

Summaries

Justice and demographics: on declining percentage of youth, ageing and colouring. Changes in the population make-up and consequences for Justice

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1 Justice and demographic developments

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The demographic picture of the Netherlands is changing. The growth in population resulted in varying degrees of pressure across the country (see Van Nimwegen and Esveldt, 2006). Immigration resulted in the population becoming more multi-coloured but, as in other countries, not to the same extent in every part of the country. There are also signs of a declining percentage of youth and of ageing. The declining percentage of youth is now more or less over, the ageing is not. It is anticipated that over the next 30 years, the number of young Dutch people will stay more or less the same, but that the proportion of older people in the population will increase rapidly. There is also ongoing discussion concerning an absolute fall in the size of the population, which can in fact already be perceived in some provinces.

Topics such as colouring, declining percentage of youth, ageing and a reduction in the population are therefore likely to excite increased interest in the public arena. Journalists come up with headlines such as "Population falls in four provinces" (NRC 10 February 2006), "Ageing leads to the Italian condition" (NRC 24 February 2006), and "The Netherlands starts to shrink" (VN, 18 March 2006). This goes hand-in-hand with increasing attention to birth figures, although it is sometimes forgotten in this discussion that the average number of children born to a Dutch woman has actually remained stable for the last 30 years (at about 1.6 or 1.7 per woman), so that Dutch fertility levels are near the top in Europe, even if still quite low. Demographers predict a (very) minor growth in population for the next 25 years, up to a maximum of about 17 million inhabitants. Then, however, a gradual population shrinkage will set in, not expected at a national level until after 2034 (CBS, 2007). In its most recent population forecasts, the CBS does indicate that this population shrinkage will not manifest itself simultaneously across the whole of the Netherlands (CBS, 2007).

Population trends have consequences for virtually all facets of society, from accommodation and health to mobility and education. We are getting to know more and more about this phenomenon. This has not until now been the case – or at least as much – in relation to the field of Justice. But Justice is and will also be affected, now and in the future, by demographic influences. The question,

therefore, is what impact the predicted demographic changes will have for crime and Justice?

On 11 May 2006, the WODC and the NIDI organised a joint congress dealing extensively with issues surrounding the relationship between demographics and crime. The consequences of demographic change for the study of crime and the safety of society were systematically contemplated in two plenary lectures and six parallel presentations. In light of the many interesting points of view that were raised, it was decided to approach the speakers and ask them to transcribe their presentations into readable chapters or short synopses. The majority of the speakers were prepared to collaborate in this congress proceedings. The speakers were asked to describe explicitly in their chapters the relationship between demographics and the consequences for Justice (in policy terms). This proceedings is a reflection of the presentations made at the WODC-NIDI congress in 2006.

2 Demographic developments: Trends, perspectives and opinions

Gijs Beets

- The number of inhabitants in the Netherlands is still rising, although at a reducing rate. Around 2035, population projections indicate a maximum population of 17.0 million inhabitants, followed by a gradual reduction.
- The number of children will remain low and below the replacement level; children will also be born at a much later stage in the lives of their parents than previously.
- Life expectancy will continue to increase and, together with low fertility this is a main driver of population ageing.
- Immigration and emigration are relatively high; it is expected that there will again be an immigration surplus in the near future, since the Netherlands remains a relatively attractive country for migrants to settle..
- The absolute numbers of married and widowed persons will decline, and the numbers of those who have never been married or who have divorced is expected to increase. Unmarried cohabitation will increase and the life course will be characterized by more, sequential, relationships. Households will shrink, if only because population ageing implies a larger proportion of the population in the so-called "empty nest" phase.
- The number of first-generation migrants is expected to drop, but the total number of persons of foreign descent will increase substantially. Because more of them will be second-generation migrants the level of integration may increase (better educated and with smaller families).
- Significant regional and international differentiation in the above trends exist.

3 The Netherlands in 2035: More fear, more inequality and more segregation?

Jan Latten and Luc Verschuren

In 30 years from now, the percentage of 65-year-olds will increase from 14% to 23% of the total population. Ageing may result in rising fears and feelings of unsafety, as well as an increase in social isolation. New generations will also have less next of kins. This type of trend can increase vulnerability. Nevertheless, growing feelings of unsafety can be accompanied paradoxically by a reduction in the risk of becoming a victim of crime. Lack of income is another aspect of vulnerability. Many indicators point to increasing inequality of income between, on the one hand, two-income households and, on the other hand, single and non-Western households. Emancipation, immigration, partial general pension entitlements and increasing inequality in both capital distribution and private pension entitlements play an important role in this context. Growing age-related feelings of unsafety and generation-related financial inequality may lead to an increase in segregation. A shift towards liberalisation in the housing market and the increasing inequalities of income and lifestyles may promote segregation trends in general.

4 Research into criminal careers: the relevance of theory and policy

Alex R. Piquero

This chapter offers a summary of the most important findings of research into criminal careers, including the results of two recent longitudinal studies into criminal careers in the United States and Great Britain. These studies show that a small group of individuals is responsible for a substantial proportion of offences, but that once these individuals have reached age of 30, most of them also stop committing offences. It also appears that as delinquents become older, the period over which they remain active as offenders also reduces, along with the residual number of offences committed by them. Thirdly, the studies show that the different risk and protective factors for young persons may be related to particular styles of offences, but that the impact of these variables is not as consistent as current theoreticians and prevention campaigns would have us believe. Information from these studies is relevant to decision-making processes at a time when resources for law enforcement are scarce, but when the population requiring correction is also on the increase.

5 Cohort sizes and crimes of violence. The Easterlin effect investigated in 20 countries

Johan van Wilsem

According to the economist Richard Easterlin, large birth cohorts generally deal with more setbacks than small cohorts, because the members of the cohort are faced with more competition for scarce commodities such as jobs, benefit payments and housing. One of the presumed consequences is that members of large birth cohorts are more often involved in crime, either as perpetrator or victim. However, empirical insights on this mechanism are based primarily on

research from the United States. This contribution therefore focuses on the relationship between cohort size and crime in other countries as well. For this purpose, the patterns of homicide victimization are studied across 20 countries, for 8 birth cohorts in the period 1980-2000. The results show that homicide victimization is indeed more prevalent among large birth cohorts, but especially in countries with low levels of governmental quality.

6 Demographic developments and call on judicial facilities

Frank van Tulder and Debora Moolenaar

In the past 10 years, the SCP, WODC and the Council for the Judiciary have developed forecasting models to gain some insight into anticipated developments concerning call on a wide range of judicial facilities. These models provide a picture of the part played by demographic developments. The models are based on empirical research into links existing at a national or regional level between call on judicial facilities on the one hand and social and policy related background factors on the other hand.

The growth in the number of young persons of foreign origin in particular seems to play a part in the criminal law system in the growth of call on judicial facilities. This turns out to be even more the case in relation to judicial facilities for minor children. Other demographic factors (divorces, the number of young persons in the four major cities) also appear to be significant in some parts of the criminal law system or for call on the civil or administrative courts, but their part appears to be less influential.

These results clarify yet again the important part played by integration problems for young persons of foreign origin in the Justice field. As long as there are no improvements in the socio-cultural or socio-economic circumstances of this group, Justice will be faced in the criminal law system with increasing pressure from crime, the number of cases it has to deal with and penal accommodation requirements, particularly in juvenile institutions.

7 Influence of ethnicity and the risk of being caught on juvenile crimes of violence

Ger Huijbregts and Erik Leertouwer

This chapter describes the growth in the number of suspects of violent juvenile crime in the period 1996-2005, and the factors influencing this growth. Using these factors, we then investigate how the number of suspects of violent juvenile crime will develop in future. We pay special attention to the role played by ethnicity in violent juvenile crime. The reason is that the number of violent crimes for each 100 individuals, the so-called "crime rate" for violence, is much higher among non-western immigrants than among the group consisting of those of native Dutch heritage and western immigrants. The number of suspects of violent juvenile crime remained reasonably constant during the period 1996-2000, but a growth in the number of suspects is perceptible after 2000. The same growth can be seen in crime rates for violence. The increase in the number of suspects and in the crime rate for violence since 2000 coincides with an increase in the risk of being caught, possibly caused by a reversal of policy. The influence

of ethnicity and the risk of being caught on the number of suspects of violent juvenile crime has been worked out in a mathematical model. This model can be used to prepare forecasts of future growth in violent juvenile crime. To assess the effect of future changes in the risk of being caught and in ethnic composition, a number of variants of the forecast have been developed. These variants seem to show that changes in the risk of being caught are of greater influence than changes in ethnic composition.

8 Population the major cities and crime forecasts

Joanne van der Leun

There is an indicated relationship in many countries between urbanity and crime or unsafety. The nature of this relationship and its specific manifestations vary according to place and time. Under the influence of economic globalisation, cities are once again now viewed as potential centres of power. This results in a selective composition and growth in the populations of the major cities, but also in immigration and emigration for those of native Dutch heritage and those of foreign heritage. There is also very selective spread of population within cities. The relationship between urban demographics and crime in the major cities seems to work on two fronts: on the one hand, the selective population make-up and development leads to crime, while, on the other hand, it seems to be crime itself (or perceived unsafety) that often persuades people to decide to leave the cities. The future expectation for cities is that, despite the population make-up, there are no clear indications for anticipating a growth in crime as a result of demographic developments in the major cities. One possible exception to this is the situation surrounding illegal immigrants. The expectation of a lack of growth in urban crime is largely based on anticipated population developments (ageing and declining percentage of youth).

9 Families and crime

Pearl A. Dykstra and Helga A.G. de Valk

The conclusion drawn in the first part of this contribution, on the basis of predictions on the development of crime in the Netherlands taking into account demographic developments, is that crime will not increase but rather will decrease. In the second section, we investigate how and to what extent family characteristics influence the likelihood of criminal conduct. Here we use data from a general random sample of the population, the Netherlands Kinship Panel Study (NKPS). The results show that the quality of social ties in the parental home is a better predictor of the likelihood of developing criminal conduct than the socio-structural characteristics of the family of origin, which are generally considered in research. Family climate is not a decisive determinant, however. Experiences later in life, and particularly the absence of ties with social institutions such as marriage and the labour market, also show a positive association with criminal conduct. The marital relationship is not only a mechanism of control that reduces the likelihood of criminal conduct but also brings involvement in the wider circle of family relationships. We observe an accumulation of problems of delinquency within families. This finding suggests that preventive

and corrective policy should not only be directed at the individual but also at the family. Finally, the results show that criminal conduct is closely associated with other problem behaviour, such as addiction and serious psychological problems. The causal link is, however, difficult to unravel.

10 Sexual offences by juvenile perpetrators of foreign heritage

Jan Hendriks

In this chapter we zoom in on the group of juvenile sexual offenders of foreign heritage. In light of the fact that an ever-increasing percentage of young persons come from backgrounds other than native Dutch ones, it may be expected that the percentage of sex offenders of foreign heritage will also increase. We used a relatively large data file (N>500), composed of juvenile sex offenders from the period 1988-2002. Virtually all the perpetrators underwent a personality assessment, so that there is a relative large amount of information available on them. We looked at changes over the course of time within the group of juvenile sex offenders, paying particular attention to perpetrators of foreign heritage. As we anticipated, foreign heritage perpetrators appear to make up an increasing percentage within the group of juvenile sex offenders. When we looked into sub-types, namely child abusers and peer abusers (solo perpetrators) and group offenders, it seems that there is an over-representation of offenders of foreign heritage, principally in the last two groups. Offenders of foreign heritage do not appear to commit sex offences at a younger age than native Dutch offenders. Within the 'group offenders' sub-type, it appeared that there was frequently a dichotomy in thinking of girls/women, so that certain "bad" girls were not taken seriously.

Figures for recidivism in relation to sex offences do not appear to be less favourable for foreign heritage offenders. They appeared to re-offend relatively more often in terms of offences of violence and other types of offences. It is not so much the foreign heritage origins but the differences in criminal careers that justifies a different approach to this type of perpetrator. Generally speaking, an educative penalty seems to be too mild a sanction, so that the imposition of a poly-clinical or residential treatment would seem preferable.

11 On risk factors, effective interventions and inconsistent government policy on violent offending

Corine de Ruiter

While the Dutch government has made room in its policy programmes, such as Terugdringen Recidive ["Preventing Re-offending"] and Naar een Veiliger Samenleving ["Towards a Safer Society"] in recent years for a preventive approach to crimes of violence as opposed to a repressive approach, this appears to have been put into practice only to a limited extent. Psychology can make an important contribution towards reducing violent re-offending, using the "What Works" approach. It is argued that an effective approach to crimes of violence should also focus on the treatment of mental health problems, a proven risk factor for violent behaviour. Examples from the state of Washington in the USA and from Canada show that this type of approach is more cost-effective than a

purely repressive policy, characterised by ever-increasing investment in detention facilities and forms of supervision.