



# Press release

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Statistics Netherlands  
is a department of  
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Economic Affairs

## ***Sharp drop in the number of vacancies***

There has been a sharp drop in the number of vacancies. According to figures by Statistics Netherlands there were 164 thousand unfilled vacancies by the end of 2001, down 40 thousand on a year earlier. The drop is caused by a sharp decrease in the number of new vacancies. In the fourth quarter of 2001 the number of new vacancies was 60 thousand lower than in the same period in 2000.

### ***Drop continues***

In the third quarter of 2001 the number of unfilled vacancies was slightly lower than the year before. This happened for the first time in seven years. The third-quarter drop was a modest 13 thousand. In the fourth quarter the figure continued to fall, leading to 40 thousand fewer vacancies than in the previous year. This was an almost 20% drop, bringing the number of unfilled vacancies to 164 thousand.

### ***Far fewer new vacancies***

The sharp decrease in the number of unfilled vacancies is caused by the slide in the number of new vacancies. In the fourth quarter of 2001 there were 194 thousand new vacancies, 60 thousand less than the year before.

The number of filled vacancies also fell, albeit not by as much as the number of new vacancies. During the fourth quarter of 2001 there were 200 thousand filled vacancies, down 33 thousand on the previous year. The decrease in the numbers of new and filled vacancies shows that the job market has become less dynamic.

### ***Fewer vacancies in business services***

The largest decrease in the number of unfilled vacancies was in business services. Here the decrease was limited to 3 thousand in the third quarter, but in the fourth quarter the number of vacancies was down by 15 thousand.

In the third quarter there were major decreases in industry, trade and transport. There were even greater decreases in industry and trade in the fourth. The exception comes from hotels, restaurants etc, financial institutions

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and non-commercial services, where the number of vacancies remained constant.

### ***Job market not as tight***

The decrease in the number of vacancies also made the job market less tight. Late last year there were 22 vacancies for every thousand jobs, 6 less than the year before. For the fourth quarter in a row construction was the tightest branch. Business services comes next, despite the major decrease in the number of vacancies.

### ***Reaction to the economic slowdown***

The drop in demand for personnel is due to the considerable economic slowdown. Whereas the Dutch economy between 1997 and 2001 had annual growth rates of close to 4%, the growth rate fell to about 1% during 2001 with the fourth quarter being the worst. Given these economic developments the job market is still doing rather well. There was an increase in the number of jobs during the fourth quarter of 2001, while the number of unemployed was stable. Although the number of vacancies decreased sharply there is still a fair number of unfilled vacancies.

### ***Vacancies***

		Number of	new	filled
		vacancies	vacancies 1)	vacancies 1) 2)
		x 1000		
31 March	1997	89	151	141
30 June	1997	101	190	178
30 September	1997	92	182	191
31 December	1997	115	189	165
31 March	1998	133	220	202
30 June	1998	152	229	211
30 September	1998	129	209	232
31 December	1998	137	197	189
31 March	1999	158	241	221
30 June	1999	197	268	229
30 September	1999	171	217	243
31 December	1999	184	226	213
31 March	2000	216	283	251
30 June	2000	218	251	248
30 September	2000	183	230	265
31 December	2000	204	254	233

31 March	2001	216	270	258
30 June	2001	218	273	270
30 September	2001	171	209	256
31 December	2001	164	194	200

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1) In the quarter ending on that date.

2) Including vacancies cancelled.

**Source: *Statistics Netherlands***