

Press release

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Ipsos research into preferences for solutions to migration problems

The Netherlands opts for reception of refugees in the region

Foundation Connect International (www.connectinternational.nl) has commissioned bureau Ipsos to conduct research into the preferences of Dutch people for ways to solve the migration problems in The Netherlands. With this, Connect International hopes to shake up Dutch politicians and motivate them to find a widely supported solution to the migration problems that do justice to the will of the people. Just over three thousand Dutch people took part in the survey.

Respondents were able to express their views on seven possible solutions for humanitarian and economic refugees, ranging from 'Close borders for all humanitarian and economic refugees' to 'Actively provide aid to humanitarian and economic refugees to make it easier to migrate to the Netherlands' to 'Safe reception of humanitarian and economic refugees in their own regions'. In addition, the respondents were able to express their views on possible solutions for labor migrants, ranging from 'Close borders for all labor migrants', to 'Allow more labor migrants in the Netherlands' to 'Allow only labor migrants with essential professions'.

Desired policy for humanitarian and economic refugees by the Dutch population

67% of the respondents indicated that they are positive about the possibility of receiving humanitarian and economic refugees in their own region, whereby these refugees can apply for asylum in the country of reception and therefore not in the Netherlands. This had by far the highest score of all possible solutions. In addition to the group of respondents who were neutral about this solution (21%), only 12% of the respondents indicated that they did not agree with this solution. It was also the only possible solution that had a similarly high preference among respondents from all political directions. Other possible solutions could count on significantly less support, such as 'Close borders for all humanitarian and economic refugees', 'Continue the current policy on refugees' and 'Actively offer help to all humanitarian and economic refugees to migrate to the Netherlands'.

Desired policy for labor migrants by the Dutch population

Most respondents preferred to admit only migrant workers with professions that are essential to the Dutch economy into the Netherlands (39% for European migrant workers and 41% for migrant workers from outside Europe), followed by the solution of admitting migrant workers as is currently the case (33 and 25% respectively). 5% of the respondents were in favor of admitting more labor migrants to the Netherlands, both labor migrants from within and outside Europe. The latter solution only had some support (usually 10% or lower) among respondents who voted for left wing parties, mainly PvdA, D66 and GroenLinks. For admitting only migrant workers with essential professions, the high score was equally divided among the political echelons, with only GroenLinks voters who opted slightly less for this solution.

Tom de Veer, director of Foundation Connect International: 'This ties in well with what we already expected. In the past seven years, Connect International has developed an extensive plan for the reception of refugees in the region, in which not only the refugees who otherwise come to the Netherlands are helped, but also the 85% of the refugees who do not have the money to migrate to the EU. In addition, this plan provides active assistance in returning to one's own country from the host country in the region as soon as it is safe to do so. In addition, the plan includes only admitting labor migrants in the Netherlands with essential functions and indicates how tension in the labor market can be prevented without having to deploy labor migrants for this. De Veer: 'Now is the time for politicians to listen to what the people want and to do what is best for everyone'.

The results of the survey will be used by various political parties before the summer recess as a reason to request a debate on the subject in the House of Representatives. The aim is to reach an agreement about starting a structural consultation in several rounds between representatives of the political parties, experts and other stakeholders, about various possible solutions to the migration problems. This is especially important according to de Veer, because 'I have been in contact with many parties about their insights and ideas about migration and how to deal with it. It is striking that most parties find the current migration policy a dead end and, in fact, that the positions on migration, as expressed in both right-

wing and left-wing party programs, often do not even differ that much.' De Veer: It would be good to do something like a few years ago with the climate tables; consultation until there is a good and executable plan that is also politically feasible'. So hopefully to be continued.

The research was conducted by Ipsos, on behalf of the Foundation Connect International, among a representative sample of the Dutch population aged 18 years and older. In determining the percentages in the report (and in this press release), the answers 'don't know / no opinion' have not been taken into account. The fieldwork ran from 12 to 17 May 2022. The Ipsos report can be downloaded from: www.connectinternational.nl/migratie