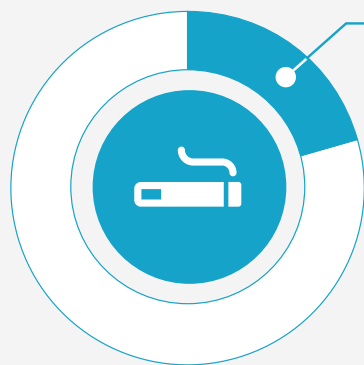


# SMOKING IN THE NETHERLANDS: KEY STATISTICS FOR 2022

STATISTICS ON SMOKING, SMOKING CESSATION, AND  
THE USE OF E-CIGARETTES IN THE NETHERLANDS

## SMOKING IN THE NETHERLANDS



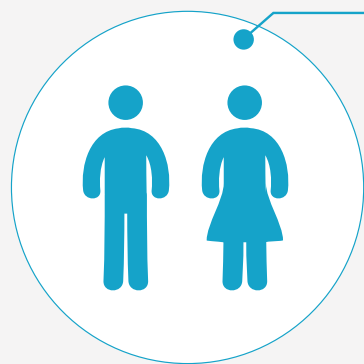
**18.9%**

of adults (18 and older) in the Netherlands smoked tobacco products in 2022



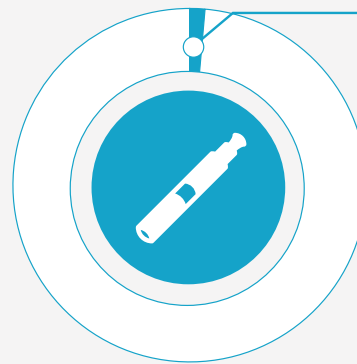
**35.9%**

of adults who smoke in the Netherlands made a serious quit attempt in 2022



**About  
2.6 million**

of the 14.3 million adults in the Netherlands smoked in 2022



**2.8%**

of adults in the Netherlands regularly used an e-cigarette in 2022

## NETHERLANDS EXPERTISE CENTRE FOR TOBACCO CONTROL

The Netherlands Expertise Centre for Tobacco Control (NET) is part of the Trimbos Institute. The Centre develops, collates, and disseminates independent knowledge on all aspects of tobacco use and tobacco control to health professionals, scientists, and public officials in the Netherlands. These dissemination activities include sharing information about tobacco usage, prevention options, treatment of tobacco addiction, and policy options.



## SMOKING IN THE NETHERLANDS: KEY STATISTICS FOR 2022

This bulletin outlines key statistics on smoking, smoking cessation, tobacco smoke exposure, and e-cigarette (electronic cigarette) use among adults in the Netherlands in 2022. It is an English-language translation of the [Dutch-language version](#) of the bulletin. All statistics are derived from the *Health Survey* database, which is part of the Netherlands Lifestyle Monitor data collection.<sup>1</sup>

### THE NETHERLANDS LIFESTYLE MONITOR

The Lifestyle Monitor includes multiple data sources. One of these sources is the *Health Survey*, which is conducted by Statistics Netherlands. The Trimbos Institute and Statistics Netherlands are part of the Lifestyle Monitor Consortium, which is responsible for the content and data collection of the Lifestyle Monitor. National Institute for Public Health and the Environment coordinated the data collection. The Lifestyle Monitor Consortium has been commissioned by the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport in the Netherlands.

### THE HEALTH SURVEY

The *Health Survey* is an annual survey of the population of the Netherlands, which has been conducted by Statistics Netherlands since 1981. Statistics Netherlands collects data on the health of the population of the Netherlands through an annual random, representative sample of adults from the municipal population registry. Respondents were first approached to participate in the survey via the internet. A selection of those who were invited to participate in the survey but did not respond were approached for a face-to-face interview. More information about the survey methods used to collect data for the *Health Survey* can be found on the [website of Statistics Netherlands](#).<sup>2</sup>

A total of 8,027 people aged 18 years or older completed the *Health Survey* in 2022. The data provides key national statistics on smoking, smoking cessation, and the use of e-cigarettes by the population of the Netherlands.

### THE ROLE OF THE TRIMBOS INSTITUTE

The Trimbos Institute publishes key national statistics on smoking, alcohol use, and drug use. Key smoking statistics include, but are not limited to, smoking rates, rates of adults who use e-cigarettes, trends in smoking cessation attempts in the Netherlands. Both local and national government

authorities in the Netherlands use these statistics to monitor tobacco use and how tobacco control policies work. Experts at the Trimbos Institute used the data from the *Health Survey* to calculate the statistics presented in this bulletin.

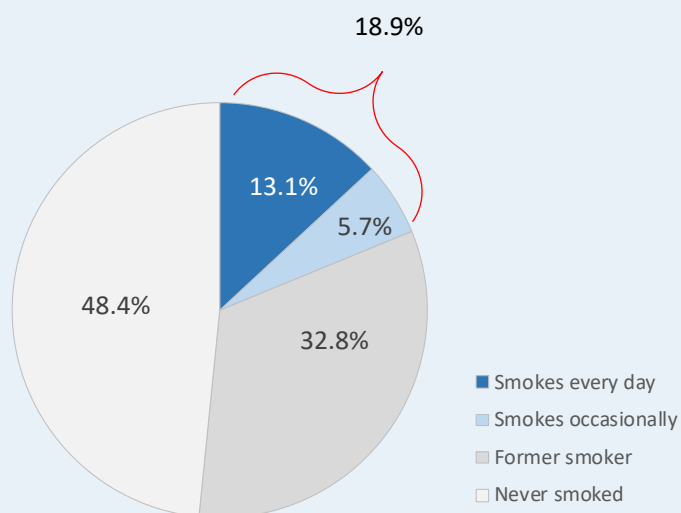
This bulletin presents separate statistics for ‘smokers’ (which include both daily and non-daily smokers) and ‘daily smokers’ (who smoke every day); this bulletin also presents key statistics on e-cigarette use. All statistics describe the adult population, defined as aged 18 years and older. In many figures, 2022 data is compared with data from the year before (2021) and to data from the year in which the Lifestyle Monitor consortium started collecting data first (2014). Subgroups are compared based on sex, education, age, and urban density. A selection of the statistics have also been published on the [‘State of Public Health and Health Care’ website](#) in Dutch).<sup>3</sup> The linked website includes all relevant statistics used by the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport to monitor health policies in the Netherlands.

### WHAT IS MEANT BY ‘SIGNIFICANT’?

This bulletin sometimes describes differences as ‘significant’. By that, it is meant that these differences are *statistically significant*. Differences are statistically significant if the odds are very small that these differences are caused by mere chance. This bulletin frequently compared data of more than one year (2014, 2020, and 2021); if differences between years are significant, this is noted in the text.



Figure 1. Smoking rate among adults in the Netherlands in 2022



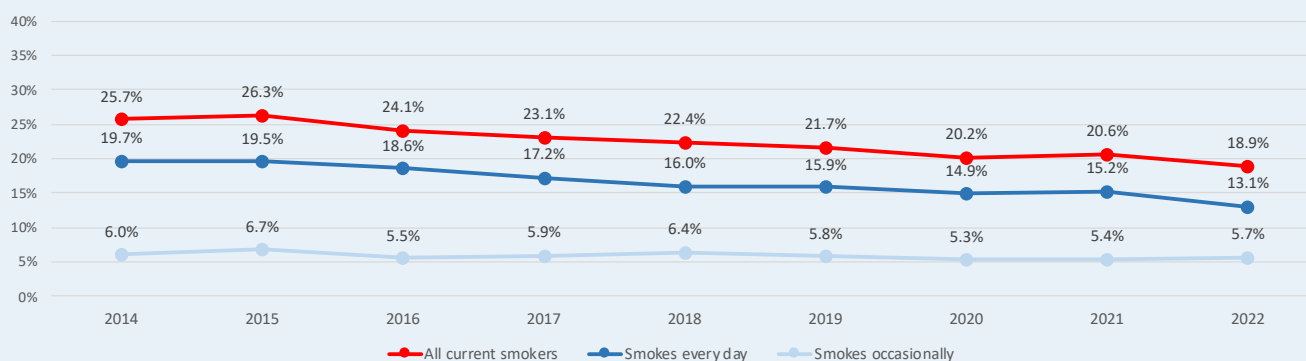
**Note:** Approximately 18.9% of adults in the Netherlands smoked in 2022. This includes 13.1% daily smokers and 5.7% occasional (non-daily) smokers. Of adults in the Netherlands who reported smoking, 69.6% smoked every day. Due to rounding, the percentages do not add up to their total.

Table 1. Estimated number of smokers in 2022

	Estimation	Lower limit	Upper limit
<b>All smokers</b>	2,649,000	2,514,000	2,784,000
Lower education	770,000	693,000	847,000
Middle education	1,055,000	966,000	1,144,000
Higher education	786,000	707,000	865,000
<b>Daily smokers</b>	1,843,000	1,727,000	1,959,000
Lower education	666,000	594,000	738,000
Middle education	767,000	690,000	843,000
Higher education	383,000	327,000	439,000
<b>Non-daily smokers</b>	794,000	725,000	862,000
Lower education	104,000	76,000	133,000
Middle education	288,000	243,000	334,000
Higher education	401,000	347,000	455,000

**Note:** About 2.6 million adults in the Netherlands smoked in 2022. As this is an estimation, Table 1 also shows lower and upper limits of the number of adults who smoked. Since the educational attainment of some of the people who smoked in 2022 is not known, the totals of the three education groups do not equal the total group of people who smoked.

Figure 2. Smoking rates over time among adults in the Netherlands

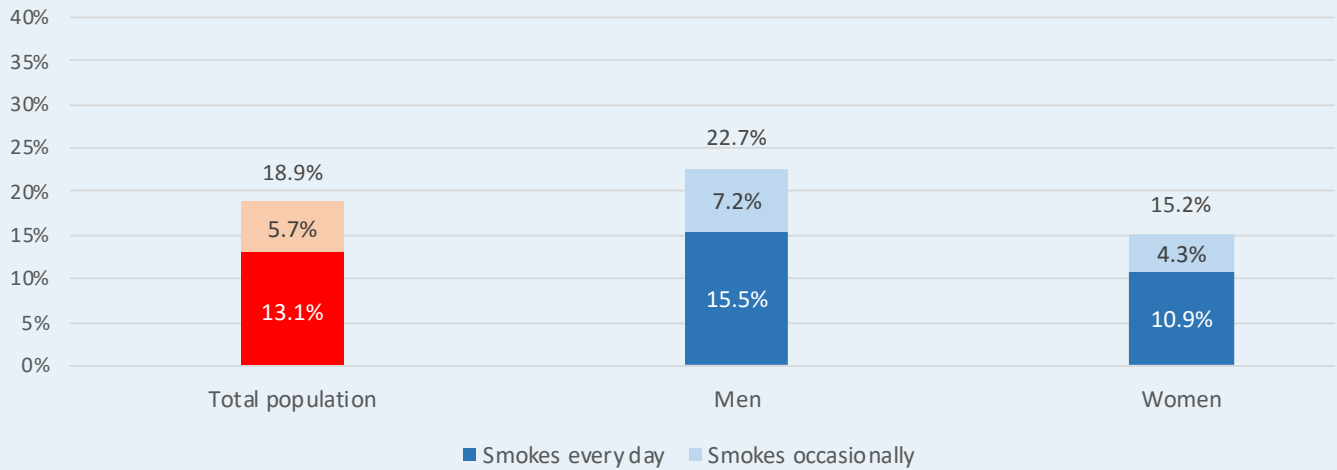


**Note:** Both the overall smoking rate and the daily smoking rates decreased significantly between 2021 and 2022. The adult smoking rate in the Netherlands has decreased significantly between 2014 and 2022. As well, the proportion of adults who smoke every day decreased significantly in that same period. The proportion of occasional smokers has not increased or decreased significantly over time.

\* A definition of significance has been provided on page 2.

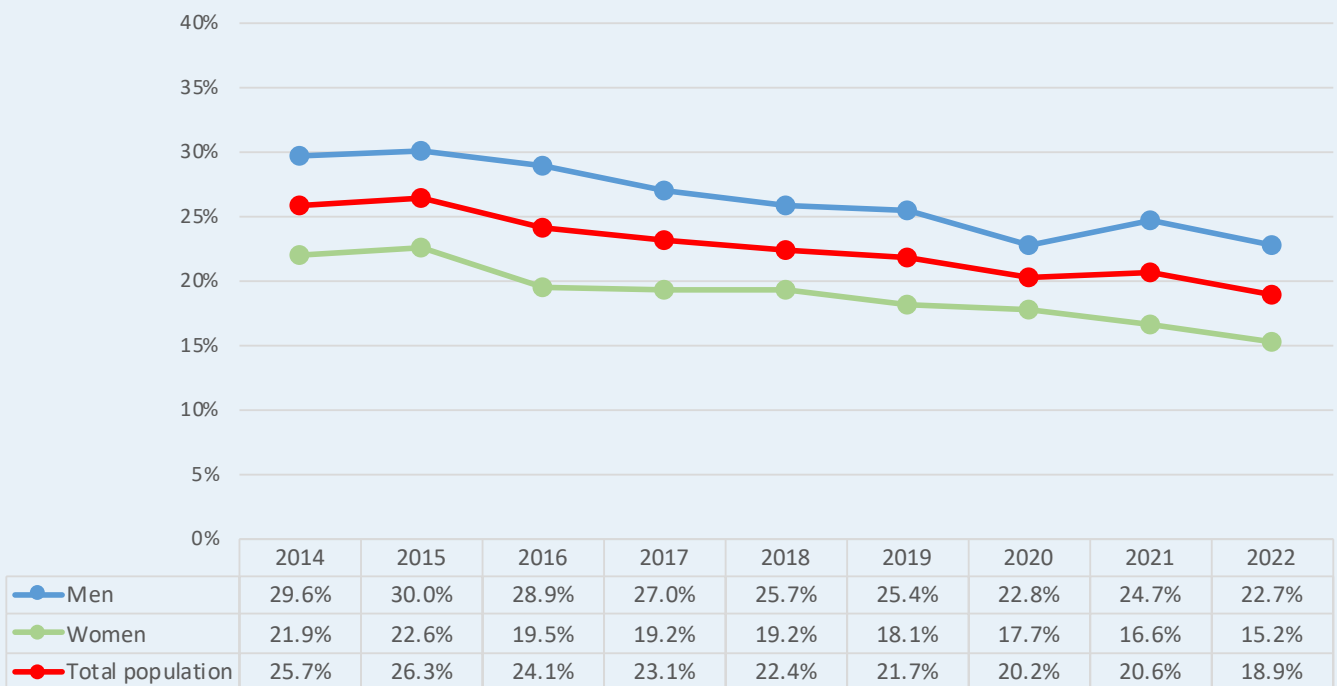


Figure 3. Smoking rates by sex in 2022



**Note:** Significantly more men in the Netherlands reported smoking than women. In addition, more men reported smoking every day. This figure displays the smoking rate of the total adult population of the Netherlands in red for comparison. Due to rounding, the percentages do not add up to their total.

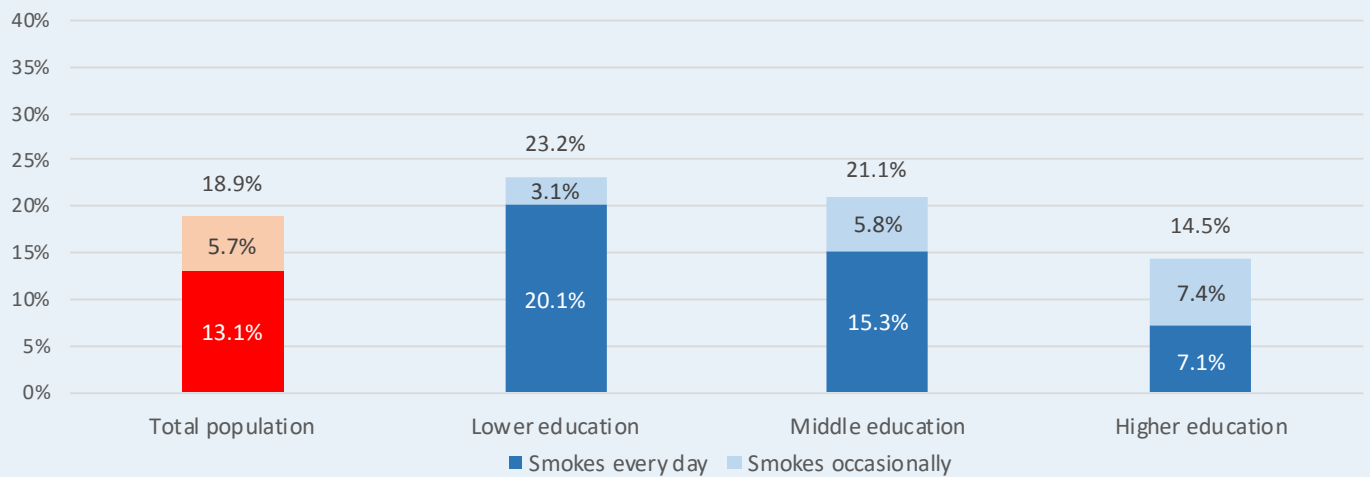
Figure 4. Smoking rates over time by sex



**Note:** Between 2021 and 2022 in the Netherlands, the smoking rate did not change significantly for men or women. However, smoking rates did decrease significantly between 2014 and 2022 for both men and women. This figure displays the smoking rate of the total adult population of the Netherlands in red for comparison.

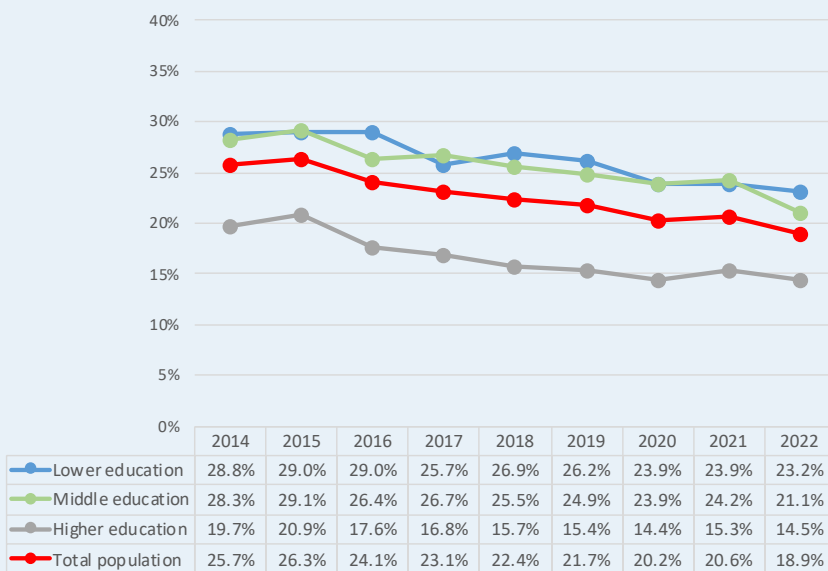


**Figure 5. Smoking rates by education in 2022**



**Note:** In the Netherlands, smoking rates are significantly higher among people with lower or middle levels of education than among people with higher education. Daily smoking rates differ in all three education groups. This figure displays the smoking rate of the total adult population of the Netherlands in red for comparison. Due to rounding, the percentages do not add up to their total.

**Figure 6. Smoking rates over time by education**



**Note:** Between 2021 and 2022, the smoking rate decreased significantly among those with a middle education. There was no significant increase or decrease in the other two education groups. In addition, smoking rates decreased significantly between 2014 and 2022 among all three groups. This figure displays the smoking rate of the total adult population of the Netherlands in red for comparison.

**WHAT ARE LOWER, MIDDLE, AND HIGHER LEVELS OF EDUCATION IN THE NETHERLANDS?**

This bulletin presents information about people who smoke and educational levels in the Netherlands. A description of the educational level categories is below:

**Lower education:**  
Elementary school, lower secondary education, or lower vocational education

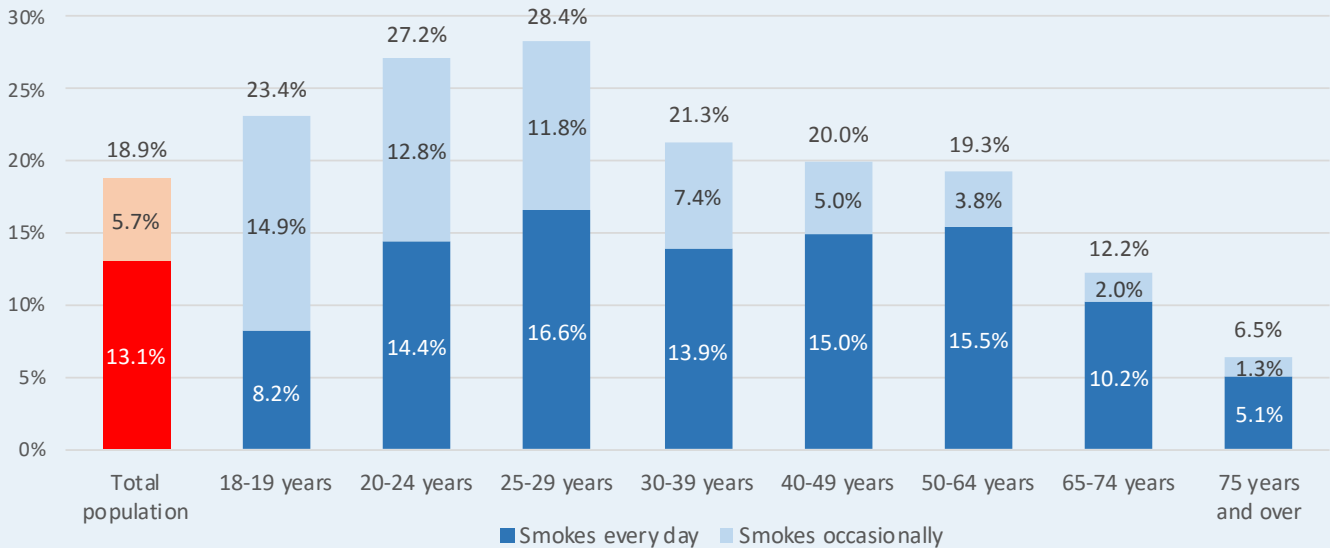
**Middle education:**  
Intermediate vocational education or higher secondary education

**Higher education:**  
Higher vocational education or university

In this bulletin, adults were grouped in three levels of education. Among people aged 18 to 24, we used the highest level of education they either completed or are currently studying to attain. Among people aged 25 and over, we used the highest level of education completed.

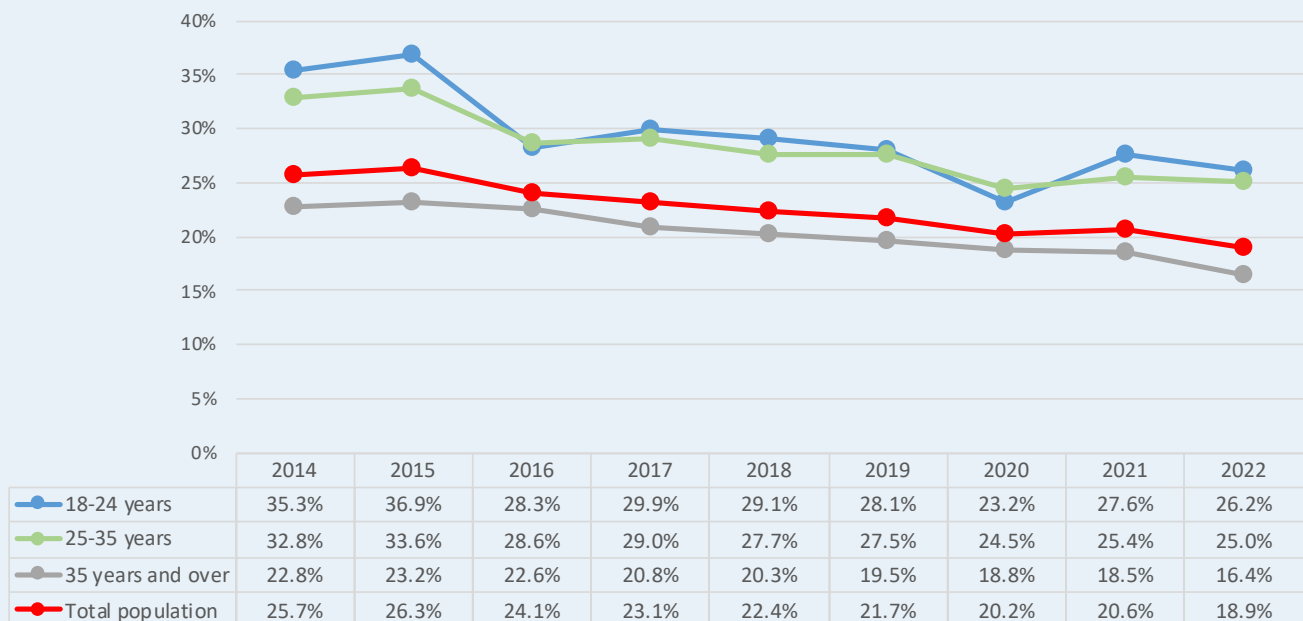


Figure 7. Smoking rates by age in 2022



**Note:** In the Netherlands, 1 out of 4 people aged 20 to 29 reported smoking in 2022. About half of those reported smoking every day. People aged 75 and over were the least likely to report smoking. In general, older people who smoke were more likely to smoke every day. This figure displays the smoking rate of the total adult population of the Netherlands in red for comparison. Due to rounding, the percentages do not add up to their total.

Figure 8. Smoking rates over time by age

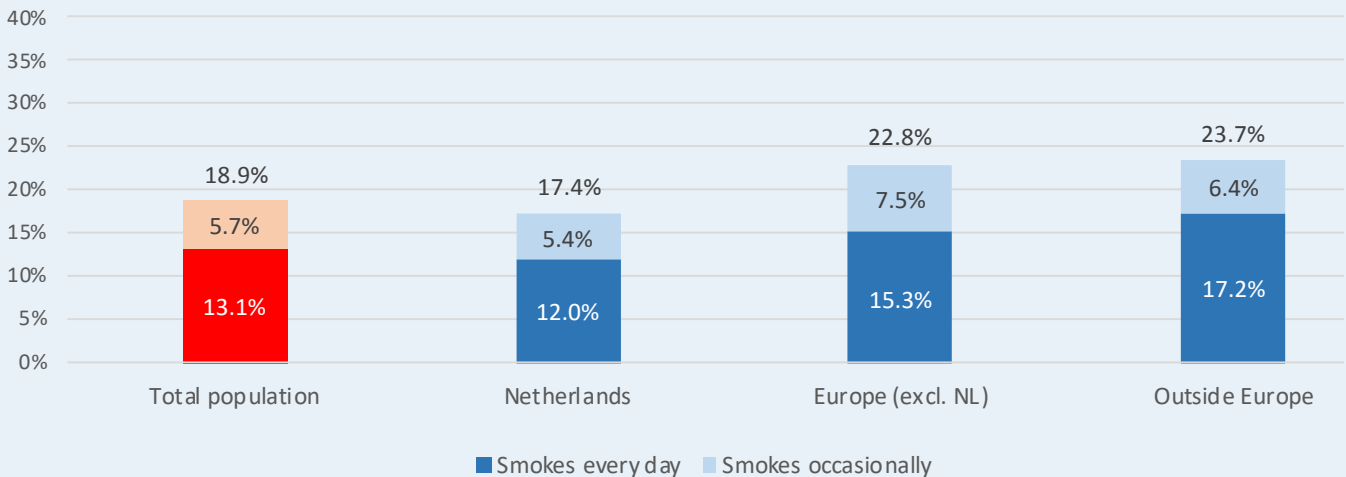


**Note:** The smoking rate decreased significantly between 2021 and 2022 among those aged 35 years and over. No such difference was found in the other age groups. Between 2014 and 2022 in the Netherlands, the smoking rates decreased significantly in all three age groups. This figure displays the smoking rate of the total adult population of the Netherlands in red for comparison.





Figure 9. Smoking rates by country of origin in 2022



**Note:** In the Netherlands, both the overall smoking rate and the daily smoking rate are higher among people with either a European or non-European country of origin than among people born in the Netherlands. We found no significant differences between two groups with country of origin outside the Netherlands. This figure displays the smoking rate of the total population of the Netherlands in red for comparison. Due to rounding, the percentages do not add up to their total.

#### WHAT IS A COUNTRY OF ORIGIN?

A person's country of origin is defined by the following criteria:

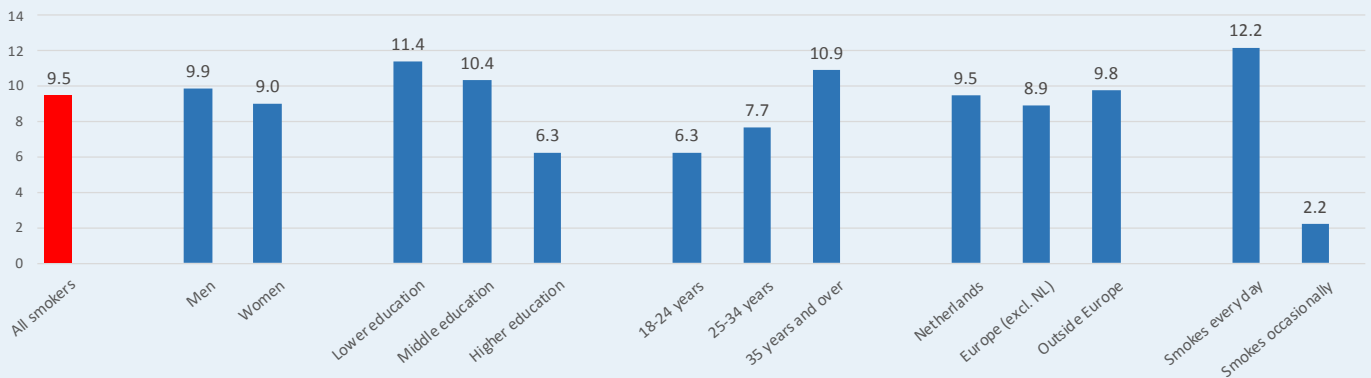
- A person who was born in the Netherlands and both parents were both born in the Netherlands is classified to have the Netherlands as their country of origin.
- A person who was born in the Netherlands and both parents were born outside of the Netherlands has the same country of origin as their mother.
- A person who was born in the Netherlands and one parent was born outside of the Netherlands has the same country of origin as that parent.
- A person who was born outside the Netherlands has their country of birth as their country of origin.

Statistics Netherlands further categorizes a foreign country of origin into 'European' and 'Non-European'. The government of the Netherlands uses statistics on people's country of origin to explain differences in cultural background, income inequalities, and other policy-related outcomes.

Want to know more on this topic? Visit the [Statistics Netherlands website](#) for more information.



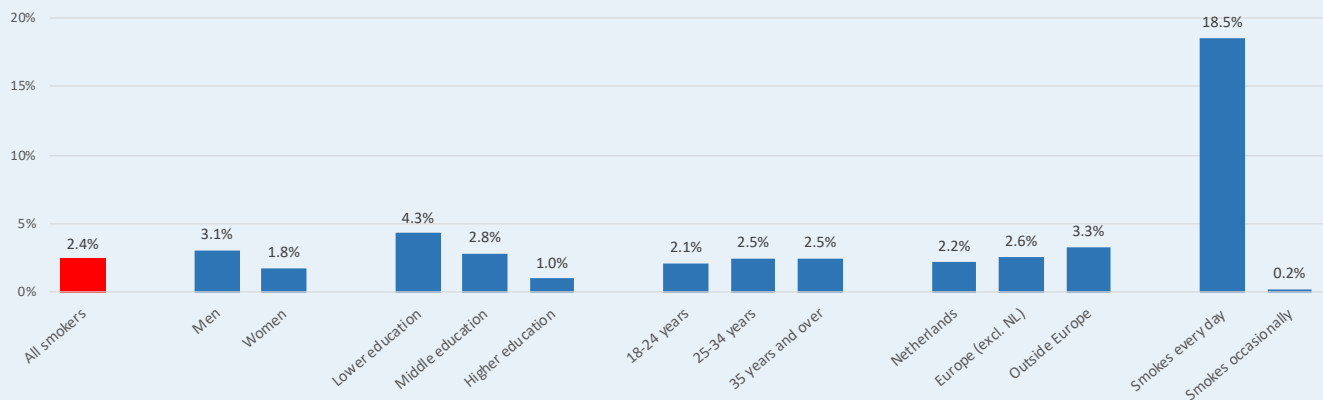
**Figure 10. Average number of cigarettes smoked by smokers in 2022**



**Note:** This figure presents data only from people who reported smoking cigarettes in the Netherlands in 2022. It displays the average number of cigarettes smoked each day.

Men, people with a lower education, people age 35 and over, and daily smokers reported smoking the greatest number of cigarettes per day in 2022. The analysis found no significant differences by country of origin. This figure displays the smoking rate of the total adult population of the Netherlands in red for comparison.

**Figure 11. Proportion of adults who were a heavy smoker in 2022**



**Note:** In 2022 in the Netherlands, only a small percentage of people (2.4%) reported smoking more than 20 cigarettes a day, which classifies them as heavy smokers. People who reported being heavy smokers tended to be men, have had a lower educational attainment, and reported smoking every day. We found no effect of age. Among the groups with different countries of origin, only the group of people born in the Netherlands and the group with a non-European country of origin differed significantly. This figure displays the heavy smoking rate of the total adult population of the Netherlands in red for comparison.

**WHAT IS A HEAVY SMOKER?**

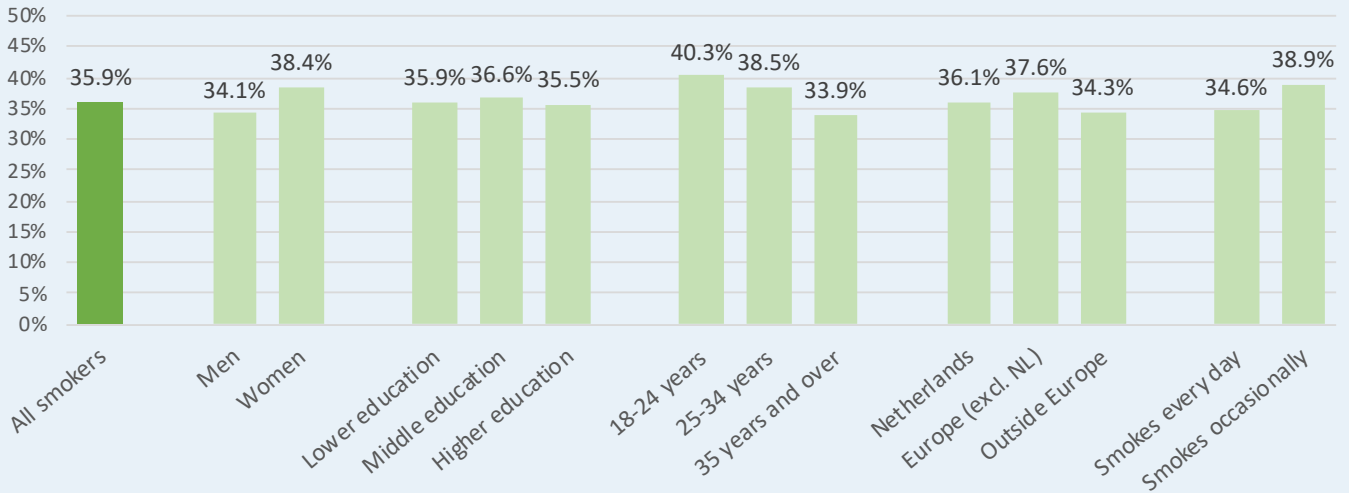
Someone who smokes 20 cigarettes or more on average each day is called a ‘heavy smoker’.

It is important to know how many heavy smokers there are and whether their number of cigarettes increases or decreases over time. Heavy smokers are more likely to become ill or to die due to their smoking. People who smoke heavily for their entire life tend to live 13 years less than those who never smoked. People who smoke every day, but who are not heavy smokers, reduce their life expectancy by 9 years on average. Occasional smokers, defined as people who do not smoke every day, tend to live on average 5 years fewer than non-smokers.<sup>4</sup>



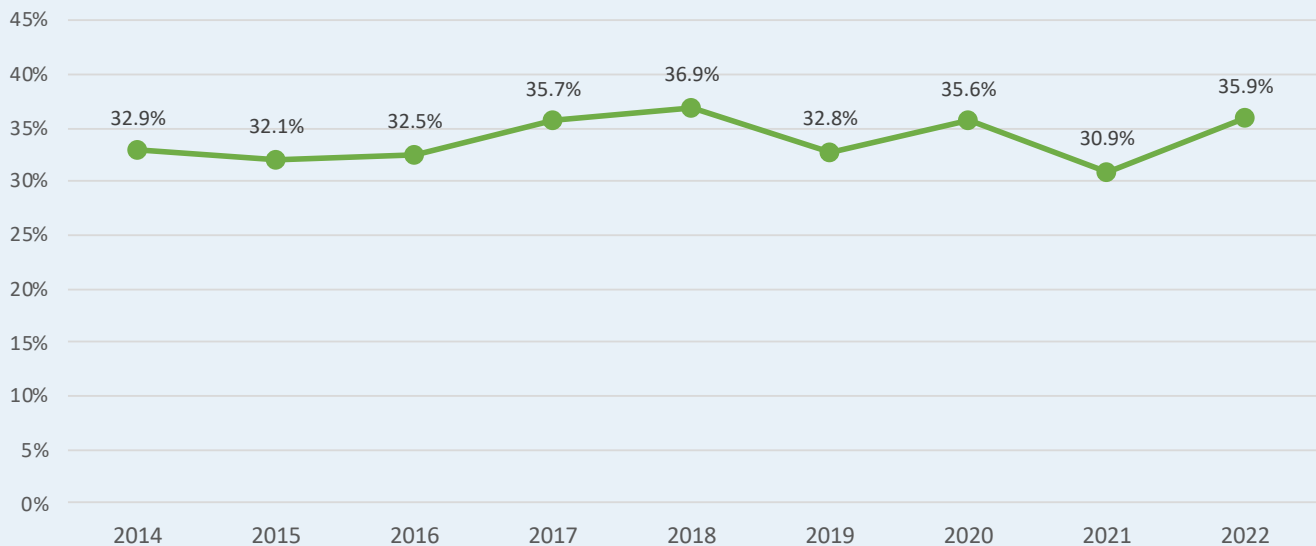


**Figure 12. Proportion of smokers who made a serious quit attempt in the past 12 months in 2022**



**Note:** In the Netherlands, about 1 out of 3 people who smoke reported having made a serious quit attempt in the past 12 months in 2022. A quit attempt is considered a serious one if someone tries to quit smoking and does not smoke for at least 24 hours. We found no significant difference between any of the subgroups. This figure displays the smoking rate of the total adult population of the Netherlands in dark green for comparison.

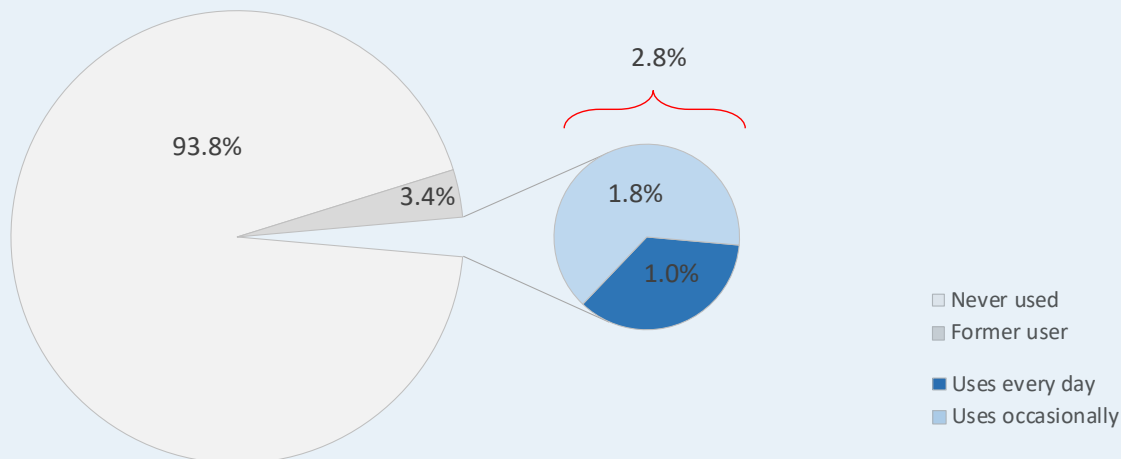
**Figure 13. Proportion of smokers who had made a serious quit attempt in the past 12 months over time**



**Note:** In the Netherlands, the rate of smokers who had made a serious quit in the past year dropped significantly between 2021 and 2022. The rate remained about the same between 2014 and 2022.

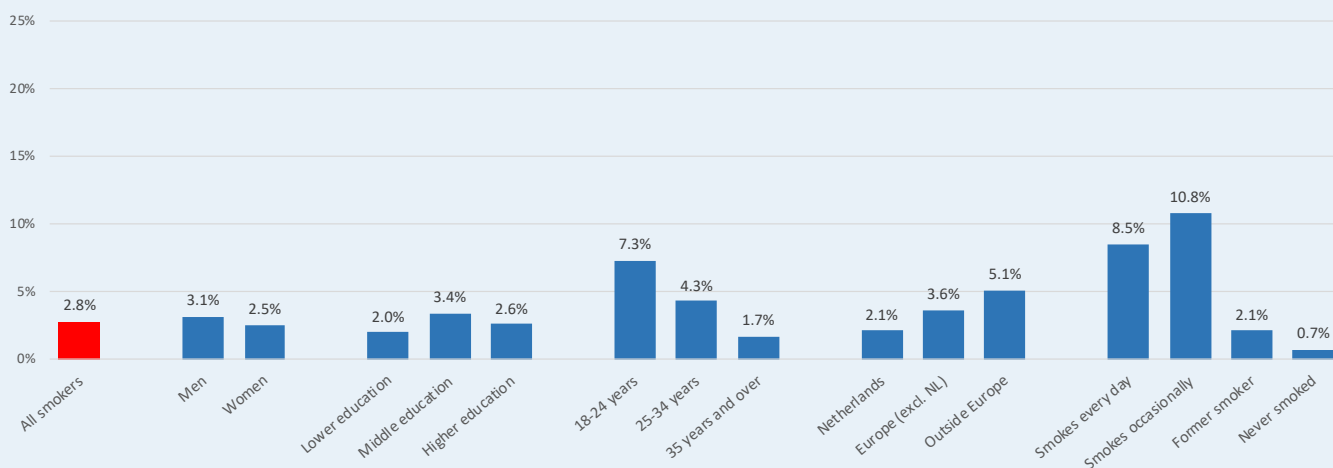


Figure 14. Prevalence of e-cigarette use in 2022



**Note:** This figure presents information about e-cigarette (electronic cigarette) use among all adults in the Netherlands. About 2.8% of adults in the Netherlands used an e-cigarette regularly in 2022. This includes 1.0% daily users and 1.8% non-daily users. Of the 2.8% regular e-cigarette users, 1.8% also smoke tobacco products, while 1.0% only use e-cigarettes. This means that 63.7% of e-cigarette users also smoke tobacco products (dual use). E-cigarettes have been available for sale in the Netherlands since 2007. The contents of e-cigarettes and the sale of e-cigarettes are regulated by the [Dutch Tobacco Act](#). In the Netherlands, the sale of nicotine and non-nicotine e-cigarette liquid is restricted to adults (18+).

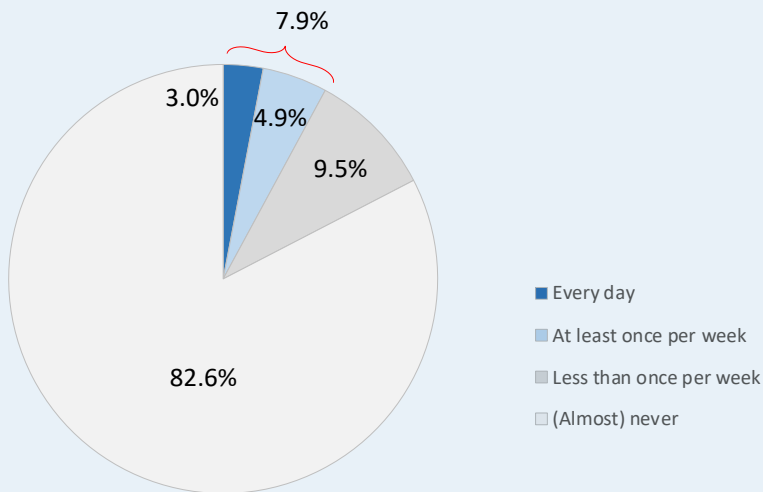
Figure 15. Prevalence of regular e-cigarette use



**Note:** This figure presents information about e-cigarette use among all adults in the Netherlands in 2022. People with a middle level of education, people aged 18 to 24, people with a non-European country of origin, and people who smoke tobacco products every day were most likely to report regularly using an e-cigarette. There was a significant difference in e-cigarette use between those who smoke tobacco products (9.3%) and those who do not smoke tobacco products (1.2%). The survey also asked respondents if they used heated tobacco products; only 0.5% of those surveyed reported using such products. This figure displays the e-cigarette use rate of the total adult population of the Netherlands in red for comparison.



Figure 16. Proportion of non-smokers exposed to secondhand smoke indoors in 2022

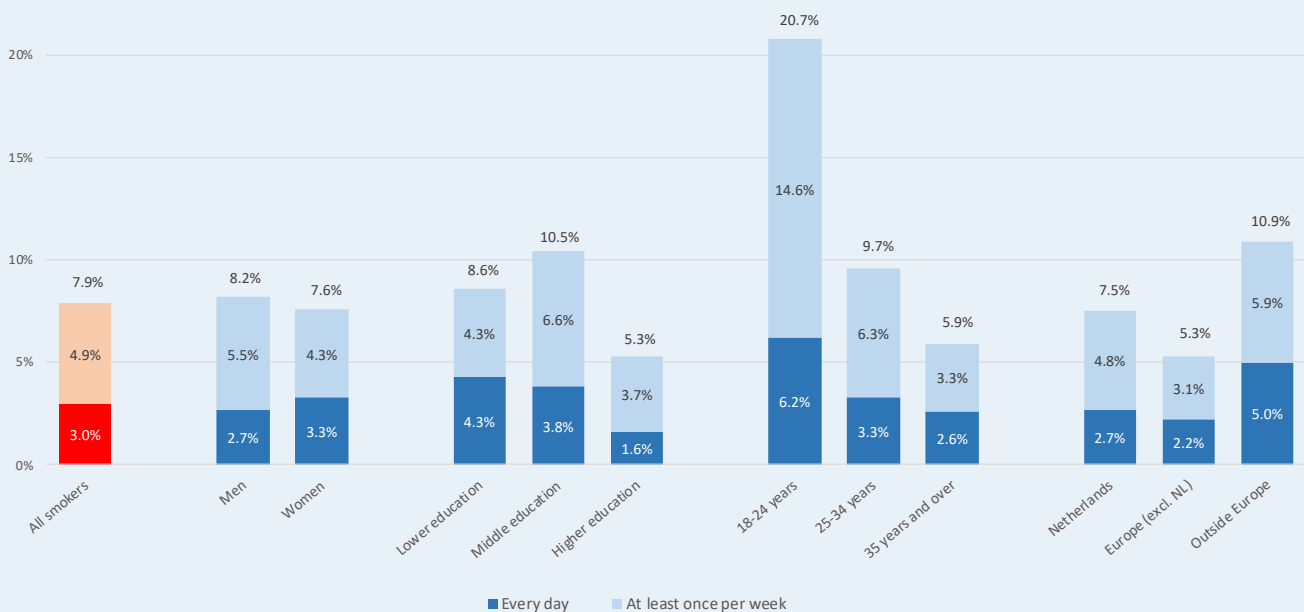


**Note:** This figure contains information only about non-smoking adults, which includes former smokers and people who never smoked. It shows the proportion of non-smokers in the Netherlands that reported having been exposed to secondhand smoke inside homes or other indoor spaces. In 2022, 7.9% of non-smokers were regularly exposed to tobacco smoke. Of those, 3.0% were exposed every day and 4.9% were exposed at least once per week.

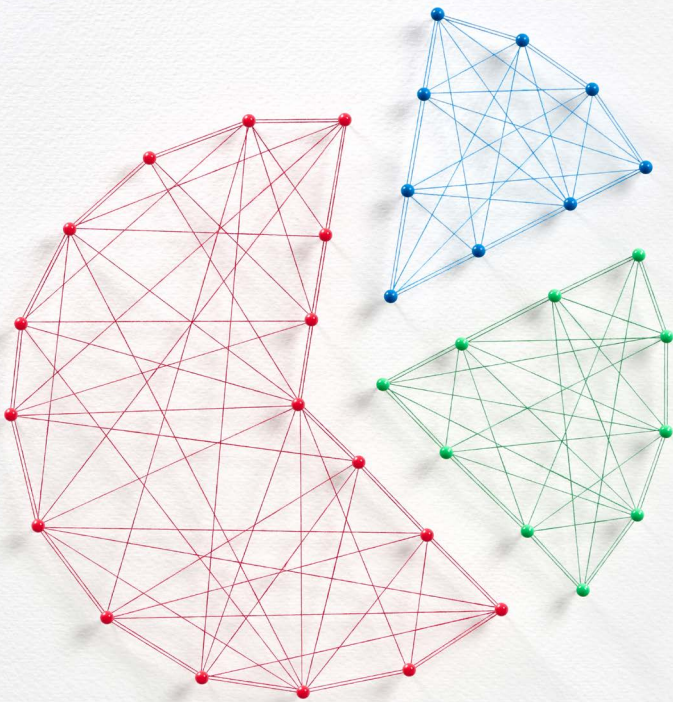
**SECONDHAND SMOKE:  
BREATHING IN SOMEONE  
ELSE'S TOBACCO SMOKE**

Secondhand smoke is tobacco smoke from burning tobacco products and smoke that has been breathed out by a person who is smoking. Exposure to secondhand smoke harms health. Secondhand smoke contains toxins similar to those in tobacco smoke and causes illnesses similar to those that smoking does. It is particularly harmful to children. Exposing children to secondhand smoke increases their chance of getting lung infections, ear infections, and other illnesses.<sup>5</sup>

Figure 17. Proportion of non-smokers exposed to secondhand smoke indoors in 2022 by subgroup



**Note:** This figure contains information only about non-smoking adults in the Netherlands. It shows the proportion of non-smokers in the Netherlands that reported having been exposed to secondhand smoke inside homes or other indoor spaces. This figure displays the exposure rate of all non-smokers the Netherlands in red for comparison. Due to rounding, some of the percentages do not add up to their total.



### FURTHER READING...

Want to know more about tobacco use and exposure to tobacco smoke in the Netherlands? The following publications may be interesting:

- [Collecting data on tobacco use in the Netherlands](#)
- [Smoking cessation counselling in maternity care in the Netherlands](#)
- [Dutch Youth Health Care: From smoke-free houses to smoke-free parents](#)
- [Local tobacco control policies in the Netherlands](#)

### OUR MISSION...

The Netherlands Expertise Centre for Tobacco Control continues to monitor tobacco use in the Netherlands. We publish the most recent key statistics on tobacco use, alcohol use and drugs use on our website: [trimbos.nl/kennis/cijfers](https://trimbos.nl/kennis/cijfers) (in Dutch).

Please contact Jeroen Bommel  ( [jbommele@trimbos.nl](mailto:jbommele@trimbos.nl) ) if there are any questions regarding this bulletin.

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### Colophon

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