



# Press release

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## ***Immigration increasing again***

According to the latest figures by Statistics Netherlands, over 22 thousand immigrants took up residence in the Netherlands in the first quarter of 2006. This is almost 2 thousand more than in the same period of 2005. For the time being, this ended the downward immigration rate that started in 2001. The increase consists mainly of returning Dutch people and immigrants from Poland. Emigration rose fast in the first quarter. That is mainly why the number of inhabitants of the Netherlands rose by only 2 thousand, the lowest figure on record.

### ***More Polish and returning Dutch people***

The immigration increase is mainly due to returning Dutch people and immigrants from Poland. In the first quarter of 2006 there were six hundred more returning Dutch people than the year before, bringing the total to 5 thousand for the quarter.

The number of Polish immigrants increased to 1.8 thousand in the first quarter of 2006. That makes Polish people the second largest group of immigrants, after the returning Dutch. There are hardly any immigrants from the other Eastern European countries that joined the European Union on 1 May 2004.

### ***Emigration continues to increase***

In the first quarter of 2006, 29 thousand people emigrated which is up 5 thousand on the year before. The rise that started in 2001 continued. The number of emigrants born in the Netherlands increased from 11 thousand to over 13 thousand. The number of emigrants not born in the Netherlands increased by 2 thousand to almost 16 thousand. Due to the rise in emigration, the Netherlands has an emigration surplus for the third year in a row.

### ***Low population growth rate***

Due to the rise in emigration, the number of inhabitants only increased by 2 thousand in the first quarter of 2006. The decreasing birth rate also contributed to the low population growth. The number of deaths, however, was also lower than in 2005. It was the lowest quarterly population increase on record.

Generally the population growth rate is lower in the first few months of the year than in other months. In March 2006 the number of inhabitants actually fell by 5 hundred. On 1 April the Netherlands had 16.338 million inhabitants.