



Press release

Statistics Netherlands

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More difficult to find staff in 1998

Employers had more difficulty finding staff last year. Figures from Statistics Netherlands show that nearly half of job vacancies at the end of September were proving difficult to fill. One year earlier this was only the case for one third of vacancies. People with vocational training are especially difficult to find.

Recruitment problems for nearly half of vacancies

At the end of September last year just over 117 thousand vacancies were still open in the private sector, 40% more than in the previous year. The number of job vacancies that are difficult to fill rose even more sharply: employers found it hard to find people for nearly half of vacant jobs, compared with one third in 1997. It proved particularly hard to find people with vocational training or an academic degree; half of the jobs requiring these qualifications were difficult to recruit for. Finding people with primary or secondary education was less of a problem; people were hard to find for one third of these jobs.

Differences between sectors

The biggest recruitment problems were in the construction industry, where it was difficult to find people for nearly 6 thousand of the just over 8 thousand vacancies. The fewest problems with recruitment were encountered in the health and welfare sector, cultural and other services, and energy and water companies.

More vacancies for people with secondary education

Compared with one year earlier, there were more vacancies for people with first and second stage secondary education. Nearly 60% of all unfilled vacancies at the end of September were for people with pre-vocational or senior vocational training. Demand for people with secondary education also increased, which was quite remarkable in view of the fact that the share of vacancies for people in these qualifications

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had fallen continuously in previous years. In 1993 27% of vacancies were for people with general secondary education, in 1997 this had fallen to as little as 5 p%; last year it rose again for the first time to 8%. Demand for staff with vocational college or academic qualifications also rose, while the demand for workers with primary education diminished.

Regional differences

On a national scale the number of vacancies was 40% higher than one year earlier. The largest growth was in the province of Flevoland, where the number of vacancies was more than twice that of the year before. Vacancies also grew in the provinces of Noord-Holland and Gelderland, while in the three northern provinces and Zuid-Holland the figures were below average.

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