



Press release

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Unemployment benefits rise to 204 thousand

At the end of 2002, 204 thousand people in the Netherlands were claiming unemployment benefit, according to figures from Statistics Netherlands, after correction for seasonal effects the number of these benefits rose by 12 thousand in the last quarter of last year. The number of income support benefits fell by only one thousand to 317 thousand at the end of September 2002. The number of disability benefits rose by 12 thousand, half the increase of the previous year.

Unemployment benefits continue to increase

At the end of December 2002, 204 thousand unemployment benefits were being paid in the Netherlands. After seasonal adjustment the increase in the last quarter was 12 thousand, thus continuing the increase which started in January 2002. Over the whole of last year the number of unemployment benefits rose by an average 3 thousand a month. In the years 1995-2001 the number fell continually, reaching its lowest point in December 2001 at 166 thousand.

Overall in 2002 the increase in unemployment benefits was mainly in those claimed by people aged under 45 years. The number of benefits claimed rose by 43 percent in this age group; for men under 45 years it was as much as 61 percent higher. For people aged 45 years and older the increase was only 8 percent.

Income support down slightly

The number of people on income support fell slightly in the third quarter of 2002, to 317 thousand. This is 6 thousand lower than twelve months previously. In the previous year the decrease was still as much as 18 thousand. The number of income support benefits paid for less than a year rose by 3 thousand from September 2001, while long-term income support benefits fell by 9 thousand in the same period.

Increase in disability benefits halved

The total number of disability benefits paid in the Netherlands rose by nearly 12 thousand to 993 thousand at the end of last year. This increase in half of

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the 24 thousand increase measured in 2001. One person may receive more than one disability benefit : the 993 thousand benefits were paid to 979 thousand people. Nearly 39 thousand of the 993 thousand benefits were not paid, for example for claimants who had a paid job.