

Spiritual Climate

The Netherlands is a richly multicultural society with diverse political parties which places high importance on the values of tolerance and equal rights. It is also strongly individualistic and humanistic.

The Reformation had a significant influence on Dutch society, but during the last century the effects have rapidly dwindled. The influence of the Christian Church on society steeply declined in the last century, and although the evangelical movement showed rapid growth, this did not prevent the decline in overall church affiliation. According to research by the Central Statistics Bureau 42% of the population did not consider themselves followers of any religion in 2004. Figures for 2008 will certainly be higher.

Although the Netherlands can look back on a long tradition of Christianity, the country is now known world-wide for its free opinions on euthanasia, prostitution and drugs. In larger cities, many churches have closed after many years of struggling with dwindling congregations.

However, there is much to thank God for in the traditional Protestant churches: a growing evangelical movement which gives hope for the future. Unlike their parents, young people in general are becoming more open to the gospel. Although this openness embraces all forms of spiritual belief, religion is now no longer automatically rejected. World mission to the Netherlands

Once primarily a sending base, Western Europe is now known in world mission terms as the 'spiritually dark continent' and has become a needy mission field. Our Korean and Latino fellow-Christians are showing us by example that mission is now from and to the six continents of the world. For example, Brazilian missionaries have planted a church attended by over 1000 ex-prostitutes in Amsterdam. The need is huge: every day hundreds of Brazilian and Russian young people arrive in the Netherlands, deceived into the sex trade by mafia organizations. As in many parts of Europe, mission in the Netherlands must cross borders of nationality, language, economic and social status.

There are almost one million people from the Muslim world in the Netherlands. Thousands of people from other nationalities also contribute to the work force and cultural diversity of the country. About 70% of Muslim immigrants are former guest workers from Turkey and Morocco, who came with their families in the 1960s and 1970s. 10% are from Indonesia and Suriname, former colonies. In the 1990s many Muslims came seeking asylum, from Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran and Somalia.

Religion:

- Catholic - 32.8%
 - Non-Religious - 38.0%
 - Protestant - 21.7%
 - Islam - 5.0%
 - Independent - 1.0% Source: Operation World 2001
- Bible Schools National Organizations
- Azusa Theologische Hogeschool
 - Christelijke Hogeschool De Wittenberg, Zeist
 - Christelijke Hogeschool Ede
 - Cornerstone Center for Intercultural Studies
 - Evangelische Hogeschool, Amersfoort
 - Evangelische Theologische Hogeschool Ede
 - Evangelische Theologische Faculteit, Leuven Belgium
 - Tyndale Theological Seminary, Badhoevedorp
 - Evangelical Alliance Netherlands
 - Evangelical Missionary Alliance Netherlands