

Summary

Trends in recorded juvenile crime in the age group 12-24 in the period 1996-2007

Findings from the 'Monitor Jeugdcriminaliteit' 2009 (Juvenile Crime Monitor 2009)

The aim of this investigation was to examine the trends in juvenile crime in the period 1996 up to and including 2007 as recorded by the police, the Public Prosecutor and the court. To that end, we examined developments among the arrested suspects of a crime and juvenile offenders aged 12 – 24. We also investigated the trends in the settlements at the levels of the Police, the Public Prosecution Service and the judiciary. The investigation concerns information registered by the police and the judicial authorities, and therefore only provides insight into a part of the juvenile delinquency issue.

The following results were found:

Suspects

- In 2007, 2.5% of the juveniles aged 12-17 was arrested on suspicion of a crime, an increase of 32% compared to 2002. In 2007, 4.0% of the juveniles aged 18-24 was arrested on suspicion of a crime, an increase of 21% compared to 2002.
- The percentage of suspects is lower among women than among men, but does increase more sharply among women. The increase in suspects is higher among women aged 12-17 than among women aged 18-24 (+51% and +37% compared to 2002).
- Compared to 2002, the percentage of suspects among 12-15 year-olds shows a stronger increase than in other age groups (+40% and ≤ +23%, respectively). Nevertheless, the average age of suspects does not decrease, because the percentage of suspects among the older age groups also increases.
- The highest percentage of suspects occurs among juveniles of Moroccan descent, followed by juveniles from the Antilles and Surinam. The percentage of suspects among juveniles of Dutch descent is the lowest. This ranking applies to both 12-17 year-olds and 18-24 year-olds. Since 2002, the percentage of suspects among juveniles of Dutch descent has increased more sharply than among juveniles from other descent groups. The percentage of suspects among Antillean juveniles shows the lowest increase and is even relatively stable among the 18-24 year-olds.
- The number of suspects for every 100 juveniles has increased in all regions, but not equally strong everywhere. The strongest increase among the 12-17 year-olds was observed in the North of the Netherlands, and in the non-urban areas. Concerning the 18-24 year-olds, there are hardly any differences in the regional trends.
- The percentage of repeat offenders among the 12-17 and 18-24 year-olds shows a higher increase than the percentage of first offenders in these age groups. With regard to the 18-24 year-olds, the number of first offenders per every 100 juveniles has remained more or less stable since 2002.
- The percentage of juvenile persistent offenders among the 12-17 year-olds has increased just as much as the percentage of juvenile repeat offenders. In 2007 both groups show an increase of about 50% compared to 2002.

- Among the 12-17 years olds, there is a sharp increase in the number of public order disturbances, threats and assaults. The same applies to the 18-24 year-olds. In these age groups the number of traffic offences have also increased sharply.

Offenders

- In 2007, 1.9 % of the 12.-17 year-olds had committed a crime, an increase of 19% compared to 2002. In 2007, 3,4% of the 18-24 year-olds had committed a crime, an increase of 20% compared to 2002.
- Although the number of offenders among the men exceed the number of offenders among women, the number of offenders among women has increased more sharply. The percentage of offenders among the 12-17 year-old women has increased by 33% and among the 18-24 year-old women by 48%.
- In all age groups the increase in the number of offenders for every 100 peers is about the same.
- Among the 12-17 year-olds there is a sharp increase with regard to the number of offenders committing crimes of threat, violence against persons, disturbance of public order and offences against the public authorities. The number of violent property offences has decreased. The 18-24 year-olds show a similar development. In addition, there is an increase in the number of traffic offences in this group.

HALT settlements

- In 2007, 1.1 % of the 12-17 year-olds was offered a HALT settlement. Since 2002, this percentage is stable.
- As compared to male juveniles, the percentage of female juveniles offered a HALT settlement shows a stronger increase.
- The trend in HALT settlements is more or less the same in all age groups.
- The percentage of HALT settlements among non-indigenous juveniles has decreased, whereas the percentage of HALT settlements among juveniles of Dutch descent has increased.

Settlements by the Public Prosecutor

- In the period of 2002-2005 work projects has almost doubled among the 12-17 year-olds (+45%). Discretionary dismissals has decreased by almost a quarter (-23%).
- In the period of 2002-2005 financial transactions among 18-24 year-olds has increased by a fourth (+23%).

Settlements in court

- In 2007 community service orders among 12-17 year-olds has increased (+73%), compared to 2002. Non-suspended prison sentences for more than three months, suspended prison sentences and rehabilitation sentences have decreased (-32%, -29% and -28%, respectively).
- Community service orders and fines have increased among the 18-24 year-olds (+48% and +24%, respectively). Non-suspended, short and long prison sentences and rehabilitation sentences have decreased (-18%, -26% and -27%, respectively).

The main conclusions are:

- There are more suspects and offenders among the 18-24 year-olds, but there is a stronger increase in the number of suspects among the 12-17 year-olds in the period of 2002-2007;

- Suspects and offenders have not become younger, but there are more juvenile suspects;
- There is a stronger increase in the number of suspects and offenders among female juveniles than among male juveniles;
- There is a stronger increase in the number of suspects among juveniles of Dutch descent than among juveniles from other descent groups, and there is a stronger increase in the number of suspects in national regions;
- In both age groups there is a strong increase in the number of public order offences, threats and assaults and a decrease in the number of property crimes;
- There is a stronger increase in the number of repeat offenders than in the number of first offenders;
- The number of community service orders and fines imposed in court has increased, the number of prison sentences has decreased. This leads to the possible conclusion that there is an increase in the number of relatively less serious offences and a stabilization or possibly even a decrease in the number of serious offences brought before the court.