



Press release

Statistics Netherlands

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Population growth higher, but not in all provinces

The population of the Netherlands increased by nearly 113 thousand people in the twelve months to August 2000. This is a higher rate of growth than in 1999, when the increase was 104 thousand people. According to figures from Statistics Netherlands, the population growth rate did not increase in the provinces of North-Holland, Utrecht and Limburg, while in Flevoland it was exceptionally high, just as in 1999.

High birth and immigration rates

The causes underlying Dutch population growth are increases in both the number of births and the number of immigrants. Over 204 thousand children were born in the period under review, i.e. September 1999 up to and including August 2000. This is the highest number of births since the early seventies. The number of second babies rose particularly strongly, but this was not unexpected as the number of first children has been increasing since 1998 and most women have their second child two to three years after their first.

Statistics Netherlands reports nearly 127 thousand immigrants in the period concerned, up from 119 thousand in 1999. Immigration increased across the board, with more immigrants from EU countries and from eastern Europe, but also more people from outside Europe.

Nearly 16 million inhabitants

On 1 September this year, 15.94 million people lived in the Netherlands. If the present rate of increase continues in the coming months, the 16 millionth inhabitant is expected somewhere in March 2001. The 15 million mark was passed in 1990. The new long-term population forecasts, to be published next month, will give an indication of when the population will reach 17 million.

Differences between provinces

There are substantial differences in growth rates between the twelve provinces, with the lowest in Limburg and the highest in Flevoland.

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The highest rate - in Flevoland - was 36.1 per thousand inhabitants. By comparison: for the country as a whole the growth rates is 7.1 per thousand inhabitants. Not only are there are relatively many births and few deaths in Flevoland, but the influx of inhabitants from other provinces is also exceptionally high.

The population developments in Limburg on the other hand show a completely different picture: with just 1.7 per thousand, this province has the lowest provincial growth rate. This is caused by the combination of relatively few births and few immigrants, while more people leave Limburg to live elsewhere in the country than the other way around.

The growth rate in Limburg is not higher than in 1999. In North-Brabant too the growth rate in the period under review about the same as in 1999; in North-Holland and Utrecht it was even slightly lower.

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