



Press release

Statistics Netherlands

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Record number of vacancies

By the end of June 1999 the number of unfilled vacancies in the private sector was 182 thousand. That is 36 thousand more than at the end of March. It is the highest number of vacancies ever observed by Statistics Netherlands. The job market was more dynamic than ever. Both the number of filled and the number of unfilled vacancies were at a record high.

Great increase in the number of vacancies

The highest number of vacancies in the private sector during the previous economic boom, in March 1990, was 134 thousand. Then came the fall, down to a mere 33 thousand by the end of 1993. There was a gradual recovery to 70 thousand by the end of 1996. During 1997 and the first two quarters of 1998 there was accelerated growth to 139 by the end of June 1998.

In the second half of last year the abundant growth seemed to have ended. However, in the first half of 1999 the number of vacancies went up substantially again. The most recent figures show that this trend continued in the second quarter. By the end of June there were 36 thousand more vacancies than at the end of the previous quarter, bringing the total to 182 thousand. That made the growth rate substantially higher than in the second quarter of 1998.

Furthermore, it was the highest number of vacancies Statistics Netherlands ever observed.

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Demand for labour continuous

The large number of vacancies confirms the continued great demand for labour in the second quarter. Figures published previously by Statistics Netherlands on job developments showed that the number of jobs continued to grow in the second quarter of this year. In the same period registered unemployment fell by about 4 thousand a month.

Dynamic job market

The number of vacancies at the end of a quarter is the result of the number of new vacancies created on the one hand, and the number of vacancies filled on the other. These figures have never been so high during the time Statistics Netherlands has observed new vacancies and vacancies filled. This hints at a dynamic job market. In the second quarter there were 250 thousand new vacancies, against 214 thousand vacancies filled. Because there were more new vacancies than could be filled, there was an increase in vacancies of 36 thousand on balance.

Developments branch dependent

The number of vacancies increased in almost every branch of industry, compared to the previous quarter. The exceptions were hotels and restaurants, culture and other services. Here the number of vacancies remained about the same. The largest increases in the number of vacancies were in the construction industry, transport and communications, in trade and in business services.

Tight job market

The number of unfilled vacancies per 1000 jobs shows how tight the job market is. For all private companies put together the average is 34 vacancies per 1000 jobs. Some branches of industry are way beyond the average. IT, with 87 vacancies per 1000 jobs is the leader, followed by business services with 53, and construction with 47 vacancies per 1000 jobs. Hotels and restaurants also have a hard time getting employees. Although the number of unfilled vacancies fell slightly, it was still at 36 by the end of June. The lowest number of vacancies, well below average, are found in health care, welfare, and in manufacturing.

Vacancies in the public sector

Apart from the 182 thousand vacancies in the private sector, there were also 15 thousand unfilled vacancies in the public sector at the end of June. One in three was a vacancy in education.

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