# Deep Canvassing Nederland

## Data Insights Report

*March 2024 – April 2026 | CorrelAid x Deep Canvassing Nederland*

## 1. About this report

This report summarises the findings from a data analysis project conducted by CorrelAid Netherlands in collaboration with Deep Canvassing Nederland, running from January to July 2026. It draws on survey data collected through the deep canvassing app between March 2024 and April 2026, covering 1,864 conversations across the Netherlands.

The goal is to provide an honest, evidence-based picture of the campaign's reach, its impact on attitudes towards migration, and where efforts can be directed most effectively in the future. All findings are drawn from the interactive dashboard built as part of this project, and each section references the relevant dashboard view so that readers can explore the underlying data directly.

## 2. The campaign at a glance

Over two years, Deep Canvassing Nederland volunteers knocked on doors across 11 regions of the Netherlands, having real conversations about migration with people they had never met before. The numbers below reflect the full scope of that effort.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **7,517**<br>Doors knocked | **1,864**<br>Conversations held | **24.8%**<br>Conversion rate<br>*doors knocked → conversations* |
| **446**<br>Volunteers signed up | **290**<br>Actively canvassing<br>*logged ≥1 visit* | **11**<br>Regions covered |

Activity has grown steadily over time. After a quiet start in 2024, conversation volumes increased through 2025, with a notable spike around the November 2025 Tweede Kamer elections — reflecting volunteers' heightened motivation to canvas during a politically charged moment.

*→ Dashboard: Trends page → Conversations Over Time (set to Weekly)*

## 3. Where and when are we canvassing?

Canvassing activity is spread across the Netherlands, but concentrated in two provinces: Utrecht (553 conversations) and Noord-Holland (521 conversations) together account for more than half of all conversations recorded. Activity is also recorded in Gelderland, Overijssel, Zuid-Holland, Groningen, Noord-Brabant, Friesland, and Flevoland.

Canvassing is predominantly a weekend activity. Saturday is the busiest day by far, with 614 conversations logged - nearly 1.5 times more than any weekday. Sunday follows with 421. Weekdays are roughly even, ranging from 124 (Wednesday) to 186 (Friday).

*→ Dashboard: Trends page → Activity by Region | Activity by Day of Week*

## 4. Are conversations changing minds?

### The two statements

Every deep canvassing conversation measures attitudes using two statements, scored on a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 10 (strongly agree), recorded before and after the conversation:

- **Statement 1 (Migratie-1, control):** “Iedereen in Nederland heeft recht op een woning, onderwijs, werk en zorg” — Everyone in the Netherlands has the right to housing, education, work and care. Almost everyone agrees with this; it serves as a baseline check.
- **Statement 2 (Migratie-2, target):** “Ook alle migranten, waarom ze/we ook naar Nederland gekomen zijn” — Also all migrants, whatever the reason they came to the Netherlands. This is the harder, more contentious statement — and the one that deep canvassing aims to shift.

### Key finding: conversations shift attitudes in the right direction

Across all conversations where both a before and after score were recorded, the average Migratie-2 score rose from 7.58 to 7.84, an increase of 3.5%. More importantly, the direction of change is strongly asymmetric: far more people move up than down.

> **17%** of all people increased their Migratie-2 score after the conversation.
>
> **Only 3.5%** decreased — meaning upward shifts outnumber downward shifts by nearly 5 to 1.
>
> **Nearly 30%** of people who had room to improve (i.e. did not already score the maximum of 10) increased their score.

The distribution of score changes sharply peaked at zero — most people do not change, which is expected and consistent with international research on deep canvassing. But the tail of positive changes is clearly much longer than the tail of negative changes. Some people moved by as many as 7 or 8 points in a single conversation.

The Score Transitions view on the dashboard visualises where people “start” and where they “end” in terms of attitude category (low, medium, high). Among those who changed, movement is predominantly upward: people starting in the “before low” and “before medium” categories are far more likely to end in a higher category than a lower one.

*→ Dashboard: Migration Scores page → Key Metrics | Score Change Breakdown | Score Transitions*

### Scores are stable over time

Looking at monthly medians over the full two-year period, there is no systematic decline in effectiveness. Migratie-2 "before" scores fluctuate month to month (reflecting different participant pools in different locations), but the gap between before and after scores remains consistently positive. This suggests the method continues to work regardless of the political climate or time of year.

*→ Dashboard: Migration Scores page → Scores Over Time (set Aggregation to Median)*

## 5. Where is the impact greatest? The targeting insight

One of the most actionable findings from this analysis concerns where canvassing is most effective — and where volunteers are currently spending their time.

### Attitude scores can be predicted from local election results

People's starting attitudes on migration are closely related to how their neighbourhood votes. Postcodes with a higher share of votes for migration-sceptic parties (PVV, FvD, JA21, BBB and others) tend to have lower Migratie-2 scores before the conversation. This makes intuitive sense: local political culture reflects — and shapes — individual attitudes.

This matters for deep canvassing because people with lower starting scores have more room to shift upwards. A person already at 9/10 can only move by 1 point; a person at 3/10 can move by 7.

### Conservative neighbourhoods produce more attitude change

> **22.6%** of conversations in more conservative (higher right-wing vote) areas resulted in a positive attitude shift.
>
> **13.6%** of conversations in more progressive areas resulted in a positive shift.
>
> Canvassing in conservative neighbourhoods is therefore nearly twice as likely to produce a measurable change.

### But most canvassing is currently happening in progressive areas

Comparing the map of canvassing activity with the map of 2025 election results reveals a mismatch. The postcodes where volunteers have been most active tend to be the same postcodes that voted most progressively in the 2025 elections — areas where most people already agree with the migration statements before the conversation begins.

The postcodes where volunteers have been most active tend to be the same postcodes that voted most progressively in the 2025 elections — areas where most people already agree with the migration statements before the conversation begins. Comparing the visits map with the PVV vote share map on the dashboard makes this mismatch clearly visible.

*→ Dashboard: Geographic Analysis page → Visits & Conversations by Postcode (dropdown: Visits) | 2025 Tweede Kamer Election Results (dropdown: PVV)*

### Implication

Redirecting some canvassing effort toward higher-potential neighbourhoods — areas that voted more conservatively on migration issues — is the clearest available lever to increase the overall impact of the campaign without requiring more volunteers or more time.

## 6. Caveats

The findings in this report are meaningful, but they should be read with the following limitations in mind.

**Social desirability**: scores are given directly to the canvasser, which may lead some participants to report a more positive answer than they genuinely feel. A possible remedy is to let participants enter their own scores privately, without the canvasser seeing them.

**No long-term follow-up**: we measure attitudes immediately after the conversation, but do not know whether changes last days, weeks, or months. International research on deep canvassing suggests effects can be durable, but this has not been tested in this dataset.

**Limited control data**: for most of the dataset there is no comparison group (people who were not canvassed). This makes it difficult to separate the effect of the conversation from other factors such as the news cycle or seasonal variation.

I**ncomplete data**: only about half of all conversations have both a before and after score recorded. This means the impact figures in Section 4 are based on the subset of conversations where both scores exist, which may not be fully representative of all conversations.

## 7. Recommendations and next steps

Based on the analysis, we suggest the following priorities going forward:

- **Prioritise higher-potential neighbourhoods.** Canvassing in areas with more conservative voting patterns produces nearly twice the rate of attitude change. Using the 2025 election results map as a targeting guide — focusing on postcodes with higher PVV/FvD/JA21/BBB vote shares — would increase impact without requiring more volunteer hours.

- **Improve after-score completion rates.** Currently only about half of conversations produce a complete before-and-after record. Encouraging volunteers to consistently record the after-score — even a brief note at the end — would make future impact analysis more reliable and representative.

- **Consider private score entry.** To reduce the risk of socially desirable answers, explore letting participants enter their own attitude scores on the app, rather than reporting them verbally to the canvasser.

- **Use the dashboard for ongoing monitoring.** The interactive dashboard built as part of this project is designed for continued use. It allows the organisation to track conversation volumes, attitude shifts, and regional patterns on a rolling basis as new data comes in.

- **Continue text analysis of conversation topics.** A preliminary analysis of volunteers' written descriptions of conversations has begun. Completing this work will help identify which conversation topics and volunteer approaches are associated with the strongest attitude shifts — and can directly inform volunteer training.

## 8. Data collection tips

The quality of any analysis depends directly on the quality of the data collected. Based on our experience working with this dataset, the following additions or changes to data collection practices would meaningfully strengthen future analyses — and help the organisation answer questions that are currently difficult or impossible to address.

### Volunteer information

- **Volunteer location.** Recording where volunteers are based — for example at postcode level — would help the organisation understand how volunteers are distributed across the country, identify gaps in coverage, and better direct recruitment efforts to areas that need more support.

- **Volunteer ID in conversation data.** Linking each recorded conversation to the volunteer who conducted it (via a volunteer ID) would allow analysis of individual volunteer activity and effectiveness. Currently, it is not possible to know which volunteer spoke with which participant, which limits understanding of what makes some conversations more successful than others.

- **Volunteer background and recruitment channel.** Collecting basic information about volunteers — such as how they heard about the organisation — would help identify which recruitment channels are working best and where to invest future outreach efforts.

- **Visit timestamps.** Recording the start time and duration of each visit would make it possible to understand when conversations are most likely to succeed and how long they typically last. This could directly inform advice given to volunteers about the best times to knock on doors.

### Survey records

- **Conversation participation responses.** Including responses to the questions "Wil de bewoner in gesprek?" and "Waarom niet?" in the dataset would help the organisation understand why some residents do not engage. This matters because the reason is important: a door that is not answered because no one is home suggests a scheduling problem, while an explicit refusal to engage suggests something different entirely. Understanding the split between these cases could support strategies to improve the overall conversation rate.

- **Follow-up contact for long-term measurement.** One of the key limitations of the current dataset is that attitude scores are only measured immediately after the conversation. If the organisation is serious about measuring lasting change, collecting optional contact details from willing participants would make it possible to send a follow-up survey weeks or months later. This would provide much stronger evidence of the method's durability — and would bring the analysis closer to the gold standard of published deep canvassing research.

## Door knock records

- **Door knock timestamps.** The current dataset includes a date for each conversation, but does not record a timestamp for door knocks where no conversation took place. Adding a timestamp to every door knocked — not just those that led to a conversation — would make it possible to identify patterns in when engagement is highest, calculate accurate conversion rates by time of day or day of week, and help volunteers optimise their visiting schedules. This is a relatively small change to the logging form that would unlock a much richer picture of canvassing effectiveness.

---