



Press release

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Number of vacancies continues to fall

The number of vacancies fell again. The seasonally corrected figure for the number of unfilled vacancies in the first quarter of 2003 is 116 thousand. This is down 12 thousand on the preceding quarter. The number of vacancies has been falling for nine quarters in a row, according to the latest figures by Statistics Netherlands.

Vacancy numbers continuously falling

At the end of 2000 there were still 213 thousand unfilled vacancies. This is the seasonally corrected figure. Since then the number of vacancies has been falling continuously by a total of 100 thousand. This is an average drop of 11 thousand in each quarter. The last figures still do not show any clear indication that this rate is changing.

The continuous decrease in the number of vacancies is in line with the other job market indicators. The job growth rate fell from 108 thousand in the first quarter of 2002 to 10 thousand in the first quarter of 2003. The unemployed labour force increased by almost 100 thousand between the first quarters of 2002 and 2003. The cause of these developments is the slowdown in economic growth.

Job market no longer as dynamic

The number of new and filled vacancies indicates how dynamic the job market is. In the first quarter of 2003 there were 177 thousand new vacancies, down 36 thousand on the first quarter of 2002. In the first quarter of 2003 some 174 thousand vacancies were filled, which is 25 thousand less than the year before. This shows that the job market has become less dynamic. This means that fewer people are changing jobs and fewer people can enter the job market.

Vacancy rate in construction down

The job market is less tight because the number of vacancies has dropped. By the end of March 2003 there were 17 unfilled vacancies per one thousand jobs. In March 2002 this was 24 vacancies per one thousand jobs. Construction saw the greatest drop in the vacancy rate: from 37 per one thousand jobs on 31 March 2002 to 20 on 31 March 2003.

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Table 1. Unfilled vacancies, seasonally corrected

	31-March	30-June	30-Sep	31-Dec
<i>x 1 000</i>				
1997	84	88	105	122
1998	127	137	145	144
1999	151	181	189	192
2000	200	201	203	213
2001	206	201	191	171
2002	168	147	133	128
2003	116			

Source: CBS**Table 2. Unfilled, new and filled vacancies, not seasonally corrected**

		Unfilled vacancies	New vacancies ¹⁾	Vacancies filled ^{1) 2)}
<i>x 1 000</i>				
1997	31 December	115	189	165
1998	31 December	137	197	189
1999	31 December	184	226	213
2000	31 December	204	254	233
2001	31 March	216	270	258
	30 June	218	273	270
	30 September	171	209	256
	31 December	164	194	200
2002	31 March	178	213	199
	30 June	162	200	216
	30 September	115	160	207
	31 December	121	162	156
2003	31 March	124	177	174

1) In the quarter ending on the date shown.

2) Including vacancies cancelled.

Source: CBS