



Statistics Netherlands

# Press release

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## ***Unemployment on the increase***

In the period December 2002 - February 2003 the unemployed labour force consisted on average of 343 thousand persons, 73 thousand more than the year before. This constitutes an increase in unemployment from 3.7 to 4.6 percent of the labour force, according to the latest figures by Statistics Netherlands.

### **Seasonally corrected unemployment figure up**

During the months December 2002 - February 2003 the average number of unemployed was 343 thousand. When the seasonal effects are taken into account, the unemployment figure comes to 338 thousand. Seasonally corrected unemployment has been on the increase since the third quarter of 2001. Around the summer of 2002 the average increase in unemployment peaked at 8 thousand a month over a six-month period. After this, the increases tapered off.

### **Unemployment mainly increasing among men under 45**

Within one year unemployment increased from 3.7 to 4.6 percent of the labour force. Unemployment among men increased from 2.8 to 4.1 percent, especially among men under 45. Unemployment among women, on the other hand, hardly increased at all within that year: from 5.0 to 5.3 percent.

Increasing unemployment fits the pattern of a stagnant economy. There has been virtually no economic growth since the start of 2001.

### **Diminishing growth in employment**

During the period December 2002-February 2003 the number of people working in paid jobs of twelve hours a week or more was 7 087 thousand. This is an increase of 34 thousand, or 0.5 percent, on the same period the year before. This means the trend of diminishing growth in employment continues. In the previous five years the number of employed people still increased by averages of over 2 percent a year.

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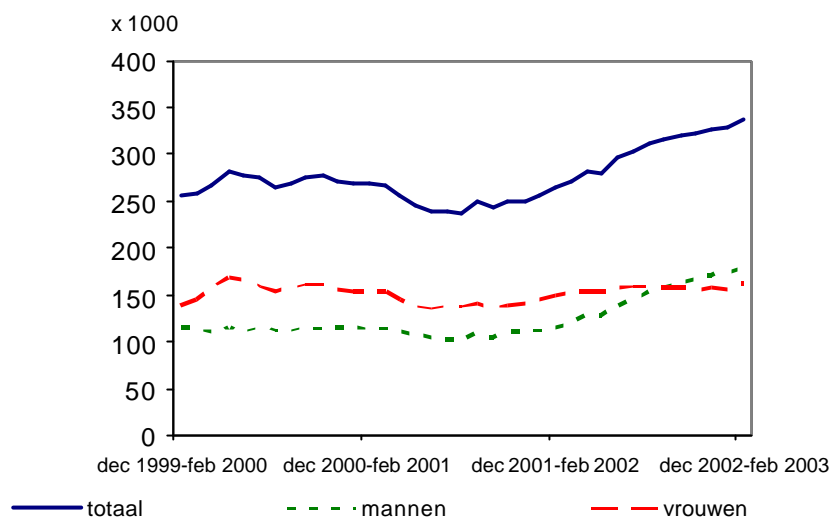
For further information please contact the press office.

Tel. +31 70 337 58 16

Fax +31 70 337 59 71

E-mail: [persdienst@cbs.nl](mailto:persdienst@cbs.nl)

## Werkloze beroepsbevolking seizoensgecorrigeerd



Unemployed labour force, seasonally corrected figures

Total, men, women