



Press release

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More people feel unsafe in last quarter of 2001

More than 22 percent of the Dutch population said they felt unsafe sometimes in 2001, more than in 2000. The increase was caused by more people not feeling safe in the last months of last year than in the preceding months. Up to September, 21 percent of the population said they sometimes felt unsafe. In the last quarter, after the terrorist attacks in the US on 11 September, this percentage rose to 25, according to figures from Statistics Netherlands.

Crime-related feelings of unsafety stable

Although the general feeling of unsafety rose in 2001, feelings of unsafety in relation to crime hardly changed from 2000 to 2001. The percentage of people who said there were places or streets in their own neighbourhood where they would rather not go alone was nearly 30 percent in both years.

Seen over a longer period feelings of unsafety have changed visibly. In the early nineties 52 percent of the population said they would not just open the door if the bell went in the evening and they were not expecting anyone. In 2001 this had risen to 57 percent. The percentage of inhabitants who think there is a large risk of being burgled decreased, in accordance with the reported decline in the number of victims of burglaries. Nineteen percent of the population are sometimes afraid to stay at home alone. In the early nineties this was still as high as 24 percent.

Victim rates of common crime unchanged

One quarter of people aged 15 years or older were the victim of some form of frequently occurring crime; this is the equivalent of 3.2 million victims. The victims rates of frequently occurring crimes have been stable for years now. The most common crimes are larceny, vandalism and violence. In 2001 nearly six percent of the population aged 15 years and older were the victim of physical abuse, intimidation or sexual offences. The most common form of violence is intimidation. More than three percent of the population had experienced this in 2001.

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Further fall in larceny victims

The percentage of victims of theft has been falling slightly for years. In 2001 twelve percent of the population of 15 years and older had had something stolen. At the beginning of the nineties this was around fourteen percent. Bicycle theft is the most common larceny offence. For years now, one in twenty people in the Netherlands report having their bicycle stolen.