



## SUMMARY

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**R**esearch and advice bureau Breuer&Intraval has performed the fourth measurement over 2017 of the monitor following the developments in coffee shop policy. This measurement is commissioned by the Research and Documentation Centre (WODC) of the Dutch Ministry of Justice and Security. The Ministry wants to use this measurement to identify, map and follow the developments of the coffee shop policy in 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2017.

National and regional data from the Police and the Public Prosecution Service (OM) were obtained and analysed. In addition, 66 local experts were consulted in a sample of 31 municipalities from 11 research regions throughout the Netherlands: 33 local officials and 33 police officials. These experts answered questions about coffee shop policy in their municipality, coffee shop tourism, soft drug tourism, illegal sales and the situation around coffee shops. Where possible, the results of this measurement were compared with the results of the measurements from 2016, 2015 and 2014. In addition, this measurement included a similar questionnaire that was presented to coffee shop owners and employees in the sample municipalities. In total, 67 coffee shop owners or employees from 23 sample municipalities have completed the questionnaire.

### Soft drug incidents

The number of registered soft drug incidents shows a slightly downward trend over the past four years. In the Zeeland-West-Brabant region, the number of registered soft drug incidents is highest throughout the year. For all four research years the number of soft drug incidents is lower than the number of registered hard drug incidents.

### Coffee shops and policy

Almost all sample municipalities (28 of 31) have included the Residents Criterion in their coffee shop policy. Above a quarter of these municipalities (8 of 28) uphold the Residents Criterion. Approximately half of the coffee shop owners and employees (32 of 67) indicate that they are positive about the municipal coffee shop policy to a greater or lesser extent. They are particularly positive about the contact and cooperation with the municipality, police and the neighbourhood. Coffee shop owners and employees who are negative about the municipal coffee shop policy, appear to be particularly dissatisfied with the national coffee shop policy.

### Coffee shop and soft drug tourism

Coffee shop tourism (non-residents buying hash/weed in coffee shops) occurs in almost half (15 out of 31) of the sample municipalities. In only a few of these municipalities this form of tourism causes significant nuisance. In a number of sample municipalities (4 out of 31) the coffee shop tourism rate is high. Some of these municipalities already attract many tourists, who also visit the coffee shops. The other municipalities are located in



border regions and do not actively uphold the Residents Criterion, giving tourists access to the coffee shops.

Local experts have limited knowledge about whether and to what extent soft drug tourism (non-residents buying soft drugs - and therefore not hard drugs - outside the coffee shop) occurs in their municipality. In almost half (9 out of 20) of the municipalities where the experts do have insight into soft drug tourism, they believe it does occur. According to the coffee shop owners and employees who have insight into soft drug tourism, soft drug tourism occurs in about a quarter (5 out of 21) of the municipalities. Over the period 2014-2017 there appears to be a downward trend.

### **Situation around coffee shops**

Problems in the area around the coffee shops seem to occur to a limited extent. In almost two-thirds (20 out of 31) of the sample municipalities, there are no nuisance incidents concerning the coffee shops according to local experts. In other municipalities these incidents occur to a limited extent. Problems around the coffee shops are mainly caused by traffic congestion and parking problems resulting from people loitering. Some coffee shops take measures themselves to prevent nuisance in the vicinity of the shop. They often cooperate with other parties such as the police, the municipality and local residents.

### **Illegal sales**

The number of municipalities where illegal drug sales occur, seems to have increased in the past year, according to local experts. In more than three quarters (25 out of 31) of the municipalities, illegal drug sales take place to a greater or lesser extent. In about a third (8 out of 23) of the sample municipalities, coffee shop owners and employees indicate that illegal sales take place in the vicinity of their coffee shop, while in the other sample municipalities respondents indicate that this does not take place or barely occurs in the direct vicinity of the coffee shop.