



Press release

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Unemployment dips below 400 thousand mark

Seasonally adjusted unemployment averaged 394 thousand in the fourth quarter of 2006, a reduction by 11 thousand relative to the period September-November 2006. For the first time in more than three years, seasonally adjusted unemployment dipped below the 400 thousand mark, according to the most recent figures published by Statistics Netherlands.

In the fourth quarter of last year, 5.0 percent of the labour force were unemployed, as against 6.0 percent in 2005.

Decrease after erratic pattern in summer

Last year, seasonally adjusted unemployment showed a rather erratic pattern. In the first six months of 2006, unemployment dropped by an average 9 thousand a month to 408 thousand in the second quarter. In summer, unemployment ranged between 404 and 413 thousand. After the summer, unemployment decreased further. At the end of 2006, unemployment fell at the same rate as in the first six months. The seasonally adjusted unemployment figure dropped to 394 thousand in the fourth quarter of 2006.

Unemployment reduced by 70 thousand in 2006

When the unemployment figure over the fourth quarter was definite, the annual figure for 2006 also became available. On average, 413 thousand people were unemployed last year, a reduction by 70 thousand relative to 2005. The unemployment rate over 2006 was 5.5 percent, as against 6.5 percent in 2004 and 2005.

In 2006, more men than women (re-)entered the job market. Male unemployment declined by 47 thousand to 191 thousand, female unemployment stood at 222 thousand, a reduction by 23 thousand compared to 2005.

Unemployment declined in all age groups in 2006. The most substantial decrease by 46 thousand to 187 thousand was recorded among 25 to 44-year-olds. Last year, 91 thousand young people were jobless, a reduction by 21 thousand compared to 2005. The reduction among over-45s was only marginal by 4 thousand to 134 thousand.

Table 1. Unemployed labour force

Year	Period			Annual change	Seasonally adjusted ¹
		%	x 1,000		
2006	Oct-Dec	5.0	377	-70	394
	Sep-Nov	5.2	390	-69	405
	Aug-Oct	5.2	390	-66	412
	July-Sep	5.4	407	-69	413
	June-Aug	5.3	400	-88	404
	May-July	5.5	415	-82	407
	Apr-June	5.5	407	-85	408
	Mar-May	5.8	430	-71	417
	Feb-Apr	6.0	447	-67	425
	Jan-Mar	6.2	460	-56	436
	Dec-Feb	6.1	454	-40	449
2005	Nov-Jan	6.1	450	-29	457
	Oct-Dec	6.0	447	-26	464
	Sep-Nov	6.2	459	-7	475
	Aug-Oct	6.1	456	-2	478
	July-Sep	6.4	476	20	484
	June-Aug	6.5	488	11	490
	May-July	6.7	497	13	488
	Apr-June	6.7	492	6	491
	Mar-May	6.8	501	5	488
	Feb-Apr	7.0	514	13	493
	Jan-Mar	7.0	516	13	492
	Dec-Feb	6.7	495	21	490
2004	Nov-Jan	6.5	479	27	487
	Oct-Dec	6.4	472	49	491
Annual figures	2006	5.5	413	-70	
	2005	6.5	483	4	
	2004	6.5	479	80	
	2003	5.4	399	97	
	2002	4.1	302	50	
	2001	3.5	252	-18	

Source: Statistics Netherlands

¹) The seasonally adjusted series is updated on a monthly basis, when the most recent unemployment figures become available

**Table 2. Unemployed labour force by gender and age,
3-monthly averages for the period October-December**

		15-24	25-44	45-64	Total
<i>3-monthly averages (x 1,000)</i>					
Men					
2006	Oct-Dec	38	67	60	165
2005	Oct-Dec	44	96	74	214
2004	Oct-Dec	59	112	70	241
Women					
2006	Oct-Dec	39	105	68	211
2005	Oct-Dec	47	118	68	232
2004	Oct-Dec	52	120	59	231
Total					
2006	Oct-Dec	77	172	128	377
2005	Oct-Dec	91	214	142	447
2004	Oct-Dec	111	232	129	472
<i>%</i>					
Men					
2006	Oct-Dec	8.5	3.1	3.6	3.9
2005	Oct-Dec	10.3	4.4	4.6	5.1
2004	Oct-Dec	13.1	5.0	4.4	5.7
Women					
2006	Oct-Dec	10.1	5.9	6.0	6.4
2005	Oct-Dec	11.9	6.7	6.5	7.2
2004	Oct-Dec	13.6	6.9	5.9	7.4
Total					
2006	Oct-Dec	9.3	4.4	4.6	5.0
2005	Oct-Dec	11.0	5.4	5.4	6.0
2004	Oct-Dec	13.3	5.8	5.0	6.4

Source: Statistics Netherlands

Table 3. Unemployed labour force by gender and age, annual figures

	15-24	25-44	45-64	Total
<i>Annual figures (x 1,000)</i>				
Men				
2006	43	80	69	191
2005	56	107	75	238
2004	63	114	69	246
Women				
2006	48	108	66	222
2005	55	126	64	245
2004	56	120	57	233
Total				
2006	91	187	134	413
2005	112	233	138	483
2004	119	234	126	479
%				
Men				
2006	9.6	3.7	4.2	4.5
2005	12.5	4.9	4.7	5.6
2004	13.5	5.1	4.5	5.8
Women				
2006	11.9	6.1	6.0	6.8
2005	13.6	7.2	6.2	7.7
2004	13.6	6.9	5.8	7.4
Total				
2006	10.7	4.8	4.9	5.5
2005	13.1	5.9	5.3	6.5
2004	13.5	5.9	5.0	6.5

Source: Statistics Netherlands