



Statistics Netherlands

Press release

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Slight increase people with chronic afflictions

Last year, the number of people who have a chronic affliction, disease or disability that makes it difficult for them to work or get a paid job slightly rose. Women were almost entirely accountable for the increase as the latest figures by Statistics Netherlands show.

More women with chronic afflictions

In 2001, more than 1.5 million people, i.e. 14 percent of the population in the age category 15-64, suffered from a chronic affliction, disease or disability that makes it difficult for them to work or get a job.

Compared to 2000, their number grew by 57 thousand. Women were largely accountable for this growth as their number rose by 50 thousand. This substantial increase in the female population with chronic afflictions and relatively low increase in the male population with chronic afflictions is reflected in the number of unemployment benefits.

Number of young women with chronic afflictions relatively high

More women than men in the age category under 35 are chronically afflicted. In 2001, respectively 4 and 6 percent of the men and women in the age category 15-24 belonged to this group. In the age category 25-34, the percentages for men and women were 8 and 11 respectively. Obviously, more old than young people suffer from chronic afflictions; in the age group 55-64, more than one in every four men and one in every five women.

Lower labour participation rate

In 2001, the labour participation rate of people with some kind of affliction was considerably lower than the labour participation rate of the total population aged 15-64. Just over 50 percent of all people with afflictions belong to the active working population, whereas more than two thirds of the people without afflictions participate in the labour process. In addition, 11 percent of the people with afflictions would like to work for 12 hours a week or more. This percentage is significantly lower in the group of people without disabilities.

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Many people with back problems

In 2001, more than six in every ten people with an affliction indicated to suffer from back problems or afflictions of the joints. Mental disorders are also frequently mentioned. More than 20 percent indicate that these hamper their ability to work or find a job. One in every five people with an affliction suffer from migraine or severe headaches.

Table 1: People aged 15-64 by chronic affliction and sex, 2000-2001

	Chronic affliction			
	2000	2001	2000	2001
	x 1 000		% of population aged 15-64	
Total	1 455	1 512	14	14
Men	747	753	14	14
Women	709	759	13	14

Source: Statistics Netherlands

Table 2: People aged 15-64 by chronic affliction, age and sex, 2001

	Total	Men	Women
	%		
Total	14	14	14
15-24 yrs	5	4	6
25-34 yrs	9	8	11
35-44 yrs	13	13	14
45-54 yrs	21	21	21
55-64 yrs	23	26	20

Source: Statistics Netherlands