



Press release

Statistics Netherlands

PR99-174
8 July 1999
9.30 hrs

Strong rise in vacant jobs

At the end of March 1999 146 thousand jobs were available in the private sector, 22 thousand more than at the end of December 1998. This is the highest number of job vacancies ever measured by Statistics Netherlands. The labour market was also particularly dynamic in the first quarter.

Strong surge in vacancies

In the last period of strong economic growth the highest number of vacancies measured was 134 thousand in March 1990. This was followed by a decline to as few as 33 thousand at the end of 1993. From this low, the number picked up gradually again to reach 70 thousand by the end of 1996. In 1997 and the first two quarters of 1998 growth accelerated and the number reached 139 thousand at the end of June 1998.

In the second half of last year the turbulent growth in the number of job vacancies seemed to have ended. In the third quarter it fell by more than usual for this time, and in the fourth quarter the number rose considerably less strongly than in the same quarter in the previous year.

In the first quarter of this year the growth rate surged up again. At the end of March the number of vacancies was 22 thousand higher than in the previous quarter. The increase was even larger than that in the first quarter of last year, and pushed up the number of available jobs to 146 thousand at the end of March, the highest number ever recorded by Statistics Netherlands.

Continuing strong demand for manpower

The large number of vacancies fits in the overall picture of the continuing strong demand for labour. Figures published earlier by Statistics Netherlands on trends in job numbers already showed an undiminished growth in the number of jobs in the first quarter of this year. In the same period, registered unemployment fell at a rate of about 5 thousand a month.

Statistics Netherlands
Press Office

P.O. Box 4000
2270 JM Voorburg
The Netherlands
tel. +31 70 337 58 16
fax +31 70 337 59 71
e-mail:
persdienst@cbs.nl

Statistics Netherlands
is a department of
the Ministry of
Economic Affairs

New and filled vacancies

The number of vacant positions at the end of a quarter is the outcome of the sum of jobs becoming vacant on the one hand, minus existing vacancies being filled on the other. In the first quarter 225 thousand jobs became vacant, while 204 thousand old vacancies were filled, on balance pushing up the number of job vacancies by 22 thousand. The number of new and filled vacancies have never been this high since Statistics Netherlands started measuring these numbers, which is indicative of a very dynamic labour market.

Sectors of industry

Compared with the previous quarter, the number of vacancies rose in nearly all sectors of industry, with the exception of computer services, IT and finance, where it remained stable. The strongest growth was in trade, hotels, restaurants and bars, and in construction.

Vacancies in the public sector

In addition to the 146 thousand vacancies in private companies, at the end of March 1999 another 12 thousand jobs were available in the public sector. Four thousand of these were in education. Unlike the number of vacancies in the private sector, the number in the public sector did not increase in the first quarter.

For further information, please contact S. van den Elshout, tel. +31 70 337 54 56; e-mail: belt@cbs.nl.