



# Press release

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## ***Economic crisis slows down migration, fewer people moved in 2009***

- Fewer emigrants, more immigrants
- Fewer house moves
- Number of divorces down
- Highest population growth since 2002

In 2009, emigration decreased and immigration increased. The net population growth was 92 thousand, an increase by just over 10 thousand relative to 2008. Net births and net mortality still contributed more to the population growth in the Netherlands than net migration. According to the most recent figures released by Statistics Netherlands, the population stood at nearly 16.6 million on 1 January 2010.

Last year, 111 thousand persons emigrated, 7 thousand fewer than in 2008. The decline was entirely caused by people born in the Netherlands.

While the emigration rate dropped, immigration increased as 147 thousand persons settled in the Netherlands, i.e. nearly 4 thousand more than in 2008. The increase mainly consisted of asylum seekers. Due to the global recession, labour migration from the EU and countries like Japan and the US slowed down in the course of 2009.

Partly due to the decreasing emigration and the increasing immigration, the population grew by 92 thousand in 2009, reaching the highest level since 2002. More than half of the population growth – 55 percent – is accounted for by net births and net mortality. In 2009, nearly 185 thousand children were born, about as many as in 2008. Despite the ageing of the population, mortality (134 thousand) was marginally lower in 2009 than in the previous year.

The number of people who moved within the Netherlands dropped notably in 2009, because of the economic crunch and the situation on the housing market. The decline was particularly obvious among married couples, i.e. the category which includes many house owners.

In 2009, nearly 73 thousand marriages were registered, 2.5 thousand down on 2008. Since 2004, the annual number of marriages has varied around 72.5

thousand with a peak in 2008, when more than 75 thousand marriages were registered.

The number of divorces, including flash divorces dropped steeply in 2009 by nearly 3.5 thousand relative to 2008. With approximately 35 thousand, the number of regular and flash divorces was fairly stable over the period 2006-2008.