



Press release

Statistics Netherlands

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Companies increasingly use the Internet, but not to do business

By the end of this year over half of Dutch companies (56%) are expected to be on the Internet. The number of companies on the net has increased strongly in the last few years. At the end of 1998 42% of companies were connected up. However, neither the Internet nor other networks are used as widely for doing business. An expected 12% of companies are expected to receive orders electronically by the end of 2000, according to Statistics Netherlands, compared with just over 6% at the end of 1998.

Business community exceeds its own expectations

At the end of 1998, 42 thousand companies were connected to the Internet, up from just over 13 thousand at the end of 1996. In 1996 the business sector expected there to be around 23 thousand connections at the end of 1998, so the growth clearly surpassed their own expectations.

Smaller companies are less likely to be on the Internet according to Statistics Netherlands. Half of small businesses expect to have an Internet site by the end of 2000, compared with 86% of large companies. This difference was already visible in 1995, but has decreased somewhat since then.

There are differences in the proportion of Internet connections between sectors of industry, with construction and agriculture lagging behind. Fewer than half of construction companies expect to be on the worldwide web by the end of 2000. In the commercial services sector on the other hand, some 70% of companies expect to be on the Internet.

Limited use for business transactions

Only few companies use the Internet to do business, i.e. actually receive orders and commissions digitally, although the figure has been doubling

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annually since 1996. Nearly 12% of businesses expect to receive orders yielding actual turnover electronically by the end of 2000. Here too there are clear differences between sectors of industry: from nearly 5% in the construction industry, to nearly 14% in commercial services.

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