

Summary

Judicial sanctions capacity forecast

Since 1998 the WODC has been responsible for the methodological development, as well as a yearly update, of forecasts of the capacity needed for various judicial sanctions in the Netherlands. This report presents forecasts over the period 2001-2006. The sanctions involved are extramural and intramural.

In cases of minor crimes extramural sanctions for juveniles can be handled by the police (so-called Halt settlements). In more serious cases the courts are involved; these can impose community service, which is a compulsory task to be fulfilled by the convicted juvenile. This last type of sanction is also possible for adults.

Intramural sanctions for juveniles involve placement into judicial institutions for juveniles. These placements can be imposed under penal law (convictions for crimes) or under civil law (absence of sufficient parental care). Intramural sanctions for adults are executed in prisons or in institutions for compulsory psychiatric treatment. A number of prison cells are reserved for illegal foreigners, who are kept in custody awaiting their expulsion.

There is traditionally some variation in forecasting methodology over the various types of sanctions. The WODC tries to enhance the uniformity and consistency of the forecasting methodology. In addition it tries to improve transparency of the backgrounds of the results of the forecasts. So the Jukebox-Adults and the Jukebox-Youth models, which are used in part of the forecasts, relate the trends in capacity needed for prisons, judicial institutions for juveniles and community services to trends in crime and law enforcement activities. Trends in crime are in turn related to demographic and socio-economic factors and to law enforcement performance indicators (solution rates, conviction rates, et cetera).

Forecast methodology in other areas of judicial sanctions is roughly based on relevant demographic developments and trends in the last 10 years. The background of these trends is not elaborated.

Both Jukebox models distinguish between various types of crime. This distinction makes it possible to see that crimes that are prominently present in the beginning of the criminal justice chain, are not in the end of the criminal justice chain, and vice versa.

For example many thefts are reported to the police, but the number of theft suspects is much smaller and the number of theft suspects that is imprisoned even more so. On the other hand the police reports on drugs possessions or violence are relatively few, and not that many people are sentenced for it. But these convicts get long sentences and thus take up a lot of prison capacity.

Table S1: Forecasts of capacity need for various sanctions (annual average)*

| | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | growth 2000-2006 |
|--|---------------|---------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|---------------------|
| Community services adults | 18,700 | 19,700 | 20,200 | 20,700 | 21,300 | 21,800 | 22,300 | 19% |
| Prisons (excluding custody of illegal foreigners) | <i>11,200</i> | <i>11,700</i> | 11,900 | 12,200 | 12,300 | 12,500 | 12,700 | 13% |
| Custody of illegal foreigners | <i>1,210</i> | <i>1,130</i> | 1,160 | 1,190 | 1,220 | 1,250 | 1,290 | 6% |
| Institutions for compulsory psychiatric treatment | <i>1,250</i> | 1,318 | 1,380 | 1,430 | 1,430 | 1,430 | 1,430 | 15% |
| Halt settlements | <i>17,900</i> | 21,900 | 23,000 | 24,200 | 25,300 | 26,300 | 27,300 | 53% |
| Community services juveniles | <i>12,800</i> | 13,200 | 14,500 | 15,700 | 16,800 | 18,000 | 19,100 | 50% |
| Judicial institutions for juveniles | <i>1,880</i> | <i>2,100</i> | 2,200 | 2,310 | 2,440 | 2,580 | 2,730 | 45% |

* Realizations are printed italic. The realization of community services for adults in 2000 was not known and has been estimated.

There have been two major developments in the period 1994-2000. The number of short sentences for petty theft increased enormously. Prosecutors react faster and judges seem less tolerant towards this type of crime. Another interesting development is the increased attention for drugs couriers.

Table S1 shows the forecasts for all sanctions involved. Growth is expected in all areas. According to the forecasts, the sanctions for juveniles will grow faster than those for adults. The expected growth of the number of juveniles in the relevant age group (12-17 years) is a major contributing factor here, as is the increase in the second generation ethnic minorities.

The severity of sanctions regarding adult suspects is also growing. Prison capacity grows because of an increase in sentences (5%) and an increase in non-sentence capacity (21%). The last category includes pre-trial detention not followed by a prison sentence, and non-prison sanctions that have been converted into imprisonment due to failure (for example failed community services and unpaid fines).

As was shown in the past, there will always be forecasting errors. The forecasts in this report are therefore presented in combination with a sketch of the uncertainties related to the forecasts. An indication of possible forecast errors is obtained by estimating a confidence interval around the forecasts. The results suggest that the intervals are relatively large for Halt settlements and custody of illegal foreigners. The intervals are relatively small for community services for adults and prisons.

This report also compares forecasts from the past with realizations. For Halt settlements and custody of illegal foreigners the forecast errors are fairly large. In both cases there has been a sudden drop in the demand for capacity in the last known year. For the other judicial sanctions most forecasting errors remain under five percent, with the exception of the forecasts from 1998.