

Press release

PB14-033 | 15 May 2014 | 15:00 hrs

Unemployment rise slows down as young people leave labour market

- Unemployment rises slightly in April
- Lower labour participation among young people
- Unemployment benefits 11 thousand lower in April
- Ten percent fewer new benefits in April than in March

Statistics Netherlands announced today that unemployment rose by 3 thousand people in April. This has slowed down the rise in unemployment at the beginning of the year. It is not the result of more jobs becoming available though, but mainly because young people have been withdrawing from the labour market.

Figures from the Employee Insurance Agency (Uwv) put the number of people claiming unemployment benefit at 443 thousand in April 2014, 11 thousand fewer than in March and 64 thousand more than in April 2013.

Unemployment rises slightly

After adjustment for seasonal effects, unemployment was 687 thousand in April. It rose more slowly than the 10 thousand people a month in December, January and February. On average the unemployed labour force rose by 3 thousand people a month in the last three months.

Lower labour participation

The number of people in work fell by less than the rise in the number of unemployed. The employed labour force fell by an average 10 thousand people a month in the last three months. This pushed down total labour participation (employed and unemployed labour force as a percentage of the population). The main reason for this was that young people withdrew from the labour market, for example by continuing their education.

The Dutch unemployment rate was 8.7 percent of the labour force in April. According to the ILO definition, it was 7.2 percent.

Much fewer young people claiming benefits

The number of people claiming unemployment benefit fell by 2.3 percent in April, to 443 thousand. In April last year the number of benefits remained at the same level. Nearly all industry sectors showed a fall in unemployment benefits in April 2014 from March. The decrease was largest in sectors with a lot of seasonal labour, such as agriculture and construction. The decrease in the number of benefits was evident across nearly all age groups.

Only among the over-55s did benefits increase. The decrease was largest among the under-25s: 10 percent. The number of existing unemployment benefits is now at almost the same level as one year previously. For the over-55s, on the other hand, the number of existing benefits rose by more than a quarter compared with April last year.

More benefits ending because of finding work

The Employee Insurance Agency (UWV) paid 42 thousand new unemployment benefits in April, 10 percent fewer than in March. The number of new benefits was also much lower than in April last year. Some 53 thousand benefits were discontinued, 1 percent fewer than in March, but nearly 16 percent more than in April 2013. The number of benefits ending because the claimant went back to work rose by 3.5 percent to 27 thousand. Compared with the same month last year, 16 percent more benefits were stopped because claimants had found a job.