



Press release

Statistics Netherlands

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Number of vacancies still high

The number of vacancies in the private sector was 157 thousand by the end of September. This is the second highest number of vacancies ever observed by Statistics Netherlands. The labour market remained quite dynamic. Some 221 thousand vacancies in the private sector were filled in the third quarter. This is the highest number of vacancies fulfilled ever observed by Statistics Netherlands. The enormous number of vacancies is in keeping with the great demand for labour in the third quarter of 1999.

Demand for labour

The highest number of vacancies in the private sector in the previous economic boom period was observed in March 1990, when it was 134 thousand. It subsequently dropped to a mere 33 thousand by the end of 1993. Ever since, the number of vacancies has increased, leading to a record of 182 thousand by the end of June in 1999.

Compared to this record high, the number of vacancies by the end of September 1999 was down by 25 thousand, totalling 157 thousand. A third quarter drop has been quite normal in recent years. It is because many school-leavers are entering the labour market. Despite this the number of vacancies is the second highest ever observed.

The great number of vacancies is in line with the continuing demand for labour in the third quarter of 1999. Statistics Netherlands has recently published figures showing that the number of jobs in the third quarter expanded as much as before. In the same period registered unemployment fell by about 4 thousand a month.

Dynamic labour market

The number of vacancies at the end of a quarter is the result of the creation of new vacancies on the

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one hand, and existing vacancies being filled on the other hand. In the third quarter there were 197 thousand new vacancies, while 221 thousand vacancies were filled. On balance this resulted in a decrease of 25 thousand. Filling 221 thousand vacancies in a single quarter is also a new record. The fact that there are such great numbers of new vacancies and vacancies filled means that the labour market is still very dynamic.

Tight job market in business services

The number of vacancies per 1000 jobs indicates how tight the job market is. In the private sector there were 30 vacancies per thousand jobs at the end of September 1999. In the previous quarter it had been 34 per thousand. Some branches of industry have considerable more vacancies. The IT sector is very tight with 79 vacancies per 1000 jobs. In business services as a whole there are 46 vacancies per 1000 jobs, while in construction the number is 37 per 1000.

Vacancies in the public sector

Apart from the 157 thousand vacancies in the private sector, there were 13 thousand vacancies in the public sector at the end of September 1999. One in three was a vacancy in the education system.

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