



Press release

Statistics Netherlands

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Pension funds invest over 800 billion guilders

The value of pension fund investments rose to 806 billion guilders in the first quarter of 1999. According to figures from Statistics Netherlands this was 9% more than one year ago. The investment portfolios contain an increasing proportion of shares. Most investments are done abroad.

New insurance policies are also increasingly based on investments.

Investment in shares more and more popular

Shares are increasingly making up a part of investment portfolios of pension funds. By the end of March, 41% of total investment was in shares. One year previously this was 37%, two years ago 31%. Within fixed-interest investment, government bonds are becoming more popular, while private loans are decreasing.

Increasing foreign investment

Most newly invested or reinvested money goes abroad. On balance investment abroad rose by 39% in the space of one year, while investment in the Netherlands fell by 7%. Investment in foreign bonds rose by as much as 60%, while that in Dutch bonds fell by 11%. Pension funds have invested about two-thirds of the share portfolios and half of their bonds abroad.

Share profits 17 billion guilders

In the first quarter of this year, pension funds made 17 billion guilders profit on their shares (5.5%). The MSCI global share price index rose by 12.2% in the same period, while the CBS share price index (Amsterdam) hardly changed (+0.8%), showing that most of the share profits came from abroad.

Investment policies increasingly popular

Insurance companies are selling more and more life insurance. In the first four months of this year they received 5 billion guilders in premiums, 10% more

Statistics Netherlands
Press Office

P.O. Box 4000
2270 JM Voorburg
The Netherlands
tel. +31 70 337 58 16
fax +31 70 337 59 71
e-mail:
persdienst@cbs.nl

Statistics Netherlands
is a department of
the Ministry of
Economic Affairs

than in the first four months of last year. Within life insurance, the policies where the investment risk is for the policy holder (investment policies) are becoming increasingly popular. Compared with the first four months of 1998, the sale of investment policies rose by 29%, while that of guilder-policies fell by 1%.

For further information, please contact C. Schmitz.
Tel +31 70 337 46 09; e-mail: cstz@cbs.nl.