

Summary

Many people derive enjoyment from sport and culture in their free time. This may involve actively participating in sport or partaking in a form of culture themselves, attending matches, performances, exhibitions or festivals, or following sporting and cultural events in the media. Within the broad domain of leisure time use, both sport and culture are an explicit focus of central and local government policy, in particular. This policy attention is based largely on arguments about encouraging people to be active, ensuring that there are facilities to enable them to do so and making those activities and facilities accessible to everyone. Who takes part in which activities? And are those who participate in sport at the same as those who participate in culture, or are they separate worlds?

The degree of public engagement with culture and sport in the Netherlands was established using the Leisure Time Omnibus (*Vrijetijdsonibus*, VTO), a survey conducted by the Netherlands institute for Social Research (SCP) in collaboration with Statistics Netherlands (CBS). Since this survey has only been held twice to date (in 2012 and 2014), it is not possible to make any statements about long-term trends. However, the data do provide an up-to-date picture of public engagement in a diverse range of sporting and cultural activities.

Sport

Seven out of ten Dutch people aged six years and over actively participate in sport at least 12 times per year, and therefore qualify as 'sports practitioners' according to the Sports Participation Research Guideline (*Richtlijn Sportdeelname Onderzoek – RSO*). On average, people participate in 2.6 types of sport. A third of participants stick to one sport, and the same proportion take part in four or more sports during the course of a year. There is variation in where and with whom people practise sport: almost half do so individually or informally, a third have organised a group themselves or are members of a sports club, and a fifth use a commercial provider (often a fitness centre). Sports participation through a company facility or care institution lags a long way behind (1-2% of the population).

Sport in the Netherlands is able to flourish thanks to the sterling efforts of volunteers.

One eighth of the population report that they volunteer at least once a month, usually as a trainer or committee member. Volunteers are often existing or former members of the club or the parents of children who are members.

Sport can be both a participatory and a spectator activity. A fifth of the Dutch population attend a sports contest at least once a month to cheer on others. Soccer (both amateur and professional) is the most popular, followed by hockey, tennis and volleyball. People who take part in sport themselves are also more often spectators, and this applies especially for people who are members of sports clubs. Watching sport has only a very limited effect in encouraging spectators to participate or participate more in sport: 8% report that they took up sport as a result of watching it.

More than half the Dutch population follow sport on a weekly basis at home or whilst travelling via the tv, newspapers, radio or Internet. Social media are an important way of fol-

lowing sport for young people, in particular. The most popular activity is watching others' perform, followed by using media to arrange meetings with fellow sports practitioners and talking about one's own sporting achievements. A quarter use social media for their own sports training.

Although participating in or watching sport is often an enjoyable activity, there are exceptions. Four out of ten who play or watch sport say they have seen or experienced antisocial behaviour – most often in the form of verbal aggression, followed by physical violence and discrimination. Men, 12-19 year-olds and people who participate in sport through a club report seeing or experiencing antisocial behaviour more often than others. It is not possible to tell from these data whether interventions under the 'Safe Sports Climate' (*Veilig Sport Klimaat*) scheme are having an impact, though six out of ten who have witnessed antisocial behaviour report that action was taken as a result. On the other hand, a quarter say that nothing was done to combat the antisocial behaviour. Overall, however, three-quarters of the Dutch public say they generally feel safe in and around sports contests.

Culture

Culture occurs in many guises, and so does involvement in culture. As a result, there is virtually no one who does not come into contact with culture in some form during the course of a year. As well as relatively exclusive activities such as attending the opera or a modern dance performance, activities such as watching a TV programme about a sentimental love song or listening to hard rock or urban music on a mobile phone also brings people into contact with culture. Participation in a narrower sense is limited to (physical) attendance or practice. Another form of participation is supporting culture with money (donations) or time (volunteering).

Almost nine out of ten people in the Netherlands came into contact with culture via the media at least once in 2014. This applies more for popular cultural events (77%) than for canonised events (54%), the visual arts (42%) and cultural heritage (49%). Culture distributed via radio and TV reach the largest number of people who consume culture via the media (78%). The printed media also still reach more people than the Internet and social media (64% versus 56% and 44%, respectively), though the question here may be for how long.

Just over nine out of ten people visited a cultural institution, performance, production or exhibition at least once in 2014. Once again, popular events had the greatest reach (82%), followed by cultural heritage (66%) and the visual arts (59%). Libraries (39%) and canonised cultural output (38%) bring up the rear. One thing that should be noted here is that people were questioned in very direct terms after visiting various cultural events; the classification 'popular' versus 'canonised' was constructed afterwards, and those words were not used in the questionnaire.

No changes took place in the reach of popular and canonised cultural events in the period 2012-2014, though the reach of libraries declined over that period (by three percentage points) while the reach of museums increased (by four percentage points). This latter trend

cannot be seen in isolation from the reopening of a number of prominent museums and the wide media attention this received.

The third form of engagement in culture studied is active participation, for example playing an instrument or involvement with local cultural heritage. In 2014, six out of ten people in the Netherlands engaged with culture in this way at least once. More people actively engage in the arts than in cultural heritage (51% versus 30%), and this contrast is even starker when the criterion is applied of practising at least 12 times per year (37% versus 10%). There was a fall of four percentage points in practising the arts between 2012 and 2014, while active engagement in cultural heritage increased over the same period, also by four percentage points.

Support for culture is the fourth and final form of cultural engagement investigated in this study. Three out of ten people in the Netherlands supported culture at least once in 2014. One in ten did so as volunteers (at a festival, theatre, museum, association, etc.), one in ten as a member of a friends' association and two in ten by giving money. These figures remained virtually unchanged between 2012 and 2014.

Sport and culture

Sport and culture are part of many people's repertoire of leisure time activity. As large parts of the Dutch population say they follow sport and culture via the media, by attending events and/or by playing an active part, it is a given that there will be overlap in the involvement in sport and in culture. Sport scores higher when it comes to active participation, while culture does better on visits and attendance. There are also differences of nuance in the personal characteristics of those involved in sport and culture, respectively.

Engagement in sport is for example associated more with age, while involvement in culture is more closely linked to education level. Yet the overlap is considerable: half the public attended both a sporting and cultural event at least once in 2014, and the same proportion actively practised both at least once. When it comes to consumption via the media, the overlap increases to no fewer than eight out of ten people.

Analysis of patterns in involvement in sport and culture shows that the Dutch population can be divided into five categories. The *non-sporting culture-lovers* (13% of the population) combine an above-average involvement in culture with below-average participation in sport. The *sporting culture-lovers* (8%) are voracious omnivores, with high and above-average levels of interest in both culture and sport. The *sports volunteers* (20%) are notable for the large amount of volunteering they do in sport. The *non-sporting middle group* (30%) record an average score across the board, with the exception of participation in sport, where the score is decidedly low. Finally, the *non-cultural sports-lovers* (30%) have little interest in culture, but a great deal of interest in sport. Sport and culture are not mutually exclusive in any of these groups. In fact, the sporting culture-lovers, and to a lesser extent the two other groups, are involved in both sport and culture.