Population growth, 2011-2016

Indicator | 29 August 2016
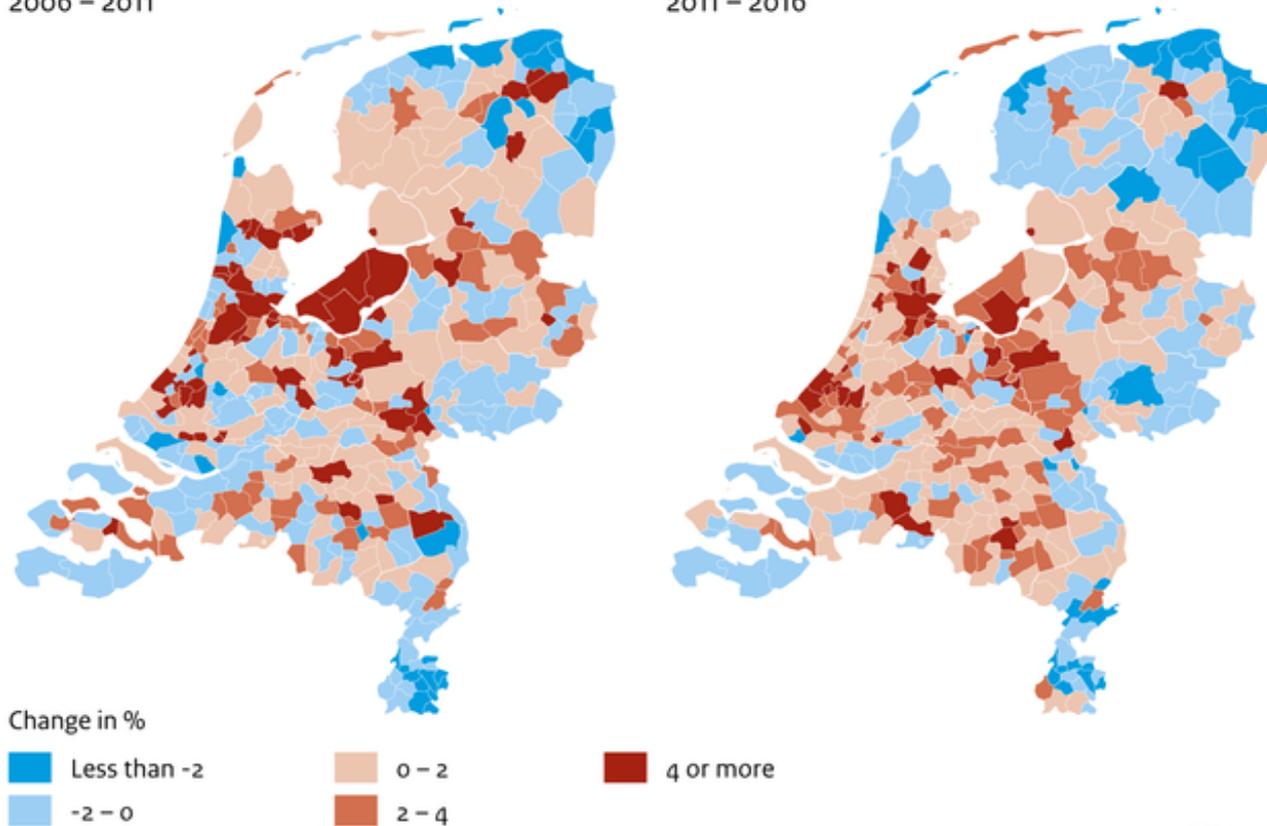You are currently viewing an archived version of this indicator. The most recent version can be viewed here [1].

Population growth rates were high in the four major cities of the Netherlands from 2011 to 2016. There was a strong correlation between municipality size and population growth: in general, the larger the municipality, the stronger the growth. There were large differences in population density within the Netherlands.

Population growth by municipality

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Population declining in more municipalities

The population of the Netherlands grew by 1.9 percent between 1 January 2011 and 1 January 2016. The increase was strongest in the four major cities (5.7 percent), which attracted new residents from both the Netherlands and abroad. Utrecht experienced a particularly large population increase in these five years: 8.9 percent. Completion of the large new Leidsche Rijn residential development was one of the main reasons for this. High population growth was also seen in the municipalities

Lansingerland, Hendrik-Ido-Ambacht, Diemen, Amstelveen and Renswoude. The lowest population growth was seen in municipalities with fewer than 20,000 residents, where total population growth was just 0.6 percent.

Population growth between 2011 and 2016 was almost equal to the preceding five years. Between 2011 and 2016, the highest population growth was seen in the provinces Utrecht and North Holland. In the preceding five years Flevoland was the province with the highest population growth. A decrease in the population was seen in the provinces Drenthe and Limburg.

In 84 of the 390 municipalities, the population decreased between 2006 and 2011 and between 2011 and 2016. These municipalities are mainly located in rural and peripheral areas, such as east Groningen and south Limburg. The largest reduction (by 5 percent or more in both periods) was reported in municipality Delfzijl. However, decreases of 2 percent or more in both periods were also seen elsewhere in the Netherlands, for example in the province Limburg (Stein, Beek and Heerlen), but also in the provinces Gelderland (Westervoort), in Groningen (De Marne) and in North Holland (Bergen).

The population of 179 municipalities (46 percent of municipalities) increased in both periods.

In the municipalities Lansingerland and Utrecht the number of inhabitants even grew by over 7 percent in both periods.

In the remaining 127 municipalities, the population grew in one period and decreased in the other.

Conclusion: in the last five years, the population decreased in more than a third of all municipalities. In the last ten years, more than half the municipalities in the Netherlands experienced population decline in one or both of the monitoring periods (2006-2011 and/or 2011-2016).

Large differences in population density

With about 504 residents per square kilometre, the Netherlands is the second most densely-populated country in Europe (after Malta). However, there are large differences in population density within the Netherlands, with the west more than four times as populated as the north.

The smaller the regions examined, the more visible the differences become. For example, the province of South Holland is almost seven times as populated as Drenthe, and the population density in the municipality of The Hague is 250 times that of the island of Schiermonnikoog. The latter is not only the municipality with the fewest inhabitants, but also the municipality with the largest area per inhabitant: just 25 people per square kilometre. In The Hague, there are almost 6,400 people per square kilometre. A total of 95 municipalities have a density of 1,000 or more residents per square kilometre, and 21 of them of more than 3,000 residents per square kilometre. The total population of the municipalities with a density of 1,000 or more residents per square kilometre is almost 8.6 million - more than 50 percent of the total population of the Netherlands. However, these people live on less than 12 percent of the surface area of the Netherlands. The top of the list of the most densely-populated cities also includes smaller cities, several of which border on other densely-populated municipalities. Examples are Leiden, Haarlem, Capelle aan den IJssel, Delft, Schiedam and Gouda.

References

- CBS (2016). Statline: Regionale kerncijfers Nederland [5]. CBS, Den Haag.

Relevant information

Technical information

Reference for this page

CBS, PBL, RIVM, WUR (2016). Population growth, 2011-2016 [6] (indicator 2102, version 06 , 29 August 2016). www.environmentaldata.nl. Statistics Netherlands (CBS), The Hague; PBL Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency, The Hague; RIVM National Institute for Public Health and the Environment, Bilthoven; and Wageningen University and Research, Wageningen.

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