



# Press release

Statistics Netherlands

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## More building permits for business units

Nearly 34 billion guilders worth of building permits were issued in 1998, a 6% increase on 1997. According to Statistics Netherlands the rise is mainly due to the increase in the number of business units. Housing construction saw a 6% dip. The number of dwellings for which a building permit was issued even fell by 4% to less than 88 thousand.

In 1998 almost 91 thousand dwellings were finished, slightly less than in 1997. The figures for the major urban areas on the other hand contrast with the nation-wide trend in that about 25% more new dwellings were finished in 1998 than in 1997. However, the number of new building permits issued in these urban regions fell by some 20%.

### Value increase

The value of the building permits issued increased by 6% in 1998, reaching a total of almost 34 billion guilders. This is mainly due to the business unit increase (+21%). Business services (+53%) and education (+40%) went up most according to Statistics Netherlands.

Residential buildings saw a 6% dip. The provinces where the value of the permits issued increased were Limburg, Friesland and Gelderland. The dips were in Utrecht and Zeeland. Flevoland and Overijssel saw the greatest falls in residential building permits. In Gelderland and Friesland the value increased most in the business sector, (+21%). This makes the provinces Flevoland, Friesland and Gelderland the fastest growing. The subsidised sector also saw a 21% increase with the provinces Limburg, Overijssel and Drenthe as major growth areas.

### Residential units

In 1998 building permits were issued for 88 thousand dwellings, a 14% dip on 1997. This dip was concentrated in Flevoland, Overijssel and Groningen. The province of South Holland issued the most permits for dwellings, over 19 thousand; nevertheless a 15% drop on 1997.

In 1998 almost 91 thousand dwellings were finished, 2% less than in 1997. The drop was concentrated in Drenthe and Limburg. North and South Holland stood out with a 20% increase.

### More dwellings around the big cities

In 1998 some 40 thousand dwellings were constructed around the major cities in the so-called BON-areas, up 6% on 1997. Growth was concentrated around Amsterdam, The Hague and Rotterdam, where almost 27 thousand dwellings were finished, up 30% on 1997. Around Utrecht the number of finished dwellings fell in 1998 (-37%). The other major cities saw 21 thousand new dwellings, 6% less than in 1997. The areas around the major cities account for two thirds of all new dwellings. Outside the city regions the number of finished dwellings fell by 9% to 29 thousand.

### Fewer building permits in major city areas

There has been a 15% dip in building permits issued in the seven big city areas, especially around the three major cities (-20%). The increase reported earlier by Statistics Netherlands for 1998 in the number of orders received by architects for residential construction around the Hague did not show up in more building permits issued yet. There were more building permits for Arnhem-Nijmegen (+22%) and Utrecht (+8%) than in 1997. These are the only regions with more dwellings under construction in December 1998 than in December 1997.

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