FUNERARY PRACTICES IN THE NETHERLANDS
Funerary International Series

Series Editor: Julie Rugg, University of York, UK
The study of mortality is now an established academic endeavour which is rapidly expanding in scale and in disciplinary reach. One missing element is a repository of basic facts about funerary practice in each country and the broader legal, governance and denominational frameworks for those practices which might serve to set more detailed research in context.
This book series remedies this absence by producing country-specific monographs, with texts providing a standard framework of questions, which ensures even coverage, aids international comparison, fosters international linkages across the academic community and inspires new research directions. These texts will be a valuable resource for researchers across the humanities and social sciences concerned with death and funerary customs.

Previous titles in this series
Julie Rugg and Brian Parsons, Funerary Practices in England and Wales

Forthcoming in this series
Olga Nešporová, Funerary Practices in the Czech Republic
Christoph Streb, Funerary Practices in Germany
Aleksandra Pavićević, Funerary Practices in Serbia
Maija Butters and Ilona Pajari, Funerary Practices in Finland
FUNERARY PRACTICES IN THE NETHERLANDS

BY

BRENDA MATHIJSSEN
University of Groningen, The Netherlands

CLAUDIA VENHORST
Radboud University Nijmegen, The Netherlands
## CONTENTS

*List of Images*  
ix

*List of Tables and Charts*  
xv

*Preface*  
xvii

*Acknowledgements*  
xix

*Map of The Netherlands*  
xxi

1. The Netherlands: An Introduction  
   1.1. Overview  
   1.2. Pillars and Polders  
   1.3. Migration and Diversity  
   1.4. Religion in Numbers  
   1  
2. History  
   2.1. The Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries  
   2.2. The Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries  
   2.3. The Early Twentieth Century  
   2.4. The Late Twentieth Century  
   9  
3. Demographic and Legal Frameworks  
   3.1. Mortality in the Netherlands  
   3.1.1. Place of Death  
   3.1.2. Causes of Death  
   3.2. Legal Frameworks  
   3.2.1. The Euthanasia Act  
   3.2.2. Corpse Disposal Act  
   23
3.3. Recent Developments in Legislation 34
   3.3.1. Resomation, Cryomation and Compostation 35
   3.3.2. Changes in the Personal Records Database 36
   3.3.3. Recent Jurisprudence 37

4. The Funeral Directing Industry 39
   4.1. Historic Development 39
   4.2. Current Organisation 41
      4.2.1. Types of Funeral Organisations 42
      4.2.2. Trade Associations 45
      4.2.3. Education and Quality Management 47
      4.2.4. Typical Premises of the Funeral Home 48
   4.3. Contemporary Developments: Gender, Diversity and Heritage 50
      4.3.1. The Female Face of Death 50
      4.3.2. A Multicultural Funeral Home 52
      4.3.3. Reallocating Religious Heritage 53
   4.4. Public Appearances: Televised Funeral Commercials 54

5. Paying for Funerals 57
   5.1. Average Funeral Costs 57
   5.2. Breakdown of General, Burial and Cremation Costs 58
   5.3. Types of Funeral Insurance 59
   5.4. Funeral Poverty and Municipal Help 62
   5.5. Special Income Support 63
   5.6. Technical Cremation 64
   5.7. Baby and Children’s Funerals 65

6. A Typical Funeral 67
   6.1. Diverse and Tailor-made Funerals 67
   6.2. Immediately Following Death 68
   6.3. Making Funeral Arrangements 70
      6.3.1. Advance Funeral Wishes 71
      6.3.2. The Lonely Funeral: A Poetic Initiative 73
   6.4. Arrangements with the Funeral Director 74
      6.4.1. Type of Funeral 74
      6.4.2. Place, Time and Length of the Service 74
      6.4.3. Mourning Cards and Death Notices 75
6.4.4. The Coffin or Shroud 75
6.4.5. Flowers 77
6.4.6. Music 78
6.4.7. Koffietafel 79

6.5. Arrangements with the Religious or Civil Celebrant 79
6.5.1. Minister, Pastor or Priest 80
6.5.2. Imam and Volunteers 81
6.5.3. Chevra Kadisha 82
6.5.4. Pandit 83
6.5.5. Humanistic Celebrant 83
6.5.6. Ritual Coach or Civil Celebrant 84

6.6. The Care of the Deceased 84
6.6.1. Ritual Washing 87
6.6.2. Viewing the Deceased 87

6.7. The Day of the Funeral 89
6.7.1. Dress 89
6.7.2. Travel to the Funeral Service 89
6.7.3. The Place of the Funeral 92
6.7.4. Decorating the Funeral Location 92
6.7.5. Orders of Service 93
6.7.6. Attending the Funeral 93
6.7.7. The Funeral Service 94
6.7.8. Committal, Burial and Cremation 98
6.7.9. Digital Recording 99
6.7.10. Remembrance or Prayer Cards 100
6.7.11. After the Funeral Service 103

7. Burial and Cemeteries 105
7.1. Historic Development 105
7.2. Current Cemetery Provision 107
7.2.1. Municipal Cemeteries 109
7.2.2. Special Cemeteries 112
7.3. Graves 125
7.3.1. Technicalities 126
7.3.2. Grave Rights and Terms 129
7.3.3. Clearing of Graves 130
7.3.4. Burial Costs 131
7.3.5. Grave Covers 133
7.3.6. Preservation 136

7.4. Cemetery Variation in the Netherlands 137
7.4.1. Marken and Volendam: Protestant and Catholic Traditions 138
7.4.2. Roermond: The Old Cemetery 140
7.4.3. Amsterdam: De Nieuwe Ooster 142
7.4.4. Beth Haim: Portuguese Jewish Cemetery 144
7.4.5. Syrian Orthodox Cemetery Glanerbrug 146
7.4.6. A Variety of Muslim Burial Plots 147

8. Cremation and Crematoria 151
8.1. Historic Development 151
8.2. Burial vs Cremation 157
8.3. Current Crematorium Provision 159
8.4. Crematorium Architecture 160
8.5. Cremation Law and Certification 162
8.5.1. Current Legal Debates 164
8.6. Crematorium Logistics 166
8.6.1. Welcoming Facilities at the Crematorium 167
8.6.2. Cremation Services in the Auditorium 168
8.6.3. Crematoria and Funeral Music 171
8.6.4. Incineration and the Witnessing of the Charge 171
8.6.5. The Crematorium Bar and Restaurant 174
8.6.6. The Technical Cremation Process 174
8.6.7. Environmental Regulations 175
8.6.8. Cremulation and Ash Storage 178

8.7. The Ashes 178
8.7.1. Retrieving the Ashes 178
8.7.2. Types of Ash Disposal 180
8.7.3. Ash Artists and Entrepreneurs 181
8.7.4. Accommodating Hindu Ash Disposal 183

8.8. Cremation Equipment and OrthoMetals 184
9. Death and Remembrance in the Public Sphere 187
  9.1. Personal Commemoration: Between Private and Public 187
    9.1.1. All Souls’ Day 188
    9.1.2. Virtual Commemoration 190
  9.2. War and Holocaust Commemoration 191
    9.2.1. National Remembrance of the Dead: May 4 191
    9.2.2. Holocaust Names Memorial 192
    9.2.3. Honour Fields and War Cemeteries 193
    9.2.4. German Military Cemetery Ysselsteyn 195
  9.3. Notable Developments in Dutch Memorial Practices 196
    9.3.1. Spontaneous Commemorations 196
    9.3.2. Dying Publicly 197
    9.3.3. MH17: Public Mourning 199

Bibliography 201

Index 209
This page intentionally left blank
LIST OF IMAGES

Chapter 2
Image 2.1. Code of the Funeral Association Tot Aller Welzijn (‘For Everyone’s Wellbeing’) . . . 14
Image 2.2. Image of the Westerveld Crematorium in Driehuis-Velsen in 1913, the Year of Its Opening. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 18

Chapter 4
Image 4.1. A Small Auditorium in a Funeral Home in Overasselt, Gelderland. . . . . . . . . . . 50

Chapter 6
Image 6.1. An Example of a Contemporary Mourning Card, with Fictional Information, Based on Digital Templates. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 76
Image 6.2. A Hearse, Characterised by the Triangular Flags with Three White Stripes at the Front. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 90
Image 6.3. A Funeral Bicycle, Used to Transport the Deceased to the Cemetery or Crematorium. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 91
Image 6.4. Religious Symbols at a Dutch Crematorium. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 93
List of Images

Image 6.5.  Typical Mourning Card 1951.................. 101
Image 6.6.  Typical Modern Mourning Card 2014........ 102

Chapter 7

Image 7.1.  Grave Candle Vending Machine at Rustoord Cemetery in Nijmegen, Gelderland.................. 112
Image 7.2.  Roman Catholic Cemetery in Nijmegen, Gelderland............................................. 114
Image 7.3.  The Old Cemetery in Sauwerd, Groningen, with Protestant Headstones..................... 117
Image 7.4.  Jewish Cemetery in Dwingeloo, Drenthe................................................................. 119
Image 7.5.  Muslim Burial Site, Grave Plots at Municipal Cemetery Blerickse Bergen in Venlo, Limburg................................................................. 120
Image 7.6.  Grave at a Natural Burial Ground in Blerick/Maasbree, Limburg.............................. 123
Image 7.7.  Open Air Auditorium at Natural Burial Ground in Blerick/Maasbree, Limburg............. 124
Image 7.8.  Canadian War Cemetery and Memorial in Groesbeek, Gelderland......................... 124
Image 7.9.  ‘You are the sweetest dog’. A Memorial Plaque at the Pet Cemetery in Grashoek, Limburg................................................................. 125
Image 7.10. Overview of a Burial Plot at Municipal Cemetery Venlo, Limburg, with New Graves................................................................. 127
Image 7.11. Open Spaces at the Cemetery after Grave Plot Clearance........................................ 131
| Image 7.13. | Balloon-decorated Grave to Celebrate the Deceased’s Birthday | 135 |
| Image 7.14. | Protestant Cemetery of Marken, Noord Holland | 139 |
| Image 7.15. | Roman Catholic Cemetery of Volendam, Noord Holland | 139 |
| Image 7.16. | Grave with the Hands at the Old Cemetery in Roermond, Limburg | 141 |
| Image 7.17. | An Elaborately Decorated Seventeenth-century Grave at the Portuguese Jewish Cemetery Beth Haim in Ouderkerk aan de Amstel, Noord Holland | 146 |
| Image 7.18. | A Recent Grave at the Portuguese Jewish Cemetery Beth Haim in Ouderkerk aan de Amstel, Noord Holland | 147 |
| Image 7.19. | Children’s Grave at the Muslim Cemetery in Venlo-Blerick, Limburg | 149 |

**Chapter 8**

<p>| Image 8.1. | Early Twentieth-century Cremation Propaganda of the Vereeniging voor Facultatieve Lijkverbranding | 154 |
| Image 8.2. | A Building Plan of the Westerveld Crematorium | 155 |
| Image 8.3. | The Leiden Murderess Maria Catharina Swanenburg | 165 |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Image 8.4.</th>
<th>Small Auditorium at a Crematorium in Gelderland</th>
<th>170</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Image 8.5.</td>
<td>Witnessing the Charge of the Deceased at a Crematorium in Gelderland</td>
<td>173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Image 8.6.</td>
<td>The Technical Cremation Process: The Operator Removes the Cremated Remains</td>
<td>176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Image 8.7.</td>
<td>The Technical Cremation Process: After Cremulation the Ashes Are Placed in Ash Containers for Storage</td>
<td>177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Image 8.8.</td>
<td>The Ash Storage Room</td>
<td>179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Image 8.9.</td>
<td>Ash Scattering Garden at Crematorium Blerick, Limburg</td>
<td>182</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Image 8.10.</td>
<td>Buckets Collecting Ortho Materials for Recycling</td>
<td>185</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Chapter 9**

| Image 9.1.  | A Commemoration Tree at an All Souls’ Event | 190 |
LIST OF TABLES AND CHARTS

Chapter 1
Table 1.1. Migration in the Netherlands, 2018. . . . . . 7
Table 1.2. Religious Affiliation in the Netherlands:
            Historical Development, 1830–2015. . . . . 8

Chapter 4
Chart 4.1. Number of Funeral Companies and
          Employees in 2007 and 2019. . . . . . . . . 42

Chapter 5
Table 5.1. Average Funeral Costs. . . . . . . . . . . . 59
Table 5.2. Average Burial Costs. . . . . . . . . . . . 60
Table 5.3. Average Cremation Costs. . . . . . . . . . 60

Chapter 6
Table 6.1. Place of Death. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 68

Chapter 8
Table 8.1. Development of Cremation in the
          Netherlands. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 158
Table 8.2. Number of Crematoria in the Netherlands. . 160
PREFACE

Death is inevitable to each of us and to those we hold dear. It is a matter of existential concern. People’s experiences with death are highly diverse, and so are their funerary practices. They are influenced by regional customs, legal frameworks and personal preferences. Moreover, our responses to loss are shaped by our age, ethnicity, class, gender and religion, as well as by the type and time of a death, and our relationship to the deceased.

People’s varied experiences with death challenge researchers who want to study funerary repertoires. How does one describe a miscellaneous field of practices, beliefs and experiences? How can one grasp its changes over time? Many researchers, including us, solve this difficulty by bypassing it. We situate our specific (Dutch) context in a larger, seemingly homogeneous one: Europe or the West. Rather than unpicking the notion of ‘Western’ death practices and its political implications, we have created a myth of Western funerary culture.

In the writing and structuring of this book, the notion of Western death ways proved problematic. It has, for instance, been impossible to translate some funerary practices and legislations to a (partially) non-Dutch and English-speaking audience, without compromising on the cultural aspects and meanings. At many occasions we discussed whether we should refer to the ‘Dutch Burial and Cremation Act’ or the
'Corpse Disposal Act’, and whether we should speak of autopsies and sections while the Dutch word *lijkschouwing* clearly indicates that the coroner primarily observes the corpse, rather than dissecting it.

The Funerary International Series provides accessible information on funerary practices in different (European) countries, and thereby aims to modestly unpick the notion of ‘Western’ funerary culture. This book does so for the Netherlands. It provides a concise introduction to contemporary funerary practices, and their historic, geographic, demographic, (multi)cultural and political context.

Although we have made a selection of funerary practices, as well as some simplifications to provide a clear and manageable overview, we want to emphasise the dynamics of funerary practices and the diversity of society. The Dutch funerary landscapes have been shaped by a Protestant majority in the North and a Roman Catholic majority in the South, by the segregation of society in pillars, by the arrival of migrants from the former colonies of Surinam and Indonesia, and from the Caribbean territories, as well as by the arrival of guest workers and refugees from the peripheries of Europe and elsewhere, by individualisation and secularisation, by emancipation movements, and by technical innovation. Thus although ‘the’ Dutch funerary culture does not exist, we look forward to offering you some insight into it.

Brenda Mathijssen and Claudia Venhorst
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This book has been written with the support of many. We are especially grateful to all of our research participants. Many of you have shared your personal stories of loss, of conducting funerals and of experiencing bereavement. You have taught us about funerary practices and frameworks, and more importantly, about the associated emotions, creativity and resilience. Some of you have invited us to conduct field-work at funeral homes, cemeteries and crematoria, and have shown what it means to work in this field. Thank you for your openness. We hope that this book resonates with your own professional experiences, and provides a useful source in your future practice.

We are also deeply indebted to our current and former colleagues at the Department of Comparative Religion and the Centre for Thanatology at Radboud University Nijmegen; the Department of Comparative Study of Religion at the University of Groningen; the Centre for Death and Life Studies at Durham University; and the Department of Human Geography at the University of Reading. We especially like to thank Eric Venbrux, Peter Nissen and Thomas Quartier for supporting us from the very start and for introducing us to the fields of Death Studies and Religious Studies. Julie, a special thanks to you for sticking to the plan of
making a Funerary International Series, and for entrusting the Dutch volume to us.

Finally, our deep gratitude is extended to Philippa Grand, Sophie Darling and Rachel Ward for their support and patience throughout the writing and editing process.
MAP OF THE NETHERLANDS
This page intentionally left blank
CHAPTER 1

THE NETHERLANDS: AN INTRODUCTION

1.1. OVERVIEW

The Netherlands, called Nederland in Dutch, is a rather small and densely populated country in North Western Europe. It borders Germany at the east and Belgium to the south. The country is often (incorrectly) referred to as ‘Holland’, the historic name of just two of the current 12 provinces: Noord-Holland, Zuid-Holland, Utrecht, Zeeland, Brabant, Limburg, Gelderland, Overijssel, Flevoland, Drenthe, Friesland and Groningen. Within the provinces 355 municipalities can be found, forming the lowest level of governance. The municipality provides services and policy at a local level. Together with three island territories in the Caribbean (Bonaire, Saint Eustatius and Saba), these provinces make up the Kingdom of the Netherlands (see map on page xxi).

The Netherlands is a parliamentary constitutional monarchy. Its central government is seated in The Hague and Amsterdam is its capital city. It is part of the European Union, the Euro-zone and the Schengen Area. It qualifies as a
welfare state which provides universal healthcare, public education, infrastructure and social benefits. Nederland or ‘lower land’ refers to the fact that more than a quarter of the country is situated below sea level, and the rest a mere metre above. The landscape is moulded by canals, rivers and lakes. The fight against water is of all times and ongoing, influencing many day-to-day practices. High groundwater levels often complicate the burying of the dead, demanding innovative and costly solutions and putting pressure on available burial space in certain areas.

With 17.2 million inhabitants on 41,500 km² (of which 33,700 km² actual land), the Netherlands is one of the most densely populated countries in the world. Well over 90% of the population is living in cities. The four largest cities – Amsterdam, Rotterdam, The Hague and Utrecht – and their surrounding areas form the so-called Randstad metropolis: the densely populated (8.2 million inhabitants in 2018) economic heart of the country. The mixed-market economy is among the top economies in the world, and the Netherlands is the world’s second largest exporter of food and agricultural products due to intensive and innovative agriculture.

1.2. PILLARS AND POLDERS

The Netherlands was long deeply divided along religious lines. From the nineteenth century onwards, this led to a policy of pillarisation, causing and facilitating a politico-denominational segregation of society. Each segment or pillar – Protestant, Roman Catholic, Social Democratic – could clearly be differentiated by means of their own media, political parties, leisure clubs, schools, healthcare providers and funerary services. The institutional segregation emancipated the various groups and also reduced personal contacts between the members of
different pillars to a minimum. The liberals who fundamentally opposed the segmentation ironically ended up in a (rather small) pillar of their own. As the government accommodated the pillarised system, they also (probably unintentionally) helped to emancipate the working and lower middle classes from elite control.

The particular experience of the Second World War — the Dutch stayed neutral during the First World War, and the last ‘war’ they were involved with was the so-called Ten Day’s Campaign against Belgium in 1831 — instigated a desire to renew the political system and break down the segmentation. The process of ‘depillarisation’ began, and turned on steam from the 1960s onwards. Today remnants of the former policy are still visible, particularly in the media and in education. Public television, for example, is organised through pillarised broadcasting companies, as are several newspapers. Also, the historic patchwork of political parties and the consequent multiple party coalition governments has become common practice in the Netherlands. The desire to break down the segmentation has also grounded the Dutch socio-economic model of consensus decision-making, the so-called poldermodel, common good throughout the 1980s and 1990s.

1.3. MIGRATION AND DIVERSITY

In the second half of the twentieth century, the Netherlands further diversified. As the pillars crumbled, church membership dropped and individualisation processes accelerated. Moreover, a variety of religious and cultural groups arrived in the Netherlands, for example, through guest worker programmes or after the dismantling of colonial administrative services, for example, in Indonesia. These migrants brought
with them a variety of customs and practices, including funeral repertoires that had to be reinvented in view of this new context, where they found themselves in a minority position.

Migration has always been part of Dutch history.\(^1\) Immigration spiked from the sixteenth century onwards, when tens of thousands of Protestants (from the Southern Netherlands and elsewhere in Europe) found a safe haven in the Northern Netherlands. Portuguese and Spanish Jews, fleeing the Spanish inquisition, were followed by German- or Yiddish-speaking Jews and French Huguenots in the seventeenth century. These were highly prosperous times in the Netherlands, making it attractive for large numbers of labour migrants from (what is now) Germany and Eastern Europe. Emigration was rather low. Certain Protestant groups, like the Mennonites, were in open conflict with the rather strict Calvinists and searched for a new home elsewhere. Sailors and soldiers were recruited to support the trade activities of the Dutch West India Company, a company that was instrumental in the short-lived Dutch colonisation of the Americas, and the Dutch East India Company that developed commercial and industrial activities in South East Asia.

Whereas there was little immigration in the nineteenth century, numbers gradually increased in the twentieth century as people became richer, travel became faster and more affordable, and international trade expanded. Between 1946 and 1963 about 400,000 people arrived from the Dutch East Indies, as they were unable to stay after the proclamation of Indonesian Independence in 1945 and its recognition by the

---

Dutch government and the UN in 1949.\(^2\) At about the same time, about half a million people left the Netherlands to find a better (and safer) future in Canada and Australia, but also in New Zealand, South Africa, Brazil and the United States. Between 1960 and 1974, 150,000 ‘guest workers’, mainly from Turkey and Morocco, were recruited for industrial labour to support the rapidly growing Dutch economy.\(^3\) Due to family reunification their number continued to increase after 1974.

In anticipation of the independence of Surinam in 1975, many – mainly Hindustani and Javanese – migrated to the Netherlands. Inhabitants of Suriname and the Dutch Antilles were granted Dutch nationality in 1954 and were free to relocate within the Dutch Kingdom. Also after independence large numbers of Surinamese (predominantly Afro-Surinamese) continued to immigrate to attend higher education and to reunite with family. Today, Suriname has a population of 556,485 and 351,681 people of Suriname descent are living in the Netherlands.\(^4\)

From the 1990s onwards, war and famine caused a rising number of refugees to settle in the Netherlands, for example, from (former) Yugoslavia, Congo, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan, Iraq, Somalia and more recently from Syria.\(^5\) They do share migration motives and experiences but are of diverse national, cultural and religious backgrounds. In 2018, 23\% of the Dutch population has a so-called migration 

\(^3\)Obdeijn and Schrover (2008), p. 284.
background (see Table 1.1). The migration balance — the number of people who settled in the Netherlands minus residents who left the Netherlands to settle elsewhere — was 80,665 in 2017.

1.4. RELIGION IN NUMBERS

In 2015, Statistics Netherlands (CBS) found that 50.1% of the adult population declared to be not religiously affiliated. Christians comprised 43.8% of the total population and were divided between Catholics with 23.7% and the members of the Protestant Church of the Netherlands with 15.5%, members of other Christian denominations were 4.6%. Muslims comprised 4.9% of the total population, Hindus 0.6%, Buddhists 0.4% and Jews 0.1% (see Table 1.2).

As Dutch society has become super-diverse, a wide variety of ideas and practices have emerged both in- and outside religious and ideological movements. These include ‘new’ perspectives on dying, death and grief. People actively look for funerary practices that suit the current time and circumstances.

---


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Migration Backgrounda</th>
<th>First Generation</th>
<th>Second Generation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total population</td>
<td>17,181,084</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With migration background</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Westernb</td>
<td>1,729,016</td>
<td>836,178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Westernc</td>
<td>2,242,843</td>
<td>1,243,151</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country of origin</th>
<th>First Generation</th>
<th>Second Generation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>404,459</td>
<td>191,513</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morocco</td>
<td>396,539</td>
<td>169,018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>361,594</td>
<td>100,922</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>354,136</td>
<td>105,355</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surinam</td>
<td>351,681</td>
<td>176,412</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>118,725</td>
<td>45,492</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>173,050</td>
<td>134,999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>88,390</td>
<td>49,358</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iraq</td>
<td>61,255</td>
<td>43,864</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>53,703</td>
<td>31,375</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Notes: aMigration background refers to the country with which a person has the closest ties, based on his/her parents’ country of birth or his/her own country of birth. bPerson originating from a country in Europe (excluding Turkey), North America and Oceania, or from Indonesia or Japan. cPerson originating from a country in Africa, South America or Asia (excl. Indonesia and Japan) or from Turkey.
### Table 1.2. Religious Affiliation in the Netherlands: Historical Development, 1830–2015.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Protestants</th>
<th>Roman Catholics</th>
<th>Jews</th>
<th>Muslims</th>
<th>Other Christians/Other Denominations</th>
<th>No Religious Affiliation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1830</td>
<td>59.1%</td>
<td>40.8</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1869</td>
<td>61.3%</td>
<td>36.6</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1899</td>
<td>60.0%</td>
<td>35.3</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>53.8%</td>
<td>35.8</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>7.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>46.3%</td>
<td>36.5</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td>14.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1947</td>
<td>42.3%</td>
<td>38.6</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
<td>17.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>40.7%</td>
<td>40.5</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>18.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>35.9%</td>
<td>40.5</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>23.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>1.7b</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>3.1b</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>4.4b</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>17.9%</td>
<td>27.3</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
<td>5.1%</td>
<td>45.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>15.5%</td>
<td>23.7</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
<td>50.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


**Notes:** Numbers indicate percentages. aPeople identified with the Nederlands Hervormde Kerk, Gereformeerde Kerk Nederland or Protestantse Kerk Nederland; all are members of the Protestant Church in the Netherlands. bThese estimates are based on census data focusing on migration background rather than religion. Therefore, they have limitations. In 2006, the CSB adopted a new approach to calculate religious affiliations.