

Extended abstract EPC 2006

Session: Integration process of migrant populations

Title: Longitudinal database on immigrants

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Since the end of the 1980s, international migration has been the most important source of population growth in countries of the European Union. Because of the increased importance of immigration, there is an also growing demand for detailed information on the *integration* of immigrants in society and, more specifically, their socio-economic position in the course of time.

This presentation focuses on the labour market integration of non-Dutch immigrants in the Netherlands. Our *longitudinal database on immigrants* includes immigrants who arrived between 1990 and 2003. Information on the labour market position of these immigrants is available for the period 1999 - 2003. A distinction can be made between variables like age, sex, country of birth and the reason for the migration.

The distinction between reasons for migration, such as asylum, labour, family reunion and marriage, is based on administrative data from Central Register of non-Dutch nationals from the Ministry of Justice in the Netherlands. This data has, at the individual level, been linked with data from the Dutch local population registers. In the next step, this combined database is linked to the Social Statistics Database SSD. The SSD is primarily based on register information and data from business and household surveys which is not available in registers. The registers contain demographic data, income tax data, data on labour market participation, the dependence on social security benefits, participation in education and housing facilities.

Our analysis is based on three socioeconomic categories – people with a job, people depending on social benefits and others – in accordance with the main source of income in the year concerned. For example, someone who had a benefit for part of the year but who received most of his or her income from work in that year is classed as having a job, not as having a benefit.

The results of the study show that, in the past few years, it has become more difficult for asylum migrants to find a job. About 30 percent of male migrants who arrived in the Netherlands in 1999 had a job in 2003. For asylum migrants who came to the country in 1995, 40 percent had a job four years later. The lower labour participation of more recent immigrants is related to the less favourable situation on the Dutch labour market.

Family migrants and (especially) marriage migrants are more likely to find work than asylum migrants. This is partly because asylum procedures take such a long time to

be completed and because asylum seekers may only work under strict conditions before they have a residence permit. Until 1998, they were not allowed to work at all. In the long run, asylum migrants do make up some of this lost ground on the labour market compared with family migrants. The arrears on marriage migrants remain about the same size however. After a few years, more than 70 percent of male marriage migrants who came to the Netherlands in 1995 had a job.