hand-peeled *mais* to make tortillas in her indigenous group food practices and food memories of these women would always involve the strong importance of emotional exchange or cooperation within their network of beloved people. From such abundant cultural diversity and colorful images of Latin American memories of food and landscape to a new life to a European Western society such as the Dutch one, what were the main strategies that the respondent faced in food practices in Almere to recreate a sense of home and cultural LAC identity?

Dominga decided to do not cook so often food from her country of origin in her household. She explains that she selectively decides to cook less Venezuelan food to keep it a special cuisine to share with her family. When asked how she would describe her food identity she replied:

³¹ Funchi refer to what is known as “Antillean polenta”, a staple dish meant to be eaten as a side together with meat or fish. Funchi ingredients are corn flour, water, butter, and salt.

International. Fusion. A bit from here and bit from there. Why I don't excess in preparing it (Venezuelan cuisine) because I want to keep it special. I want that every time my family eat, brings in their mind memories, family, moments, and that is why I don't cook that much Venezuelan. Even if my son hasn't eaten in Venezuela, he is a Venezuelan. (R14, 2022)

For Dominga deciding to cook sporadically Venezuelan for his son is a way to create a sense of cultural preciousness connected to food. Differently, Bibiana decided since many years to don't cook authentic Nicaraguan food as a strategy to avoid emotionally painful food nostalgia. She explained that she intentionally wants to recreate a fusion taste between LAC taste and merge them with Dutch industrial food products. The choice of cooking plates such as bean soup or gallo pinto with Dutch rookworst or Philadelphia instead of queso fresco, it's a strategy to suffer less. Bibiana selectively decided to abandon and forget part of her eating habits from Nicaragua, to don't experience too much nostalgia:

I had to let go of some of my food habits, to forget them a little bit, so I couldn't get the ingredients to make the recipe I was used to, original from my country. Like the naranja agria, another fruit widely used in Nicaraguan cuisine. Ingredients that I didn't find here are a lot like flour of mais from the brand "Maseca", achote, naranja agria. To recreate naranja agria, as people say, if you mix orange with a lemon, it's going to get a little bit similar to naranja agria, but I don't want it. I say either it is, or it isn't. I don't want the similar version. So, I'm very demanding, you could say, with myself, but I don't want it, because I'm not going to get the taste that I'm looking for. Part of my habit I've left it, you could say I've abandoned it, so as not to suffer. I had to sacrifice a lot, when I came to Holland I sacrificed not only my family, my friends, my habits, my culture, but also my way of eating, of living. I sacrificed that too and I learned to let go of it and to enjoy the food here in Holland. (R06, 2022)

The topic of food nostalgia was a delicate emotional space to dive with the respondents. Each of them faced it differently, Alma would drink imported Inka Cola when she would miss Peru and feel melancholic. Some people would make hallacas for Christmas with friends or relatives all day or order them through Tia Mona local business in Almere (a Venezuelan woman who sells Venezuelan dishes in Almere). Once every three months, Dominga also salteñas informally from a woman living in Amsterdam. Luna from Guatemala felt that her sons should have had experience thing she experienced as a child *because I wanted to give them the taste of family that I had, because here you are alone. I am trying to keep the Catholic tradition in the house also for Easter. (R09, 2022)*

Some respondents would recreate a sense of family through strong friendship network among Latin American immigrant and organize dinner to share their food culture. Maria remembers that:

Most of us met at Church going to mass, the catholic service. Some others at school trough the kids. We become very close friends to the point that we all say that we are each other family, they fell like

they are cousins. We are from Latin American all here in Almere and now we are learning from each other. (R01, 2022)

Ignacia from Mexico would spend Christmas with Mexican friends in her house and cook traditionally with the willingness to transmit tradition to their sons:

Christmas is always spent with my group of Mexican friends, originally, they were all from Almere but they moved house. We always spend it together as 5, 4 of us have children and one of us doesn't have any. We have respect and esteem, and we cherish that the children also live that part of Mexico. So, at Christmas, we always eat what is Mexican for Christmas, like bacalau, pork legs, fruit salad, spaghetti that we always make with shrimps, delicious. The piñata, the ponche (hot fruit concentrate, water with this fruit like guayaba or sugar cane and tejogotes herb). (R15, 2022)

The establishing of strong friendships network among Mexican or Latin American immigrant people for Ignacia is a way to re-create a sense of family. Many respondents highlighted the importance of bonding with people they felt connect with, to the point that they could perceive each other as an intimate new family. Luna from Guatemala remembers she started to make tamales for Christmas and respect Easter Catholic tradition for his children to connect to her friends:

I wanted to give them what I had when I was little and I don't have it here so I created it. I was the one creating the piñata, forming the group here and saying to my kids to call uncle and aunt the others. (R09, 2022)

Typical LAC plates during festivities and related eating choices are strictly connected to the religious background of the interviewees. The 70% of the respondents claimed to be Catholic believers and practisers. Except for one respondent, all the women were raised Catholic and baptized. Specific food habits during Easter time are driven by religious tradition. Indeed, 13 women do not consume meat during the Holy Friday of the Eastern Holy week, which usually take place in April or May according to the yearly Catholic calendar. Other 4 interviewees do not consume meat on Fridays also during the 40 days prior to the Holy week, known as *quaresima* or Catholic Lent. Fish based plates are the eligible food options for the *Viernes Santo*. Therefore, Lucita usually prepare deep fried cod or salt cooked fish and for Ignacia cod is a special ingredient to process even during Christmas. Blasa for Easter prepare a typical Ecuadorean Eastern dish known as *fanesca*, a very dense soup composed by a multitude of different ingredients such as pumpkin or cabbage, different type of fish like dried cod or sambo, choclo corn and other grains, and many varieties of beans. Valentina from Bolivia even if not religious she does not eat red meat during *Semana Santa* to keep the tradition alive. For Christmas she would make turkey in the oven and during New Eve she would eat pork and not chicken because according to a Bolivian believe:

The pig would walk forward while eating whereas the chicken stays still in his spot while pecking at birdseeds. So, if you want a prosper year, you have to eat pork to advance. (R16, 2022)

Interestingly, for Alma from Peru, despite being non-religious but baptized, catholic festivities in Perú influences her current food choice.

There is an influence in my eating habits, in October in Perú they have the mes morado “the purple month”, which is the month of a special Christ, Cristo of pachacamilla. El señor de los Milagros, “The lord of miracles” is very Peruvian. So, people eat other things like Turrón de doña pepa, which is this dish. I would like to eat that each October, even If I don’t follow the señor de los Milagros. Turrón de doña pepa is a desert, a very heavy cake. So religious don’t really have an influence on my food, but in October I really would love to eat this. I used to make it with my auntie Rocio. (R04, 2022)

Turrón de doña pepa from the brand San José is one of the products that Alma order delivery through “Miriam que rico” online platform. Alma does not prepare this sweet anymore as she used to do it as a child with her aunt because the execution process is very complex and time taking. Cooking time is an important theme that has emerged in this research, and we will see in the next paragraph how LAC recipes are described as laborious task where effort and patience is required.

It was clear how expressing part of cultural LAC identities for the respondents was related to cooking practices, food memory and strategies to cope with episodes of food nostalgia. Conviviality and connecting with friends are a way to re-create a sense of family but also deciding to cook in specific ways to avoid emotional distress. Christmas and Easter festivities are moments to create new memories and LAC foodway to their children and in this case recreate flavors adapted to the new Almere context. However, food identity is an ongoing cultural and abstract construction. Therefore, how women relate to it and perceive consumption of LAC food?

4.5 Food identity as dynamic process: perception and consumption of LAC food

As previously reported in the theoretical framework, with the term food identity we refer to scholar Krishnendu Ray elaboration on the interaction between individual subjectivity and food cultural practices to understand if *identity refers to food and cuisines as well as to the persons typically associated with it or who promote its distinctiveness* (Ray, 2013). As Ray suggests in his “Food and Identity” chapter, the theme of interrelation among individual, identity and food need to *exceed national imagination* in our contemporary society (Ray, 2013, p.376). As much as the perception of what Dutch cuisine entails, the term Latin American and Caribbean was connected to specific food items and food consumption we will present soon. At the end of this session, a detailed table display frequency and type of LAC food consumed by the women. The symbolic and emotional significance

of eating LAC food together with migrant friends and family showed to be important in the previous paragraph. However, the definition of women's food identity will display a *liquid* approach towards the ontological definition of their LAC foodway (Bauman, 2005). A definition that reflects a multicultural and vibrant foodscape in which women are actively engaged in Almere.

As noted previously, the term Latin American and Caribbean has aroused culinary association repeated significantly for majority of the respondents. From the analysis of the table picturing consumption of LAC food, we can see that the most mentioned and main ingredient associated to South American and Caribbean plates is rice. *Arroz moro*³², *arroz frito* as side dish or simply boiled were dishes consumed by many women. Bibiana from Nicaragua explained that she would usually prepare a big pot of black beans soup for the family to consume throughout the week. After 3 or 4 dinners of bean soup, the liquid part of the soup would proportionally decrease, and the beans become drier. When the beans start to look more of a stew rather than a soup, Bibiana would use them to prepare *gallo pinto* plate, by adding rice. In fact, other ingredients associated to LAC cuisine were different varieties of legumes such as black or red beans, lentils, together with corn, corn flour, plantains, avocados, tortillas, empanadas or salteñas, tacos, burritos. Different type of meat such as chicken, pork and beef are eaten for dinner together with rice, beef is usually mentioned to prepare *carne molida*, or minced beef, used as a filling for preparation like tacos, empanadas and tortillas. Looking at the time frequency of consumed LAC dishes, it seems that 14 women consume LAC dishes from a daily to weekly base. The table at the end of the paragraph can give more detailed information about the frequency and typology of consumed LAC foods.

Another relevant theme emerged from the interviews, which it has been declined in multiple ways towards this result chapter, the issue of cooking time. No matter if in childhood memories as presented before or current foodways, many LAC plates perceived as *typical* or *traditional* were described as very complex and time taking processes. It is not casual that hallacas are usually prepared for special occasions, and it becomes a time in which family and friends gathers to help each other mutually in the act of cooking. Peruvian *salsa a la huancaína* or *aji de gallina*, which take 3-4 hours' time preparation, are dishes made by Alma for her son's birthday or for parties. On the other hand, women also mentioned that during the week there are food that are faster to prepare and easier to execute. Venezuelan respondents often quoted *arepas* as a dish they would prepare often together with *cachapas* and *patacones* or *tajadas*. Peruvian women constantly cited the varieties of aji (e.g. amarillo, pancha, mirasol, rojo) as fundamental ingredient to make their dishes

³² Arroz moro, known as gallo pinto in Nicaragua and arroz casiamento in El Salvador, is a dish composed mainly by rice and black or red beans.

and therefore consider them Peruvian. One or two times a week, Alma would make arroz chaufa³³ and arroz tapado because of their versatility. Indeed, in the case of *arroz chaufa*, different type of vegetables and meat can be quickly cooked in a pan together with soya sauce and oyster sauce according to Alma. Valentina from Bolivia associate proportionally the amount of time invested in soup preparation to the quality of taste of the plate:

I had a restaurant in Bolivia, my mother cooked very well and in big pots for many people, 100 or 150. I remember that the process of the soup lasted about 4 or 5 hours, every day, my mother was always cooking. And here in Holland, the cooking process is 20 minutes. So, I think that was a cultural change for me, in a positive way and in a negative way because it took me a long time here but always the taste, I had to get used to the taste. Chicken doesn't taste like the same chicken in Latin America. Here it seems to me that the meat has less taste. Now I make a soup for 4 hours and it tastes much better than a soup for an hour and I discovered that after many years. (R16, 2022)

Despite the description of Valentina regarding how tasty the soup is, she explained that it is not a plate that she would make often or better that she cooks *authentic* Bolivian just for big parties or for special occasions. During the week she usually have one warm meal for dinner that can consist of the soup but usually boiled in less time. She usually cooks 2 or 3 times a week *Latin food* and *Bolivian* for dinner. She makes soup of quinoa or chicken soup or *picante de pollo* a plate from Cochabamba district in Bolivia, where Valentina is from. It is a plate composed by chicken cooked together with onions, potatoes, tomatoes, green peas, aji amarillo, a thick sauce usually is flavored with cumin, garlic and oregano (TasteAtlas, 2023). Majority of respondents seems to consume LAC plates multiple times a week from 1 up to 4 times. As previously stated in the previous paragraph, majority of women are the one cooking daily for the household. In the table presented at the end of the paragraph, it can be seen in more details and for each respondent which type of LAC food and how often it is consumed by the respondents in the household. Overall, this is the type of food that was perceived and consumed as LAC. However, what about the food identities definitions of the women?

The women interviewed reacted in the most dissimilar ways when asked about their personal food identity. The term itself food identity created curiosity and at the same time confusion. During the interview, it was asked many times to define it and some respondents need it time to think about their opinion and therefore reply. The result of the analysis shows that the imaginary of individual food identity differs from neat national or territorial cuisine. Only 2 women refer to their food identity as being fully national, so *Venezuelan* and *Peruvian*, whereas Maria from Honduras feels her identity is both Latin and Honduran, but in terms of flavors *definitely* Honduran. Dulce feels her cuisine is attached to Antilleans cooking and only Blasa from Ecuador describe her food identity as

³³ Arroz chaufa is plate coming from the fusion cuisine known as Chifa, a mixed cuisine of Cantonese and Peruvian traditions.

Latina. Manuela, Lupe and Bibiana refer to it as a dichotomy between their country of origin and the Netherlands. Whereas, for Lucita is a puzzle of different cuisine such as Latin, Italian and Curaçao. Usoa describe her food habits as inspired by three culinary cultures coming from Surinam, Curaçao and The Netherlands. For Rocio, her cuisine is mostly a personal expression inspired by Peruvian and Latin way of cooking. The 30 % of women describe their food identity as *international* or *mundial* (global) or a space where specific national cuisine don't prevail as a personal expression of their self. Additionally, certain interviewees find their national cuisine of origin as a multitude of different food cultures. Another Venezuelan respondent Lola, feels that Venezuelan cuisine itself is an expression of history of multiple cultures colliding together:

My identity is global. It's just true. I like everything. I can cook today, and if you say let's eat Peruvian, I do, I like it. Let's eat fish, too. Italian, I love it, because we in Venezuela we have this quantity of united culture. We have so much European on top that we got used to, that pasta is a Venezuelan food. I learned to eat pasta with bread and onion. Eating pork or eating Spanish, something with chicken for us is something normal in our food. (R18, 2022)

Furthermore, Alma from Perú explain how being married to a Dutch person made the household food habits more diverse and refer to her identity not only as international but interestingly as fluid:

My food identity is international. For me it is something that you make together, I don't just eat to have the energy for the day. I eat for pleasure, when we eat, we are together, we make it together as well. I would eat everything international; I don't know. I am very flexible; I don't like to impose people to eat my food. My identity is international and fluid. I guess, if we would be a Peruvian couple, it would be another story because we would come from the same region and come from the same type of food...I don't know. We made our identity a little bit of everything. (R04, 2022)

Clearly, the above description of the women individual food identity seems to match the concept of identity not only as an intimate and personal space of food choice but as a reflection of a hyper globalized society. The theoretical borders in which a national food culture can be defined in relation to the concept of identity seems to be blurred. However, when asked to define what the cuisine of their cultural origin was some respondents referred to an imaginary of national cuisine. For Alma there is no such a thing as Latin American cuisine but Peruvian and for her *it already conquered the world*. For her, many Latin American countries *would share the ceviche, each country has their own ceviche. Each country has their way*. (R04, 2022). Empanadas preparation only for Alma is a dish common in different Latin American countries yet called in different ways and with diverse filling according to geographical areas and personal preferences (e.g empanadas are called salteñas in Bolivia and Argentina). Maria also agrees with the fact that *Latin* is too generic adjective when referring to food:

Latin food is too wide for me because it would go from Honduras to Argentina and Caribbean Island, that is how I see it. In Argentina they eat completely different from how they eat in Mexico. For me Latin it is so vague because we go from eating platano, coconut and yuca in the Caribbean area, from seafood to eat completely different in Argentina, which is mainly beef. The ingredient that we use in the Caribbean or central Mexicans area tend to be different and probably more similar to Indonesia than Chile, Argentina, Paraguay Uruguay. In Meso America, we have so many different dishes based on corn and so many different types of corn. Very specific type of area.

We have some similar dishes I would say from Mexico until Venezuela to Colombia and some in Ecuador, but it starts to melt away and change completely. For example, platano verde, we eat in Honduras and in Ecuador also but in a completely different way. (R01, 2022)

Instead, Luna and Belinda feel there are some ingredients that can be considered as generically *Latin* such as coffee, corn, cacao and some tropical fruits.

The results show how the individual sphere in the perception of food identity is affected by the social context in which the respondents are living. Despite the differences in opinion about what LAC is and if it can actually be referred to as such, the results in a way confirm that this migrant foodscape manifest a constant change influenced by time, social relations, economic needs and personal life experiences. During an interview with chef Sharon de Miranda, her opinion about food identity gave an interesting sight regarding how to perceive different food cultures:

I think nobody is allowed to claim or make identity to food. I think people should stop with that and that's something that you also learn from the past because also my friends, they said "My mother makes the best poom poom, is like a traditional Suriname food." Someone else said "No, my mother makes the best". Actually it's always stupid. Is something the best, best? And then they said try my relative dish. Yes, it's good but my aunt makes it better and that's something that people need to stop. Claiming and saying my country is better, this is better than that. That whole thing needs to stop already. You need to learn, except and just eat.

You cannot claim and make recipes different, but you have to keep the respect for the culture. Keep the respect. For everybody's culture, nature and the product respect. That's something that we need to don't forget. (R21, 2022)

Figure 21. Table of consumption and frequency of LAC cuisine together with frequency and type of restaurant.

	Frequency of LAC cuisine consumption	Type of LAC food respondent consume	Frequency of restaurant or delivery	Type of restaurant or delivery respondent visit	Definition and opinion of LAC
R01	3 or 4 times a week	Baleadas dish, carne asada, deep fried beans, rice, cheese mole	3 times a month 2 times a month	Restaurants outside Almere for lunch Delivery: poke bowl at Chinese, sushi, pizza, shoarma/falafel	Latin food is too wide and vague for me because it would go from Honduras to Argentina and Caribbean Island. We go from eating plantains, coconut and yuca in Caribbean area, from seafood on the coast to eat beef in Argentina.
R02	1 or 2 times a week	Platano, arepas and eggs for breakfast Lechoso con piña (traditional Maracaibo sweet) Tacos, juca, rice	4-5 times a year for celebrations 1 time every 2 months 1 time a month	Breed in Almere Buiten: sushi, pasta Rosita in Almere Centrum: Tex-Mex Subway, Sushi in Amsterdam McDonalds	Our cuisine is very little, we don't need many dishes. We have many fried mini pie or fried products. Empanadas, mandoca, arepas is Venezuelano.
R03	Frequently Once every 2 years during Christmas spend in Almere	Arepas Sancocho, cow tongue and liver, steak	1 time a month	Almere Centrum: Cubanita, Anno, Tapas Barça, Rosita Tex-Mex (went not so many times)	In Colombia, you don't eat much potatoes, you eat soup bout not fries. The lunch was difficult here, in Colombia the lunch is composed by arepa or egg omelette or you have a chocolate mug. Many times, people is used to have a steak with arepas and lunch.

	Frequency of LAC cuisine consumption	Type of LAC food respondent consume	Frequency of restaurant or delivery	Type of restaurant or delivery respondent visit	Definition and opinion of LAC
R04	1 or 2 times a week 2-3 times per year	Arroz chaufa, arroz tapado Aji de gallina, alfajores, salsa a la guanacaina	1 time every 2 months	Almere Centrum: Kimono all-you-can-eat sushi place Oriental or Italian restaurants	We cannot say Latin cuisine we can say Peruvian. I think Peruvian cuisine has already conquered the world in gastronomy and we do have special Peruvian food we would find anywhere else. Many Latin American country would share the ceviche. Empanadas would be a recipe that you share in different countries. Latin I don't think that exist.
R05	Daily Once a year for Christmas	Plate composed by: rice, plantains, meat/fish, vegetables. Arepas Hallacas	1 time every 2 months	Hamburgers and fries places	There is Latin food, specific things that we have in common in all Meso America and South America. For instance, corn and rice. In Venezuela you eat more rice than potatoes.
R06	4 times a week	Rice, beans, bean soup, Mexican tacos	2 times every 2 months	Almere centrum: Rosita Tex-mex, sushi, Dutch food with meat and vegetables Amsterdam: Argentinian restaurant, sushi	When I talk about Latin food I refer to a plate composed by rice, which is the base of the Latin American person. We consume a lot of rice, meat and fried things, tortilla and plantains.
R07	1 or 2 times a month Daily	Barbeque, dulce de leche products, ravioli, spaghetti, gnocchi Drinking mate	1 time a week	The one they see on google with best reviews, usually they go for Italian, African	In Argentina 80% of people are immigrants so it is a mix of cultures. Argentinian cuisine is for me asado, the barbeque. Everything related to dulce de leche, I love it. Mate, I drink mate everyday. Pasta, specifically gnocchi, spaghetti and ravioli.

	Frequency of LAC cuisine consumption	Type of LAC food respondent consume	Frequency of restaurant or delivery	Type of restaurant or delivery respondent visit	Definition and opinion of LAC
R08	Daily 2 times a week	Latin American food: burritos, meat or bean chile, lentils Peruvian food: tomato sauce, ajì amarillo or rojo	2 times a month	Almere Centrum: Rosita Tex Mex Amsterdam: Casa Perù, Pacha Mama, Peruvian Cuisine Den Haag: Somos Perù	Peruvian cuisine is very tasty but lacking vegetables, so I always put more vegetables than what the recipe says. If you ask a Peruvian person, my food is not Peruvian because I make it differently.
R09	1 time a week	Burritos or taco, rice	1 time every 2 months	Almere Centrum: Greek restaurant Almere Poort: Atlantis for buffet international	Everything that has cilantro. Mix of spices that gives taste. Any food that comes from Latin American, I have an association with tropical food, mais, cacao, caffè. The products I used to have. Although I don't know if they used to have it in Argentina but I think everybody in Latin American has the same type of products.
R10	4 times a week	Cod fish fillet, platano, meat stew, rice, meat, beans, fun chi, bread with sardines	Less than once a month	Almere Centrum: Breed, Rosita Tex-Mex Lelystad: All you can eat Almere Buiten: Pizzeria, Bon sabor Antillean toko Almere Poort: Atlantis	In Curaçao, plantains is important, you put it aside the plate.
R11	1 time a week or 1 time every 2 week	Pupupas, beans with rice, pasteles, encurtido de repollo, chicken with rice	Once a month	Almere: KFC, McDonald, Burger King, Rosita	The Salvadorean diet for me is a little bit stronger compared to the Dutch diet. You consume a lot of grain flour or corn. You eat something solid, out of corn or grain or a piece of meat or vegetables. You feel stronger, you don't feel hungry after having that food. It makes me stronger to eat from El Salvador.

	Frequency of LAC cuisine consumption	Type of LAC food respondent consume	Frequency of restaurant or delivery	Type of restaurant or delivery respondent visit	Definition and opinion of LAC
R12	Not specified	Rice with beans or pasta with tomato sauce, avocado salad	1 time every 2 months	Almere Centrum: Rosita Tex-Mex	Every country has it's tasty thing, right? We in Guatemala we make soup of annatto seeds and I miss it. I miss pacaya leaves. We as indigenous we find it fresh at the mountain and we eat it grilled or cooked.
R13	3 times a week	Mostly Peruvian dishes+ lentils, rice, taco	1 time a month	Almere Centrum: Rosita Tex-mex French, Italian Restaurants, Sushi all-you-can eat Amsterdam: Nazka peruvian restaurant Den Haag: going with her friends	The basic ingredients of Peruvian cuisine is garlic and onion. We have a lot of variety of aji amarillo, aji mirasol, aji pancha, aji escabeche. In Perù, you always go out to have something like a coffee, having an active social life is important.
R14	3 times a month	Venezuelan dishes: arepas, pabellon, asado negro, cachapas	Not specified 2 times a month 1 time every 2 months 1 time every 3 months	Almere: Italian Woodstone Delivery; Kapsalon, pizza I love sushi, poke bowl Salteñas made by Bolivian lady	I miss the family gathering around food. Every time I make Venezuelan cuisine, it takes a lot of time. My great grandmother cooking, she was in my opinion my inspiration to see this granny all day cooking or making special delights for snacks.

	Frequency of LAC cuisine consumption	Type of LAC food respondent consume	Frequency of restaurant or delivery	Type of restaurant or delivery respondent visit	Definition and opinion of LAC
R15	1 time a week Christmas	Recipe of his father meatball, tortilla Cod fish, pork legs, spaghetti with shrimps, ponche	1 time every 2 months	Almere: Rosita Almere Haven: Cortes Almere Poort: Atlantis, sushi and international buffet	Latin food and Mexican food are two different things. I think Mexican cuisine is very different. The corn is an ingredient that all South America use. The corn tortilla in Mexico, that is totally Mexican. Tamal, you make it different according to the place it has different flavours. Hallacas in Venezuela has one type of stew. Mexican cuisine is very wide. We don't know the Mexican cuisine among Mexican people, we know the typical food but not the regional because it is a lot.
R16	2 or 3 times a week	Picante de pollo, rice, potatoes, quinoa soup, chicken soup, lentils, spinaches, Bolivian soup, tallarin	3 times a month On special occasions	Almere Centrum: Rosita, Cubanita, Luche Bussen: Leuk Amsterdam: Nazka	I own a restaurant in Bolivia, my mother cooked very well in a big pan for many people, 100 or 150. I remember that the process of the soup lasted 4 or 5 hours, every day, my mother was always cooking.
R17	Daily	Rice, fried rice, meat	3 times a year	Almere Poort: Atlantis	I love Latin food, I love it. In Spain I love to eat fish and seafood. I eat daily Latin food, paella, yuca, green plantains, arroz moro from Santo Domingo, I love it.
R18	Not specified	Mexican food, sancocho, fish with arepas	2 or 3 times a month	Almere Centrum: Rosita, Kimono sushi	Latin food is eating rice, salad, carne molida, lentils, rice with chicken, arepas. Peruvian people eat more fish but Venezuelan people eat more meat, chicken, pork.
R19	Never	Tutu, pan batì, cactus soup with iguana	After covid, never	None	Latin cuisine is empanadas, we have also funchi with chicken, beans. Caribbean cuisine it's time consuming.

	Frequency of LAC cuisine consumption	Type of LAC food respondent consume	Frequency of restaurant or delivery	Type of restaurant or delivery respondent visit	Definition and opinion of LAC
R20	4 times a week	Rice, salad, plantains, soups, beans	1 time a month	Almere Centrum: Rosita Almere Buiten: Festijn Culinaire, Portofino Ordering Indonesian food from a lady who makes catering	Latin food, the main food is rice, also has lot of soups and a lot of seafood, fish and it is also a cuisine with the base of plantain and beans. The ceviche we eat it there in Ecuador with all type of variety of fish, seafood, mixed or together.

CONCLUSIONS

The following anthropological study wanted to depict the complexity of a migrant foodscape such as the one located in Almere city and shaped by the community of LAC migrant women. To untangle all the complex and social dynamics and food practices of 20 individual foodscapes is likely to be an impossible intellectual attempt to succeed in. This research analysis followed an inductive approach, which consists in reading carefully the data, applying empirical observation and only after having detected themes emerged from the data consequently applying a theoretical framework. Therefore, it was important to let the results speak for themselves and, at the same time, trying as much as possible to let the stories of the women be heard with as less theoretical preconceptions as possible. The dynamic process of this women migrant community being part and simultaneously shaping Almere foodscape shows the different shades of cultural adaptation that new food context, such as the Dutch one, can require.

The results show that the cultural differences with the Dutch foodway are relevant compared to LAC food practices. The overall perception of Dutch cuisine of the respondents is described as an imaginary of practical and quick meals where efficiency and simplicity are reported as characteristics of Dutch consumption and cooking. Potatoes, stamppot and erwtensoep are the main ingredients claimed and imagined as typical Dutch. The association to local plates and winter season is also repeatedly mentioned. Overall, the qualitative perception of Dutch cuisine is described as lacking in exciting spices and flavors. Dutch dishes are described as bland in flavors and perhaps possible to enrich just with salt and pepper. Frikandels or fried snack are described as unhealthy and for some respondents, Dutch people eat less meat and more vegetables compared to LAC countries. For some women Dutch food was perceived as unhealthy and for others healthy but the dimension of time in relations to food habits emerged more consistently.

The women interviewed reported how Dutch cooking time has been perceived as very quick practice compared to LAC preparations. So quicker and earlier for dinner compared to their previous Latin American habits, that they need it time to adjust to it. Their cooking practices had also to become more “efficient”. Even in the kitchen, time turns into a precious commodity in a capitalistic society where optimization of activities such as eating improve working efficiency (Martineau, 2012). Not only but also meal time and modality of consumption underwent a drastic change for this community. From 2 or 3 hot meals per day, women had to adjust to have just one hot homemade meal for dinner. Some still decide to rather warm leftovers from the fridge for lunch than having

cold sandwiches. Adding some LAC ingredients such as avocados or aji amarillo sauce are examples of different ways to adapt to the bland *broodje met kaas* (little sandwich with cheese).

Despite culinary adaptation to Dutch habits, the most challenging aspect concerning Dutch foodways reported was the lack of conviviality and socialization around food meals. The missing of socialization around meals as a moment to connect with known and unknown people was an interesting theme that emerged. Women felt lonely during lunch time and missed sitting on a table and socialize more often during meals. This was a big trigger for women of emotional distress. For some respondents, despite living in Almere since more than 20 years, Dutch food represented a quite different foodway to accept, adapt to and, in some cases, resist with active agency. As previously mentioned, during the first years living in Almere, 75% of the sample struggled to adapt to the Dutch foodway or to source specific LAC food they were familiar with.

In order to recreate a sense of familiar taste, sourcing specific LAC key ingredients such as corn flour, black beans, yucca, plantains or tropical fruits in different places in Almere was and it is still crucial. In the first years living in Almere, many women had to reach Albert Cuyp market in Amsterdam to source LAC ingredients. Nowadays, availability of LAC key ingredients is wider in Almere. Purchasing at tokos seems crucial for almost the totality of the women but many ingredients like harina pan or jalapeños can be found easily in most supermarkets chain. Whether in different supermarkets, tokos or at open markets scattered throughout the city, food sourcing of tropical fruits or specific LAC ingredients became easier in Almere. Many women select specific tokos or food shops to also seek quality of the product, even if it implies to get out of their neighborhood and invest more time in their grocery.

Food sourcing choices is not only driven by economic or geographical proximity but also by emotional drivers. In fact, some women purchase specific food items through online importing South American products platforms such as “Miriam que rico” for necessity but also to cope with food nostalgia episodes or recall childhood memory through LAC food consumption. A cluster of respondents from Peru, Bolivia and Honduras, have no choice but still import directly from their country of origin to source ingredients like naranja agria or aji amarillo. Recognizing the logistic issues concerning the imports of tropical fruits, women also shared missing a lack of variety and quality of tropical fruit in Almere. Services like South American or Caribbean restaurants or street food vendors were also missing for the respondents in the city centrum and not only because they were missing the familiar gastronomic flavours but mostly to experience a known atmosphere. The same atmosphere looked for in the intimate spaces of their houses.

The values of sharing food among relatives and friends in the household are strong LAC drivers to recreate food practices in relation to religious Catholic beliefs. On Christmas holidays spent in Holland, long and effort demanding gastronomic preparation of *hallacas* are ways to reconnect with the family. Other respondents prefer to buy complex and time taking LAC gastronomic preparations such as hallacas or salteñas through informal local business in Almere or Amsterdam. During Easter time, specifically on holy Friday, for Catholic beliefs meat is not consumed. Gathering with LAC migrant friends for celebrations is a way to recreate a network of social support that equals the importance of a family. Food nostalgia memories are not always a comfortable mental place to be. In a specific case, the preparation of certain *authentic* dishes are also avoided in order to overcome emotional distress and homesick feeling. When respondents try instead to recreate traditional LAC dishes, the loss of LAC foodway or lack of specific ingredients triggers creative way of blending Dutch ingredients to LAC recipes. In this case, tropical fish is substituted with cod, queso fresco to fill cachapas or arepas with feta cheese.

The strategy adapted by Alma to create a ceviche put of herrings and sliced local onions could be seen as a fusion cuisine strategy, in which though there would be an ontological issue to define what Peruvian cuisine is and what Dutch cuisine is: two collectively recognized invented food tradition through soft powers maneuvers or recognized cultural heritage phenomenon? (Guardia, 2020) (Hobsbawm, 2013). Despite the driver to create a new dish, combining different foods items and different recipes to produce a new cuisine, as in the case of many women, it is not just a combination of the two gastronomic ways, but it is a third culinary context different from the two mentioned before. This third place of personal food creativity, this cuisine is something that is elaborated through an adaptation process, which is a formalized way of combining and interconnecting life experiences or perhaps a strategy of gastronomic adaptation. An example of new frontier of gastronomy may have just taken shape, where new food practice collides by sourcing local food products and adapting to another food culture.

These dynamic strategies of cultural adaptation to the Dutch foodway, specifically within Almere foodscape, are strictly connected to the dimension of LAC food identity and how to maintain it. What are foods perceived as South American or Caribbean? If potato is perceived as the Dutch food ingredients par excellence, rice is described and consumed as staple food in their almost daily consumption. Dishes composed by a variety of meat such as chicken, pork and beef are usually marinated or prepared filling for tacos, empanadas and tortillas. Consumption of corn, black beans or red ones, varieties of hot chilli peppers, lentils, plantains, a wide range of tropical fruits, avocados were somehow mentioned or part in different ways of each respondent diet. All of these different LAC foods are consumed more frequently than perceived Dutch dishes. The emotional value that

eating LAC ingredients have and transmit these LAC foodways to their son showed to be relevant. Interestingly, when asked how they would define their food identity, the sense of *Latinidad* was not as relevant as described when they were mentioning food practices around festivities and celebrations (Sanabria, 2019). Their relations with food and identity are pictured as international, global, sometimes described as a dichotomy between Dutch cultural and their LAC one. Overall, their attitude towards food cultures was very open and not attached to an imaginary of national cuisine. In conclusions, respondents foodways is an expression of a dynamic process of recreating a sense home, fusing it with local Dutch foodway immersed in very multicultural social urban fabric such as the one of Almere.

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