# Registered Partnership in the Netherlands
# A quick scan

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Ministry of Justice
Scientific Research and Documentation Centre (WODC)

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Dat: 1-4-99

# Contents

# Introduction

This is the report of a quick scan of the effects of the legislation on registered partnership, which came into force on 1 January 1998. The research was carried out by the research agency Van Dijk, Van Soomeren & Partners B.V., Amsterdam, for the Scientific Research and Documentation Centre (WODC) of the Ministry of Justice. A guidance committee provided support for the research.

The *questions* addressed in this quick scan may be divided into two areas:
- to determine the number of partnership registrations which have been concluded, classified according to composition, sex and age
- to investigate people's reasons for deciding to conclude a registered partnership, and the consequences of this decision

The *research activities* mainly consisted of preparing and conducting a telephone survey concerning the characteristics, motivation and experiences of people who concluded a registered partnership in 1998.
The research was carried out between mid-December 1998 and mid-January 1999.

The *report* is made up of three chapters, preceded by an introduction.
Chapter 1 examines the content of the legislation on registered partnership, focusing particularly on those elements which are highlighted later in the research.
Chapter 2 deals with the questions and design of the research.
Chapter 3 contains the results of the research. It presents a brief overview of the number of registrations in 1998, the distribution according to size of municipality, and the results of a survey of 153 registered partnerships. In view of the nature of the research -a quick scan of 153 registered partnerships- this chapter gives purely indicative data and (cautious) hypotheses based on these.
Further research will be necessary to demonstrate whether these hypotheses are representative of all people who have concluded a registered partnership.

# 1 Registered partnership and other forms of cohabitation

## 1.1 Introduction

The introduction of registered partnership has considerably increased the options for structuring a relationship, especially a same-sex relationship. The various possibilities -marriage, registered partnership and cohabitation with or without a cohabitation contract- are here not considered in detail. Only those elements which are important for the research report are examined.

## 1.2 Legislation on registered partnership

Registered partnership is regulated in the 'Act of 5 July 1997 to amend Book 1 of the Civil Code and the Code of Civil Procedure in order to introduce provisions on registered partnership' [hereinafter: the Registered Partnership Act].

This Act, which came into force on 1 January 1998, introduces to Book 1 of the Netherlands Civil Code, which deals with law of persons and family law, the possibility of concluding a registered partnership. The text of the Act is closely interrelated with other articles of Book 1 of the Civil Code by the many references, and is not an independent entity. This is why the text of the legislation is not included as an appendix.

As a consequence of the Registered Partnership Act it became necessary to adapt other legislation to its provisions. This resulted in the 'Act of 17 December 1997 to adapt the legislation to the introduction of registered partnership in Book 1 of the Civil Code' (Adaptation to Registered Partnership Act). This Adaptation Act also came into force on 1 January 1998.

Registered partnership, like marriage, is a statutorily regulated form of cohabitation for two people. Registered partnership is open both to people who at the moment are unable to marry because they are of the same sex, and to people who are able to marry but do not wish to do so. Concluding a registered partnership has as far as possible the same consequences as concluding a marriage. The main exceptions are the consequences with respect to children.

## 1.3 Concluding and legal consequences of registered partnership

The fact that registered partnership is almost identical to marriage may be seen from the following brief summary of the conditions for concluding registered partnership, the formalities involved, the termination and the rights and obligations ensuing from the two forms of legal cohabitation.

The *conditions* for concluding a registered partnership are virtually the same as those for concluding a marriage. One difference is that people who are not Dutch must already have a valid residence permit. This condition is designed to prevent 'sham partnerships'.

The *formalities* involved in concluding a registered partnership are practically the same as those involved in concluding a marriage.

The *termination* of a registered partnership can in principle be brought about in the same way as that of a marriage. Unlike with marriage, however, there is also the possibility of dissolving the partnership out of court - provided there is mutual consent- by means of an agreement ending the partnership. Following this agreement, a declaration that the partnership has ended, signed by both partners and a lawyer or civil-law notary, must be entered in the Register of Births, Marriages and Deaths.

The *rights and obligations* which ensue from concluding a registered partnership are largely the same as those which ensue from marriage.

The legal consequences for *personal and proprietary rights* of concluding and terminating a registered partnership are the same as those of marriage.

- Support and maintenance obligation
  Registered partners, like married couples, are obliged to support and provide for each other.
- Community of property
  In principle, all possessions and debts are joint. However, it is possible to deviate from this rule by having a civil-law notary draw up partnerships conditions, as in the case of marital conditions.
- Inheritance
  The rules on inheritance and inheritance tax are the same as with marriage.
- Pension rights
  The rules are in principle the same as with marriage. However, the 'partner's pension' for a surviving registered partner may sometimes be lower than for a surviving spouse.
- Legal acts
  For certain legal acts -for example the sale of the jointly occupied home- partners require each other's permission.
- Alimony obligation
  If the registered partnership ends, the partner with the greater financial resources has an obligation to pay alimony to the other partner.

The consequences under *family law* which ensue from concluding a registered partnership are different in some respects from those of marriage. As with marriage, concluding a registered partnership creates an official family relationship.
However, there is a difference between marriage and partnership in the consequences concerning the birth of a child. In a marriage the birth of a child automatically creates all the relationships regulated under family law between the two spouses and the child. Both spouses are parents in the eyes of the law.
In a registered partnership the birth of a child creates relationships under family law only between the mother and the child. Only the biological mother is a parent in the eyes of the law; the partner is not a parent. A registered partnership thus creates no relationships between a child and a non-parent who (jointly) looks after and brings up the child.
A parent and a non-parent (regardless of sex) may however apply to the court for joint custody of a child. This will create rights (for instance, in the area of inheritance tax), powers (for instance, with respect to upbringing) and obligations (for instance, in the form of support and maintenance obligations), which can continue even after the termination of the joint custody. If the non-parent is a man, he can also become the legal father of the child of his female partner; this can be done by means of legitimation or, where applicable, by means of adoption or legal establishment of paternity.

## 1.4 Cohabitation and cohabitation contract

In addition to marriage and registered partnership, there is a third option in the Netherlands: (unmarried/unregistered) cohabitation.
Actual cohabitation also gives rise to rights and obligations. It may, for instance, have consequences for the right to benefits within the scope of social legislation.
With respect to inheritance tax, after five years of cohabitation the situation becomes the same as that created by marriage or registered partnership. Most pension funds offer a 'partner's pension' for unmarried cohabitees.
Cohabitees can make mutual arrangements about matters such as pensions, maintenance (obligation) and division of joint property. If their arrangements are set down in writing, this is known as a cohabitation contract. If cohabitees wish to make provision for each other with respect to inheritance, they have to make wills. The content of a cohabitation contract can be decided by the cohabitees as they wish. The arrangements must naturally not be contrary to the mandatory provisions of the law, to public order and to good morals.
A cohabitation contract has in principle legal consequences only for those who conclude the contract, but in a number of cases a cohabitation contract is required by (government) authorities as proof of cohabitation.

# 2 The research

## 2.1 Research questions

It has only been possible to conclude a registered partnership in the Netherlands since 1 January 1998. Registered partnership is therefore a relatively new phenomenon, and very little research has been conducted on it. Virtually nothing is known about the application of the legislation in this area, and about the people who conclude a registered partnership. This research is intended as an initial attempt to answer a number of basic questions.

The design and execution of the research were guided by the following questions.

- To what extent have people made use of the Registered Partnership Act in 1998; total number of registrations per year/per month; by composition (man/man, woman/woman, man/woman); by age categories?
- What is the geographic distribution of partnership registrations within the Netherlands?
- What are the characteristics of the people who concluded a registered partnership in 1998: age, nationality, religion, education, income?
- What are the characteristics of the relationship of the people who concluded a registered partnership in 1998; history of relationships, length of the present relationship, composition of the present household?
- What are the motives for deciding to conclude a registered partnership, and how is this motivation related to possible choices in the future?
- How much do the people who concluded a registered partnership in 1998 know about the consequences of concluding a registered partnership?
- Have people who concluded a registered partnership in 1998 observed any potential problems?

## 2.2 Design and procedure of the research

For reasons of privacy, the research was designed in such a way that researchers did not need to know the names, addresses or any other particulars of the people in registered partnerships in the Netherlands.
A letter signed by the directors of the Scientific Research and Documentation Centre (WODC) of the Ministry of Justice and the Dutch Association for Civil Affairs was sent to all municipalities with over 20,000 residents, requesting that they take part in the research. This involved a total of 222 municipalities.
Firstly, the municipalities were asked to provide data concerning the extent to which people within their municipal boundaries had made use of the Registered Partnership Act; number of registrations, number and composition of the registered partnerships entered in the Municipal Basic Administration. These data, along with global figures supplied by the Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) and data from other sources, were processed to create a general picture of the use made of the Registered Partnership Act in 1998 [see 3.2.].

The municipalities were also asked to send out to all registered partners a mailing consisting of a short explanation of the research and a reply form -

to be returned if desired- on which they could declare that they were willing to take part in the research. The only information requested was the sex of the two partners and the telephone number. The same mailing was also distributed to the sections of the Dutch homosexual association (C.O.C.) and to private individuals via the snowball method. The sample was put together on the basis of the reply forms that were returned.

The period between the date of writing to the municipalities (8 December 1998) and the closing date for composing the sample for the survey (6 January 1999) was very short, and also partly coincided with a holiday period. Viewed in that light, the response of both the municipalities and the registered partners who were willing to take part in the research was extremely good.

The research consisted of a telephone survey of 15-20 minutes, conducted by the Mediad Agency, Rotterdam, in the second week of 1999.

## 2.3 The sample

Of the 222 municipalities approached for the research, 141 replied before the closing date for composing the sample; together they sent out approximately 1,575 reply forms. Approximately 175 forms were distributed via the other channels mentioned above. This means that approximately 1,750 reply forms were sent out to people in registered partnerships.
Of these 1,750 forms, 510 were returned in time for the telephone survey, 480 of these being positive in that the respondents were willing to take part in the research. One third of these 480 partnerships were approached for the research. A total of 153 partnerships participated in the research, of which:

- man/man couples : 51 couples
- woman/woman couples : 51 couples
- man/woman couples : 51 couples

The participants were selected as follows. The 480 partnerships who responded were divided into the three different 'categories'. They were then approached until each of the three categories was filled (to 51 partnerships). The term 'category' is used for the distinction in the composition of the partnerships by sex: man/man, woman/woman and man/woman. Five percent of the partnerships who were telephoned could not be contacted at the first approach. A second approach was not necessary, however, as the numbers of registered partners willing to participate were sufficient.

Given the small number of registered partners involved in this survey, it was clear from the outset that the requirements of representativeness would not be met. In order to obtain an indicative picture of the registered partnership phenomenon, however, care was taken to achieve a balanced composition of the research group, with a reasonable distribution in terms of age, religion, education and income.

In view of the extent and nature of the research, the results must be interpreted primarily as indications. These results could perhaps be used in elaborating the questions for further research.

# 3 Results of the research

## 3.1 Introduction

This chapter is largely based on the quantitative data supplied by the municipalities and by the responses to the telephone survey of 153 partnerships, distributed equally across the three categories of registered partners.

Much of the research is constituted by the question concerning the motives of the people when making decisions. These considerations are naturally subjective, and from an objective standpoint perhaps even incorrect. In the report they are presented without commentary as the opinions of the interviewees.

For ease of reading, the text contains almost exclusively tables of absolute figures. The tables of relative figures are given in the appendices.

## 3.2 Partnership registration: national data

*Registrations*
A total of 4,237 registered partnerships were concluded in the Netherlands up to the end of November 1998. They were evenly distributed across the three categories.

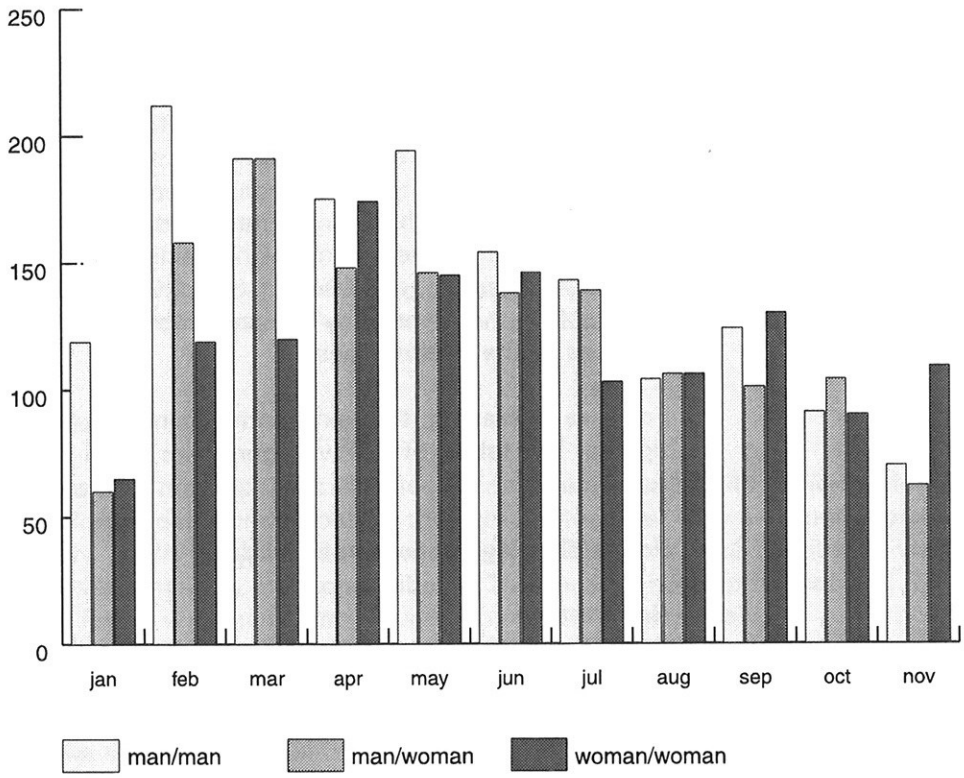
Table 1 Registered partnerships concluded in the Netherlands, January-November 1998 (CBS figures)

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| man/man partnerships | 1.577 | 37% |
| woman/woman partnerships | 1.307 | 31% |
| man/woman partnerships | 1.353 | 32% |
| total | 4.237 | 100% |

These figures show that in 1998 the total number of partnership registrations involving same-sex partners will be considerably higher than the 1,700 registrations assumed by the Ministry of Justice when preparing the Act. (note: Kamerstukken II 1995/96, 23761 nr. 7, page 3)
Another striking point is the unexpectedly large number of man/woman couples who utilise the option of registering a partnership.

The following diagram gives a picture of the trends in registrations per month per category.

Diagram 1 Number of partnership registrations in the Netherlands january up to november 1998




On the basis of these figures one might assume that there is a downward trend in the number of partnerships concluded. However, it is still too early to draw such a conclusion. After all, it is well known that substantially fewer marriages are concluded during the winter months, and it may very well be that registered partnerships follow the same pattern. Neither is it possible on the basis of these data to determine whether the figures for the first year give a distorted picture due to a 'catching up' demand of same-sex couples who were previously unable to officialise their relationship.
No conclusions may be drawn either about a possible difference between same-sex and different-sex partners with respect to trends in concluding registered partnerships.

The trends in registrations during 1998 in Amsterdam show a similar picture. In Amsterdam in 1998 a total of 500 partnerships were registered, with a distribution across the categories which clearly deviates from the national picture.

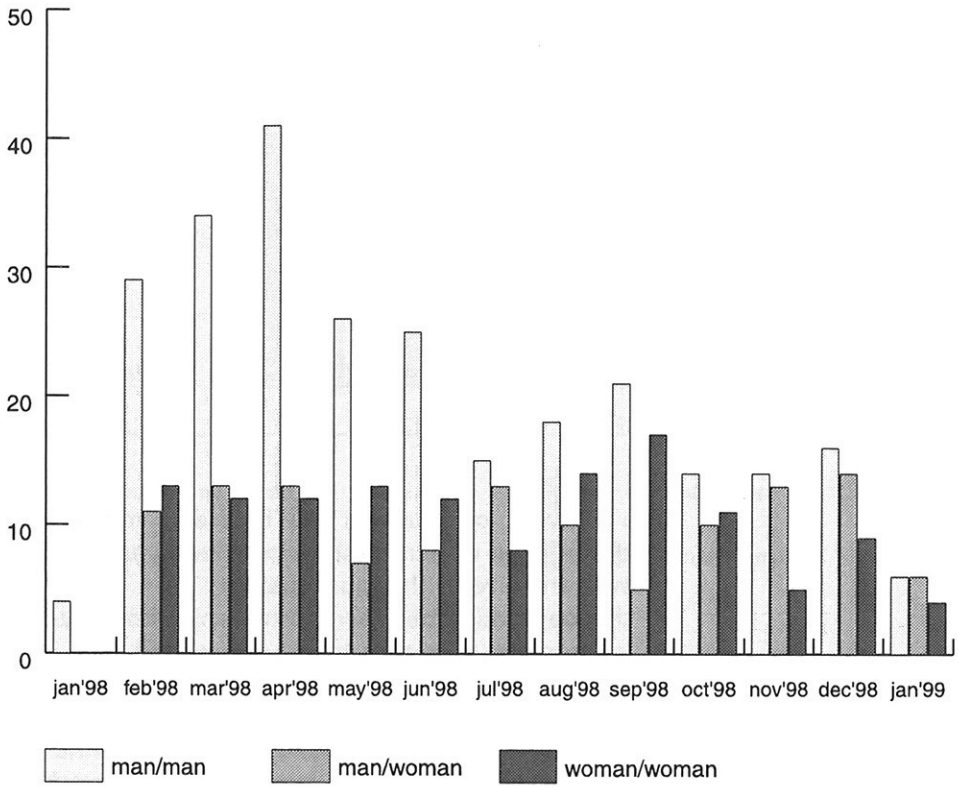
Table 2 Registered partnerships concluded in Amsterdam in 1998 (Research & Statistics [O&S] Amsterdam)

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| man/man partnerships | 257 | 51% |
| woman/woman partnerships | 126 | 25% |
| man/woman partnerships | 117 | 24% |
| total | 500 | 100% |

In view of the large proportion of man/man partnerships, it is clear that the figures for Amsterdam are not representative of the Netherlands as a whole.

The figures for the number of registrations per month per category in Amsterdam give the following picture.

Diagram 2 Number of partnership registrations in Amsterdam january 1998 up to january 1999




This diagram also includes the figures for January 1999. In this month 16 registered partnerships were concluded (6 man/man, 4 woman/woman and 6 man/woman partnerships). This is the lowest number of registrations per month since the introduction of registered partnership, but -as noted above- no conclusions can be attached to these data.

*Geographical distribution*
The definitive data of the CBS on the geographical distribution of registered partnerships in the Netherlands in 1998 cannot be expected before mid 1999. The figures supplied by the municipalities in preparation for composing the sample for the telephone survey do however give an indication. The 2,092 registrations which they reported are distributed as follows across the categories.

Table 3 Registered partnerships concluded in the Netherlands in 1998; per category (based on figures supplied by 141 municipalities)

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| man/man partnerships | 806 | 38% |
| woman/woman partnerships | 600 | 29% |
| man/woman partnerships | 686 | 33% |
| total | 2.092 | 100% |

Examination of the way in which these figures are distributed according to the size of municipality reveals an uneven distribution of registered partnerships within the Netherlands.

Table 4 Registered partnerships per 10,000 residents by size of municipality (based on figures supplied by 141 municipalities)

| | 20,000-50,000 | 50,000-100,000 | >100,000 |
|---|---|---|---|
| man/man partnerships | 0.7 | 1.3 | 2.2 |
| woman/woman partnerships | 0.7 | 1.1 | 1.3 |
| man/woman partnerships | 0.9 | 1.0 | 1.3 |
| total | 2.3 | 3.4 | 4.8 |

The following conclusions may be drawn from this table:

- the number of partnerships concluded per 10,000 residents increases with the size of the municipality
- this correlation between partnerships concluded and size of municipality is strongest with man/man partnerships

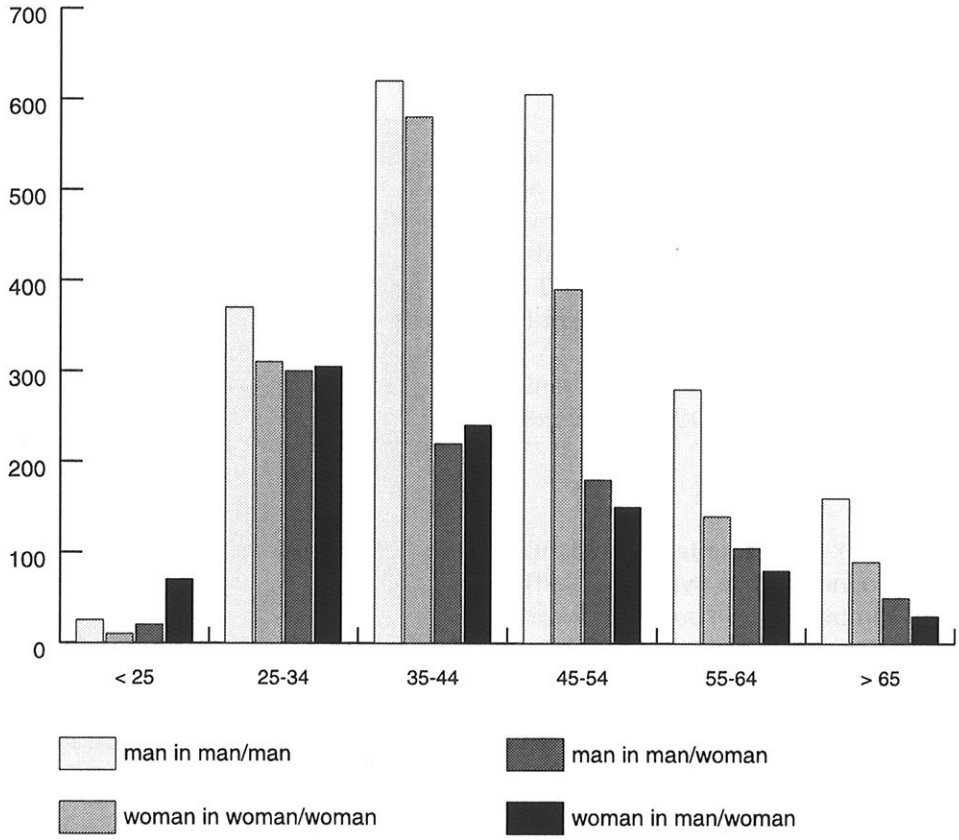
These conclusions are in line with the findings of Harmsen/Latten concerning all the partnerships concluded in the first half of 1998. They calculated that the interest in registered partnership is twice as high in (extremely) urban areas as in non-urban areas, and that this phenomenon is primarily due to over-representation of registered partnerships of same-sex couples in the large cities. By contrast, man/woman couples measured according to urbanisation of the municipality are distributed evenly throughout the Netherlands.

*Age of registered partners*

Harmsen/Latten calculated that the average age at the first marriage of men is 30 years and of women 28 years. The people who concluded same-sex registered partnerships in the first half of 1998 were found to be considerably older: the men were on average 45 years old; the women 43 years. This difference may be connected to a 'catching-up' demand of same-sex couples who were previously unable to officialise their relationship, although they had cohabited for a long time. The average age of the man/woman partnerships was also high: men 42 years; women 39 years.

In terms of distribution by age, Harmsen/Latten report that the emphasis for same-sex registered partnerships is on the age category 35-54 years, and for man/woman partnerships on the age category 25-34 years.

Diagram 3 Number of registered partnerships in the Netherlands first six months of 1998 according to age




The letter sent to the Dutch municipalities concerning the research asked them to supply data on the age of registered partners in their municipality. However, the data supplied were too divergent to be included in the results of this research.

## 3.3 The interviewees

[For the tables relating to this section see: Appendix I]

*Numbers and sex*
A total of 153 partnerships were involved in the research, divided into the following categories:

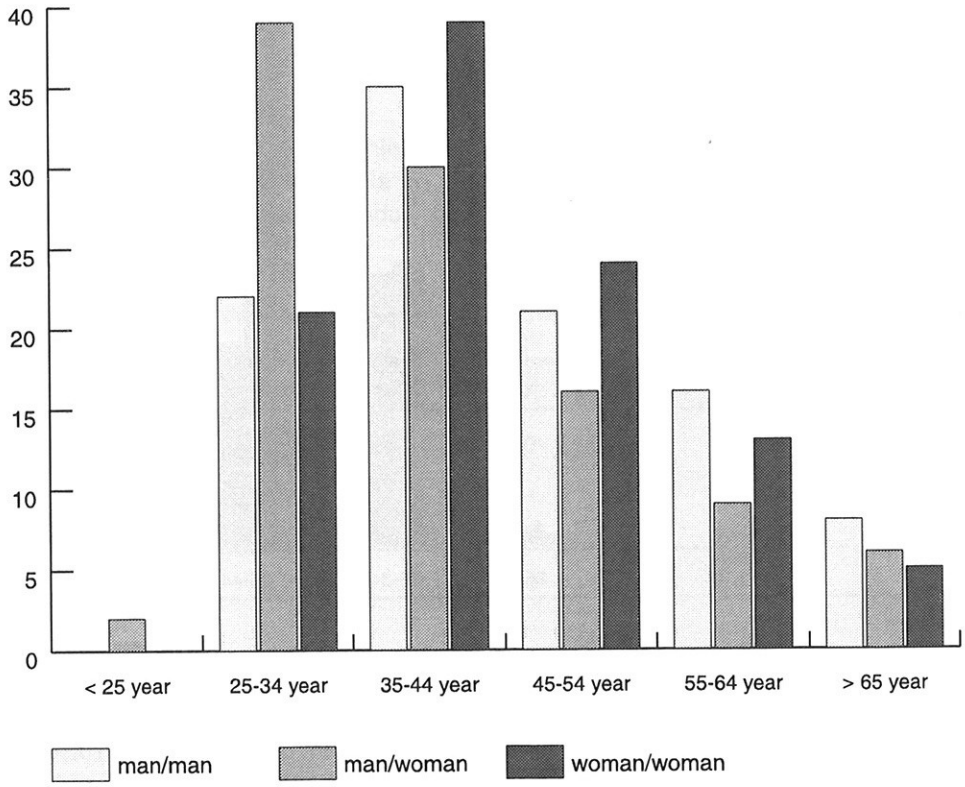
| | |
|---|---|
| man/man couples | : 51 |
| woman/woman couples | : 51 |
| man/woman couples | : 51 |

There are consequently 306 registered partners, distributed by sex:

| | |
|---|---|
| men | : 153 |
| women | : 153 |

*Age*
The distribution by age is as follows.

Diagram 4 Age of the interviewees




This distribution is in line with the earlier conclusion of Harmsen/Latten that the emphasis for same-sex registered partnerships is on the age 35-54 years. For man/woman partnerships the distribution is rather different from that described by Harmsen/Latten: the number in the age-group 35-44 is higher. It is striking here, however, that there is still an emphasis on the age group < 34 years.

*Nationality*
The majority of registered partners are of Dutch nationality, in total 298 of the 306 involved. Only two people have the nationality of a country outside the European Union.

*Place of residence*
People living in municipalities with fewer than 20,000 residents were also found to be involved in the research. The large cities made only a very partial contribution to the research. Distortion due to over-representation of the large cities is therefore not probable.

*Religion*
About 60% of the interviewees reported that they do not have a religion. This is considerably more than the Dutch population as a whole (40% 1996 CBS). Only eight couples stated that religious belief had played any part in their decision to conclude a registered partnership. As relevant points these couples mention: support obligation (five times), the church service after the registration (three times) and recognition by the [church] community (once).

*Education*
The vast majority of the interviewees have an education level higher than primary education. For all three categories, the percentage with an 'HND'-level qualification (HBO) or university degree is higher than for the Dutch population in general.

*Income situation*
In terms of income, approximately 90% of the interviewees belonged to the category of 'double-income'; man/man partnerships 96%; woman/woman partnerships 84%; man/woman partnerships 86%. This is a considerably higher percentage than in the Netherlands as a whole. At the end of 1996 over 3.3 million of the 6.6 million households were constituted by couples. Of these over 2.3 million were 'double-income', approximately 70% of all couples.
In 1996 the disposable income in double-income households was on average almost NLG 12,000 (approximately GBP 4,000) more than in single-income households.

*Summary*
The interviewees differ from the general Dutch population in that they are less religious and more highly educated. They also have a better income situation. There is no reason to assume, however, that they would not be representative of the group of registered partners.
In terms of age, the emphasis is on the category 35-54 years. The representation of the age group < 34 years is striking for man/woman partnerships.

## 3.4 Characteristics of the relationship

[For the tables relating to this section see: Appendix II]

*History of relationships*
Almost half of all partners have not previously cohabited with or been married to another person. There are however clear differences between the categories. For man/man relationships the percentage is 60%, for man/woman relationships 50% and for woman/woman relationships 35%.

On average slightly under one third of the registered partners have previously been married. In man/man relationships the percentage is very much lower than average: less than 20%.
These figures correspond with the proportions given by Harmsen/Latten concerning all the partnerships concluded in the first half of 1998. They calculated that three quarters of the same-sex couples and half of the man/woman couples had not previously been married.

*Length of the present relationship*
The registered partners have known each other for a long time. In 96% of the cases more than 2 years. In 2/3 of the cases more than 5 years. In 40% of the cases more than 10 years. It is striking that in over one quarter of the man/man partnerships the relationship has existed for more than 20 years.

*Cohabitation: yes and how*
Almost all the interviewed couples (149) cohabit at one address. Four live and previously lived apart. All the man/man couples cohabit. Of the woman/woman couples, two live apart, in different municipalities. Of the man/woman couples, two live apart.

Most of the interviewees (over 85%) already cohabited when they concluded a registered partnership. In this respect, however, there is a difference between the man/woman couples (75%) and the same-sex couples: for woman/woman relationships precisely 90%; for man/man relationships 94%.

On average 40% of all couples had concluded a cohabitation contract. There is a striking difference in this connection between man/woman couples and same-sex couples. Over half of the same-sex couples had concluded a cohabitation contract; man/man relationships 55%, woman/woman relationships 49%. For man/woman relationships this figure is 16%.

*The presence of children*
In 30% of the registered partnerships children were reported to be a part of the household. This is the case for half of the man/woman partnerships; man/man couples 24%; woman/woman couples 20%.
In over half of all cases the children are from a previous relationship. In all the man/man relationships the children are from a previous relationship.
It emerged from later interviews, however, that a number of the interviewees did not take this 'presence of children in the household' to mean that children are part of the household in the physical sense. They took it to mean that children from a previous relationship should be seen as a factor influencing the decisions taken by the partners.

*Summary*
For almost half of the registered partners this partnership is their first officialised relationship. About one third have been married (and divorced). Registered partners have known each other for quite a long time; in two thirds of the cases for more than five years.
The majority of the partners already cohabited before concluding a registered partnership. In 40% of the cases they had concluded a cohabitation contract. After the registration almost all the couples cohabited. Children are involved in 30% of the registered partnerships; many of these are children from previous relationships.

## 3.5 Cohabitation contract, partnership or marriage?

[For the tables relating to this section see: Appendix III]

In this section the difference between the various categories may be seen not only in its effect on the answers, but also in the question itself. For same-sex couples, of the three options - marriage, registered partnership or cohabitation contract - only the last two are open. And for different-sex couples, future legislation to open marriage to same-sex couples has no relevance.

*Partnership or cohabitation contract*
In total there are 92 partnerships in which -before the partnership registration- there was *not* a cohabitation contract. Almost half of this group is constituted by man/woman couples. This is reasonable, since it has already been found that cohabiting man/woman couples are much less likely to have concluded a cohabitation contract (see 3.4).
These 92 partnerships were asked whether they had considered concluding a cohabitation contract, instead of registering a partnership. This was found to be the case for approximately 60% (54 couples).

Table 5 Question: Did you consider concluding a cohabitation contract instead of a registered partnership?

| | total N=92 | m/m N=23 | f/f N=26 | m/f N=43 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| did consider | 54 | 10 | 13 | 31 |
| did not consider | 38 | 13 | 13 | 12 |

Two considerations were found to have been by far the most important in the ultimate decision to conclude a partnership.
Firstly, the perception that a partnership has more significance than a cohabitation contract. This argument is especially put forward by the woman/woman couples.
Secondly, the argument that concluding a partnership is less expensive because it does not require the services of a civil-law notary. This consideration is especially mentioned by man/woman couples.

Table 6 Question: Why did you decide to conclude a registered partnership instead of a cohabitation contract?

| | total N=54 | m/m N=10 | f/f N=13 | m/f N=31 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| partnership has more significance | 33 | 05 | 12 | 16 |
| does not require civil-law notary/less expensive | 18 | 02 | 01 | 15 |
| more financial security | 08 | 01 | 00 | 07 |
| the festie nature of concluding a registered partnership | 05 | 03 | 01 | 01 |
| do not live together | 01 | 00 | 00 | 01 |
| total | 65 | 11 | 14 | 40 |

[more than one answer possible]

*Partnership or marriage*
Another option for man/woman partnerships, in addition to cohabitation (and the cohabitation contract) and registered partnership, is marriage. 23 of the 51 couples stated that they had considered marriage. The reasons which they gave for their ultimate choice of a registered partnership are shown in Table 7.

Table 7 Question: Why did you decide to conclude a registered partnership instead of a marriage?

| | |
|---|---|
| aversion to marriage as a traditional institution | 10 |
| a registered partnership is less binding than marriage | 05 |
| the relationship with (future) children | 04 |
| a registered partnership can be arranged more quickly | 05 |
| a marriage is too expensive | 02 |

[N=23; more than one answer possible]

Of these 23 man/woman couples, 11 say that they are giving consideration to converting the partnership into a marriage in due course. Of all the man/woman couples, 38 couples say they are not planning to do this.
Those who are thinking of doing so give the reasons that marriage has more significance (6 times), the partnership was intended from the start as a step on the way to marriage (twice) and -with no further explanation- children (3 times).

*Partnership or gay marriage*
The same-sex couples were asked whether they would have concluded a marriage instead of a partnership if the option had been open to them. Over 80% (86 of the 102 couples) would in that case have concluded a marriage.

If in the future marriage were to also become open to same-sex couples, a large majority (62%; 63 couples) say that they would then like to convert the partnership into a marriage.
The reasons put forward for converting the partnership into a (gay) marriage have already been encountered: the greater significance of marriage, and -for woman/woman couples- children. And there is another argument that has not previously been mentioned, which is particularly put forward by the man/man relationships: full equality.

Table 8 Question: Why would you like to convert your registered partnership into a (gay) marriage

| | total | m/m | f/f |
|---|---|---|---|
| full equality | 41 | 27 | 14 |
| marriage has more significance | 24 | 09 | 15 |
| children | 04 | 00 | 04 |
| don't know | 01 | 00 | 01 |
| total | 70 | 36 | 34 |

[more than one answer possible]

Of the 27 couples who see no reason to convert their partnership into a marriage, all (11) of the man/man couples and 13 of the woman/woman couples give the -pragmatic- argument that they see no need to do this because they have already achieved what they want. Three woman/woman couples state that they would find it `too much fuss'.

*Summary*
One may suggest -cautiously- that the registered partnership is perceived as having greater significance than a cohabitation contract, and that marriage is perceived as an institution of greater significance than a registered partnership. If the possibility had existed, 80% of the same-sex couples would have married instead of concluding a registered partnership. And if in the future marriage becomes open to same-sex couples, a large majority would choose to convert their registered partnership into a marriage. Opening marriage to same-sex couples is regarded as a symbol of full equality.

Some noteworthy responses are given by various man/woman couples about registered partnership: it is less expensive than a cohabitation contract, especially as a civil-law notary is not required. It can be "arranged more quickly" than a marriage, and is even said to be "less binding". And in a number of cases: the partnership is seen as a "step on the way to marriage".

### 3.6 Reasons for concluding a registered partnership

[For the tables relating to this section see: Appendix IV]

*Financial, emotional or both?*
Just over half of the interviewees (52%; 80 partnerships) are of the opinion that financial/practical considerations were more important in their decision to conclude a registered partnership than emotional considerations. A more nuanced picture is obtained when these responses are broken down into the different categories. Emotional considerations were said by over 60% of the woman/woman couples to be the most important. Over 70% of the man/woman couples said that the financial/practical reasons were decisive. Unfortunately it is not possible to discover whether in this latter case it was the man or the woman who gave the answer. The man/man couples were divided equally between saying that financial/practical considerations and emotional considerations were decisive. It is striking, incidentally, that substantially more responses were given to the questions concerning emotional considerations (117 couples; 341 responses) than to the questions concerning financial/practical considerations (136 couples; 258 responses).

*Financial/practical considerations*
Of all the respondents, 17 couples (11%) state that they had no financial/practical considerations whatsoever. These are mainly same-sex couples. Most couples, however, give more than one of these reasons.

The reasons given -in descending order- were inheritance, pension, buying joint home, co-tenancy, financial security, tax considerations, and other considerations. The most important reasons for all three categories were found to be inheritance, pension, and buying a joint home.

Table 9 Most important financial/practical considerations in concluding a registered partnership

| | total N=153 | m/m N=51 | f/f N=51 | m/f N=51 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| inheritance | 47 | 19 | 18 | 10 |
| pension | 33 | 11 | 10 | 12 |
| buying joint home | 21 | 04 | 06 | 11 |
| financial security | 09 | 02 | 03 | 04 |
| children | 08 | 00 | 04 | 04 |
| co-tenancy | 04 | 00 | 03 | 01 |
| tax | 04 | 01 | 00 | 03 |
| own business | 01 | 01 | 00 | 00 |
| don't know | 09 | 06 | 00 | 03 |
| no financial/practical considerations | 17 | 07 | 07 | 03 |

*Emotional considerations*
Over 20% of the respondents (34 couples) state that they had no emotional considerations whatsoever. Two thirds of these were man/woman couples, who also in general give substantially fewer emotional reasons. Recognition with respect to each other scores highest in all categories, but especially in the man/man and woman/woman relationships. Societal recognition is a good second, especially for same-sex couples. The need for recognition from people in the home, work and social environments also plays a part, mainly for same-sex couples, particularly man/man. The primacy of the 'recognition with respect to each other' is emphasised again when the couples are asked to select the most important reason.

Table 10 Most important emotional considerations in concluding a registered partnership

| | total N=153 | m/m N=51 | f/f N=51 | m/f N=51 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| recognition with respect to each other | 96 | 34 | 38 | 24 |
| general societal recognition | 11 | 07 | 04 | 00 |
| recognition with respect to family | 04 | 02 | 01 | 01 |
| recognition with respect to home environment | 01 | 01 | 00 | 00 |
| children | 03 | 00 | 02 | 01 |
| nice to conclude a registered partnership | 02 | 01 | 01 | 00 |
| do not want to marry | 02 | nvt | nvt | 02 |
| no emotional considerations | 34 | 06 | 05 | 23 |

*Summary*
Over half of the registered partners say that they concluded the partnership for mainly financial/practical reasons; for man/woman couples the percentage is actually 70%. The most important financial/practical reasons are inheritance, pension and buying a home.
Over 20% of the registered partnerships say that they had no emotional considerations whatsoever in deciding to conclude the partnership.
The most important emotional consideration is the recognition with respect to each other. For same-sex couples societal recognition is also an important factor; especially for the man/man couples.

## 3.7 Information, knowledge and partnership conditions

[For the tables relating to this section see: Appendix V]

*Information and knowledge*
Of all the interviewees, 83% say that they obtained information verbally or in writing about the consequences of concluding a registered partnership.

Three quarters of all the interviewees also respond affirmatively to the question whether they considered beforehand what the consequences of concluding a registered partnership would be in the event of one or both of the partners wishing to end the partnership.

One might assume, on the basis of the above responses, that the interviewees would have a considerable amount of knowledge about registered partnership.
However, when asked about the legal consequences of concluding a registered partnership, one third of the interviewees (52 couples) could not spontaneously name any legal consequences at all; for the woman/woman couples this is actually over 40%. On the other hand, some couples give more than one legal consequence, especially the man/woman couples. A striking feature of this category is the emphasis on the support obligation [meaning: maintenance obligation].

The consequences mentioned are -in descending order- support obligation, community of property, alimony obligation, consequences for inheritance, fiscal consequences, custody of children and pension.

*Partnership conditions*
Of all the interviewees, half (78 couples) obtained information about partnership conditions. Of these, 25 couples drew up partnership conditions. This means that in total 16% of the interviewed couples had partnership conditions drawn up. This is a low percentage if one considers that in the same group on average 40% cohabited with a cohabitation contract; for the same-sex couples this was actually over half. *(See 3.4; Appendix II; Table II.4)*
This percentage of 16% is also low compared with the percentage of marriages with marital conditions in the Netherlands: 27% in 1996.
It is also a low percentage compared with the number of cohabitees with a cohabitation contract among the registered partners.
The following table, showing the correlation between the data on the numbers of partnerships with conditions and the data on the numbers of 'cohabitees with a cohabitation contract', suggests that cohabiting with a cohabitation contract is replaced by a partnership without partnership conditions. This mainly relates to same-sex partnerships.

Table 11 Cross-table of partnerships with partnership conditions and cohabitees with a cohabitation contract

| | cohab. with cc | cohab. without cc | not cohab. | did not say | total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| partnership conditions | 06 | 12 | 06 | 01 | 25 |
| no partnership conditions | 21 | 28 | 04 | 00 | 53 |
| total | 27 | 40 | 10 | 01 | 78 |

*Summary*
Over 80% of the interviewees say that they obtained information about the consequences of concluding a registered partnership.
However, it was found that they do not have much knowledge about the consequences of concluding a partnership; one third of the interviewees cannot name any consequences whatsoever. The consequences mentioned are mainly: support obligation, community of property, alimony obligation and consequences for inheritance.

Over half of the interviewees say that they obtained information about partnership conditions. Ultimately, 16% drew up partnership conditions, a low percentage compared with the national percentage for marital conditions (27%).

It is also a low percentage compared with the number of cohabitees with a cohabitation contract among the registered partnerships.
It appears that people who previously cohabited with a cohabitation contract find registered partnership -and its legal consequences- to be a good replacement for the cohabitation contract and the arrangements that it contains. This is especially true for same-sex couples.

## 3.8 Problems

The interviewees were asked whether they had encountered any problems in or after concluding their registered partnership.

*Before concluding the registration* of the partnership slightly more than 10% of all the interviewees (17 partnerships) encountered problems. The vast majority therefore experienced no difficulties whatsoever in concluding their registered partnership.
The problematic points were mainly connected with the contact with the Registry of Births, Marriages and Deaths: problems concerning the birth certificate (3 times; twice from other countries), 'surprise' at the unwanted ceremony, despite the expressed reference for a purely business-like transaction (4 times) and officials' unfamiliarity with the registered partnership phenomenon (5 times).
Two interviewees consider that their employer does not take them seriously.
Three report unfamiliarity with registered partnership in general as a problem.

*After concluding the registration* 15% of the interviewees (23 partnerships) experienced problems. These problems are at the level of: unfamiliarity of other people with the registered partnership phenomenon (9 times), problems with filling in forms because they do not include registered partnership (8 times), and problems with the pension fund (5 times), social security, insurance and collective agreements (once each).

The majority of the respondents had therefore not encountered any problems whatsoever up to the time of the interviews. One should bear in mind, however, that registered partnership has only been in existence for one year, and potential problems could become evident later.

*Summary*
On the whole, it appears that up to now there have been very few problems with registered partnership. Where problems exist, they mainly ensue from the lack of familiarity with registered partnership in society in general, and on the part of authorities in particular.

# 4 Summary

The legislation on registered partnership entered into force in the Netherlands on 1 January 1998. Registered partnership, like marriage, is a statutorily regulated form of cohabitation for two people. It is open both to people who at the moment are unable to marry because they are of the same sex, and to people who are able to marry but do not wish to do so. Registered partnership is virtually identical to marriage with respect to the conditions under which it may be concluded, the formalities involved, its termination, and the rights and obligations ensuing from the two forms of cohabitation. The main difference lies in the consequences concerning children. In the event of a birth within a registered partnership, only the relationships between mother and child regulated under family law are legally created.

**Design of the research**

Virtually nothing is known about the application of the legislation since it was introduced on 1 January 1998, and about the people who conclude a registered partnership. The present research, which consisted mainly of a telephone survey on the characteristics, motivation and experiences of people who concluded a registered partnership in 1998, is an initial attempt to answer a number of basic questions. Firstly, the question of how many registered partnerships have been concluded, classified according to composition, sex and age. Secondly, the question of what reasons people have for deciding to conclude a registered partnership, and the consequences of that choice. In view of the nature of the research -a quick scan of 153 registered partnerships, divided equally across the three categories: man/man, woman/woman and man/woman partnerships- the results must be regarded as indicative data. There is no reason to assume that the interviewees would not be representative of the group of registered partners.

*Registered partnerships*
In 1998 to the end of November a total of 4,237 registered partnerships were concluded: man/man partnerships 1,577; woman/woman partnerships 1,307; man/woman partnerships 1,353.
Which means that the total number of partnership registrations involving same-sex partners is considerably higher than the 1.700 registrations a year assumed by the Ministry of Justice when preparing the Act. Another striking point is the unexpectedly large number of man/woman couples who utilise the option of registering a partnership.
It was found that registered partnerships are not distributed evenly throughout the country: the number of partnerships concluded per 10,000 residents increases with the size of the municipality; this is particularly the case for man/man partnerships.

*Characteristics of registered partners*
The interviewees -almost all of Dutch nationality- differ from the Dutch population as a whole in that they are less religious and more highly educated. They also have a better income situation.
In terms of age, the emphasis for same-sex partnerships is on the age category 35-54 years; for man/woman partnerships the representation of the age category < 34 years is striking.

For almost half of the registered partners this partnership is their first officialised relationship. About one third have been married (and divorced). Registered partners have known each other for quite a long time; in two thirds of the cases for more than five years.
The majority of the partners already cohabited before they concluded a registered partnership. In 40% of the cases they had drawn up a cohabitation contract. After the registration practically all of them cohabited.
Children are involved in 30% of the registered partnerships; many of these are children from previous relationships.

*Registered partnership and marriage*
The interviewees perceive the registered partnership to have more significance than a cohabitation contract. Marriage is seen as an institution with more significance than a registered partnership. If the possibility had existed, 80% of the same-sex couples would have married instead of concluding a registered partnership. And if in the future marriage becomes open to same-sex couples, a large majority (62%) would choose to convert their registered partnership into a marriage. Opening marriage to same-sex couples is seen as a symbol of full equality.
For different-sex registered partnerships, the number who wish to convert the registered partnership into a marriage is much lower.

*Motivation*
Over half of the registered partners say that they concluded the partnership for mainly financial/practical reasons; for man/woman couples the percentage is actually 70%. The most important financial/practical considerations are inheritance, pension and buying a home.
The most important emotional consideration for concluding a registered partnership is recognition with respect to each other. For same-sex couples societal recognition is also an important factor; especially for the man/man couples.
Over 20% of the registered partners say that they had no emotional considerations whatsoever in deciding to conclude the partnership.

*Information*
Over 80% of the interviewees say that they obtained information about the consequences of concluding a registered partnership.
However, it was found that they do not have a great deal of knowledge about the consequences of concluding a partnership; one third of the interviewees cannot name any consequences whatsoever. The consequences mentioned are mainly: support obligation, community of property, alimony obligation and consequences for inheritance.

*Partnership conditions and cohabitation contract*
Over half of the interviewees say that they obtained information about partnership conditions. Ultimately, only a small number of them (16%) drew up partnership conditions. It appears that people who previously cohabited with a cohabitation contract find registered partnership -and its legal consequences- to be a good replacement for the cohabitation contract and the arrangements that it contains. This is especially true for same-sex couples.

*Problems*
On the whole it appears that up to now there have been very few problems with registered partnership. Where problems exist, they mainly ensue from the lack of familiarity with registered partnership in society in general, and on the part of authorities in particular.

# 5 Conclusion

The legislation on registered partnerships which came into force in the Netherlands on 1 January 1998 has been used considerably more than for the 1,700 registrations of same-sex partnerships per year assumed during the preparation of the legislation. By the end of November 1998, about 2,900 registered partnerships had been concluded between same-sex partners. It is also striking that a large number of man/woman couples (end of November: 1,353) utilise the option of concluding a registered partnership.

It appears that people who previously cohabited with a cohabitation contract find registered partnership -and its legal consequences- to be a good replacement for the cohabitaion contract and the arrangements it contains. Up to now there have been no problems in the application of the legislation.

If marriage were to be opened to same-sex couples, more than half of these couples would choose to convert their registered partnership into a marriage.

Registered partners are on average more highly educated than the Dutch population in general. They also have a better income situation. In terms of age, the emphasis is on the age category 35-54 years.

Financial/practical considerations (inheritance, pension, buying a home) constitute the most important reasons for concluding a registered partnership. Despite the information available, there is not much knowledge about the consequences of concluding a registered partnership.

# 6 Literature


C. Harmsen & J. Latten, Snelle start partnerregistratie (*Fast start for partnerregistration*, in: Index 1998, number 9 (October.)

C. Harmsen & J. Latten, Belangstelling for geregistreerd partner schap groter dan verwacht (*Interest in registered partnership greater than expected*), in Maandstatistiek bevolking CBS 1998, number 10 (October.)

J. Latten, Trouwen op vrijdag de dertiende (*Getting married on Friday the 13th*), in: Index 1998, number 10 (November/December.)

M.J.A. van Mourik, De ontwikkeling in de praktijk der huwelijkse voorwaarden. Een voortgezet landelijk onderzoek over de periode 1994-1996 (*The trends in practice of marital conditions. A continued national survey for the period 1994-1996*), in: Weekblad voor Privaatrecht, Notariaat en Registratie, 129 (1998), number 6302.

# Appendices

# Appendix I Personal characteristics of the research group

Table 1.1 Nationality

| | Total N = 306 | m/m N = 102 | f/f N = 102 | m/f N = 102 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Netherlands | 298 | 98 | 100 | 100 |
| European Union | 4 | 3 | 0 | 1 |
| outside European Union | 2 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| would not say | 2 | 0 | 2 | 0 |

Table 1.2 Religion

| | Neth. 1996 CBS | Total N = 306 | m/m N = 102 | f/f N = 102 | m/f N = 102 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| no religion | 40 | 59 | 55 | 55 | 67 |
| Roman Catholic | 32 | 25 | 28 | 24 | 21 |
| Dutch Reformed | 15 | 10 | 11 | 11 | 09 |
| Presbyterian | 08 | 03 | 04 | 02 | 03 |
| other | 05 | 02 | 02 | 06 | 00 |
| would not say | 00 | 01 | 00 | 02 | 00 |
| | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |

Table 1.3 Education

| | Neth. 1997 | Total N = 306 | m/m N = 102 | f/f N = 102 | m/f N = 102 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| primary school | 14 | 03 | 05 | 02 | 02 |
| GCSE (lower general secondary education) | 10 | 14 | 14 | 19 | 09 |
| A level (upper general secondary education/ pre-university education) | 09 | 09 | 17 | 05 | 07 |
| GNVQ (preparatory vocational education) | 16 | 09 | 09 | 09 | 11 |
| BTEC (upper secondary vocational education) | 33 | 25 | 21 | 27 | 24 |
| HND (higher vocational education) | 14 | 29 | 20 | 34 | 32 |
| university degree | 06 | 11 | 14 | 04 | 15 |
| would not say | 00 | 00 | 01 | 00 | 00 |
| | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |

Table 1.4 Income

| | Total N=153 | m/m N=51 | f/f N=51 | m/f N=51 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| double-income | 89 | 94 | 86 | 86 |
| single-income | 10 | 04 | 14 | 14 |
| would not say | 01 | 02 | 00 | 00 |
| | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |

Table 1.5 Age

| | Total N=306 | m/m N=51 | f/f N=51 | m/f N=51 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| < 25 years | 01 | 00 | 00 | 02 |
| 25 - 34 years | 27 | 21 | 21 | 38 |
| 35 - 44 years | 34 | 34 | 38 | 29 |
| 45 - 54 years | 20 | 21 | 23 | 16 |
| 55 - 65 years | 12 | 16 | 13 | 09 |
| > 65 years | 06 | 08 | 05 | 06 |
| | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |

# Appendix II Relationship characteristics of the research group

Table 2.1 History of relationships

| | Total N = 306 | m/m N = 102 | f/f N = 102 | m/f N = 102 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| not married/ not cohabiting | 49 | 61 | 35 | 49 |
| married | 30 | 19 | 33 | 38 |
| cohabiting with contract | 05 | 06 | 08 | 02 |
| cohabiting without contract | 16 | 15 | 24 | 11 |
| | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |

Table 2.2 Lenght of relationship

| | Total N = 153 | m/m N = 51 | f/f N = 51 | m/f N = 51 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| < 02 years | 06 | 04 | 08 | 06 |
| 02 - 05 years | 27 | 27 | 24 | 31 |
| 06 - 10 years | 27 | 22 | 27 | 33 |
| 11 - 20 years | 24 | 20 | 31 | 20 |
| > 20 years | 16 | 27 | 10 | 10 |
| | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |

Table 2.3 Children in the household

| | Total N = 153 | m/m N = 51 | f/f N = 51 | m/f N = 51 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| children from previous relationship | 20 | 24 | 08 | 29 |
| children from present relationship | 10 | 00 | 12 | 20 |
| no children | 70 | 76 | 80 | 51 |
| | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |

# Appendix IV Considerations in making the decision

Table 4.1 Emotional or financial

| | Total N=153 | m/m N=51 | f/f N=51 | m/f N=51 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| financial/ practical | 52 | 49 | 35 | 72 |
| emotional | 43 | 49 | 61 | 18 |
| don't know | 05 | 02 | 04 | 10 |
| | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |

Table 4.2 All financial / practical considerations (more answers possible)

| | Total N=153 | m/m N=51 | f/f N=51 | m/f N=51 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| inheritance | 55 | 61 | 59 | 45 |
| pension | 54 | 65 | 49 | 49 |
| buying joint home | 25 | 20 | 22 | 35 |
| co-tenancy | 10 | 06 | 18 | 08 |
| financial security | 08 | 10 | 04 | 12 |
| tax | 07 | 08 | 04 | 08 |
| own business | 02 | 04 | 02 | 00 |
| free travel | 01 | 00 | 00 | 02 |
| less espensive than cohabitation contract | 01 | 00 | 00 | 02 |
| no financial/ practical cosiderations | 11 | 14 | 14 | 06 |

Table 4.3 Most important financial/ practical considerations

| | Total N=153 | m/m N=51 | f/f N=51 | m/f N=51 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| don't know | 06 | 12 | 00 | 06 |
| inheritance | 31 | 37 | 35 | 20 |
| pension | 21 | 21 | 19 | 23 |
| buying joint home | 14 | 08 | 12 | 21 |
| co-tenancy | 03 | 00 | 06 | 02 |
| financial security | 06 | 04 | 06 | 08 |
| children | 05 | 00 | 08 | 08 |
| tax | 03 | 02 | 00 | 06 |
| own business | 00 | 02 | 00 | 00 |
| no financial/ practical consideration | 11 | 14 | 14 | 06 |
| | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |

Table 4.4 All emotional considerations (more answers possible)

| | Total N=153 | m/m N=51 | f/f N=51 | m/f N=51 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| recognition with respect to each other | 69 | 77 | 82 | 49 |
| societal recognition | 43 | 65 | 53 | 12 |
| recognition with respect to family | 35 | 51 | 37 | 18 |
| recognition with respect to friends | 29 | 45 | 35 | 08 |
| recognition with respect to home environment | 20 | 31 | 22 | 06 |
| recognition with respect to work environment | 19 | 35 | 18 | 04 |
| children | 01 | 00 | 04 | 00 |
| do not want to marry | 00 | nvt | nvt | 00 |
| nice to conclude a registered partnership | 00 | 02 | 00 | 00 |
| no emotional considerations | 22 | 12 | 10 | 45 |

Table 4.5 Most important emotional considerations

| | Total N=153 | m/m N=51 | f/f N=51 | m/f N=51 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| recognition with respect to each other | 63 | 66 | 74 | 47 |
| general societal recognition | 07 | 14 | 08 | 00 |
| recognition with respect to family | 03 | 04 | 02 | 02 |
| recognition with respect to home environment | 01 | 02 | 00 | 00 |
| children | 02 | 00 | 04 | 02 |
| nice to conclude a registered partnership | 01 | 02 | 02 | 00 |
| do not want to marry | 01 | nvt | nvt | 04 |
| no emotional considerations | 22 | 12 | 10 | 45 |
| | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |

# Appendix V Information, knowledge and partnership conditions

Table 5.1 Information

| | Total N = 153 | m/m N = 51 | f/f N = 51 | m/f N = 51 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| obtained information | 83 | 76 | 78 | 94 |
| did not obtain information | 16 | 24 | 20 | 06 |
| don't know | 01 | 00 | 02 | 00 |
| | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |

Table 5.2 Consequences of termination

| | Total N = 153 | m/m N = 51 | f/f N = 51 | m/f N = 51 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| yes | 77 | 76 | 71 | 84 |
| no | 23 | 24 | 29 | 16 |
| | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |

Table 5.3 Legal consequences (more answers possible)

| | Total N = 153 | m/m N = 51 | f/f N = 51 | m/f N = 51 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| don't know | 34 | 33 | 43 | 25 |
| support obligation | 38 | 37 | 24 | 53 |
| community of property | 23 | 22 | 22 | 25 |
| alimony obligation | 16 | 16 | 08 | 24 |
| consequences for inheritance | 15 | 14 | 18 | 14 |
| fiscal consequences | 03 | 04 | 00 | 06 |
| custody of children | 03 | 00 | 02 | 06 |
| pension | 01 | 02 | 00 | 02 |

# Appendix VI The guidance committee

| | |
|---|---|
| chairman: | |
| prof.mr. A.L.G.A. Stille | Molengraaff Institute, Utrecht University |
| members: | |
| mr. J.E. Geuzinge | Amsterdam Register |
| mr.dr. E. Niemeijer | Ministry of Justice, Scientific Research and Documentation Centre (WODC) |
| drs. J.W. Plaisier | Ministry of Justice, Scientific Research and Documentation Centre (WODC) |
| mr. C. Waaldijk | Leiden University, Faculty of Law |
| prof.mr. S.F.M. Wortmann | Ministry of Justice, Directorate of Legislation |