

Netherlands

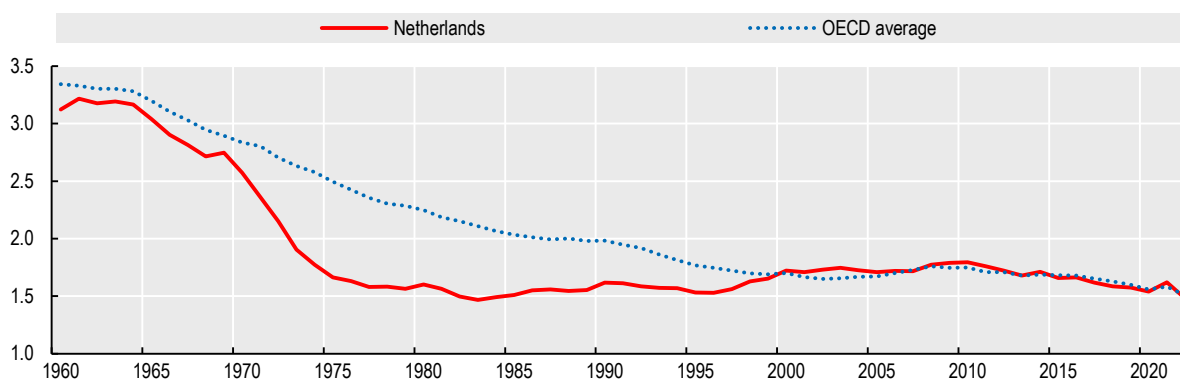
Spotlight on fertility trends

In 2022, 167 504 babies were born in the Netherlands, corresponding to a total fertility rate (TFR) of 1.48 children per woman, just below the OECD average of 1.51.

Across the OECD on average, the TFR steadily declined from 1960 until 2002. There was a small fertility rebound in the 2000s until 2008, upon which the TFR dropped to an all-time low of 1.5 in 2022. In the Netherlands, the TFR more than halved from over 3 children per woman in 1965, to below 1.5 in 1983, but the TFR oscillated around 1.7 children per woman over the 2000-2015 period. Since then the TFR has declined in line with OECD average.

Figure 1. In the Netherlands total fertility rates have been at the OECD average level over the past two decades

Number of children per woman aged 15 to 49, Netherlands and OECD average, 1960 to 2022



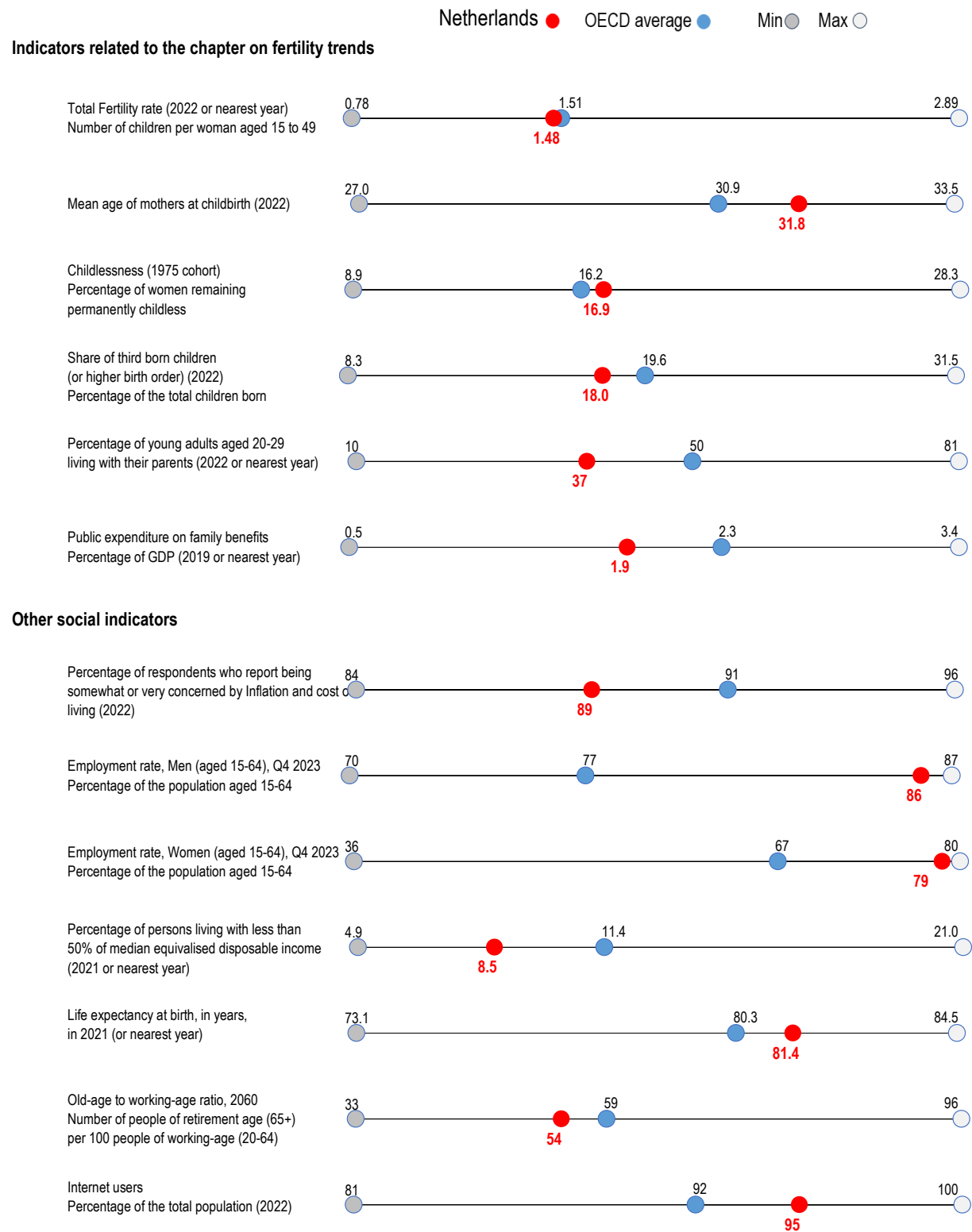
Source: Figure 1.1 in OECD (2024), *Society at a Glance 2024*, <https://stat.link/vxdinc>.

Many factors affect fertility choices, including employment of both men and women, unemployment, financial support for families (e.g. paid parental leave and childcare supports) and housing costs (Figure 1.7, <https://stat.link/8zu7m3> and Figure 1.14, <https://stat.link/ois3k8>). However other factors such as (financial) uncertainty as well as norms and attitudes also play a role. In many OECD countries, the desire to establish oneself in labour and housing markets have contributed to a delay of childbearing. In the Netherlands, the mean age of mothers at childbirth rose from 30.3 years in 2000 to 31.8 years in 2022, around one year above the OECD average (Figure 1.5, <https://stat.link/163n2d>).

The fall in TFRs is related to women having fewer children and/or none at all. Childlessness has been on the rise across the OECD, but there is cross-national variation in timing and extent. Although permanent childlessness in the Netherlands increased from around 12% for women born in 1935 to 17% for women born in 1955 and 1975. (Figure 1.3, <https://stat.link/mvkw3b>).

How does the Netherlands compare?

Selection of indicators related to the chapter on fertility trends and other social indicators



Source: OECD (2024), *Society at a Glance 2024*, <https://stat.link/vxdInc>.