



## The Heritage Monitor

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# Archaeological research by contractor

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The overview of archaeological research by contractor makes it clear that their number was limited until the introduction of the Monuments and Historic Buildings Act 1988. From that point on, there was a clear change, with commercial agencies accounting for a growing proportion of archaeological research.



The diagram shows the amount of research carried out by the different types of archaeological contractors in the Netherlands by year of investigation, based on research reported in Archis.

### Commercial agencies account for largest proportion since 1988

The effects of the amendment to the Monuments and Historic Buildings Act and the introduction of market forces became steadily more apparent during the 1990s. The number of archaeological agencies licensed to perform borehole surveys and archaeological excavations grew steadily. They performed a growing proportion of desk studies and fieldwork, eventually accounting for around 90% of all archaeological research performed in the Netherlands.

### Local authorities in second place

Central government and universities perform less and less archaeological research nowadays. Central government (in the form of the Cultural Heritage Agency) only performs fieldwork on a small scale in connection with the protection agenda, and local authorities only perform investigations within their municipal boundaries. The number of investigations performed by local authorities has however remained stable in recent years. Between 1996 and 2014 they accounted for a constant proportion which exceeded that of central government, universities and other contractors (except commercial agencies) together.

**Sources:**

Archaeological Information System ([Archis](#)) - Cultural Heritage Agency.

31 December 2018

Monitor-frequency:

annual

**Responsibility:**

Some of the research types have been clustered in order to promote the clarity and readability of the charts:

- 'preliminary field research' = (field) mapping, drilling research, geophysical research, inspection, trial pits/trial trenches.
- 'indeterminate' = indeterminate, unknown.
- 'other' = archive, aerial photography/remote sensing, and (non-archaeological) dredging, drilling, excavatory work, mapping, metal detector.

The research reports are registered in [Archis](#) by the contractor. The Cultural Heritage Agency checks whether a plan of action or a schedule of requirements is present for excavations, trial pits, trial trenches and archaeological supervision.

Read [here](#) more about this subject.