



Press release

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Number of job vacancies still high

The number of job vacancies remained high in the fourth quarter of 2005. After correction for seasonal effects, there 169 thousand job vacancies at the end of 2005. This is slightly down on the previous quarter. According to figures from Statistics Netherlands, the number of vacancies has almost doubled in the space of two years.

Increase has not continued

The number of job vacancies rose by 37 thousand in the third quarter of 2005. The slight fall of 5 thousand in the fourth quarter put a stop to the increase, however. This does not necessarily mean that the development in the number of vacancies has reached its definite turning point. In the second quarter of 2005, too, a slight fall followed a substantial increase. The number of vacancies was still nearly twice as high in the second quarter of 2005 as at its low point in 2003, when there were 92 thousand job vacancies.

Increase only in non-commercial services

Non-commercial services was the only sector of industry in which the number of vacancies increased. At the end of 2005 this sector had 39 thousand vacancies, 3 thousand more than in the previous quarter. The largest fall was in commercial services. There the number of vacancies fell by 7 thousand to 98 thousand.

Higher vacancy rate

Compared with twelve months previously, more jobs were vacant. As a result the vacancy rate was higher than twelve months previously for the seventh quarter in succession. The vacancy rate is the number of vacant jobs per thousand jobs, and thus a measure for the shortage on the labour market. At the end of 2005 there were 23 vacancies per thousand jobs, 5 more than at the end of 2004. A vacancy rate of 23 means the labour market shortage is neither high nor low. The shortage was felt most in business services, with 35 vacancies per thousand jobs.

More new and filled vacancies

For the seventh quarter in succession the labour market was more dynamic than twelve months previously. This is apparent from the increase in both new and filled vacancies. In the fourth quarter of 2005, 212 thousand jobs became

vacant. This is 36 thousand more than twelve months previously. The number of vacancies filled was 43 thousand higher than one year previously.