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## **MIGRATION MOTIVES OF NON-DUTCH IMMIGRANTS IN THE NETHERLANDS**

Submitted by Statistics Netherlands<sup>1</sup>

### **Abstract**

Statistics Netherlands obtains more detailed information on immigration since 1 October 1994, when a new system of decentralized automated municipal population registers was introduced in the Netherlands. However, statistics on international migration in the Netherlands do not reveal reasons for migration, such as asylum, labour, family reunion, marriage or study. In view of the demand for such information (for example for the purpose of specific government policies and for the National Population Forecasts of Statistics Netherlands), additional information on migration motives from the Central Register of non-Dutch nationals has been used. The information in this Central Register of non-Dutch nationals is derived from registrations maintained by the Aliens Police and the Immigration and Naturalization Service of the Dutch Ministry of Justice. In this Central Register, the migration motives of all non-Dutch nationals living in the Netherlands are entered. This data has, at the individual level, been linked with data from the municipal population registers. In the next step, adjustments were necessary in order to comply with the definitions regarding migration motives. Furthermore, imputations for missing data were carried out. Finally, the data on migration motives was made consistent with the statistics on international migration.

From the information of the Central Register of non-Dutch nationals and the additional information of the Population Registers, data has been deduced about the following categories of migrants:

- asylum migrants;
- labour migrants;
- family reunionists;
- family forming migrants;
- students;
- au pairs / trainees;
- pensioners;
- people who come to the Netherlands for a medical treatment.

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Special attention has been given to asylum migration and family reunion migration of asylum migrants in the Netherlands. It was shown that the extent of family reunion and family formation migration caused by asylum migrants is still relatively modest. Family reunion often takes place one year after the asylum seeker has been registered in a municipal population register. By relating the number of family reunionists and family forming migrants in the period 1991-1998 to the number of asylum migrants in the period 1990-1997, it could be estimated that for every four asylum migrants one person immigrated for the purpose of family reunion or family formation.

## **1. Introduction**

Since 1995, the number of immigrants coming to the Netherlands has increased strongly, reaching a record level of 130 thousand persons in 2000, including 91 thousand non-Dutch nationals. The previous record was established in 1998, when 122 thousand persons immigrated to the Netherlands, including 82 thousand non-Dutch nationals. So far, the migration motives of non-Dutch immigrants were not quite clear. Statistics Netherlands does obtain more detailed information on immigration since 1 October 1994, when a new system of decentralized automated municipal population registers was introduced. In particular, statistics on international migration in the Netherlands still do not distinguish reasons for migration, such as asylum, labour, family reunion, marriage or study. In view of the demand for such information (for example for the purpose of specific government policies and for the National Population Forecasts of Statistics Netherlands), Statistics Netherlands made estimates of asylum migrants, labour migrants, family reunionists and family forming migrants in recent years. These estimates were based on information from several sources, such as the municipal population registers, the Central Reception of Asylum Seekers and the National Employment Services (Croes (1995); Nicolaas (1999); Sprangers (1995)). Recently, information on migration motives became available from the Central Register of non-Dutch nationals. Information from this source has been used for the first time in Nicolaas and Sprangers (2000), in order to estimate numbers of labour migrants. The data in this paper has largely been derived from the Central Register of non-Dutch nationals.

This paper starts with a brief description of the Central Register of non-Dutch nationals, the main source for this analysis and an outline of the migration categories that are distinguished in this register. This is followed by a short description of the method used to derive the information from the Central Register of non-Dutch nationals and the method used to link this data with information from the municipal population registers. In the next section the main results of the migration motives of non-Dutch nationals are given, with special attention to labour migration, asylum migration and family reunion / family formation migration of asylum migrants in the Netherlands. The paper ends with some conclusions and suggestions for further research.

## **2. Source: Central Register of non-Dutch nationals**

The Central Register of non-Dutch nationals is a registration with data on all non-Dutch nationals legally residing in the Netherlands. The information in this register is derived from registrations of the Aliens Police and the Immigration and Naturalization Service of the Dutch Ministry of Justice. In the Central Register of non-Dutch nationals, migration motives of all non-Dutch nationals living in the Netherlands are registered. From the information of this Central Register and additional information from the Population Registers, data has been deduced about the following categories of migration:

1. Asylum migrants;
2. Labour migrants;
3. Family reunionists;
4. Family forming migrants;
5. Other types of migrants.

### *2.1. Asylum migrants*

Not every asylum seeker will be allowed entry into the Netherlands and will be registered as an immigrant in a municipal population register. Those who are allowed to stay in the Netherlands and can be considered as asylum migrants, will only be recorded in a municipal population register in the course of time.

Asylum seekers are usually registered in a municipal population register once they depart from a centre for asylum seekers to a dwelling. Asylum seekers who reside for more than one year (since 1 June 2000: more than half a year) in such a centre can be registered in a municipal population register as well. After Statistics Netherlands has received a notification of registration in a municipal population register, the asylum seeker will be entered as an immigrant in the international migration statistics.

In this paper, the following categories of immigrants are considered to be *asylum migrants*, at least insofar as they have been registered in a municipal population register:

- asylum seekers (applicants for asylum who have not yet been granted any official status);
- former asylum seekers granted any residence permit, i.e.:
  - persons with the refugee status ('A-status');
  - persons with a temporary residence permit on humanitarian grounds ('VTV-humanitair');
  - persons with a conditional residence permit ('Voorwaardelijke Vergunning tot Verblijf, VVTV');
- unaccompanied minors ('Alleenstaande Minderjarige Asielzoekers, AMA's');
- invited refugees.

Some immigrants with a residence permit on humanitarian grounds may have come to the Netherlands for other reasons than asylum. For reasons of convenience and because of the fact that it concerns small numbers (less than a thousand in 1998), these persons have been counted as asylum migrants.

In the Netherlands, a special policy applies to asylum applications lodged by unaccompanied minors. In case unaccompanied minors do not qualify for a refugee status, a temporary residence permit or a conditional residence permit, they normally have to leave the Netherlands. If, however, no proper accommodation in the country of origin is available through, for example, family or fellow-villagers, these unaccompanied minors are granted a special residence permit, a so-called 'AMA-VTV' (Ministry of Justice, 2000).

In the near future, the asylum procedure in the Netherlands is going to change drastically. According to revised legislation (Vreemdelingenwet) that comes into effect in 2001, there will be just one (temporary) refugee status. This status will, after a period of three years, change into a permanent status.

## 2.2. *Labour migrants*

Most data on labour migration in this paper is derived from the Central Register of non-Dutch nationals. This data refers to the stock on 1 January 1999. As a consequence, flow data by year of arrival is retrospective by nature. In connection with naturalizations, emigration and deaths, it is not known to what extent data regarding immigrants who arrived in earlier years and who are still living in the Netherlands on 1 January 1999, is typical of the total number of immigrants in those previous years.

In order to check the plausibility of data regarding earlier years, additional data on work permits have been used. The source for this data is the National Employment Services. A second reason for using this data is the availability of additional variables, such as occupational category. It must be taken into account that in many situations work permits are issued, although the persons involved cannot be considered as labour migrants. For example, seasonal workers, part of the asylum seekers and trainees do not stay long enough to be considered as immigrants, as the criterion for registration as an immigrant in the Netherlands is four months. To be more precise: every person intending to stay in the Netherlands for at least two thirds of the forthcoming six months, should notify the municipal population register immediately after arrival in the Netherlands. Furthermore, several other groups that cannot be considered as labour immigrants need a work permit, such as artists on tour.

A work permit is not needed for persons from other EU-countries, whereas labour migration from outside the EU is restricted and a work permit is needed. Work permits are supplied only in case recruitment from within the European Union is impossible. Therefore, the data from the National Employment Services refers only to non-Dutch nationals from non-EU countries.

### 2.3. *Family reunionists*

The term *family reunion migration* is used for the immigration of family members joining their family members who came to the Netherlands in a previous year, including children who arrive after their father and/or mother. If family members (for example of a labour migrant) immigrate in the *same year* as the labour migrant, these family members are considered to be *accompanying family members*. Family reunion is often preceded by labour migration (family reunion of Turks and Moroccans is a well-known example in the Netherlands), or by asylum migration. In general, asylum migrants with a residence permit have the right to bring their partner and/or children to the Netherlands. In 1993, the rules for family reunion were tightened. As from that year family reunion for migrants is only possible within three years of arrival in the Netherlands. Furthermore, conditions with regard to income and accommodation have to be fulfilled.

### 2.4. *Family forming migrants*

*Family formation migration* occurs when someone settles in the Netherlands for the purpose of marriage or cohabitation with a partner already living in the Netherlands. The phase of family reunion migration of Turks and Moroccans in the late 1960s and the 1970s, for example, was followed by an increasing family formation migration in the 1980s. For migrants, family formation is allowed only in case one has resided legally in the Netherlands for at least three years and if one disposes of a sufficient income and appropriate accommodation.

### 2.5. *Other types of migrants*

Apart from these four groups the following categories of immigrants are distinguished:

- students;
- au pairs / trainees;
- pensioners;
- people who come to the Netherlands for medical treatment.

## 3. **Method**

In order to extend the files derived from the Central Register of non-Dutch nationals with such variables as the year of most recent arrival of immigrants, the data from this register has – at the individual level – been linked with data obtained from the municipal population registers. In the next step, adjustments were made in order to comply with the definitions regarding migration motives. Furthermore, imputations for missing data were carried out. Finally, the data on migration motives from the Central Register of non-Dutch nationals was made consistent with the statistics on international migration (Nicolaas and Sprangers, 2001a).

These steps are described in more detail below.

### 3.1 *Adjustments carried out for data from the Central Register of non-Dutch nationals*

#### 3.1.1 *Adjustments concerning asylum migrants and family reunionists*

Apart from information from the Central Register of non-Dutch nationals, additional information derived from population stock data on 1 January 1999 from Statistics Netherlands has been used for some categories of immigrants. This population stock data is obtained from the municipal population registers and contains information on every person registered in a municipal population register in the Netherlands. Variables recorded are, among others, age, sex, country of birth, year of most recent arrival in the Netherlands, year of most recent change of marital status and position in the family. Information on the purpose of immigration, however, is not recorded in this stock data.

With a view to getting information about the year of most recent arrival of immigrants and their possible family members, the results of the population stock data on 1 January 1999 have, at the individual level, been linked with data from the Central Register of non-Dutch nationals.

In some cases, the migration motive according to the Central Register of non-Dutch nationals has been adjusted with additional information about the year of arrival of the family members involved according to the population registers. It appears that family members of asylum seekers come to the Netherlands after the asylum seeker and start an asylum procedure as well. In the Central Register of non-Dutch nationals, these persons are – according to legislation – also registered as asylum seekers. If, however, both husband and wife in a married couple are registered as asylum seekers, whereas they are registered in the population registers as immigrants in different years, the person who was the last to arrive has not been considered an asylum migrant but a family reunionist. Similar adjustments are made for family reuniting children who are registered as asylum seekers in the Central Register of non-Dutch nationals (*table 1*).

### 3.1.2 Adjustments concerning simultaneously immigrating family members

In the Central Register of non-Dutch nationals, family reunionists are distinguished from *family forming migrants*, but *family reunionists* cannot be distinguished from *simultaneously immigrating family members*. Family migration of Turks and Moroccans consists for the larger part of family reunion and family formation. With regard to the immigration from Western countries, such as the European Union, the United States of America and Japan it is, considering the size of these groups, more important to distinguish *simultaneously (in the same year) immigrating family members* on the one hand and *family reunionists* on the other hand. With a view to this distinction, additional information from population stock data has been used in the same sense as described above in the case of asylum migrants and family reunionists. Table 1 shows the adjustments made to the information in the Central Register of non-Dutch nationals.

Table 1

Table 1  
Corrections with respect to certain migration motives according to the Dutch Central Register of non-Dutch nationals (CRN)

Migration motive according to Central Register of non-Dutch nationals	Migration motive of the partner according to Central Register of non-Dutch nationals	Position in the family according to Population Registers	Year of most recent migration of spouse/partner according to Population Registers	Year of most recent migration of the father according to Population Registers	Year of most recent migration of the mother according to Population Registers	Migration motive after adjustment
asylum 1) asylum 1) asylum 1) asylum 1) asylum 1) asylum 1) asylum 1)	asylum 1) 2) asylum 1) 2) asylum 1) 2) asylum 1) 2)	spouse spouse cohabiting person 3) cohabiting person 3) child 4) child 4) child 4)	before same year/later before same year/later		before other 5) other 5)	family reunion asylum family reunion asylum family reunion family reunion asylum
family reunion family reunion family reunion family reunion family reunion family reunion		spouse spouse cohabiting person 3) cohabiting person 3) child 4) child 4) child 4)	before same year before same year		before other 5) other 5)	family reunion accompanying family member family reunion accompanying family member family reunion family reunion accompanying family member

1) Persons with a refugee status (permanent residence status), a 'VTV' (residence permit) or a 'VVTV' (conditional residence permit).

2) Corrections are only made if the partner is registered in the Central Register of non-Dutch nationals as an asylum seeker as well.

3) Only cohabiting couples with common children living at the same address.

4) Position in the family, irrespective of the age of the child.

5) Same year/after/not applicable.

### Adjustments carried out for the Dutch Central Register of non-Dutch nationals

### 3.2 Imputations for missing data

Especially for the most recent years, information from the Central Register of non-Dutch nationals includes many 'unknown migration motives' (about 15 percent). For recent years, these unknown migration motives are often related to running procedures concerning residence permits. Therefore, the distribution of the

recorded migration motives has, at the individual level, been applied to the 'unknown' migration motives. Variables that are strongly connected with the migration motive (sex, age, marital status, year of most recent arrival and country of birth) have been used as auxiliary variables for the imputation of these 'unknown' migration motives.

### *3.3 Consistency with international migration statistics*

The estimates were carried out for the period 1990-1998. The data that has been used to make these estimates was for the bigger part derived from the Central Register of non-Dutch nationals and refers to the stock on 1 January 1999. Making the calculations, it had to be taken into account that, especially with reference to naturalizations and departures, it is not obvious to what extent information on non-Dutch immigrants – who immigrated in an earlier year and who are still living in the Netherlands – is representative for the entire migration inflow in that year. There is, after all, a relation between the migration motive and the duration of stay in the Netherlands. Labour migrants from Western countries and students, for example, will often stay only temporarily in the Netherlands, whereas family forming immigrants often stay for a longer period. In 1997, for example, about one third of all immigrants from the United States of America came to the Netherlands for the purpose of labour. For 1992, the Central Register of non-Dutch nationals shows a share of only 18 percent for labour migrants from this country. The fact that the latter percentage is that much lower is probably related to returning immigrants who came to the Netherlands temporarily for the purpose of labour.

So, the available information provides a picture of migration motives of immigrants in a certain year, insofar as these immigrants have not left the Netherlands, have died or have been naturalized by then. Therefore, the distribution of numbers of immigrants by migration motives on the basis of stock data on 1 January 1999 will, for previous years, not always represent the composition of the actual migration inflow. Since it is reasonable to assume that most of the asylum migrants have stayed in the Netherlands, it is likely that no strong misrepresentation as described above will occur with respect to this group of immigrants. In this paper, estimates of numbers of asylum migrants will therefore be presented for the entire period 1990-1998. A plausibility check, based on a comparison with previous, calculated numbers of asylum migrants on the basis of the enumeration of population registers for the period 1990-1996 (Nicolaas, 1999), supports the assumption that no serious bias occurs for earlier years.

In order to achieve consistency with the total numbers of immigrants according to the international migration statistics with respect to year of most recent arrival by sex, by age group and by country of birth, the estimates are adjusted in such a way that they equal these totals.

## **4. The reasons why immigrants settle in the Netherlands**

### *4.1 General results*

The most numerous groups of foreign immigrants in the Netherlands arrive for the purpose of asylum, for the purpose of labour, as family reunionists or as family forming migrants. Each of these groups accounts for about one fifth of the total immigration of non-Dutch nationals.

Many family reunionists are family members of labour migrants who arrived in earlier years. A smaller, but growing number of family reunionists are family members of refugees. In this section, general results of the analysis on migration motives are presented. In the next sections, the results regarding refugees and labour migrants and their family members are discussed in more detail.

*Table 2* shows the numbers of non-Dutch immigrants in 1998, distinguished by country of birth and migration motive.

*Table 2*  
*Migration motives of non-Dutch immigrants by country of birth, 1998*

Table 2  
Migration motives of non-Dutch immigrants, 1998

Country of birth	Total	Family reunion	Accompanying family member	Family formation	Asylum	Labour	Study	Other
x 1,000								
European Union	18.0	1.9	2.0	1.3	0.0	9.7	2.1	2.2
of which:								
Belgium	1.8	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.8	0.1	0.4
Germany	4.7	0.5	0.5	0.4	0.0	1.5	0.6	1.1
United Kingdom	4.1	0.5	0.6	0.2	0.0	2.5	0.1	0.2
Other EU countries	7.5	0.7	0.7	0.5	0.0	3.9	1.2	0.4
Turkey	5.1	1.6	0.1	2.7	0.3	0.3	0.1	0.1
Morocco	5.3	1.6	0.0	2.8	0.3	0.2	0.3	0.1
Suriname	3.2	0.7	0.2	1.8	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
Afghanistan	3.9	0.6	0.0	0.0	3.3	0.0	0.0	0.0
Iraq	7.4	1.6	0.0	0.0	5.7	0.0	0.0	0.0
United States	3.1	0.5	0.6	0.4	0.0	1.1	0.2	0.3
Former Soviet Union	2.6	0.4	0.2	0.6	0.7	0.3	0.3	0.1
Other countries	32.8	5.1	2.1	8.4	6.8	4.6	3.3	2.5
Total	81.6	14.0	5.2	18.0	17.3	15.3	6.4	5.4

In 1998, some 18 thousand immigrants arrived for the purpose of family formation. The number of family reunionists amounted to 14 thousand. Over 17 thousand immigrants were seeking refuge in the Netherlands, whereas 15 thousand persons came for the purpose of work. Just over 6 thousand immigrants came to the Netherlands because of studies. The remaining (mixed) group counted over 5 thousand immigrants, including pensioners, trainees and au pairs.

#### *Asylum migration*

The number of migrants for asylum increased strongly in the first half of the 1990s. After 1994, the number of asylum migrants decreased slightly. The past few years, many asylum seekers came from Iraq (5.7 thousand in 1998) and Afghanistan (3.3 thousand in 1998). Not all asylum seekers who are registered in a municipal population register are allowed to stay in the Netherlands. Part of the asylum seekers are registered after a one-year stay in an asylum seekers centre (half a year since 1 June 2000).

#### *Labour migration*

In the 1990s, most labour migrants came from more prosperous Western European and other economically developed countries, such as the United States of America. Comparatively large numbers of labour migrants came from the United Kingdom (2.5 thousand in 1998). The labour migration from countries of the European Union has increased by seven percent between 1996 and 1998, whereas the immigration of workers from non-EU countries has increased even more in this period (by 40 percent).

#### *Family reunion*

In recent years, family formation as a motive to immigrate has been more important than family reunion. This is partly a consequence of the strong decrease in family reunion migration from Turkey and Morocco, whereas relatively large numbers of Turks and Moroccans came over for the purpose of marriage. Nevertheless, there are still comparatively large numbers of Turks and Moroccans who reunite with family members already living in the Netherlands (both more than 1.6 thousand in 1998).

The number of family reunionists joining asylum migrants has increased in the 1990s. In 1998, the number of family reunionists from Iraq nearly equalled the numbers from Turkey or Morocco (1.6 thousand). This number is high compared with the numbers of family reunionists from neighbouring countries. In 1998, some 500 German and British family reunionists settled in the Netherlands. The number of Belgians reuniting with family members in the Netherlands hardly exceeded 200.

#### *Family formation*

Turks and Moroccans are also the major groups as far as family formation is concerned. In 1998, 2.7 thousand Turks and 2.8 thousand Moroccans settled in the Netherlands for the purpose of family formation.

More than half of the immigrating Turks and Moroccans arrived as family formers. Furthermore, comparatively many Surinamese family formers have migrated to the Netherlands.

Figure 1 shows the migration motives of non-Dutch immigrants for the period 1996-1998. Because of the uncertainty regarding the representativeness of data for earlier years, this figure is restricted to the period 1996-1998.

Figure 1  
Migration motives of non-Dutch immigrants, 1996-1998

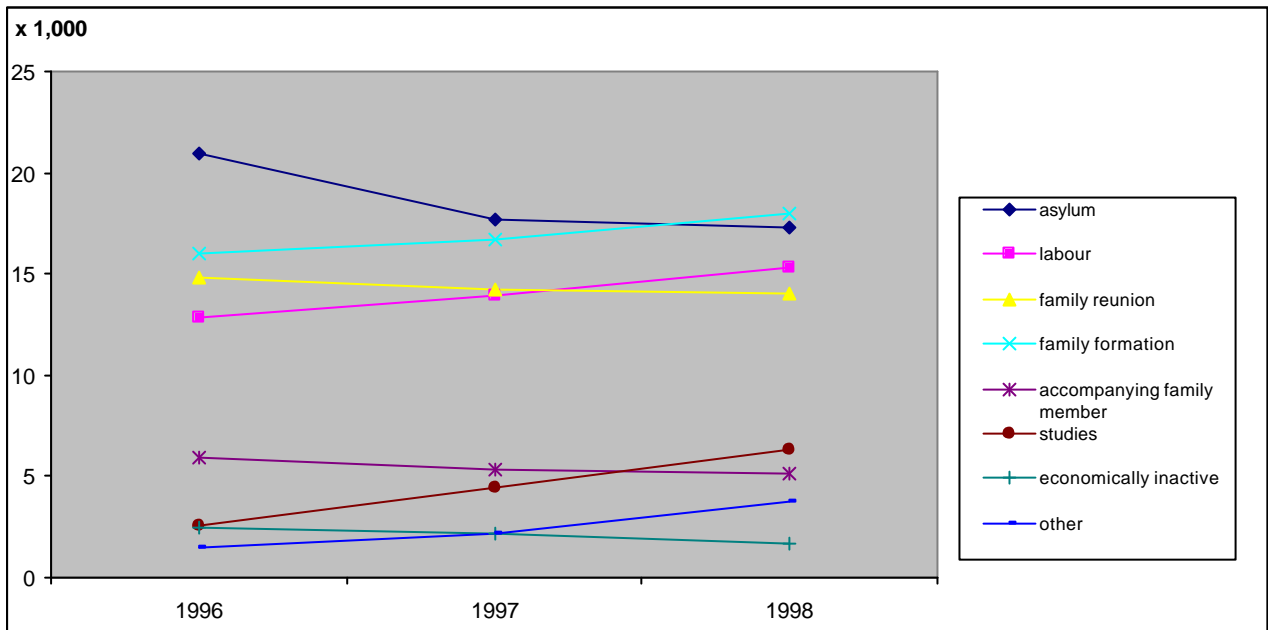
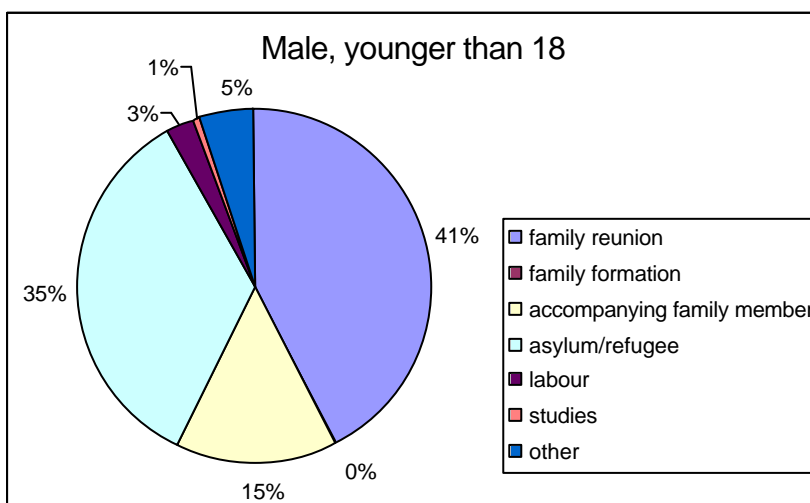
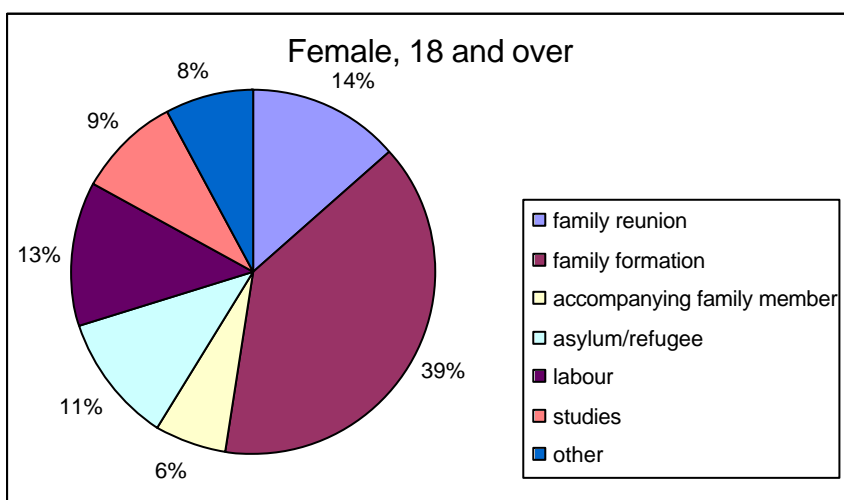
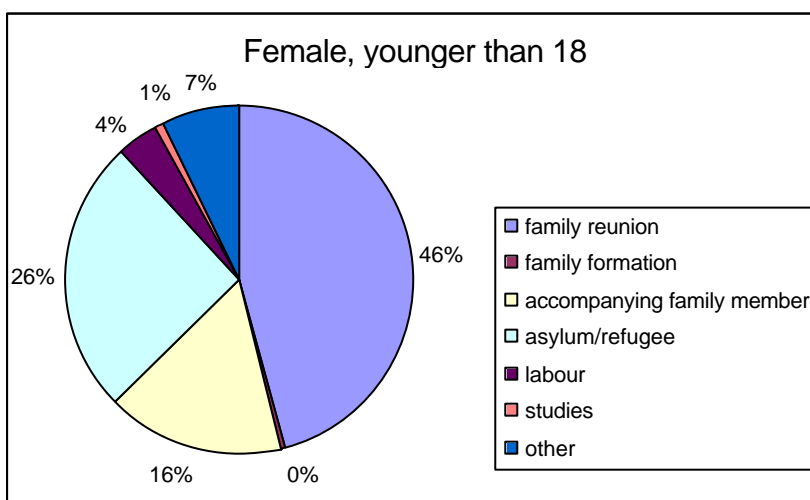
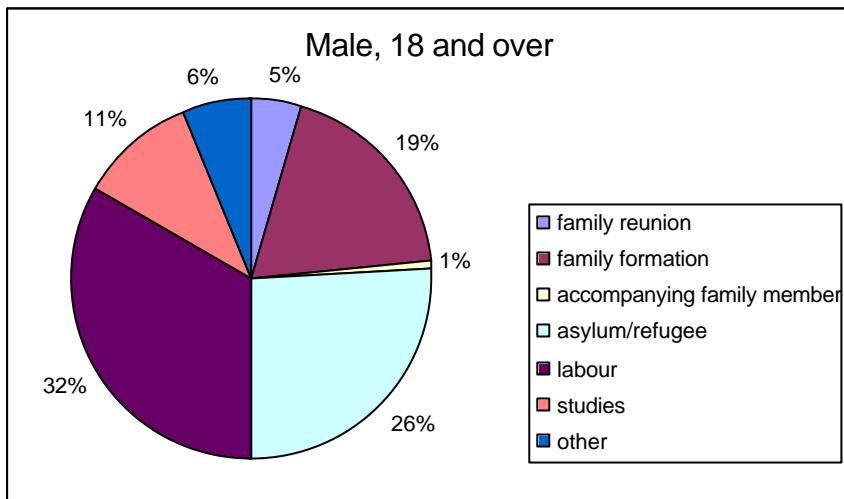


Figure 2 shows the migration motives of non-Dutch immigrants who arrived in 1998, by sex and age group. About six out of ten non-Dutch minors arrived in the same year as their parent(s). One third of the immigrating boys and a quarter of the immigrating girls were asylum seekers.

Figure 2  
Migration motives of non-Dutch immigrants by sex and age group, 1998







One third of the non-Dutch male immigrants who were 18 years or older arrived for the purpose of labour. The share of migrants for asylum was about one fourth. One out of five arrived as family formers. For women, the share of family formers was twice as high (39 percent).

## 4.2 Asylum migrants

### 4.2.1 One third of the non-Dutch nationals immigrate for the purpose of asylum or asylum-related family reunion or family formation migration

In the early nineties, the number of asylum migrants increased sharply. In 1990, some 15 thousand asylum migrants came to the Netherlands, almost 20% of the total immigration of non-Dutch nationals in that year. In 1993, their number rose to 27 thousand, almost one third of the total non-Dutch immigration. In the second half of the nineties, however, a slight decrease set in (*figure 3*). Both in 1997 and 1998, some 18 thousand non-Dutch immigrants came to the Netherlands for the purpose of asylum migration, many of them from Iraq (5.7 thousand in 1998) and Afghanistan (3.3 thousand in 1998).

*Figure 3*  
Number of asylum migrants coming to the Netherlands, by country of birth

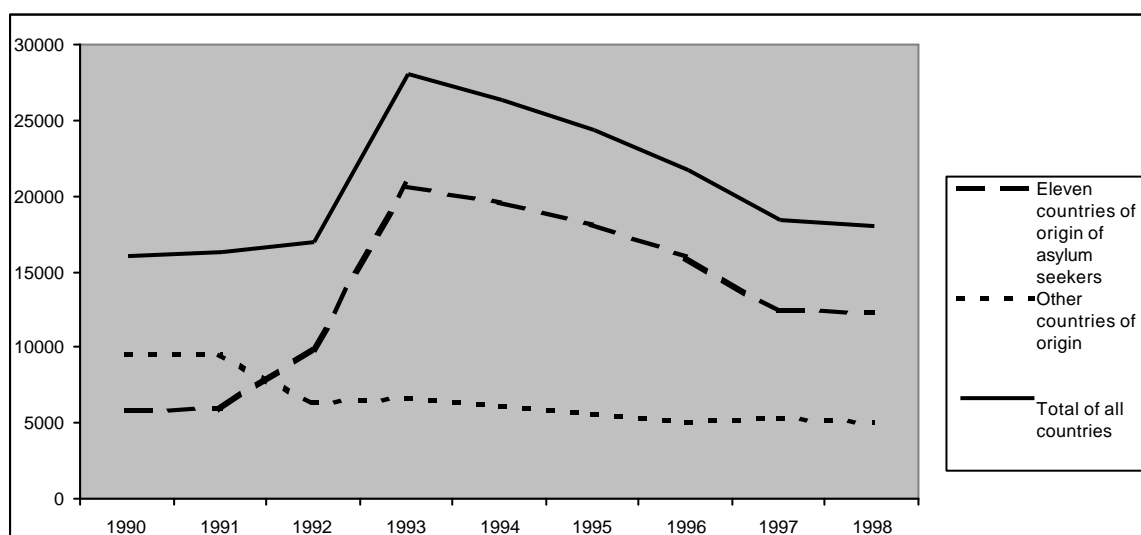


Table 3 shows the main results of the estimates. These results refer to non-Dutch nationals born in one of the eleven countries of origin of asylum seekers which have been examined in a previous paper (Nicolaas, 1999): Afghanistan, Angola, Ethiopia, Ghana, Iran, Iraq, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Vietnam, (former) Yugoslavia and Zaire/Democratic Republic of Congo. Two thirds of all asylum migrants originate from one of these eleven countries. In table 3, persons from all other countries of origin who have been registered as asylum seeker in the Central Register of non-Dutch nationals have been considered as asylum migrants. The ratio of asylum migrants to family reunionists and family forming migrants of the eleven countries of origin of asylum seekers has been applied to asylum migrants from all other countries of origin. In this way, the share of asylum migration and the consecutive family reunion and family formation migration in the total immigration of non-Dutch nationals has been estimated.

The results show that the previously assumed homogeneity of the migration inflow applied to a much lesser degree to Ghana than to the other countries examined. The number of asylum requests filed from Ghana on the one hand and the calculated numbers of asylum migrants from Ghana on the other showed a large discrepancy. It turns out that migration flows from Ghana comprise for only a small part asylum migrants. Figures from the Central Register of non-Dutch nationals indicate that the large numbers of family reunionists and family forming migrants presented in table 3 refer only to a small extent to asylum migrants, and partly to labour migrants. Because of this different nature of the migration flow, Ghana will no longer be considered a country of origin of asylum seekers. An exception is made for section 4.2.6, in which a comparison will be made with an earlier analysis on this topic.

*Table 3*  
*Asylum migration and consecutive family reunion and family formation migration of non-Dutch nationals, by country of birth, 1998*

Table 3  
Asylum migration and consecutive family reunion and family formation migration of non-Dutch

Country of birth	Asylum migration	Family reunion and family formation migration
Afghanistan	3296	579
Angola	220	65
Ethiopia	124	73
Ghana	31	516
Iran	694	325
Iraq	5664	1640
Somalia	1057	269
Sri Lanka	295	216
Vietnam	32	203
(Former) Yugoslavia	652	750
Zaire / Dem. Rep. of Congo	262	86
Total of eleven countries of origin of asylum seekers	12326	4721
Other countries of origin	5010	1919
Total of all countries	17336	6640

In 1998, some 17 thousand asylum migrants were entered into the municipal population registers. The subsequent family reunion and family formation migration of these asylum migrants amounted to almost 7 thousand: 5 thousand family reunionists and 2 thousand family forming migrants. Hence, in 1998 30% of all non-Dutch immigrants came to the Netherlands for the purpose of asylum migration or asylum-related family reunion and family formation migration.

In the period 1990-1998 almost 180 thousand asylum migrants and 45 thousand family reunionists and family forming migrants of these asylum migrants came to the Netherlands. The above-mentioned ten countries of origin of asylum seekers (excluding Ghana) accounted for two thirds of them. In these years, the largest numbers came from former Yugoslavia, Iraq and Somalia: 32 thousand, 23 thousand and 22 thousand respectively. Another 14 thousand came from Iran and a similar number from Afghanistan. The remaining asylum migrants came from various countries, especially from the former Soviet Union, China (many unaccompanied minors) and other countries in Asia and Africa.

#### *4.2.2 Asylum migrants: many males and youngsters*

The majority of immigrating asylum seekers are males. They are, on average, also younger than other immigrants. In 1998, almost 60% of the non-Dutch immigrants from one of the ten countries of origin of asylum seekers were males. In that year, the entire non-Dutch immigration was made up of about equal numbers of males and females.

In general, immigrants from countries of origin of asylum seekers are younger than non-Dutch immigrants from other countries. However, the various countries show considerable differences. Only 20% of the immigrating Yugoslavian males and females were under eighteen. On the other hand, some 50% of the asylum seekers from Somalia were under eighteen, which can be explained by – in relation to other countries of origin of asylum seekers – high numbers of unaccompanied minors from Somalia.

#### *4.2.3 Men come first, followed by women and children*

The traditional pattern of family reunion which is well-known from, for example, Turks and Moroccans in the 1970s and 1980s – men came first, followed by their partners and children – can also be found for the most important countries of origin of asylum seekers. In 1998, for instance, three-quarters of the male immigrants from countries of origin of asylum seekers came to the Netherlands for the purpose of asylum

migration. Almost 20% of the males and 40% of the females came for the purpose of family reunion or family formation migration.

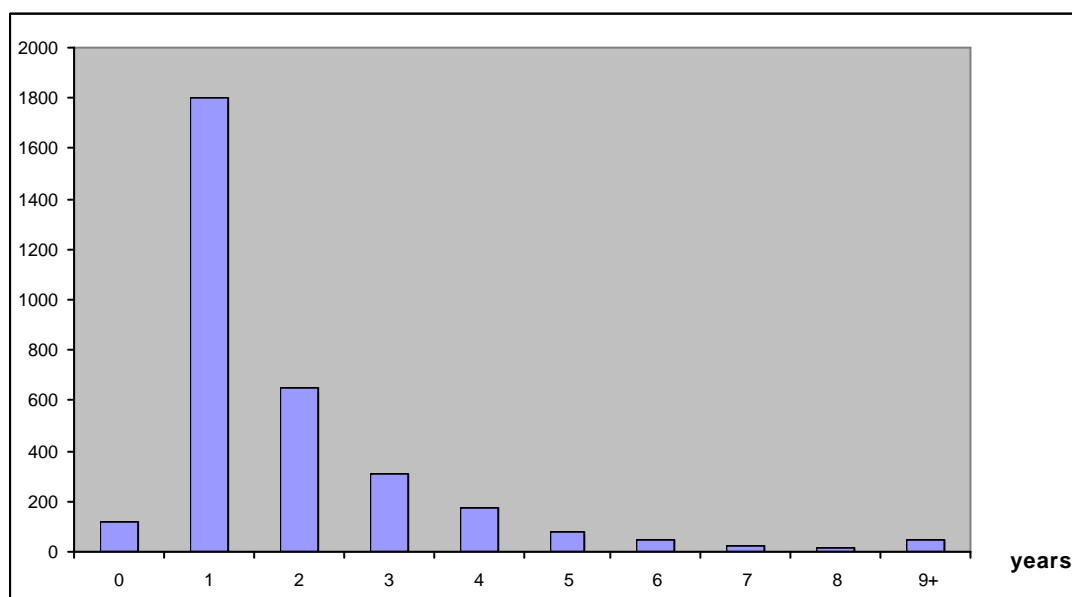
With regard to this point, considerable differences between the various countries of origin of asylum seekers exist as well. From Afghanistan and Iraq, for example (by far the most important countries of origin of asylum seekers in 1998), nine out of every ten males have immigrated to the Netherlands within the scope of asylum migration, either directly or indirectly. Former Yugoslavia, the most important country of origin of asylum seekers for years but less so by the end of the 1990s, shows a completely different pattern. In comparison with Afghanistan and Iraq, asylum migration from Yugoslavia has become a matter of minor importance, whereas family reunion and family formation migration is more important, both for females and for males.

#### 4.2.4 Family reunion often takes place after one year

In this analysis, the year of most recent arrival of asylum migrants has, at the individual level, been compared with the year of most recent arrival of the family reunionists. In contrast to the previous study on this subject (Nicolaas, 1999), the period of time between the registration of an asylum migrant and the family reunionist could therefore be determined more precisely.

From *figure 4*, it turns out that the majority of the family reunionists join the asylum migrant after one year. *On average*, the difference in calendar years between the year of most recent arrival of the family reunionist and the asylum migrant is two years.

*Figure 4*  
*Difference in years between year of most recent arrival of the family reunionist and the asylum migrant, total*



*of all countries, 1998*

Since the *peak* in family reunion migration is situated one year after the registration of the asylum migrant, the numbers of family reunionists and family forming migrants in the period 1991-1998 have been related to the numbers of asylum migrants in the period 1990-1997. In this way, the ratio between numbers of family reunionists / family forming migrants and numbers of asylum migrants has been calculated per country of birth. The ratios are presented in *table 4*.

For the total number of asylum migrants it is estimated that for every four asylum migrants one person has immigrated for the purpose of family reunion or family formation. This estimated ratio hardly changes if the *average* period of time (of two years) between the registration of an asylum migrant and the family reunionist / family forming migrant is being used. In that case, for every four to five asylum migrants one person has immigrated for the purpose of family reunion or family formation.

Table 4 shows that this ratio differs considerably by country of origin, which might be related to the family-context in which immigrants from the different countries come to the Netherlands. If, for example, immigration from a certain country comprises for the larger part families (Iran and Yugoslavia for example), the number of family reunionists and family forming migrants from this country, as a consequence, will be low.

*Table 4*  
*Family reunion and family formation migration 1991-1998 in relation to*  
*asylum migration 1990-1997, by country of birth*

Country of birth	Asylum migration 1990-1997	Family reunion and family formation migration 1991-1998	Number of family reunionists and family forming migrants per 1,000 asylum migrants
Eastern Europe	37201	6964	187
of which:			
(Former) Yugoslavia	31543	6400	203
Asia (excl. Turkey, Japan and Indonesia)	54668	15897	291
of which:			
Afghanistan	9600	1381	144
Iran	13484	2030	151
Iraq	16817	4882	290
Sri Lanka	3334	1489	447
Vietnam	2116	1222	578
Afrika (excl. Morocco)	40107	9094	227
of which:			
Angola	2132	342	160
Ethiopia	3696	608	165
Somalia	20656	1743	84
Zaire / Dem. Rep. of Congo	3409	580	170
Other countries of origin	30419	6827	224
Total of all countries	162396	38782	239
Total of ten countries of origin of asylum seekers	106787	20677	194

#### 4.2.5 Comparison of the results with those of previous study

As a plausibility check, the estimates of the number of asylum migrants and family reunionists and family forming migrants of this study have been compared to the results of a previous study on this subject (Nicolaas, 1999).

It turns out that for the total of the eleven countries concerned the difference in the estimated number of *asylum migrants* for the period 1990-1996 according to both investigations is very small (*table 5*). This supports the assumption that the distribution by migration motive for earlier years is not biased due to the retrospective character of the investigation.

With regard to the number of *family reunionists and family forming migrants*, the estimates according to the previous study are generally higher than the estimates presented here. The main reason for these differences is the fact that in the previous analysis the total immigration from a certain country has been attributed to asylum migration or family reunion / family formation migration: every immigrant who could not be considered an asylum migrant, has been counted as a family reunionist or family forming migrant. In the current analysis, apart from asylum migration and family reunion / family formation migration, other migration motives such as labour and study are considered.

*Table 5*  
*Numbers of asylum migrants and family reunionists / family forming migrants according to two studies, total for the eleven countries of origin of asylum seekers, 1990-1996*

	Central Register of non-Dutch nationals, 1 January 1999	Nicolaas, 1999
Asylum migrants	95921	99263
Family reunionists and family forming migrants	18467	22328

#### 4.2.6 Conclusions

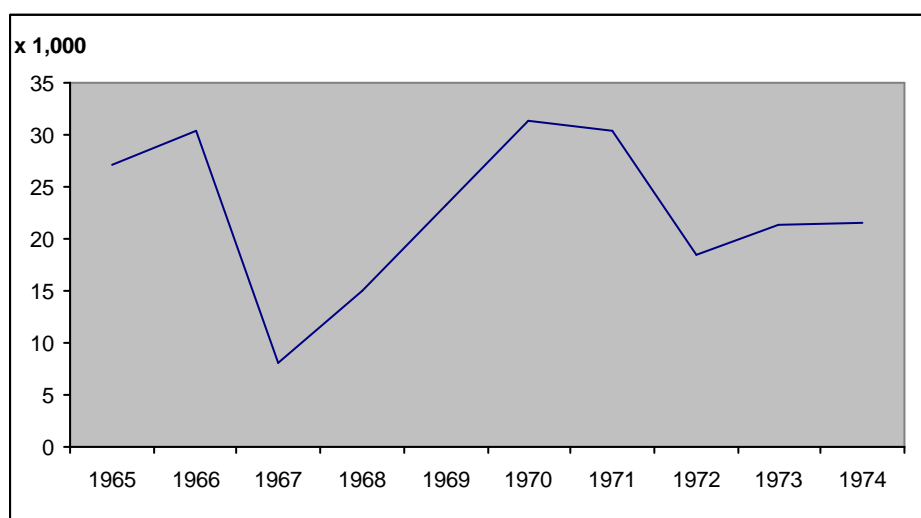
In 1998, some 17 thousand asylum migrants were registered in the municipal population registers, about a fifth of the total number of non-Dutch immigrants in that year. The extent of family reunion and family formation migration caused by these asylum migrants is still relatively modest. Family reunion generally takes place one year after the asylum seeker has been registered in a municipal population register. By relating the number of family reunionists and family forming migrants in the period 1991-1998 to the number of asylum migrants in the period 1990-1997, it is estimated that for every four asylum migrants one person immigrated for the purpose of family reunion or family formation. These results correspond with results from a previous analysis of this subject for the period 1990-1996 (Nicolaas, 1999).

#### 4.3 Labour migrants

##### 4.3.1 Introduction

Because of a shortage of manpower in the Netherlands in the 1960s and early 1970s, foreign labourers were recruited from Mediterranean countries, such as Algeria, Greece, Italy, Morocco, Portugal, Spain, Tunisia, Turkey and Yugoslavia. The number of immigrants from these countries, for the major part employed in manufacturing industries, exceeded 30 thousand in some years (*figure 6*). In the 1960s, nine out of ten immigrants from these countries were men. It was assumed at the time that these workers would stay only temporarily. Many Spaniards and Italians indeed stayed only for some time, after which they returned home. For most Turks and Moroccans the stay was lengthier.

*Figure 5*

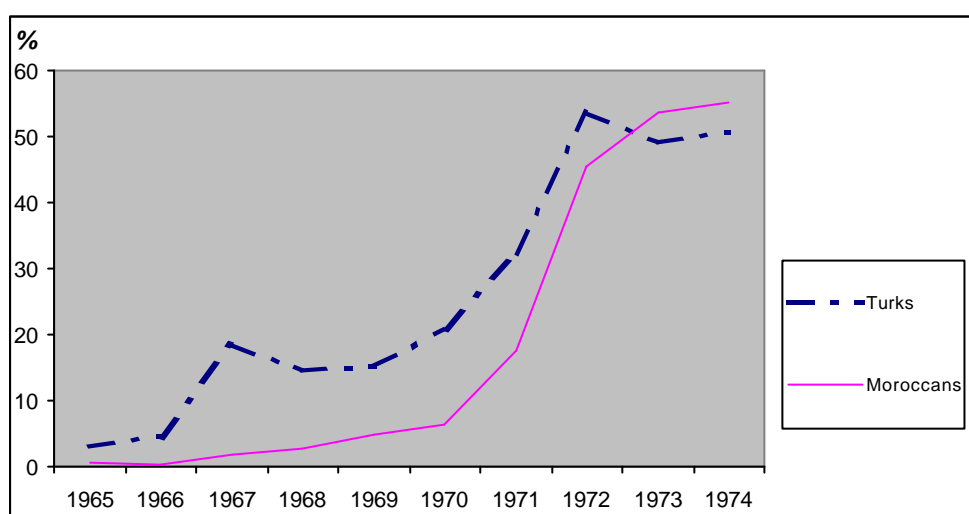


*Immigration from Mediterranean countries <sup>1)</sup> into the Netherlands*

<sup>1)</sup> Algeria, Greece, Italy, Morocco, Portugal, Spain, Tunisia, Turkey, Yugoslavia

As from 1973, recruitment of these foreign workers was no longer allowed. However, the number of Turkish and Moroccan immigrants showed a further increase after 1973. This was partly caused by the growing importance of family reunion migration. From the early 1970s onwards, many labour migrants from Turkey and Morocco sent for their families in their country of origin. As a consequence, the share of Turkish and Moroccan women in immigration increased considerably in the early 1970s (*figure 7*). Furthermore, in 1975, a regularisation took place. Some 15 thousand former illegal immigrants took advantage of this opportunity. Half of them were Turks or Moroccans (Groenendael, 1986).

*Figure 6*  
*Share of women in immigration into the Netherlands*



#### 4.3.2 Many labour migrants from Western countries

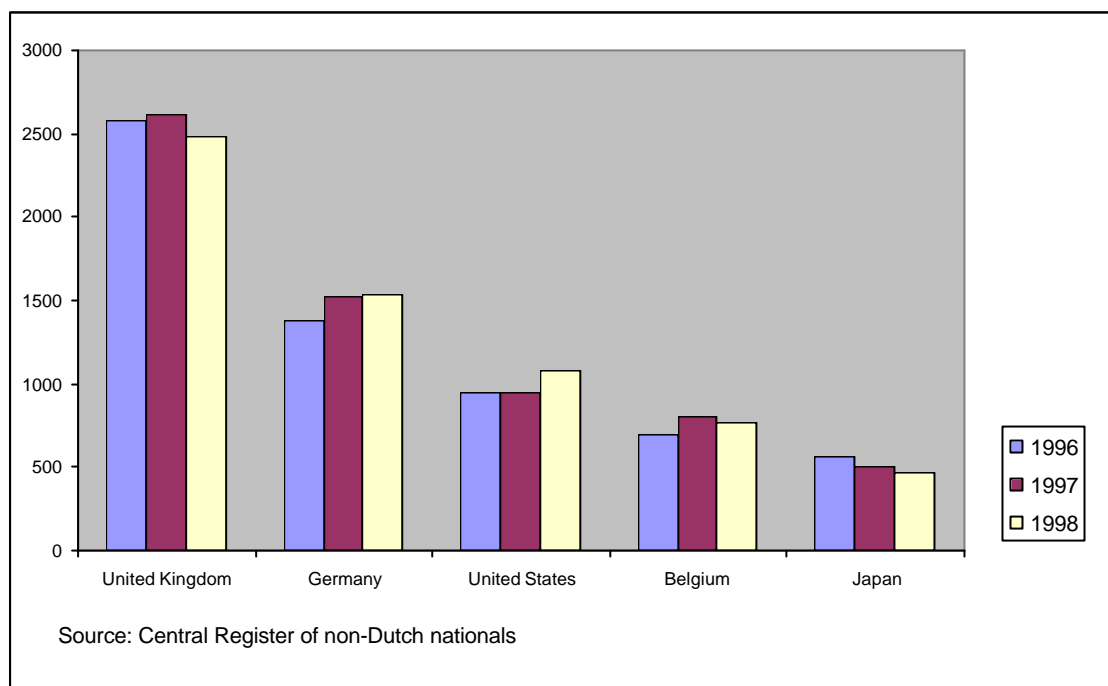
In the early 1990s labour migrants were less numerous. More recently, labour migration has largely been confined to people from Western European and other developed countries, such as the United States of America and Japan.

In 1998, 8.5 thousand European labour immigrants came to the Netherlands. The migration of workers from other EU-countries increased by seven percent between 1996 and 1998. The largest group of labour migrants came from the United Kingdom (2.5 thousand in 1998, *figure 8*). The number of labour migrants from this country was even larger than that from the neighbouring countries Belgium and Germany combined.

Almost fifty percent of the non-Dutch immigrants from other EU-countries migrate to the Netherlands for the purpose of labour. Among those with British citizenship, six out of ten are labour migrants. For Belgian immigrants this is four out of ten and for German immigrants about one out of three.

The number of labour migrants from outside the European Union amounted to 6.5 thousand in 1998, thousand of them originating from the United States and 500 from Japan. Many were highly skilled. In recent years there were hardly any labour migrants from Turkey or Morocco.

Figure 7  
Labour migration into the Netherlands, by country of birth



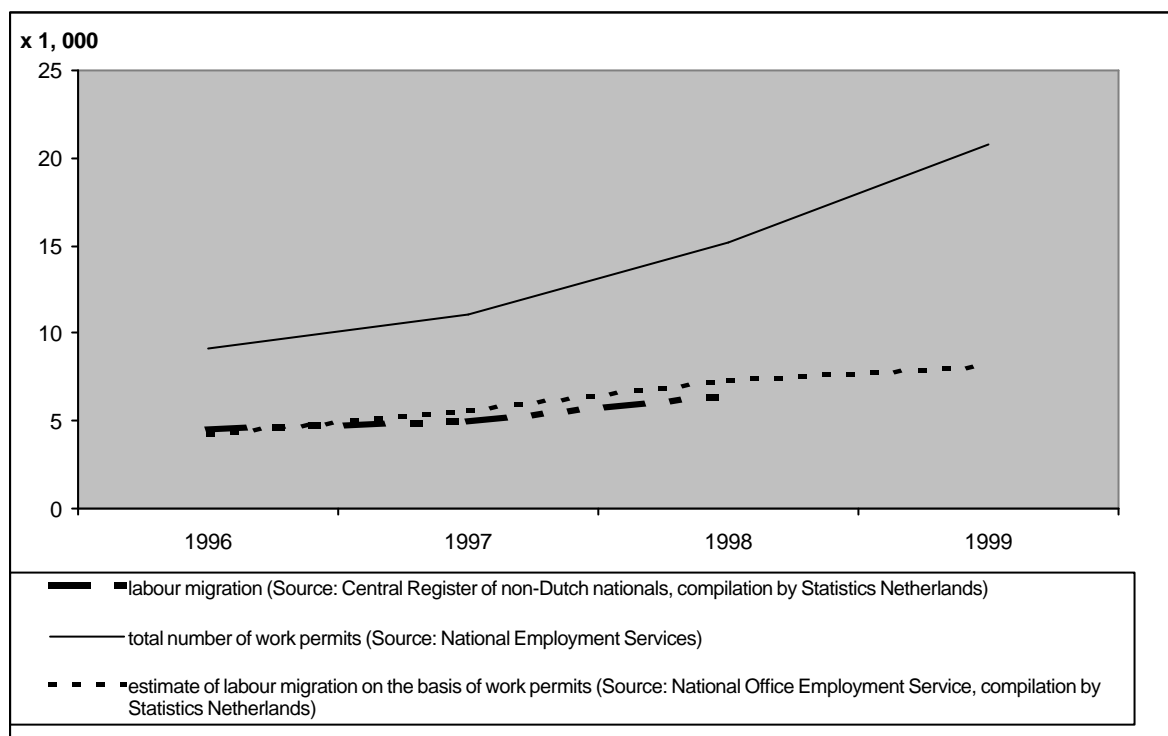
Because of shortages of manpower in both the Netherlands and other EU-countries, labour migration from non-Western countries plays an increasingly important role. According to the data from the Central Register of non-Dutch nationals, the number of immigrants from outside the European Union increased by more than 40 percent between 1996 and 1998. This rise is not due to the migration from 'traditional labour migration countries', such as the United States or Japan. The number of Japanese workers immigrating into the Netherlands even slightly decreased in the same period. The increase in the number of immigrants for the purpose of labour can – for the greater part – be attributed to the migration from Eastern Europe and from Third World countries.

As a check on plausibility, additional estimates based on numbers of work permits were used (*figure 9*). As stated before, it should be taken into account that in many cases in which a work permit is provided, the persons involved cannot be considered as migrants for the purpose of labour. Therefore, not all persons who were granted a work permit were counted as labour immigrants. The alternative estimates of the number of labour migrants based on work permit data show an even stronger increase (almost 75 percent) than according to the estimate on the basis of the Central Register of non-Dutch nationals.

The strong rise in the number of labour immigrants in the late 1990s is related to shortages on the Dutch labour market. One out of three workers arriving in the Netherlands from outside the European Union were posted there by their companies.



Figure 8  
Labour migration into the Netherlands from outside the European Union



#### 4.3.3 Guest workers in the 1990s: managers from the USA and informaticians from India

In the 1990s, contrary to the 1960s, many foreign workers migrating to the Netherlands were highly educated. Data from the National Employment Services show that from the United States of America comparatively many technical experts, managers and informaticians migrated to the Netherlands. Furthermore, the increase in the number of informaticians from India and the Republic of South Africa is remarkable (to 430 and 200 respectively in 1999).

The strong increase in the total number of work permits has partly been caused by the increase in the number of work permits granted to asylum seekers. In 1999, more than 4 thousand work permits were provided to asylum seekers who were not yet granted refugee or any other (humanitarian or temporary) status. Most of these asylum seekers were employed as seasonal workers in agriculture. At the moment, asylum seekers are allowed to work under certain conditions and for no longer than twelve weeks a year. The employment of asylum seekers does not concern labour migration in a strict sense, as these people have arrived for a different purpose (asylum). However, the situation is to a certain degree comparable with the situation of labour shortages in the 1960s, when lower skilled workers were employed in manufacturing industries.

## 5. Conclusions, expectations and further research

In the period 1995-2000 the number of immigrants coming to the Netherlands has strongly increased. In 2000, immigration into the Netherlands reached a record level of 130 thousand persons. The previous record dated from 1998, when 122 thousand persons immigrated into the Netherlands, including 82 thousand non-Dutch nationals. The most numerous groups of foreign immigrants to the Netherlands arrive for the purpose of asylum, for the purpose of labour or for family reunion or family formation. Each of these four groups accounts for some 20 percent of the total immigration of non-Dutch nationals. The remaining 20 percent consist of students, pensioners, persons who came to the Netherlands for a medical treatment, trainees and au pairs.

Many family reunionists are family members of labour migrants who arrived in earlier years. If the situation of labour shortages in the Netherlands will last for a longer period, labour migrants will keep coming to the Netherlands, and so will their possible family members. In the long run, there may be even more labour migration due to labour shortages caused by the ageing of the work force.

The number of family reunionists and family forming migrants caused by asylum migrants is still small, but growing. Estimating future numbers of asylum migrants and their family-reuniting and family forming migrants however, is difficult. Asylum migration depends on several factors, partly related to one another, such as:

- the political situation in the countries of origin;
- the number of requests for asylum filed from these countries;
- the share of asylum seekers granted a residence permit in the Netherlands, who can subsequently register themselves as migrant in a municipal population register;
- asylum policy of the Dutch government in relation to asylum policies in other countries.

Despite the uncertainties involved with these factors, it can be expected that in the short run the number of family-reuniting and family forming migrants from countries that have recently generated large flows of asylum seekers, such as Afghanistan and Iraq, will increase. In fact, the number of family reunionists and family forming migrants from these two countries has already increased in the past few years. On the other hand, the number of family-reuniting and family forming migrants will become negligible for countries with low numbers of asylum requests in recent years. Examples are Angola, Ethiopia, Sri Lanka and Vietnam.

The estimates show that the migration of asylum seekers has become an important part of the total immigration into the Netherlands. It is therefore recommended to monitor this migration category on several aspects. Firstly, further investigation of the share of asylum seekers that eventually register themselves as asylum migrants is necessary. Secondly, the calculations of the numbers of family reunionists and family forming migrants following these asylum migrants has to be completed and updated. Finally, further study of the relation between these two categories of immigration will be necessary in order to prove the above-mentioned expectations and to get a better grip on the whole process of the registration of asylum seekers and their possible family members. Two examples for further investigation will be given below:

- it is recommended to include the migration motives of the mother and/or the father of immigrating children. In this way, relating asylum migration to family reunion and family formation migration can be improved. Furthermore, family reunion and family formation migration caused by asylum migrants can be distinguished more precisely from family reunionists following labour migrants;
- in addition to the analysis of the migration motives of *immigrants*, the *outflow* of migrants by migration motive should be analysed in order to get a better understanding of the dynamics in migration flows. In this way, for example, estimates of the chances of migrants to deregister from the municipal registers by original migration motive can be made in the long term.

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