Looking back

a century of Dutch statistics

Foreword

The Dutch central bureau of statistics began on a small scale in 1892 as the Central Commission for Statistics (CCS), with thirty members who were tasked with advising public authorities, including the ministries, about statistics and with compiling statistics themselves to be used for purposes of practice and policy purposes. From then on, statistics were to constitute the basis for the preparation and evaluation of Dutch government policy.

The members of the CCS did their statistical work alongside their full-time jobs. In 1899, therefore, the central bureau of statistics was founded as a professional office with a small scientific staff. With its annual figures, monthly figures and other periodic declarations pertaining to the Netherlands and the Dutch East Indies, statistics on saving and loaning banks and statistics on municipal finance, the bureau's publishing list was only small. In 2010, Statistics Netherlands, as it is called today, was 111 years old, had a staff of nearly 2,500 and issued more than 3 thousand publications (press releases, economic monitor updates, books, electronic publications and StatLine tables).
Looking back, a century of Dutch Statistics is an anthology of themes and topics on which the bureau has been collecting and publishing information for more than a century. It reveals just how much has changed in the Netherlands in the past century.
The population has grown from 5.1 million in 1900 to 16.6 million in 2010. And there are not only more of us, but we are also living longer and longer. Combined with lower birth rates, this means that the share of older people in the population has increased substantially.
Around 1900, seven in ten Dutch people lived in a dwelling with three rooms or less (including the kitchen). Dwellings were overcrowded. Today 80 percent of Dutch homes have four rooms or more.

Higher education shot up after 1945 in particular, mainly as result of the increase in female students. The participation of women on the labour market, too, has risen spectacularly. Per capita income in the Netherlands in 2009 was four times as high as just after the war, while we now use eight time as much energy as then.

All the statistics are on Statistics Netherlands' website (www.cbs.nl).

Director General of Statistics
G. van der Veen
The Hague/Heerlen, December 2010

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Billard „Populair
Vergunning
MARTINI

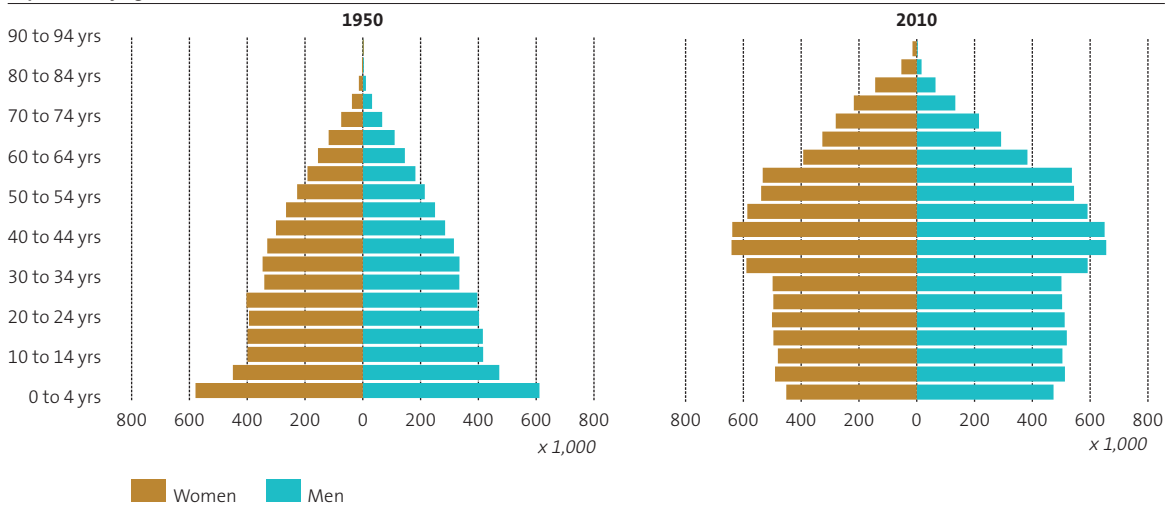
Population

Population ageing faster

The age composition of the Dutch population has changed drastically since 1950. The share of young people, the 'green burden', has decreased, while that of older people ('grey burden') has increased.

The green burden was still large in the fifties and sixties, with about seven young people for every ten 20 to 64 year-olds (the potential labour force). The sharp drop in birth rates in the seventies rapidly reduced the green burden, and in 2010 the ratio is around four to ten.
The grey burden has been rising slowly since the fifties. In 1950 there were fewer than one and a half over-65s for every ten 20 to 64 year-olds. Today there are two and a half. From 2011, when the baby boom generation reaches retirement age, the grey burden will increase more rapidly. According to the most recent population forecasts, it will peak around 2040, with five

Population by age



over-65s for every ten 20 to 64 year-olds. So the grey burden will double in the future, but the demographic burden – an approximation of the ratio of non-labour-force to labour force – will increase more slowly. By 2040 Statistics Netherlands expects there to be 88 young and old people per hundred 20–64 year-olds. Today this is 67.

Within the group aged over 65, it is the number of people aged over 80 that has grown particularly strongly. In 1950, fewer than 100 thousand people in the Netherlands were older than 80; today there are six times as many. Because of the higher female life expectancy, there are more older women than older men. At the moment there are twice as many women as men aged over 80. As male life expectancy is expected to rise, this ratio will be a lot lower in a few decades' time. The increase in the share of over-80s is set to continue and is expected to peak in 2026, when the first baby-boomers reach the age of 80.

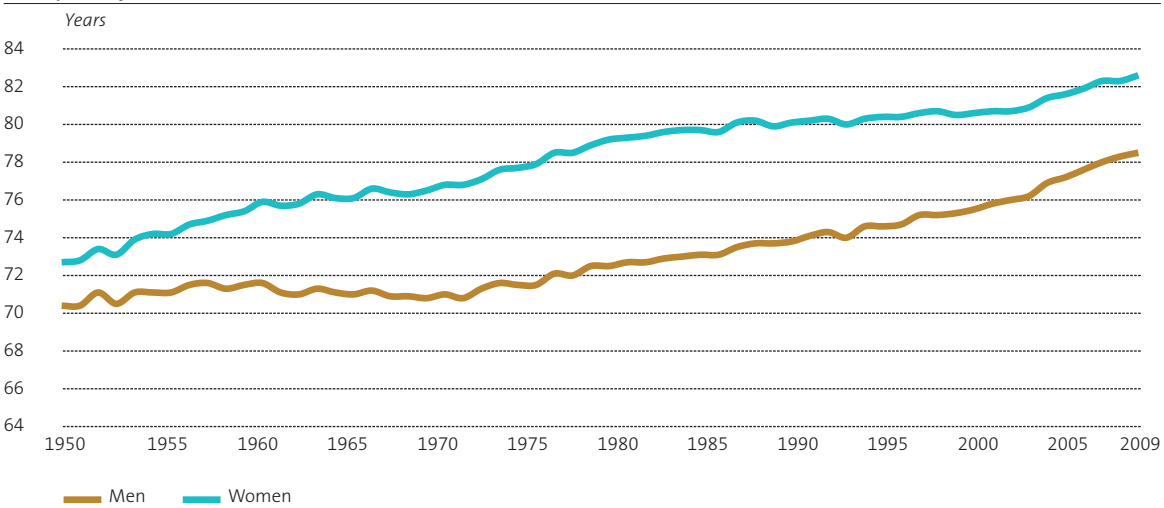
Ageing set to peak in 2026

Life expectancy

A baby boy born in 1950 could expect to live to the age of 70.3 years; a boy born in 2009 will probably reach the age of 78.5. Most of this improvement in life expectancy was realised after the mid-seventies: since 1975 male life expectancy has risen by an average two months per year. Healthier lifestyles, a decrease in smoking and improved medical technology are the main reasons for the rise in life expectancy. Baby girls born in 1950 will live on average 2.3 years longer than boys born in the same year. But unlike the boys, their life expectancy also rose substantially in the fifties and sixties. Female life expectancy is now 82.6 years, 4.1 years higher than that for men.

So women can still expect to live longer than men, and the difference is even larger than in 1950. The life expectancy gap between men and women peaked – at 6.7 years – in the beginning of the eighties, as a result of the increase in

Life expectancy at birth



smoking related deaths among men. As more and more women also started to smoke in later years, they too now often die from smoking related diseases, and the gap in life expectancy has narrowed somewhat.

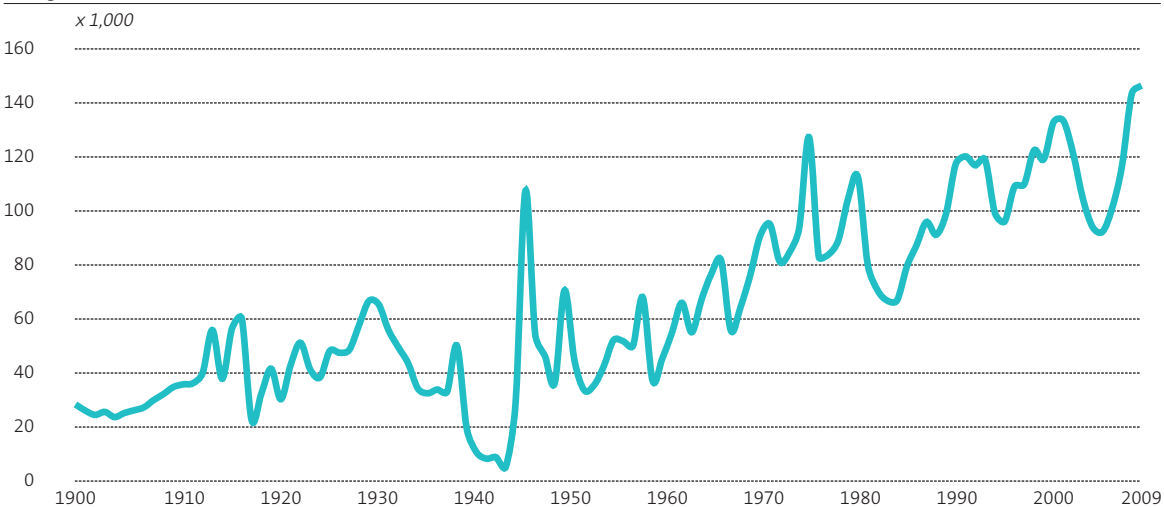
The life expectancy of 65 year-olds has also increased, but by less. For men aged 65 it rose from 14.1 years in 1950 to 17.4 years in 2009; for women from 14.6 to 20.8 years.

More recently, too, life expectancy at age 65 has shown a strong rise. The total increase in life expectancy since 2002 can even mainly be attributed to the relatively strong decrease in mortality at ages older than 65 years.

Waves of immigrants

Large groups of immigrants have come to live in the Netherlands in the course of time. In the last century immigration has shown a wavelike pattern. At the beginning of 1900, immigrants were mostly transient: seasonal workers who came to help Dutch farmers with their harvests, and peddlers. The first large influx of immigrants arrived when the First World War broke out, in 1914. Nearly one million Belgian refugees crossed the border to seek refuge from the hostilities. Later on in the First World War, some two thousand Chinese sailors were also stranded in the Netherlands. In the twenties, tens of thousands of girls from Germany and Austria came to work as maids in Dutch families. At the time, thousands of immigrant workers from Poland, Slovenia, Italy, Germany and Belgium were already working in the coal mines in Limburg. After the Second World War, immigration became more permanent. Twelve

Immigration



thousand Moluccans and more than 300 thousand people from the Dutch East Indies came to the Netherlands to stay. In the seventies migration from Suriname started to increase. The independence of Suriname in 1975 ultimately resulted in the departure of one third of the Surinamese population to the Netherlands. Antilleans and Arubans followed some ten years later. Large-scale migration of people from other countries began at the end of the sixties. Dutch companies had their eye on foreign workers to do the low-skilled jobs in mining and the textile and metal industries which Dutch workers were unwilling to do. They recruited from the surplus of unskilled workers in the Mediterranean countries. These 'guest workers' were employed on short-term contracts. Workers from Turkey and Morocco in particular settled in the Netherlands. They were allowed to send for their wives and children, pushing up family migration from these two countries from 1973 onwards. More recently, migration from the new countries in the European Union – Poland (EU member since 2004), Romania and Bulgaria (members since 2007) – has been growing strongly. In 2008 en 2009, nearly one quarter of European immigrants came from these countries.

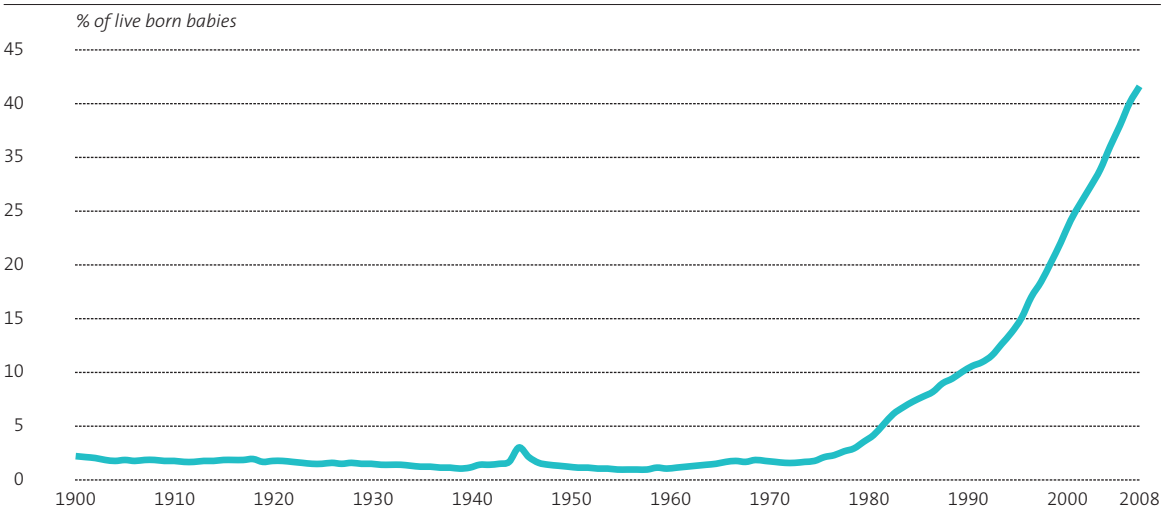
Unmarried parents

By today's standards, very few Dutch babies were born out of wedlock at the beginning of the last century. In 1900, 2.6 percent of births were illegitimate. Ten years later this was 2.1 percent, and in 1935 only 1.5 percent. Compared with the rest of Europe, too, these rates were very low.

So unmarried mothers were not really an issue in the Netherlands. The main reason policymakers paid attention to this group was to provide moral discipline. Very early on, in the 1870s, 'respectable' women were sent to visit women from vulnerable families and instruct them in the mores of the middle-classes and the newest insights into hygiene and childcare.

Until 1981 the percentage of non-marital births remained below 5. After that it rose every year: by 1988 it was already 10 percent, and ten years

Non-marital births



later it was 20 percent. Today nearly half of babies born in the Netherlands have unmarried parents.

This substantial increase in the number of babies born outside marriage illustrates just how normal it has become to have a baby without being married, although most new parents are in a steady relationship. The birth of a baby is also becoming less of a reason to get married.

The situation into which these children are born is completely different than half a century ago. Until the beginning of the eighties, unmarried mothers were mostly young single women and girls, who had become pregnant accidentally. Most of today's non-marital babies are planned children of couples who live together.

The share of non-marital births is now particularly high among young mothers (15 to 24 years) and older mothers (35 years and older). Until the mid-seventies, fewer than 10 percent of children of 15 to 24 year-old mothers were born outside marriage. This has now risen to two-thirds.

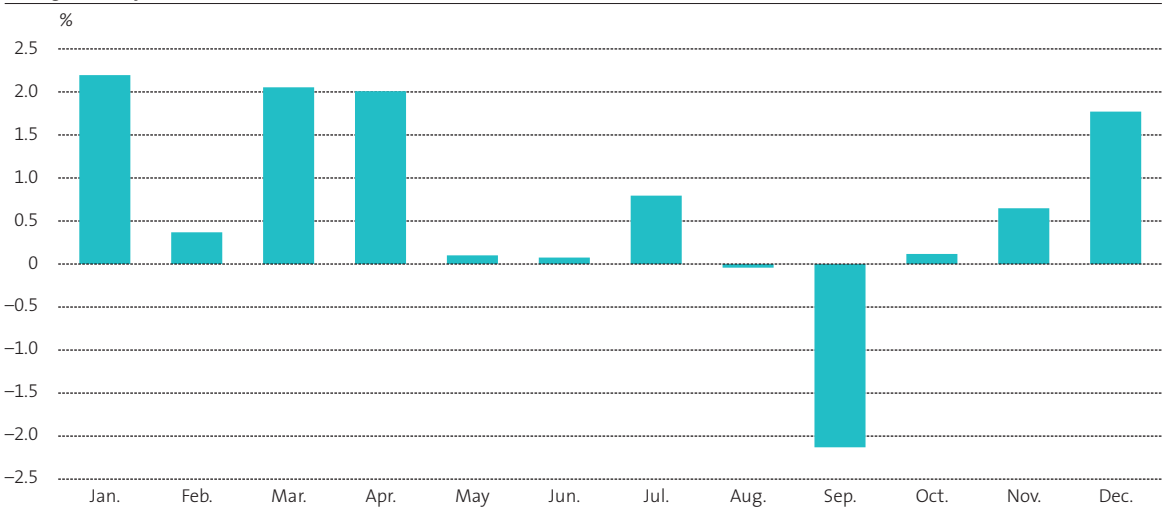
Economy

Shares blossom in spring

Share prices are affected by many factors, such as the ratio of share prices to company profits and expected profits, but also macroeconomic effects such as exchange rates and inflation. There is also a subjective element in share price levels. If buyers expect the stock market to rise, and so start to buy shares, share prices will increase without there being a fundamental basis for this. Share prices also suffer from seasonal effects. In the period 1953–2009, share prices rose by more than over 7 percent in the first half of the year, but only by 1.5 percent in the second half. It should be taken into account in this respect that more dividend is paid in the first half of the year than in the second half. The seasonal pattern is surprisingly stable through the years.

It has even been observed this century, when returns for investors fell sharply as a result of

Average monthly share returns, 1953–2009



the dotcom hype and the credit crisis. Average returns were negative in both the first and the second half of the year, but the loss was on average 2 percent larger in the second half than in the first half.

January is the best month for shareholders. The average share price increase in the 57 Januaries since 1953 is 2.2 percent. March and April also have an average increase of over 2 percent on average in this period. September is the only month in the period with clear losses on shares, just over 2 percent on average.

The old stock market saying tells investors to 'Sell in May and go away, but remember: come back in September.' However, analyses show that this should not be taken too literally.

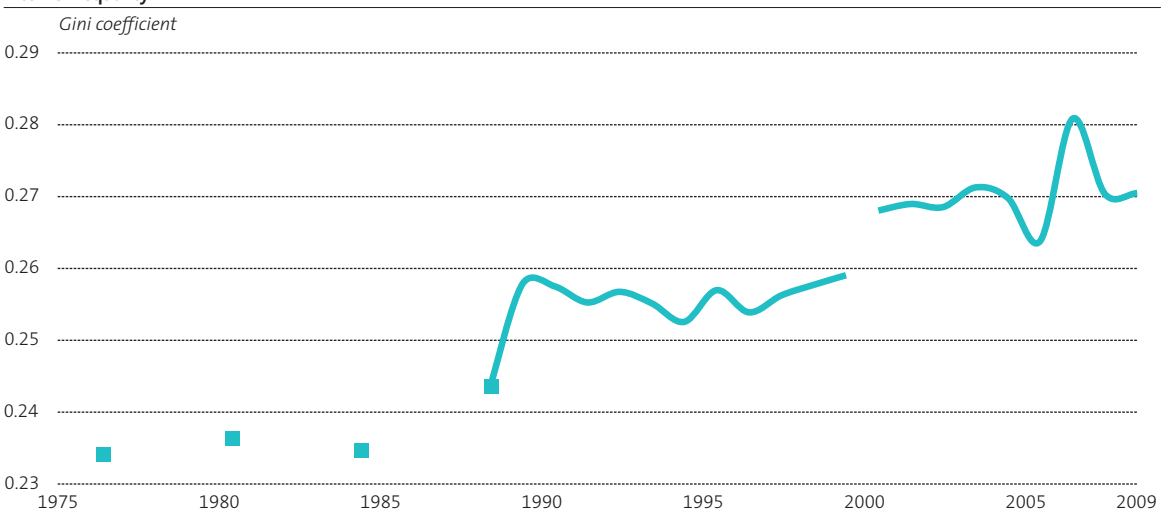
The end of July is the best time to sell shares, and the beginning of October is the top time to get back on to the market. Share investors trading according to these rules would have had 2 percent higher returns on average.

Unequal incomes

Today more than half a million Dutch households have to get by on a low income. For income support or unemployment benefit claimants this is 17.5 thousand euro a year on average. Not surprisingly then, one in ten households find it difficult to make ends meet. This is particularly the case for households who have had to make do with an income below the low income threshold for a longer period. The position of these households contrasts sharply with that of the small group of households who earn more than one million euro per year.

Differences in income are large. They change for example when wages rise, while at the same time benefits are cut. The specific measure for income inequality – the Gini coefficient, with a value of between 0 and 1 – illustrates this change: the closer it is to zero, the smaller income inequality is.

Income inequality



Income inequality hardly changed between 1977 and 1985; the situation deteriorated for nearly everyone – workers and benefit claimants. After 1985, income differences increased substantially: wages rose, benefits were frozen and the number of single people – with lower incomes – and two-earner households – with higher incomes – grew. Inequality rose sharply from 1989 to 1990, largely as a result of Oort's tax reforms, which reduced the tax burden for people in work considerably.

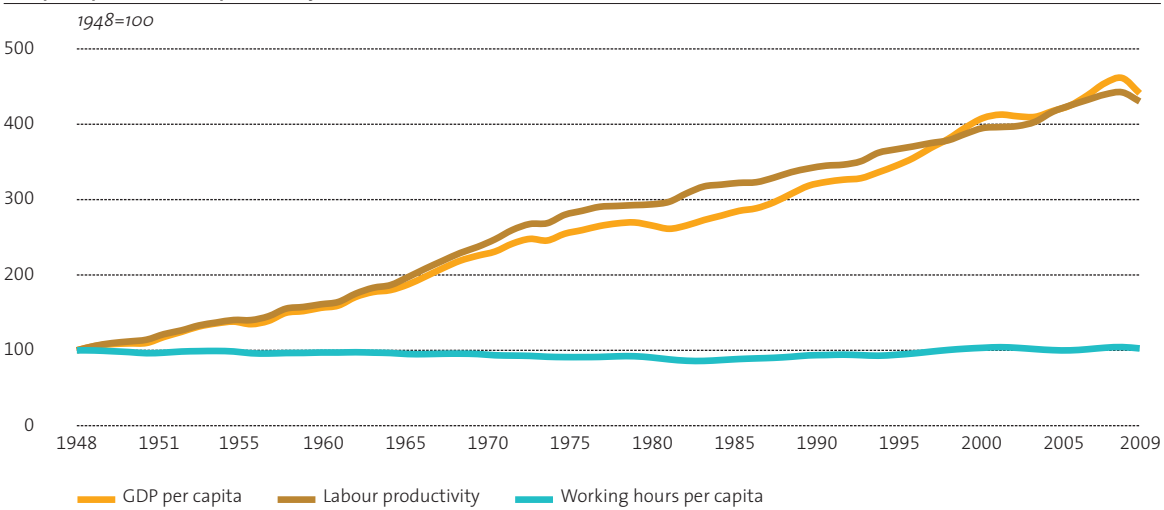
The Dutch economy went through a dip after 1990, but bounced back after 1994. Income inequality fell slightly in this period, but rose again later – from 1995 onwards – mainly as a result of the higher labour participation of women. The Gini curve was more erratic in the first decade of this century, with little change before 2005, a slight levelling (in 2006) and the opposite in 2007, when the highest incomes in particular benefited from the economic growth. One year later the credit crisis hit this group first, reducing inequality again.

Income up fourfold since 1948

Income per capita in the Netherlands is now more than four times as high as it was in 1948. There are two ways these earnings, in terms of gross domestic product per inhabitant, can increase. First if relatively more people work, or workers work more hours on average. And secondly, if labour productivity rises, i.e. if more value added is generated per working hour.
Dutch economic growth will come under pressure in next few decades as the population continues to age. To maintain the growth rate, the government is considering measures to get more people into work. In the past sixty years GDP per capita has risen mainly as a result of higher labour productivity. The number of working hours per inhabitant has hardly changed since the Second World War.

The number of working hours per inhabitant depends on labour participation, working

GDP per capita and labour productivity



hours per worker and the age composition of the population. From the beginning of the eighties more people started to work, speeding up the rise in per capita GDP in the nineties in particular. The continual decrease in working hours per worker countered this effect to a certain extent. Changes in the age composition of the population had a positive effect until the nineties: an increasingly larger part of the population were in the labour force age group (15 to 64 years).

Since the beginning of the nineties, however, the age composition has been developing more unfavourably. The ratio of 15 to 64 year-olds to over-65s has dropped from eight to one in 1950 to four and a half to one in 2009, and is expected to fall even further to two and a half to one in 2030. If things stay as they are, therefore, in 2030 the ratio of workers to the total population, and thus GDP per inhabitant, will be lower than it is now. However, if labour productivity increases at the same rate as in the last three decades, it would more than compensate for the negative effect of population ageing on GDP per capita.

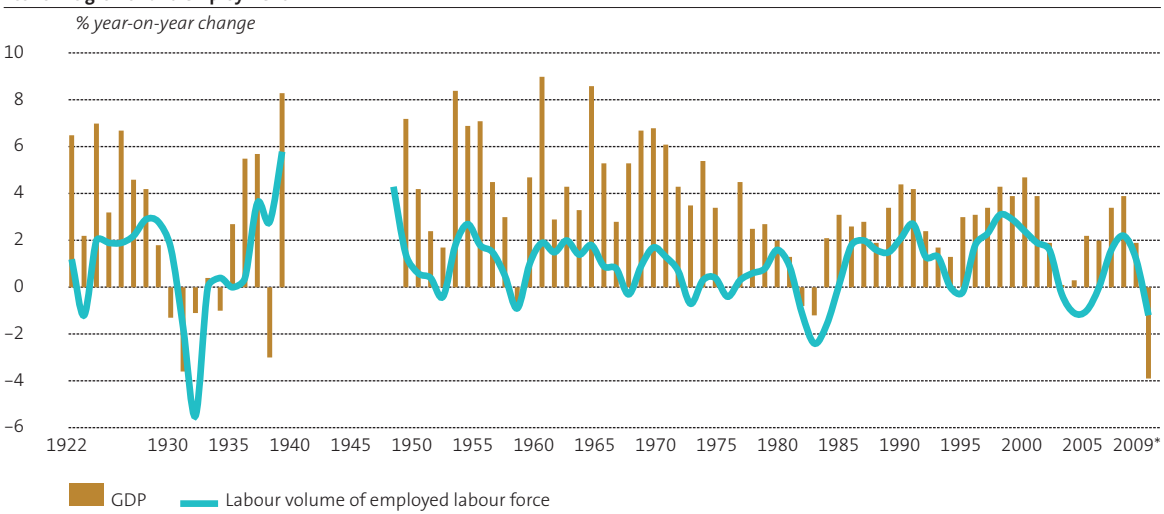
Higher labour productivity pushes up income

Growth and decline

The Dutch economy shrank by 3.9 percent in 2009. This was the largest decrease ever recorded by Statistics Netherlands, larger even than during the depression of the thirties. The last time economic growth was negative was in 1982, when it shrank by 1.2 percent. The largest negative growth in thirties was –3.6 percent, in 1931. Just as in the thirties, the cause of the economic malaise in 2009 was a financial crisis in the United States. The recession in the eighties was the consequence of the two oil crises in the seventies.

Employment falls sharply in times of recession. In 2009 it fell by 1.1 percent, not too bad compared with the volume of economic downturn. The labour market usually responds with a delay to economic developments. In the thirties, unemployment was higher than ever before and employment decreased strongly, by as much as 5.5 percent in 1932. In the eighties,

Economic growth and employment



too, unemployment was much higher than in 2009. The labour market has recovered surprisingly quickly in 2010. The large rise in unemployment in 2009 has now turned into a fall.

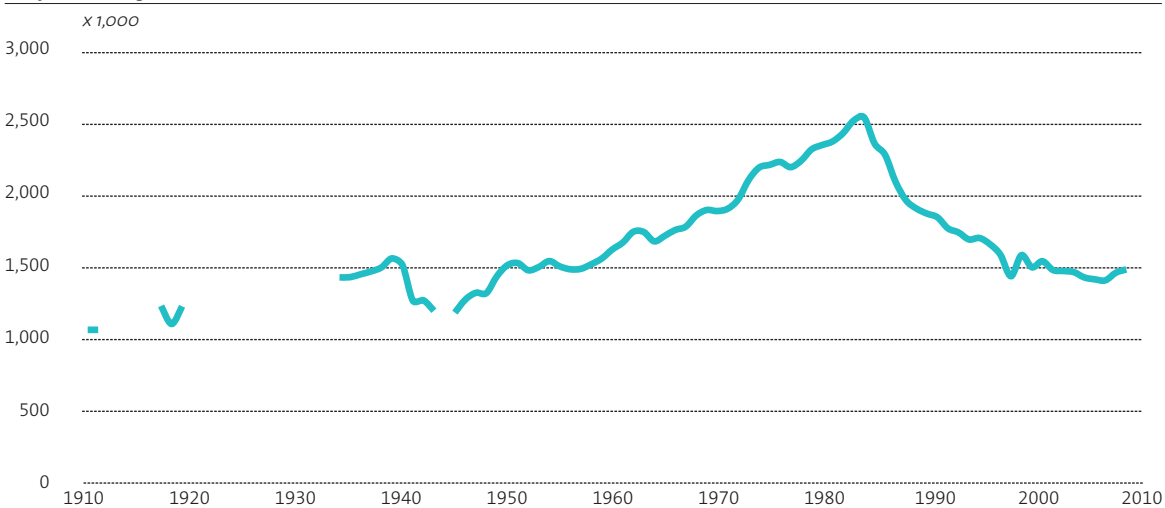
The crisis of the thirties was the most dramatic. The recessions in the eighties and in 2009 had less drastic consequences for the population, as the level of prosperity was much higher: the social safety net was much more extensive, benefits were higher. Moreover, the crisis did not last as long as in the thirties. In 2009, governments were doing their very best to battle the crisis. More than in the past, countries have been working together in this respect, not only favouring their own companies and institutions. In the thirties, on the other hand, national governments across the world took protectionist measures, which resulted only in further economic decline.

More cows in Dutch fields

More than two million heads of cattle were grazing on Dutch meadows in 1910. Over half of these – 1.1 million – were dairy cows and calves. Friesland and South Holland were the main cattle provinces. Farmers in these provinces owned 30 percent of all cattle. Friesland had the most (307 thousand), but South Holland had the highest number of dairy cattle (178 thousand). The number of dairy cows rose from 1.1 million in 1910 to 1.49 million in 2009, so the fields have got a lot busier. The number was even higher in some periods. In the seventies the number rose to over 2 million, and in 1983 and 1984 there were no fewer than 2.5 million dairy cows. Encouraged by guaranteed milk prices, farmers produced a lot more milk than the market could cope with.

The introduction of milk quotas and fines (the super levy) for excess milk production

Dairy and calving cows



significantly reduced cattle numbers and milk production. In the last hundred years, the location of dairy farming has gradually shifted to the provinces Overijssel, Gelderland and North Brabant, although Friesland still has most dairy cows (267 thousand). Overijssel, Gelderland and North Brabant follow with 242 thousand, 229 thousand and 214 thousand respectively. These four provinces account for just about two-thirds of the total Dutch dairy herd.

Among other things, the intensification of pastoral farming, better livestock housing systems, new feeding techniques and more efficient breeding methods have pushed up the milk productivity of cows almost continually in the last century. The annual milk production of a cow was only just over 2,500 litres in 1910; by 1936/1939 it was already more than 3,500 litres. Today's cows produce nearly 8 thousand litres per year. This enormous productivity increase means that the 35 percent more cows grazing in Dutch fields in 2009 produced more than four times as much milk as the cows in 1910.

Labour

Controlled wages

There are nearly 1,200 collective labour agreements in the Netherlands. These pacts between employers and employees set down the terms of employment in a certain sector of industry for a specified period. Wages are usually the main subject of the agreements, but they also contain stipulations about training, pension provisions or child care. The collective labour agreements cover about 80 percent of Dutch employees. Inflation always play an important part in wage level negotiations.

The fist collective labour agreement in the Netherlands came into effect in 1894. Diamond workers in Amsterdam had walked out, thus forcing employers to reach an agreement on their wages. The real breakthrough came after the Second World War. The government wanted to keep prices and wages low to improve the

Collectively agreed wages and inflation

competitiveness of the Dutch economy. They linked wage levels to the cost of living. From 1953 onwards, wages were also allowed to rise if labour productivity rose. However, as labour was in short supply, employers were forced to increase wages.

After 1959 it became increasingly difficult to continue this controlled wage policy. By 1964 there was no holding the labour market back, and pay rises exploded. Wages rose by more than 16 percent on average, and in the subsequent years prosperity shot up. From 1975 the turbulent wage developments gradually calmed down, and in 1981 wages rose by less than 3 percent. In this period, the government often asserted its authority to intervene in wage setting.

In 1982 the Wassenaar Agreement marked the beginning of a long period of wage restraint which is still in effect today. Employers and employees agreed on shorter working hours in return for smaller wage rises. Since then, average annual wage increases have been between 0 and 4 percent. Inflation, too, has fluctuated within the same range.

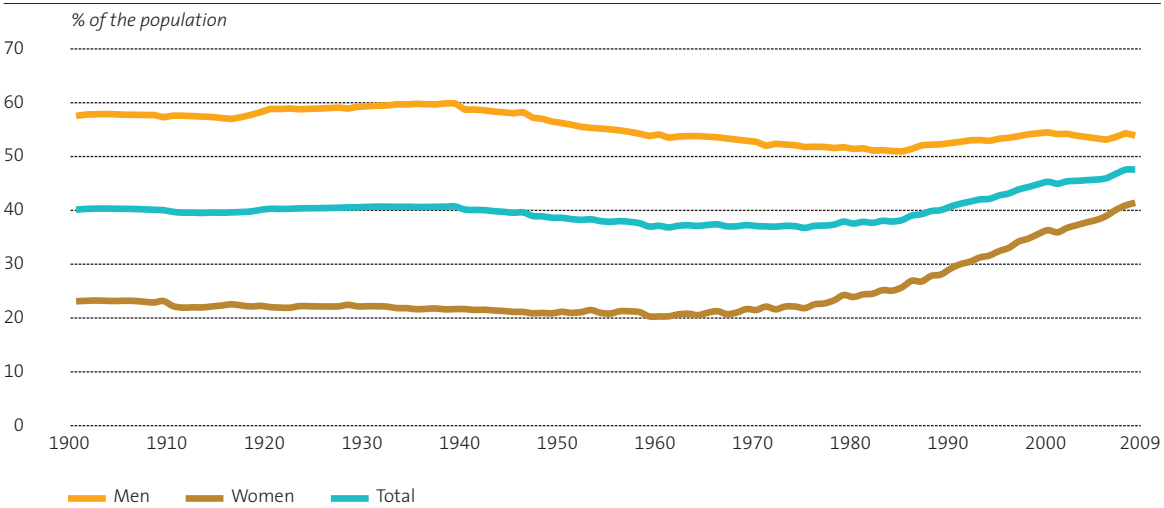
Close relationship between wages and inflation since 1982

Working women catching up

In the space of one century, the size of the Dutch population has increased more than threefold. From only 5.2 million inhabitants in 1900, it has grown to 16.6 million today. The labour force has increased fourfold in the same period, however: from 2.0 million to 7.8 million. In spite of this, the share of the labour force in the total population remained quite stable for a long time: around 40 percent until the nineties. Underlying these large numbers of people and apparent labour force stability are considerable shifts in who was able, who was allowed and who wanted to work.

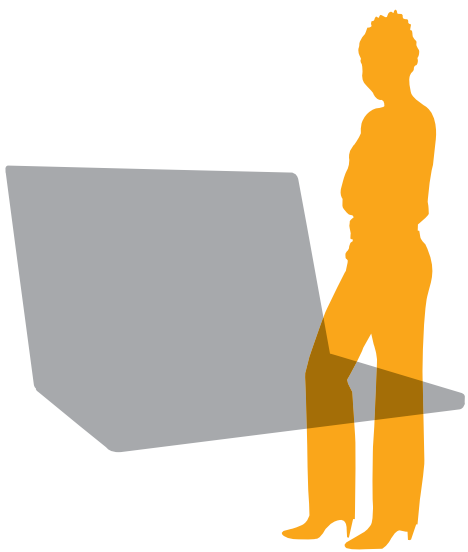
Since the nineties, the relative labour force has risen to 48 percent in 2009. This large increase was mainly the result of working women. Women's participation on the labour market has risen spectacularly in the last fifty years. Since 1960 the female labour force as a

Labour force



percentage of the total population has almost doubled, from around 20 percent (1960) to over 40 percent in 2009. For men participation fell initially, from nearly 60 percent in 1900 to around 51 percent in the mid-eighties. After that it rose again slightly, to around 54 percent in 2009.

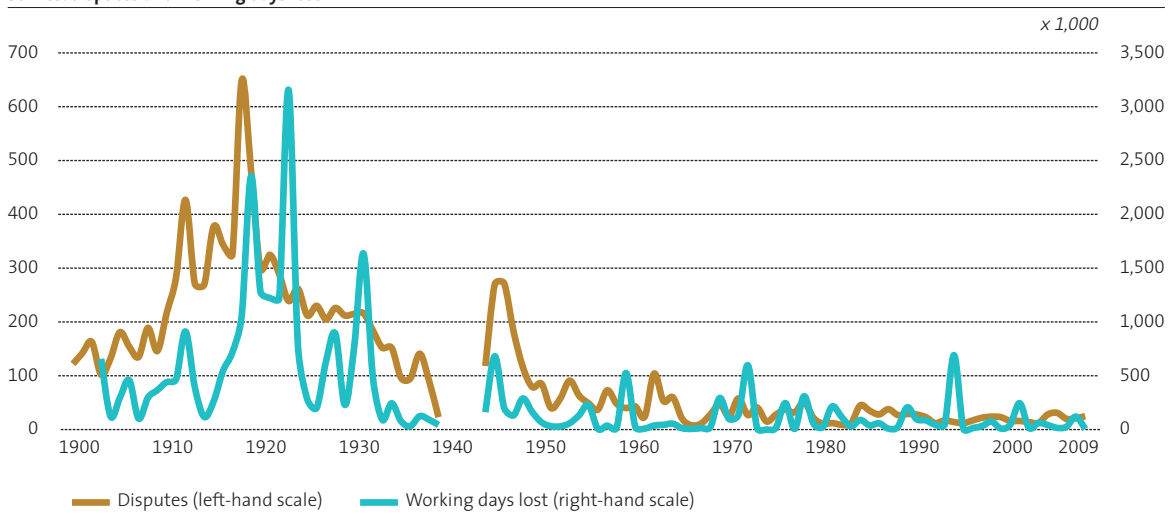
The structure of the Dutch economy has also changed substantially. Around 1900, three in ten workers were employed in agriculture, 110 years on this share has dropped to below 2 percent. In the textile and clothing industries, domestic service and mining, too, employment has dropped considerably. In the services industry, however, especially in trade, the free professions, education, banking and insurance, employment has risen rapidly. Employment in the services sector has even doubled since 1900. Women have been able to consolidate their position on the labour market as a result of the strong rise in employment in services.



Strike patterns

In May 1823, a contractor had undertaken to complete the groundwork for the construction of the Noord-Hollands Canal for a low price. The only way he would make a profit was by skimping on the pay of his labourers. This led to widespread unrest among the workers.
One day one of the workers called for a walkout, to force the contactor to raise their wages. The men stayed out on strike for eight days before the contractor gave in. He raised the wages, but not for everyone. In a subsequent reaction, some three hundred men descended on the contractor's hut. When some of them tried to force an entry, the contractor shot two men dead. Although a number of engineers working on the project succeeded in calming down the workers, when the contractor emerged a little later the strikers beat him to death.
This is just one example of the many hundreds of small spontaneous strikes that took place in

Strikes: disputes and working days lost



the Netherlands in the nineteenth century. Most took place among workers on groundwork projects in the north and east of the country, dyke workers, polder labourers and peat cutters. These early strikes often involved violence. Strikes were prohibited until 1872, and when workers did walk out the police and the military police took heavy-handed action. This did not always have an effect, however; sometimes it only served to increase aggression among the strikers.

After the railway strikes in 1903, organised to establish the right to set up workers' unions, civil servants and railway workers were legally forbidden to go on strike. This ban was only abolished in 1979.

In the course of the twentieth century, the pattern of strike action changed substantially. While early industrial action was characterised by dozens, and sometimes hundreds of restricted walk-outs, with only few participants who stayed off work for long periods, in more recent years the number of strikes has become smaller, the number of strikers has grown substantially and the duration (in terms of number of working days lost) is limited.

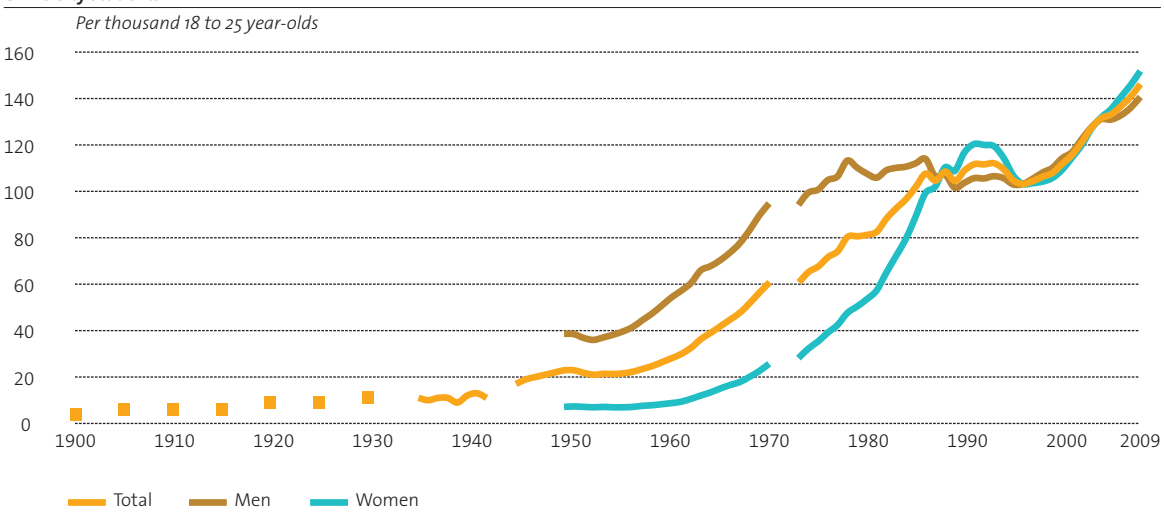
Welfare

More and more university graduates

More and more people in the Netherlands are graduating from university. In 2009, 10 percent of the population aged 15 to 64 years had a university degree. Thirty years ago this was only 3 percent. The number of students has grown spectacularly in the last century: from around 3 thousand in 1900 to no less than 233 thousand in 2009. The first university in the Netherlands was founded in 1575, a gift from William of Orange to the people of Leiden. At the end of the sixteenth century a few hundred students attended this university.

Around 1900, nearly 3 thousand students were enrolled at Dutch universities. This is the equivalent of four students per thousand 18 to 25 year-olds. Participation in university education only started to boom after the Second World War. In 1945 there were 22 thousand students, 17 per thousand 18 to 25

University students



year-olds. This rose to 146 per thousand in 2009. In the space of 65 years, therefore, the number of students has increased nearly ninefold.

It took until 1871 before the first woman, Aletta Jacobs, was admitted to a university. The number of female students remained small for a long time; at the beginning of the twentieth century there were hardly more than one hundred. This was connected with the position of women in Dutch society at the time. The increase in the number of female students was slower than that for men until the mid-seventies. After that they caught up very quickly, and in 1989/1990 – for the first time – there were more female than male university students.

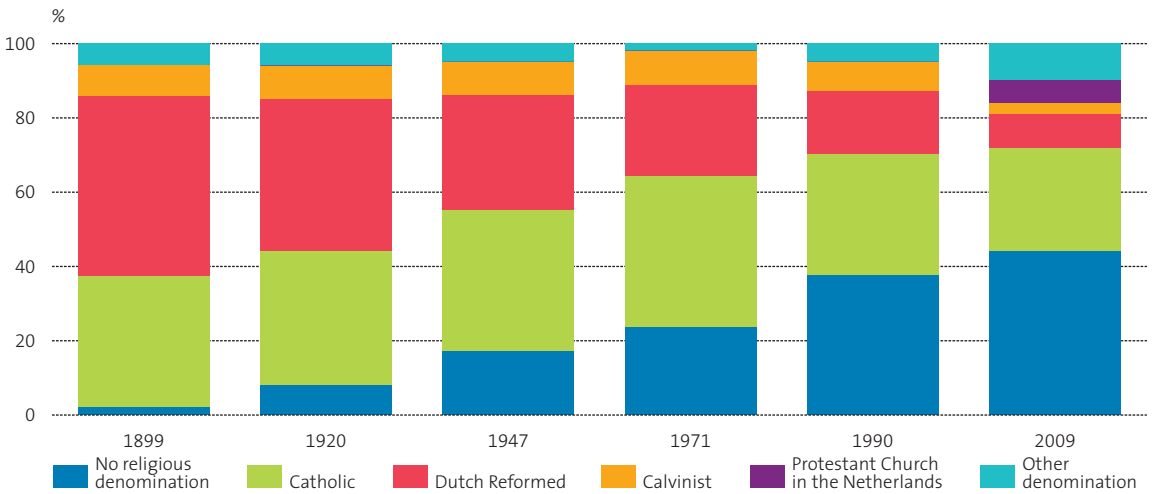
The strong rise in education participation since 1945 was connected with the rapid rise of the welfare state. Large numbers of higher educated people were needed to realise this. It also resulted in a considerable reduction in the inequality of education opportunities, and made university education accessible for more people. In addition, the expansion of the grant system in the sixties and seventies led to larger numbers of young people applying to universities.

Strong reduction in inequality of education opportunities

Fewer and fewer churchgoers

Around 1900, the religious map of the Netherlands was quite simple: 90 percent of the population were Dutch Reformed, Catholic or Calvinist. Six percent had a different faith, and two percent did not go to church at all.
Just over a hundred years later, the map has had to be completely redrawn. In 2008 fewer than six out of ten people in the Netherlands said they belonged to a religious denomination. Half of them (29 percent) were Catholic, 9 percent were Dutch Reformed, 4 percent Calvinist, 6 percent belonged to the Protestant Church in the Netherlands (a merger in 2004 of the Dutch Reformed Church, the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands, and the Evangelical Lutheran Church). Other denominations had grown to account for 10 percent. Irreligion is now the largest 'denomination', accounting for 42 percent of the population. The most frequently given

Religious denominations

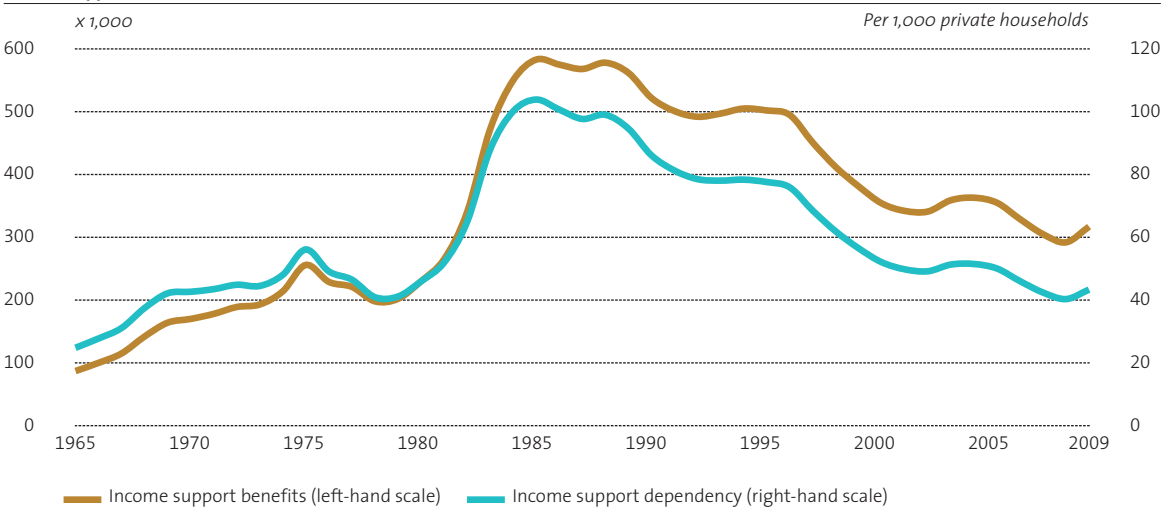


explanation for the increasing number of non-religious people is that the church has lost its function in the community. The modernisation of society has increased institutional differentiation and pluriformity in the area of meaningfulness and ideology. Take the – initially strongly anti-religious – socialist workers' movement, for example. New institutions took over the role of church and religion, for example by helping the poor and in clubs and associations; the significance of the church and its religious values diminished. Other developments in society also pulled people away from religion: higher prosperity, greater mobility, higher education levels and last but not least, the emergence of television; these all resulted in the church losing its grip on its congregation.So secularisation has resulted in large scale and formal irreligion in the Netherlands. Nearly nowhere in the world has the development been so marked as here. On the other hand, it does mean that people in the Netherlands who do worship, do so on the basis of a conscious personal choice more than people elsewhere who say they are religious. This also explains the more active involvement of Dutch church members with their church compared with other countries.

Income support: from handouts to work

In the Netherlands, helping the poor is a centuries old tradition. Legislation on income support for the poorest groups in the Netherlands was introduced in 1965, and has been subject to almost continuous change since then. With its legal basis, income support brought charitable poor relief to an end. Under the new law, poor people were entitled to financial support from the government. The number of people claiming income support rose sharply up in the first half of the eighties: from 215 thousand in 1980 to 583 thousand in 1985. More than one in ten private households in the Netherlands were claiming income support in 1985. The economic downturn meant many people had lost their jobs, and some of them had to fall back on income support after a time. Many school leavers also applied for the benefit as they could find work either. The number of claimants under 25 years

Income support benefits, 31 December



tripled in this period. The situation only took a turn for the better after 1985, when the economy started to recover. In later periods of economic decline, too, the number of income support claimants rose. These increases were very small compared to those in the early eighties, however. At the end of 2009, nearly 317 thousand people were claiming income support, 25 thousand more than at the end of 2008. The amount of the benefit depends on the type of household. At the end of 2009, 61 percent of income support benefits were paid to single households, 22 percent to single parents (mainly women), and 16 percent to married couples. To curb the demand for income support benefits, the Dutch government introduced a number of measures in the nineties, including legislation to guarantee jobs for young people (Jeugdwerkgarantiewet) in 1992. Not only youngsters benefited from subsidised employment opportunities, however. The job pool regulation (1991) and the Melkert jobs scheme (1995) provided opportunities for people over the age of 23 to get back to work. The focus of income support gradually shifted from handing out income to helping benefit claimants back into a job as soon as possible. Today getting people to work is the focus of new income support legislation introduced recently.

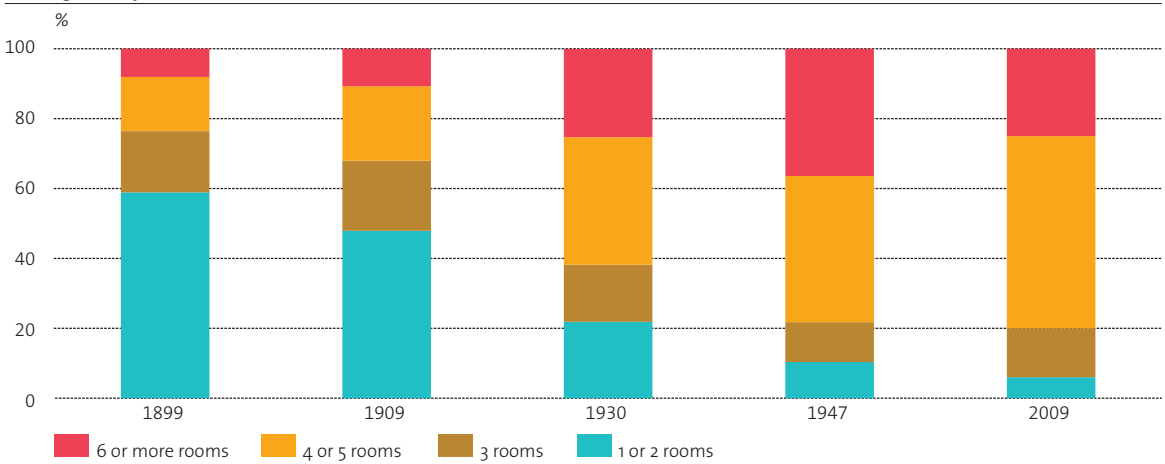
Recent schemes focus on getting claimants into jobs

New housing standards

In 1900, seven in every ten Dutch people lived in a dwelling with three or fewer rooms (including the kitchen). Dwellings were overcrowded, which was not only unhealthy, but also immoral. Not only was there the danger of infection, but also the risk that children would overhear their parents nocturnal conversations or worse – their sex life. Overcrowded housing, and particularly inappropriate bed sharing by adolescent brothers and sisters – still quite common in most large cities around 1910 – was one of the many issues in the civilisation debate. There was a great need for larger dwellings, which were seen as the only way to preserve high moral standards.

Under the Dwellings Act of 1901, authorities were permitted to intervene if a dwelling was overcrowded according to the regulations of

Housing stock by number of rooms

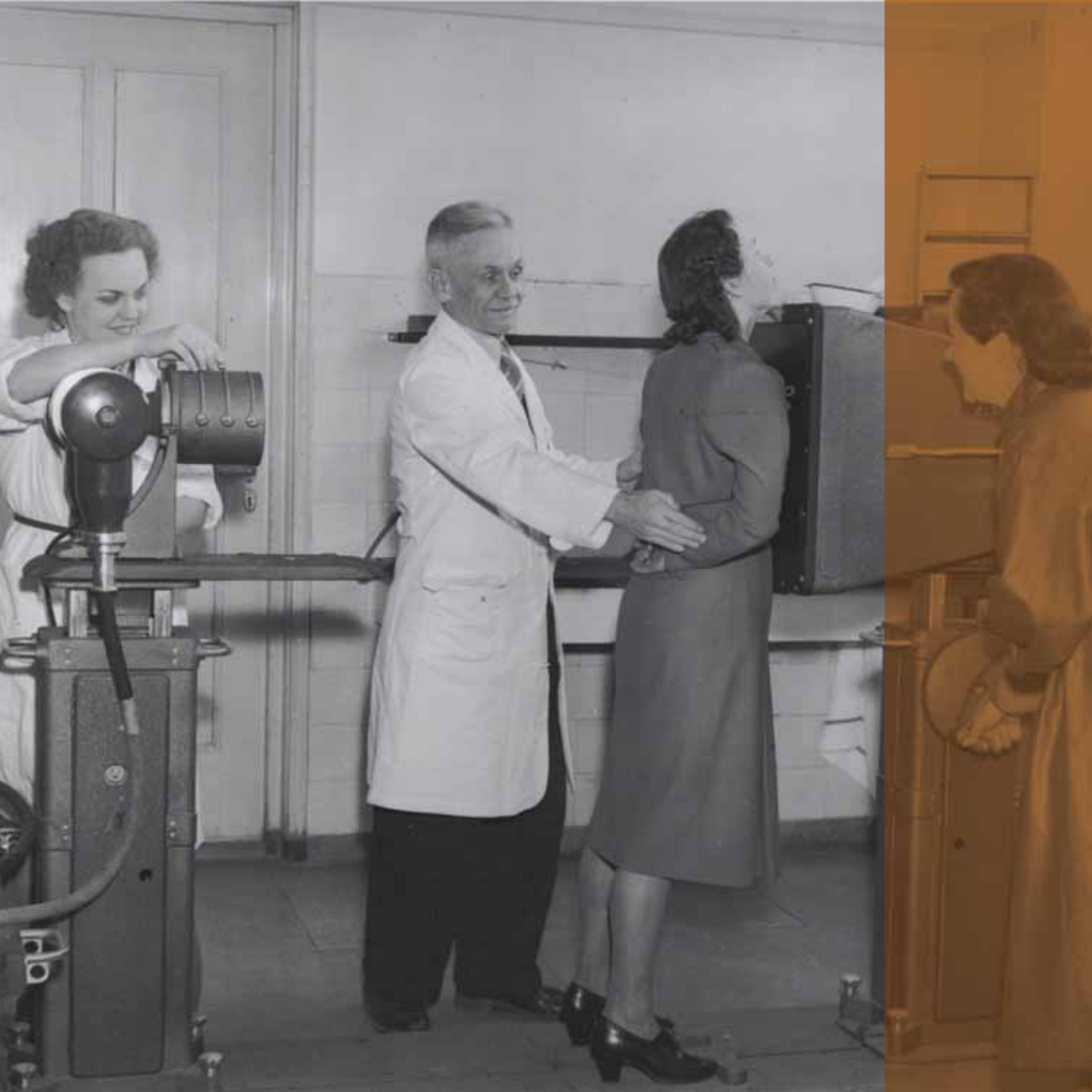


N.B. in 2009: room at least 4 m²

local bye-laws. In many municipalities this was the case if a one-room dwelling was occupied by four people or a two-room dwelling by six people. There were also sleeping regulations for bedrooms. At all times, young adults of different sexes were to be prevented from sharing a bedroom. In most municipalities it was also forbidden for a single parent to sleep in the same room as an (older) child of the other sex.

It was in this period that the term 'hygienic dwelling' came into being. Such a dwelling consisted of a living room, a kitchen and an appropriate number of bedrooms: one for the parents, with a cot if there was enough space, and enough bedrooms to sleep boys and girls separately.

It was partly the result of such undesirable moral situations that new standards of living were drawn up. Since the Dwellings Act came into effect, governments have invested large sums in improving housing conditions. Today the number of dwellings with one or two rooms is very small (6 percent). Fourteen percent of the housing stock consists of homes with three rooms, while 80 percent of homes have four rooms or more.



Health

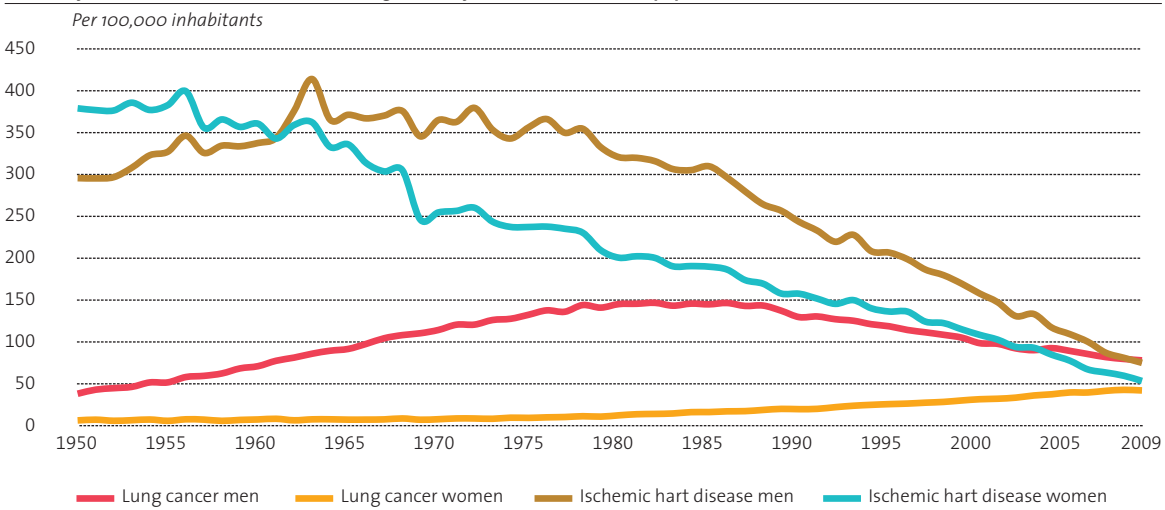
Successful battle against heart disease

Great victories have been won in the battle against serious diseases in the last decades, but the gains have sometimes been only modest. The success rate has been relatively high for the reduction in ischemic heart disease in the Netherlands.

Forty years ago, ischemic heart disease – coronary artery disease, mostly heart attacks – accounted for one quarter of total male deaths in the Netherlands. For women, it was responsible for one sixth of mortality. The combination of better medical technology and behavioural changes (healthier diet, more exercise, not smoking) have reduced mortality from heart disease considerably.

According to the most recent figures, this development has yet to slow down. Today, ischemic heart disease is responsible for fewer than one ten male deaths. For women it accounts for one in fifteen deaths.

Mortiality from ischemic heart disease and lung cancer by sex (2009 is standard population)



The success in the battle against and treatment of ischemic heart disease has been most successful for younger ages. It has thus also contributed relatively strongly to the increase in life expectancy in the Netherlands. Moreover, the average age of people who die from ischemic heart disease has risen: male victims are on average five years older than in 1970.

Smoking is only one of the many risk factors for ischemic heart disease, but by far the most important cause of lung cancer. Partly because the medical success in the treatment of lung cancer has been much more modest, the number of deaths reflects the share of smokers in the population with a few decades delay. Since the end of the fifties the share of men who smoke has fallen sharply, from 90 to 30 percent in 2009. The number of women smokers on the other hand rose in the fifties and sixties, and only started to fall from the seventies, to 26 percent in 2009. This explains why morality from lung cancer has decreased for men, but risen for women.

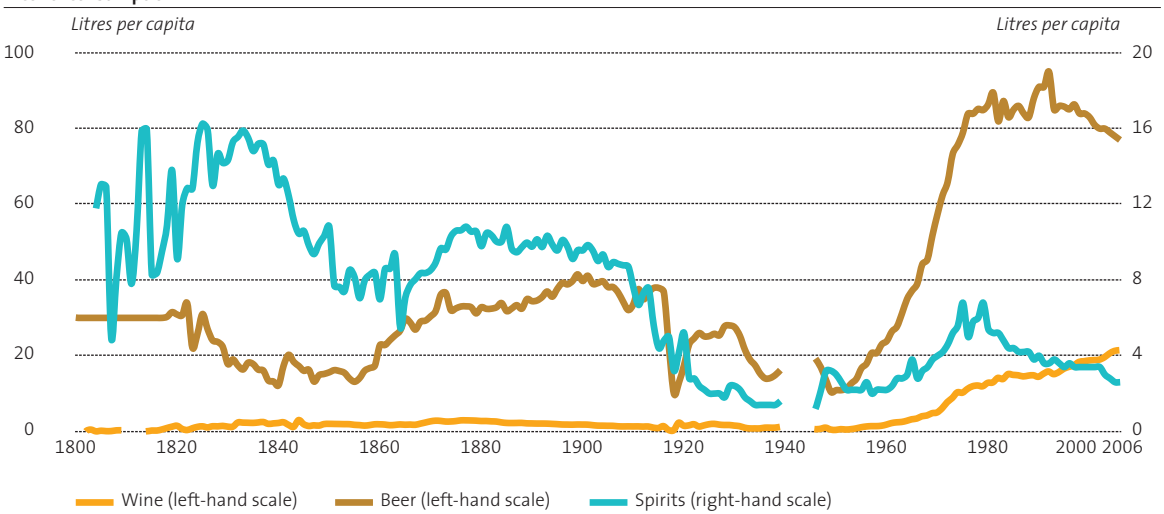
Moderate drinkers

Although the Dutch have the reputation of being great drinkers, they are not: there are few countries in Europe where people drink less. The populations of Luxembourg, Ireland and Germany drink a lot more, and only Greeks, Italians and Swedes are more moderate.

Two centuries ago alcohol consumption – beer, wine and spirits – was high in the Netherlands. In the period 1820–1840 it was the equivalent of around 8 to 10 litres of pure alcohol per capita. It fell to below 5 litres in the mid 1850s, subsequently stabilising at around 7 litres per capita. From 1900 on, consumption fell sharply to reach 1.5 litres in the 1930s.

Alcohol use – and abuse – is as old as time itself. Many authors have connected it with poverty. So it is ironic that alcohol consumption in the Netherlands only really increased when poverty became a political issue in the course

Alcohol consumption



of the nineteenth century. Higher real wages meant that workers were in a position to buy not only more meat and sugar, but also more spirits.

As a result of social developments and legal measures, the consumption of spirits decreased drastically in the course of the nineteenth century. Social security, permanent employment and a regular way of life certainly contributed to this, just as shorter working days, better housing and more recreational options than only drinking in public bars. When clubs and societies started to be founded at the end of the century, and people started taking part in sports activities, there were alternative recreational venues than the drinking halls.

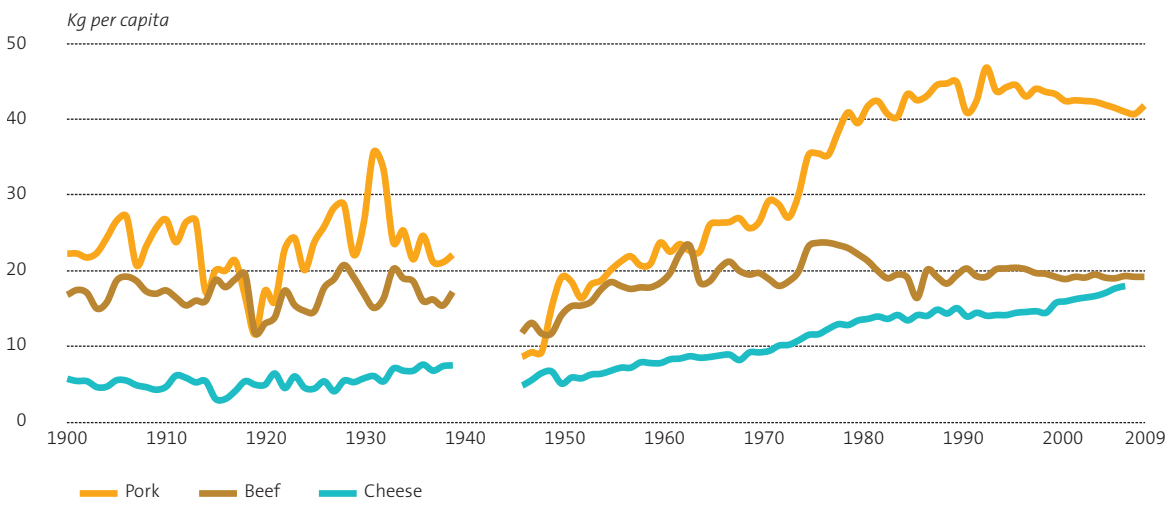
The level of alcohol consumption in the 1830s was only equalled again in 1970. As a result of the increasing prosperity, the consumption of spirits rose from 5.5 litres of pure alcohol per capita in 1970, to 8 litres in 1995. It was still around this level in 2009.

Praise for peas and beans

In 1913 the director of the Dutch central bureau of statistics, Henri Methorst, did a study of the problem of labourers' nutrition. He thought that the diet of workers was too unbalanced: too many potatoes mashed with vegetables, and too little protein. As a result, in his opinion, they could not work hard enough, and they produced weak progeny. Methorst's views were apparently confirmed by statistics: in 1909 a correlation was established between higher real wages and higher protein diet content.

Methorst was a great fan of the domestic science schools, which were doing pioneering work in the area of meal preparation. They had succeeded in persuading the population, especially in the cities, to eat peas and beans, by teaching women to cook them with fried bacon or with an onion or bacon sauce to mask their bland flavour. The increased consumption

Consumption of beef, pork and cheese



of peas and beans, but also of rice, skimmed milk and buttermilk, meat, fish, cheese and margarine increased the protein content of their diet.

This dietary culture came to an end in the course of the twentieth century. As a result of increasing wages, the Dutch diet became more varied. Consumption of potatoes fell from nearly 130 kg per capita around 1910 to less than 90 kg today. Consumption of beef and pork increased by nearly 20 kg per capita between 1910 and 2009, and cheese consumption increased threefold in the same period.

As early as the fifties, potato farmers were producing more potatoes than the Dutch population could eat. To secure their market, in 1962 a number of potato growers in the east of the country united to form Aardappel Verwerkende Industrie Keppel en Omstreken (Aviko), and started to process ware potatoes to sliced, pre-fried packaged chips.

Chips had entered the Netherlands from Belgium via the fairs held in North Brabant. They were eaten in snack bars and cafeterias. These innovative factory-made chips were soon to tap a new market for potatoes.

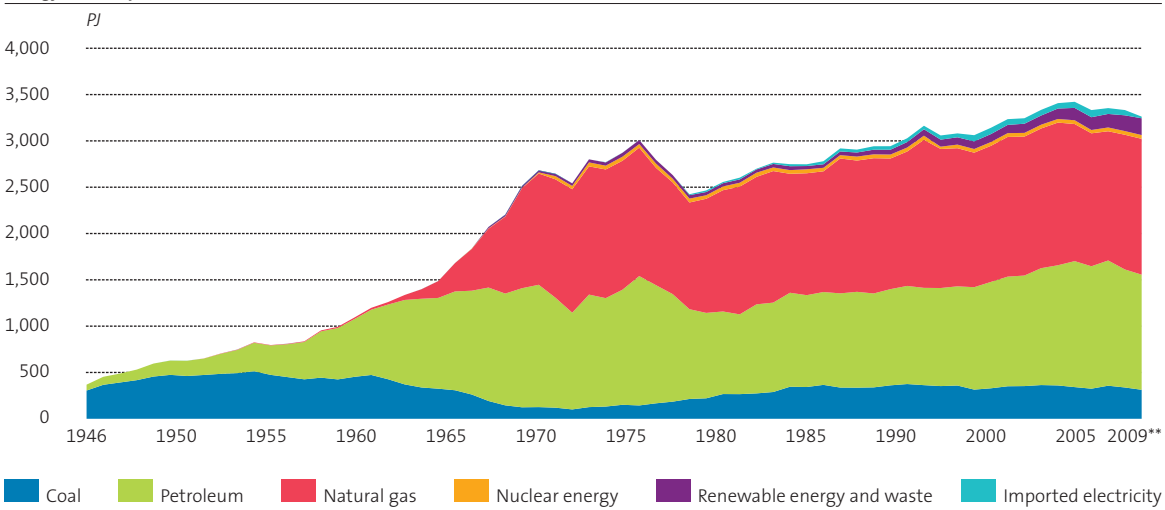
Energy and environment

Energy consumption

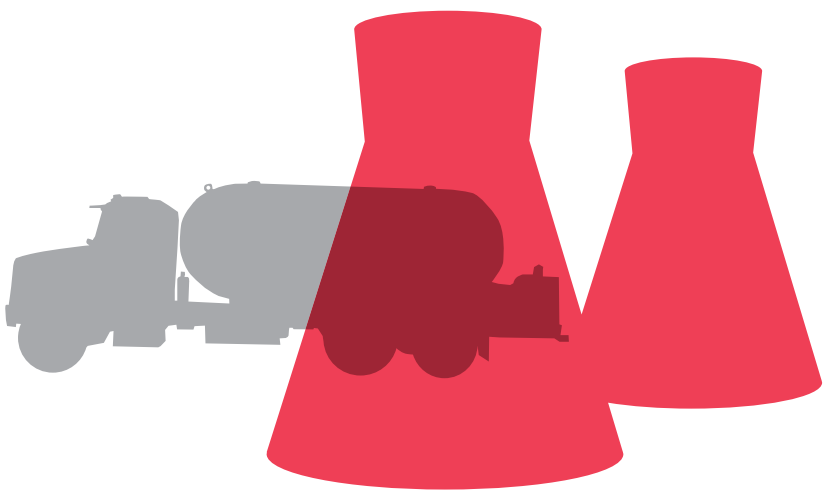
Energy use in the Netherlands has increased eightfold in the last 65 years. After the Second World War growth was modest, and constant, but in the sixties the sky was more or less the limit. This came to an abrupt end in 1974, following the publication of the Club of Rome report on the limits to economic growth in 1972, and the first oil crisis in 1973.
After the second oil crisis, in 1979, energy use fell substantially until the early eighties. It subsequently started a period of constant increase, peaking now and again around cold winters. It reached its maximum around 2005, after which it fell slightly as a result of more efficient use of natural gas and the economic crisis of 2008.

The increase in energy use in the last century has coincided with the discovery of new sources of energy. Between 1900 and 1910

Energy consumption



Dutch coal was used to generate a relatively large share of energy. Coal now accounts for a much smaller part of energy production. In the fifties petroleum was increasingly used as an energy source and the discovery of natural gas in Groningen – in 1959 – led to a limitless growth of energy consumption in the sixties. Since the oil crises of the seventies, the energy sector has been trying to introduce other sources of energy than coal, gas and oil. This shift is occurring slowly but steadily. In 2009, for example, nearly 7 percent of Dutch energy came from sources other than fossil fuels. On the other hand however, oil consumption has risen in the last twenty years and the use of natural gas has been high since the beginning of the nineties.

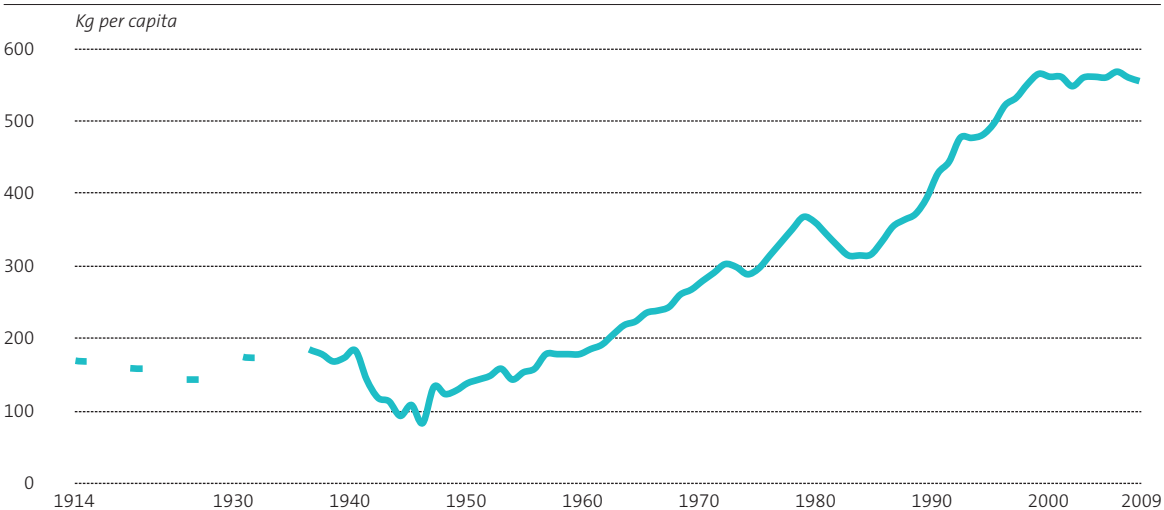


Waste collection

Two centuries ago, Dutch city dwellers just dumped their rubbish and refuse in the streets and canals. Muckheaps were also a common occurrence in city streets. The Dutch were not a dirty people, though, and formal regulations for the collection of refuse and rubbish go back a long time. Cities often assigned these tasks to the poor relief committee or a specially set up labour fund. Workers receiving welfare – cheap labour for the city – would then clean the streets. The collection and sale of refuse was a useful source of income for towns and cities. Dung from the city of Groningen, for example, was transported to the nearby peat districts. The city owned a number of peat moors, and tenants were required to fertilise them with manure from the city.

By the second half of the nineteenth century, the amount of waste had started to become a serious problem. The volume of household

Household waste



refuse was growing faster than the population, the net result of combined industrialisation, increasing prosperity, population growth, and jerry-built homes. As doctors pointed out the association between unclean surroundings and outbreaks of disease, concerns about public health forced city councils to keep their streets clean. Inspectors from the municipal sanitation department in Amsterdam were authorised to fine people contravening the regulations.

By 1938, household waste collection was well organised in the Netherlands. Nearly all municipalities with more than 5 thousand inhabitants had a sanitation department, and their services reached over 95 percent of the population. In the largest cities, municipal sanitation or public works departments were responsible for refuse collection. Other municipalities collaborated with private companies to get the job done.

The volume of waste has continued to increase, from 175 kg per capita in 1938 to over 550 kg in 2009. In the latter year, more than 9 million tonnes of household waste were collected, of which half had been separated for recycling.

Dutch cities have had effective waste disposal schemes for centuries

Acknowledgments

Sources

Databases of Statistics Netherlands and the National Institute for Public health and the Environment (household waste).

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Photographs

Statistics Netherlands
(page 4)

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(page 6, 13, 15, 35, 45, 46, 49)

VeldWerk, Amsterdam
(page 27, 28, 53)

Hollandse Hoogte, Amsterdam
(cover, page 16, 19, 36, 54)

Explanation of symbols

empty cell	=	category not applicable
.	=	data not available
x	=	publication prohibited
-	=	nil
0 (0.0)	=	less than half of unit concerned
*	=	provisional figure
**	=	revised provisional figure (but not definite)
2009–2010	=	2009 to 2010 inclusive
2009/2010	=	average of 2009 up to and including 2010
2009/'10	=	crop year, financial year, school year etc. beginning in 2009 and ending in 2010
2007/'08–	=	crop year, financial year, etc. 2007/'08 to 2009/'10
2009/'10	=	inclusive

Due to rounding, some totals may not correspond with the sum of the separate figures.

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