



# Press release

Statistics Netherlands

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## *One million more inhabitants than in 1990*

Statistics Netherlands expects there to be 15.862 million inhabitants in the Netherlands on 1 January 2000. With 14.893 million in 1990, this means an increase of nearly one million people in the nineties. The number of 'new' inhabitants is the equivalent of the sum of the populations of Amsterdam and Utrecht.

A new book *Vital Events*, published by Statistics Netherlands today, shows that the Dutch population has grown by 11 million people in the course of the twentieth century. It is expected to increase less quickly in the coming century. In one hundred years time just over 17 million people are expected to live in the Netherlands

### *Increase in number of immigrants*

The population of the Netherlands has grown by nearly one million people since 1990. Over half of these are non-western immigrants. In the nineties just over 300 thousand non-western immigrants arrived in the Netherlands. In addition, 250 thousand children were born to immigrant parents. The number of native Dutch and western immigrants rose by 400 thousand.

### *Fluctuations in population growth*

There were substantial fluctuations in population growth in the nineties. At the start of the decade the population increased by nearly 120 thousand people per year. One important cause of this growth was the high immigration rates. In the mid-nineties population growth dropped to 70 thousand a year. The number of immigrants decreased, especially from Turkey, Morocco and Suriname. Moreover, fewer children were born in this period as the confidence in the economy weakened.

Now, at the end of the nineties, population growth has grown again to just over 100 thousand people a

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year. The strong economy has pushed up the number of births and immigration has increased again, although from different countries than in the early nineties. The number of immigrants from Turkey, Morocco and Suriname has fallen drastically, from nearly 30 thousand in 1990 to just over 13 thousand in 1999. On the other hand, more people have arrived from the Netherlands Antilles. There were also more immigrants from countries in the European Union and more Dutch emigrants returned to the Netherlands. The number of asylum-seekers, too, increased at the end of the decade, after a dip in the mid-nineties.

### ***Twenty million babies born this century***

The Dutch population has grown by 11 million people in the course of the twentieth century. In 1900, 5.104 million people lived in the country, and just over one thousand of them are still alive today. Twenty million children have been born in the Netherlands since 1900, 14.4 million of whom still live here. The remainder have emigrated or died.

In the past century, six million immigrants have come to live in the Netherlands. Some were Dutch emigrants returning to the Netherlands, others foreigners coming to the country for the first time. Some of these immigrants left the Netherlands again to return home or live elsewhere. Today, 1.4 million people living in the Netherlands arrived here from another country, 60% of whom come from a non-western country.

### ***Highs and lows***

On average, the population has grown by just over one hundred thousand people per year in the twentieth century. This average belies large annual differences, however. The largest growth was recorded in 1946, the first year after the Second World War, when the population increased by 238 thousand people. This was mainly caused by the post-war baby boom, but also by immigration, pushed up by the repatriation of Dutch nationals from Indonesia.

The lowest growth rate was measured in 1982, when the population rose by fewer than 54 thousand people. This dip was connected with the weak economic climate in the early eighties, which had a negative effect on both the number of births and the number of immigrants.

### ***Slower population growth in the next century***

Population growth will probably slow down in the 21st century. It will take fifteen years for another million people to be added to the figure.

Subsequently the population will slowly grow to a maximum of 17.4 million. And after 2040 it will gradually fall to around 17.1 million at the end of the 21st century. The decrease in the growth rate will be caused by the increase in the annual mortality rate, from 140 thousand today to 220 thousand by the middle of the next century. The annual birth rate will not be able to keep pace with this. Women today are having fewer children than a few decades ago, and are likely to continue to do so in the next century.

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Statistics Netherlands publishes *Vital events. Past, present and future of the Dutch population* today. This book gives an overview of the development of the Dutch population in the past century, focusing on births and mortality, immigration and emigration and the formation and dissolution of households. The present situation of the Dutch population is compared to that in other countries of the European Union, revealing, among other things, that:

- the Dutch population has grown faster in the past century than any other in the European Union;
- population density in the Netherlands overtook that in Belgium about halfway through the century, and the Netherlands now has one and a half times as many inhabitants per square kilometre as Belgium;
- Dutch fertility is just above the EU average, but well below replacement level;
- mortality rates have declined across Europe, but more strongly in the south than in the north; the increase in life expectancy in the Netherlands in the last decades was below the EU average.

Finally, based on the most recent forecasts, *Vital events* presents a picture of the future population of the Netherlands.

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