

*title* : When nobody understands what I mean, dealing with ethnic minorities under a hospital order (TBS)  
*for* : the State Secretary for Justice  
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**The acronym TBS stands for ‘placement under a hospital order’. TBS is a treatment measure the court imposes on people who have committed serious offences and suffer from a psychiatric illness or disorder, which influences their behaviour to a greater or lesser extent.**

A third of all patients in TBS institutions are of ethnic minority origins. Their numbers are expected to further increase during the coming years. Patients with an ethnic minority background can differ from native Dutch patients in how they experience their disease, the way in which their disease manifests itself, their request for care and their participation in their treatment. Being able to effectively understand and interpret the behaviour of ethnic minority patients and deal with them in the right manner imposes special requirements on how they are treated. If these requirements are not met, this has a detrimental effect on the effectiveness of the treatment. As TBS involves perpetrators of serious crimes, inadequate treatment results in a risk to society. Furthermore, ethnocentrism among those providing treatment results in ethnic minorities being treated differently from native Dutch patients. This results in the application of double standards. Because of this, the legal position of ethnic minority patients is at issue. Particular attention urgently needs to be devoted to dealing with ethnic minorities in an appropriate manner, also referred to as interculturalisation. Various TBS institutions have taken initiatives in the direction of interculturalisation, however it is not yet being applied in TBS on a structural basis.

In these recommendations, it has been investigated which cultural differences are relevant with regard to TBS treatment. Based on the manner in which these are currently dealt with by the institutions, the Council formulates the general recommendation to strive for interculturalisation from a central focus and to provide it with a structural basis and a definite place in the organisation and execution of treatment.