



Press release

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Construction shares peak on Amsterdam stock exchange

Prices of shares in construction companies rose by more than 24 percent in the first quarter of 2002. The average return of all Dutch shares was much lower at 5 percent. According to the latest figures from Statistics Netherlands, investment companies investing in real estate yielded the best results among investment trusts

Construction continues steady rise

With a return of 24.2 percent, shares in construction companies stood out again in the first quarter of 2002. In 2000 and 2001, too, this sector yielded the best results following a number of years of moderate growth.

There was a notable recovery for small high-tech companies. The barometer index for these funds rose by 15.1 percent in the first quarter of 2002. Last year this index rose by 46 percent, in 2000 by 50 percent. The index covers companies in micro-electronics, information technology and telecommunications, excluding heavyweights KPN and Philips.

The trade sector had the most disappointing results: the average return in this sector was -4.0 percent in the first quarter of 2002.

Hesitant recovery

Following the strong recovery of share prices in the fourth quarter of last year, the Amsterdam stock exchange opened 2002 on a more hesitant note. The mood was negative to begin with: by mid February the CBS share index was 5 percent down on the end of 2001. After that, however, it started to pick up again, and was 5.2 percent up at the close of the quarter.

Real estate funds doing well

With an average return of nearly 10 percent trusts investing in real estate did much better in the first quarter than those investing in shares and bonds. Trusts investing in bonds closed the quarter 1.0 percent down, those investing in shares incurred 0.4 percent loss. There are large differences within the group. Share trusts investing globally closed 1.2 percent down, while those concentrating their investments in the Far East realised a return of 10.6

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percent. Investment funds investing in Dutch shares realised 4.9 percent profits, just under the average for all shares (+5.2 percent).

Amsterdam better than world index

The total return on shares, including paid dividends was 5.2 percent in the first quarter of 2002. The MSCI total return index (world) rose by 2.6 percent in the same period. In spite of the euro's fall against the US dollar in the first quarter, Dutch shares did better than the world average.