

This article discusses two studies that examined the diagnosis of autism in children from ethnic minority groups in the Netherlands. The first study found that children from ethnic minority groups were significantly underrepresented in autism care facilities. Only a small percentage of children in these facilities were from ethnic minority groups, despite these groups making up a much larger share of the overall child population. The second study focused on the role of pediatricians in referring children to autism care. The results showed that pediatricians referred children from ethnic minorities less frequently for autism assessment compared to Dutch children, even when there were concerns about possible autism symptoms. However, when pediatricians used standardized questionnaires to test for autism, there was no difference in referral rates between ethnic groups. These studies indicate that children from ethnic minority groups have less access to autism diagnosis and treatment than Dutch children. This may be because doctors are less inclined to refer these children, possibly due to cultural differences or unconscious biases. Using standardized questionnaires can help reduce this issue. It is important that all children, regardless of their cultural background, have equal opportunities for timely diagnosis and appropriate help with autism. Further research is needed to fully understand the underlying reasons for the underrepresentation of ethnic minority groups in autism care.