



Statistics Netherlands

Press release

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Foreigners account for three-quarters of population growth

According to new a projection released by Statistics Netherlands, the number of people in the Netherlands with a non-western foreign background will increase to nearly 420 thousand in 2010. The total population in the Netherlands will grow by 560 thousand people in the same period. This means that three-quarters of total population growth will be caused by the rise in the number of people with a non-western background. Asians will be the fastest growing ethnic group in this period.

Nearly 420 thousand more non-western foreigners

At the moment 1.6 million non-western foreigners live in the Netherlands. Their number is expected to rise by nearly 420 thousand to 2 million in 2010. The total population of the Netherlands will rise by 560 thousand in the same period. People with a non-western foreign background will therefore account for three-quarters of total population growth to 2010. The number of western foreigners will increase by 100 thousand and the number of native Dutch by 50 thousand.

Birth main factor of increase

Over half the growth in the number of non-western foreigners will be the consequence of the excess of births over deaths: 260 thousand children will be born to non-westerners in the Netherlands, one sixth of all children born in the country in this period. Non-western women have more children on average than native Dutch women: Moroccan women have one and a half more children on average and Asian women half a child more. In addition non-western women increasingly arrive in the Netherlands at an age to start a family. Opposite these births, 30 thousand non-western foreigners in the Netherlands will die by 2010.

Migration also important

Immigration and emigration will also play a part in population growth. Between 2002 and 2010 a net 190 thousand non-western immigrants will arrive in the Netherlands, just over a quarter less than between 1994 and 2002. In addition to asylum seekers, marriage migrants will arrive from countries like Morocco and Turkey, and labour migrants will increasingly arrive from Asian countries.

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Increasing Asian population

High birth rates and immigration have pushed up the Asian population in the Netherlands. In 2010, 400 thousand people of Asian descent will live here, one and a half times as many as in 2002. A large proportion of the expected net 80 thousand Asian immigrants will move here to work.

Moroccans overtake Surinamers

After Turks, Surinamese are the largest non-western population group in the Netherlands at present. In 2010 they will have been overtaken by Moroccans, however. The number of Moroccans will increase to nearly 360 thousand while the number of people of Surinamese origin will be just under 350 thousand. On the one hand fewer people will come from Suriname to the Netherlands, while on the other hand Surinamese women have fewer children on average than Moroccan women.