Statistics Netherlands

Press release

Slight decrease in number of vacancies

The number of vacancies slightly dropped in the second quarter of 2003. When adjusted for seasonal effects, there were 114 thousand unfilled vacancies at the end of the second quarter, 3 thousand less than in the first quarter. The number of vacancies has decreased for two and a half years now, according to the latest figures by Statistics Netherlands.

Limited decrease in the second quarter

Since early 2001, the number of vacancies fell by approximately 50 percent, an average drop by 10 thousand per quarter. In the second quarter of 2003, the drop was below average but it is still too early to conclude that the decrease in the number of vacancies is levelling off.

Job market less dynamic

Just like in the previous quarters, the job market was less dynamic in the second quarter of 2003 than in the previous year. This is shown in the figures on the number of new and filled vacancies. These figures are not adjusted for seasonal effects. In the second quarter of 2003, there were 175 vacancies, 25 thousand less than in the same quarter of 2002. The number of filled vacancies in the second quarter of 2003 was 173 thousand, 43 thousand down on the previous year.

Lower vacancy rate in construction and hotels and restaurants sectors

A high vacancy rate is an indication of a tight job market. It is defined as the number of vacancies per one thousand jobs. At the end of June 2003, there were 17 unfilled vacancies per one thousand jobs, whereas a year earlier the vacancy rate was 22. The vacancy rate decreased in all sectors but most significantly in the construction and hotels and restaurants sectors. At the end of June 2002, the number of unfilled vacancies in these sectors was 32 and 34 per thousand jobs respectively. These numbers shrank to 19 and 21 at the end of June 2003. In spite of this strong decrease, the vacancy rate in the two sectors was still above average.

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