



Press release

Statistics Netherlands

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Manufacturing output down in December

The production volume of the manufacturing industry was 2.7% lower in December last year than in the same month one year previously according to provisional figures just released by Statistics Netherlands.

In the fourth quarter of 1998 output was 1% lower than in the last quarter of 1997, the first decrease since the fourth quarter of 1993, when it was 2% down on 1992. Compared with November 1998 seasonally adjusted production in December was also lower (-2.9%).

Output diminished in second half of 1998

In the first quarter of 1998 manufacturing production was 1.2% higher than the already high level of the fourth quarter of 1997. Output did not rise further in the second quarter, retaining its first-quarter level. In the third quarter it fell by 1.6%, dipping under the level of the fourth quarter of 1997. Statistics Netherlands now calculates output in the fourth quarter of 1998 to have fallen even further (-0.7%). For the whole of 1998 manufacturing production was still 2.4% higher than in 1997.

Developments per branch

Growth rates were down on 1997 figures in nearly all branches of industry. The largest falls were in the chemical industry and in wood and construction materials: while growth rates were 6% in 1997, in 1998 they fell to 1%. In the food industry, too, rates fell: from 3% to 1%. Output in the metal industry was 3% higher, compared with 4% the previous year. Growth rates in paper and publishing and in the textile, clothing and leather industry were at about the same level as in 1997.

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