



Press release

Statistics Netherlands

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Housing associations build fewer new homes

Last year housing associations built 20% fewer new houses than in 1997. At the same time the sales of houses by housing associations increased by 10%. Both trends fit in the Dutch government's policy to stimulate home ownership. According to figures from Statistics Netherlands in Voorburg, the structural vacancy of dwellings belonging to housing associations fell for the first time in 1998.

Construction at new low, sales up

Construction of new houses by housing associations fell by 20% in 1998, just as in 1997. The share of rented houses for low income tenants was at its lowest ever in 1998: only 22% of all newly built houses in 1998 were reserved for the low-income rent sector.

In 1998 housing associations sold more than 18 thousand houses to their occupants, 10% more than in 1997. Relatively most houses were sold in the provinces of Flevoland, Friesland and Zeeland. This is connected with the high vacancy rate in these provinces.

Vacancy down sharply, but up in Flevoland

The policy of selling and demolishing houses has clearly been effective in some areas: in 1998 the structural vacancy of housing association dwellings fell by 15%. On 1 January 1999 2.8 per 1,000 houses were unoccupied.

Vacancy fell by most in the province of Groningen because almost 3% of the housing stock was either sold or demolished. The fight against vacancy in the province of Flevoland was less successful, however: despite all efforts, the vacancy rates rose by 25%. House sales are still going well, but demolition has not really got off the ground. This is partly because Flevoland has a relatively young housing stock, which means that not many houses need to be demolished.

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