

Reaching and engaging a diverse research population

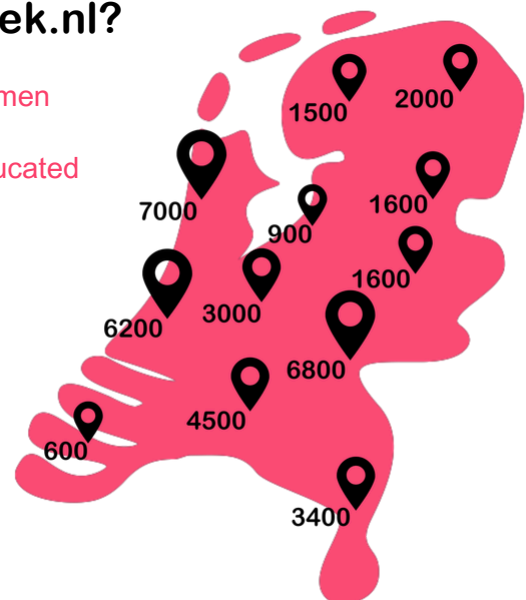
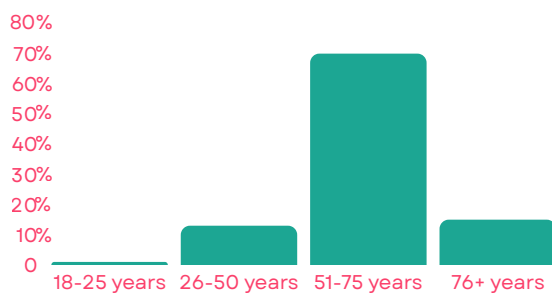
What does Hersenonderzoek.nl offer researchers?

- Reach a large group of motivated participants
- Automatic prescreening
- Step-by-step information provision
- Targeted sampling
- Easy-to-understand language

... and support to minimize selection bias

Who participates in Hersenonderzoek.nl?

- 41.873 registrants
- 74% women, 26% men
- 35% vocationally educated, 65% academically educated
- 12% migrants or children of migrants*



* information is currently available for 57% of registry participants. Classification based on Statistics Netherlands (CBS).

What can researchers do themselves to improve recruitment?

- Diversity quotas
- Collect socio-demographic data
- Active recruitment
- Culturally sensitive materials
- Snowball sampling
- Community key persons

... see the reverse side for further explanation.

What can we do together?

- Dissemination of results
- Advice on recruitment material
- Targeted campaigns



Snowball sampling

Snowball sampling is a method of finding participants through people who have already been included in a study. Participants tell others about the research, encouraging more people to take part. The process starts with a small group, who then invite others. In this way, the group grows like a snowball rolling downhill. Participants can also be asked to distribute flyers and posters within their own communities.



Socio-demographic data

Reporting socio-demographic data in clinical studies is important for identifying groups at risk and improving patient care and treatment. It helps ensure that different population groups are adequately represented and highlights areas where improvements may be needed.

Researchers should determine which socio-demographic characteristics are relevant to their study, depending on the research question, such as identity, ethnicity, or migration background.



Active Recruitment

Active recruitment means directly approaching people to participate in a study. This can be done through personal contact, telephone invitations, door-to-door visits, targeted advertising, or by becoming known within the target community. Researchers take the initiative themselves to identify participants or work through a community key person.



Culturally sensitive materials

Culturally sensitive materials are information materials, communication tools, questionnaires, or tests that have been adapted to the language, norms, and values of different cultures. This helps people feel understood and respected, making information more accessible and relevant to diverse groups.



Diversity quotas

Start with a plan. A diversity quota means that a study actively seeks participants from different groups, such as men and women or people from different backgrounds. This helps ensure fair and broadly applicable results.



Community key persons

Community key persons can help connect communities with research. They can reduce barriers to participation, particularly for people with a migration background or those with a lower socioeconomic position.



Dissemination, Recruitment Materials, and Campaigns

Hersenonderzoek.nl can provide advice on recruitment materials. If needed, we can develop targeted campaigns to reach more people from the desired target group. In addition, researchers can share their study results with a broad audience.

References:

Gilmore-Bykovskiy, A. L., *et al.* (2019). Recruitment and retention of underrepresented populations in Alzheimer's disease research. *Alz & dem Shaw, A.R. et al. (2022) Representation of Racial and Ethnic Minority Populations in Dementia Prevention Trials: A Systematic Review. JPAD Waterink, L, et al. (2025) Evaluation of efficiency and effectiveness of different recruitment strategies for the FINGER-NL multidomain lifestyle intervention trial via the Dutch Brain Research Registry. Alz & dem TRCI*
<https://www.zonmw.nl/nl/diversiteit-en-inclusie>
<https://www.pharos.nl/infosheets/sleutelpersonen-gezondheid/>
<https://www.alzheimer-nederland.nl/onderzoek/voor-onderzoekers/etnische-en-sociaal-culturele-diversiteit-in-wetenschappelijk-onderzoek>

This project was made possible in part by:

In collaboration with: