

## Changes to Jobcentre Plus vacancy statistics

From April 2006 Jobcentre Plus introduced changes to its vacancy handling procedures. These have implications for the vacancy statistics published as National Statistics by Department for Work and Pensions and disseminated via Nomis<sup>®</sup>.

Prior to April 2006, vacancies notified to Jobcentre Plus were followed up with the employer to ascertain whether (a) they should remain available to jobseekers, or (b) whether they should be closed or had been filled by clients referred by Jobcentre Plus. Vacancies filled were monitored as one strand of Jobcentre Plus performance.

From April 2006 Jobcentre Plus performance is being assessed differently and there is consequently no longer an operational need to follow up vacancies. Vacancies notified to Jobcentre Plus now have a closure date agreed with the employer. Vacancies are automatically withdrawn on the closure date unless the employer advises that a later closure date is required.

### **Impact on statistics**

Evidence from pilots of the new procedures suggests that inflows of newly notified vacancies may fall by some 5 per cent as a result of a reduction in speculative placings. (These are not notified in the normal sense, but are recorded when Jobcentre Plus speculatively refers a client to an employer with whom they subsequently secure a job.)

Auto-closure of vacancies will, over time, also lead to a reduction in the recorded stocks of unfilled vacancies, but in due course these are expected to reflect more accurately job opportunities available via Jobcentre Plus.

Filled vacancies will no longer be recorded on Jobcentre Plus computer systems. Consequently, for datasets from April 2006 onwards, only statistics on total vacancy outflows will now be published on Nomis<sup>®</sup>. There will be some changes to the mean/median duration of both unfilled and closed vacancies which will reflect the new processes.

### **Further information**

Statistics on Jobcentre Plus vacancies are available on [www.nomisweb.co.uk](http://www.nomisweb.co.uk). Summary data and seasonally adjusted figures are available from [www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/statistics.asp](http://www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/statistics.asp). For further information, see the article

'Publication of Jobcentre Plus vacancy statistics' in *Labour Market Trends*, June 2005, pp253-259.