

Press release

Statistics Netherlands

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Producers less sombre

Producer confidence, the mood indicator of Dutch manufacturers, recovered by almost 2% in December, reaching -4.0. The survey carried out by Statistics Netherlands further showed that the order position in December had improved slightly on November. Insufficient demand remains the main cause of lower production, as was the case in November. The entrepreneurs do not expect a further decrease in productivity during the first quarter of 2002.

Lower stocks of finished products

The stocks of finished products again reached a lower level in December, which was the second month in a row for this to occur. The decrease in stocks was already showing in figures published earlier this month by Statistics Netherlands, showing that the turnover volume fell by less than the production volume. Entrepreneurs are therefore more positive about stock levels. The order position in the Dutch manufacturing industry also improved somewhat in December. The index for the order position reached 93.5 in December versus 92.8 in November (June 2000=100). Despite this the entrepreneurs remain rather negative about the order position.

Insufficient demand hampers production

About 13% of producers were hampered in their production by lack of demand during the third and fourth quarters of 2001. Personnel shortages were hardly a factor. 15% of the enterprises expect a reduction in workforce, on balance. The lower production rates have led to a decrease in the degree of capacity utilisation to 83.3% on 31 December 2001. This is the lowest value since March of 1994. Dutch entrepreneurs feel their competitive position had improved somewhat on the domestic market during the fourth quarter. It hardly changed on the international market.

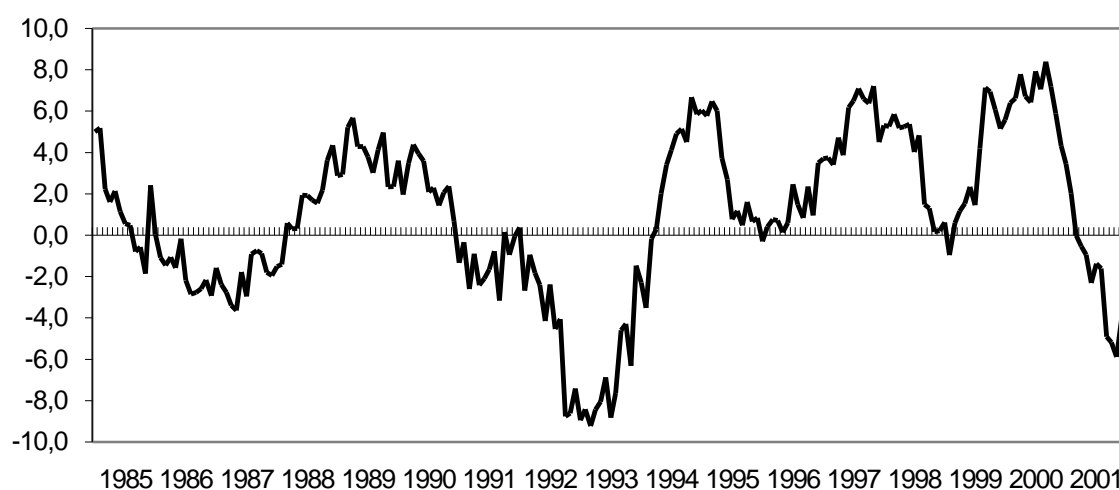
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Producentenvertrouwen



Producer confidence (seasonally corrected figures)

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Ma	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Year
1999	0.6	-1.0	0.6	1.2	1.5	2.3	1.4	4.2	7.1	6.9	6.1	5.2	3.0
2000	5.6	6.4	6.6	7.8	6.7	6.4	7.9	7.1	8.4	7.2	5.9	4.3	6.7
2001	3.5	2.0	0.0	-0.5	-0.9	-2.3	-1.4	-1.6	-4.9	-5.2	-5.9	-4.0	-1.8

Source: Statistics Netherlands