

## Netherlands

The trend of increasing migration flows in the Netherlands continued in 2007. The number of immigrants entering the Netherlands was 116 800 in 2007, up from 101 150 in 2006. Emigration flows were similar than the previous year, just over 91 000 people, after several years of continuous increases. This emigration figure would increase to 122 600 after including administrative corrections for unreported emigrations.

These immigration flows came mostly from Western countries. Around one third of the immigrants were Dutch nationals returning to the Netherlands (including Antilleans and Arubans). Excluding Dutch nationals, more than half of the immigrants were from EU-countries, mostly from Germany (7 087), France (3 929) and the new EU countries like Poland (9 945), Bulgaria (4 814) and Romania (2 248). Finally, around 30 percent of those non-Dutch immigrants were from non-Western countries, mostly from China (3 498), India (2 345) and Turkey (2 323).

Applications for residence permits for labour decreased from 17 000 in 2006 to 11 000 in 2007. This reduction was mainly due to the introduction of free movement of workers for the eight European countries which entered the European Union in 2004 (although not for Bulgaria and Romania, which remain the first and third nationalities applying for residence permits for employment).

The number of asylum requests in 2008 was over 13 000, almost double the 2007 level, putting an end to a decline in asylum applications initiated in 2000. In addition, a “general pardon” of asylum seekers who applied for asylum before April 2001 and were still in the Netherlands was applied. By January 2008 almost 25 000 foreign nationals received a written notice that they were eligible for a residence permit and 21 000 had already accepted it. Since January 2009 it is no longer possible to apply for a residence permit on the basis of the “general pardon”.

An Admission Scheme for Highly Educated Migrants was introduced in January 2009. The scheme allows those migrants who have obtained a Master’s degree or a PhD, either in a Dutch or in a particular foreign university, to freely look for a job in the Netherlands for a maximum period of one year, or to start an innovative firm. The number of first residence permits granted to highly-skilled migrants increased to 2 900 in 2008, associated with the introduction of the Highly-Skilled Migrants Scheme and the facilitation of admission of research scientists.

For further information:

<http://www.ind.nl/EN/>

<http://www.cbs.nl/en-GB/menu/home/default.htm?Languageswitch=on>