

### **The relevance of group styles or youth subcultures for the political attitude of youngsters**

by Joep de Hart and Jacques Janssen

The relevance of group styles or youth subcultures exceeds the mere expression of elements of the leisure culture: musical preferences, looks, manners, dating, pleasure-seeking and the like. They also have political correlates. The attitude of youngsters toward certain group styles to a considerable extent is related to their social and political attitude.

Two marked antipodes attract attention. A number of group styles (punks, 'krakers') implicates social criticism, left-wing opinions, little trust in existing political institutions, pessimism with regard to the development of Dutch society, and rejection of a bourgeois value orientation. The very opposite of these group styles is a number of youth cultures (discofans, 'corpsstudenten') typically connected with a right-wing political attitude, agreement with the social and political status-quo, optimism with regard to its future development, and subscription of bourgeois values. Besides the two clusters of styles mentioned, there are also group styles falling beyond the political dimension.

### **The relationship between number and type of key informants and completeness of data**

by N.Y. Kuiper and H. van Goor

In a study on policy making processes in medium sized Dutch municipalities we looked at the effects of the size and composition (with regard to position in local government) of groups of informants on the completeness of the data obtained. If well chosen, a rather small number of informants (three or four) in different positions suffices to get the largest amount of information attainable by using informants. The information obtained is, however, never complete. The gathering of other, supplementary data, for instance from documents, remains necessary.

### **Social incompetence of the homeless?**

by Frans Spierings

Medical psychologists have tried to demonstrate that the undersocialization of homeless can be explained by 'social incompetence'. In this article, the thesis of 'social incompetence' is being questioned from a sociological perspective.

Durkheim has taught us to recognize excessive individuation on the one hand and insufficient individuation on the other. Being on the tramp, can mean a way of escape from lack

of social integration but also from social bonds (integration) that are too strong. Research among 'hidden homeless' has shown this second aspect of relative isolation to be valid.

The theory of modernization analyses societal change and its influence on individual dispositions. In a transforming society, the nature of social networks is changing. Individuals that are unable to cope with unstable social supports and professional help become increasingly vulnerable. Trigger-effects can send them adrift.

Social policy needs research and new insights. Professional help can create a fresh start for homeless individuals. But what comes next? Relapse? Loneliness? Many homeless will cherish social supports. But only those that help, and stay.