

The Netherlands on the European scale

AT Austria
 BE Belgium
 BG Bulgaria
 CY Cyprus
 CZ Czech Republic
 DE Germany
 DK Denmark
 EE Estonia
 EL Greece
 ES Spain
 FI Finland
 FR France
 HU Hungary
 IE Ireland
 IT Italy
 LT Lithuania
 LU Luxembourg
 LV Latvia
 MT Malta
 NL Netherlands
 PL Poland
 PT Portugal
 RO Romania
 SE Sweden
 SI Slovenia
 SK Slovakia
 UK United Kingdom



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Foreword

Statistics Netherlands published the previous edition of *The Netherlands on the European Scale* nearly six years ago, in February 2004. Later on that year ten new countries joined the European Union, bringing the total number of member states to 25; a new European Parliament was elected in June; and the Dutch EU presidency ran from July to December. The publication satisfied a need at the time, and this is still the case today.

Many people still want to know how the Netherlands is doing compared with other countries in the EU. Where are we top of the class? Where are we trailing behind? And in which areas are we an 'average member state'? It turns out that the Dutch economy is doing relatively well. As sixth largest economy in the EU-27, the Netherlands has one of the highest per capita incomes and the lowest rate of unemployment in the EU. It still leads the way in terms of part-time workers, and - together with the Czechs - the Dutch have the fewest inhabitants with an income below the poverty line. The Netherlands contributes relatively most money to the EU: it is the largest net payer of all the member states.

The Dutch are significantly lower down in the European rankings in three areas: home ownership, life expectancy for girls (down from 6th to 12th position) and the share of women in top management positions.

Where possible, figures for the newest member states, Romania and Bulgaria, have been included in this new edition. Most of the statistics are from Eurostat, but other sources include the United Nations, the OECD and Statistics Netherlands. More details about the sources can be found in the European Union dossier on Statistics Netherlands website: www.cbs.nl. The business cycle dossier on the website comprises interactive infographics with an overview of the most recent international business cycle indicators. The website also contains the most recent statistics for the Netherlands.

Director-General of Statistics,
Gosse van der Veen

The Hague/Heerlen, January 2010

Population

1



Net population growth (%)



Source: Eurostat.

Net population size (mln) and growth (%)

	2000	2009	Average annual growth
Austria	8.0	8.4	0.5
Belgium	10.2	10.8	0.6
Bulgaria	8.2	7.6	-0.8
Cyprus	0.7	0.8	1.7
Czech Republic	10.3	10.5	0.2
Denmark	5.3	5.5	0.4
Estonia	1.4	1.3	-0.3
Finland	5.2	5.3	0.3
France	60.5	64.4	0.7
Germany	82.2	82.0	0.0
Greece	10.9	11.3	0.4
Hungary	10.2	10.0	-0.2
Ireland	3.8	4.5	2.0
Italy	56.9	60.1	0.6
Latvia	2.4	2.3	-0.6
Lithuania	3.5	3.3	-0.5
Luxembourg	0.4	0.5	1.5
Malta	0.4	0.4	1.0
Netherlands	15.9	16.5	0.4
Poland	38.7	38.1	-0.1
Portugal	10.2	10.6	0.5
Romania	22.5	21.5	-0.5
Slovakia	5.4	5.4	0.0
Slovenia	2.0	2.0	0.2
Spain	40.0	45.8	1.6
Sweden	8.9	9.3	0.5
United Kingdom	58.8	61.6	0.5
European Union (EU-27)	482.8	499.7	0.4

Source: Eurostat.

Population growth

In terms of population size, the Netherlands is the eighth largest nation in the European Union (EU-27). Germany has the largest population, with 82.0 million inhabitants. France, the United Kingdom, Italy, Spain, Poland and Romania also have more inhabitants than the Netherlands.

The total population of the EU-27 increased by 2.43 million people in 2007, mainly as a result of relatively extensive migration. At 1.94 million people, net migration was four times as high as natural growth (0.48 million). Italy and Spain account for nearly two-thirds of this large migration surplus.

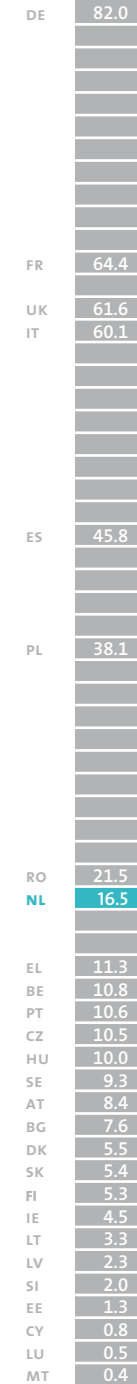
Population numbers have decreased in all countries that have joined the EU since 2004 and in Germany. With the exception of Poland,

this decrease was caused by negative natural growth. Hungary is the only country in this group with positive net migration.

The Irish population grew by most in 2007 (2.4 percent), while Lithuania's decreased by most (-0.6 percent).

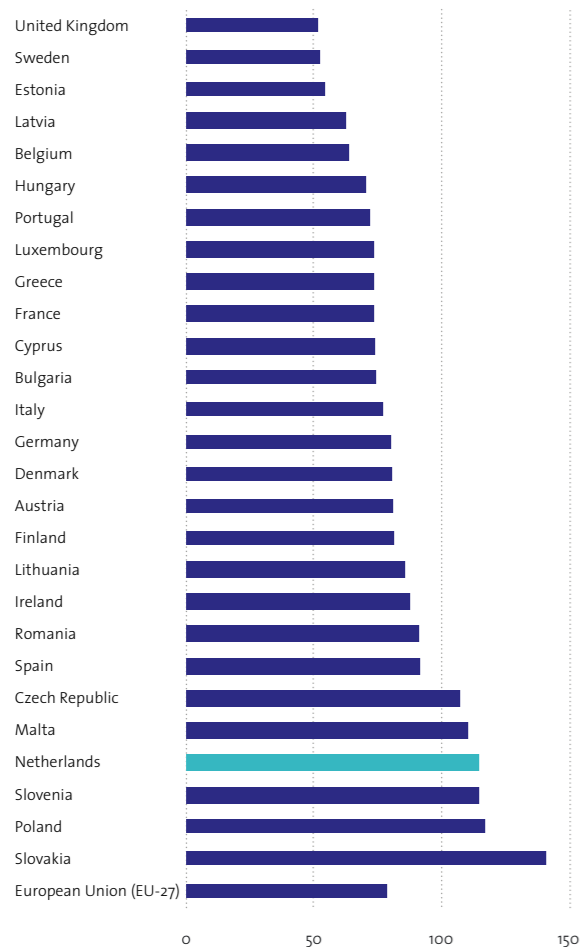
Ireland has had the highest population growth rate in Europe for a number of years now. Since 2000, the number of inhabitants there has risen by nearly 690 thousand, i.e. 18 percent. Population growth rates in Cyprus, Spain and Luxembourg are also high. The long-term growth rate for the Dutch population is 3.9 percent (2000-2009). This is slightly higher than the average 3.5 percent for the 27 countries in the European Union.

eighth largest population



Population, 2009 (x mln)

Increase in grey burden, 2008–2040 (% change)



Source: Eurostat.

Aeiging and grey burden (over-65s as a % of the population and as a % of the population aged 15–64 years)

	Over 65		Grey burden	
	2008	2040	2008	2040
Austria	17.2	27.2	25.4	46.0
Belgium	17.0	25.0	25.8	42.3
Bulgaria	17.3	26.7	25.0	43.6
Cyprus	12.4	20.0	17.7	30.8
Czech Republic	14.6	26.3	20.6	42.7
Denmark	15.6	24.8	23.6	42.7
Estonia	17.2	24.2	25.2	39.0
Finland	16.5	26.2	24.8	45.0
France	16.5	25.3	25.3	44.0
Germany	20.1	31.1	30.3	54.7
Greece	18.6	28.4	27.8	48.3
Hungary	16.2	25.0	23.5	40.1
Ireland	11.2	19.3	16.3	30.6
Italy	20.1	30.8	30.5	54.1
Latvia	17.3	25.4	25.0	40.7
Lithuania	15.8	26.3	23.0	42.8
Luxembourg	14.2	22.2	20.9	36.3
Malta	13.8	25.7	19.8	41.7
Netherlands	14.7	26.9	21.8	46.8
Poland	13.5	25.9	19.0	41.3
Portugal	17.4	26.8	25.9	44.6
Romania	14.9	25.5	21.3	40.8
Slovakia	12.0	25.3	16.6	40.0
Slovenia	16.1	29.1	23.0	49.4
Spain	16.6	27.7	24.2	46.4
Sweden	17.5	24.3	26.7	40.8
United Kingdom	16.1	22.5	24.3	36.9
European Union (27)	17.1	26.9	25.4	45.4

Source: Eurostat.

Population ageing

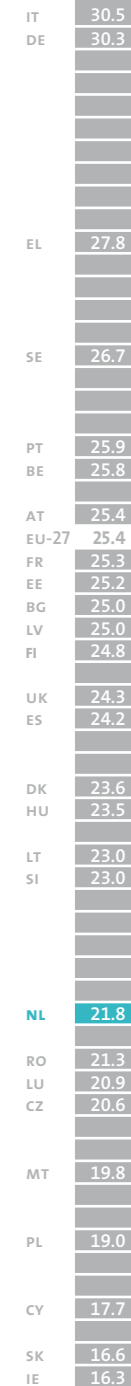
Fifteen percent of the Dutch population were 65 years or older in 2008, nearly 4 percent were 80 years or older. By 2040 these shares will have risen to an expected 27 and 9 percent respectively. The high birth rates of 1946–1970 will be reflected in an increase in the number of very elderly people. Steadily decreasing mortality risks have also contributed to this process.

The grey burden - the ratio of over-65s to 15–64 year-olds - will increase. In 2008 there were 22 over-65s for every hundred people aged 15–64 years. In 2040 this is expected to be as many as 47. This is the result of the increase in the

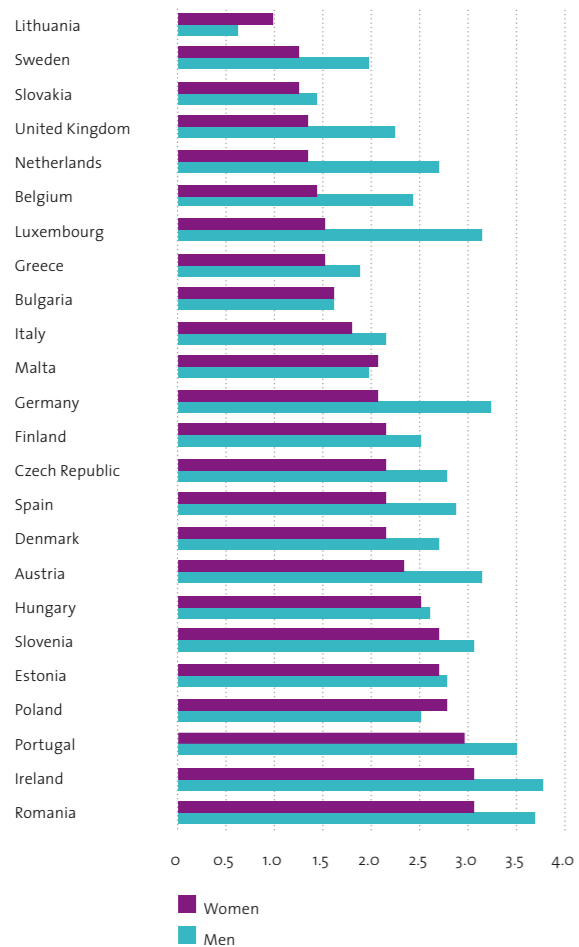
number of over-65s and a shrinking potential labour force.

In the Netherlands the older part of the population is already putting more pressure on the active population than in the 27 countries in European Union (45 percent). More than a quarter of the population of the EU-27 is expected to be 65 years or older at that time, and nearly 10 percent will be at least 80 years old. The differences in grey pressure between the countries are substantial and range from 30 percent in Cyprus and Ireland, the youngest countries, to 54 percent in Italy and Germany, the oldest countries.

one quarter over 65 in 2040



Life expectancy (increase in years, 1996-2006)



Source: Eurostat.

Life expectancy, 2006 (years)

	Men	Women
Austria	77.2	82.8
Belgium	76.6	82.3
Bulgaria	69.2	76.3
Cyprus	78.8	82.4
Czech Republic	73.5	79.9
Denmark	76.1	80.7
Estonia	67.4	78.6
Finland	75.9	83.1
France	77.3	84.4
Germany	77.2	82.4
Greece	77.2	81.9
Hungary	69.2	77.8
Ireland	77.3	82.1
Italy	77.9	83.8
Latvia	65.4	76.3
Lithuania	65.3	77.0
Luxembourg	76.8	81.9
Malta	77.0	81.9
Netherlands	77.7	82.0
Poland	70.9	79.7
Portugal	75.5	82.3
Romania	69.2	76.2
Slovakia	70.4	78.4
Slovenia	74.5	82.0
Spain	77.7	84.4
Sweden	78.8	83.1
United Kingdom	76.8	81.0
European Union (EU-27)	75.2	81.5

Source: Eurostat.

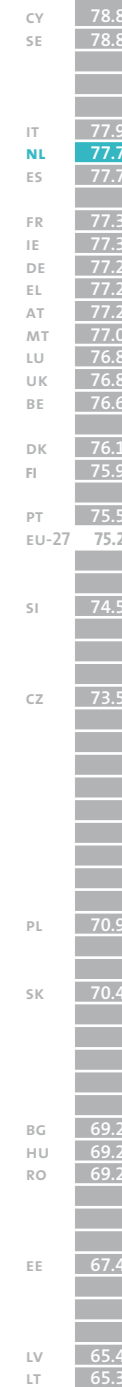
Life expectancy

A baby girl born in the Netherlands in 2007 can expect to live to the age of 82.3 years. This is 4.3 years longer than a baby boy (78.0 years). The gender difference in life expectancy has been narrowing since 1980. Men now live 5.5 years longer than in 1980, and women an average 3.1 years longer. The explanation for this is the sharp decrease in mortality: in spite of the fact that the overall population is ageing, the number of deaths has decreased every year since 2002. In the European life expectancy ranking, Dutch girls dropped substantially between 1996 and 2006, from sixth to twelfth place. Their increase

in life expectancy has been only 1.5 years in the period 1996–2006. Boys gained 3.0 years and moved up from fifth to fourth place. The life expectancy of Dutch boys is now similar to that of boys in Spain, while boys in Sweden and Italy can expect to live significantly longer.

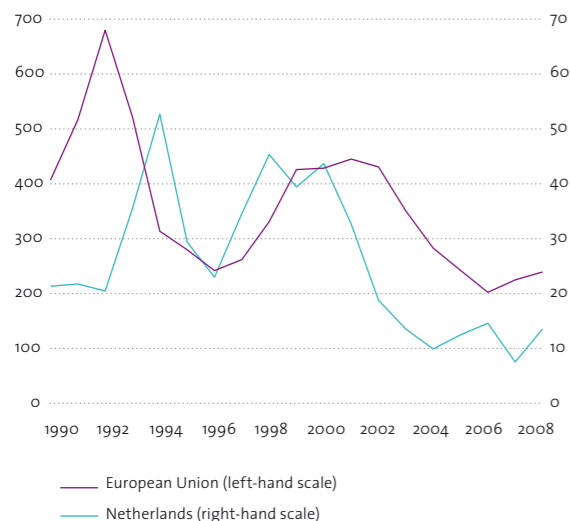
The lowest life expectancies are for men and women in the Baltic states. Latvian boys born in 2006 can expect to reach the age of 65 years, and although girls live an average 11 years longer, at 76.3 years their life expectancy is still the lowest of all women in the EU-27.

men gain more years of life than women



Life expectancy men, 2006 (years)

Requests for asylum (x 1,000)



Source: Ministry of Justice, UNHCR

Requests for asylum by country of origin, 2008 (x 1,000)

Destination	Total EU-27	
	Total EU-27	Netherlands ¹⁾
Iraq	27.6	5.0
Russian Federation	18.2	0.1
Somalia	17.1	3.8
Afghanistan	13.5	0.4
Serbia and Montenegro	12.6	0.0
Pakistan	12.0	0.0
Nigeria	11.3	0.1
Eritrea	7.0	0.2
Iran	6.7	0.3
Turkey	6.3	0.1
Sri Lanka	6.0	0.2
Bangladesh	5.7	0.0
Georgia	4.8	0.1
Zimbabwe	4.6	0.0
China	4.3	0.6
Syria	4.2	0.0
Dem. Rep. of Congo	4.2	0.0
Colombia	1.0	0.0
Haiti	1.0	-
Other countries	70.0	2.3
Total	238.1	13.4

¹⁾ First requests..

Source: Ministry of Justice, UNHCR.

Asylum requests

Some 13.4 thousand requests for asylum were submitted to the Dutch authorities in 2008, nearly twice the number received in 2007, but only a fraction of the number in the 1990s which peaked at nearly 53 thousand requests for asylum in 1994.

The relatively strong increase in 2008 was connected to the increase in asylumseekers from Iraq and Somalia. This rise was the result of a regulation providing protection for all asylumseekers from Iraq and Somalia that was still valid in 2008. This regulation has now been rescinded.

France, Italy and the United Kingdom received most requests for asylum in 2008. In Sweden, Greece and the twelve states who joined the

European Union most recently the number of requests has decreased.

In relative terms it is the smallest countries – Malta and Cyprus – who receive the most requests, i.e. 6.4 and 4.6 respectively per thousand inhabitants. France receives the most asylum requests in absolute terms, but this is the equivalent of only 0.6 of a request per thousand inhabitants. In the Netherlands it is 0.8 per thousand.

Just as in other European countries, most asylumseekers in the Netherlands come from Iraq. In 2008 nearly 28 thousand Iraqis came to the various countries of the European Union. Large numbers of asylumseekers also arrived from Russia and Somalia.

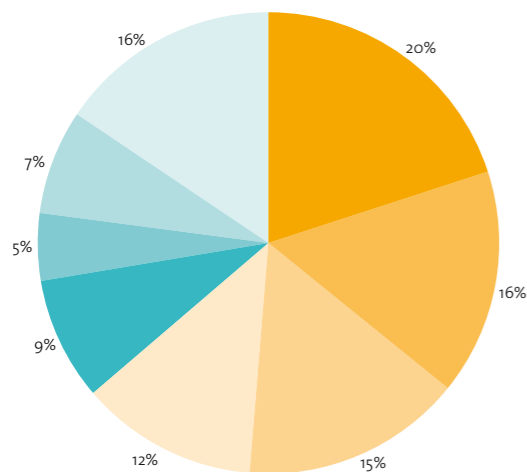


Economy

2



Contribution to GDP of the EU-27, 2008
Total EU-27: 12,456 bln euro



Source: Eurostat.

Economic growth (%)

	1999-2008 Average per year	2009 Jan. to Jun.
Austria	2.7	-4.7
Belgium	2.4	-3.7
Bulgaria	5.9	-4.2
Cyprus	4.2	-0.1
Czech Republic	4.3	-5.1
Denmark	1.8	-5.3
Estonia	6.9	-15.6
Finland	3.5	-8.5
France	2.3	-3.3
Germany	1.7	-6.8
Greece	4.4	-0.1
Hungary	4.0	-7.1
Ireland	6.2	-8.4
Italy	1.4	-6.3
Latvia	5.2	-5.7
Lithuania	7.6	-18.4
Luxembourg	6.8	-17.8
Malta	1.6	-2.6
Netherlands	2.7	-5.0
Poland	4.7	1.1
Portugal	1.7	-4.3
Romania	5.6	-7.5
Slovakia	5.7	-5.5
Slovenia	4.9	-8.8
Spain	3.8	-4.1
Sweden	3.1	-7.0
United Kingdom	2.9	-5.4
European Union (27)	2.5	-5.4

Source: Eurostat.

Economic growth

The Netherlands is the sixth largest economy in the European Union (EU-27) and contributes nearly 5 percent to the EU's gross domestic product (GDP). Germany, which accounts for 20 percent of EU GDP, is the largest economy in the EU, followed by the United Kingdom and France. Together these three countries account for half the economy of the EU.

Dutch GDP per capita is one of the highest within the EU. Only in Luxembourg and Ireland is it higher. Between 2000 and 2005 economic growth in the Netherlands was lower than in most other EU countries, however. Since then it has grown by more than average.

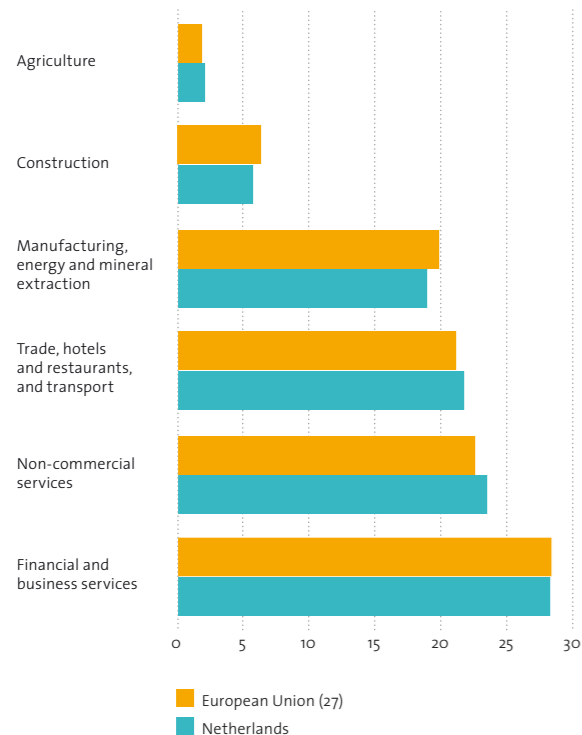
The decline in the economy as a consequence of the credit crisis has been smaller in the Netherlands than in many other EU countries. The economies of the new member countries in particular have weakened substantially; this in sharp contrast to the very high economic growth rates in most of these countries in the last decade. Accession to the EU has been an impulse for economic growth in these countries.

Prosperity has also risen substantially in these states, although the differences between the countries remain large.

high prosperity



Share of industry sectors in GDP, 2008 (%)



Source: Eurostat.

Financial and business services (as a % of GDP)

	1999	2008
Austria	21.3	24.2
Belgium ¹⁾	26.3	28.4
Bulgaria	19.2	23.6
Cyprus ¹⁾	22.6	27.8
Czech Republic	16.1	17.2
Denmark	21.9	24.9
Estonia	22.1	24.4
Finland	19.4	21.1
France ²⁾	29.4	33.7
Germany	27.1	29.4
Greece ²⁾	20.6	18.6
Hungary	18.5	22.0
Ireland	20.0	30.1
Italy	23.5	27.7
Latvia	16.7	22.8
Lithuania	12.2	16.5
Luxembourg	38.0	48.6
Netherlands	26.8	28.2
Poland	16.7	19.5
Portugal ³⁾	20.7	22.4
Romania	12.7	14.5
Slovakia	16.6	17.4
Slovenia	19.6	22.4
Spain	18.9	22.7
Sweden	24.0	24.8
United Kingdom	25.4	33.8
European Union (27)	25.2	28.3

¹⁾ 1997 and 2007

²⁾ 1997

³⁾ 2007

Source: Eurostat.

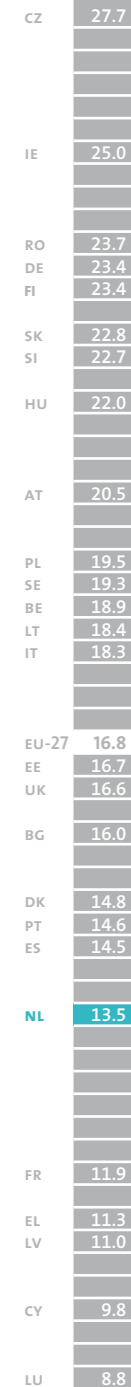
Production structure

One measure of how important services are in an economy is the proportion of gross domestic product (GDP) accounted for by financial and business services. These services include banks, insurance companies and temp agencies. In the Netherlands, financial and business services account for 28 percent of GDP, and this puts the Dutch in seventh place in the European Union (EU-27). Luxembourg tops the list, thanks to the many banks established in this country. Financial and business services are now the largest sector in most west European countries. The manufacturing and construction sectors are smaller in the Netherlands than on average

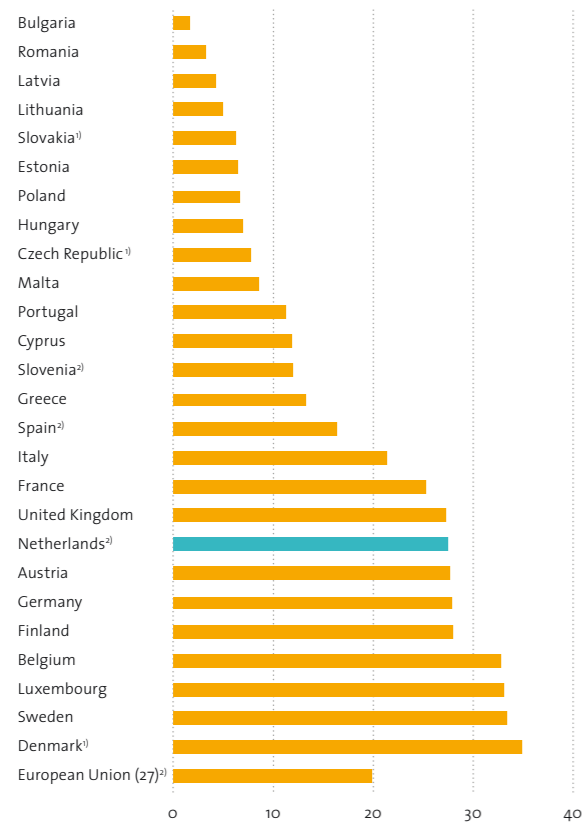
in the EU, while the role of non-commercial services is larger. The share of trade, hotels and restaurants, transport and agriculture in the Dutch economy is around the EU average.

Agriculture is the smallest sector in the EU, even in the new member countries, although there it is larger than in most of the old EU-15 countries. In the new countries, manufacturing and trade and transport are still often the largest sectors, but there too the role of financial and business services is expanding. The differences in production structure between new and old members states have diminished in the last ten years.

more services, less manufacturing



Labour costs per hour, 2007 (euro)



¹⁾ 2006.
²⁾ 2005.

Source: Eurostat.

Unit labour costs (% change)

	Average 2001-2006	2007	2008
Austria	0.9	1.3	2.9
Belgium	1.7	2.2	3.9
Bulgaria	3.6	14.2	16.2
Cyprus	3.3	-0.2	2.5
Czech Republic	7.1	5	17
Denmark	2.4	4.3	7
Estonia	4.6	17.3	14.3
Finland	1.4	1.5	5.9
France	2.0	1.8	2.8
Germany	-0.1	0.2	2.2
Greece	2.6	3.5	3.9
Hungary	6.5	10.9	4.4
Ireland	3.5	3.6	7.9
Italy	3.0	1.6	4.2
Latvia	2.8	26.3	22.7
Lithuania	4.3	6.5	9.3
Luxembourg	2.5	1.6	6.8
Malta	1.8	1	3.8
Netherlands	2.1	2	2.9
Poland	0.7	5.7	15.1
Portugal	2.8	1.4	3.6
Romania	5.7	21.9	4.1
Slovakia	5.7	10.9	13.7
Slovenia	1.7	2.6	6.2
Spain	3.0	3.7	4.4
Sweden	-0.6	4.8	-1.3
United Kingdom	0.6	2.6	-11.9
European Union (27)	1.3	2.2	0.8

Source: Eurostat.

Competitiveness

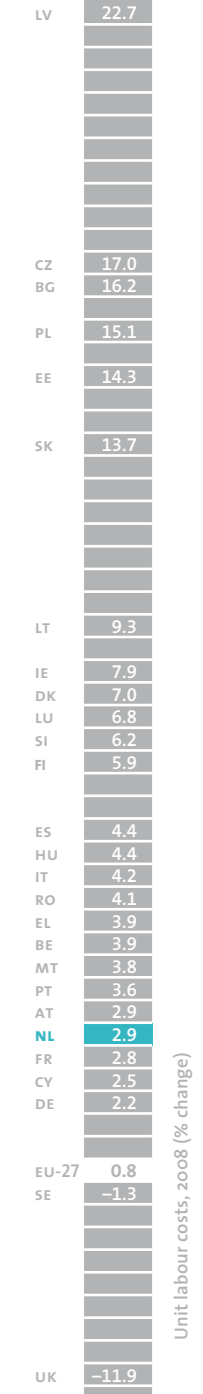
It is difficult to measure the competitiveness of a country in one single figure. Competitiveness is determined by many indicators, such as the composition of exports, the education level of the population, physical and fiscal infrastructure and unit labour costs. The most widely used indicator is unit labour costs.

From 2001 to 2004, relatively large wage rises and low labour productivity growth in the Netherlands pushed up labour costs by more on average than elsewhere in the EU-27. After that they developed more moderately, but in 2008 they were well over the EU average. This has

weakened the competitiveness of Dutch exporters.

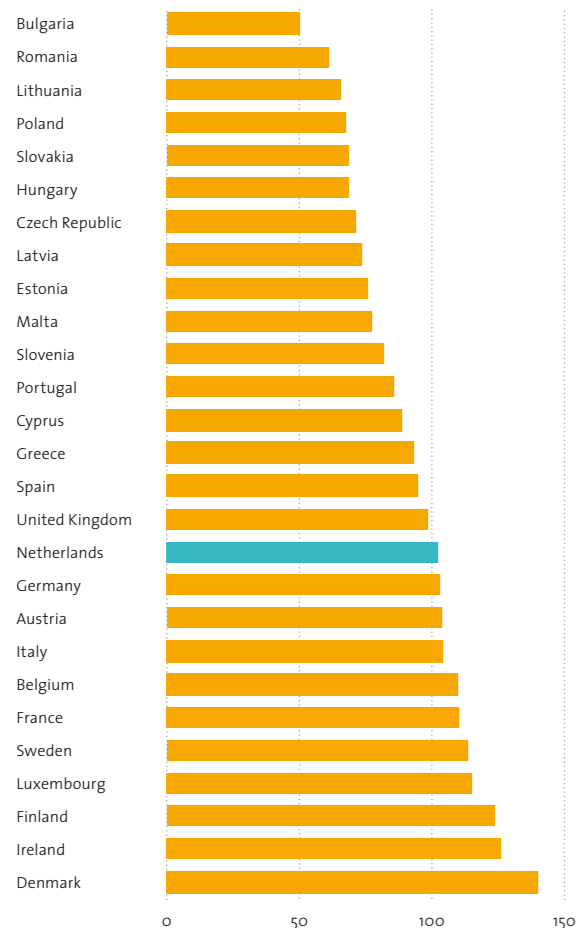
High costs may prompt goods manufacturers to relocate production to countries where wages are lower; the former east bloc, for example. The accession of these countries to the EU has made this step easier to take. Labour costs per hour are lowest in these countries, although they are rising by more than average in the EU. In 2008 the rise in unit labour costs in Latvia, the Czech Republic, Bulgaria and Poland was far above the EU-27 average. As a result these economies have become less competitive.

rising labour costs



Unit labour costs, 2008 (% change)

Relative price levels, 2008 (EU-27=100)



Source: Eurostat.

Inflation, harmonised index of consumer prices - HICP (%)

	2002–2007 Average per year	2008	2009 ¹⁾ Jan. to Sep.
Austria	1.8	3.2	0.4
Belgium	1.9	4.5	0.1
Bulgaria	5.9	12	3.0
Cyprus	2.5	4.4	0.1
Czech Republic	1.8	6.3	0.8
Denmark	1.7	3.6	1.1
Estonia	3.9	10.6	1.0
Finland	1.2	3.9	1.8
France	2.0	3.2	0.0
Germany	1.7	2.8	0.2
Greece	3.4	4.2	1.1
Hungary	5.3	6	3.7
Ireland	3.1	3.1	-1.3
Italy	2.4	3.5	0.8
Latvia	5.7	15.3	4.9
Lithuania	2.1	11.1	5.2
Luxembourg	2.9	4.1	-0.4
Malta	2.2	4.7	2.6
Netherlands	2.0	2.2	1.1
Poland	2.0	4.2	4.0
Portugal	2.8	2.7	-0.9
Romania	11.6	7.9	5.9
Slovakia	4.7	3.9	1.2
Slovenia	4.2	5.5	0.7
Spain	3.3	4.1	-0.4
Sweden	1.5	3.3	1.8
United Kingdom	1.8	3.6	2.2
European Union (27) ¹⁾	2.1	3.7	1.0

¹⁾ To 2005 EU-15, to 2007 EU-25, from 2008 EU-27

²⁾ Average year-on-year change.

Source: Eurostat.

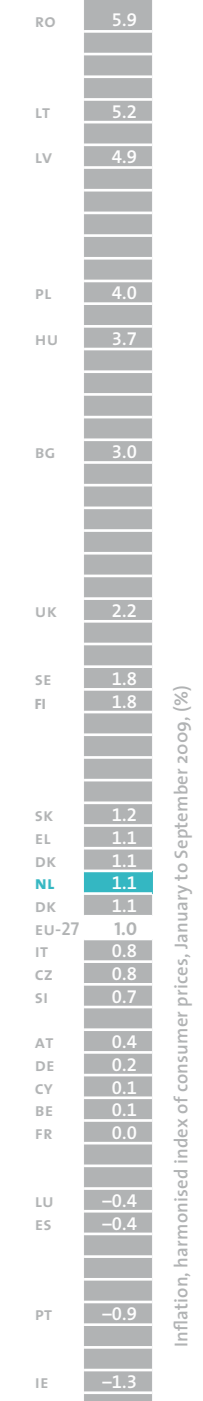
Prices

Dutch inflation was slightly higher than that in the European Union (EU-27) in the first three quarters of 2009. Inflation in the Netherlands is still much lower than in 2008, however. The inflation rate for the whole European Union was low in the first three quarters of 2009. Ireland, Portugal, Spain and Luxembourg even reported deflation, i.e. price decreases. Consumer prices rose by most in Romania. Dutch households had to pay nearly 10 percent more for alcohol and tobacco in the first nine months of 2009 than twelve months previously. In the EU-27 this increase was much smaller. Prices in hotels and restaurants also rose by more than average in the Netherlands,

but price increases for recreation and cultural activities were smaller than average. Communication cost less for consumers in both the Netherlands and the rest of Europe, but the prices decreases were larger in the Netherlands.

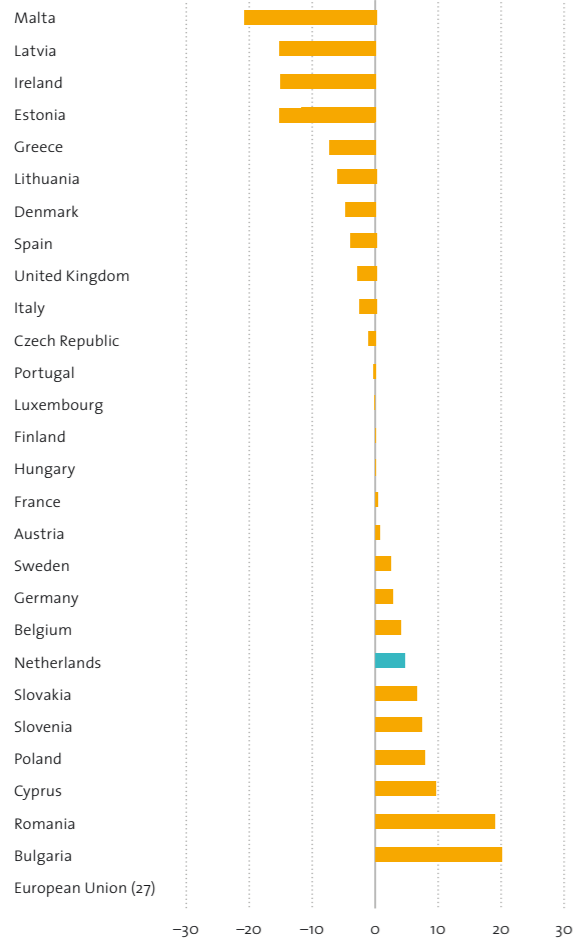
Price levels in the Netherlands were around the EU average in 2008, and similar to those in Germany and the United Kingdom. Shopping is relatively cheap in eastern Europe; in Bulgaria in particular, consumer prices are relatively low. In the Scandinavian countries and Ireland, on the other hand, the cost of living is considerably higher than average.

lower inflation



Inflation, harmonised index of consumer prices, January to September 2009, (%)

Investment spending, 2008 (% volume change)



Source: Eurostat.

Direct investment spending, average per year in 2004–2007 (% of GDP)

	By other countries	In other countries	Net foreign investment
Austria	5.0	3.9	-1.2
Belgium	10.6	12.8	2.3
Bulgaria	0.4	18.7	18.3
Cyprus	4.5	8.5	4.0
Czech Republic	0.7	5.7	5.1
Estonia	5.4	13.1	7.8
Finland	1.5	2.8	1.3
France	5.6	3.8	-1.8
Germany	2.9	1.2	-1.8
Greece	1.1	1.0	-0.1
Hungary	12.7	15.8	3.1
Ireland	8.0	-3.1	-11.0
Italy	2.5	1.5	-1.0
Latvia	0.9	6.3	5.4
Lithuania	1.3	4.7	3.4
Luxembourg	333.3	301.7	-31.5
Malta	0.2	15.0	14.8
Netherlands	9.7	6.2	-3.5
Poland	1.3	4.9	3.6
Portugal	2.9	2.9	0.0
Slovakia	0.4	6.3	5.9
Slovenia	2.4	2.4	-0.1
Spain	6.6	2.7	-3.9
Sweden	6.2	3.7	-2.5
United Kingdom	5.2	5.8	0.6
European Union (27)	2.5	1.6	-1.0

Source: Eurostat.

Investment spending

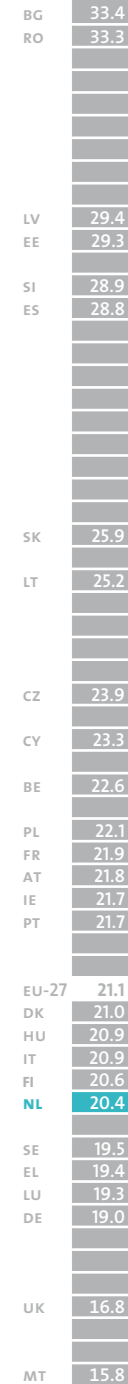
Around one fifth of the Dutch gross domestic product (GDP) is spent on fixed capital formation in the public and the private sector. This is about the same as the average for the European Union (EU-27). In most former east bloc countries, investment spending accounts for more than a quarter of GDP; and in Bulgaria and Romania for as much as one third. Overall in the EU-27, investment spending fell in 2008, after years of growth. In the Netherlands, however, it rose quite substantially, by nearly 5 percent.

Investment spending in former east bloc countries has been relatively high in recent years. Much of this money is used to replace

obsolete capital goods. Bulgaria and Romania realised the highest growth in investment spending in 2008.

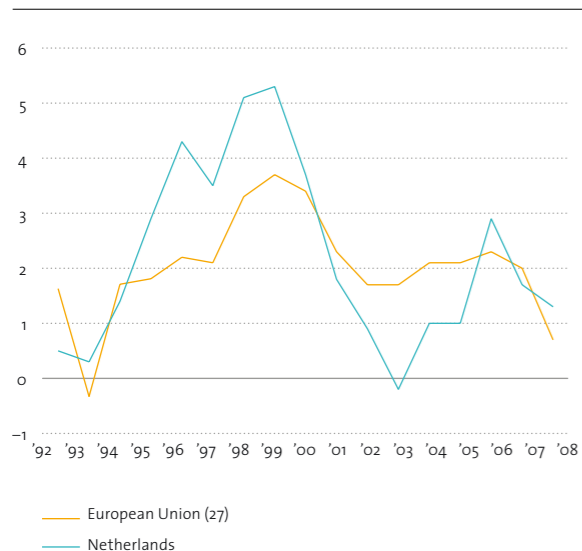
On average, the EU-27 receives more foreign investment than it invests in other countries. This difference is largest in Luxembourg, followed by Ireland, Spain and the Netherlands. Foreign investment is very sensitive to the economic climate and fluctuates strongly. Foreign investment increases in periods of strong economic growth, but drops sharply in times of decline, with disinvestment as a result. Companies tend to concentrate more on their core activities on the domestic market in recession periods.

investment spending around European average



Investment spending 2008 (% of GDP)

Household consumption (% volume change)



Source: Eurostat.

Consumption, 2008 (% of GDP)

	Government	Households
Austria	19	53
Belgium	23	52
Bulgaria	16	68
Cyprus	19	68
Czech Republic	20	50
Denmark	27	49
Estonia	19	56
Finland	22	52
France	23	57
Germany	18	57
Greece	17	73
Hungary	22	54
Ireland	18	50
Italy	20	59
Latvia	20	62
Lithuania	19	65
Luxembourg	15	32
Malta	21	64
Netherlands	26	46
Poland	19	62
Portugal	21	67
Romania	16	66
Slovakia	17	57
Slovenia	18	53
Spain	19	57
Sweden	26	47
United Kingdom	22	64
European Union (27)	21	57

Source: Eurostat.

Consumption

Consumption by households in the Netherlands accounts for about half the gross domestic product (GDP). This share is well below the average for the European Union (EU-27). Household consumption is relatively highest in Greece and Cyprus, where it accounts for two-thirds or more of GDP. It is lowest in Luxembourg. Developments in consumption by households is similar to developments in the growth of GDP. In the second half of the 1990s, Dutch household consumption and GDP both grew strongly and by more than the average in the EU. From 2001, Dutch consumption growth

was clearly lower and the Netherlands dropped below the EU average. In 2003 consumption growth in the Netherlands was even negative. Since 2008 consumption by households has been slightly above the EU average.

Government consumption consists of spending on care, education, defence, justice and public administration. In the Netherlands, government consumption makes up nearly one quarter of GDP. This puts the Netherlands in second place in the EU-27. Only in Denmark is this share higher.

household consumption relatively low

EL 73
CY 68
BG 68
PT 67
RO 66
LT 65
UK 64
MT 64

LV 62
PL 62

IT 59

EU-27 57
ES 57
FR 57
DE 57
SK 57
EE 56

HU 54
AT 53
SI 53
BE 52
FI 52

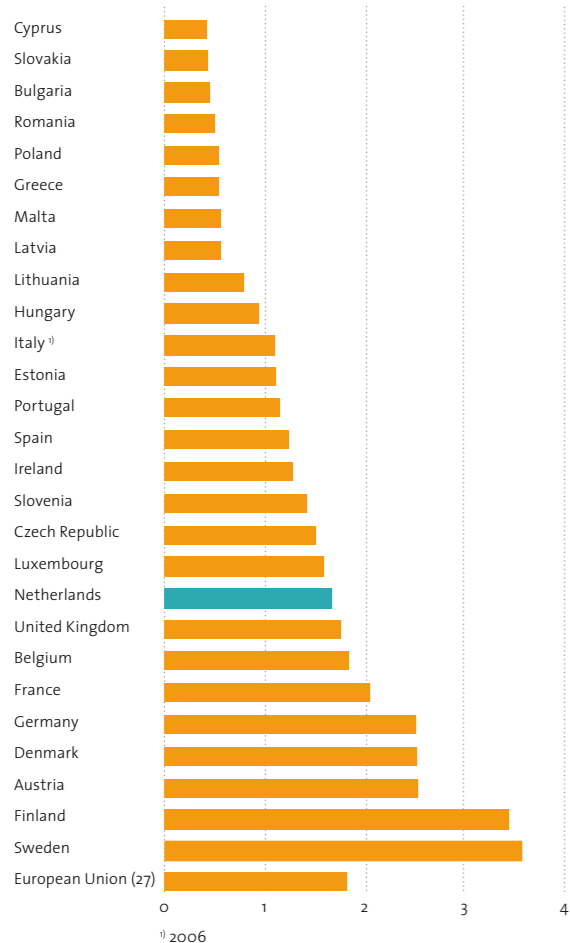
IE 50
CZ 50
DK 49

SE 47
NL 46

LU 32

Household consumption, 2008 (% of GDP)

R&D spending, 2007 (% of GDP)



Source: Eurostat.

E-commerce, 2007 (% of companies)

	Companies purchasing online ¹⁾	Companies selling online ¹⁾
Austria	34	15
Belgium	34	16
Bulgaria	3	2
Cyprus	14	7
Czech Republic	26	15
Denmark	38	20
Estonia	18	11
Finland ²⁾	19	13
France	18	13
Germany ³⁾	52	24
Greece	10	7
Hungary	7	4
Ireland	54	25
Italy	12	3
Latvia	9	6
Lithuania	25	22
Luxembourg	23	10
Malta	13	13
Netherlands	40	27
Poland	11	8
Portugal	20	19
Romania	4	3
Slovakia	9	5
Slovenia	15	8
Spain	19	10
Sweden	50	19
United Kingdom	47	32
European Union (27)	28	16

¹⁾ At least 1 percent of purchases and sales.

²⁾ 2006.

³⁾ Purchasing: 2006.

Source: Eurostat.

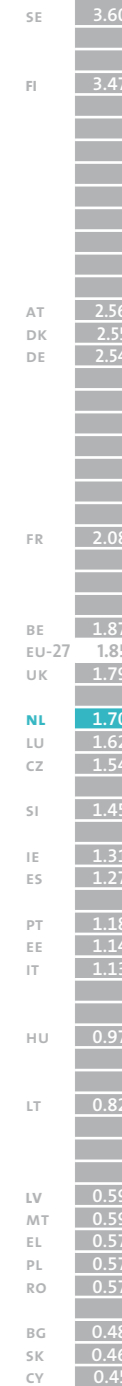
Knowledge economy

To maintain the competitiveness of the European economy, government leaders in the European Union (EU) agreed that by 2010 at least 3 percent of gross domestic product should be spent on research and development (R&D).

In 2007, Dutch R&D spending was still well below this level, at 1.7 percent. And the Netherlands is not the only EU country that is still below target. Only Finland and Sweden spent more than 3 percent of GDP on R&D. On average, the EU countries spent nearly 1.9 percent of GDP on R&D. Application of new technologies

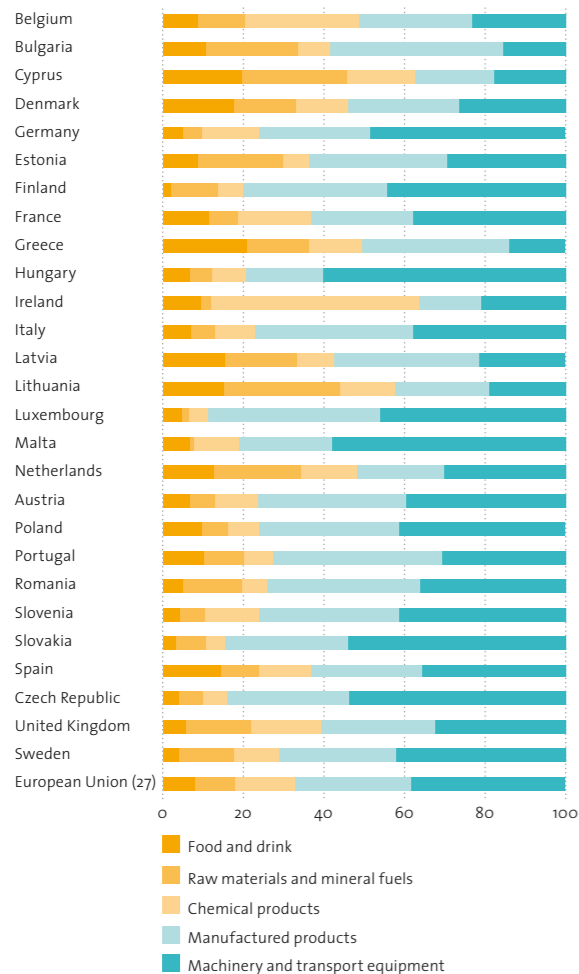
such as information and communication technology (ICT) is one of the Netherlands' strong points, however. ICT has become an important tool for Dutch companies to carry out business processes online. The Netherlands is one of the leading EU countries in terms of use of the internet to buy and sell goods and services. In terms of online purchases, only four countries outperformed the Dutch; and only the United Kingdom sold more products via the internet. In nearly all EU countries companies use the internet more to buy goods and services than to sell their products.

low R&D spending, but very ICT-minded



R&D spending, 2007 (% of GDP)

Composition of exports, 2008 (%)



Source: Eurostat.

Exports by destination, 2008 (bln euro)

	European Union (27)	Rest of the world	Total
Austria	89	34	123
Belgium	247	74	321
Bulgaria	9	6	15
Cyprus	1	0	1
Czech Republic	85	15	100
Denmark	55	24	79
Estonia	6	3	8
Finland	37	29	66
France	260	149	409
Germany	623	361	983
Greece	11	6	17
Hungary	58	16	74
Ireland	54	32	85
Italy	214	152	366
Latvia	5	2	7
Lithuania	10	6	16
Luxembourg	15	2	17
Malta	1	1	2
Netherlands	342	91	434
Poland	90	26	116
Portugal	28	10	38
Romania	24	10	34
Slovakia	41	7	48
Slovenia	16	7	23
Spain	133	58	191
Sweden	75	50	125
United Kingdom	178	134	313
European Union (27)	2,704	1,307	4,011

Source: Eurostat

International trade

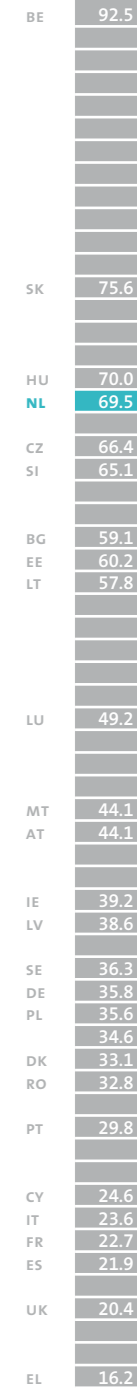
The Netherlands has always been an open economy. One of the indicators used to measure the openness of an economy is trade integration, the average of imports and exports as a percentage of the gross domestic product. In terms of this measure, the Netherlands has the fourth most open economy in the European Union (EU-27). Dutch exports were even the second largest in 2008, after Germany.

In 2008, the Netherlands exported about the same amount as the twelve new member states together. A large part of Dutch imports come from China and the United States. The Netherlands plays an important role in the

distribution of goods. Nearly half of its exports are re-exports: goods that have been imported and are immediately exported again. This distribution role is one of the reasons that the Netherlands exported 152 billion euro worth of goods more to other EU countries than it imported from these countries in 2008, while it had a trade deficit of 114 billion euro with the rest of the world.

Dutch exports comprise more food and drink, raw materials and mineral fuels and less machinery, transport equipment and manufactured products than the average export package of the EU-27.

highest exports after Germany



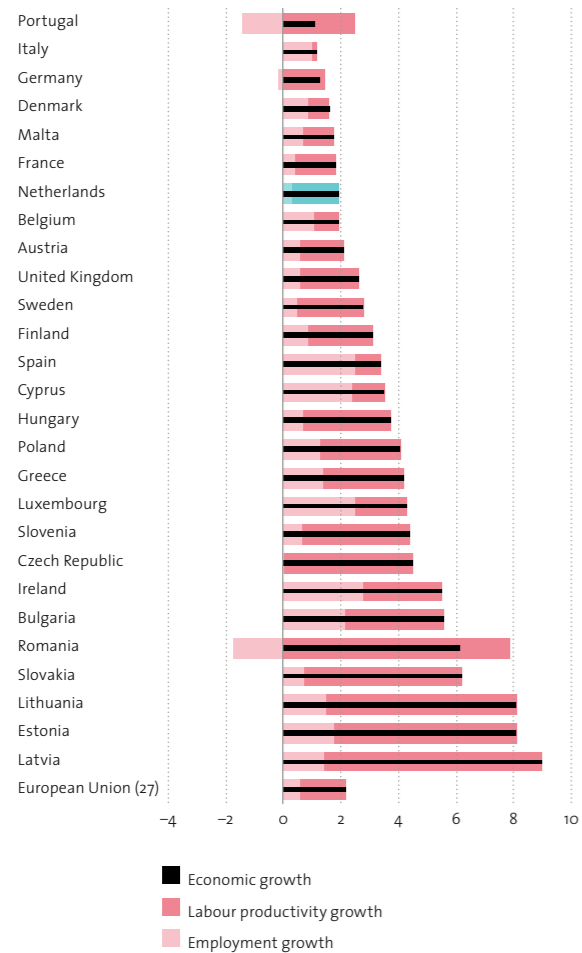
Trade integration, 2008 (% of GDP)

Labour



3

Average economic growth 2001–2007: sum of employment growth and labour productivity growth (%)



Source: Eurostat.

Labour productivity, GDP per hour worked (EU-27=100)

	2001	2007
Austria	115	115
Belgium	145	140
Bulgaria	33	35
Cyprus	76	75
Czech Republic	55	62
Denmark	118	109
Estonia	42	55
Finland	111	109
France	135	132
Germany	125	126
Greece	78	80
Hungary	58	57
Ireland	114	125
Italy	116	100
Latvia	34	47
Lithuania	44	53
Luxembourg	-	192
Malta	93	80
Netherlands	136	136
Poland	48	49
Portugal	60	-
Romania	24	39
Slovakia	58	71
Slovenia	66	73
Spain	102	106
Sweden	114	116
United Kingdom	111	112

Source: Eurostat.

Labour productivity

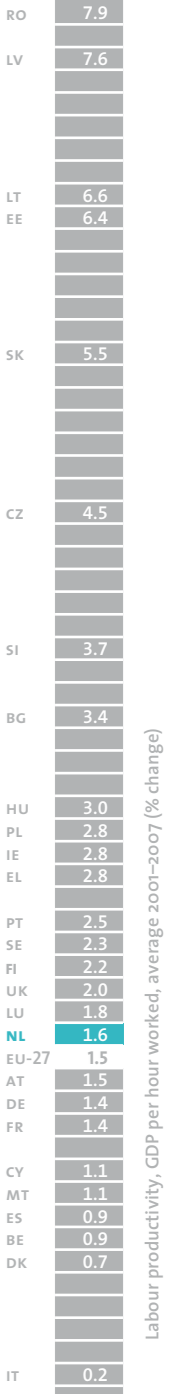
Labour productivity, i.e. gross domestic product per hour worked, is relatively high in the Netherlands. Within the European Union, only the economies of Belgium and Luxembourg are more productive.

The increase in Dutch labour productivity is around the European average, however. It rose by 1.6 percent per year between 2001 and 2007, slightly more than the 1.5 percent average for Europe as a whole in this period. The Netherlands performed better than Belgium in this respect, where labour productivity rose by only 0.9 percent per year. As employment rose by more in Belgium, economic growth - the sum of increases in labour productivity and employment - was about the same for the two

countries: around 2 percent. In Luxembourg high productivity growth went hand in hand with a strong increase in employment. Economic growth in Luxembourg was indeed much higher than in the Netherlands and Belgium, at 4.3 percent. Employment growth was much slower in the Netherlands. As a result of this relatively small increase, Dutch economic growth was lower than the EU average.

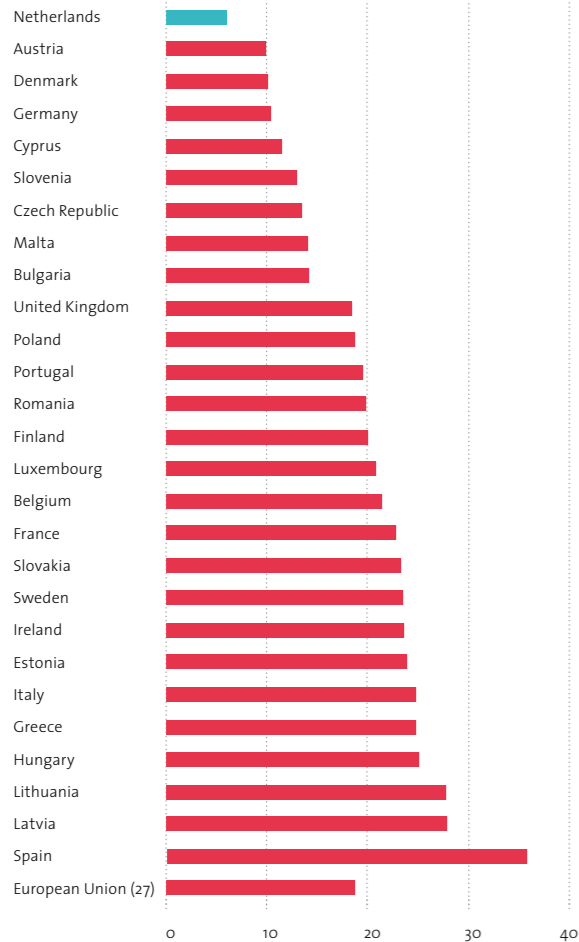
The highest rates of productivity growth were reported in the new member countries in eastern Europe. In Romania, Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia labour productivity grew by more than 6 percent per year.

high productivity



Youth unemployment, 1st half of 2009

(% of labour force younger than 25 years, adjusted for seasonal effects)



Source: Eurostat.

Unemployment, first half of 2009,

(% of labour force, adjusted for seasonal effects)

	Men	Women	Total
Austria	4.8	4.5	4.6
Belgium	7.4	8.1	7.7
Bulgaria	6.2	6.1	6.2
Cyprus	4.5	5.2	4.8
Czech Republic	5.1	7.1	5.9
Denmark	5.8	4.9	5.3
Estonia	14.8	9.5	12.2
Finland	8.3	7.3	7.8
France	8.7	9.6	9.2
Germany	7.9	7.0	7.5
Greece	6.4	12.6	9.0
Hungary	9.7	9.2	9.5
Ireland	14.0	7.6	11.2
Italy	6.3	8.9	7.4
Latvia	17.8	11.8	14.8
Lithuania	15.0	9.8	12.4
Luxembourg	5.7	6.6	6.1
Malta	6.5	7.8	6.9
Netherlands	3.0	3.2	3.1
Poland	7.3	8.6	7.9
Portugal	8.5	9.6	9.0
Romania	7.2	5.2	6.3
Slovakia	9.7	11.6	10.5
Slovenia	5.4	5.4	5.4
Spain	16.8	17.8	17.2
Sweden	8.0	7.6	7.8
United Kingdom	8.3	6.3	7.4
European Union (27)	8.5	8.5	8.5

Source: Eurostat.

Unemployment

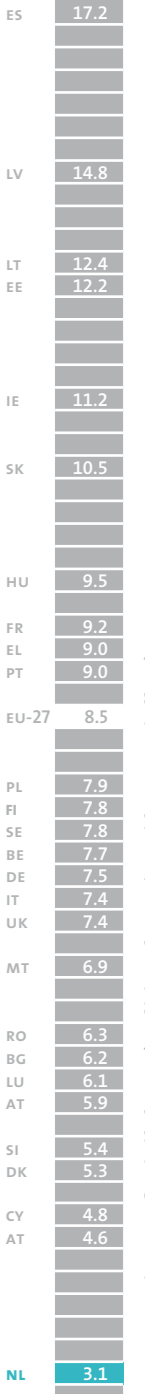
After adjustment for seasonal effects, unemployment in the 27 countries of the European Union was 8.5 percent in the first half of 2009. In the first quarter of 2008 it was still only 6.7 percent. The Netherlands had the lowest unemployment rate of all the member countries, 3.1 percent, followed by Austria with 4.6 percent. Unemployment was higher than 10 percent in six countries. Spain had the highest rate, at 17.2 percent.

Youth unemployment in the EU was 18.8 percent in the first half of 2009. It was higher than this in sixteen countries. Here, too,

the Netherlands has the lowest rate, and Spain the highest; just over one third of young Spaniards were out of work.

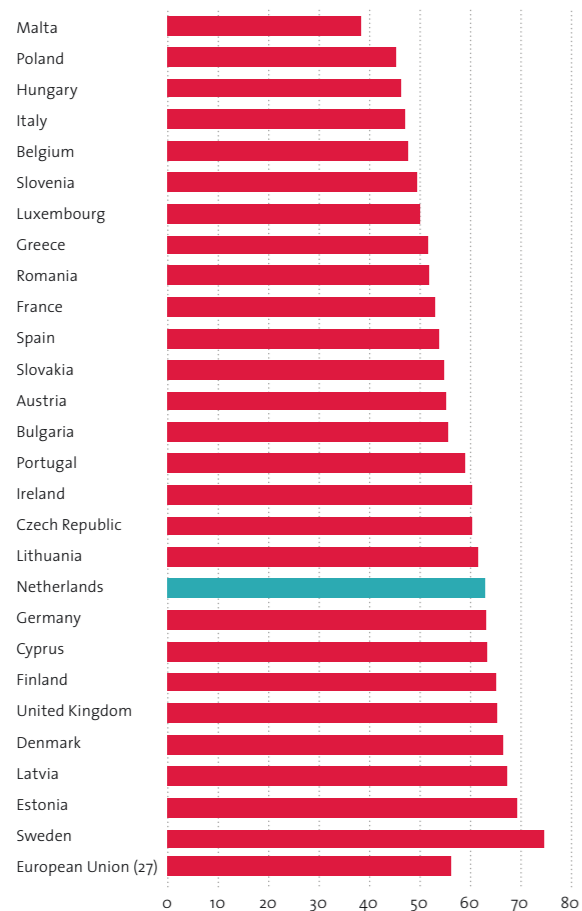
In relative terms, just as many men as women were unemployed in the EU-27. In thirteen member states unemployment was lower among women than among men. The gender gap was largest in Ireland, where 7.6 percent of women were unemployed compared with 14 percent of men. In the Netherlands relatively more women were unemployed, but the difference was only small.

lowest unemployment rate



Unemployment, first half of 2009, (% of labour force, adjusted for seasonal effects)

Labour participation of 50-64 year-olds, 2008 (%)



Source: Eurostat.

Labour participation (% of population aged 15-64 years)

	2002	2008
Austria	68.1	72.1
Belgium	59.7	62.4
Bulgaria	51.1	64.0
Cyprus	68.5	70.9
Czech Republic	65.5	66.6
Denmark	76.4	78.1
Estonia	61.7	69.8
Finland	69.1	71.1
France	62.9	65.2
Germany	65.4	70.7
Greece	57.7	61.9
Hungary	56.2	56.7
Ireland	65.1	67.6
Italy	55.4	58.7
Latvia	60.5	68.6
Lithuania	60.6	64.3
Luxembourg	63.6	63.4
Malta	55.0	55.2
Netherlands	74.5	77.2
Poland	51.7	59.2
Portugal	69.2	68.2
Romania	58.6	59.0
Slovakia	56.5	62.3
Slovenia	64.3	68.6
Spain	58.6	64.3
Sweden	74.0	74.3
United Kingdom	71.2	71.5
European Union (27)	62.4	65.9

Source: Eurostat.

Labour participation

More than three-quarters of the Dutch population aged between 15 and 65 years had a job in 2008. Labour participation in the Netherlands is high compared with the average in the 27 countries of the European Union. Only in Denmark was it higher.

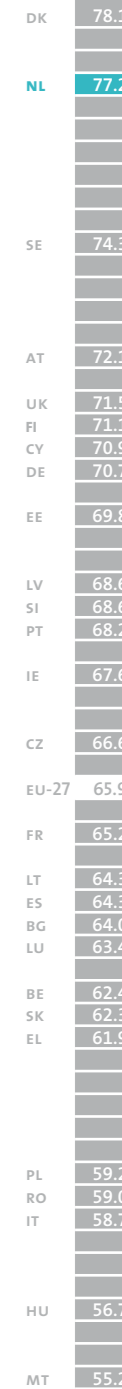
The proportion of people with a job was nearly 66 percent on average in the EU-27. Malta had the lowest rate, at 55 percent. In Hungary, Italy, Romania and Poland, too, the percentage of 15-65 year-olds with a job was below 60.

In the Netherlands, 83 percent of men had a paid job. This is the highest percentage of the EU-27 and well above the EU average of

73 percent. Relatively many Dutch women were also active on the labour market: 71 percent of them had a job. Denmark and Sweden are the only countries with more working women. Across the European Union as a whole, 59 percent of women had a paid job.

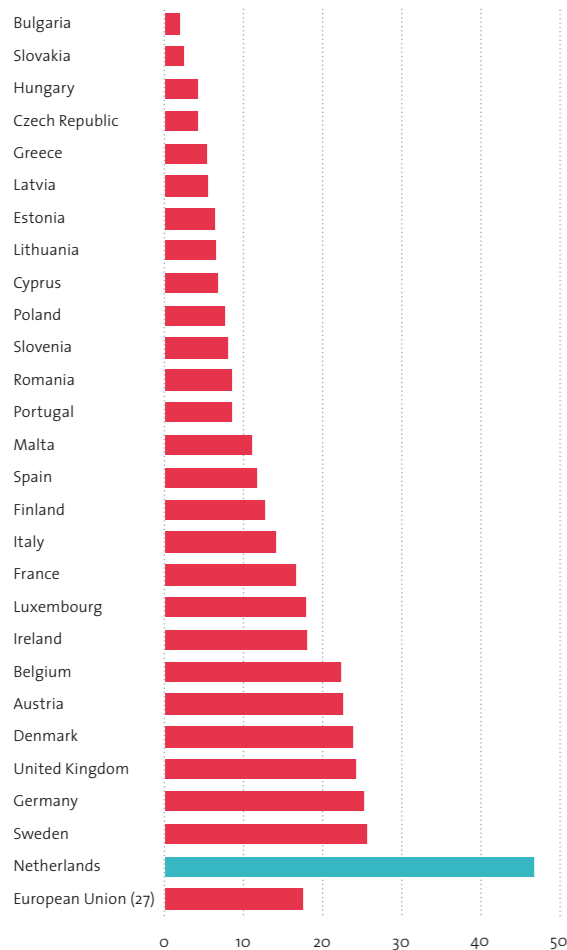
Labour participation in older age groups is relatively high in the Netherlands. Just over 63 percent of Dutch people aged between 50 and 65 years had a paid job in 2008. This is higher than the EU average of 57 percent, but not top of the European class. In Sweden 75 percent of 50-65 year-olds had paid work.

most working men



Labour participation, 2008 (% of population aged 15-64 years)

Part-time workers, 2008 (% of employees)



Source: Eurostat.

Part-time workers, 2008 (% of employees)

	Women	Men
Austria	41.1	6.9
Belgium	40.8	7.5
Bulgaria	2.4	1.6
Cyprus	10.8	3.4
Czech Republic	7.8	1.6
Denmark	36.0	13.1
Estonia	9.3	3.5
Finland	17.8	7.9
France	29.3	5.6
Germany	44.9	8.4
Greece	9.8	2.5
Hungary	5.8	3.0
Ireland	31.9	7.1
Italy	27.8	4.8
Latvia	7.1	3.9
Lithuania	8.3	4.7
Luxembourg	38.2	2.7
Malta	25.3	4.0
Netherlands	75.2	22.8
Poland	10.9	5.1
Portugal	13.9	4.1
Romania	9.3	8.1
Slovakia	4.1	1.3
Slovenia	10.4	6.2
Spain	22.6	4.0
Sweden	40.9	11.9
United Kingdom	41.0	9.8
European Union (27)	30.6	7.0

Source: Eurostat.

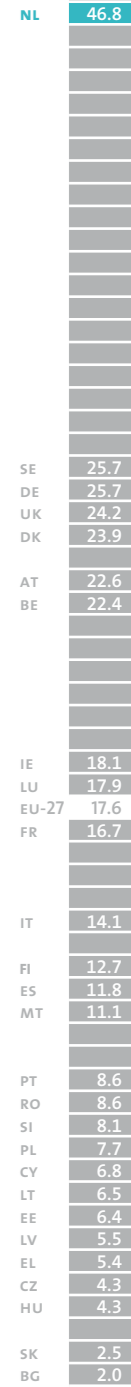
Part-time work

Nowhere in the European Union (EU-27) is part-time work as popular as in the Netherlands. Nearly half of people aged between 15 and 65 years in the Netherlands had a part-time job in 2008. In the rest of the EU part-time work is much less common. Sweden and Germany follow the Netherlands in second and third place: around a quarter of workers in these countries had a part-time job in 2008. On average in the EU, nearly 20 percent of the labour force worked part-time. It is mainly working women who put the Netherlands in the unrivalled top position with respect to part-time employment. In 2008 three-quarters of Dutch working women had a part-time job, compared with just under one in

three in the EU. Male part-timers contribute less to the Netherlands' top ranking. In 2008 one in four Dutch men worked part-time. Although this is considerably less than Dutch women, it is the highest rate in the EU.

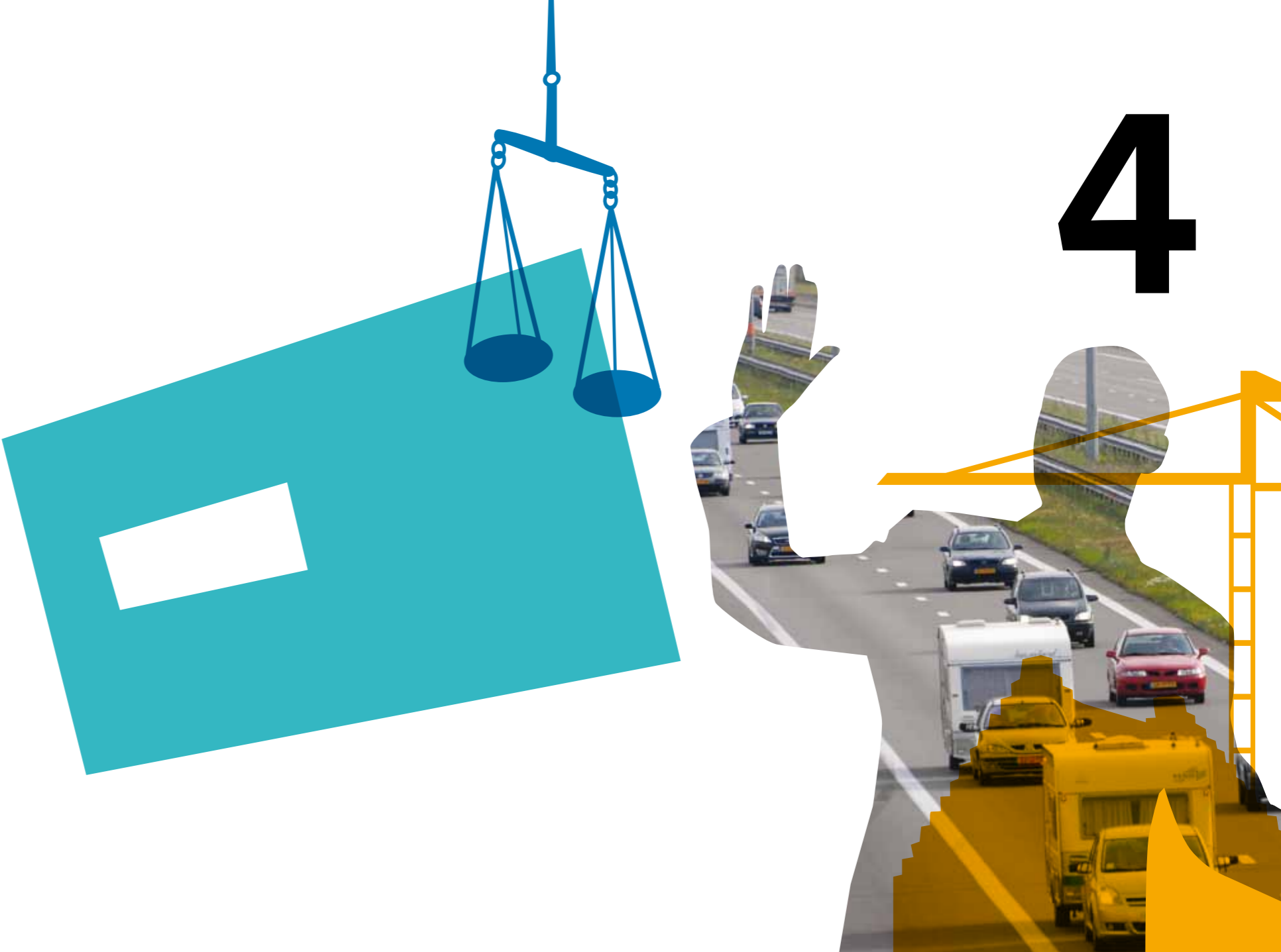
The relatively large number of male part-timers in the Netherlands are mainly young men and, to a lesser extent, men aged over 50. Sixty-two percent of young people who work have a part-time job. They are often still at school, college or university and work alongside their studies. From the age of 25, most men work full-time, but once they turn 50, more of them start to work part-time again as a result of partial retirement schemes.

nearly half of Dutch workers work part-time



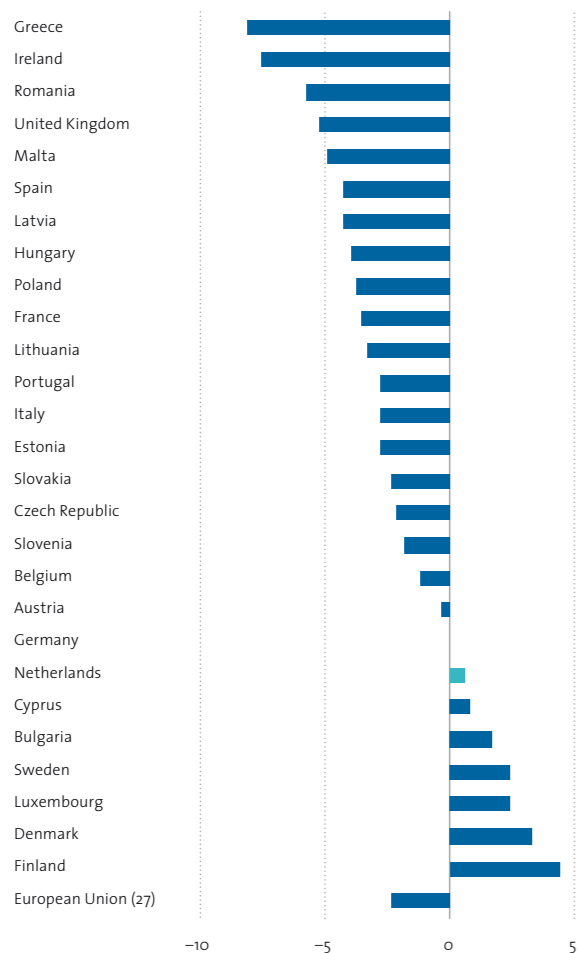
Part-time workers, 2008 (% of employees)

Government finance



4

Government surplus/deficit, 2008 (% of GDP)



Source: Eurostat.

Government surplus/deficit and government debt (% of GDP)

	Surplus/deficit		Debt	
	2003	2008	2003	2008
Austria	-1.4	-0.4	65.5	62.6
Belgium	-0.1	-1.2	98.7	89.8
Bulgaria	-0.3	1.8	45.9	14.1
Cyprus	-6.5	0.9	68.9	48.4
Czech Republic	-6.6	-2.1	30.1	30.0
Denmark	0.1	3.4	45.8	33.5
Estonia	1.7	-2.7	5.6	4.6
Finland	2.6	4.5	44.4	34.1
France	-4.1	-3.4	62.9	67.4
Germany	-4.0	0.0	63.8	65.9
Greece	-5.7	-7.7	98.0	99.2
Hungary	-7.2	-3.8	58.1	72.9
Ireland	0.4	-7.2	31.1	44.1
Italy	-3.5	-2.7	104.4	105.8
Latvia	-1.6	-4.1	14.6	19.5
Lithuania	-1.3	-3.2	21.1	15.6
Luxembourg	0.5	2.5	6.1	13.5
Malta	-9.9	-4.7	69.3	63.8
Netherlands	-3.1	0.7	52.0	58.2
Poland	-6.3	-3.6	47.1	47.2
Portugal	-2.9	-2.7	56.9	66.3
Romania	-1.5	-5.5	21.5	13.6
Slovakia	-2.8	-2.3	42.4	27.7
Slovenia	-2.7	-1.8	27.5	22.5
Spain	-0.2	-4.1	48.7	39.7
Sweden	-0.9	2.5	52.3	38.0
United Kingdom	-3.3	-5.0	38.7	52.0
European Union (27)	-3.1	-2.3	61.8	61.5

Source: Eurostat.

Government deficit and government debt

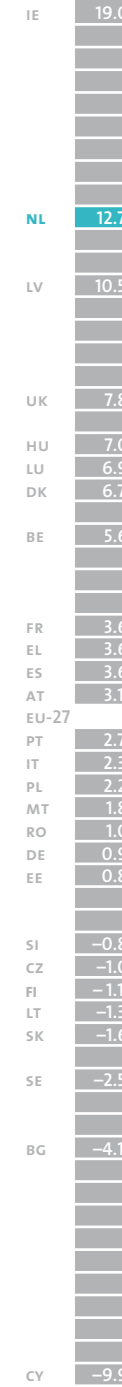
As a result of the global credit crisis in 2008, many European governments have had to support the financial markets. This was one of the reasons that government deficits of the member states of the European Union rose to an average -2.3 percent of the gross domestic product (GDP). Eleven of the countries in the European Union exceeded the EMU norm of 3 percent of GDP.

The Netherlands still had a government surplus of 0.7 percent of GDP in 2008. This is because interventions by the Dutch government were limited to capital injections in financial

institutions at prevailing commercial rates. The higher government debt was offset by an equally large increase in the value of government assets.

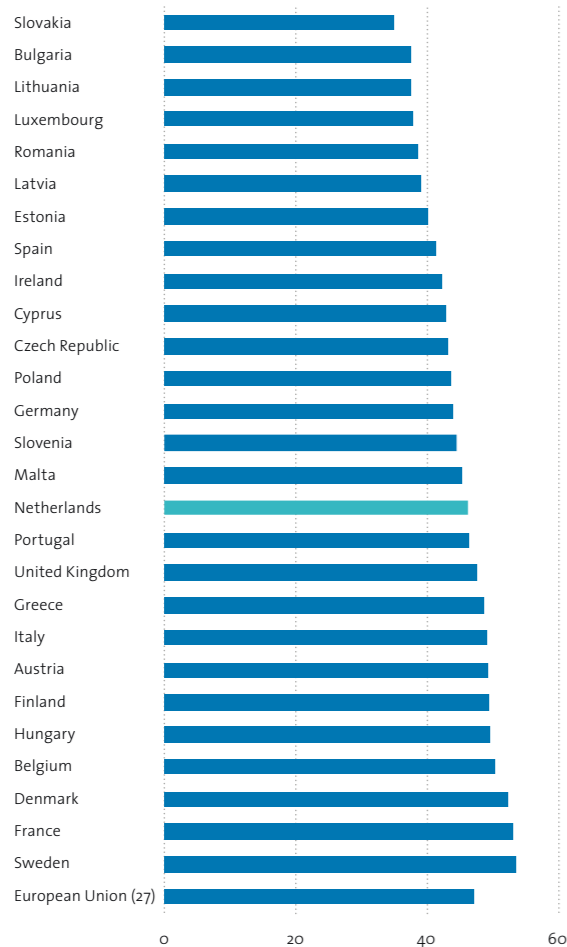
The interventions did push up Dutch government debt in terms of GDP substantially in 2008. Nine of the EU-27 governments exceeded the norm of 60 percent of GDP. In Italy government debt is even larger than GDP. At 58.2 percent of GDP the Dutch debt is still below the average of the EU-27 (61.5 percent), but the relative increase was the largest within the EU after Ireland.

relative government debt larger, but within EMU norm



Increase in debt as a % of GDP, 2008 (% points change on 2007)

Government spending, 2008 (% of GDP)



Source: Eurostat.

Government spending and revenues (% of GDP)

	Spending		Revenues	
	2007	2008	2007	2008
Austria	48.8	48.9	48.1	48.4
Belgium	48.4	50.0	48.2	48.8
Bulgaria	41.5	37.3	41.5	39.1
Cyprus	42.2	42.6	45.5	43.5
Czech Republic	42.5	42.9	41.9	40.9
Denmark	51.0	51.9	55.4	55.3
Estonia	34.8	39.9	37.4	37.1
Finland	47.3	49.0	52.5	53.4
France	52.3	52.7	49.6	49.3
Germany	43.7	43.7	43.9	43.7
Greece	44.4	48.3	40.4	40.6
Hungary	49.8	49.2	44.8	45.5
Ireland	36.2	42.0	36.5	34.9
Italy	47.9	48.7	46.4	46.0
Latvia	35.9	38.8	35.5	34.6
Lithuania	34.8	37.4	33.8	34.2
Luxembourg	36.2	37.7	39.9	40.2
Malta	42.5	45.0	40.4	40.3
Netherlands	45.5	45.9	45.7	46.6
Poland	42.2	43.3	40.3	39.6
Portugal	45.8	46.0	43.2	43.2
Romania	36.0	38.4	33.5	32.8
Slovakia	34.4	34.8	32.5	32.5
Slovenia	42.4	44.2	42.4	42.4
Spain	39.2	41.1	41.1	37.0
Sweden	52.5	53.1	56.3	55.6
United Kingdom	44.1	47.3	41.4	42.4
European Union (27)	45.7	46.8	44.9	44.6

Source: Eurostat.

Government spending and government revenues

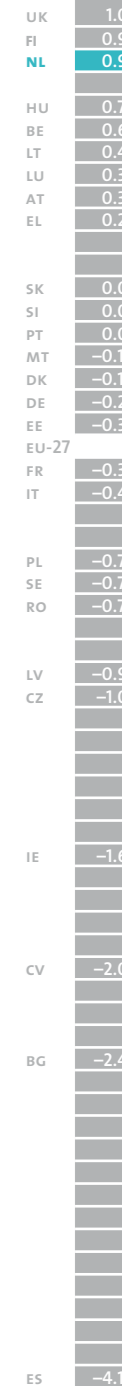
The Dutch government spent 274 billion euro in 2008. With a share of 45.9 percent of gross domestic product (GDP), the Netherlands is just below the average for 27 countries of the European Union, which was 46.8 percent. As a result of the financial crisis government spending rose in nearly all the countries of the EU-27 in 2008. The increasing relative expenditure meant an abrupt end to the downward trend which had characterised the years of economic prosperity. Relative spending rose by most in Ireland as a result of a lower GDP and higher spending caused by interventions in the financial sector. Bulgaria and Hungary were the only countries

where relative expenditure fell. In Bulgaria this decrease was caused by a surge in economic (GDP growth of 6 percent) in 2008.

Revenues of the Dutch government amounted to 278 billion euro in 2008, an increase of 0.9 of a percent point. This rise in government income was the third largest in the EU-27, after the United Kingdom and France.

On average in 2008, government revenues in the EU-27 fell by 0.3 of a percent point from 2007, to 44.6 percent of GDP. The decrease was caused by lower tax revenues and social premiums as a result of the economic recession.

government spending up again

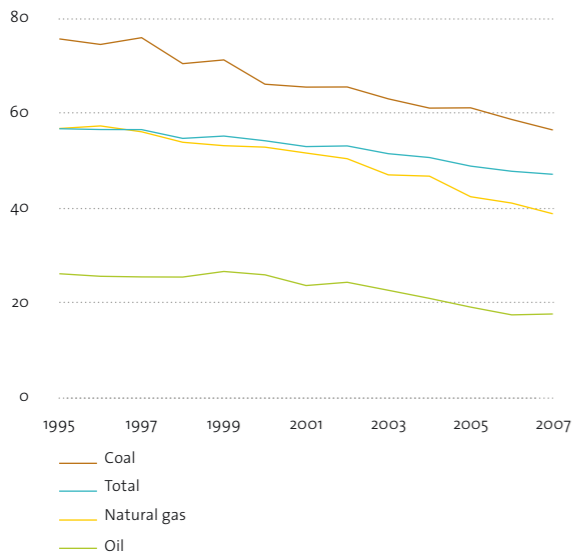


Government revenues as a % of GDP, 2008 (% points change on 2007)

Energy, environment and nature



Self-produced energy in the European Union (% of energy used)



Source: Eurostat.

Proportion of self-produced energy (EU-27), 2007 (%)

	Total	Coal	Oil	Natural gas
Austria	31	0	7	23
Belgium	24	0	0	0
Bulgaria	48	61	1	8
Cyprus	2			
Czech Republic	72	111	2	2
Denmark	132		187	204
Estonia	73	98	6	
Finland	42	15	0	
France	50	0	1	2
Germany	40	63	3	17
Greece	36	96	0	1
Hungary	38	57	16	19
Ireland	9	26		9
Italy	14	1	7	11
Latvia	38	3		
Lithuania	38	6	6	
Luxembourg	2			
Malta	0			
Netherlands	72		7	164
Poland	73	112	3	31
Portugal	18	0		
Romania	69	67	47	71
Slovakia	31	14	1	2
Slovenia	47	77	0	0
Spain	21	27	0	0
Sweden	65	6	0	
United Kingdom	79	25	99	79
European Union (27)	47	56	18	39
Norway	780	356	1,221	1,621

Source: Eurostat.

Energy

Together, the 27 countries of the European Union produce less than 50 percent of the energy they consume. To an important extent, therefore, they depend on trade with countries outside Europe for their energy needs. This dependence has increased in recent years. While the EU-27 produced 60 percent of the energy it used in 1995, this had dropped to less than half in 2007.

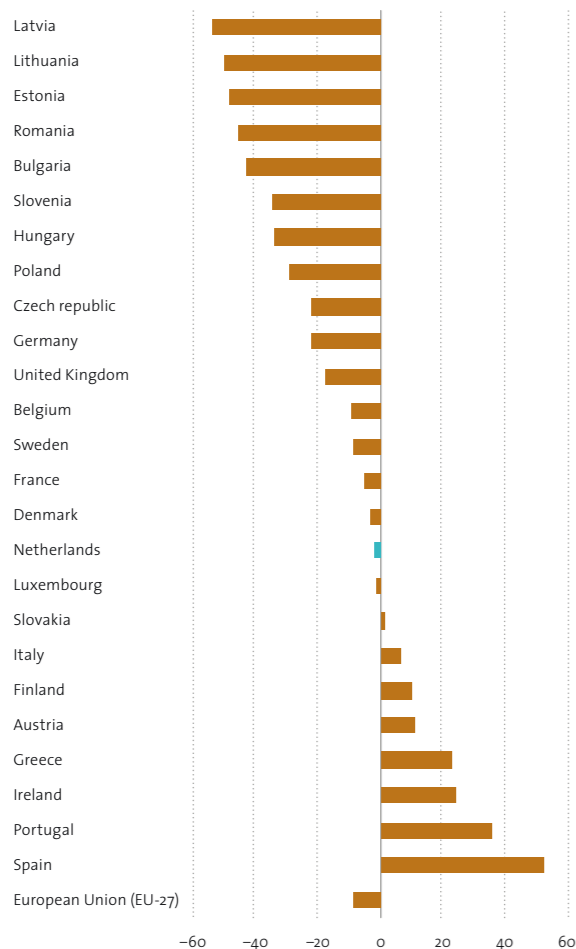
The energy dependence of a country can be expressed as the amount of energy it produces as a proportion of the amount it consumes. If a country produces less of a type of energy than it uses, it is not self-sufficient for this type of energy. For the 27 countries of the European Union, the ratio of production to use for coal is

56 percent, for natural gas it is 39 percent (but 164 percent in the Netherlands), and for oil 18 percent (7 percent in the Netherlands). So Europe has to import substantial amounts of oil, natural gas and coal. The Netherlands can provide in more than 70 percent of its own energy needs, mainly because of its natural gas reserves.

If non-EU member Norway is included in the equation, the ratios become a lot more favourable. Norway produces a lot more energy than it uses. It is an important energy exporter, exporting mainly petroleum and natural gas. If Norway is included, Europe's proportion of self-produced energy rises from 47 to 56 percent.

more dependent on energy imports

Greenhouse gas emissions (% change on 1990)



Source: Eurostat.

Greenhouse gas emissions (% change on 1990)

	Kyoto-target 2008-2012	Realisation 2007 ¹⁾
Austria	-13	11
Belgium	-7,5	-10
Bulgaria	-8	-43
Cyprus		85
Czech Republic	-8	-22
Denmark	-21	-4
Estonia	-8	-48
Finland	0	10
France	0	-6
Germany	-21	-22
Greece	25	23
Hungary	-6	-34
Ireland	13	25
Italy	-7	7
Latvia	-8	-53
Lithuania	-8	-50
Luxembourg	-28	-2
Malta		49
Netherlands	-6	-3
Poland	-6	-29
Portugal	27	36
Romania	-8	-45
Slovakia	-8	2
Slovenia	-8	-35
Spain	15	53
Sweden	4	-9
United Kingdom	-13	-18
European Union (27)		-9

¹⁾ Excluding acquisition of foreign emission rights.

Source: Eurostat.

Environment

The emission of greenhouse gases continued to decrease in the Netherlands in 2007, to nearly 3 percent below the level in 1990.

Under the Kyoto agreement, the European Union has committed to reducing its emission of greenhouse gases between 2008 and 2012 to 8 percent less than in 1990. In 2001 emissions in the fifteen countries of the European Union were 2 percent below the 1990 level; by 2007 this had risen to 5 percent. For the Netherlands the target is 6 percent lower emissions than in 1990. The 3 percent reduction in 2007 therefore means there is still some way to go.

The Dutch economy is relatively energy intensive, among other things because of the

relatively large size of the petrochemical and horticulture sectors. The relatively cold climate also means that households have to heat their homes for a large part of the year. In spite of this, for years now energy use has been increasing more slowly than the gross domestic product. The energy intensity of production is also decreasing, by as much as 21 percent since 1990, with the largest falls in oil refinery and the basic chemicals industry.

Belgium and Germany have realised the largest reductions since 2001. Greenhouse gas emissions in most east European countries increased in this period, although they are still well within the limits of the Kyoto target.

greenhouse gas emissions fall further



Greenhouse gas emissions; reduction still to be realised to comply with Kyoto target 2008-2012 (%)

Development of breeding bird populations, 1990-2007 (% change per year)



Source: SOVON, CBS.

Population changes of some characteristic bird species, 1990-2007 (% change per year)

Species	Trend in the Netherlands	Netherlands	17 European countries
Goldfinch	Strong increase	6	2
House martin	Moderate increase	2	-2
Yellowhammer	Moderate increase	1	-2
Whitethroat	Stable	0	1
Tree sparrow	Stable	0	-2
Wood pigeon	Moderate decrease	-1	2
Kestrel	Moderate decrease	-2	-1
Starling	Moderate decrease	-3	-2
Lapwing	Moderate decrease	-3	-3
Black-tailed godwit	Moderate decrease	-4	-3
Blue-headed wagtail	Moderate decrease	-5	-3
Skylark	Strong decrease	-7	-2
Turtle dove	Strong decrease	-8	-4

Source: EBCC, SOVON, CBS.

Nature

Changing farming methods in the Netherlands have resulted in declining populations of breeding birds on Dutch farmland. Data from the Farmland Bird Index show that these decreases are taking place across Europe. Populations have declined by most in Italy. In Hungary, Switzerland and Estonia breeding bird numbers are still growing.

In the Netherlands the number of birds per species has fallen by 1 percent per year (1990-2007). This puts the country about halfway down the Index of nineteen European countries. Goldfinch, house martin and yellowhammer are all thriving in the Netherlands, while populations of skylarks and turtle doves are deteriorating.



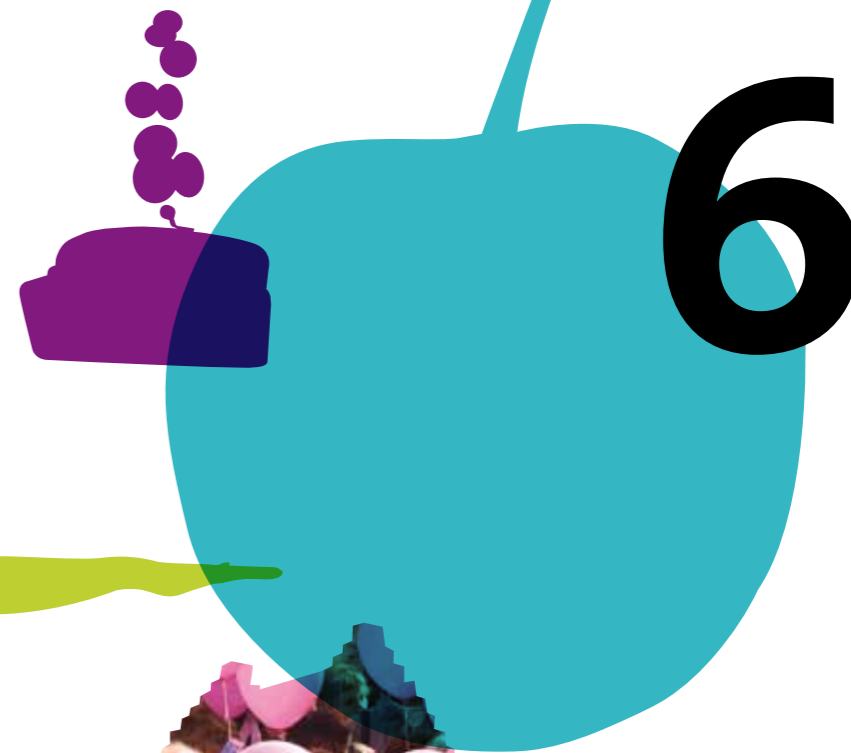
The main reasons for the decline in numbers of farmland birds are the intensive use of arable and grass land (less fallow land, more intensive livestock farming), changes in crop types (more maize, fewer cereals) and the increase in the scale of farming, which has led to the disappearance of landscape elements such as wooded banks and copses. Added to this, urban expansion and road construction have also resulted in the loss of breeding habitats.

In eastern and southern Europe there is an additional factor: unprofitable land is no longer used for agriculture, and as this land runs wild it eventually turns into scrub and woodland.

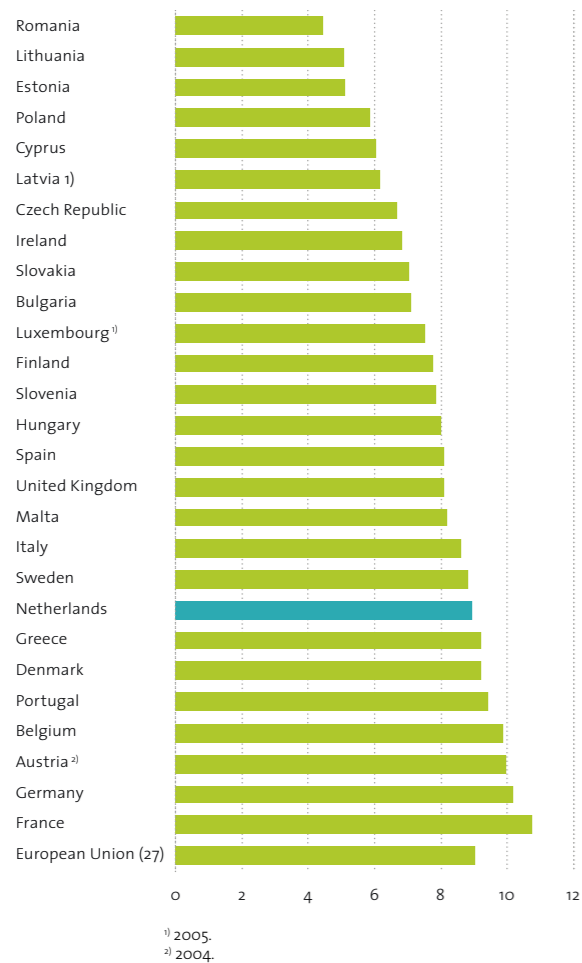


Development of breeding bird populations, 1990-2007 (% change per year)

Welfare



Health care spending, 2006 (% of GDP)



Source: Eurostat, Malta: WHO, Greece, Ireland, Italy, UK: OECD.

Health care spending adjusted for differences in purchasing power, 2006 (euro per capita)

Austria	2,733
Belgium	2,797
Bulgaria	613
Cyprus	766
Czech Republic	1,227
Denmark	2,709
Estonia	815
Finland	2,141
France	2,819
Germany	2,750
Greece	2,038
Hungary	1,225
Ireland	2,368
Italy	2,113
Latvia	691
Lithuania	775
Luxembourg	3,563
Malta	1,492
Netherlands	2,766
Poland	722
Portugal	1,656
Romania	407
Slovakia	1,051
Slovenia	1,652
Spain	1,994
Sweden	2,586
United Kingdom	2,295
European Union (27)	2,092

1) 2005.
2) 2004.

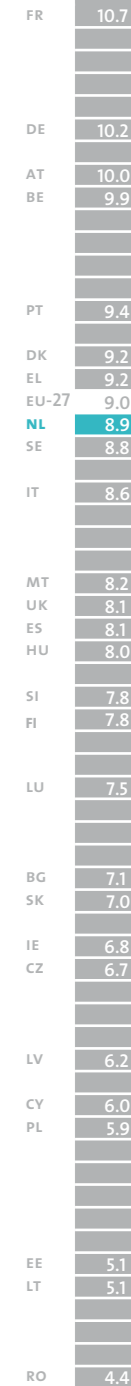
Source: Eurostat, Malta: WHO, Greece, Ireland, Italy, UK: OECD.

Health care

Dutch spending on health care amounted to 8.9 percent of the gross domestic product (GDP) in 2006. This is slightly lower than the average in the European Union (EU-27), which is 9.0 percent. France, Germany and Austria spent most on health care, more than 10 percent of GDP. In Romania, Lithuania, Estonia and Poland, health care spending was below 6 percent of GDP. The average Dutchman spent around 2,800

more than the average 2,100 euro per European Union inhabitant. In France, Belgium, Austria, Germany and Denmark health care spending was around the same level as in the Netherlands. Health care costs were highest in Luxembourg: 3,600 euro per inhabitant.

People living in the new member countries of the EU paid least for health care. An average Romanian paid only 400 euro, the lowest amount, a Bulgarian 600 euro.



Health care spending, 2006 (% of GDP)

Education level of the population aged 25-64 years, 2007 (%)



Source: Eurostat.

Government spending on education (% of GDP)

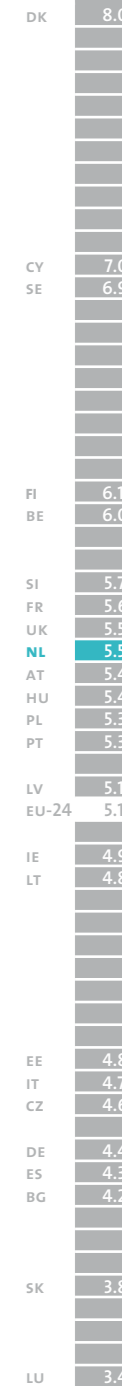
	2000	2006
Austria	5.7	5.4
Belgium	-	6.0
Bulgaria	4.0	4.2
Cyprus	5.4	7.0
Czech Republic	4.0	4.6
Denmark	8.3	8.0
Estonia	6.1	4.8
Finland	5.9	6.1
France	6.0	5.6
Germany	4.5	4.4
Greece	3.4	-
Hungary	4.4	5.4
Ireland	4.3	4.9
Italy	4.6	4.7
Latvia	5.6	5.1
Lithuania	5.9	4.8
Luxembourg	-	3.4
Malta	4.5	-
Netherlands	5.0	5.5
Poland	4.9	5.3
Portugal	5.4	5.3
Romania	2.9	-
Slovakia	3.9	3.8
Slovenia	-	5.7
Spain	4.3	4.3
Sweden	7.2	6.9
United Kingdom	4.5	5.5
European Union (24)	4.9	5.1

Source: Eurostat.

Education level

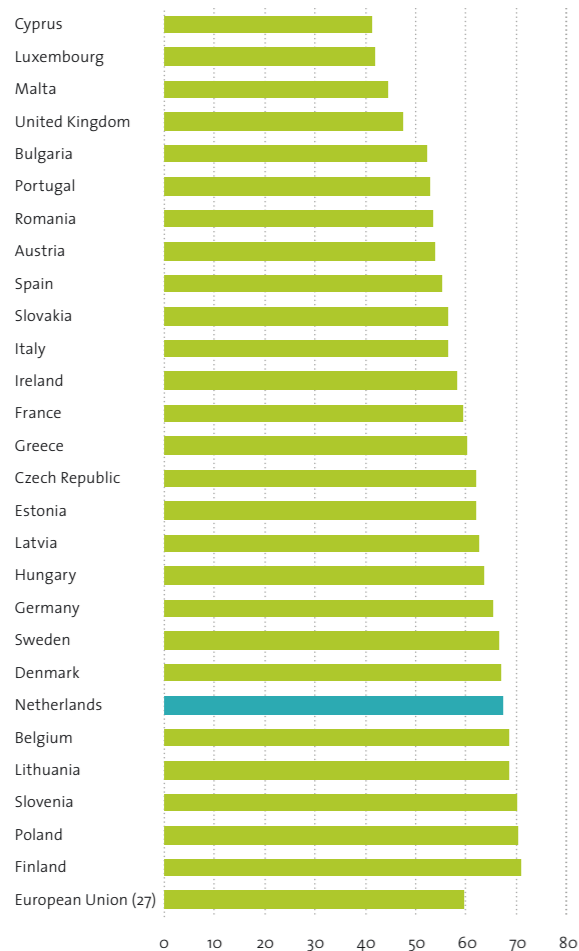
The Netherlands spent 5.5 percent of its gross domestic product (GDP) on education in 2006. This is about the same share of GDP as France and the United Kingdom, slightly higher than the average in the European Union (5.1 percent), and significantly more than Germany. The Danes spent most on education: 8.0 percent of GDP. All EU countries spent more on education in 2008 than in 2000. In ten countries, GDP grew by more than education spending, so that relative spending on education was lower. The education level of the Dutch population was higher than the average in the 25 EU

countries in 2007. Thirty-one percent of 25-64 year-olds in the Netherlands had a degree in higher education, compared with nearly 25 percent overall in the EU-25. The proportion of higher educated people in countries around the Netherlands ranged from 24 percent in Germany and 27 percent in France to 32 percent in the United Kingdom and Ireland. The Finnish population had the largest proportion of higher educated people: 36 percent. Education levels were also high in a number of new EU countries; in Estonia 33 percent had completed higher education, and in Lithuania 29 percent.



Government spending on education (% of GDP)

Education participation of 15–24 year-olds, 2006/07 (%)



Source: Eurostat.

School drop-outs, 18–24 year-olds (%)

	2000	2007
Austria	10.2	10.9
Belgium	12.5	12.3
Bulgaria	-	16.6
Cyprus	18.5	12.6
Denmark	11.6	12.4
Estonia	14.2	14.3
Finland	8.9	7.9
France	13.3	12.7
Germany	14.9	12.7
Greece	18.2	14.7
Hungary	13.8	10.9
Ireland	-	11.5
Italy	25.3	19.3
Latvia	-	16.0
Lithuania	16.7	8.7
Luxembourg	16.8	15.1
Malta	54.2	37.3
Netherlands	15.5	12.0
Poland	-	5.0
Portugal	42.6	36.3
Romania	22.3	19.2
Slovakia	-	7.2
Slovenia	-	4.3
Spain	29.1	31.0
Sweden	7.7	8.6
United Kingdom	-	17.0
European Union (27)	17.6	15.2

Source: Eurostat.

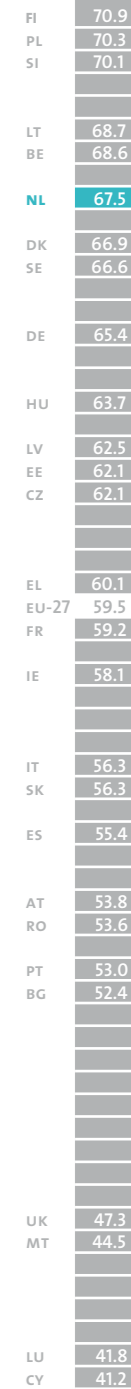
Education participation

A large proportion of young Europeans are still in education. In the Netherlands, 68 percent of 15–24 year-olds attended school, university or college in 2006/07. This is slightly higher than the average of the 27 European Union countries. In neighbouring countries Belgium and Germany, too, relatively many young people are still in education. Finland tops the list, however: 71 percent of Fins under the age of 25 are in education. In the Netherlands, just as in most other EU countries, the percentage of young people in education has increased in the last ten years.



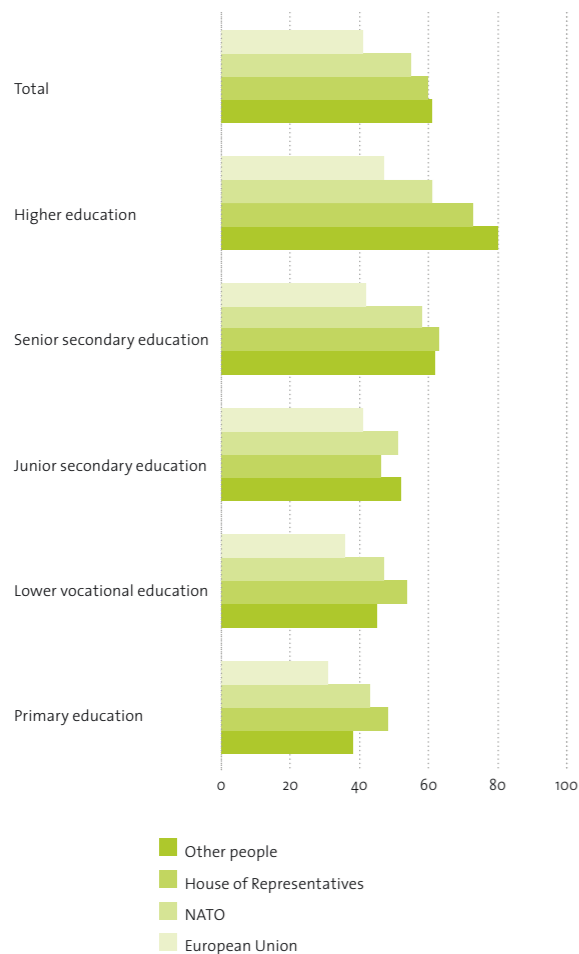
Not all youngsters are equally successful at school. Twelve percent of Dutch 18–24 year-olds did not have a basic qualification at senior secondary level in 2007. This figure was down from 16 percent in 2000. In the 27 countries of the European Union the average was 15 percent, down from 18 percent in 2000.

The governments of the EU countries have agreed to halve the percentage of pupils leaving school without a basic qualification by 2010 compared with 2000.



Education participation (15–24 year-olds), 2006/07 (%)

Dutch trust, by level of education (% of total)



Source: CBS, SKON.

European Parliament election turnout (%)

	2004	2009
Austria	42.4	46.0
Belgium ¹⁾	90.8	90.4
Bulgaria		39.0
Cyprus ¹⁾	72.5	59.4
Czech Republic	28.3	28.2
Denmark	47.9	59.5
Estonia	26.8	43.9
Finland	39.4	40.3
France	42.8	40.6
Germany	43.0	43.3
Greece ¹⁾	63.2	52.6
Hungary	38.5	36.3
Ireland	58.6	58.6
Italy	71.7	65.1
Latvia	41.3	53.7
Lithuania	48.4	21.0
Luxembourg ¹⁾	91.3	90.7
Malta	82.4	78.8
Netherlands	39.3	36.8
Poland	20.9	24.5
Portugal	38.7	36.8
Romania		27.7
Slovakia	17.0	19.6
Slovenia	28.4	28.3
Spain	45.1	44.9
Sweden	37.9	45.5
United Kingdom	38.5	34.7
European Union (27)	45.5	43.0

¹⁾ Voting is compulsory in Luxembourg, Belgium, Cyprus and Greece.

Source: TNS Opinion/EP.

Social cohesion

Political participation can be used as an indicator of the degree of cohesion in a society. In the Netherlands, political participation is increasing. Voter turnout rose to 80 percent for the general election in November 2006. In most other countries in Europe, fewer people turn up to vote.

Turnout rates for the elections for the European parliament are much lower. In 1979, 58 percent of those eligible to vote in the Netherlands did so, by 2004 this had dropped to 39 percent and in 2009 only 37 percent turned up at the polling stations. This is lower than the European average of 43 percent.

Dutch citizens are also quite negative about further European unification, with 55 percent of the population against, 26 percent in favour and 19 percent undecided.

When asked whether they trust other people, 61 percent of the Dutch say they do. The remainder think they can't be too careful in their contacts with others. This social trust has increased since 1998. The Netherlands scores quite high on this aspect compared with most other European countries. Only in Scandinavia do people trust each other more. On the other hand, at 41 percent, only a minority of Dutch people have faith in the European Union.

Dutch have faith in each other, but not in Europe



Relative poverty¹⁾ in the EU, 2007 (% of population)



Source: Eurostat

Income inequality¹⁾

	2001	2007
Austria	3.5	3.8
Belgium	4.0	3.9
Bulgaria	.	6.9
Cyprus	4.1 ²⁾	4.5
Czech Republic	3.4	3.5
Denmark	3.0	3.7
Estonia	6.1	5.5
Finland	3.7	3.7
France	3.9	3.8
Germany	3.6	5.0
Greece	5.7	6.0
Hungary	3.1	3.7
Ireland	4.5	4.8
Italy	4.8	5.5
Latvia	5.5 ³⁾	6.3
Lithuania	4.9	5.9
Luxembourg	3.8	4.0
Malta	4.6 ³⁾	3.8
Netherlands	4.0	4.0
Poland	4.7	5.3
Portugal	6.5	6.5
Romania	.	7.8
Slovakia	.	3.5
Slovenia	3.1	3.3
Spain	5.5	5.3
Sweden	3.4	3.4
United Kingdom	5.4	5.5
European Union (27)	.	5.0

¹⁾ Ratio richest 20% to poorest 20% of the population

²⁾ 2003.

³⁾ 2000.

Source: Eurostat

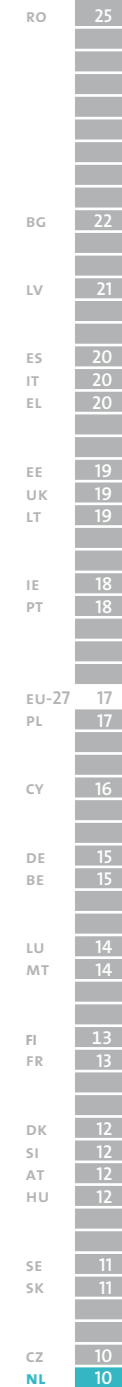
Income inequality

Some 79 million inhabitants (17 percent) of the European Union (EU-27) had an income below the poverty line in 2007. The poverty threshold differs between countries and depends strongly on the level of prosperity. The Netherlands and the Czech Republic had the smallest proportion of inhabitants with such a low income. In Latvia, Bulgaria and Romania, more than 20 percent of inhabitants had too little to get by on. On average the relative poverty level in the new members states was nearly the same as in the old countries. The fifteen old countries were substantially wealthier, however.

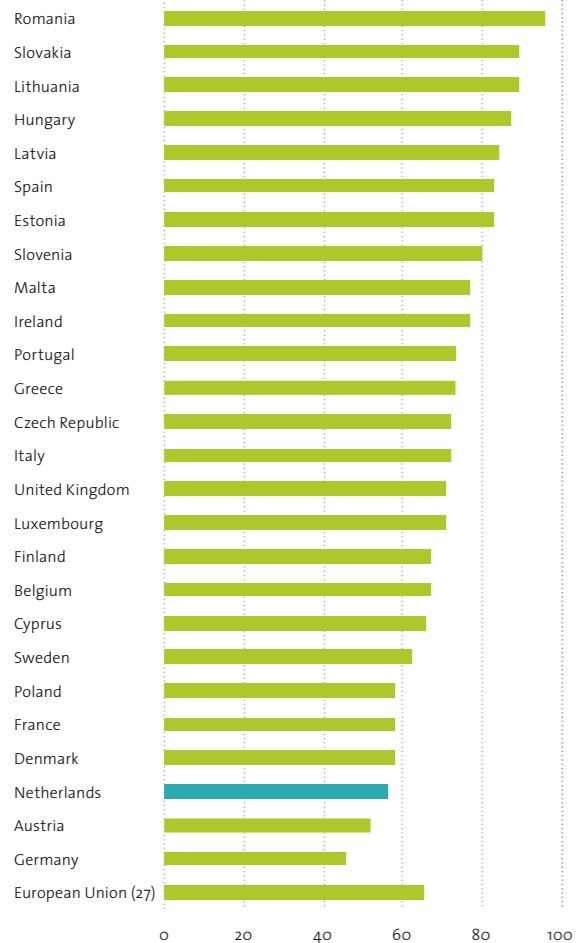
In countries where a high percentage of people have incomes below the poverty line, income inequality is often very substantial. In the Netherlands, the income of richest 20 percent of the population was four times as high as the income of the poorest 20 percent.

On average in the EU-27, the richest 20 percent of the population had five times more income than the poorest 20 percent. Within the old EU, the differences were smallest in the Scandinavian countries. The income gap between rich and poor was largest in Bulgaria and Romania.

small income differences



Home owners, 2007 (% of households)



Source: Eurostat.

Type of dwelling, 2007 (% of total)

	Flat	Detached house	Terraced or semi-detached house
Austria	48	39	12
Belgium	26	34	39
Cyprus	25	44	29
Czech Republic	56	34	10
Denmark	38	48	15
Estonia	69	27	4
Finland	43	38	19
France	41	39	20
Germany	62	23	13
Greece	55	35	10
Hungary	35	57	8
Ireland	4	41	55
Italy	53	22	19
Latvia	72	23	5
Lithuania	59	32	9
Luxembourg	33	35	30
Malta	46	4	49
Netherlands	26	14	55
Poland	55	40	5
Portugal	38	39	23
Romania	41	56	3
Slovakia	53	45	2
Slovenia	31	65	4
Spain	66	16	19
Sweden	51	42	7
United Kingdom	18	24	59
European Union (27)	46	30	22

Source: Eurostat.

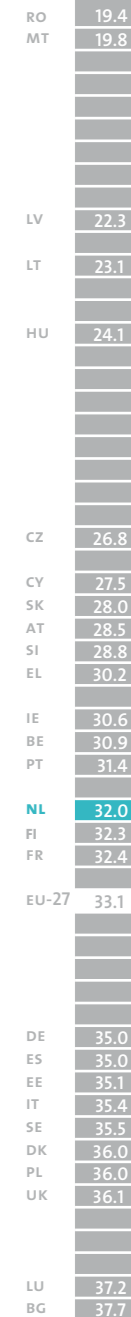
Housing

Seven out of ten Dutch households lived in a terraced, semi-detached or detached house in 2007. This is more than in all the other countries in the European Union (EU-27) except the United Kingdom. Relatively few Dutch people live in detached houses and flats. While nearly half of all households in the EU live in a flat, this was true of only one quarter of households in the Netherlands. Compared with other countries in the EU, relatively few Dutch households own their

homes. In 2007, only Austria and Germany had fewer home owners than the Netherlands. The highest rates of home ownership were reported in Romania, Lithuania and Slovakia.

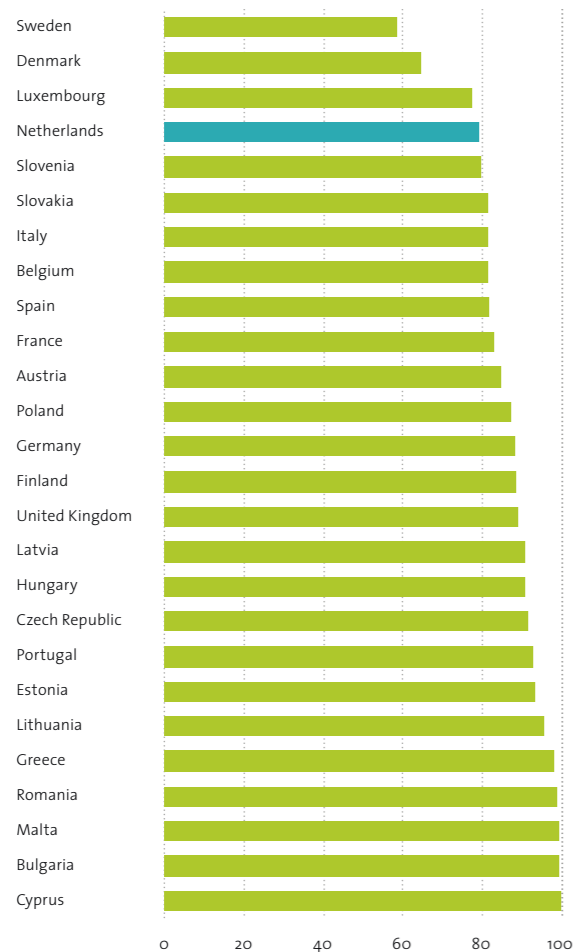
Dutch households spent 32 percent of their income on housing in 2007, slightly less than the European average and about the same amount as households in France and Finland. Bulgarian households spent relatively most on housing, Romanians the least.

few home owners



Spending on housing (% of income)

Foreign guests in hotels (% of total foreign visitors)



Source: Eurostat.

Number of holidays of at least 4 nights away from home (per capita, 15 years or older)

	2007
Austria	1.24
Belgium	0.78
Cyprus	1.28
Czech Republic	1.07
Denmark	1.35
Estonia	0.36
Finland	1.53
France	1.65
Germany	1.40
Greece	0.89
Hungary	0.91
Ireland	1.71
Italy ¹⁾	0.82
Latvia	0.44
Lithuania	0.42
Luxembourg	1.81
Netherlands	1.37
Poland	0.55
Portugal	0.38
Romania	0.30
Slovakia	1.08
Slovenia	0.96
Spain	1.06
Sweden ¹⁾	1.71
United Kingdom	1.44

¹⁾ 2006.

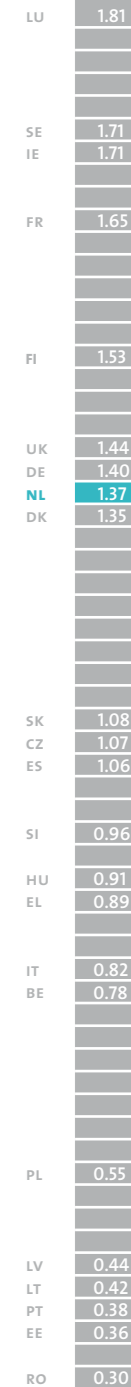
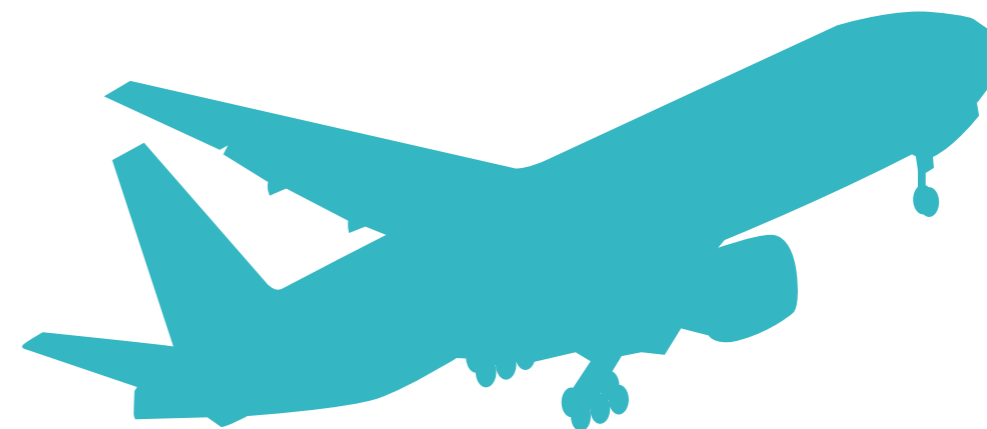
Source: Eurostat.

Tourism

Europeans travel a lot. The Dutch population aged 15 years and older went on holiday - at least four nights away from home - 1.4 times a year on average. Danes and Germans had a similar holiday pattern to the Dutch. People living in Luxembourg went on holiday most often in 2007, 1.8 times, followed by the Swedes and the Irish with 1.7 holidays on average. Romanians were least likely to take a holiday: only 0.3 per person on average in 2007. The Dutch spent more than 12 billion euro on holidays in 2007, just over 900 euro per person. This places them fifth on the list of holiday

spending in the European Union (EU-27). The French spent most on holidays: nearly 81 billion euro, followed by the Germans with just over 78 billion euro.

Eight out of ten foreign visitors to the Netherlands in 2007 stayed in a hotel. Nearly all foreign visitors to Cyprus, Bulgaria and Malta stay in a hotel. Only in Denmark and Sweden did more than 30 percent of foreign visitors stay in other types of accommodation, such as camp sites, holiday cottages or group accommodation.



Holidays per person aged 15 years or older, 2007

Women in parliament, 2008 (%)



Source: UNDP.

Work and income

	Women in higher technical and scientific professions (%)	Women in senior executive positions (%)	Ratio women's income: men's income
Austria	48	32	0.64
Belgium	49	31	0.68
Bulgaria	61	15	0.58
Cyprus	48	28	0.74
Czech Republic	53	38	0.59
Denmark	52	34	0.65
Estonia	69	29	0.73
Finland	55	38	0.61
France	48	28	0.51
Germany	50	35	0.75
Greece	49	31	0.56
Hungary	60	34	0.49
Ireland	53	41	0.67
Italy	47	38	0.70
Latvia	66	-	0.57
Lithuania	70	19	0.45
Luxembourg	-	28	0.67
Malta	41	27	0.40
Netherlands	50	36	0.59
Poland	60	32	0.60
Portugal	51	28	0.68
Romania	56	34	0.61
Slovakia	58	31	0.58
Slovenia	56	32	0.52
Spain	49	29	0.57
Sweden	51	34	0.67
United Kingdom	47	32	0.67

Source: UNDP.

Women in society

The gender empowerment measure (GEM) is an indicator of inequality between men and women in the areas of work, income and politics. A low GEM score indicates large inequality in political and economic opportunities between men and women.

Compared with other countries in the European Union (EU-27), the GEM score for the Netherlands is high. Sweden performs best in this respect, while the new member countries are trailing the rest of the EU.

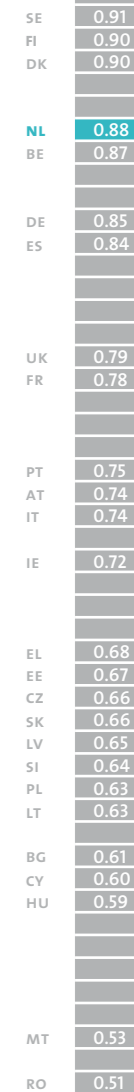
Just as many women as men work in higher technical and scientific professions in the Netherlands. In the Baltic and east European countries more women than men are employed in these positions. Dutch women

are less well represented in higher management positions. With women accounting for 28 percent of senior executives, the Netherlands is behind the rest of Europe.

Dutch women also earn less than Dutch men. The main reason for this is that more women than men work part-time. However, nowhere in the EU-27 is the income of women higher than 75 percent of that of men.

Lastly, women account for 39 percent of members of parliament in the Netherlands; this is quite high compared with other EU countries. Only Sweden and Finland have relatively more female members of parliament.

few women in executive positions, relatively many in parliament



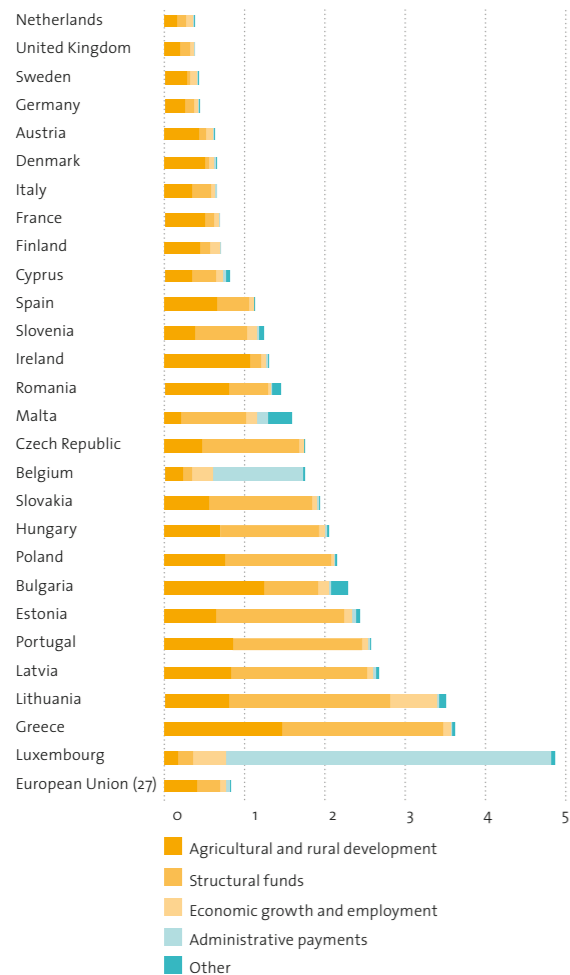
Gender Empowerment Measure

EU finance



7

Revenues from the European Union, 2008 (% of GNI)



Source: Eurostat.

Net revenues per inhabitant (euro)

	2002	2008
Austria	-31	-50
Belgium	128	138
Bulgaria	18	80
Cyprus	24	-63
Czech Republic	25	100
Denmark	-41	-135
Estonia	32	154
Finland	5	-73
France	-32	-67
Germany	-71	-134
Greece	305	551
Hungary	14	105
Ireland	402	107
Italy	-54	-81
Latvia	23	174
Lithuania	29	240
Luxembourg	1726	2354
Malta	35	66
Netherlands	-178	-268
Poland	14	109
Portugal	258	250
Romania	11	67
Slovakia	23	120
Slovenia	34	24
Spain	210	47
Sweden	-95	-191
United Kingdom	-67	-46

Source: Eurostat.

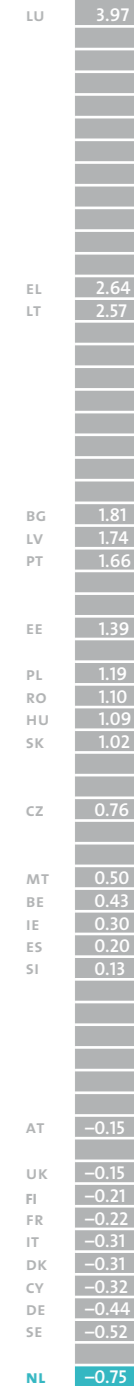
Revenues from and payments to the EU

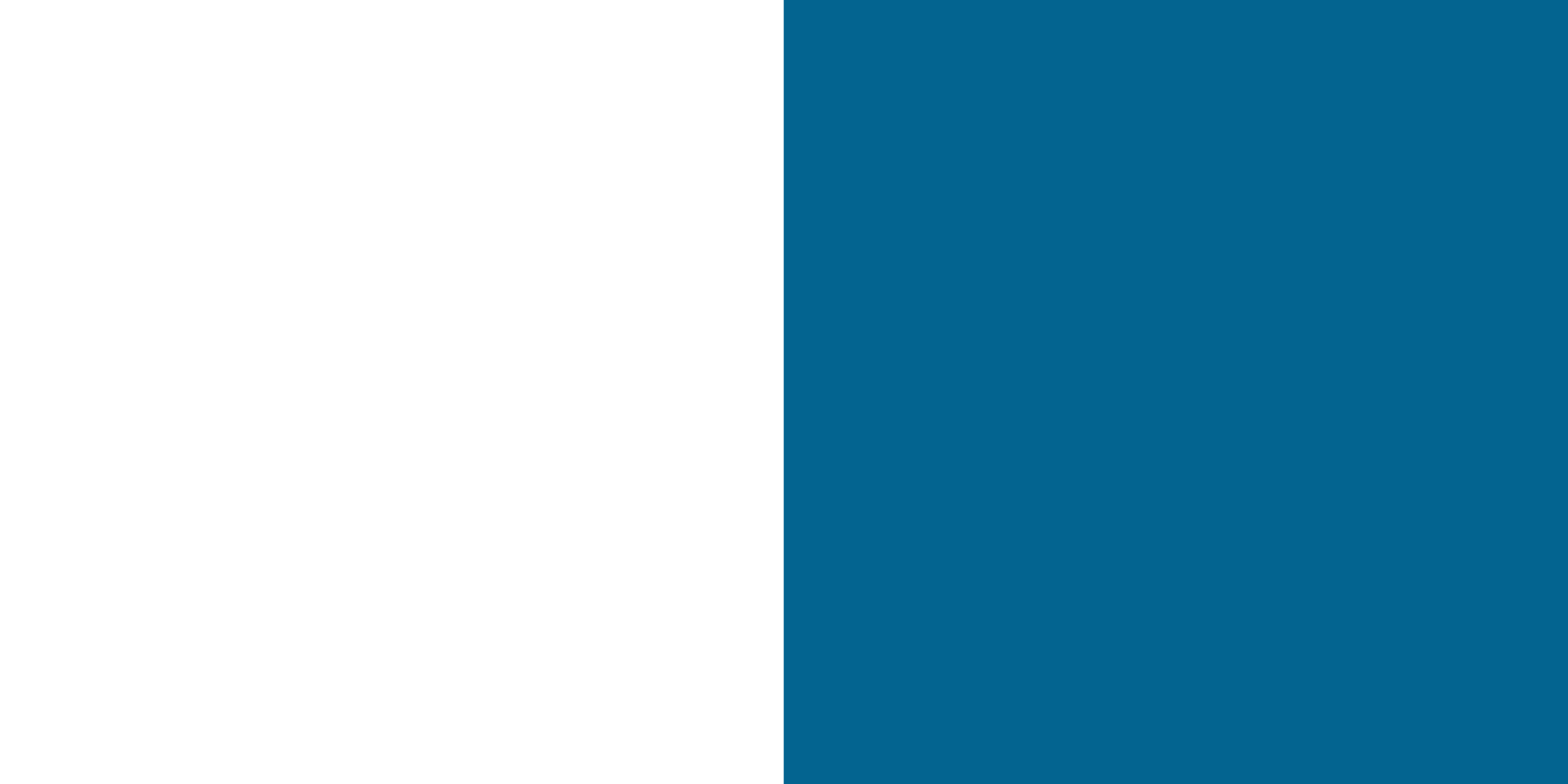
As a result of the redistribution of the money paid by member states to the European Union, some countries are net payers and others net receivers. The Netherlands paid 6.7 billion euro to the EU in 2008, and received 2.3 billion euro. The Dutch contribution per capita was 268 euro, the highest of all member countries. Luxembourg receives most from the EU: 2,354 euro per inhabitant. This amount is so high because Luxembourg receives administrative payments for hosting a number of large EU institutions. The amounts for Belgium are distorted for the same reason. If these administrative payments are not taken into account, Belgium and Luxembourg would be net payers.

The largest net receivers are Greece, Portugal and Lithuania. These countries receive substantial amounts from the agricultural and structural funds.

In terms of gross national income (GNI), the Netherlands received least from the EU: 0.38 percent. The main reason for this is that the Netherlands receives relatively little from the largest income sources, the agricultural and structural funds. If the Dutch contribution to the EU is subtracted from this amount, the Netherlands pays 0.75 percent of its GNI to the European Union; again the highest proportion of all member countries.

largest net contribution





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