



Press release

Statistics Netherlands

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One in six children witness parents' divorce

In 2000 33 thousand Dutch children experienced the divorce of their parents. In a longer term perspective, one in six Dutch children witness the break-up of their parents' relationship. After some time a step-parent will enter the lives of forty per cent of these children according to figures from Statistics Netherlands.

Half of divorcing couples have children

Last year 35 thousand Dutch marriages ended in divorce. Half of the couples involved had undreamed children, a total of 33 thousand children. In the course of the years, one in six children have experienced the divorce of their parents.

One quarter of children no longer see their father

Eighty per cent of children involved in divorces stay with their mother after the separation. One quarter of all children of divorced couples no longer have any contact with their father after the divorce. One third of the children who do see their father view their relationship with him negatively. Two thirds consider the relationship reasonably good or good.

Just over sixty per cent of children in one-parent families say that they have a good relationship with their mother. This is a smaller percentage than for children in two-parent families, where eighty per cent have a good relationship with their mother.

Most divorcees find a new partner

Since 1994 some 60 to 70 thousand people get divorced in the Netherlands every year. Most of them find a new partner within a few years, although they are more likely to live together than to remarry. Three quarters of men who divorced in 1994 were living with a new partner in 2000, for women this was 60 per cent.

It would thus seem more divorced women than men remain alone. One important reason for this is that any children will usually stay with the mother after a divorce, and the presence of children reduces the chance of entering a new relationship. This is true for both men and women.

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Children and stepparents

Forty per cent of children of divorced parents are confronted with a step-parent at some stage in time. In by far most cases this is a step-father. Children are thirteen years of age on average when their parents enter this stage. Less than half of these children have a positive view of this new family situation, while for children growing up with both their own parents, this percentage is eighty.

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