



Press release

Statistics Netherlands

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More single parent families

On 1 January 2001 there were 399 thousand single parent families in the Netherlands, against 361 thousand in 1995. One in six families with children is a single parent family. About 60% of the single parent families has one child, according to the latest figures of Statistics Netherlands

More single parent and fewer two-parent families

The number of single parent families has increased from 38 thousand in 1995 tot 399 thousand in 2001. In 2000 the number of single parent families increased by 12 thousand. In contrast, the number of two-parent families has fallen by 24 thousand since 1995, although it picked up slightly in the last two years. This came as a consequence of the recent increase in the number of births. Right now, one in six families with children is a single parent family. In 1995 it was one in seven.

Mostly families with one child

Single parent families on average have fewer children than two-parent families. This is because some parents divorce before they have a second child. About 60% of the single parent families has one child, whereas only a third of the two parent families do.

There are few single parent families with many children: only 10% has three children or more. Among two-parent families this share is twice as high. More than 600 thousand children live in single parent families, which comes down to one in seven children living in the parental home.

Divorce

About half of the 399 thousand single parent families came into existence after a divorce. In 2000 there were 35 thousand divorces, half of which involved children under age. The children usually stay with their mothers after the divorce. In 85% of the single parent families the parent is a woman. This percentage did not change at all over the years.

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Unwed single mothers...

Single parent families are not only the result of divorce or the death of a parent. About a quarter of the single mothers has never been married. These may be women who had one or more children within a relationship that has ended, and also single women who had a child often at a young age.

... and married single mothers

One remarkable fact is that one out of ten fathers or mothers in the single parent family is married. However they do not live together with a steady partner. The parents may still in the middle of a divorce procedure or didn't bother to get divorced officially. Among immigrants the partner may still be abroad so that the family reunification has not yet been completed.

Temporary

Many single fathers and mothers will eventually marry again or start living together without marrying. Although having children living at home makes it slightly more difficult to find a new partner, about half of all divorced parent with children are living with a new partner within five years of the divorce. So many children have to deal with a stepparent. Children with a stepparent have spent an average of five years in a single parent family.

For more information please contact Jan Latten, tel. (070) 337 52 32.

Number of two- and single parent families

	Total	Two-parent families	Single parent families
	x 1000		
1995	2473	2112	361
1996	2474	2106	369
1997	2465	2093	372
1998	2459	2084	375
1999	2457	2078	380
2000*	2468	2081	387
2001*	2487	2088	399

Single parent families by number of children

	Total	Of whom		
		1 child	2 children	3 children or more
	x 1000			
1995	361	218	106	36
1996	369	223	109	37
1997	372	224	110	38
1998	375	225	111	39
1999	380	228	112	40
2000*	387	231	115	41
2001*	399	237	119	42

Source: Statistics Netherlands