

Dutch Liberal Voters Largest Climate Polluter

Roughly translated from “VVD grootste klimaat vervuiler, D66-er vliegt het meest” an artikel in the Dutch’s Elsevier Weekblad on 7 March 2019.

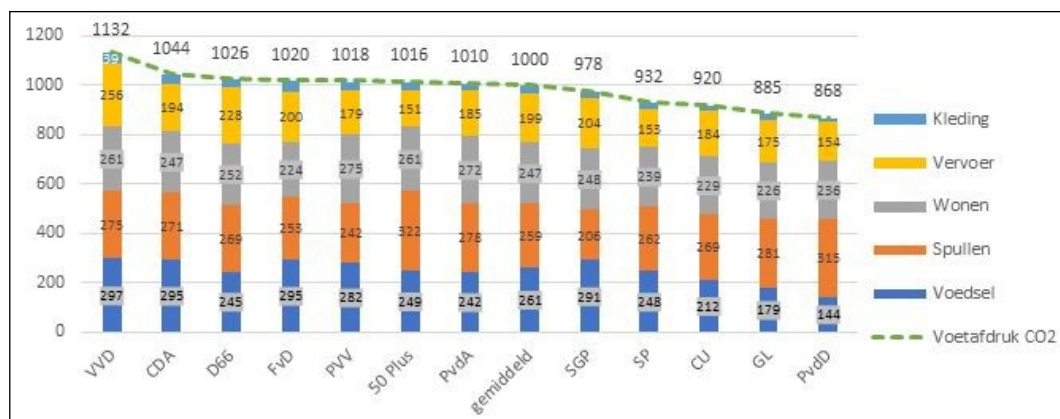
<https://www.elsevierweekblad.nl/nederland/achtergrond/2019/03/vvd-stemmer-grootste-klimaatvervuiler-d66er-vliegt-het-meest-676274/>

Higher educated men that vote for the VVD (≈ Australian liberals) emit on average most CO2. Also the supporters of “climate party” D66 produce a fair bit: they fly most often. That is according a report by I&O Research which was produced for the journal *Binnenlands Bestuur* (≈ Domestic Governance) for research on “climate behaviour” of Dutch people. Below the most striking conclusions.

In the research participated more than 2500 Dutch people over 18 years of age. According to the research bureau the results, “weighted for” gender, age, size of household, education level, location and voting behaviour at the last two Lower House parliamentary elections, are representative for the adult Dutch population.

Respondents had to answer over twenty questions about the amount of meat they eat, how often and long they shower, how often they used their car and the distances covered, and how they live. They had to make estimates or look figures up. Because of this I&O accepts that due to the method no exact figures can be known, the bureau also consulted external sources. Those were close to the estimates of the respondents according to the report.

On the basis of the answers has I&O the behaviour of citizens linked to CO2-emissions in order to conclude on their “ecological footprint”. They are subdivided in five domains “Home & Energy”, “Mobility”, “Food”, “Appliances/Stuff” and “Clothing”.



Emissions according to political party. The PvdA (≈ Australian Labor Party) just above average (= gemiddeld). Categories: Clothing; Mobility; Living; Stuffs; Food; CO2 footprint

The highest CO2 emissions are for the VVD-voters who also like to fly, but D66-supporters do the latter more. The latter fly the most. The VVD-voter fly on average longer distance and sit longer in the plane.

According to the research are D66-voters prepared to pay more for flying: 47% of these voters would like to see the prices double. For GroenLinks-voters (\approx Green Left) it is even 60%.

For the airtravel behaviour of the surveyed GroenLinks-voters, 31% feel guilty about the environmental pollution of flying. In an attempt to negate that, they pay on top of their plane ticket for carbon offset schemes, an extra amount to lessen the GHG emissions. Supporters of the VVD, SGP (\approx orthodox Calvinistic party), SP (\approx Eurosceptic socialist party) and FvD (\approx liberal democrats, nationalistic) are least likely to do this.

But 13% of the surveyed Dutch have “flying guilt”¹. Also eating meat according to environmental activists have an important part of the climate change is no taboo. Of the respondents is 6% vegan or vegetarian and only 8% have “meat remorse”.

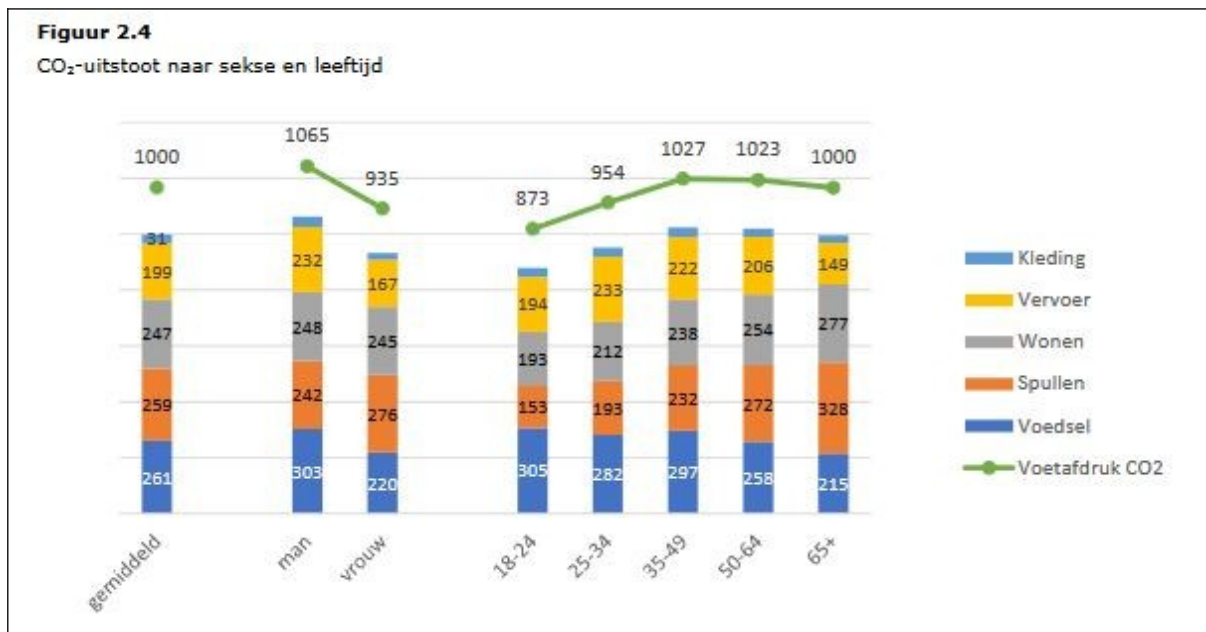
The “right” eats more meat and drives more often a car.

More than four in ten call themselves flexitarians which means that not every day meat has to be eaten. The highest number of vegans and vegetarians is - not surprisingly - with the PvdD (\approx Party of the Animals) 22%. Also voters of GroenLinks and the Christen Unie (\approx Christian party, progressive on social and ecological issues and on ethical issues it has a more conservative opinion) chose relatively often for a meat free meal. While PVV-voter (Geert Wilders \approx Pauline Hanson) are according to the report “carnivores par excellence”, followed by supporters of CDA (\approx christen democrats), FvD, VVD and SGP.

Also regarding driving a car there are clear contrasts between right and left voters. The voters of the VVD, CDA and SGP clock up most kms, while the GroenLinks and PvdD voter most often “do not use” their car. The last group is also most in favour of lowering the max speed limit on the freeway (130 kmh), something the most fervent drivers do not like that.

Although political preference is related in some cases with lifestyle, there are also stark contradictions. The higher educated vote more often than average for the “sustainable” parties like GroenLinks and PvdD, but emit in general more CO₂ than the lower educated. This happens mainly because they fly more often - about which they feel guilty - and drive more kilometres in their cars. And although the higher educated eat fewer times meat, they consume not less grams than the average.

¹ HB : This was also regularly mentioned by schoolkids when interviewed before and after the climate rallies / strikes.



Average; Man; Woman; age groups. Categories : Clothing; Mobility; Living; Stuffs; Food; CO₂ footprint

Women live “more sustainable” than men.

A clear dividing line is also gender: men emit more CO₂ than women, because they eat more meat, drive more in the car and travel more by plane. In addition, young people score lower than average, partly because they usually do not have a car and live smaller. Although they use the plane more often, eat more meat than average and take longer. Overall are the largest emissions are from the Dutch between 35 and 49 years of all age groups according to I&O research.

Besides concrete living patterns has I&O also asked also feelings assessed of the Dutch. It is striking according the bureau that at the end of last year 78% were worried about climate change, but that changed dramatically last month. At the end of February it dropped to 65%. “The pronounced sceptical remarks by politicians like Klaas Dijkhof (VVD), Sybrand Buma (CDA) and Thierry Baudet (FvD) at the start of this year drew lots of attention” says the spokesperson of I&O to the AD (a daily newspaper). Also he blames reporting by De Telegraaf (≈ tabloid newspaper) and news that energy costs will increase €300 more than was promised by the government.²

More and more Dutch are of the opinion that the climate plans of the government go too far.

An increasing number of Dutch believe the climate plans of the government go too far: in 2015 two-thirds thought the government has to do more to lower GHGs, now it is only 48%. The fear of the high costs has increased. Six out of ten surveyed believe that their own share in combatting global warming is negligible as long as business does not drastically lower their emissions.

² Cost climate change policy implementations : A highschool student who was interviewed at the end of the recent schools climate rally said “The government had plenty of money to bail out banks at the time of the GFC, so it should have enough money to implement climate change policies”.

Many left parties, Groenlinks leader Jesse Klaver in particular, believe that a CO₂-tax³ for large companies is the solution, but those companies oppose. In the Volkskrant (≈ originally a catholic paper, but now just centrist) on Thursday an open letter was published by “works councils”⁴ of 17 companies in the steel and chemistry industry stating that the “Klaver-tax” will cost 10,000 jobs. “In the worst case such type of taxes push our companies straight away into the red, our jobs will disappear and then we import steel, petrol and chemicals from countries that are less ambitious in the field of climate and GHG reduction”.

3 In addition to the ETS requirements in the EU.

4 A “work’s council” is a participation and participation body within a company consisting of employees who consult with the employer on behalf of the employees about the company policy and the employee interest.

