



Statistics Netherlands
Department of population

PO Box 4000
2270 JM Voorburg
The Netherlands

Migration of the four largest cities in the Netherlands

Mila van Huis, Han Nicolaas, Michel Croes

Abstract

The proportion of people who move to, from or within large cities in the Netherlands is much bigger than the corresponding figure for other municipalities. In 1997 a total number of 153 removals per thousand of the inhabitants took place in the four largest cities in the Netherlands. This is considerably higher than the corresponding mobility for the Netherlands as a whole (111).

Big city mobility concerns mostly migration within the cities. Since the introduction of a new system of decentralised automated population registers in 1994, Statistics Netherlands obtains complete and timely information on this intra city migration. This paper discusses the migration flows in 1997 to, from and within the capital city of the Netherlands, Amsterdam. The results will be compared to the migration flows of Rotterdam, The Hague and Utrecht, the other three big cities of the Netherlands. For these big cities net migration with regard to the other municipalities in the Netherlands was negative, net international migration was positive. Attention was paid to the migration flows to and from the various city wards. Wards with highest mobility are generally situated centrally in town and have a high proportion of foreigners and young inhabitants. Most wards at the edge of town attract inhabitants from the municipality itself. Mobility from these wards to one of the municipalities in the urban agglomeration is high.

1. Introduction

In recent years the four big cities in the Netherlands (Amsterdam, Rotterdam, The Hague and Utrecht) received considerable attention. Many social and economical problems, such as unemployment and the pauperisation of certain urban environments, are clearly visible in these cities. Last year the political discussion on some of these topics even resulted in the establishment of a special Minister in charge of the large Dutch cities.

In order to understand more about the urban issues, it is useful to study demographic developments in the big cities. One of the areas of interest are the urban migration flows. The migration flows can cause a great change in the structure of the city in relatively short time. The aim of this paper is to give information about migration flows of the big cities on the level of wards. Such detailed information on migration is available since the introduction of a new system of decentralised automated population registers on 1 October 1994. Since that date Statistics Netherlands obtains for each change of residence in the Netherlands the address of departure and the address of arrival. This makes it possible to observe not only migration flows to and from different municipalities, but also migration flows to and from different wards within municipalities. The migration statistics comprise the following variables among others: age, sex, country of birth and family relationship. The data on migration used in this paper are based on the year 1997.

This paper starts with a short discussion on the historical migration flows to and from the four big cities in the Netherlands. In the next chapter the migration flows to and from the big cities in 1997 are described. Then the migration of Amsterdam is described beginning with the mobility of the different wards, followed by the migration for three flows: migration between the wards, migration with other municipalities and international migration. This is followed by pin pointing some similarities and differences between the migration in the four big cities. Finally this paper ends with conclusions and suggestions for further research.

2. Historical context

2.1 Internal migration

The migration flows to and from the big cities have their own characteristics. Relatively many single individuals move to the big city and on the other hand relatively many families leave the city. Selective migration started at the beginning of this century. In that time the very rich people in particular left the city (Musterd e.a., 1995). Right after World War II and up to the 1960s there was a move away from the city of especially well-to-do families with children. They moved to the outskirts of the city and the suburbs.

In the 1960s the government wanted to regulate the departure from the big cities. Many cheap dwellings were built in so called centres of urban growth, making it possible for less well-to-do families to depart from the big cities. Between 1965 and 1975 this flight reached its peak (Van der Wouden, 1996). Since the short economic recession in the 1980s fewer families left the cities. Outmigration became again selective in terms of income: the relatively high-income households moved from the city, particularly to the suburbs (Van der Wouden, 1996).

At the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s the government policy aims to stop the exodus from the large cities by planning the building of new houses in urban areas. Much attention is also paid to urban renewal.

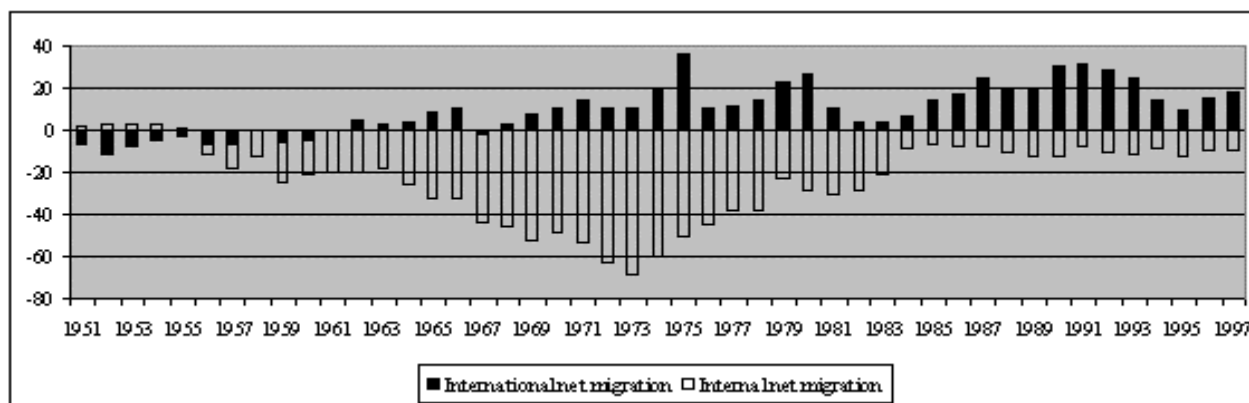
2.2 International migration

Shortage of unskilled workers during the 1960s and early 1970s in the Netherlands, made it necessary to attract 'guest workers' from the Mediterranean countries. In most cases these Spanish, Italian, Turkish, Moroccan and Yugoslavian immigrants settled in the big cities (Tesser e.a., 1995). In the 1970s the inflow from abroad increased by immigration of Turks and Moroccans in particular for the purpose of family reunification. Most of the immigrants from Turkey and Morocco settled down in the big cities in cheap dwellings.

Additionally in the 1970s two waves of immigrants from Suriname caused an increase in the number of immigrants to the big cities. The independence of Suriname in 1975 led to some forty thousand Surinamese migrants to the Netherlands, in particular to the big cities (*figure 1*). Five years later a second wave occurred, when the option for the people from Surinam to obtain the Dutch nationality automatically expired. Since then unrestricted migration to the Netherlands was no longer possible. At that time there was some geographical dispersion of these immigrants in the Netherlands, because municipalities were obliged to make dwellings available. However, later on most of the immigrants from Suriname moved to the big cities (Tesser e.a., 1995).

Between 1980 and 1990 the increase of immigrants continued. The immigration flow for the purpose of family reunification and family formation stopped a further decrease of the population in the big cities. In the 1990s the international immigration is characterised by the arrival of asylum seekers. For these asylum migrants the central government introduced a policy of dispersed settlement. Nevertheless the asylum migrants tend to migrate relatively often to the big cities (Croes, 1995). However the migration of asylum seekers could not counterbalance the decrease of the total number of immigrants to the four big cities. Thus the decline in population growth in the four big cities in the 1990s is particularly the result of the decrease of international migration.

Figure 1: Internal and international net migration of the four large cities (x 1 000)



3. Current migration in the large cities

The four largest cities lie in one of the most densely populated areas (“Randstad”) of Europe. The four largest cities are populated by almost two million people. Amsterdam (715 thousand inhabitants) is the largest city followed by Rotterdam (590 thousand inhabitants), The Hague (442 thousand inhabitants) and Utrecht (234 thousand inhabitants).

The rate of internal mobility¹ of a municipality is influenced by the total number of inhabitants, e.g. the larger the number of inhabitants the more mobility is observed (Van Huis en Nicolaas, 1998). In general it can be said that more removals take place in the big cities compared to the rest of the Netherlands. In 1997 the number of removals per thousand inhabitants (internal mobility score) for the four largest cities was 153. This means that in 1997 one out of seven inhabitants either moved to, from or within the large cities. The total mobility score for the Netherlands was in that year 111, while the “medium sized” municipalities² scored 137. Another main difference concerns the intensity of removals within the municipality itself. The removals within the large cities comprise 75 percent of the total mobility and that is much higher than the country average of 64 percent.

The migration balance of the four large cities and the other municipalities results for the large cities in a decrease of the number of inhabitants. This negative internal migration balance is caused to a large extent by the departure of urban inhabitants to the adjacent municipalities. Forty percent of all persons leaving the big cities moved to the urban conglomerate. Additionally persons leaving Amsterdam moved to Almere where many former inhabitants from Amsterdam have settled (Nicolaas, 1995).

The international migration for the big cities on the other hand, results in a migration surplus. Data for the big cities for 1997 show that more than 30 thousand immigrants from abroad choose a big city to live in. This migration figure comprises 25 percent of the total immigration to the Netherlands. On the other hand 22 thousand persons have left the big Dutch cities to live in a foreign country.

¹ The mobility of an area is the sum of the migration within that area plus half the sum of the migration exceeding that area

² Municipalities with 100 thousand or more inhabitants, excluding the four large cities.

Compared to the rest of the country, more foreign-born³ immigrants settle in one of the big cities. While eighty percent of the total migrants to the Netherlands are born abroad, the corresponding figure for the big cities is around ninety percent. In 1997 data show that the foreign-born migrating to the large cities are mainly from EU countries (5.6 thousand), Turkey (3 thousand), Morocco (2.7 thousand), Suriname (2.4 thousand) and the Netherlands Antilles and Aruba (2 thousand). Not all foreign-born immigrants choose the large cities as their first municipality to live in. Asylum migrants (foreign-born from among others Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran and Somalia and a number of other countries) for example show, stimulated by governmental policy, a more dispersed settlement pattern.

4. Amsterdam

4.1 Dividing the city into wards

The municipality of Amsterdam consists of eighteen wards. The ward Westelijk Havengebied has few inhabitants and is therefore excluded from the analysis as presented here. Wards on the outskirts of the city generally have low percentages of single persons, while the centrally situated wards have low percentages of elderly people. Additionally some wards (Zuidoost, Zeeburg and Bos en Lommer) show high percentages of the foreign-born population. The average income per inhabitant is highest in Zuid and Buitenveldert and lowest for Bos en Lommer (see *annex*).

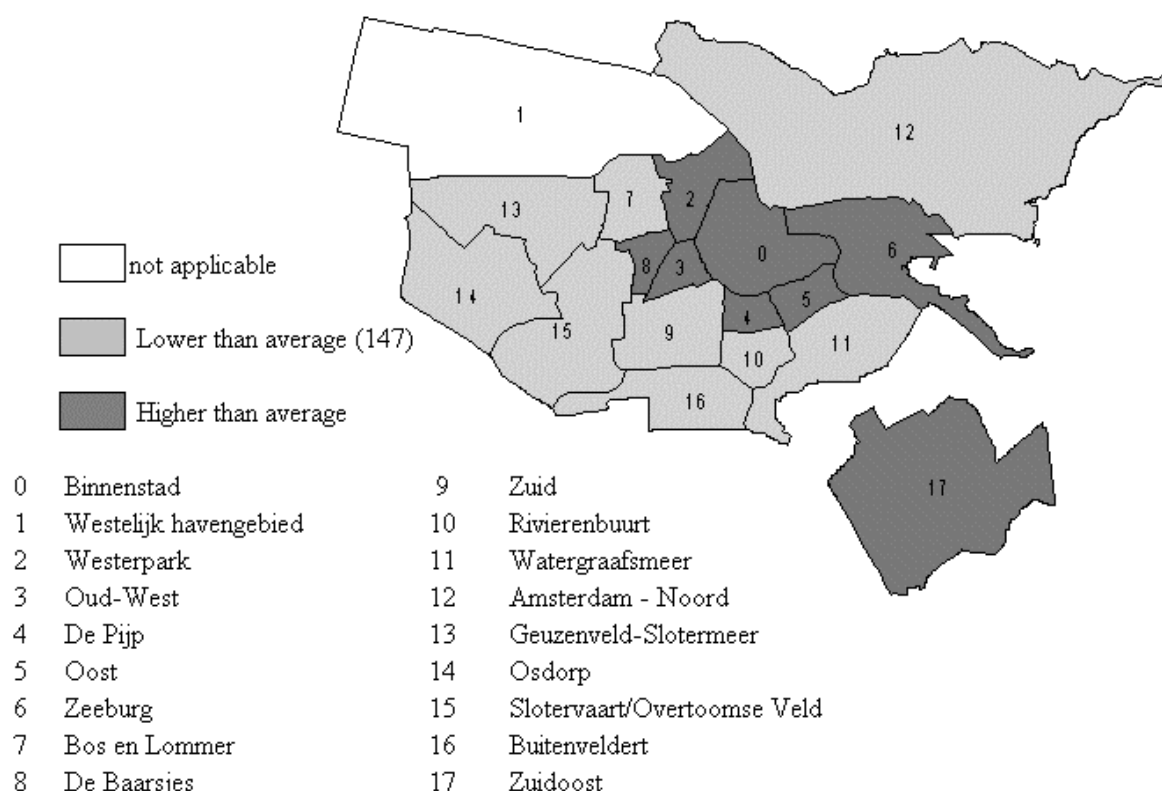
4.2 Zuidoost ward with highest mobility

Wards with low mobility figures in 1997 are found on the outskirts of Amsterdam. For example Buitenveldert, Amsterdam-Noord and Osdorp have mobility indicators of less than 120 movements per thousand inhabitants. These are wards with high percentages of persons living in family context and elderly people.

More to the centre of the city the mobility scores were higher than the average score for Amsterdam (148 movements per thousand inhabitants) (*figure 2*). The centre of the city is populated by relatively many young and single persons, who move frequently. The wards Zuidoost, Westerpark and Zeeburg have the highest mobility figures (scores between 175 and 200). In Zuidoost and Zeeburg live many foreign-born persons, who move more frequently than natives (Van Huis and Nicolaas, 1998). It can be noticed that movements within the ward Zuidoost account for 50 percent of the total mobility of that ward. Except for Amsterdam-Noord, the corresponding figure for all other wards is less than 30 percent.

³ In this paper the following definition for “foreign-born” is used: persons born abroad with at least one parent born abroad or persons born in the Netherlands with both parents born abroad.

Figure 2: Internal mobility per 1 000 of the population per ward of Amsterdam, 1997



4.3 Removals between wards

In 1997 48 thousand movements between Amsterdam wards were recorded on a total of around 80 movements within the municipality of Amsterdam. In 1997 all wards on the edges of the city, excluding Zuidoost, had an internal migration surplus. Thus more people already living in Amsterdam moved to these wards compared to the number of people that left these wards. Especially Zeeburg and Slotervaart/Overtoomse Veld, wards with extensive housing development projects, have a large internal migration surplus. Data on the other wards, except Westerpark, show a negative internal migration balance. The central area (the ward “Binnenstad”) has the largest negative net internal migration. In 1997 this ward lost 1.3 thousand inhabitants to other wards of Amsterdam. These former inhabitants of the central area chose in particular Westerpark, Zeeburg and Zuid as their new residence.

4.4 Large number of removals to municipality of Almere

On the intermunicipal movements, meaning those movements between Amsterdam and the rest of the Dutch municipalities, the central area (the ward “Binnenstad”) has the largest migration surplus. Amsterdam-Noord has the largest negative migration balance, followed by Zuidoost. More than one third of the 28 thousand inhabitants leaving Amsterdam in 1997 for other parts of the country, settle in the conglomerate of Amsterdam or to the municipality of Almere. In 1997 Almere received around 4 thousand movers leaving Amsterdam. Other popular destinations are geographically closer to Amsterdam: Amstelveen, Haarlemmermeer and Purmerend.

4.5 International migration

All wards of Amsterdam show a migration surplus on the international migration balance. In 1997 the largest number of immigrants settles in the central area (the ward “Binnenstad”) and Zuidoost. Immigrants from Turkey and Morocco are dispersed more evenly throughout the city compared to those from Suriname,

Netherlands Antilles, Aruba and Ghana. More than 50 percent of the Surinamese, Antillian/Aruban and Ghanaese immigrants choose Zuidoost as their first ward to settle down in Amsterdam.

5. Comparing the four big cities

5.1 Introduction

The migration flows in 1997 to, from and within Rotterdam, The Hague and Utrecht also have been studied. For more detailed information we refer to Van Huis and Nicolaas, 1999. In the following paragraphs the migration flows of the four big cities are compared concerning mobility, internal migration and international migration.

5.2 Mobility

The relative mobility figures for the wards of the four big cities show more or less the same picture. Wards on the outskirts of the city show a lower than average mobility, whereas the more centrally situated wards have a higher than average mobility.

The five wards with highest relative mobility are Centrum and Laak in The Hague, Binnenstad in Utrecht, Delfshaven in Rotterdam and Zuidoost in Amsterdam. The mobility varies between 223 removals per thousand inhabitants in the ward Centrum and 197 in the ward Zuidoost. All these wards, excluding Zuidoost, are centrally situated within the cities. The ward Binnenstad in Utrecht is deviating in terms of background characteristics. Large numbers of single and/or well-to-do persons and small numbers of foreign-born persons populate this ward. This is contrary to the other mentioned wards where the average income is low and numerous foreign-born live. The wards have their similarities as well. Relatively many young persons (e.g. students) and few elderly persons populate them (*table 1*).

Four of the five wards with the lowest mobility figures can be found in Rotterdam. The fifth ward is Buitenveldert in Amsterdam. These are all suburban wards and especially Hoek van Holland and Pernis have few foreign born inhabitants. Except for Buitenveldert, these are all wards where relatively many families live. Data also show that these wards are characterised by a high average income and a high percentage of elderly persons.

Table 1: Some characteristics of wards with the highest, respectively the lowest internal mobility, 1997									
Municipality / Ward	Internal mobility per 1,000 of the population	Proportion of non-native population	Proportion of single population	Proportion 0-14 years	15-24 years	25-44 years	45-64 years	65+ years	Average income DGId
		%							x 1 000
Highest mobility									
The Hague - Centrum	223	56	41	21	15	39	18	8	16,9
Utrecht - Binnenstad	218	11	71	7	17	55	15	7	25,2
The Hague - Laak	216	41	33	20	15	36	18	11	16,6
Rotterdam - Delfshaven	201	59	38	21	16	37	18	8	16,1
Amsterdam - Zuidoost	197	58	33	23	14	39	17	8	18,0
Lowest mobility									
Rotterdam - Pernis	73	6	20	17	11	30	25	18	21,5
Rotterdam - Hoek van Holland	88	5	20	17	11	31	24	17	22,3
Amsterdam - Buitenveldert	97	21	44	8	7	23	26	36	29,7
Rotterdam - Prins Alexander	98	14	27	17	9	30	23	21	22,1
Rotterdam - Overschie	102	20	27	16	11	29	24	20	20,3

The differences between mobility scores are highest in Rotterdam. According to 1997 data for that city the mobility ranges between 73 per thousand inhabitants in Pernis and 201 in Delfshaven. Amsterdam also has a wide variation in terms of mobility. In The Hague and Utrecht the mobility figures differ to a much lesser

extent. Utrecht has the lowest variation in mobility figures. The centre of this city (the ward Binnenstad) stands out with a score of 218, while the other wards remain close to the total figure for the city (156).

5.3 Internal migration

It is notable that the wards with the largest positive migration balance on migration within the cities are often also the wards with the largest negative migration balance on migration between the wards and other municipalities. Data for 1997 show that inhabitants of wards on the outskirts of the cities often move to municipalities in the urban agglomerate.

The 1997 internal migration flows to and from the central areas of the cities have many similar features. All the four central wards have a negative migration balance on the intramunicipal flows and a positive migration balance on the intermunicipal flows. The observed positive migration balance on the intermunicipal flows is striking, because in general the other wards within the cities have a negative balance on this flow. Movers to the centre of the cities comprise to a large extent young and single persons (e.g. students) that leave other municipalities and choose the centre of town as the first place to live.

5.4 International migration

Many foreign-born persons immigrating in 1997 to the big cities come from Turkey, Morocco, Suriname, the Netherlands Antilles and Aruba. In most cases these migrants settle down in wards with high percentages of foreign-born persons and centrally situated wards. However it is noticeable that Zuidoost (Amsterdam), a ward not centrally situated, attracts many immigrants. In 1997 more than half of Surinamese, Antillian and Ghanaese migrants choose this ward to live in. In the city of Rotterdam the immigration flow is also strongly oriented towards specific wards. For example 44 percent of the migrants from Cape Verde choose Delfshaven.

6. Conclusions and further research

The internal migration to and from the big cities is characterized by a negative migration balance. Relatively many people leave the city to settle down in adjacent municipalities. On the other hand the international migration for the big cities results in a migration surplus. More than a quarter of the immigrants to the Netherlands in 1997 moved to the four big cities.

The migration flows to and from the wards of the city differ considerably per ward. The wards with highest mobility are generally situated centrally in town and have a high proportion of foreign-born people and relatively young inhabitants. Wards at the edge of town tend to attract inhabitants of the town itself. But many people once living in these wards, move to one of the suburban municipalities of the big city. Furthermore foreign-born people immigrating to the big cities from abroad, often settle down in centrally situated wards with high percentages of foreign-born.

These relatively big migration flows to, from and within the big cities may lead to concentration or dispersion of certain groups in the city. For example the preference of immigrants to wards with high percentages of foreign-born strengthens the one-sided demographic composition of such wards. In order to investigate the concentration or dispersion of certain groups in the city, it will be necessary to study the migration flows in terms of age, ethnicity and family relationship. It would also be interesting to see how the population structure per ward changes through time due to migration flows.

As seen in paragraph 3 the migration to and from the cities is biased. Those who leave the city tend to be (native Dutch) families and those who enter the city tend to be immigrants (Van der Wouden). Further research on this selectiveness is desirable, especially concerning the selectiveness in terms of ethnicity. Still little is known about migration behaviour of foreign-born people, while this group is strongly growing in size in cities.

In this paper no comparison of big city migration in the Netherlands with other countries of Europe is made. In some ways comparing large Dutch cities with other metropolises will be difficult because of the incomparability in size. For example Amsterdam has about 0.7 million inhabitants whereas London has around 7 million inhabitants. Despite this, it would be interesting to investigate if some of the results of this paper coincide with migration patterns of other European cities.

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Annex									
Some characteristics of the wards of the four big municipalities									
Wards	Population on 1 January 1997	Proportion of non-native population	Proportion of single population	Proportion					Average income DGld
				0-14 years	15-24 years	25-44 years	45-64 years	65+ years	
	x 1000	%							x 1000
Amsterdam	715,2	35	44	16	12	39	20	13	20,9
00 Binnenstad	78,2	22	65	9	11	49	22	9	24,9
02 Westerpark	32,4	37	56	13	12	49	18	9	19,1
03 Oud-West	32,6	27	62	11	11	50	19	8	21,5
04 De Pijp	34,3	33	60	11	12	49	19	9	20,4
05 Oost	33,8	48	48	17	13	45	18	7	18,3
06 Zeeburg	29,6	53	42	19	13	45	17	6	17,9
07 Bos en Lommer	31,1	51	37	20	15	37	17	11	17,1
08 De Baarsjes	35,5	41	48	15	14	44	17	10	18,7
09 Zuid	51,2	21	51	11	11	40	23	14	27,1
10 Rivierenbuurt	27,2	21	51	11	11	40	22	17	24,7
11 Watergraafsmeer	23,0	18	41	13	10	31	23	23	22,7
12 Amsterdam-Noord	85,6	26	29	18	11	32	23	17	19,5
13 Geuzenveld-S.	37,8	43	29	20	11	29	19	20	18,5
14 Osdorp	38,0	34	29	19	11	29	21	20	19,7
15 Sloterv./Ov.	40,7	36	29	20	11	34	19	16	21,0
16 Buitenveldert	18,2	21	44	8	7	23	26	36	29,7
17 Zuidoost	85,8	58	33	23	14	39	17	8	18,0
Rotterdam	590,0	32	33	17	13	33	21	16	19,6
01 Stadscentrum	27,7	42	53	12	14	40	21	13	21,8
03 Delfshaven	73,4	59	38	21	16	37	18	8	16,1
04 Overschie	16,8	20	27	16	11	29	24	20	20,3
05 Noord	52,1	38	44	16	15	39	19	11	19,5
06 Hillegersberg-S.	38,7	11	31	16	9	28	23	24	24,5
08 Kralingen-Kr.	52,1	34	40	17	14	36	20	14	19,9
10 Feijenoord	71,1	50	29	22	14	33	20	11	16,1
12 IJsselmonde	58,1	17	28	16	10	29	23	22	20,3
13 Pernis	4,6	6	20	17	11	30	25	18	21,5
14 Prins Alexander	82,7	14	27	17	9	30	23	21	22,1
15 Charlois	65,9	30	38	15	13	32	20	20	19,2
16 Hoogvliet	37,3	21	23	18	11	31	24	15	19,9
17 Hoek van H.	9,4	5	20	17	11	31	24	17	22,3
Den Haag / The Hague	442,2	31	37	16	12	33	21	17	21,0
1 Centrum	97,5	56	41	21	15	39	18	8	16,9
2 Escamp	94,9	26	34	15	11	31	21	22	19,7
3 Haagse Hout	43,3	23	40	13	9	30	23	25	27,5
4 Laak	38,1	41	33	20	15	36	18	11	16,6
5 Loosduinen	47,5	14	30	14	9	26	26	23	24,1
6 Scheveningen	58,7	16	38	14	12	32	24	19	23,9
7 Segbroek	62,3	27	39	15	14	36	20	14	22,2
Utrecht	234,0	22	41	15	15	38	18	13	20,8
1 West	26,8	26	41	15	17	38	18	12	20,0
2 Noordwest	41,4	24	35	16	16	36	20	12	18,2
3 Overvecht	30,8	28	34	15	12	29	24	21	19,8
4 Noordoost	34,6	13	46	15	15	43	16	11	23,5
5 Oost	25,9	11	53	12	18	42	17	10	23,6
6 Binnenstad	14,9	11	71	7	17	55	15	7	25,2
7 Zuid	27,0	23	38	17	14	41	17	11	20,6
8 Zuidwest	31,6	36	34	18	15	33	18	15	18,7