

## Press release

PB14-47 | 11 August 2014 | 15:00 hrs

# Immigration rising

- **More immigrants, emigration stable**
- **Immigration of Poles and Romanians increasing**
- **Poles mostly in Westland region; Bulgarians and Romanians in cities**
- **Over 100 thousand Polish migrants in the Netherlands**

### Immigration higher in first six months

According to figures released by Statistics Netherlands today, more people came from abroad to live in the Netherlands in the first of this year than in the same period last year. Over 76 thousand immigrants arrived in the Netherlands, 8.6 thousand more than in 2013. The number of people who left the country remained at the same level (64 thousand). Net immigration was thus 12 thousand persons.

### Most Poles are labour migrants

Poles account for the largest foreign-born group of immigrants in the Netherlands. Since Poland joined the European Union in 2004, the number of Poles coming to live in the Netherlands has risen every year. In the first months of 2014, 12 thousand Poles registered in a Dutch municipality, 2 thousand more than in the same period last year.

Around 70 percent of Poles who come to live in the Netherlands come here to work. Most of them find jobs via temp agencies, in sectors such as construction and horticulture. Alongside this labour migration, around 20 percent of Polish immigration to the Netherlands consists of people who come to marry, or to join relatives here. The number of Polish students is relatively small: only a few hundred a year.

A large number of Poles leave the country again the course of time. In the first half of 2014, 5 thousand Poles left the Netherlands, in 2013 4.7 thousand. Figures previously published by Statistics Netherlands show that around half of Polish immigrants had left the country again within ten years of arriving.

### Over 100 thousand Polish migrants in the Netherlands

In spite of the increasing number of Poles leaving the Netherlands, the number arriving is still larger than the number of departures. Net immigration from Poland was 6.5 thousand in the first half of 2014, compared with just under 5 thousand in the first half of 2013. More than 100 thousand Polish migrants were living in the Netherlands on 1 July 2014. This number puts them in the same league as the traditional migrant groups in the Netherlands.

**Seasonal migrants**

In addition to the Poles who are registered and live in the Netherlands, more than 80 thousand (December 2012) Poles were staying here for short-term work. They are not required to register as residents. Migrants from other EU countries are more likely to register as official residents.

**Number of Romanians rising, Bulgarians stable**

From 1 January this year, Romanians and Bulgarians, too, can come to work in the Netherlands without a work permit. This new regulation may result in more immigrants arriving from these countries. The number of Romanians who came to live in the Netherlands has doubled compared with the first half of 2013, to just over 2.3 thousand. The number of Bulgarians has not risen. In the first half of both 2013 and 2014, just over 2 thousand Bulgarians came to live in the Netherlands. There is as yet no clear view of the mechanisms behind these migration flows.

**Most Poles in Westland, Bulgarians in large cities**

In relative terms, most Poles live in the Westland area, where Dutch horticulture is concentrated: three times the average share of Poles in the Netherlands. The province Brabant and the tulip-growing areas are also popular among Poles. Bulgarians, and to a lesser extent also Romanians, are relatively more likely than average to live in the large cities. The share of Bulgarians in The Hague, for example, was nearly eight times the national average share of Bulgarians at the beginning of 2014.

**More Syrian asylum seekers registered in the Netherlands**

In addition to labour and family reunion migrants, a small but increasing group of people apply for asylum in the Netherlands. At the moment there are relatively many asylum requests from Syrians and Eritreans. In the first half of 2014, nearly 3 thousand Syrian asylum seekers registered in a Dutch municipality, compared with 600 in the same period of 2013. Hardly any of these asylum seekers leave the Netherlands. The more recent increase in asylum requests from Eritreans (strong increases in April and May) is not yet reflected in a rise in registrations in Dutch municipalities.

**More migration in second half of the year**

Immigration and emigration are usually higher in the second half of the year than in the first half. In August and September in particular, many immigrants arrive in the Netherlands, especially students and foreign workers. More people also leave the Netherlands in the second half than in the first half of the year.

**Explanatory note**

The figures on immigration and emigration referred to in this release concern people entered in or withdrawn from the Basic Register of Persons (BRP). An immigrant is registered if he/she expects to stay in the Netherlands for at least four months in the six months after arrival. Emigrants are withdrawn from registration if they expect to spend at least eight months of the subsequent twelve months outside the Netherlands. The number of Poles not registered in the BRP are people with a job (employees and self-employed) who work in the Netherlands but are not registered in a Dutch municipality.

Asylum seekers are usually registered in a Dutch municipality if they receive a residence permit and move from an asylum seekers' centre to a private dwelling. Asylum seekers staying in an asylum seekers' centre can be registered in a municipality if they have been living in the Netherlands for six months, even if they do not have a residence permit.

Figures for 2014 are provisional.