

Harry Mulisch for low-literate people

'Nederland Leest' (The Netherlands read) has become the biggest reading campaign in the country this year. This time, the action targets an even more diversified group of readers. The book *Twee vrouwen* (Two women) by Harry Mulisch – the main feature of the campaign 'Nederland Leest' – is published in six different editions. The total edition amounts to 1.030.500 copies. This was stated today in The Hague, where minister Plasterk received the first copies of *Twee vrouwen* from Harry Mulisch himself. Goal of 'Nederland Leest' is that as many people as possible read the same book at the same time, to then discuss it amongst each other. The action starts on Friday 17th October and lasts until Friday 14th November. The Public Libraries play the central role in 'Nederland Leest'.

Low-literate people, migrants and vocational pupils who encounter difficulties with language, can also join the national campaign 'Nederland Leest' this year. Especially for people who experience great difficulty with reading, the book has been re-written in simple Dutch, enabling also these people to join the discussion about the book read by the whole country. The special edition is an initiative by Stichting Lezen & Schrijven. Stichting Lezen & Schrijven started a book series in 2007, especially for low-literate adults, with the name *Leeslicht* (Reading light). The rewritten edition of Harry Mulisch's *Twee vrouwen* is the tenth book in the *Leeslicht* series.

The campaign 'Nederland Leest' exists since 2006. Every year, the campaign invites all the Dutch to read the same book and to discuss it with each other. In 2006, the book *Dubbelspel* (Double) by Frank Martinus Arion formed the centre of attention, it was published in an edition of 725.000. In 2007, 957.500 free copies of *De gelukkige klas* (The happy class) by Theo Thijssen were dispersed amongst the members of public libraries. The final edition of the 'Nederland Leest' book 2008 will be announced later this year. *Twee vrouwen* will then be in print for the 24th time. For the third consecutive year, Philip Freriks is the ambassador for 'Nederland Leest'. Annejet van der Zijl wrote the eulogy on the book.

The festive distribution of *Twee vrouwen* begins in the night of Thursday 16th October 2008 at midnight in various libraries throughout the country. Libraries are organising many activities for their members. Main sponsor NS (Dutch Railways) organise a special 'Nederland Leest' activity on Tuesday 21st October. On Friday afternoon on 14th November, the campaign will be concluded festively at the Stadsschouwburg Amsterdam, in the presence of Harry Mulisch and ambassador of 'Nederland Leest' Philip Freriks. More information: www.nederlandleest.nl.