



2024 Bank Customer Experience Survey: Netherlands

Insights into customer behaviors, preferences, and experiences with banks

FICO Proprietary Research

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Key findings

- Most customers in the Netherlands hold between two and three bank accounts, designating one provider as their primary account. The primary is typically the bank they have used the longest.
- The vast majority of Dutch consumers (82%) still receive their banking services from traditional banks, though interest in digital banking services is increasing, particularly with younger demographics.
- Customer experience plays a key role in customers' financial decision-making. In fact, 63% of Dutch respondents say that customer experience is as important as bank products and services, and 19% say it is more important.
- Dutch consumers prioritize savings accounts, real-time payments, and credit cards among the most sought-after additional banking products. To maintain customer satisfaction, banks should focus on delivering diverse services.
- Banking customers in the Netherlands strongly prefer digital communication methods such as mobile app notifications and emails, rather than calls to landline phones and traditional mail.



Methodology

The data referenced throughout this e-book derives from a FICO-commissioned survey conducted by an independent research agency in September 2024. The survey asked 1,000 customers across the Netherlands for their opinions about their banking experiences, preferences, and whether their financial institutions are meeting their needs.

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Introduction

The Dutch economy is showing positive signs of recovery after a period of stagnation in 2023. [Real GDP growth increased to 0.8% by the end of 2024](#), with an impressive 1.6% increase expected for 2025. This positive trajectory follows a significant drop in inflation — from 4.2% in 2023 to 3.4% in 2024 — while wages have increased up to 6% in the past year.

This dynamic economic landscape provides opportunities and challenges for banking customers in the Netherlands. As wage growth outpaces inflation, some Dutch consumers are experiencing increased disposable income, prompting a re-evaluation of their financial strategies. However, investment growth was negative in the Netherlands during the latter half of 2023 and is gradually recovering due to easing financial pressures and positive public investment growth. This, in turn, creates a mixed economic environment for many, where [personalized banking experiences](#) are essential in helping individuals understand their financial options and make informed decisions about their money.

Modern Dutch banking has evolved rapidly to meet these economic shifts and rising consumer expectations. For

example, many forward-thinking companies now offer faster, more sophisticated, and personalized digital services to help customers navigate this complex economic landscape.

As we move through 2025, banks should focus on delivering tech-driven, customer-centric experiences to help people protect their existing wealth and provide investment opportunities in line with the country's steady economic recovery.



To achieve this goal, financial firms must develop a comprehensive understanding of their customers, examining not just their banking preferences and dislikes but also the motivations that drive their financial decisions. This can only be accomplished with thorough research to uncover customers' genuine opinions and needs.

To support this vital research, FICO conducted an in-depth study examining the opinions and feelings of 1,000 banking customers across 12 regions in the Netherlands, including, Drenthe, Flevoland, Friesland, Gelderland, Groningen, Limburg, North Brabant, North Holland, South Holland, Overijssel, Utrecht, and Zeeland.

Our survey targeted respondents aged 18 to 65+ from all income levels, with questions focusing on the following key discussion points:

1. What makes a bank a primary provider, and what drives customer loyalty?
2. How do customers feel about banks' services and products?
3. How do they rate their customer experience?
4. How do they feel about marketing offers and communications?



This e-book provides a detailed exploration of our survey findings, summarizing the responses from our participants and offering insights into the implications for the financial services industry in the Netherlands.

What makes a primary provider?

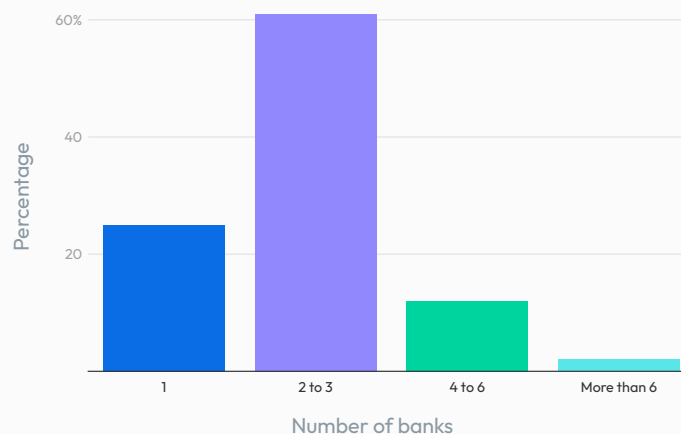
Customer loyalty is the defining characteristic of the Netherlands's competitive banking landscape. Our research has found that, in general, Dutch customers demonstrate a remarkable tendency to stick with a select number of financial institutions for all their banking needs. Furthermore, Dutch customers usually consider one provider to be their main port of call. We refer to this as their “primary provider.”

Our survey of Dutch bank customers reveals that a substantial majority (over 60%) maintain between two and three bank accounts, while 25% rely on just one. A smaller portion (12%) manages four to six accounts, and only 2% hold more than six accounts. This distribution indicates that Dutch customers are strategic in their banking decisions, choosing to manage a limited number of accounts rather than spreading their finances across a wide range of financial institutions.

Income levels seem to play a crucial role in account

ownership patterns. Low-income respondents are significantly more likely to have a single account (41%) compared with middle-income (22%) and high-income (12%) individuals. As income increases, so does the tendency to maintain multiple accounts — 27% of high-income customers hold between four and six accounts, compared with 12% of middle-income and just 3% of low-income customers. This trend illustrates that while low-income consumers prefer simplicity, high-income customers are more inclined to diversify their banking relationships to optimize their financial

How many accounts do Dutch consumers have with financial institutions?



Regional variations are also apparent in account ownership behaviors. Residents of Drenthe, for example, show a notable inclination towards having just one bank account (33.5%), while customers in Utrecht manage the highest number of accounts, where over 24% have four or more.

Despite the diversity in account ownership, the concept of a primary bank account remains strong amongst Dutch consumers. The vast majority (91.7%) of respondents say they have a primary provider. However, this tends to vary with age — 74.4% of 18- to 24-year-olds and 88.2% of 25-34-year-olds have a primary bank, compared to 94.5% of 34- 44-year-olds. This figure increases to 95.8% for respondents aged 45-54 before falling slightly among the 55-64 age group (94.7%). It then rises again to 97.4% of respondents aged 65+ who manage a primary account.

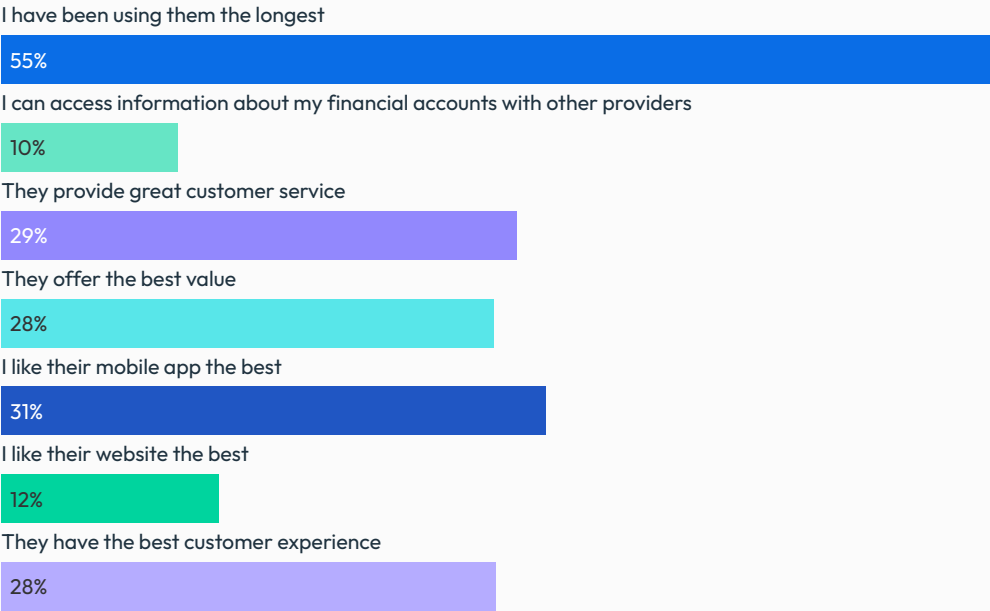
Regional differences for primary providers are notable as well. Flevoland has the highest percentage of customers with a primary bank, at 95.8%. Meanwhile, Friesland has the lowest, with 10.8% of respondents reporting that they have no primary provider.

Customer loyalty to primary providers appears to be strong, as 65% of participants say they have not changed their primary account over the past decade. Only 27% of

respondents have switched their primary accounts once or twice during this period. Age also appears to influence this loyalty to a primary, with older customers being more likely to have retained the same primary provider for over ten years — 85% of the oldest group compared with just 48% of the youngest group.



Which factors make customers choose a financial institution to be their primary provider?



Top reasons customers switch financial providers

Dissatisfaction with their current bank account

45%

Better value for money

34%

New provider offers incentives

23%

Better customer experience

20%

Changing providers is easy

20%

New provider cares more about customers

17%

The new provider is more ethical

11%

These findings suggest that Dutch bank customers tend to be loyal to providers they've been with the longest, particularly those that reached them early in their banking journey. This contrasts with countries like Italy, where the majority of consumers favor primary providers that offer them the best value for money or a great mobile app experience.

However, this loyalty is not unconditional. Customers in the Netherlands are willing to switch if they feel their current bank is not meeting their needs or if a competitor offers better value or customer experience.

This underscores the importance of [attracting bank customers](#) early and continuously innovating and improving services to retain primary provider status in an increasingly competitive market.

The bank products and services that customers want most

When considering the banking landscape in the Netherlands, it's crucial to understand the types of institutions favored by Dutch consumers and the services they deem most valuable.

A significant majority of customers — an impressive 82% — continue to rely on traditional banks for their banking needs. In comparison, only 4% mainly use credit unions. Interestingly, digital banking services, which operate exclusively through websites or apps, are used by 9% of respondents. This preference is particularly notable among Gen Z customers (aged 18–24), who rely on digital banking at a rate of 20%. In contrast, only 7% of those aged 65 and above use digital banks as their main financial services.

What type of organization do customers use for their main banking services?

Traditional bank

82%

Digital bank (website or app only)

10%

I don't know

4%

Credit union

4%



Regardless of the type of institution, it's undeniable that Dutch customers across all age groups and income levels seem to favor services that offer digital interaction channels and apps. Mobile banking app usage is particularly high among younger age groups, with 56.2% of 18- 24-year-olds, 56.7% of 25- 34-year-olds, and 55.8% of millennial's (aged 34-44) using them. The usage is higher for 45- 54-year-olds at 60.2% but drops to 36.5% for 55- 64-year-olds and 44.2% for those over-65s.



Which bank products and services are most important to Dutch customers?

Savings accounts

79%

Real-time payments

58%

Credit cards

46%

Mortgages

41%

Loans

34%

Foreign exchange

31%

Investment services

26%

Property insurance

23%

Buy Now, Pay Later (BNPL)

13%

Cryptocurrency

9%

Income levels also influence mobile app usage. Currently, 44.5% of low-income Dutch banking customers primarily interact with their bank account via mobile app, compared to 53.3% of middle-income with 55.3% of high-income customers. This data highlights the growing importance of digital channels in the banking experience.

When it comes to bank products and services, traditional offerings like savings accounts, real-time payments, and credit cards remain top priorities. Meanwhile, newer offerings — such as BNPL and cryptocurrency — are not yet high on the list for most Dutch customers.

To succeed in the Dutch financial services industry, banks must offer competitive products in these key areas while also prioritizing positive and empathetic customer service. Customers in the Netherlands value both the quality of products and the overall banking experience, making it essential for banks to strike a balance between innovative offerings and excellent customer care.



Customer experience (still) reigns

While banking products and services are undeniably crucial for Dutch customers, the significance of providing an exceptional customer experience cannot be overstated when it comes to boosting customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Our survey found that 63% of participants believe a bank's customer experience is equally important as the products and services provided, with 19% saying that customer experience is actually more important.

When we break this down by age, we find that 19% of 18- 24-year-olds, 28% of 25- 34-year-olds, and 22% of those aged 35-44 prioritize customer experience over banking products and services. This viewpoint tends to decrease with age, falling to 16% for the 45-54 age group, 13% for 55- 64 year-olds, and rising slightly to 16% for those aged 65 and older.



82% of Dutch consumers believe that customer experience is as important as (or more important than) a bank's products and services.

Income levels can also play a role in how customer experience is prioritized. High-income earners place a greater emphasis on customer experience, with 27% stating it is more important, compared with only 21% of low-income and 17% of middle-income customers. Interestingly, medium-income consumers are more likely to view customer experience and product offerings as equally important, with 64% holding this view compared with 60% of low-income and just 50% of high-income respondents.

Regionally, customers in Groningen seem to prioritize customer experience the most, with 32% indicating it is more important than banking products and services.

Overall, most participants report having positive customer experiences with their primary provider; specifically, 19% rate their experience as “excellent” while 57% describe it as “generally good.” This suggests that a positive customer experience is a significant factor in why customers choose a bank as their primary provider.

However, some consumers demonstrate remarkable loyalty, even in the face of less-than-ideal experiences. Our survey revealed that 15% of respondents report a “mediocre” banking experience, while 3.6% describe their experience as “bad” and just 1.6% label it as “terrible.” Notably, younger customers

(aged 18-24) are more likely to report a mediocre experience than older participants (22% versus just 13.5% for those over 65).

High-income customers stand out with the highest reported rates of positive experiences (26% rate their customer service as “excellent”). However, they also seem to experience the highest levels of dissatisfaction, with 2.5% rating their experience as “terrible” (compared with only 0.7% among low-income and 1.5% among middle-income customers).

These findings indicate that banks should focus on enhancing customer experience if they wish to attract younger and higher-income clients. It is essential to recognize that the relationship between banks and their customers is fundamentally trust-based; how customers feel they are treated plays a crucial role in shaping their overall banking experience.

Omni-channel communications: the right time, tone, and channel

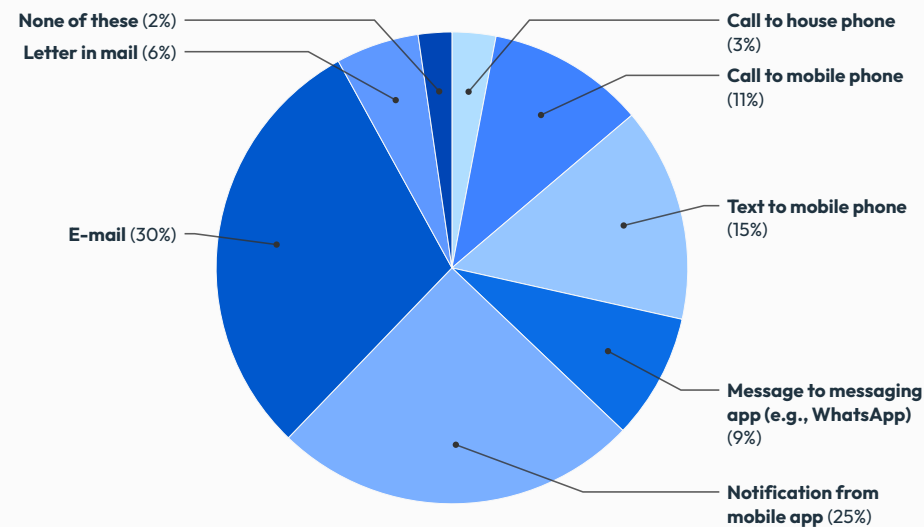
Financial institutions must ensure that their customers feel heard and valued. At the same time, they need to maintain a delicate balance between keeping customers informed and overwhelming them with excessive messaging. The key lies in moderation and strategic [omni-channel communications](#).

Our survey reveals that Dutch banks are generally successful in their communication efforts, with 70% of customers reporting that their bank contacts them through their preferred channels. Only 7% of consumers feel their primary bank's communication methods are poor. This suggests that the main challenge for Dutch banks isn't necessarily their method of communication, but rather tailoring the frequency and content of their messages to each individual customer's preferences.

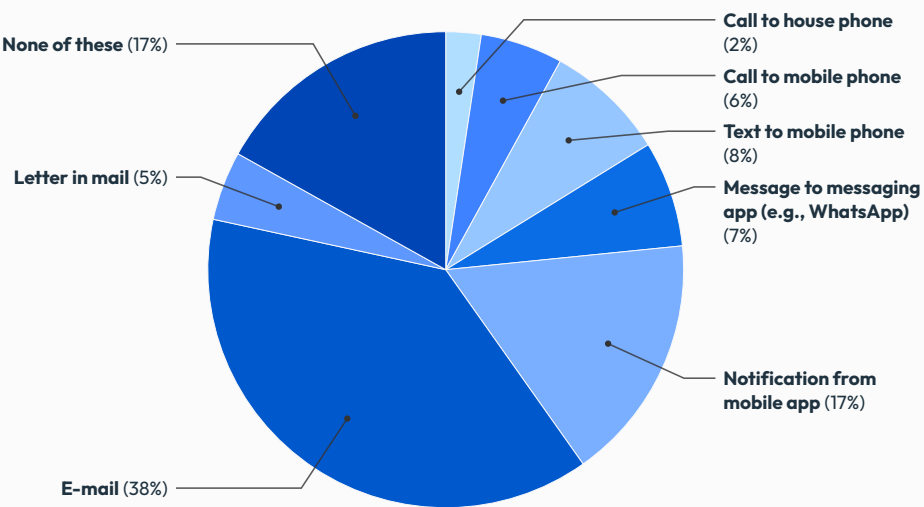


Customer communication preferences based on the message content

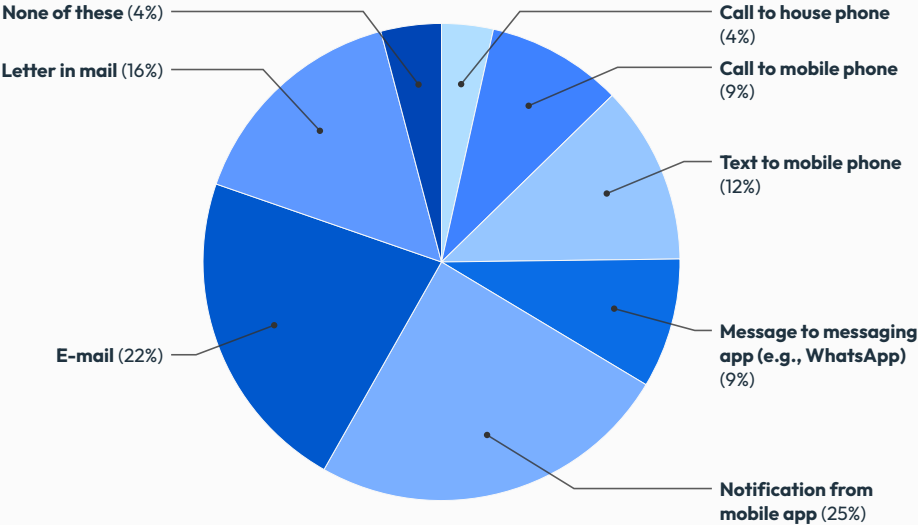
Fraud alerts



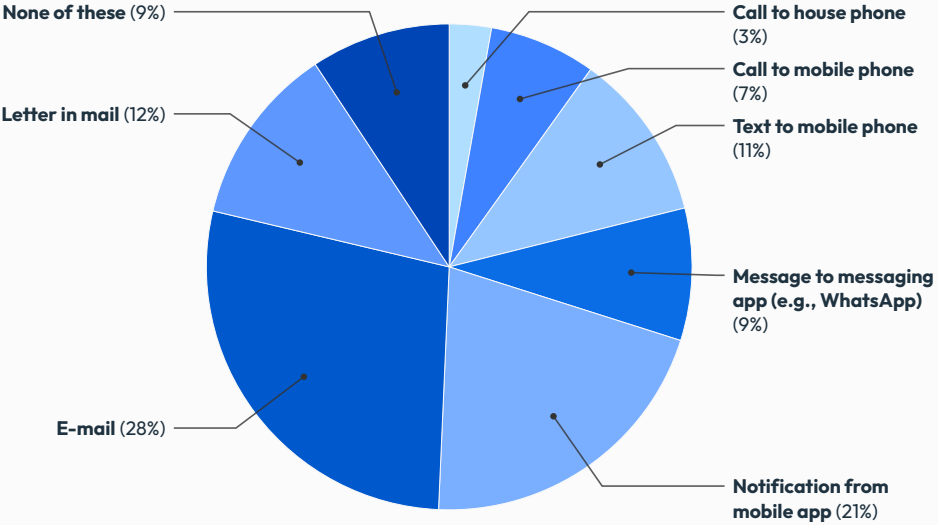
Marketing offers



Identity verification



Overdue payments



While customers' preferred communication method varies depending on the nature of the message, emails and mobile apps rank highest:

- For Terms and Conditions updates, the most popular contact method is email (39.9%) and notification from a mobile app (22.8%).
- For information requests, the most popular method is email (29.1%) and notification from a mobile app (25.9%).
- For account reminders, the most popular is email (31%) and notification from a mobile app (28.1%).

Interestingly, letters in the mail and calls to home phones are consistently ranked as the least popular communication methods across all categories. This indicates a clear preference among Dutch customers for digital channels, suggesting that banks should focus their efforts on these areas.



Conclusion

Our research into bank customer preferences and behaviors reveals several key insights into the current landscape of financial services in the Netherlands.

- Most Dutch customers maintain two to three bank accounts, with one designated as their primary provider. This trend demonstrates a discerning approach to personal finance, as customers consistently prioritize simplicity and efficiency, regardless of age and income level.
- Younger consumers are less likely to have committed to a primary account provider, leaving opportunities for banks to capture and retain customers in this demographic.
- Traditional banks continue to dominate the Dutch market, catering to the majority of consumers. However, digital banking apps are rapidly gaining popularity, particularly among younger demographics. This shift reveals the importance of digital transformation in the banking sector and the need for established institutions to adapt to changing customer preferences.
- When it comes to bank products, savings accounts, credit cards, and real-time payments are most essential. Therefore, financial institutions should prioritize these

services to meet customer demands and maintain a competitive edge in the marketplace.

- Customer experience is a critical factor in banking relationships. In our recent survey, 63% of participants said that a bank's customer experience is equally important as the products and services provided, and 19% say that customer experience is actually more important. Notably, many customers, especially older Gen Z and younger millennials, believe that customer experience is even more crucial than the products themselves. This highlights the potential for banks to engage and convert these demographics by placing a strong emphasis on enhancing their customer experience.
- It is imperative for banks to adopt more strategic, omni-channel communication tactics. Financial institutions must intentionally select the right communication method for each type of message and avoid overwhelming customers with information. Outreach must be well-timed and tailored to individual preferences.

These findings point to a shifting landscape in Dutch banking, where customer experience, digital innovation, and strategic omni-channel communication are becoming increasingly vital to success.

How FICO helps

Banks across Europe will be moving into highly aggressive markets in 2025. They all want to retain and grow market share while maximizing profit and maintaining acceptable risk levels. By tapping into the power of analytics, AI, and machine learning, your business can deliver faster, smarter, automated, and risk-aware digital decisions at speed and scale.

[FICO® Platform](#) helps banks thrive and react quickly to changing market conditions. By integrating various functionalities into a unified and adaptable platform, you gain the agility to quickly draw upon multiple different data sources to enable faster, better, and more personalized customer decisions. With the [Omni-Channel Engagement](#) capability, you can build customized communication strategies that factor in real-time data, client preferences, regulatory requirements, market conditions, and consumer behavior.

At FICO, we are committed to understanding the intricacies of the finance industry and exploring the complex behaviors and needs that motivate customers. To learn more about driving customer-centric change and growing your bottom line, visit our [Resource Center](#).



Customer lifecycle resources

- [Attract & Engage](#)
- [Nurture & Manage](#)
- [Contact & Communicate](#)
- [How to Unlock the Power of Hyper-Personalization in Banking](#)



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