



Press release

Statistics Netherlands

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Employment growth levels in third quarter

The number of jobs was 2.4% higher in the third quarter of 2001 than in the third quarter of 2000. This is slightly lower than the employment growth rate of 2.7% in previous quarters according to the latest figures from Statistics Netherlands.

The number of jobs rose by 175 thousand to over 7.5 million. In terms of full-time jobs, employment growth fell from 2.5% in the second quarter to 2.1% in the third quarter of 2001. Growth has levelled off in the services sector in particular. The average increase in wage costs remains stable.

Employment growth levelling of in commercial services

The increase in the number of jobs was slightly smaller in nearly all sectors of industry. The fall is largest in commercial services: trade, hotels and restaurants, transport, post and telecommunications, and financial and business services. Employment growth in trade, hotels and restaurants, and the repair trade slowed down from 3.8% in 2000 to 2.4% in the third quarter of 2001, while the increase in financial and business services fell from 3.6% to 2.1%.

Increasing growth in government jobs

The public sector is apparently an exception to the rule. In 2000 growth in employment was 1.6%, and it subsequently grew to 2.7% in the second quarter of 2001 and 2.9% in the third quarter.

Largest growth in care sector

In the third quarter there were 55 thousand more jobs in the care sector and other non-commercial services. This is an increase of 4.3%: nearly one third of employment growth is realised in this sector.

Stable increase in wage costs

The increase in wage costs per working year stabilised in the third quarter. The average increase was 4.8%. In the second quarter the increase was nearly the same at 4.9%. The distribution of the increase

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across the sectors is limited. The increase in wage costs per working year in the third quarter was highest in financial and business services (6.2%) and lowest in manufacturing (4.1%).

Job growth higher than economic growth

Economic growth slowed down considerably to 0.4% in the third quarter of 2001. Although employment growth levelled off, with 2.1% it was still much higher than economic growth. Labour productivity was down in commercial sectors. Employment growth has shifted its centre of gravity to non-commercial services. Unemployment is substantially lower than twelve months previously, although the fall in the first six months has now come to an end. Unemployment generally responds to changes in economic growth rates with a certain delay.

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