



Press release

Statistics Netherlands

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Non-western immigrants more likely to receive benefit

At the end of 1999 one and a half million people in the Netherlands received income support, unemployment benefit or a disability benefit. This means that one in seven people in the age group 15 to 64 years received a benefit. Non-western immigrants were twice as likely to receive a government benefit than native Dutch people. The difference is accounted for by income support claimants alone. Relatively fewer second generation than first generation non-western immigrants received a benefit, according to figures just released by Statistics Netherlands.

One quarter of non-western immigrants on benefit

One in eight native Dutch people received a government benefit. For non-western immigrants this ratio was one in four. So non-western immigrants are twice as likely to receive a benefit than native Dutch people. Out of the one and a half million claimants in the Netherlands, 233 thousand are non-western immigrants.

Difference lies in income support claimants

Disability payments were paid to 13.5% of native Dutch people aged between 40 and 64. For non-western immigrants the percentage was slightly higher at 16.5. There is no difference between immigrants and the native population for the under-40s.

For income support the differences were more substantial. More than 15% of non-western immigrants received income support, compared with 2.5% of the native Dutch population. The likelihood of a non-western immigrant receiving income support was therefore six times higher.

Older Turkish and Moroccan men often claim benefit

Most benefit claimants were in the age group 40-64 years. Two out of every ten people in this age group received some form of government benefit. For non-western immigrants this proportion is twice as high: four in ten people. There are differences between the various groups of immigrants in this age group. Six out of ten Moroccan and Turkish men aged between 40 and 64 received a benefit, mostly a disability benefit, but the number of income support claimants was also high.

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Nearly half of Turkish women age 40 to 64 years received a benefit. This proportion was smaller for other immigrants groups. Turkish women in this age group received fewer income support benefits, but on the other hand were much more likely to claim a disability benefit.

Fewer benefits paid to second generation immigrants

Nearly 13 thousand non-western immigrants receiving benefit belong to the second generation of immigrants. These are people who were born in the Netherlands but of whom one or both parents were born overseas. Most of these immigrants are younger than 40. One in thirteen received a benefit, much fewer than in the first generation, of whom one in five people under 40 received a benefit.

Small differences for unemployment benefit

At the end of 1999 2.3% of all people aged 15 to 64 years had an unemployment benefit. Overall, the differences between the immigrants and native population are small, but there are some notable ones: for example, nearly 8% of Turkish and Moroccan men had an unemployment benefit, twice as many as their native peers.

Technical note: Immigrants are defined as people of whom at least one parent was born outside the Netherlands. Non-western immigrants are immigrants from Africa, Asia (excl. Japan, the former Dutch East Indies and Indonesia), South America and Turkey. The largest groups of non-western immigrants in the Netherlands are Moroccans, Turks, and people originating from Suriname and the Netherlands Antilles and Aruba.

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