

Summary

The aim of this report is to map out the differences in nature¹ and scope of recorded crime² between the various ethnic groups residing in the Netherlands. We aim to achieve this by answering the following questions:

1. To what degree are the various ethnic groups represented in the various types of offences?
2. What is the pattern of the age-specific crime rates of the various ethnic groups for the various types of offences?
3. To what degree is the risk of being a suspect in certain types of offences explained by the ethnic background of the person in question?

This report attempts to answer the first question by means of a number of descriptive statistics. By simply counting the number of offences, it is apparent that the alleged offenders in about one third of all offences logged in the data records system (the *herkenningsdienstsysteem* or *HKS*) in 2003 were individuals of non-western origin. Looking at specific types of offence, there are clear differences. For property offences involving violence, for instance, individuals of non-western origin account for 61% of the suspect rates, which is considerably higher than for the total number of offences. Differences also emerge between the groups of non-western origin.

Adjusted for the size of the population, Antilleans have the highest crime rates for all types of offence. Antilleans distinguish themselves negatively, particularly in drugs and arms offences and property offences involving violence. Moroccans, accounting for the second-highest overall crime rates (after the Antilleans), are often suspected of property offences (non-violent and involving violence), threat, vandalism, and disorderly conduct. Surinamese are relatively often suspected of traffic offences, and drugs and arms offences. Of the four 'conventional' groups originating from elsewhere, Turks are suspected of crimes least. Offences of which the Turks are suspected relatively often are traffic offences and arms offences.

In order to answer the second question, we have examined *age-crime* curves. These *age-crime* curves follow more or less the same pattern for all groups originating from elsewhere, despite substantial differences in actual levels. There are two significant exceptions, however. For Moroccans, the *age-crime* curves demonstrate a remarkably high peak — relatively speaking far higher than the peak in the other groups - in the second half of their teens. The second exception is that the crime rates amongst Antilleans continue to be high in their thirties and forties. An

¹ The nature of the crime is understood to refer to the distribution amongst the various types of offence. The types of offence distinguished in this study are: violent offences (not including property offences involving violence), sexual offences, threat, non-violent property offences, property offences involving violence, vandalism and disorderly conduct, traffic offences, drugs offences and arms offences.

² The large *dark number*, i.e. a large part of the committed offences does not find its way into the police records, is a problem with the interpretation of the results presented in this study, which are based on data on recorded crime. Offences which are reported to the police but where the identity of (at least one of) the suspect(s) remained unknown are also not taken into consideration in this study. It is unknown whether the *dark number* differs between the various ethnic groups.

evident drop in crime rates in this population group does not occur until after the age of forty.

For most types of offences, the *age-crime* curves follow the more or less traditional pattern of initially increasing crime, which then drops from the early thirties onwards. Again, however, there are a number of exceptions. For example, the *age-crime* curves for sexual offences are too volatile to present a clear pattern. We also see that relatively more youngsters are suspected of non-violent property offences, vandalism and disorderly conduct, while suspects of traffic offences and drugs offences tend to be older.

In order to answer the third question, this report carried out regression analyses to explain the risk of becoming a suspect in a crime. The regression analyses show that for virtually all types of offence persons from any of the big four 'conventional' ethnic minority groups (Turks, Surinamese, Moroccans and Antillians) have a significantly higher chance of becoming a suspect of a crime than individuals from the autochthonous Dutch population. This applies to both the first and the second generations, and to both adults and minors. A few types of offence even present a greatly increased risk: property offences involving violence for Moroccans, Antilleans and Surinamese; drug offences for first-generation Antilleans; arms offences for adult Antilleans; threat for second-generation Moroccans.