



# Time use in the Netherlands

## Edition 2

The Netherlands Institute for Social Research  
The Hague, July 2019

# Colophon

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## Opening image

Hollandse Hoogte

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# Introduction

## Introduction

The way in which people spend their time reveals a lot about their interests, opportunities and constraints. Time use data is therefore a unique tool for gaining insights into social differences and societal changes. Do men and women, people with higher and lower education levels and people in different phases of life allocate their time differently? And are there activities that we do more or less often today than we did ten years ago?

*Time use in the Netherlands* is a digital publication ('card stack'), made up of a number of standalone pages or 'cards'. Each card deals with one aspect of the time use of Dutch people. The data are based on the Time Use Survey 2016 (hereinafter the TBO'16), supplemented with figures from 2006 and 2011. This digital publication complements the [Time Use Survey called \*The art of juggling\* \(https://www.scp.nl/Publicaties/Alle\\_publicaties/Publicaties\\_2018/Alle\\_ballen\\_in\\_de\\_lucht\)](https://www.scp.nl/Publicaties/Alle_publicaties/Publicaties_2018/Alle_ballen_in_de_lucht) (*Alle ballen in de lucht*).

# A week at a glance

Authors: [Anne Roeters](#) and [Jan Dirk Vlasblom](#)

A week comprises 168 hours. The total available hours and minutes could be viewed as a sort of cake that people can divide up into ‘activity slices’ according to their own wishes and possibilities. The way in which people spend these hours and minutes says a lot about their interests, opportunities and constraints.

Research into how people divide up their time therefore reflects social differences and societal changes. These cards broadly map out how the Dutch spent their time in 2016. In line with earlier research, we divide time use into six categories: personal care (including sleep) [For example sleeping, eating and drinking, dressing and washing.]; paid work [Performing paid work, commuting to and from work, looking for work and training during working hours.]; household and care tasks [Household tasks, shopping, parent-child time and caring for adults.], leisure time [Media and ICT, social contacts, sports, culture, hobbies, the catering sector, outings and relaxation.]; education and training [General and vocational education, hobby courses and related travelling time.] and voluntary work and meetings [Voluntary work, meetings, other gatherings and religious activities.]. Which activities took up the most time? How much time is there for relaxation and rest? How does this time compare with the time spent on paid work and the time spent caring for others? And what is left over for education and volunteering?

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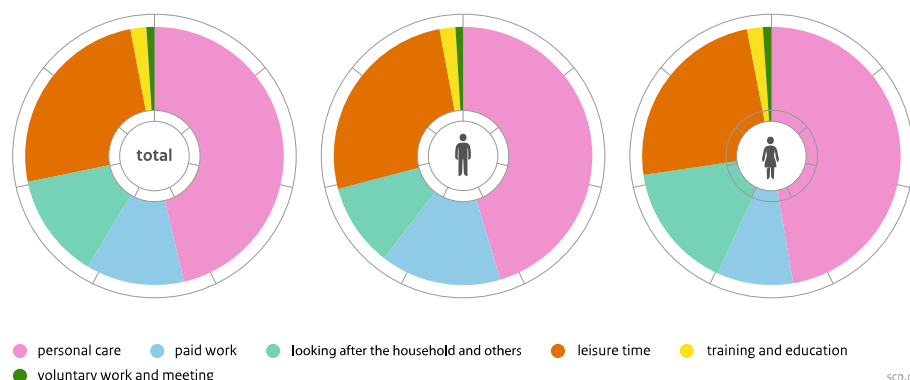
## The Time Use Survey 2016

Participants in the Time Use Survey (hereinafter “TBO”) kept a diary recording how they spent their time over the course of a week. The reported activities were then coded by Statistics Netherlands (CBS). Click here to view the [list of codes !\[\]\(74d4806277d7e73349d8e8c0897931e9\_img.jpg\)](https://digital.scp.nl/timeusez/assets/data/Bijlage_TBO-rapport_Gebruikte_codes.ods) ([https://digital.scp.nl/timeusez/assets/data/Bijlage\\_TBO-rapport\\_Gebruikte\\_codes.ods](https://digital.scp.nl/timeusez/assets/data/Bijlage_TBO-rapport_Gebruikte_codes.ods)). The individual codes were then assigned to larger categories. Sleeping and showering are, for example, both classed as personal care. Travel time is apportioned to the relevant activity; commuting to and from work is placed under paid work, for example.

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## Weekly time use in 2016

[Time spent per week on the six main categories, population aged 12 and older, 2016 (in hours per week).]



- 1 Looking after the household and others includes informal help given to other households.
- 2 Leisure time includes time spent on media and social contacts but does not include voluntary work (this differs from the report called *The art of juggling* from 2018).
- 3 Voluntary work includes attending meetings and religious activities.

Bron: SCP/CBS (TBO '16), weighted data

## Lots of time for personal care and leisure activities

The figure shows how many hours people spend on the six categories each week. These are what are referred to as the 'main activities', i.e. activities that are the most important according to the respondent.<sup>1</sup> Dutch people aged 12 and older spend almost half the week on personal care [For example sleeping, eating and drinking, dressing and washing].<sup>2</sup> They spend 59 hours per week sleeping and around 18 hours per week on other forms of personal care, such as eating and drinking, washing, dressing, and so on. A lot of time is also devoted to leisure activities [Media and ICT, social contacts, sports, culture, hobbies, bars/restaurants, outings and relaxation.] such as hobbies and sports. At just over 42 hours, the time spent on these activities is roughly equal to the time spent on a full-time job.<sup>3</sup> Men have approximately 3 hours more leisure time per week than women. On the other hand, women spend around 3 hours more per week on personal care.

## Men work more, women provide more care

A quarter of the time of both men and women is spent on paid and unpaid work. But compared to men, women spend more time on the household and on care tasks [Household tasks, shopping, parent-child time and caring for adult household members.] and report fewer hours of paid work [Performing paid work, commuting to and from work, looking for work and training during working hours.]. In other words, women are still spending more time in the domestic domain, whereas paid work occupies a more central role for men.

### Why do the individual activities not add up to precisely 168 hours per week?

The time spent on the individual activities does not add up to precisely 168 hours because the time spent on those activities is rounded off. In addition, there is a small category of activities that are defined as 'other' and not included. These are activities that could not be categorised, such as time spent completing the diary for the survey.

### Little time for education and volunteering

Little time is spent on education and training [General and vocational education, hobby courses and related travel time.] and volunteering [Voluntary work, meetings, other gatherings and religious activities.], compared with the other activities. The Dutch spend an average of 3 hours and 20 minutes a week in education and doing homework. Voluntary work and meetings [Voluntary work, meetings, other gatherings and religious activities.] accounts for less than 2 hours a week for Dutch people. These low averages are largely explained by the fact that a high proportion of the population spend no time at all on these activities.

### The breakdown by age for education and voluntary work

The following table shows that three quarters of participants in the survey were not following educational courses (outside working hours) during the week that the diary was kept. More than half do not engage in volunteer work, religious activities or attending meetings. Participation in these activities is strongly related to age: young people spend lots of time in education and training, whereas older people devote a lot of time to volunteering and related activities.

Share of respondents participating in education and volunteering\* during the diary week, population aged 12 and older, 2016 (in percentages)

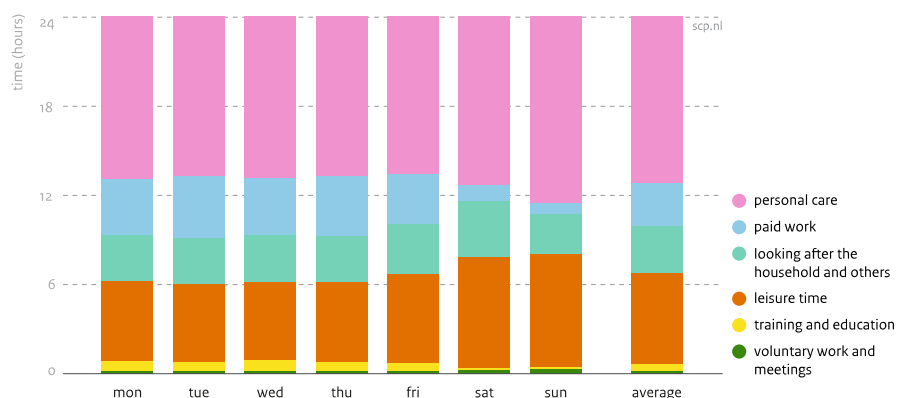
age group	education and training	voluntary work and meetings
total	23%	36%
aged 12-19	74%	18%
aged 20-65	21%	34%
aged 66 and over	6%	53%

\* Voluntary work includes meetings and religious activities.

Bron: SCP/CBS (TBO '16), weighted data

## Time use during the week and at the weekend

[Time spent on the six main time use categories, by day of the week, population aged 12 and older, 2016 (in hours per week).]



Bron: SCP/CBS (TBO '16), weighted data

## Differences between the days of the week and times of day

Using the information on time use, we can also describe when the Dutch undertake certain activities. For example, do we live in a 24/7 society in which people also work at the weekend? And do the Dutch still eat at six in the evening?

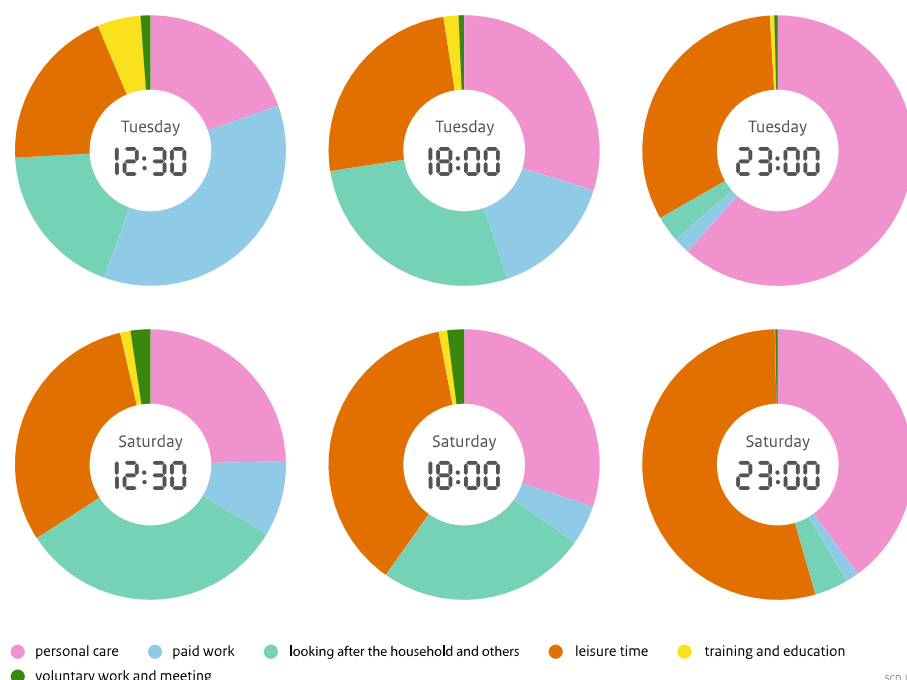
Weekdays resemble each other very closely, with people spending almost 11 hours on personal care (including sleep). The amount of free time is also roughly equal to the sum of the more obligatory activities such as paid work, looking after the household, caring for others and education and training. Friday is the weekday that most closely resembles the weekend days. This could indicate that Friday is a popular part-time day.

It would seem that the Dutch do not live in a 24/7 society, given that much less time is spent on paid work at the weekend. Sunday is clearly a day of rest, with a relatively large amount of time devoted to personal care and leisure time.



## When do the Dutch engage in which activities?

[Share of the population participating in the six main activities, Tuesday and Saturday, population aged 12 and older, 2016 (in %).]



Bron: SCP/CBS (TBO '16), weighted data

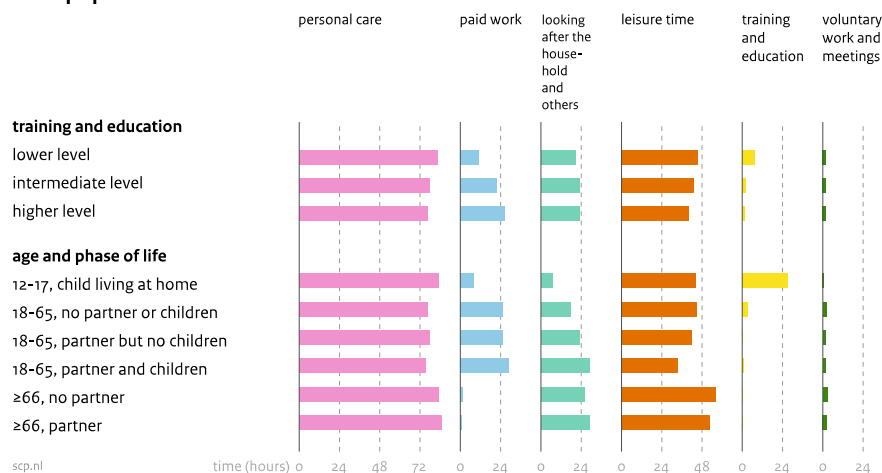
If we look at the times of day, we also find no evidence at all for a 24/7 economy. People mainly work between 08:00 and 17:00, with a proportion also taking a break around lunchtime. The times devoted to lunch and the evening meal can be recognised clearly, with peaks in time spent on personal care occurring around 12:00 and 18:00. There is time for leisure activities during the evening hours. On Saturdays there is more scope for leisure time and for household and care tasks.

Although paid work is concentrated around certain hours and on weekdays, people do also work outside these times. On Tuesdays, 6% of respondents are still at work at 20:00 and 3% are still at work at 22:00. The proportion of people working during the daytime on Saturdays fluctuates between 6 and 8%; in the evening hours it is around 2%. These people may be working overtime, but they may also have a job that involves working outside normal office hours (e.g. nursing or the hospitality sector).

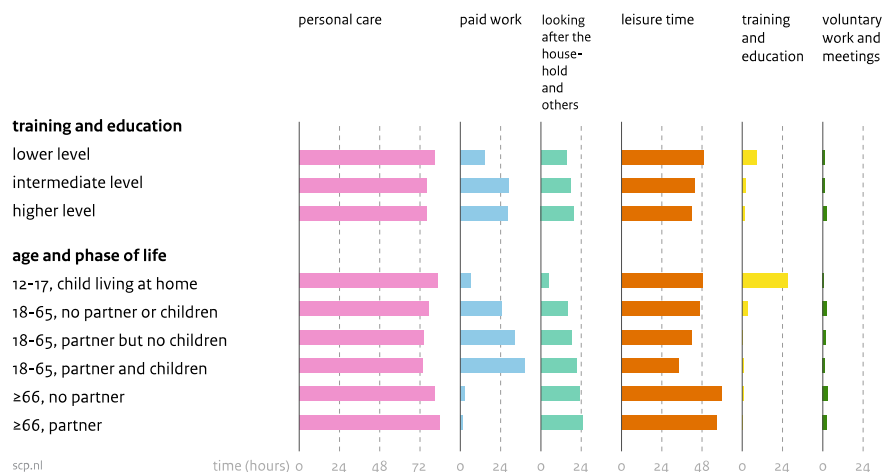
## Differences in time use

[Time spent per week on the six main time use categories, broken down by background characteristics, population aged 12 and older, 2016 (in hours per week).\*]

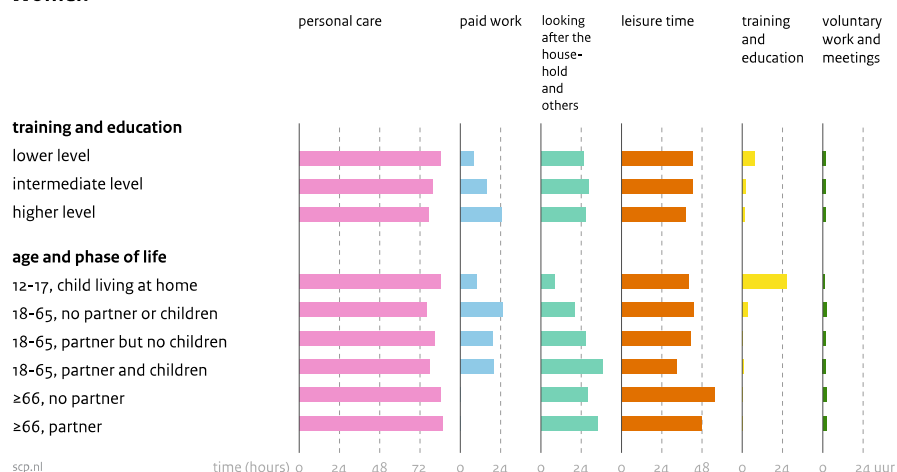
### Total population



### Men



### Women



\* This card stack does not include figures about single parents as a group. The decision to do this was taken because the number of participants from that group in the study was too small to allow reliable conclusions to be drawn.

Bron: SCP/CBS (TBO '16), weighted data

## Dividing lines in time

Information on time use can also answer questions about social differences. Differences between social groups can become manifest in several ways (Bovens et al. 2014; Vrooman et al. 2014), whereas differences in behaviour become manifest, inter alia, in time use. It is precisely for this reason that 'Time' is one of the six core domains in the Gender Equality Index published by the European Institute for Gender Equality (2017). Are there significant differences according to gender, educational background and age? Or are the similarities greater than the differences?

The gap between different educational and income groups has received a good deal of attention from researchers and politicians in recent years (Bovens et al. 2014; nos.nl 2017; Piketty 2017; Rijksoverheid 2017). Population ageing has also raised attention for the position and well-being of older people (Van den Broek et al. 2016; Van den Broek 2016; NOS 2017; Rijksoverheid 2017). That is why this publication pays attention to differences in age and educational background.

## Differences between men and women

There are clear differences in how men and women use their time, particularly in work and care. Explanations for this can be found, inter alia, in opinions on the division of tasks and what constitutes appropriate roles for men and women (Bianchi & Milkie 2010; European Institute for Gender Equality 2017). Women also spend slightly more time on personal care and slightly less on leisure time. A more detailed analysis of these activities shows that men mainly devote extra leisure time to ICT, sports and hobbies, whereas women spend slightly longer bathing/showering than men, but above all spend more time applying make-up and dressing.

## Differences between educational groups

An increasing amount of attention is being paid to differences between people with higher and lower levels of education (Wolf 2013). Educational differences say a lot about someone's preferences and opportunities (Bovens et al. 2014). This is related to social class, as well as to social norms and resources such as money.

Better-educated men spend longer working and on care than those with a lower level of education. Women with a higher educational level also work more hours, but the differences in time spent on care tasks and the household are small. The high number of hours spent working by people with higher levels of education reflects their strong position in the labour market and their ambitions in relation to work (Cloïn 2013; Van der Horst 2014; Portegijs & Van den Brakel 2016). The relatively large amount of time spent by highly educated men on care tasks and the household can be attributed to the importance they attach to an equal division of household and care tasks (see also the [Emancipation Monitor 2018 \(https://digital.scp.nl/emancipatiemonitor2018/\)](https://digital.scp.nl/emancipatiemonitor2018/)).

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### A caveat with the comparisons

It is important to note that we are comparing groups on a single characteristic here, without taking into account any other differences. This could, for example, signify that people with a low level of education work relatively few hours because they are retired or are still in

education or training more often than more highly educated people. This supposition is supported by the fact that the share of people with higher education is greater among those aged 20-64 than among the over-65s.

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Differences can also be observed between educational groups in the other categories. People with a lower educational level spend more time on leisure activities [Media and ICT, social contacts, sport, culture, hobbies, bars/restaurants, outings and relaxation.] and personal care [For example sleeping, eating and drinking, dressing and washing].<sup>4</sup> This final point is mainly due to the overrepresentation of younger people in the low-education group.

### The period with children is relatively busy

Different phases of life bring different opportunities and constraints (Nomaguchi & Bianchi 2004; Bianchi & Milkie 2010; Kraaykamp et al. 2013). For example, single people can allocate their time relatively easily, whereas people with a partner and children have to coordinate their time use more with each other. In addition, young and older people have different lifestyles; many young people go to school, for example, which means they devote more time to education than to work and care. Younger people also devote a relatively large amount of time to personal care. The period when there are children living at home is the busiest phase of life in terms of time spent on paid work, the household and care tasks. In contrast to common perception, mothers are no busier than fathers as regards the time spent on these 'obligations'. On the contrary, in the phase of life when children are living at home, men spend almost 4 hours per week more on the sum total of paid *and* unpaid work than women (Bucx and Roeters 2018).

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#### No 'second shift' for women

In a book published in 1989, Arlie Hochschild introduced the term 'second shift' (Hochschild 1989). She posited that many women begin a 'second shift' at home after finishing work. This was based on the assumption that women do the bulk of the housework, while men relax after work. This term and its concomitant assumption are also regularly heard in the Netherlands. However, time use research provides no evidence for it. While Dutch women do indeed spend more time on unpaid work (care tasks and the household) than men, they also spend less time on paid work. Accordingly, the sum total of paid and unpaid work is roughly the same. In the phase of life when the children are living at home, the total time spent on paid work, household tasks plus caring for and looking after children is in fact slightly higher for fathers than for mothers (Bucx & Roeters 2018).

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The other cards in this stack look in more detail at the time spent on

[Personal care](https://digital.scp.nl/timeuse2/personal-care) (<https://digital.scp.nl/timeuse2/personal-care>), [Paid work](https://digital.scp.nl/timeuse2/paid-work) (<https://digital.scp.nl/timeuse2/paid-work>), [Looking after the household and family care](https://digital.scp.nl/timeuse2/looking-after-the-household-and-family-care) (<https://digital.scp.nl/timeuse2/looking-after-the-household-and-family-care>) and [Leisure time](https://digital.scp.nl/timeuse2/leisure-time) (<https://digital.scp.nl/timeuse2/leisure-time>) (including voluntary work and meetings).

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## Cite this card

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## Publication date

24 July 2019

## Information notes

- 1 Participants were also asked to note their secondary activities, i.e. activities they were performing alongside the main activity. This could for example mean looking after children whilst cooking. These secondary activities are not included in this digital publication.
- 2 More information on how measurements were carried out can be found on the card [About the Time Use Survey](https://digital.scp.nl/timeuse2/about-the-time-use-survey) (<https://digital.scp.nl/timeuse2/about-the-time-use-survey>).
- 3 The number of hours of leisure time is somewhat different to the results in the report *Alle ballen in de lucht* (The art of juggling). This is because the report also includes time spent on voluntary work under 'leisure time'.
- 4 This is also the case if we look only at people in work, though the differences between the educational groups are then much smaller.

# Personal care

Author: [Anne Roeters](#)

## How much time do we spend on sleeping, eating and other forms of personal care?

Personal care consists of our basic needs (such as sleeping and eating) and is therefore a fundamental part of the day. The amount of sleep we have, for example, has a major impact on our quality of life (Kahneman & Krueger 2006; Ancoli-Israel et al. 2008; Dewald et al. 2010; Van Laethem et al. 2015). A day that starts after a night of too little sleep rarely turns into a good day.

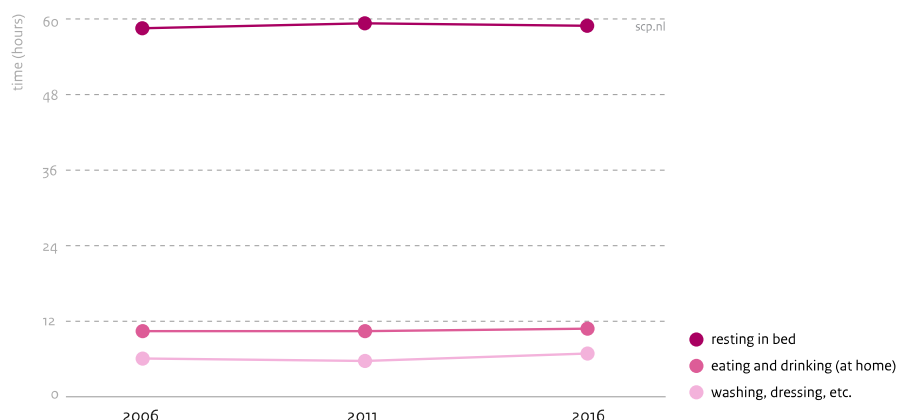
According to some, modern life has become so rushed that there is little time left over for personal activities. Both journalists and researchers have sounded the alarm about the amount of sleep people get. They presume that people are suffering from chronic lack of sleep due to being kept awake by the endless possibilities of the Internet, the blue light emitted by smartphone screens and the stress of daily life (Van Gelder 2014; Vantighem 2017; Weeda 2017). Do we manage to get the recommended eight hours' sleep per day? Is it true that we are spending less time in bed? And what has happened with other forms of personal care? This card investigates trends in personal care. In addition, we compare different educational levels and age groups and look at the differences between men and women.

## What kind of activities does 'personal care' include?

In 2016, Dutch people aged 12 and older spent an average of about 11 hours per day on sleeping and other forms of personal care.<sup>1</sup> The time spent on eating and drinking at home [[Eating a meal or snack or drinking something at home.](#)] is about 1.5 hours per day. The time spent on activities such as washing and dressing [[Showering, bathing, brushing teeth, shaving, putting on make-up, getting dressed, medical care and personal care that is classed as private.](#)] is about one hour per day. However, the largest share of this form of time allocation is spent in bed [[Sleeping and other time spent ill or awake in bed.](#)]: about 8.5 hours a day. People say they spend almost one hour longer sleeping on Sunday than on an average weekday.

## Personal care, 2006-2016

[Personal care: distribution across different types of personal care, population aged 12 and older, 2006-2016 (in hours per week).]



Bron: SCP (TBO'06); SCP/CBS (TBO'11-'16), weighted data

## Little change in sleeping and eating

The figures provide no support for the assumption that we have less time for sleeping and other forms of personal care today than in the past. Between 2006 and 2016, people in the Netherlands in fact started spending slightly more time on personal care. Additional analyses show that this can be ascribed, above all, to an increase in the time spent on washing and other personal care.

### Eating and drinking between 1975 and 2015

As time allocation data have been collected since 1975, we can look back further than 2006. In the article 'Fast or slow food?', researchers investigated how time allocation in relation to eating has changed. They showed that people spent 15 minutes per day less eating and drinking at home in 2005 than in 1975. Conversely, people spent almost twice as much time eating out or eating takeaway meals (Mandemakers and Roeters 2014).

## Do we get the recommended eight hours' sleep per day?

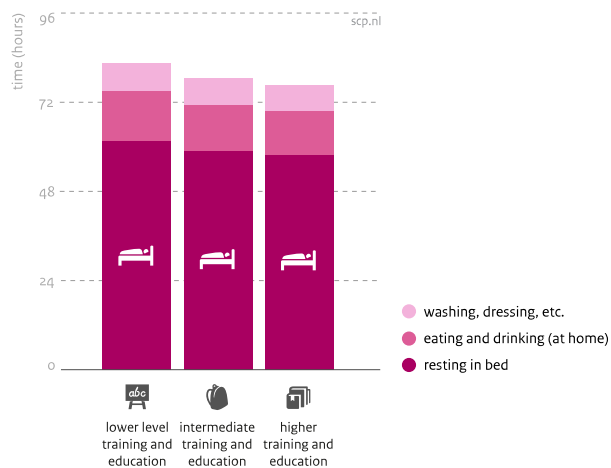
In the category 'bed rest' [[Sleeping and other time spent ill or awake in bed.](#)], we distinguish between sleeping and lying in bed awake or ill. Participants in the survey stated that they spend an average of 8 hours 15 minutes per day sleeping and 10 minutes lying awake. While it is of course possible that people who lie awake at night have not always recorded this accurately, it would seem that many Dutch people are getting more than the recommended eight hours of sleep per day. To be precise, 60% of participants exceeded the eight-hour threshold in the diary week.<sup>2</sup> This proportion is even higher among those aged under 18. Within that group, 93% sleep for 8 hours or more (as opposed to 58% of those aged over 18). Roughly 5% of Dutch people stated that they slept less than 6.5 hours per day (or night) in 2016.



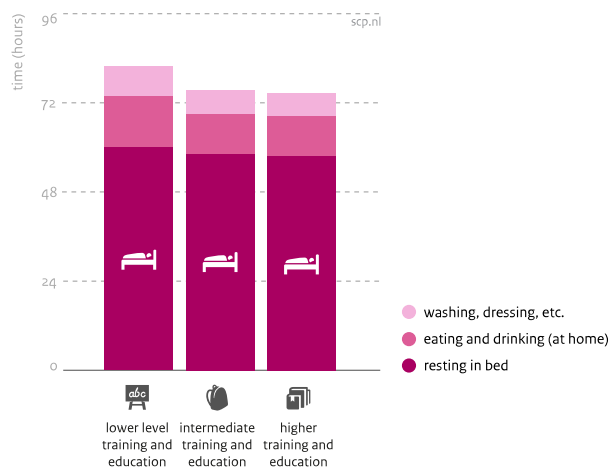
## Personal care broken down by educational level

[Time spent on personal care, broken down by educational level and gender, population aged 12 and older, 2016 (in hours per week).]

### Total population



### Population aged 20-65



Bron: SCP/CBS (TBO '16), weighted data

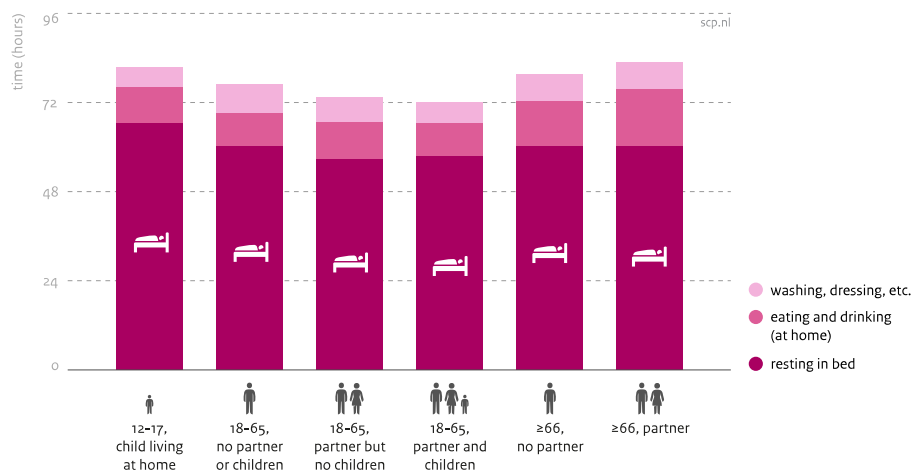
## Differences in educational levels greater than gender differences

Women spend a total of 3 hours per week more on personal care than men. However, the differences between the different educational levels appear to be slightly greater than those between men and women. People with a lower level of education spend almost 6 hours per week more on personal care than more highly educated people.

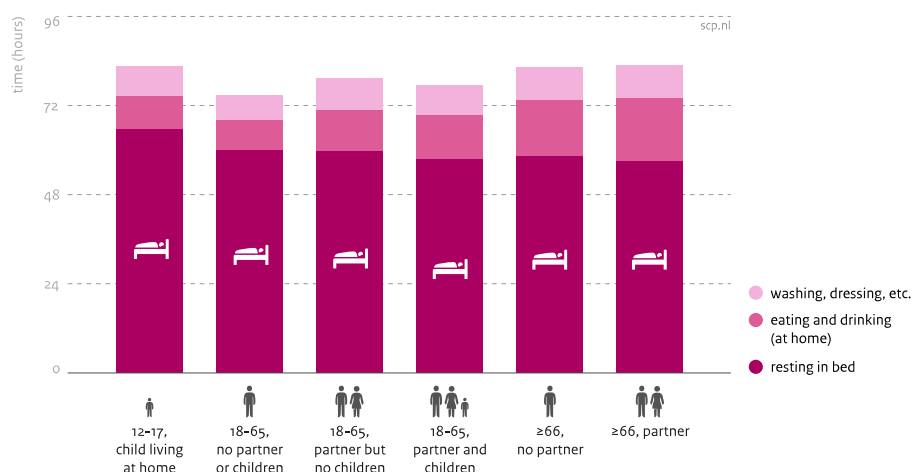
## Personal care, broken down by age and family status

[Time spent on personal care, broken down by age and family status as well as gender, population aged 12 and older, 2016 (in hours per week).]

### Men



### Women



Bron: SCP/CBS (TBO '16), weighted data

## Older people spend a lot of time on personal care, but do not sleep more

Various studies have shown that sleep patterns vary with age. Young people, for example, need more sleep, whereas elderly people experience more problems sleeping (Ancoli-Israel et al. 2008; Klerman & Dijk 2008). The exceptional position of young people stands out particularly clearly in the time allocation statistics. As a group, they spend much more time in bed than adults. There are few differences between older people and people of working age. In other words, after retirement people definitely do not spend more time lying in and dozing.

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## Publication date

24 July 2019

## Information notes

- 1 As with the other activities, we look only at the main activities. For more information, see the card [About the Time Use Survey \(https://digital.scp.nl/timeuse2/about-the-time-use-survey\)](https://digital.scp.nl/timeuse2/about-the-time-use-survey).
- 2 Women achieve this threshold more often than men (63% versus 57%).

# Paid work

Author: [Anne Roeters](#)

## How much time do we spend on paid work and related activities?

Time allocation data provide unique information about labour market participation and related activities. Where contractual hours are a direct reflection of a person's employment contract, the hours reported in the survey diary are a reflection of people's daily lives. People may work more than their contractual hours because they are working overtime, or less because they are ill or on holiday. The time allocation data also allow us to look at activities that are more indirectly related to work, such as commuting, work-related training and looking for a new or different job.

Averages for the entire Dutch population mask wide differences in the time spent on paid work between men and women, between people with different educational levels and between different ages and family status. These differences are often caused by a person's labour market position and the need to balance work and family care (Van Echtelt et al. 2016; SER 2016; Roeters 2017). On this card, we are therefore looking at men and women, people with high and low educational levels and people of different ages and family status ('phases of life'). When we look at the overall picture, we will be zooming in, above all, on people in the age group aged 20 to 65.<sup>1</sup>

## What do people do during working hours?

The umbrella term 'paid work' as used here encompasses four activities: doing paid work, commuting to and from work, study during working hours, and looking for work.<sup>2</sup> On average, all Dutch people aged 12 and older spend 20.5 hours per week on paid work. If we only look at the age group 20-65, this figure is nearly 27 hours per week. Within this age category, we can also focus only on people in paid employment. This latter group works an average of 35 hours per week.

The lion's share of this time is spent on doing paid work (31 hours per week by those aged 20-65). People spend about 4 hours per week travelling to and from work. The diary entries also showed how much time people spent on study during working hours and on looking for work. As less than 5% of the working-age population take part in these activities at all, the time spent on them averages out at less than 10 minutes per week.

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### The Netherlands: the part-time champion

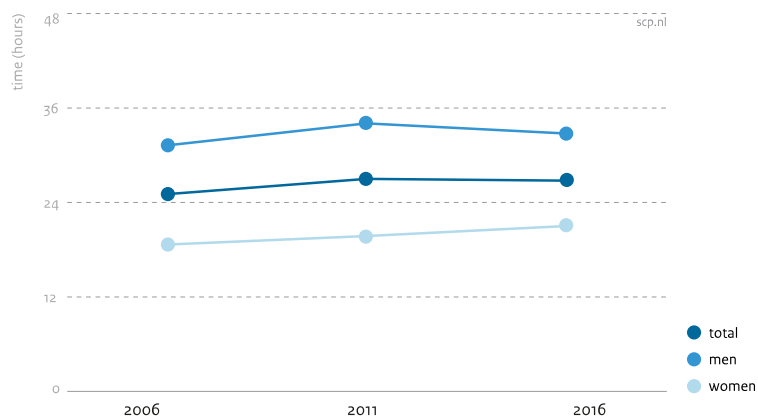
The popularity of part-time work in the Netherlands has a major influence on the time spent on paid work. Three quarters of women and one in five men in paid employment are in part-time jobs. This puts Dutch women and men head and shoulders above other countries: the average across the 28 EU member states is 31.5% for women and 8.2% for men (Portegijs & Van den Brakel 2016).

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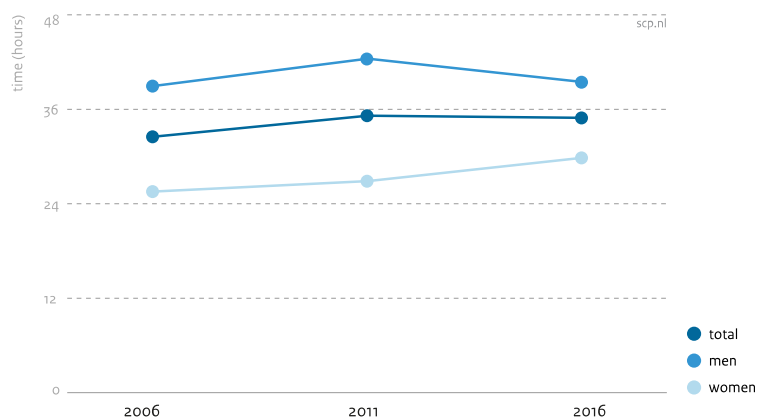
## Paid work, 2006-2016

[Total time spent on activities relating to paid work, population aged 20-65, 2006-2016 (in hours per week).]

### People with and without paid employment



### People with paid employment



Bron: SCP (TBO'06); SCP/CBS (TBO'11-'16), weighted data

## Continuity...

The changes in time spent on paid work over the past ten years are small. People aged 20 to 65 worked 2 hours per week more in 2016 than in 2006. If we look only at those in paid employment, the increase is slightly bigger, at 4 hours per week. Women in paid employment, in particular, have reported more hours of employment: in 2016 they spent 5 hours per week more on work-related activities than in 2006. It is important to note that this does not mean that they expanded their employment contracts; the *Emancipation Monitor 2016* (*Emancipatiemonitor 2016*) shows that the contractual working hours of women in paid employment increased by an average of one hour per week between 2005 and 2015 (Portegijs & Van den Brakel 2016, p. 67). The contractual hours of men fell by one hour over the same period.

## ...despite the economic crisis

The Dutch labour market has been exposed to a deep economic crisis over the past decade (CBS 2017). In 2011, at the low point of the crisis, people were not working any less than before or after the crisis.<sup>3</sup> If anything, the opposite was the case: men in paid employment, in particular, spent relatively more time on work in that year. It may be that they worked a relatively high number of hours during the crisis in order to increase their job security.

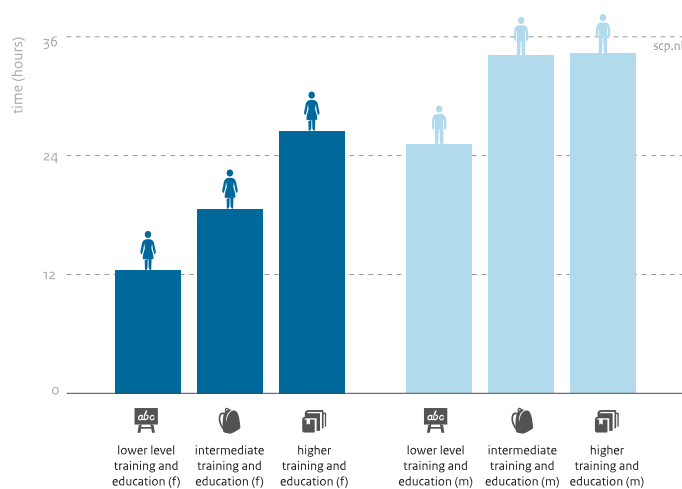
### Trends in contractual hours

The time allocation data correspond reasonably well to estimates of contractual hours based on the Dutch Labour Force Survey (Enquête Beroepsbevolking, EBB). Women in paid employment were contracted for an average of 25.4 hours per week in 2005; by 2015, this had risen to 26.6 hours. The figures for men were 38.5 and 37.7 hours respectively. The Emancipation Monitor 2016 also shows that it was mainly the working hours of younger women that increased (Portegijs & Van den Brakel 2016).

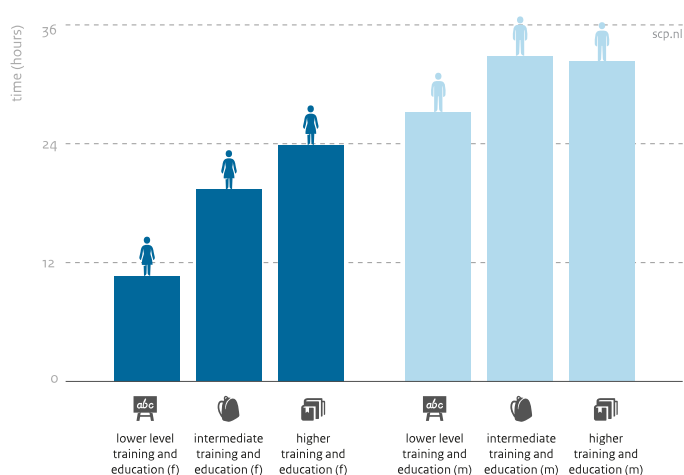
### Paid work broken down by educational level

[Time spent on paid work and related activities, broken down by educational level and gender, population aged 20-65, 2016 (in hours per week).]

2016



2006



Bron: SCP/CBS (TBO '16), weighted data

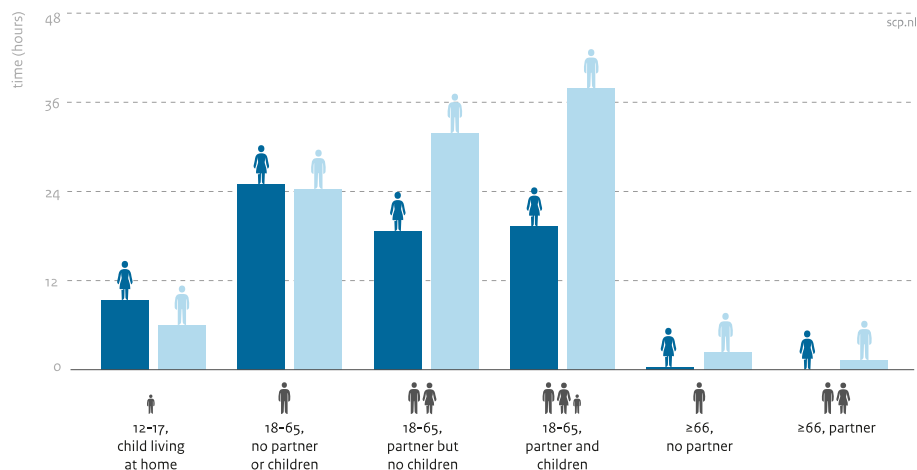
It is feasible that the working hours of people with higher and lower levels of education have developed differently over the last decade. Technological changes in the labour market mainly pose a threat to the labour market position of those with intermediate education, because it is relatively attractive for companies to replace these workers with robots (Herweijer & Josten 2014; Van den Berge & Ter Weel 2015). At the same time, it is usual for people with higher levels of education in particular to continue working in the evening (Roeters et al. 2016b; SER 2016).

The figure above shows the differences in educational levels for those aged 20 to 65. They relate to people both with and without work. The higher a person's educational level, the greater the number of working hours. Men with intermediate education resemble more highly educated men. Among women, those with intermediate education occupy a distinct middle position. If we compare the differences in educational levels in 2016 with those in 2006, we see that the educational level dividing line has moved lower. The differences among women have increased slightly, at 14 hours in 2016 as opposed to 13 hours in 2006. For men, the difference between those with lower and higher educational levels has increased from 5 hours to 9 hours per week.

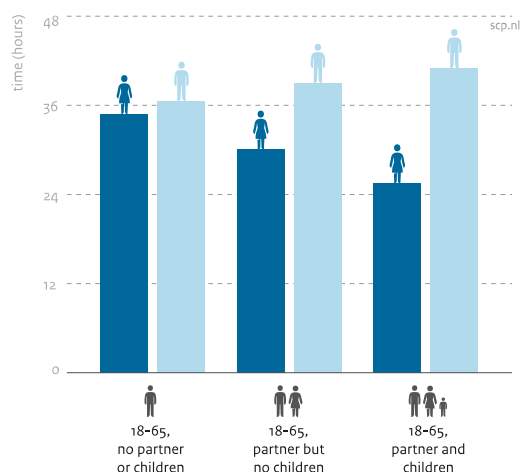
## Paid work by age and family status

[Time spent on paid work and related activities, by age and family status, as well as gender, population aged 12 and older, 2016 (in hours per week).]

### Total population



### People with paid employment, ages 18-65



Bron: SCP/CBS (TBO '16), weighted data

## Paid work over the life course

The amount of time that people are willing and able to devote to paid work varies considerably depending on their personal circumstances (SER 2016). Are there still school obligations? Are there children to be looked after?

Analyses of labour market participation often focus on people of working age, which is why we looked at 20-65 year-olds in the figures above. However, younger people also work for around 8 hours per week; these are often (though not always) jobs on the side, student jobs and so forth. The number of hours worked by older people is very much lower: older women work less than half an hour per week on average and older men 2 hours.



## Gender gap greatest in the phase with children

Single women report spending the same amount of time on paid work per week as single men. In cohabiting couples with children, men work about 18 hours more per week. This pattern is in line with earlier research showing that gender differences in working hours are already visible at a young age and increase in later life. An important turning point in this context is the arrival of the first child (Wiesmann et al. 2008; Roeters et al. 2016a). After the birth of a child, women often reduce their working hours in order to be able to provide more care, whereas men tend to work more rather than less. These different choices reflect the different role patterns: women feel (more) responsible (than men) for looking after the baby, while men often work as much or even more in order to provide financial security (Wiesmann et al. 2008; Bianchi & Milkie 2010).

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## Publication date

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## Information notes

- 1 For that reason, the results presented here may differ somewhat from those in the report *Alle ballen in de lucht* (The art of juggling) (Roeters 2018).

For that reason, the results presented here may differ somewhat from those in the report *Alle ballen in de lucht* (The art of juggling) (Roeters 2018).

- 2 A lunch break during working hours is also classed as doing paid work.
- 3 The proportion of respondents (aged 20-65) stating that they were working during the diary week was around 80% in all years.

# Looking after the household and family care

Author: [Anne Roeters](#)

## How much time do we spend on looking after the household and family care?

We devote some of our time to ourselves (e.g. when we read a book or take a bath), but we also 'give' a portion of it to others. Parents look after children and voluntary carers provide care to loved ones who need help. But carrying out household tasks is also often regarded as 'care' because others (such as fellow household members) often benefit from it (Folbre 2006), for example from a tasty meal or a clean home. The question of how much value the Dutch attach to this and how it compares with the value of paid work is one that is often asked but is very difficult to answer (Putters 2015). In this card, we show how much time the Dutch spend on looking after the household and family care (together summarised as 'care'). Was there continuity in the time spent on these activities between 2006 and 2016, as we found for paid work, or do we see more fluctuations in this domain? How have differences in educational levels developed and what differences can be observed between different ages and family status?

As care is one of the main domains where inequality between men and women becomes manifest, this card devotes a lot of attention to gender differences. Dutch and international studies show that women still perform more household tasks (Portegijs & Van den Brakel 2016; European Institute for Gender Equality 2017). The time allocation data let us look in more detail at how much time men and women devote to care and at how this varies depending on the educational level as well as the age and family status.

## How much time do the Dutch spend on care?

Dutch people aged 12 and over spend 22 hours a week on care, or an average of 3 hours per day. Women spend more time than men on care (both in the total and the individual activities). The bulk of the time spent on care is devoted to activities such as cooking, tidying up, cleaning and doing the washing. The Dutch spent 2 hours per day on these activities in 2016. Shopping and using services also take a fair amount of time, namely 5 hours per week (three quarters of an hour per day).

The average Dutch person spends less than half an hour per day looking after others. However, most people do not provide voluntary care and are not looking after children. We are, however, able to take a more targeted look at the group who do have care tasks. Parents of children aged under 4 spent 15 hours per week on childcare, for example. Respondents who stated that they were providing some form of unpaid help to adults (within or outside their household) spent an average of 3.5 hours per week doing so.

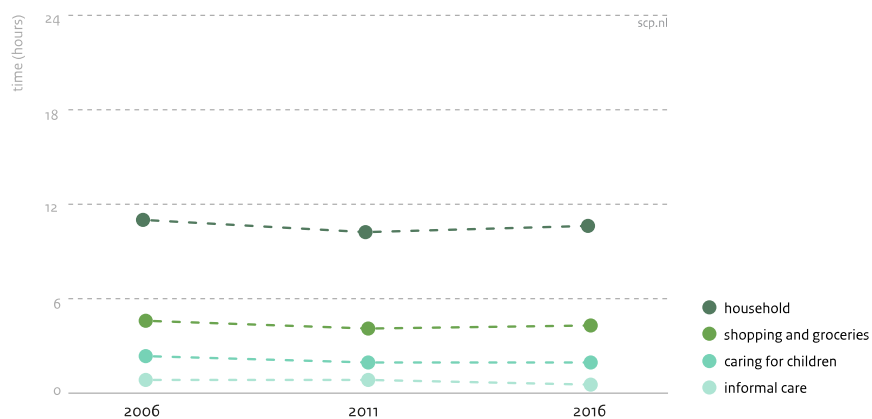
### Looking after the household and family care, 2006-2016

[Time spent looking after the household and family care, distribution across various forms of care, population aged 12 and older, 2006-2016 (in hours per week).]

#### Men (total population)



#### Men (aged 20-65)



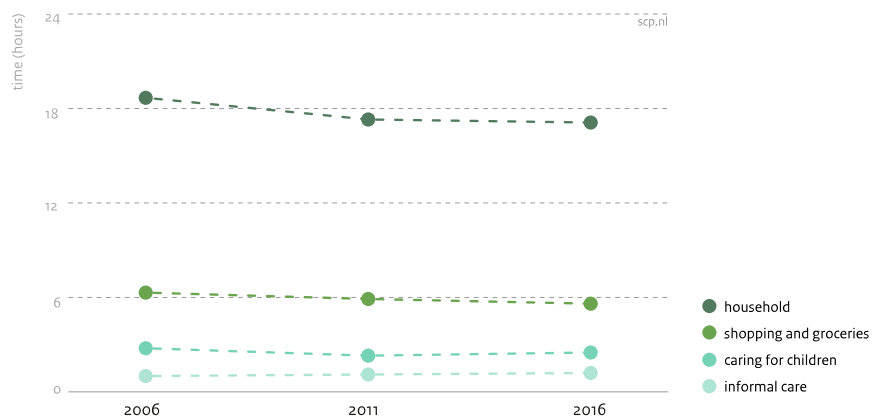
#### Fathers



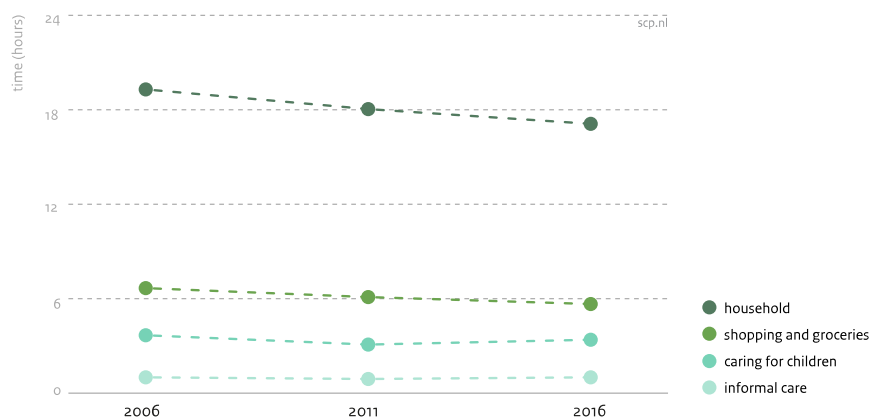
### Care tasks, 2006-2016

[Time spent looking after the household and family care, distribution across various forms of care, population aged 12 and older, 2006-2016 (in hours per week).]

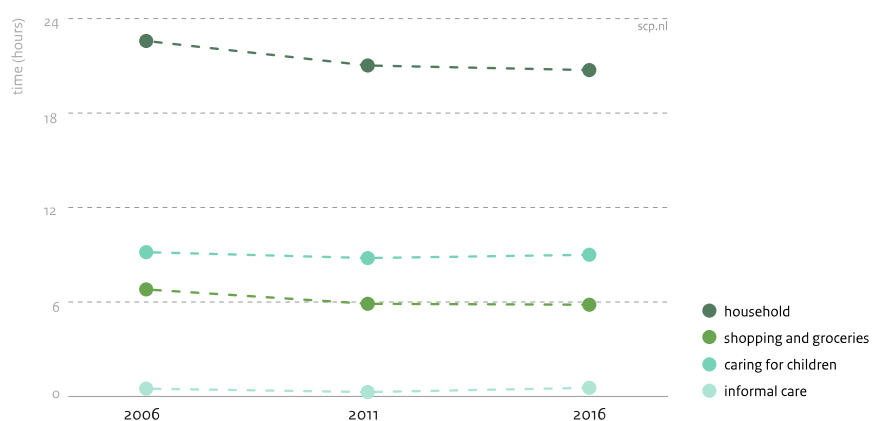
#### Women (total population)



#### Women (aged 20-65)



#### Mothers



\* The figures for fathers and mothers relate to cohabiting parents of children living at home.

Bron: SCP (TBO '06); SCP/CBS (TBO '11-'16), weighted data

## Some time gains for women

Technological advances have led to the development of intelligent devices, allowing us to shop for food and groceries, clothing and meals easily online. This could explain the reduction in the time women spend on household tasks and doing the shopping: Compared to 2006, women (aged 12 and over) are spending about 2.5 hours less a week on this. There was no reduction for men.

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### Time-saving technologies in the household

Scientists have been arguing since the 1970s about the question of whether domestic appliances (such as microwaves and washing machines) lead to time savings in the household (Szalai et al. 1972; Vanek 1974; Bittman et al. 2004; Gershuny 2004). Although the answer to this question is not yet clear, these studies do offer a possible explanation for the finding that the amount of time spent on the household remains fairly constant despite the increased opportunities to save time. This explanation posits that people raise their standards as the technical possibilities increase. In the past, for example, people only did the washing once a week because it was so laborious. The arrival of washing machines meant that washing took less time, but people began doing the washing more often because it became the norm to wear clean clothes more often. We can also map this onto the present day. It is now easier to shop online, but it may be that we spend (some of) the time we save looking at other webshops.

---

## No indications that parenthood has become more intensive

Family sociologists posit that parents are more engaged with their children than in the past. It is suggested that this 'intensive parenthood' is a new ideology in which parents devote lots of time, money and attention on their children (Altinas 2016). The time allocation data provide no evidence for this: there are no significant differences between 2006 and 2016 for either fathers or mothers. In the in-depth [Time Use Survey \(https://www.scp.nl/Publicaties/Alle\\_publicaties/Publicaties\\_2018/Alle\\_ballen\\_in\\_de\\_lucht\)](https://www.scp.nl/Publicaties/Alle_publicaties/Publicaties_2018/Alle_ballen_in_de_lucht), the time spent by parents (of children aged 9 and under) with their children was examined for 2011 and 2016 as well. In 2016, this was on average nearly 30 hours for fathers and nearly 40 hours for mothers. The figures for 2011 were 23 and 37 hours respectively. These data are however insufficient to determine whether it is a reflection of a rising trend.

## No sign of an increase in unpaid help as yet

Despite the ageing of the Dutch population and the government's aim to get people participating more in providing help to others, this form of time allocation did not increase between 2006 and 2016: if we look only at the time allocation of the group who were providing help or care to an adult at any point during the diary week, we see wide fluctuations. Compared against 2006, those who provide unpaid help spent more time per week doing so in 2016 (3.4 versus 2.7 hours), but the average in 2011 was a little higher still.

## Has the gap between men and women narrowed?

Bianchi et al. (2012) investigated whether household tasks have become more evenly shared between men and women in America over time. The researchers looked at a long period – 1965-2010 – and concluded that the gap between men and women had indeed narrowed. This was partly because men were doing more in the household, but mainly because women were doing less.

In this card stack, we are looking back over a period of 10 years. Although the pace of women's emancipation is generally slow, there are at least two reasons to suspect that the gender gap has reduced. As discussed on the [Paid work \(https://digital.scp.nl/timeuse2/paid-work\)](https://digital.scp.nl/timeuse2/paid-work) card, women are working slightly more today than they did in the past. In addition, women's educational levels have risen and actually exceed those of men in the younger generations. It is highly likely that this highly educated group have egalitarian standards (Merens & Bucx 2017).

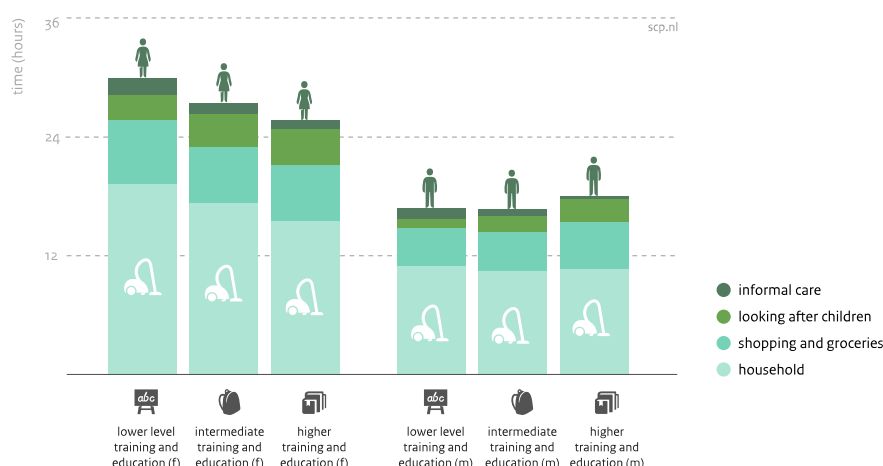
The data show that the difference in care in 2006 was 12 hours per week (among Dutch people aged 12 and over), and 9 hours per week in 2016. If only the household tasks and doing the shopping are included, the difference is less, going down from 10 hours a week to 7.5. So the gender gap appears to be narrowing slowly. As in America, this is caused by women doing less rather than by men doing more.

Finally, if we compare the time spent by the population as a whole on household and care tasks, it is the relative lack of difference that stands out most. Evidently, therefore, the time people spend on care is only partially related to their participation in the labour market. People with children spend more time on household tasks and family care. However, the trend over time is the same for this group as for the population as a whole.

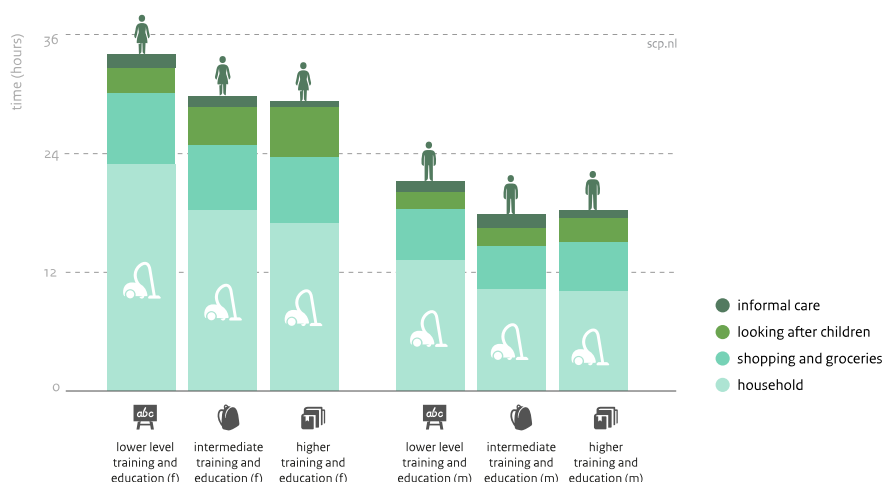
### Looking after the household and family care broken down by educational level

[Time spent looking after the household and family care, broken down by educational level and gender, population aged 20-65, 2016 (in hours per week).]

2016



2006



Bron: SCP/CBS (TBO '16), weighted data

### Educational differences limited

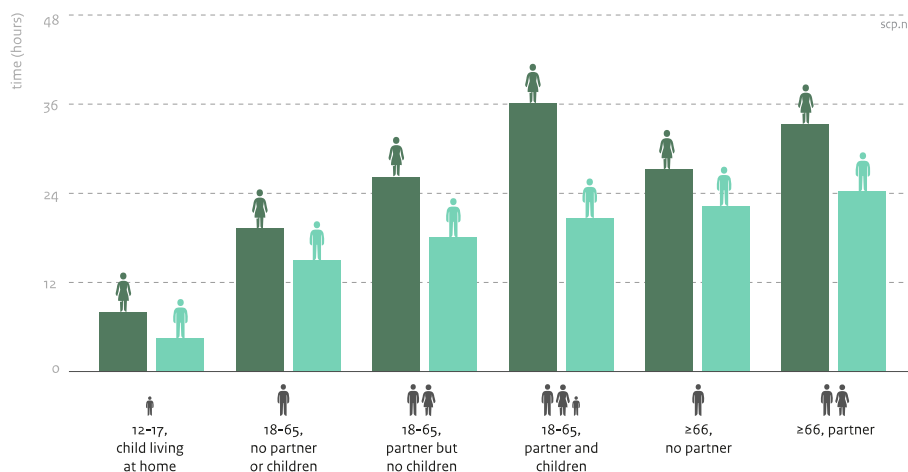
When we looked at paid work, we found differences not only between men and women but also between people with high and low levels of education. As paid work and care are partially communicating vessels, it is interesting to investigate whether these differences are also found when we look at care. With a few exceptions, that transpired not to be the case.

In addition, women with a higher level of education spent on average 4 hours less a week on household tasks than women with lower education levels. That difference was greater (6 hours a week) in 2006. Women with a higher level of education also spend less time on informal care (about 1 hour a week). It is possible that highly educated women have less time because they work more and have the financial resources to outsource these tasks (Heisig 2011).

### Looking after the household and family care broken down by phase of life and gender

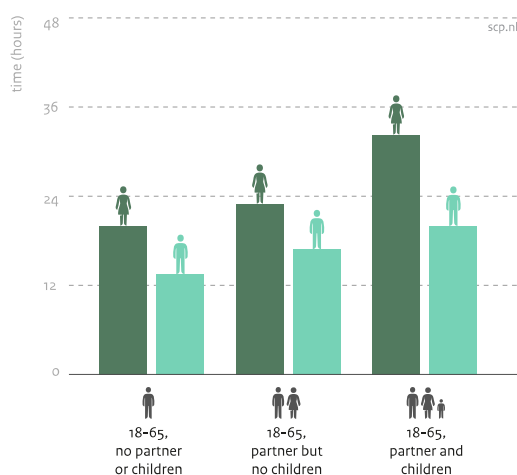
[Time spent looking after the household and family care, by educational level and gender, population aged 12 and older, 2016 (in hours per week).]

#### Total population





### People with paid employment, ages 18-65



Bron: SCP/CBS (TBO '16), weighted data

## Differences between parents and people without children greater for women than men

Women still feel more responsible for the running of the household and care of children than men (Wiesmann et al. 2008; Ridgeway 2011; Portegijs & Van den Brakel 2016). They also work fewer hours in the phase with children, giving them more time for family care (see also the card on [Paid work \(https://digital.scp.nl/timeuse2/paid-work\)](https://digital.scp.nl/timeuse2/paid-work)). This suggests that women gear the time they spend on family care more to their personal situation. The figures support this. Men who live with a partner and have at least one child spend 2 hours more per week looking after the household and family care than men who live with a partner but do not (or do not yet) have children. The difference between women living with a partner with and without children is, however, much greater, at 10 hours per week. Where parents are in paid employment, the difference in time spent on care is also greatest among couples with children, although the gender difference is slightly smaller than in the population as a whole. However, even without the responsibility for a child or a partner, women already spend more time on care tasks. The difference for single people is for example 5 hours per week.<sup>1</sup>

### Why we cannot make any assertions over changes over the life course

The time allocation data enable us to compare groups of different ages and with different family statuses. However, we cannot determine the influence of life course events such as the birth of a child. It is therefore possible that the differences we observe between groups can be attributed to factors that we have no information about. It is possible, for example, that men and women who are more caring more often choose to have children and that this partially explains why people with children spend more time on family care.

## Gender gap also wide among young people and people aged over 65

To place the time allocation of those aged 20-65 in context, we also look at the preceding and subsequent phases of life. Girls and young women aged 12-19 spend 3 hours more per week looking after the household and family care than boys and young men in this age group.<sup>2</sup> It may be that to some extent we are measuring tasks here that have been given to children by their parents. What happens after age 65, when both partners generally no longer (need to) work? Compared with the child-rearing phase, the time allocation of men and women in this age group is relatively similar. However, women who have a partner still spend 9 hours per week more on care tasks than men with partners. Among the elderly who live alone, the difference is 5 hours a week.

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### Information notes

- 1 As in the rest of this digital publication, single parents are not included because our dataset includes too little information on this group to enable us to make any statements about them.
- 2 Compared with boys, girls spend more time on household tasks, doing the shopping and giving informal care to adults.

# Leisure time

Author: [Anne Roeters](#)

## How much leisure time do the Dutch have and how do they allocate it?

This card examines time use in the form of leisure. The amount of leisure time and how it is spent is often an indicator of the quality of life (Stiglitz et al. 2010; Verbeek & De Haan 2011; Bijl et al. 2015). That is no coincidence. People can use their leisure time to relax, reinforce social ties, take part in sports and improve themselves.

This is also the form of time use in which people have the most freedom and autonomy. The amount of leisure time people have and the way they organise it is partly a matter of choice, but also depends on their personal circumstances. Someone with a busy job and young children, for example, will have little time left over for leisure activities, whereas someone who is unemployed has lots of free time but may not enjoy it. On this card, we investigate how much time people spend on leisure activities and how they allocate their leisure time. We also investigate what the educational and gender differences are and the phases of life during which people have the least and most leisure time.

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### Time spent on voluntary work and meetings

Roughly a third of the survey participants said that they spent time on voluntary work and/or meetings during the diary week. The participants in those activities spent a total of about 4.5 hours a week on this. Both the proportion and the time spent by the participants were a little higher in 2016 than in 2006.

### Time spent on voluntary work and meetings, population aged 12 and older, 2006-2016 (as a percentage and in hours per week)

	2006	2011	2016
proportion (%)	33.7	36.9	36.3
time spent (hours a week)	1.4	1.7	1.7
time spent by those involved (hours a week)	4.2	4.6	4.6

Men spend neither more nor less time on voluntary work and meetings than women do. There are also no differences in terms of their education. We have noted a number of differences depending on the phase of life; older people in particular spend a relatively large amount of time on voluntary work and meetings.

### Time spent on voluntary work and meetings, population aged 12 and older, broken down by background characteristics, 2016 (in hours a week)

men	1.6
women	1.8
12-17, child living at home	0.8
18-65, no partner or children	2.2
18-65, partner but no children	1.6
18-65, partner and children	1.5
≥ 66, no partner	2.5
≥ 66, partner	2.3
lower level of education	1.7
intermediate level of education	1.7
higher level of education	1.7

## How much leisure time do we have?

Leisure time is used here as an umbrella term incorporating various sub-activities: media and ICT (including watching television); social life (such as family visits); hobbies (such as making music) and cultural participation (such as theatre visits). Overall, Dutch people aged 12 and older spend a little over 42 hours per week on these activities. If time spent on voluntary work and meetings is included as well, the total comes to nearly 44 hours a week. On an average Saturday and Sunday, people have around 7.5 hours of leisure time. On weekdays, this fluctuates between 5 and a quarter hours on an average Tuesday and 6 hours on an average Friday.

Media and ICT [[listening or watching media, reading, gaming, internet and computer use.](#)] (19.6 hours per week) and social life [[Social life: face-to-face contact \(e.g. visits\) and mediated contact \(phone, texting, chat, social media.\)](#)] (8.2 hours per week) are the most popular forms of leisure time. If we look more closely, we see that the category ‘media and ICT’ consists mainly of watching television (an average of 2 hours per day).<sup>1</sup> Men spend more of their leisure time on media than women do. On the other hand, they spend less time than women on social life.

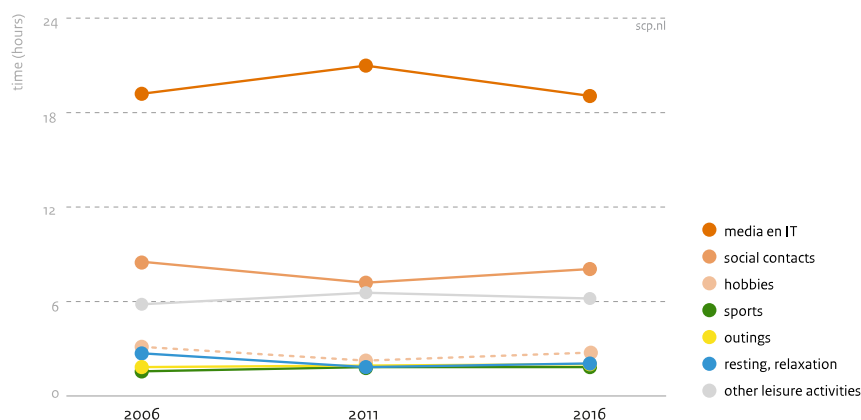
### A closer look at media and ICT: the ‘Media:Time’ study

The ‘Media:Time’ study is a time use survey that examines media use in the Netherlands in some detail. SCP collaborates in this survey with the Dutch Public Broadcasting Association (Nederlandse Publieke Omroep – NPO), the National Radio Audience Research Organisation (Nationaal Luister Onderzoek – NLO), the National Multimedia Research Organisation (Nationaal Onderzoek Multimedia – NOM), the Dutch Viewer Audience Measurement Service (Stichting Kijk Onderzoek – SKO) and the Dutch Outdoor Research Organisation (Buitenreclame Onderzoek – BRO). The survey has been carried out twice (in 2013 and 2015) and will be repeated every few years. Time use is measured slightly differently in the

Media:Time survey than in this study. For example, people are asked to enter one general activity and up to three media and ICT activities for each time interval of 10 minutes. See the [Media:Time card stack](#) for more information about the survey and the results.

### Leisure time, 2006-2016

[Leisure time: distribution across various types of leisure time use, population aged 12 and older, 2006-2016 (in hours per week).]



Bron: SCP (TBO '06); SCP/CBS (TBO '11-'16), weighted data

There was little change in the total amount of leisure time between 2006 and 2016 and the gender gap was also unchanged. If we look in more detail at the individual activities, we see that people in 2006 more often stated that they were resting and relaxing. A number of shifts also appear to have taken place between 2006 and 2011, which were reversed again in 2016. For example, the time spent on media and ICT rose between 2006 and 2011, but in 2016 was back at the same level as in 2006.

### Possible explanation for the reduction in time spent on media and ICT

The striking decline in media and ICT use between 2011 and 2016 is mainly attributable to changes in Internet and computer use. Using the Internet via a mobile phone is not included under Internet and computer use here, whereas this activity has grown in popularity in recent years. In the classification used in this study, use of a mobile phone is included under social life (because the telephone is often used for online communication). For more information, see Chapter 9 of [‘The Social State of the Netherlands 2017’](https://www.scp.nl/Publicaties/Alle_publicaties/Publicaties_2017/De_sociale_staat_van_Nederland_2017) ([https://www.scp.nl/Publicaties/Alle\\_publicaties/Publicaties\\_2017/De\\_sociale\\_staat\\_van\\_Nederland\\_2017](https://www.scp.nl/Publicaties/Alle_publicaties/Publicaties_2017/De_sociale_staat_van_Nederland_2017))(Bijl et al. 2017).

### Leisure time and social status

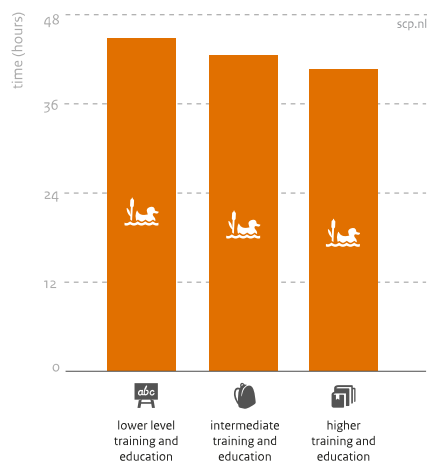
During the course of the twentieth century, there was a shift in the leisure time patterns of people in Western societies (Gershuny 2009). In the past, the higher social classes always had more leisure time than the lower classes (Veblen 1899/1912; Gershuny 2009). Members of the upper classes did not have to work, or only did very little, because they had sufficient income and assets. They could also afford to pay for help with the household and therefore had lots

of time left over for the pleasurable things in life. People with little by way of education and income, by contrast, had to work long days in order to earn a sufficient income. The rise of the knowledge economy has reversed this situation, and today it is those with higher levels of education who have little leisure time.

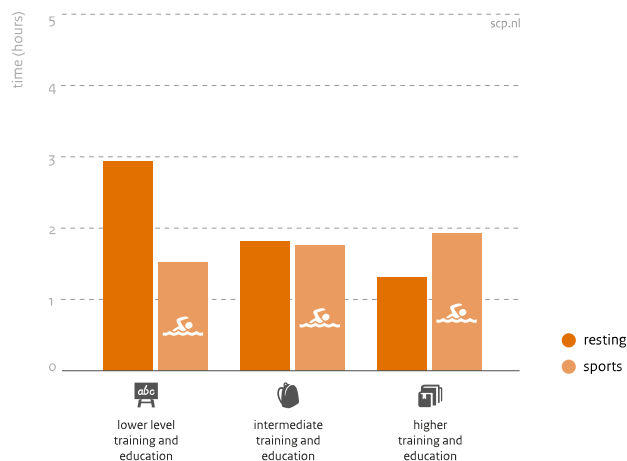
### Leisure time, broken down by educational level

[Time spent on leisure time, broken down by educational level and gender, population aged 12 and older, 2016 (in hours per week).]

#### Total leisure time



#### Only sport and relaxation



Bron: SCP/CBS (TBO '16), weighted data

### People with less education have more leisure time than people with more education

People with a lower educational level state that they have more leisure time than people with intermediate and higher levels of education. This difference still exists when we omit the responses from young people and those aged over 65 (who have a lower education level compared with the other groups and who tend not to be in work). This pattern is in line with the findings of earlier international research (Gershuny 2009; Gimenez-Nadal & Sevilla-Sanz 2011; Sevilla et al. 2012; Cloin

2013). The most frequently cited explanation for this difference is the status that people with higher levels of education attach to having a busy life and long working days. As a result, they have little time left over for leisure. People with less education more often work fewer hours and are more often unemployed, which means they spend or can spend a relatively high proportion of their time on leisure activities. See also the card on [Paid work \(https://digital.scp.nl/timeuse2/paid-work\)](https://digital.scp.nl/timeuse2/paid-work).

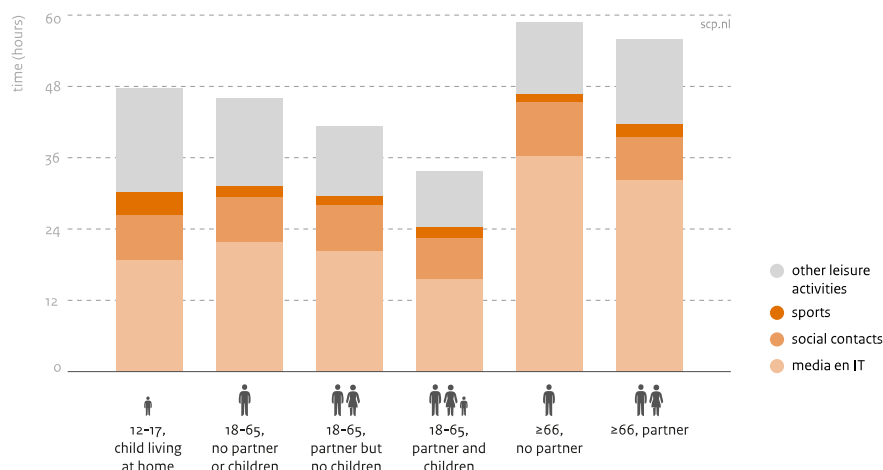
To investigate whether the different educational groups organise their time differently, we picked out two activities: sports and resting. Sports are an example of an ‘intensive’ activity, which can cost money and to which a certain status is attached. Resting, by contrast, is a less intensive activity that is by definition not organised. The differences in sports are negligible, but when it comes to resting, we see clearly that people with lower education do indeed spend more time on this activity.

Additional analyses for the [Time Use Survey \(https://www.scp.nl/Publicaties/Alle\\_publicaties/Publicaties\\_2018/Alle\\_ballen\\_in\\_de\\_lucht\)](https://www.scp.nl/Publicaties/Alle_publicaties/Publicaties_2018/Alle_ballen_in_de_lucht) show that the educational differences in leisure time use can be ascribed to differences in media used in particular.

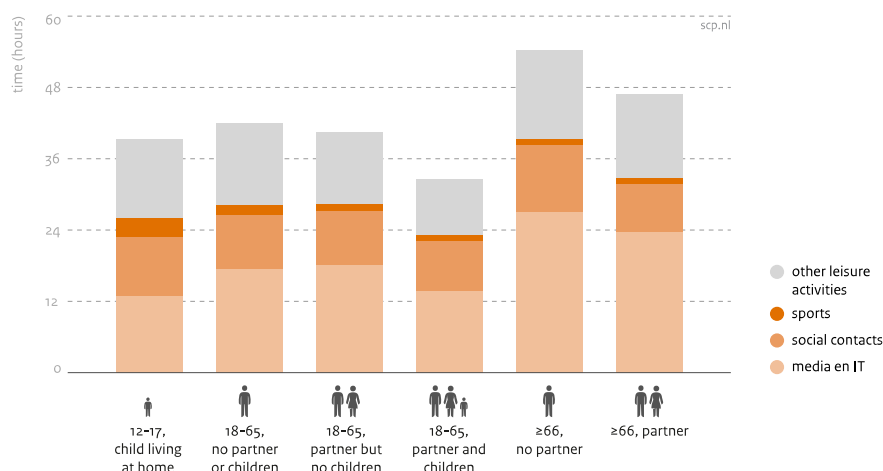
### Leisure time by family status

[Time spent on leisure, population aged 12 and older, 2016 (in hours per week).]

#### Men



#### Women



Bron: SCP/CBS (TBO '16), weighted data



## Different ages or phases of life, different opportunities

As the rest of this card stack shows, we find that the period when people are working and have children living at home is a relatively busy phase of life. Data on leisure time therefore unsurprisingly shows that cohabiting parents have the least leisure time (roughly 33 hours per week). Young people, and especially older people, have lots of leisure time. Men aged 65 and older (without a partner) have the most leisure time (roughly 59 hours per week).

There are also differences in the *composition* of leisure time. Compared with the older age groups, young people spend more time on sports and social life. These are more active activities that often take place outside the home. The absence of young children and health issues probably make it easier to participate in these activities. Media and ICT use – the most passive form of time use in this figure – is popular for all ages and people in various phases of life. People in the later phases of life spend the most time on this activity; this is mainly because people aged over 65 spend a relatively large amount of time watching television.

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### Why more leisure time is not always better

Although the term ‘leisure time’ has a positive ring, it is not necessarily always a positive thing in practice. Someone who is unemployed, for example, will not always know what to do with the large amount of leisure time at their disposal. Leisure time can also be busy; some researchers have demonstrated that leisure time is ‘intensifying’. As people do more and more in less and less time, their leisure time becomes less and less relaxing (Gershuny 2009; Sevilla et al. 2012; Sullivan & Gershuny 2017). Research also shows that women (compared with men) fragment their leisure time more and combine it more often with care activities (Bittman & Wajcman 2000; Portegijs et al. 2016).

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## Information notes

- 1 This means watching television as a main activity. Watching television as a secondary activity (e.g. if the television is on in the background while the respondent is cooking) is not counted.

# About the Time Use Survey

Author: [Anne Roeters](#)

## Changing times?

A lot has happened in the last decade. The Netherlands fell into an economic crisis and clawed its way out again. Politicians and policymakers changed tack by focusing on creating a 'participation society': a society whose members are expected more than ever to participate in employment, lifelong learning, volunteering and meetings, local decision-making and caring for relatives, friends and neighbours who need help (Putters 2015), and to do so despite there seeming to be more worries than ever about time pressure (Roeters 2018). This publication investigates whether these changes are reflected in time use by the Dutch. Do the Dutch spend more time working and providing care than in the past? Are we heading towards a 24/7 society in which we work and care around the clock? And how much time is left over for relaxation and resting?

## Brief guide to the cards and figures

The data relate to people's main activities. Participants in the study kept a time-use diary for one week, in which they were asked to indicate what their main activity was in each given time interval. Unless stated otherwise, the data relate to all Dutch people aged 12 and older, including those who did not spend any time on the activity in question. Most of the tables report the average time use over the whole week. Data from respondents who did not make diary entries on all seven days have not been included in these figures. Therefore, it is possible that we have left out precisely those people who are busiest.

## Background to the study

SCP has been describing the time use of the Dutch in the Time Use Survey since 1975. Every five years, we ask a large group of Dutch to keep a diary recording their time use for one week. These data have been [reported in several reports \(https://www.scp.nl/Onderzoek/Tijdsbesteding\)](https://www.scp.nl/Onderzoek/Tijdsbesteding). Since 2011, we have carried out the Time Use Survey in collaboration with [Statistics Netherlands \(CBS\) \(https://www.cbs.nl/\)](https://www.cbs.nl/). In 2006, the fieldwork was performed by Social data BV (Breedveld et al. 2006).

Diary data are a rich source of information because it provides an insight into who does what when. Generally speaking, we assume that diary data are not distorted by socially desirable responses, or are only distorted to a minimal extent, because people are recording their actual behaviour and not making their own subjective assessment of how much time they spend on different activities (Gershuny 2003; Sayer 2005).

In this card stack, we are presenting the most recent time use data, which were collected throughout 2016. We also look back at the two previous editions of the survey, from 2006 and 2011. In 2006, a slightly different method was used (Kamphuis et al. 2009) and in this card stack we therefore decided not to go back further than 2006. In the [Time Use Survey \(https://www.scp.nl/Publicaties/Alle\\_publicaties/Publicaties\\_2018/Alle\\_ballen\\_in\\_de\\_lucht\)](https://www.scp.nl/Publicaties/Alle_publicaties/Publicaties_2018/Alle_ballen_in_de_lucht), we look back a little further.

## Differences over time and between groups: random chance or not?

This card stack is full of comparisons: between years, between men and women, between people with high and low levels of education and between people of different ages and phases of life. When interpreting these differences, it is important to look at their ‘statistical significance’. If the average time use of group A is higher than that of group B, this does not of itself mean that this difference can be assumed to be significant: differences may also be due to random chance, for example, because the averages are close to each other or because the estimate is hedged in by lots of uncertainty. For this reason, we apply statistical techniques to test the most substantively interesting comparisons. Where we say something about differences, these have proved to be significant unless stated otherwise.

## Classification of activities

The classification of individual activities under headings such as ‘personal care’ and ‘household’ is to some extent arbitrary. Eating an evening meal at home, for example, is classed as personal care here, whereas if it is eaten in the company of others this could also be classed as leisure or even as parent-child time (Mandemakers & Roeters 2014). As far as possible, the classification of the activities is based on the scientific literature. Since that literature develops in line with advancing insights (see for example Bianchi et al. 2012), it was decided, when devising the new classification, to deviate on some points from the classification used in earlier SCP reports. Doing odd jobs around the home, looking after pets and informal help to other households was for instance still classified as leisure time in the *Social State of the Netherlands in 2017*, whereas in this publication it is classed as looking after the household and family care. For the same reason, the figures in this edition vary somewhat from the first edition of the card stack (which was published in December 2017).

## Time-use diaries

The Time Use Survey combines a ‘time diary’ with a questionnaire. Each respondent received a diary in which they recorded their time use. Respondents wrote down in their own words what they were doing during each time interval in the diary week. They were asked to record the most important activity (‘main activity’) and any other activities they were doing at the same time (‘secondary activity’). For each activity, they were asked to say where they were, whether they were alone or in the company of someone they knew. Coders from Statistics Netherlands (CBS) went through the diaries and assigned an appropriate code from a code list to each activity. Click here to view the [list of codes !\[\]\(ec9132f1d27c8919987d92907322654d\_img.jpg\)](https://digital.scp.nl/timeuse2/assets/data/Bijlage_TBO-rapport_Gebruikte_codes.ods) (https://digital.scp.nl/timeuse2/assets/data/Bijlage\_TBO-rapport\_Gebruikte\_codes.ods). The respondents also answered questions in two supplementary questionnaires, completing the first questionnaire at the start of the diary week and the second at

the end. The questionnaires provided us with information about aspects such as the sociodemographic background characteristics, perceived quality of life, opinions and job characteristics of respondents.

## Sampling and fieldwork

Statistics Netherlands (CBS) drew a sample from all people who were registered as residents of the Netherlands in the Personal Records Database and who were aged 10 or older (the figures for 10 and 11-year-olds are not included in this card stack). People living in institutions or residential nursing or care homes were not approached to take part. Because the data were being collected throughout 2016, a new sample was drawn each month. This was a two-step process. In the first step, a number of municipalities were selected within each region of the Netherlands. The chance that a municipality would be selected was proportional to the number of residents. This step guaranteed a regional distribution. In the second step, a random sample was drawn within each municipality.

The interviewers from Statistics Netherlands visited the homes of potential respondents. If these people were prepared to take part, the initial questionnaire was completed there and then. Respondents were also asked if they were willing to record their activities in the diary. At the end of the diary week, the interviewer called on the respondent again. During this visit, the diary was checked and the final questionnaire completed. The initial invitation letter contained a gift voucher for 5 euros. When respondents were recruited to complete the diary, they received a further gift voucher worth 10 euros.

The initial questionnaire was completed by 2,757 people, equivalent to a response rate of 52.9%. Some people did drop out during the subsequent steps, however. The diaries of 2,260 respondents were approved; meaning that they had correctly completed at least one working day and at least one weekend day in the diaries. For this card stack, we only selected respondents who had completed the diaries for a full week. As a consequence, the ultimate analyses for 2016 were based on 1,841 respondents. In the final sample, young people, older people and households with higher incomes and cohabiting partners were overrepresented. To correct for any distortions, weightings were applied in the analyses.

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