



# Press release

Statistics Netherlands

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## ***Employment growth slowed down in 2000***

The employed labour force rose by 155 thousand people in 2000, a smaller increase than in recent years. A total of nearly seven million people had a paid job of at least twelve hours in 2000. Unemployment fell further but more slowly than in the three preceding years. Labour participation rates for women and older people increased further in 2000, according to Statistics Netherlands' labour force survey.

### ***Nearly seven million people in work***

The number of people with a paid job of at least twelve hours a week was on average 154 thousand higher than in 1999. Although this is a smaller increase than in recent years, it is still above the average for the last ten years. In the years 1997–1999 the increase in the employed labour force was around 200 thousand a year, while in the last ten years it has been just over 130 thousand on average. The total number of people with a job of at least twelve hours a week was on average nearly seven million in 2000. The six million mark was passed somewhere between 1994 and 1995.

### ***More women in employment***

Women's participation in the labour force rose further in 2000. Last year over 52% of women aged between 15–64 years had a paid job of at least twelve hours a week. In 1990 this was still only 39%. In spite of this increase, though, relatively fewer women than men (77%) are active on the labour market. Female participation was highest among 25–29 year-olds. In 2000 three quarters of women in this age group had a job, up from only six in ten in 1990.

### ***Participation of older people continues to rise,***

Considerably more older people have been active on the labour market in recent years. The increase is especially large among 55-59 year-olds. The activity rate for this group rose to 50% last year, while in 1996 only 40% of these people had a paid job. For 60-64 year-olds, too, participation has increased: in 1996 11% had a job, while last year 16% were in employment.

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### ***Unemployed labour force continues to fall***

Statistics Netherlands compiles a number of unemployment rates. To analyse the situation on the labour market, figures on the non-active part of the labour force are the most relevant. The non-active, or unemployed, labour force consists of people who are actively seeking work of at least twelve hours a week and can start immediately, regardless of whether they are registered with an employment agency. The non-active labour force fell by 5 thousand to just under 267 thousand people last year. This fall is considerably smaller than in the three preceding years. The continuous fall in the unemployed labour force since 1994 has pushed unemployment down to its lowest level since 1980. The unemployed accounted for 3.7% of the labour force in 2000. Unemployment was still twice as high among women (5.3%) than among men (2.6%).

### ***Potential labour supply down by 100 thousand***

The potential labour supply numbered an average 700 thousand people in 2000. This labour supply includes everyone who would like a paid job of at least twelve hours a week, regardless of whether they are actively looking for one or could start work immediately. The number was just over 100 thousand down on 1999, the fourth year in succession that it fell by 100 thousand. In the mid-nineties 1.1 million people wanted a paid job of at least twelve hours a week.

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