



Press release

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Net population growth 81 thousand

- Immigration reaches record level
- Emigration 5 percent down

In 2008, net population growth in the Netherlands was more than 81 thousand, i.e. 34 thousand more than in 2007. The growth is caused by increased immigration and a simultaneously declining emigration. The increase was nearly twice as high as in the preceding year. According to the most recent figures released by Statistics Netherlands, the population on 1 January 2009 stood at nearly 16.5 million.

With nearly 143 thousand, immigration reached an unprecedented level last year, only approximated around the turn of the century. In the first three quarters of 2008, the number of labour migrants from the European Union in particular rose substantially.

In the last quarter, immigration from EU member states in Eastern Europe slowed down, but this effect was offset by an increase in immigration from other countries. The recent economic boom plays a part in this respect.

Last year, emigration declined from 123 thousand to 116 thousand and thus contributed to population growth. With some exceptions, emigration declined across the board. Emigration from Poland, Romania and Bulgaria, on the other hand, increased.

The rising birth rate also contributed to population growth. The downward trend observed at the beginning of the 21st century changed into a marginal increase in the past year. In 2008, nearly 185 thousand children were born, over 3 thousand more than in 2007. The current economic crisis is anticipated to have a downward effect on the birth rate in 2009.

A marginally higher mortality rate slowed down population growth.

In the fourth quarter of 2008, the number of house moves dropped by 4 percent relative to the same period in 2007. In the last quarter, the number of house moves declined, both within and between municipalities.