



Press release

Statistics Netherlands

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Noisy neighbours affect sense of well-being

In 1998 the serious nuisance caused by stench and noise was hardly less than in the four preceding years. Road traffic, neighbours and aircraft are the main sources of serious noise problems. Figures from Statistics Netherlands' permanent quality of life survey show that Dutch people find noisy neighbours the hardest form of nuisance to cope with. People who have problems with noisy neighbours report bad health and feelings of unhappiness nearly twice as often as people who do not have such problems. Noise is generally perceived as more of a problem than stench in the living environment.

Nuisance from noise and stench hardly down

The serious nuisance people experience from traffic noise has hardly decreased since 1994. In 1998 16% of the people interviewed for the survey reported problems with traffic noise. Noisy neighbours were reported by slightly fewer people in 1998 than in 1994 (8% versus 10%). Aircraft, trains and industrial noise caused about the same level of irritation in 1998 as in 1994.

Farming smells were experienced as a nuisance by 2% of respondents in 1998, down from 4% in 1994, while stench caused by traffic and industry, open fireplaces and multi-burners remained unchanged.

Noise from neighbours, health and happiness

People who have serious problems with noisy neighbours report bad health 1.7 times as often as people who do not have such problems. The other forms of nuisance from noise and stench have hardly or no bearing on health. Feelings of happiness, on the other hand, are only related to noise from neighbours. People who are troubled by serious noise from their

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neighbours report being unhappy 1.8 times more often than people with more peaceful neighbours.

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