Netherlands

Ethnicity in Netherlands

Group selection

Historically, distinguishing between both religion and social class, Andeweg and Irwin ([3817], 22) describe the Netherlands as a country of minorities. The system of pillarization, the "most notorious impediment to stable government in the Netherlands" (ibid, 44), however, has allowed these minorities to develop into "tightly organized social groups or subcultures that structured not just politics, but nearly every aspect of social life" (ibid, 23). Represented in these pillars are both political-ideological (Socialists, Liberals) and confessional (Catholics, Protestants) groupings.

Over time, starting around 1960, "not only did the size of the pillars decline because of persons no longer expressing a religious identification, those who continue to identify began to change the degree to which they practiced their faith" (ibid: 37) – a process widely referred to as depillarization. Due to this "depillarization", the older (confessional) cleavages expressed by this system are not of particular political relevance anymore and all the "minorities" formerly represented within the system can safely be assumed to form a more or less homogeneous national group of the "Dutch".

An ethnic group with significant presence that formed outside of the system of pillarization are the **Muslims**. As a result of large-scale immigration starting in the 1960's, the Netherlands has witnessed an emergence of Islam ([3818]; [3819]). The Dutch National Bureau of Statistics estimates that around 900.000 people (5% of the total population) identifies as Muslim in 2018, whereby the majority have a Turkish or Moroccan background ([3820]). With the steady rise of the Muslims in Dutch society, political actors have increasingly used ethnicity to mobilize support.

[3817] [Andeweg & Irwin, 2005]

[3818] [van Herten, 2009]
[3819] [Huijink, 2018]

[3820] [Schmeets, 2018]

Power relations

1946-2017

Ethnicity has long been politically irrelevant in the Netherlands. Depillarization dissolved prior group cleavage and the Muslim population was not represented by a significant political actor (although there are community organizations and national umbrella groups for the fractionalized group; [3821]). Furthermore, it is difficult to disentangle the representativeness of these groups with regard to interest of Dutch and non-Dutch Muslims. This leads to the conclusion, that

[3821] [Euro Islam Info, 2011]

ethnicity is irrelevant in Dutch politics.

2018-2020

As of 2015, two members of the Dutch Labour Party (Partij van de Arbeid) with a Turkish background founded the party "DENK" (meaning "think" in Dutch and "equal" in Turkish). During the parliamentary elections of 2017, the party obtained 3 seats in the Dutch parliament. The seats are occupied by the parties' public representatives (2 with Turkish backgrounds and 1 with a Moroccan background). The party markets itself as a social democratic/immigrant party, primarily aspiring multiculturalism. More importantly, the party specifically targets voters from Moroccan and Turkish backgrounds who form a large part of their support base ([3822]). We code Muslims as a separate ethnic group with representation in the political sphere. Whereas the Muslims have 3 seats in parliament, they have no representation in the cabinet and thus, no influence on executive decision-making. Therefore, the Dutch are coded as having a monopoly, while the Muslims are powerless in the executive body of Dutch politics.

[3822] [Vermeulen et al., 2018]

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Political status of ethnic groups in N

From 1946 until 2017

Group name	Proportional size	Political status
Dutch	0.95	IRRELEVANT

From 2018 until 2021

Group name	Proportional size	Political status
Dutch	0.95	MONOPOLY
Muslims	0.05	POWERLESS

Figure 743: Political status of ethnic groups in Netherlands during 1946-2017.

Figure 744: Political status of ethnic groups in Netherlands during 2018-2021.

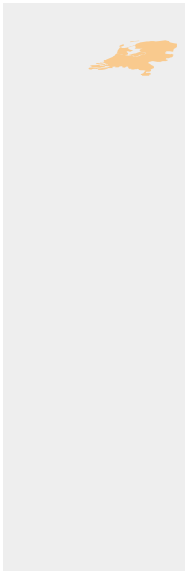# *Geographical coverage of ethnic groups in Netherlands*

From 2018 until 2021

Figure 745: Map of ethnic groups in Netherlands during 2018-2021.

	Group name	Area in km^2	Type
	Dutch	34 938	Statewide
	Muslims	0	Urban

Table 281: List of ethnic groups in Netherlands during 2018-2021.

Conflicts in Netherlands

Starting on 1962-01-14

Side A	Side B	Group name	Start	Claim	Recruitment	Support
Government of Indonesia	Government of Netherlands		1962-01-14			