

The country of second jobs

983,000 employed Dutch people held a second job in 2025, 10.4% of all workers. That is the highest share in the EU, where the average stands at 4.1%.

Summary

Nowhere in the EU do as many people stack jobs as in the Netherlands. In 2025, 983,000 workers aged 15 to 64 held a second job, 10.4% of all employed people, against an EU average of 4.1%. Denmark follows at 9.7%, Germany stands at 5.1%. The explanation sits close to the part-time structure: where main jobs are small, there is room to stack. For recruitment the second job is an underrated signal: nearly a million people demonstrate they can and will work more hours than their main job offers.

Beside the question of how many people work sits the question of how many jobs they hold. In the Netherlands the answer is strikingly often: more than one. This paper measures the stackers and places the Netherlands in the European line-up.

One in ten workers stacks

In 2025, 983,000 Dutch workers aged 15 to 64 held a second job beside their main one. That is 10.4% of all employed people, more than one in ten.

10.4% of employed Dutch people held a second job in 2025



Employed people aged 15 to 64 with a second job as a share of all employed, 2025. Eurostat, `lfsa_e2ged` and `lfsa_egan`, retrieved 1 September 2026.

The EU average is 4.1%; the Netherlands sits two and a half times above it. Only Iceland, outside the EU, scores higher at 11.4%. At the bottom sit Italy at 0.8% and Bulgaria at 0.5%.

Why the Netherlands, of all places

The explanation sits close to another Dutch record, described earlier in this library's paper on the hours reserve: nowhere is so much work done part-time. Small main jobs leave room for a second one, and some sectors are even built on it, with rosters of a few half-days a week.

The countries at the top of the list are no coincidence: Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden combine, like the Netherlands, high labour participation with flexible hours patterns. At the bottom sit countries where a job is nearly always full-time and a second one hardly fits logistically.

The second job as a recruitment signal

For recruitment, the second job is information almost nobody uses. Whoever combines two jobs demonstrates three things: hours are left, there is willingness to work them, and the current main employment apparently offers no room or no reason for them.

Nearly a million people give off that signal. For employers who roster on small contracts, the same population is a risk in the other direction: their own part-timer with a second job elsewhere is already half inside another employer, and an extension of hours there is a departure here.

What this figure does not say

- The motive is missing. The statistic counts jobs, not reasons. The specialist who teaches on the side and the courier stacking two small contracts to get by both count as one.
- A second job is not by definition spare capacity. Whoever already works 40 hours across two jobs has no hours left; whoever works twice 12 hours may well have. The hours side sits in the paper on the hours reserve, not here.
- Self-employed side work beside salaried employment falls under the survey definition; the boundary with hobby work is soft in surveys.

What this means

- **The quotable number.** 983,000 workers held a second job in 2025, 10.4% of the total and the highest share in the EU. The average is 4.1%.
- **Stacking is normal here.** A candidate with two jobs is not an oddity in the Netherlands but one in ten. Whoever asks about it, instead of rejecting on it, reads availability and appetite for work in it.
- **The hours reserve has an address.** Part of the stackers demonstrably want more hours than the main job offers. Offering a larger contract is cheaper than finding a new candidate.
- **Small contracts leak.** Employers who roster in half-days effectively share their staff with other employers. The initiative for an extension lies with whoever asks first.

Method and sources

The numerator comes from Eurostat, dataset lfsa_e2ged, persons aged 15 to 64 with a second job, in thousands. The denominator comes from dataset lfsa_egan, all employed persons aged 15 to 64. Both reference year 2025, retrieved on 1 September 2026, licensed CC BY 4.0. The 10.4% share is our calculation from those two series; Eurostat does not publish the share directly in this dataset. The same denominator choice, ages 15 to 64, is applied to every country.

The survey counts persons with more than one job in the reference week, regardless of the size or motive of the second job. What is missing: the hours and motives behind the second job, and the sector split of main and side job, which would interest rostering employers most and which this dataset does not offer.

- Eurostat (lfsa_e2ged), personen met een tweede baan, CC BY 4.0
- Eurostat (lfsa_egan), werkzame personen, CC BY 4.0