



Press release

Statistics Netherlands

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Number of job vacancies still high

At the end of December last year, 168 thousand jobs were waiting to be filled in the private sector, 11 thousand more than at the end of September 1999. With an additional 16 thousand vacancies in the public sector, it is clear that the total number of vacant jobs is still rising. Never has Statistics Netherlands counted so many vacancies at the end of a year. The increasing demand for labour has also had its effect on the labour market dynamics.

Vacancies continue to rise

In the last period of high economic growth the number of vacant jobs in the private sector peaked at 134 thousand (March 1990). It subsequently fell to as little as 33 thousand by the end of 1993. Since then, however, more and more jobs have become available, and at the end of June 1999 the number of vacant jobs hit a new record at 182 thousand. Although the 168 thousand at the end of December 1999 is lower than this record, it is the highest ever measured by Statistics Netherlands at the close of the year.

The large number of vacancies bears out the picture of a continued demand for labour in the fourth quarter of 1999. Previous figures from Statistics Netherlands on job trends have already pointed to an unabated growth in the number of jobs. Moreover, registered unemployment fell by about 7 thousand per month in the fourth quarter of 1999.

Labour market movements

The number of vacancies at the end of a quarter is the result of newly created jobs minus existing vacancies that have been filled. In the fourth quarter 210 thousand new jobs were created and 200 thousand positions were filled. The high numbers of both new jobs and jobs for which people were found

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are an indication of the high level of dynamics on the labour market.

Labour shortage continues

One indicator for labour market tension is the number of vacancies per thousand jobs. In the private sector thirty out of every thousand jobs were vacant at the end of December 1999: the same number as in the preceding quarter. The shortage is highest in the IT sector, with 81 thousand vacancies per thousand jobs. In the whole business services sector, 53 thousand jobs are available for every thousand positions.

Public sector vacancies

In addition to the 168 thousand vacancies in the private sector, there were also 16 thousand jobs available in the public sector. Just over one third of these were in education.

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