



Press release

PB03-215
3 December 2003
9:30 AM

Number of jobs diminishing

In the third quarter of 2003 the total number of jobs of employees was down by 45 thousand on the third quarter of 2002. This constitutes a 0.6 percent drop. The number of private sector jobs fell by 128 thousand on the previous year. However, the number of jobs in care and government went up by 83 thousand according to the latest figures by Statistics Netherlands.

Jobs losses in private sector increasing faster

The number of jobs by employees in the private sector, which is all enterprises except government and care, diminished by 2.5 percent on the same period of 2002. Job losses picked up ever since the second quarter of 2002.

In the third quarter of 2003 employment fell sharply in construction (- 4.5 percent). Dutch manufacturing saw a drop of over 3 percent whereas the number of jobs in financial and business services fell by 2.6 percent. In trade, catering and repairs job losses were a relatively modest 1.5 percent.

Growth rate in government jobs down

The number of jobs in care and government is still growing. Within one year there were 62 thousand new jobs in care (including other public sector services), and 21 thousand in government (including education). This means that the growth rate for jobs in care stayed at the high level of 2001 and 2002. The growth rate in government is clearly less than in 2002.

Job losses among men

The number of jobs in the Netherlands in the third quarter of 2003 totalled almost 7.5 million, down 0.6 percent on the third quarter of 2002. The total number of jobs fell for the second quarter in a row. The previous drop dates back to 1994.

The number of jobs employing men fell by 1.4 percent. The number of jobs employing women increased by 0.5 percent, which was not as fast as in the previous quarters. The different developments in jobs for men and women are due to the job increases in the care sector, which employs mostly women.

Employment falling faster in fulltime jobs

Employment as expressed in fulltime jobs fell by 1.1 percent in the third quarter of 2003 on the same quarter of 2002. In 2002 employment still rose by 0.4 percent after years of growth rates between 1.5 and 3.6 percent. In terms

of fulltime job equivalents employment is deteriorating faster than in terms of the number of jobs. This is because the number of jobs increases mostly in branches where people are often employed part time. These jobs are often fulfilled by women, who work part time much more often than men do. However, unemployment is now also diminishing for women when we look at the fulltime job equivalents.

Rising wage costs slowing down

Wage costs per fte in the third quarter of 2003 averaged 3.3 percent more than the year before. This increase is considerably lower than the 4.9 percent in 2002 and moreover the lowest since 1997. The increase in wage costs is lower than in 2002 in all branches of industry. The increase is lowest in transport and communication companies and highest in care and other services.

The CAO wage increase, of collectively negotiated wage agreements, also fell substantially from an average of 3.7 percent in 2002 to 2.6 percent in the third quarter of 2003.