



# Press release

PB 06-066

## ***Unemployment below 6 percent***

An average 430 thousand people were unemployed in the Netherlands in the period March-May 2006. After correction for seasonal effects, the number comes to 418 thousand. This is 10 thousand fewer than in the period February-April 2006, according to the latest figures from Statistics Netherlands.

In the period March-May 2006, 5.8 percent of the labour force was unemployed. The last time unemployment was below 6 percent was in 2003.

### ***Unemployment continues to fall***

Seasonally adjusted unemployment has been falling for eight months in succession now. The decrease started after the period July-September 2005. Since then, seasonally adjusted unemployment has fallen by nearly 70 thousand people.

### ***Youth unemployment down sharply***

The number of unemployed young people fell by 26 thousand in the space of one year. In the period March-May 10.6 percent of young people were unemployed, nearly 3 percent points down on one year previously. Unemployment also fell in other age groups, but by relatively less.

### ***Male unemployment decreasing for more than a year***

Unemployment among men was 204 thousand on average in the period March-May 2006. This is 44 thousand fewer than in the same period last year. For the first time since the first quarter of 2005, unemployment among men has been lower than twelve months previously every month.

In the period March-May 2006 4.8 percent of the male labour force was unemployed. This is 1.1 percent point lower than one year previously.

Among women, too, unemployment was down. The decrease in the space of one year was smaller than for men, at 26 thousand. The decrease for female unemployment also started later. Since the period November 2005-January 2006 unemployment has constantly been lower than twelve months previously.

Because of the substantial increase in the number of working women in the last year, the unemployment rate still showed a strong decrease. It fell by 1.0 percent point to 7.0 percent of the female labour force.