



# Press release

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## ***Voters prefer computer to red pencil***

According to the national voters survey conducted by Statistics Netherlands and the foundation for voting research SKON, Dutch voters trust voting machines. They think they are the most reliable way to vote. Floating voters voted for one of the main parties in November 2006. Voters were divided on the issue of the legalisation of illegal immigrants, even those who have live in the Netherlands for years. Half are in favour of legalisation, the other half are against. Only a minority are in favour of abolition of the tax benefits for people paying mortgage interest. The idea of taxing rich pensioners to contribute to the state old age pension is also only favoured by a minority of voters.

### ***Strong faith in the voting computer***

Nearly all voters trust the voting computers in use in the Netherlands. Moreover, more voters think the voting computer is more reliable than the red pencil. Alternative ways of voting such as by telephone, via the Internet or by post are not very popular. Only a minority of voters trust these procedures.

A small majority of voters stated a preference for voting computers. Thirteen percent opt for the red pencil and 31 percent report no preference.

### ***Most floating voters end up voting for main parties***

Nearly all voters who intended to vote for the Christian Democrats (CDA) and the ChristianUnion (CU) did so in the general election in November last year. For the Labour Party (PvdA), the People's Party for Freedom and Democracy (VVD), the Green Left (GroenLinks), the Socialist Party (SP) and the Party for Freedom (PVV) around eight out of ten voters stuck by their original intention.

Ten percent of voters who intended to vote for the PvdA voted for the SP. Vice versa, 10 percent of those planning to vote for the SP ended up voting for the PvdA. Most floating voters ultimately voted for one of the main parties. CDA, PvdA and the SP each attracted about 20 percent of the floating vote.

### ***Voters divided on legalisation if illegal immigrants***

Half of Dutch voters are in favour of giving illegal immigrants who have lived in the Netherlands for a number of years a legal status. Half of CDA voters are in favour of this, for the CU and PvdA the percentages are 58 ad 64 respectively.

Voters for the PvdV are most radical in this respect. More than three-quarters are against the legalisation of illegal immigrants. A majority of VVD voters are also against such a measure.

### ***Minority want to abolish mortgage interest tax benefits***

Only 18 percent of voters were in favour of abolishing the tax benefits for interest payments on mortgage loans. Twelve percent of CDA voters were in favour of abolition. The percentages were higher for PvdA and CU voters, 22 and 19 percent respectively.

On the pensions issue, 39 percent of voters agreed that pensioners with a high self-saved pension should contribute to the state old age pension. There is little difference in this respect between the PvdA and the CU. Just over half of supporters of these two parties were in favour of 'richer' elderly contributing to the provisions for old age. Among CDA voters this was half.

### ***Voters in favour of maintaining social provisions***

Voters for most political parties are in favour of maintaining the level of social provisions. Only 22 percent of the electorate are in favour of reducing tax rates at the expense of the level of social provisions. There are only minor differences between CDA, PvdA, CU, VVD and SP voters in this respect.