



# Press release

Statistics Netherlands

PR99-208  
17 August 1999  
9.30 hrs

## ***Record audiences for performing arts***

In the 1997/'98 season, professional stage performances of music, dance and theatre drew audiences of a total 15.6 million people. This is the highest number ever measured by Statistics Netherlands. Pop concerts are not included in the figures. Cabaret and modern dance are drawing increasing audiences. Subsidised companies gave more performances and attracted more people than in the previous season. Amsterdam remains the most important city for the performing arts, although The Hague and Rotterdam are making up their arrears. These are the conclusions of the publication *Podiumkunsten 1997/'98* (The performing arts 1997/'98; available in Dutch only) to be released this week.

### ***One performance a year on average***

On average, everyone in the Netherlands attends one stage performance per year. However, a smaller group attends more often. Statistics Netherlands' surveys show that 7% of the population go to the theatre more than 3 times a year and 1% go at least once a month.

In the 1996/'97 season, audiences of professional performing arts were smaller than the season before, the 1997/'98 season more than made up for this, according to Statistics Netherlands figures. The number of performances rose by 8% and attendance by nearly 5%. Compared with the 1992/1993 season there were even more than 20% more visitors and, at nearly 57 thousand, 15% more performances.

### ***Cabaret and modern dance more popular***

Of all the disciplines, cabaret and modern dance in particular have shown a steady rise in the last five seasons, both in the number of performances and in audience numbers. Recitals on the other hand, poetry recitals for instance, are attracting smaller and smaller audiences, and are also performed less.

The average audience in 1997/'98 was 275 per stage performance. Concerts by orchestras attract the largest audiences, 975 per performance, while puppet theatres have the smallest attendance 95 per performance. Attendances of improvised music, especially music theatre, are falling slowly but steadily, while for circus and variety performances the average attendance rose sharply to 836 per performance.

### ***Companies with long-term subsidy doing well***

Companies and institutions who receive long-term subsidies from the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science did well in 1997/'98. The

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

increase by 17% in the number of performances and nearly 12% in attendance is partly caused by the addition of ten companies which receive subsidy under the new arts plan.

The subsidised companies receive an average three-quarters of their revenues from subsidies: theatre companies around 80% and music societies around 70%.

### ***Amsterdam remains the capital of performing arts***

There were regional differences in the 1997/'98 season. Under the influence of the large cities, the provinces of Noord-Holland and Zuid-Holland lead the field. One in every six performances is given in Amsterdam. Indeed there are just as many performances in the three other large cities (The Hague, Rotterdam and Utrecht) together, as in Amsterdam. The number of performances and audiences has only risen slightly in recent years in Amsterdam though, while in Rotterdam and The Hague the increases have been quite substantial. In 1997/'98 The Hague had 20% higher attendances than in the preceding season.

For further information, please contact P. Sevat +31 70 337 47 35; e-mail: psvt@cbs.nl.