



Press release

PB12-079
20 december 2012
15:00 hrs

Dutch society 2012: repercussions of the crisis

- 2012: another difficult year for the economy
- Fewer births, marriages and people moving house
- No increase in unsafety, high level of satisfaction with social contacts

These and other facts are presented in *De Nederlandse Samenleving 2012*, Statistics Netherlands' report on society in the Netherlands (available in Dutch only). The book gives a picture of prosperity and well-being in the Netherlands today, including differences between population groups and regions. With its combination of economic and socio-demographic developments, the book provides an integrated and up-to-date impression of Dutch society.

Hard times for the Dutch economy

In terms of the economy, 2012 was a difficult year in the Netherlands. Consumer confidence fell to a record low, companies invested less and the housing market remained depressed. These economic developments also took their toll on the labour market. For the first time since 1996, more than half a million people in the Netherlands are unemployed, with both young and older ages groups being hit. Purchasing power fell for the third year in a row.

Fewer births, marriages and removals

To a certain extent, the recent years of economic recession also seem to have had an effect on people's personal lives. In 2012 the number of babies born will fall to 176 thousand, 8 fewer than in 2010 and the lowest number since the mid-1980s. The number of people getting married or entering a registered partnership is also decreasing, just as the number moving house; families with children in particular are less likely to move. In 2012 nearly 100 thousand fewer couples with children than in 2008 will have moved house.

Unsafety unchanged, high satisfaction with social contacts

While economic indicators are showing downward trends, many well-being indicators are more stable. The number of people who do not feel safe and the number of victims have not increased, and registered crime is falling. The number of underage male crime suspects has nearly halved since 2005. Lastly, most people in the Netherlands have a social network, within which they are still very satisfied with the contact they have with friends, neighbours and acquaintances.