



Press release

PB03-113
19 June 2003
9:30 AM

Faster increase in unemployment

According to figures just released by Statistics Netherlands, an average 395 thousand people in the Netherlands were unemployed in the period March-May 2003. This is 123 thousand more than in the same period last year. In the period February-April 2003 the increase was 102 thousand. In the most recent period, 5.3 percent of the Dutch population were out of work. Twelve months ago this percentage was 3.7.

Unemployment rising twice as fast

On average, 395 thousand people in the Netherlands were out of work in the months March-May 2003. Seasonal effects usually push down unemployment at this time of the year. When these effects have been removed the unemployed labour force comes out at 403 thousand.

Seen over a longer period, unemployment is increasing faster and faster. At the end of 2002, unemployment had increased at an average rate of 6 thousand people a month for a period of six months. In the first quarter of 2003 the increase accelerated to 9 thousand people a month and now the growth has reached a rate of 14 thousand a month.

Equal increase for men and women

The increase in male unemployment started at the end of 2001. For women it started later: at the beginning of 2003. The rate of increase is equal for both men and women. In the period March-May 2003, 207 thousand men and 187 thousand women were unemployed.

Decreasing trend for employment

In the months March –May 2003 7,069 thousand people in the Netherlands had a job of at least twelve hours a week. After correction for seasonal effects, the employed labour force turns out to have decreased.

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