

Annual Report

Youth

Monitor 2016

Summary



Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport

Annual Report 2016

Youth Monitor

Summary

Explanation of symbols

.	Data not available
*	Provisional figure
**	Revised provisional figure (but not definite)
x	Publication prohibited (confidential figure)
-	Nil
-	(Between two figures) inclusive
0 (0.0)	Less than half of unit concerned
empty cell	Not applicable
2015-2016	2015 to 2016 inclusive
2015/2016	Average for 2015 to 2016 inclusive
2015/'16	Crop year, financial year, school year, etc., beginning in 2015 and ending in 2016
2013/'14-2015/'16	Crop year, financial year, etc., 2013/'14 to 2015/'16 inclusive

Due to rounding, some totals may not correspond to the sum of the separate figures.

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Introduction

This is the summary of the ninth Annual Report of the National Youth Monitor. The Annual Report 2016 provides insights into the situation of young people. It describes how the nearly 5 million young persons in the Netherlands are doing, based on certain indicators and current topics. Where possible, the situation among young people in the Caribbean Netherlands is addressed as well. Topics discussed in this annual report include family situation, youth care, living and growing up safely, education, labour, health and crime.

Dutch children give themselves high scores on well-being in international comparative studies. Young people indicate that they experience such a high level of well-being because they can really talk to both parents and because they have friendly, helpful classmates (De Wilde, Kann-Weedega & Meima, 2013). Not unimportant, their parents are also very happy in comparison with people elsewhere in the world (Schmeets & Gielen, 2015). Around 85 percent of Dutch adults were satisfied with their lives in 2015. When specifically asked about satisfaction with job and other activities, men are slightly happier than women. This satisfaction naturally has its effect on the well-being of their children.

The study by Van Beuningen and De Witt (2016) demonstrates this. Over 90 percent of the young people aged between 12 and 21 are satisfied with their circle of friends, and 90 percent are satisfied with their mental health and their home. Over 80 percent are satisfied with their looks, neighbourhood and physical health, education and work. On the other hand, 2 percent of the young people are dissatisfied and/or unhappy. The probability that these young people will require support from youth care at some point is slightly higher.

In 2015, nearly 11 percent of the 3.4 million minors residing in the Netherlands received some form of youth care (Chapter 3). The majority (75 percent) of these 362 thousand young people received some form of ambulatory care. Over 40 thousand received care involving a stay elsewhere: 21 thousand stayed with a foster family and over 4 thousand in a type of family-oriented care.

Research

What does this mean for research in the broadly defined field of youth? It is only logical that many studies are oriented towards those children who are receiving care; that is where the risk factors for youth problems and prevention policies

are developed, the effectiveness of interventions is tested, etc. However, it is also possible to take another approach to research on youth. Given the positive scores of young Dutch people on well-being, one major question is: what is it that we are doing well in the Netherlands? Why are parents and young people so happy? Why is the crime rate falling among young people (Chapter 8), what are the reasons for the reduction in addiction problems as discussed in Chapter 7?

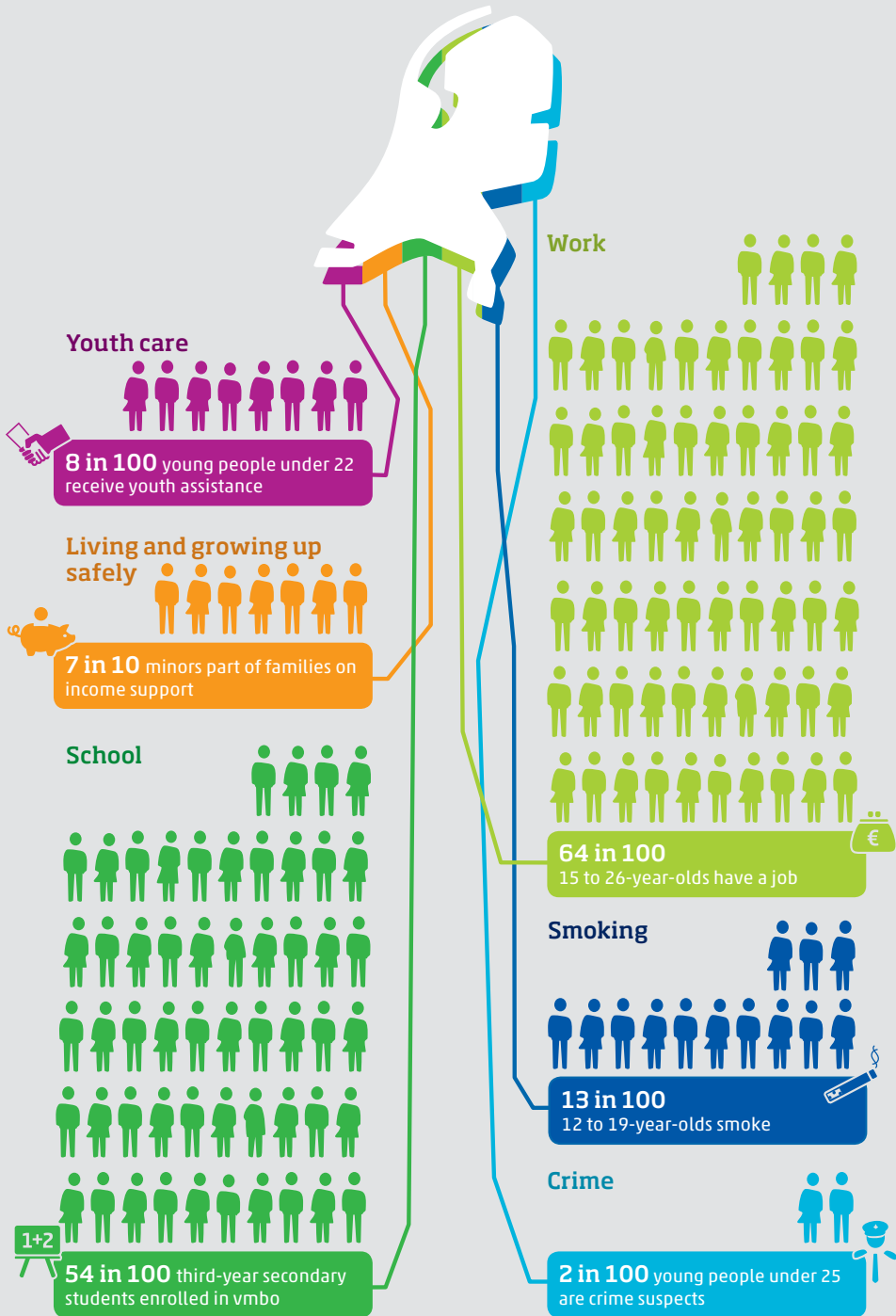
The question of happiness can be seen like the peeling of an onion. Firstly, we can take a critical look at the research question, which is often normative from an international perspective, and it may be predictable why certain countries have low and other countries have high scores. Next, we can examine whether the Dutch really are so great at parenting compared to other nationalities, or whether there are regional differences in child-rearing culture within the Netherlands.

The next layer is the question as to what extent the organisation of education plays a role. The study by Van Beuningen and De Witt shows that 86 percent of 12 to 17-year-old students are satisfied with the education they are following, versus 76 percent of the 18 to 24-year-old students. More girls between ages 18 and 24 are satisfied (79 percent) than boys (74 percent), as satisfaction increases with education level and girls are in the majority in higher education. More information about young people in education can be found in Chapter 5. Prosperity is the next factor influencing experienced happiness. For example, it makes a difference whether a child grows up in a family living on income support (Chapter 4). These children are more likely to end up relying on social benefits themselves later in life (Van Gaalen, Van den Brakel and Eenkhoorn, 2015).

Once the above questions have been given substance, we are better able to determine as to what extent public youth care contributes to the well-being of young people and then we have come full circle. The purpose of policy information on young people is to relate differences in the use of youth care to scores on social indicators (see figure 1.1.1), such as the share of children living on income support and the share of young people coming into contact with the police. This can yield insights into correlations. These correlations between the use of youth care and social indicators may differ depending on local or regional circumstances. It is important for municipalities to understand what is happening on which they can exert little or no influence through policies, and which factors they can influence in the short or long term.

Everyone who is interested in the situation of young people in general is invited to read the Annual Report 2016 of the National Youth Monitor.

1.1.1 The six social indicators of the Netherlands



In this section we refer to the following publications:

Beuningen, J. van en S. de Witt (2016). Welzijn van jongeren: geluk en tevredenheid met het leven onder jongeren van 12 tot 25 jaar. *Bevolkingstrends* 2016/07.

Galen, R. van, M. van den Brakel en E. Eenkhoorn (2015). Wie opgroeit in een uitkeringsgezin heeft later bovengemiddeld vaak een uitkering. *Sociaaleconomische trends* 2015/01.

Schmeets, H. en W. Gielen (2015). Geluk en sociaal kapitaal: Nederland in West Europees perspectief. *Bevolkingstrends* 2015/07.

Wilde, E.J. de, D. Kann-Weedega en B. Meima (2013). Welbevinden in rijke landen. Utrecht: Nji.

Summary

1. Young people in the Netherlands (Chapter 2)

On 1 January 2016, there were nearly 5 million young people under the age of 25 in the Netherlands, making up 29 percent of the population. Although the number of young people has increased slightly, their share has declined in the total population, which grew on account of immigration and increased longevity on average. The number of children under the age of 12 has declined over the last decade, mainly as a result of a lower birth rate since the turn of the century. The number of 12 to 17-year-old children has increased slightly.

One-quarter of all young people have an immigrant background. The largest groups with a non-western background are young Moroccan, Turkish, Surinamese and Antillean people. A relatively new group of non-westerners are young Syrians. This has to do with the recent influx of refugees from Syria, from where relatively many families with young children have settled in the Netherlands. There are currently 22 thousand young Syrians living in the country. The largest groups with a western background consist of German, Polish, Belgian and Indonesian youngsters.

The family situation in which children grow up has changed over the past few decades. Currently more and more children are born to unmarried parents living together. In 2015, this was true for more than half of all firstborns. The number of single parents is also rising as relatively more relationships break down nowadays. This leads to different family structures, where children live with their biological mother and her partner, for instance. Young people start living on their own at a later age. The average age at which they leave the parental home has risen from 23.6 years in 2006 to 24.6 years in 2016.

In the Caribbean Netherlands (Bonaire, Saba and St Eustatius), nearly three in ten residents are under 25 years of age, similar to the Netherlands. Some 5.5 thousand live on Bonaire, nearly 600 on Saba and around 950 on St Eustatius. Approximately half of these young people live with both parents, while nearly one-quarter live with a single parent. The remaining quarter includes children living in other types of households, often with other family members apart from the child and his or her parent(s).

2. Youth care (Chapter 3)

As of 1 January 2015, Dutch municipalities are responsible for all youth welfare and care services. This has been laid down in the Child and Youth Act. Services include youth support as well as juvenile protection and rehabilitation. In 2015, some form of youth care was provided to 365 thousand young people. The majority – 350 thousand – received youth assistance; this involved more boys than girls. The use of such assistance increases up to the age of 9 and subsequently declines with age.

More than 40 thousand minors received one or more juvenile protection measures in 2015. These are measures imposed by a court when the health and safe development of a minor are in danger and voluntary help does not suffice. Approximately three-quarters of these young people were placed under a supervision order and slightly over 10 thousand in child custody. The proportion of young people placed under juvenile protection increases with age. Juvenile protection is relatively more common among children with an immigrant background than among native Dutch children. A peak can be seen among children of immigrants around age 16, from both western and non-western backgrounds.

Over 11 thousand young people aged 12 to 21 received one or more juvenile rehabilitation measures. Such measures serve to prevent repeat criminal activities through meaningful day programmes, leisure activities, etc. In 2015, over 3.5 times as many boys as girls fell under such measures. A peak occurs around age 17 among both boys and girls. Juvenile rehabilitation is also more prevalent among youngsters with a non-western background than for others. By far the most juvenile rehabilitation measures were compulsory.

3. Living and growing up safely (Chapter 4)

At the end of 2015, 1 in 15 children under the age of 18 were living in a family on income support: at least one adult family member was claiming social assistance benefits on 31 December. Most of these minors have a non-western immigrant background, many live in single-parent families and nearly all live in rented housing. Moroccan and Turkish children form the largest groups of non-western children living in families on income support. Between 2006 and 2009 before the economic tide turned, the number of minors in families relying on income support fell by 45 thousand, but their number has gone up by over 40 thousand since 2009, after the onset of the economic crisis.

In 2014, the average disposable income for a family with underage children on income support was 1,690 euros per month. Among other families with children, average disposable income was more than twice this amount. Over four in five children in families claiming income support were at risk of poverty as their disposable income fell below the low-income threshold. Very few families on welfare had assets worth more than 5,000 euros. Such tight finances relatively often imply material limitations for the children, such as not going on holidays every year and not getting new clothes regularly.

In the Caribbean Netherlands, social assistance is referred to as social relief (*onderstand*). Social relief is intended for residents of the Caribbean Netherlands (Bonaire, Saba and St Eustatius) who are older than 18 years and are unable to earn sufficient income to meet their livelihood. To qualify for social relief, a resident must have been living for at least 5 years on one of the islands. The preliminary figures on 2013 show that 3.3 percent of all minors lived in families where at least one adult was receiving *onderstand* benefits.

4. School (Chapter 5)

By the third year of secondary school, most students have made a choice between VMBO, HAVO or VWO. VMBO (lower level pre-vocational) is the most widespread type of secondary education. In the academic year 2015/'16, 54 percent of all third-year secondary students were enrolled in VMBO (not including practical training). This share was slightly larger ten years ago with 57 percent attending VMBO. In 2015, 22 percent were enrolled in HAVO and 22 percent attended VWO. Two percent of all third-year students had not yet chosen their type of education and were in a general education course year.

Students with a pre-vocational secondary VMBO diploma do not yet have any formal basic qualification and are still obliged to obtain this. Therefore, nearly all VMBO graduates move on to post-secondary education. Only a small minority have left (publicly funded) education. The majority (88 percent) of VMBO students who graduated in 2010/'11 went straight to secondary vocational education (MBO). Furthermore, 18 percent of students who completed VMBO-T (theoretical programme) and 7 percent of students with a VMBO-G (mixed theoretical and practical) diploma moved on to HAVO. This is more often the case with boys than with girls and more common among students with a non-native background than for native Dutch students. Although their VMBO diplomas do not provide qualified access to universities of applied science (HBO), one-fifth of the 2010/'11 graduates were studying at HBO level five years on. This level can be attained by 'stacking'

through taking MBO or HAVO education. The largest share of students continuing on to HBO are those who graduated from VMBO-T. More girls progress to HBO than boys, and it is relatively more common among students with a non-western migrant background than among native Dutch or those with a western migrant background.

In the Caribbean Netherlands (Bonaire, Saba and St Eustatius), over 4 thousand children and young people participated in education in the academic year 2015/'16. The majority did so on Bonaire. Most students were in regular or special primary and secondary education while a smaller number took secondary vocational education (MBO). Students can take one of four levels within MBO; most take the highest level, MBO 4. For each MBO course there are two learning pathways: vocational training (BOL) where practical training takes up between 20% and 60% of the course; and block or day release (BBL) where practical training takes up more than 60% of the course. Eight in ten MBO students followed the vocational training or 'BOL' pathway.

5. Labour (Chapter 6)

In 2015, 64 percent of young people aged 15 to 26 were in employment. The labour participation rate was considerably higher among young people who were no longer enrolled in education (80 percent) than among secondary and tertiary students (56 percent). Compared to 2014, the participation rate was up while youth unemployment went down.

Of all working young people, 32 percent were in permanent employment in 2015 while nearly 62 percent were flexible employees; a minor share were self-employed. The proportion of young flex workers has risen in recent years: in 2005 it was still 43 percent. Secondary and tertiary students are more likely to work in flexible employment than those not in education.

One in ten young employees worked as shop assistants. Other jobs ranking among the top ten for young workers included loader, unloader, shelf stacker, waiter/waitress and bar employee. Six out of ten secondary and tertiary students who worked had a small part-time job of less than twelve hours a week, much more often than those not in education. Over half of the latter group were working full-time. For those not in education, disposable income was over 3 times higher in 2014 than among those in education.

Among Caribbean Dutch youngsters between 15 and 26 years, 42 percent were employed in 2014. Around 14 percent of the young labour force were unemployed. Labour participation is low among those enrolled in secondary or tertiary education, with only 16 percent holding a job. Among these working students, 33 percent held a permanent job, 55 percent were in flexible employment and around 12 percent were self-employed.

6. Smoking (Chapter 7)

In the period 2011/2015 one-third of young people aged 18 to 24 smoked (regularly or occasionally). Over one-fifth smoked daily. More than one-third of native Dutch youngsters were smoking, less than the share among youngsters with a western migrant background (38 percent) but more than among youngsters with a non-western migrant background (29 percent).

Unhealthy lifestyle factors such as smoking are harmful to health. Young smokers experience more problems with their locomotor apparatus and generally feel less healthy. Their perceived mental health is also affected. This is expressed in feelings of gloom, restlessness, sadness and depression. Young women are more likely than young men to experience this. Over 12 percent of young smokers have indicated they sought assistance from a youth care worker in the preceding year. The share was even higher among heavy smokers with 17 percent.

Smoking is also related to other lifestyle factors. For example, the share of young people who occasionally drink alcohol is higher among smokers (nearly 97 percent) than non-smokers (over 79 percent). The share of excessive drinkers is also significantly higher among smokers (27 percent versus less than 10 percent). Smokers are furthermore more frequently overweight, less inclined to do weekly physical exercise, fall below the nutrition standard for fruit consumption more often, use more recreational drugs and engage in more unsafe sex.

7. Crime (Chapter 8)

In 2015, more than 66 thousand young people in the age group 12 to 24 years were registered as crime suspects by the police. This was 2.2 percent of all people in the same age group. Over one-third were still underage. Compared to 2007, the share of young suspects was halved from 4.5 percent to 2.2 percent. This decline was more pronounced among the underaged than among older age groups.

The share of registered suspects among the 12 to 14-year-olds is significantly lower than among 15 to 17-year-olds and young adults (18 to 24 years). These are predominantly male suspects. This applies to almost all types of offences. Shoplifting is the only exception: this is more prevalent among young females than among young males. Underage boys from age 15 are relatively often suspects of property offences such as theft or burglary and offences involving vandalism and disturbing the public order. Violent crimes and traffic offences are mostly committed by young male adults. In all age groups, Moroccan, Antillean and Surinamese youths are more often crime suspects than native Dutch youths. Moroccan boys are relatively most often suspects, among both the 15 to 17-year-old and the 18 to 24-year-old male age groups. In the 12 to 14-year-old age group, the highest share is found among Antillean and Aruban young suspects.

In 2015, nearly one in four young people (15 to 24-year-olds) were victims of traditional crimes such as violence, property offences and vandalism. This share was nearly halved between 2005 (41 percent) and 2015 (23 percent). Young male adults and young city dwellers are more often victims of traditional crimes than underage boys and those living in rural areas.

Apart from traditional crime, 17 percent of young people fell victim to cyber crime (identity fraud, sale-resale fraud, hacking and online bullying). Although the number of adult cyber crime victims declined last year, the share of minors remained the same. While victims of traditional crimes are more often adults, the reverse is true for cyber crime. The difference is largely related to cyber bullying: the share of victims is almost twice as large among minors as among adults. Women fall victim to cyber crime more often than men.

In the Caribbean Netherlands, one in five young people indicated they had been a victim of traditional crime. These were mainly property offences, followed by violent crimes and vandalism. Due to differences between surveys, the data are not comparable to the data on young people in the Netherlands.

