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30 september 2025, SDMX Global Conference, Rome



Statistics
Netherlands



Our world of statistics

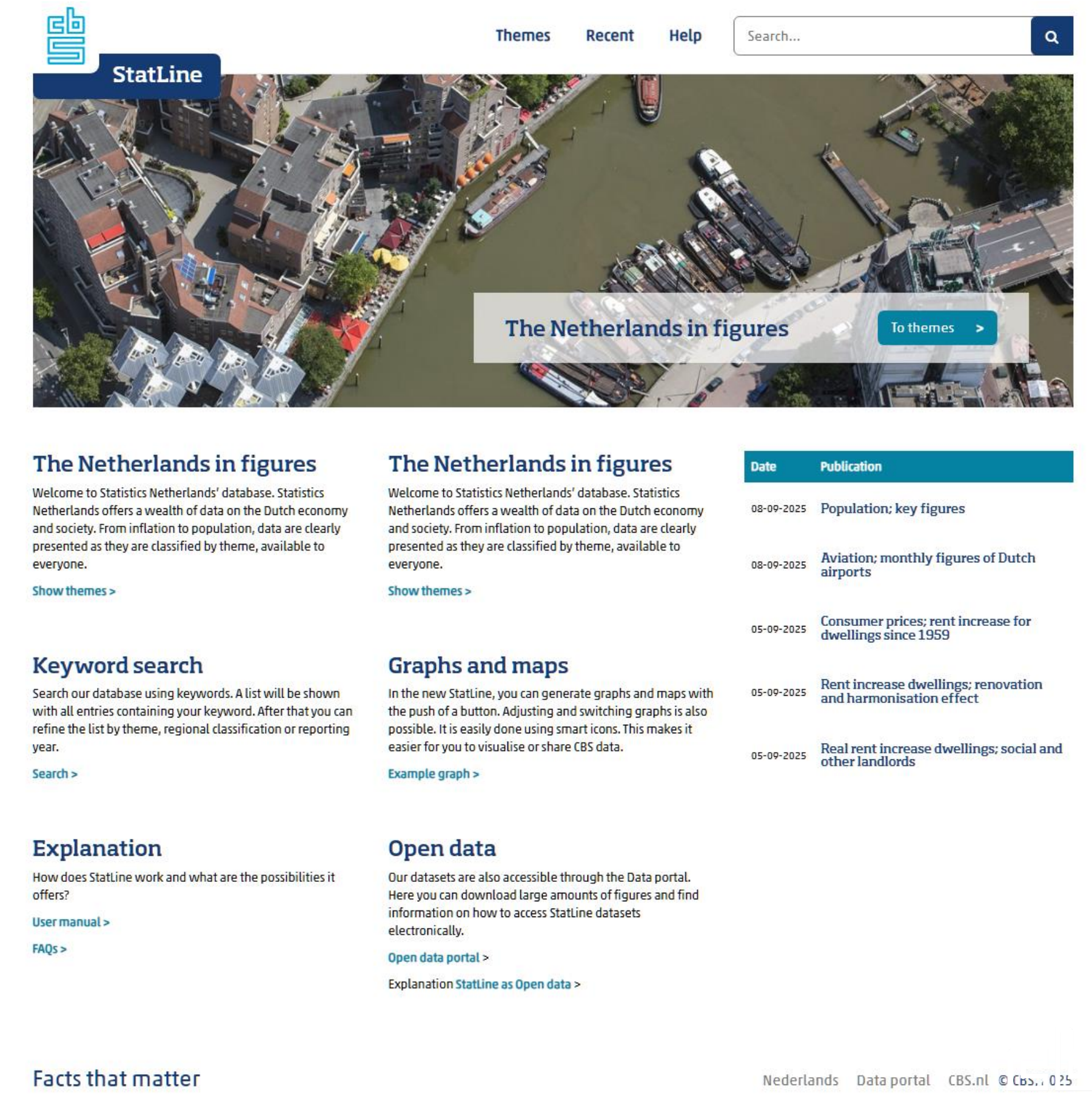
- Principal supplier of reliable, objective statistics in NL
- Since 1899: 126 years
- 2,157 employees
- The Hague, Heerlen and Bonaire
- In collaboration with ministries, government agencies, universities, research institutes and the business community

**6500+ datasets disseminated in
20+ domains (including archive)**



Current Platform

- StatLine (Statistics Online)
- Started mid 90's
- Developed in house; evolved into an extensive&complex suite of components
- Including process management and (partial) metadata management
- Extensive external use
- Critical lifecycle management issues
- Not up to modern standards anymore
- Increasing business risk
- Various alternatives considered
- Mid 2024: board decision to implement SDMX/.Stat



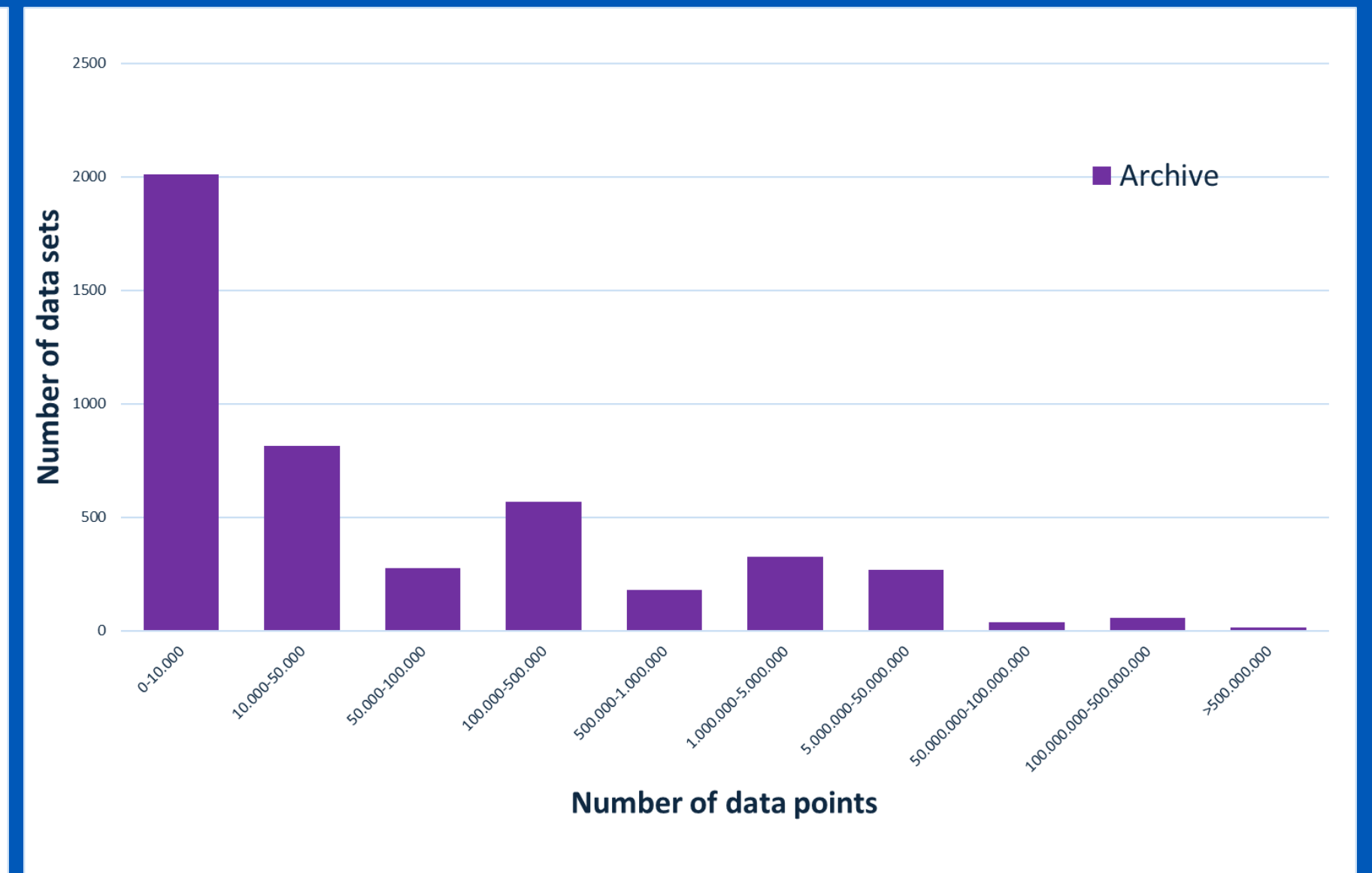
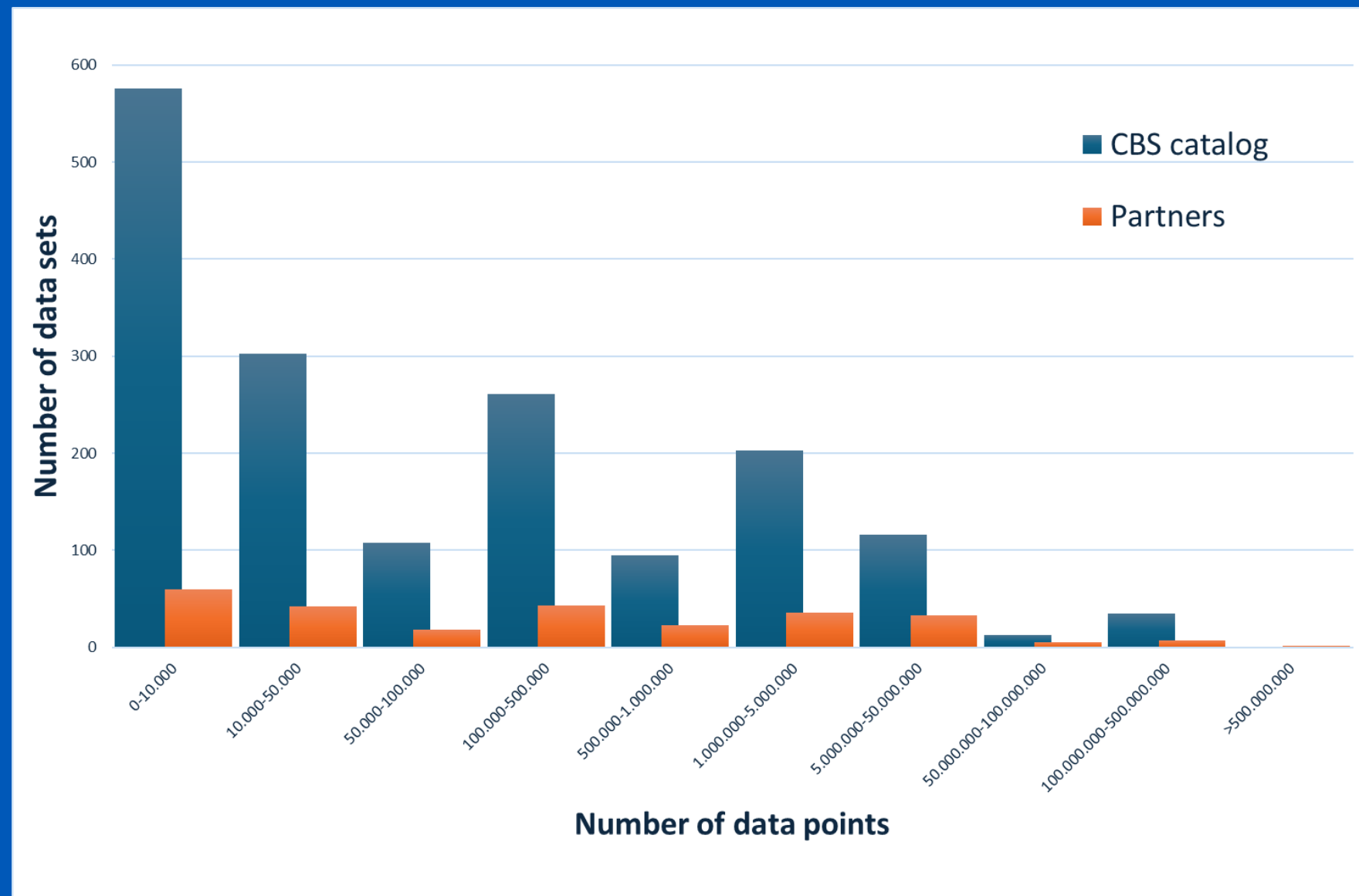
The screenshot displays the StatLine website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the StatLine logo, links for 'Themes', 'Recent', and 'Help', and a search bar. Below the navigation bar is a large banner image of a canal in Amsterdam with a semi-transparent overlay containing the text 'The Netherlands in figures' and a 'To themes >' button. The main content area is divided into two columns. The left column contains sections for 'The Netherlands in figures' (with a welcome message and a 'Show themes >' link), 'Keyword search' (with a description and a 'Search >' link), 'Explanation' (with a description and links for 'User manual >' and 'FAQs >'), and 'Facts that matter'. The right column contains another 'The Netherlands in figures' section (with a welcome message and a 'Show themes >' link), 'Graphs and maps' (with a description and an 'Example graph >' link), and 'Open data' (with a description and links for 'Open data portal >' and 'Explanation StatLine as Open data >'). On the far right, there is a table listing publications.

Date	Publication
08-09-2025	Population; key figures
08-09-2025	Aviation; monthly figures of Dutch airports
05-09-2025	Consumer prices; rent increase for dwellings since 1959
05-09-2025	Rent increase dwellings; renovation and harmonisation effect
05-09-2025	Real rent increase dwellings; social and other landlords

Netherlands Data portal CBS.nl © CBS, 0 25

Our Legacy

6500+ data sets to be migrated (with various sizes and origins)



Organisation of implementation phase 1

- Dedicated Programme Directorate
 - Core group (11 persons) with all migration perspectives aboard
 - Many more colleagues involved
 - Steering Group with Directors of 5 Divisions involved
 - Ambitious deadline was set
-
- In first phase focus on automated migration as much as possible (given the business risks and number of datasets to migrate)





Development of migration tools with automated & final manual checks

- Proved to have major advantages (relatively cheap with good results)
- But also, unforeseen challenges (we ended up breaking the limits of the current version of .STAT, no performance left)
- Lessons learned:
 - Add some minimal harmonization of codelists and minimize number of artefacts
 - Code lists instead of current standard time dimension were used to allow for additional flexibility in presentation
 - Cost effective for (archived) datasets/tables

Organisation of implementation phase 1

In parallel we started capacity building for SDMX and .Stat, training and designing a new dissemination process

- Lessons learned so far:
 - Central SDMX expert knowledge required to look ahead, train & support;
 - Decentralized knowledge and skills in teams essential (for support, ownership and given the number of active datasets).
 - Far less people needed in design roles, compared to our current process (reuse)
 - A “renewal” of the need for harmonization and standardization of concepts and code lists
- Implementing a new dissemination process: work in progress
 - It is not simply implementing new software; it affects current ways of working, roles, organization, technical support, etc.
 - Users (external and internal) built a lot of own applications on our APIs
 - Involvement of statistical teams from the start is thus key
 - .Stat (still) misses necessary workflow and process management



Governance

- On dissemination process:
 - Within scope of migration program
 - Start in time to accelerate implementation/hand-over to business
- On metadata, especially concepts and codelists:
 - Triggered by program, but beyond scope of dissemination process, therefore:
 - Fitting in with data governance as per data strategy for CBS as a whole



Additional tooling requirements beyond FMR/.Stat

Our main gaps identified so far:

- Workflow & Process Support Tool to initiate new tables, adjust existing tables, generate DF IDs, capture requirements and agreements, enable workflows, manage release dates, manage embargoed releases, prevent overwriting final (immutable) data, etc.
- Metadata Management Tool to provide a user-friendly input form & translate content to SDMX.csv format for upload; provide store for additional metadata (e.g. data flow specific comments with code lists and measures)
- More advanced functionality to manage concepts and concept schemes and to share concepts across the statistical process + functionality to convert measures to codelists and v.v. (preparing the organisation for the move from SDMX 2.1 to SDMX 3.x)
- Tool to assemble & manage complex code lists for output domain



Additional tooling requirements FMR/.Stat

(nice to have):

- Generation of dummy data and metadata for test purposes
- Reporting tool, to provide supporting reports, e.g. for governance purposes
- More advanced management of Category Schemes, Categories and Categorizations, currently only used for grouping of dataflows by statistical domains



To conclude:

- Despite serious issues (which took a lot of extra time and resources, but from which we learned a lot) we will proceed our implementation (with the upcoming J-release of .Stat)
 - With more focus on remodeling, but automated conversion remains indispensable part
 - Ready to strengthen our role in the community and to help .Stat and the community evolve
- Established a new team to maintain our implementation of the .Stat/FMR platform, explore new technical solutions and manage the release process and lifecycle management
- Required adjustments in statistical processes (many different applications) strengthens our choice for a decentralized approach; involve statistical teams from the start
- Continuation of communication with our users:
 - Not everything is immediately better than we are used to today
 - Involve main external stakeholders early and allow time for change, beta version
- Impact bigger than anticipated: don't underestimate the level of change!



Also from Statistics Netherlands, 1 October, 11:55:

An NSO Perspective on Microdata Modelling Challenges in SDMX

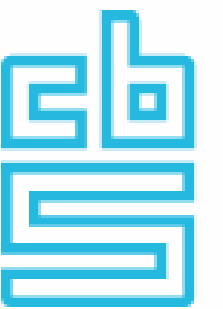
By Matjaz Jug

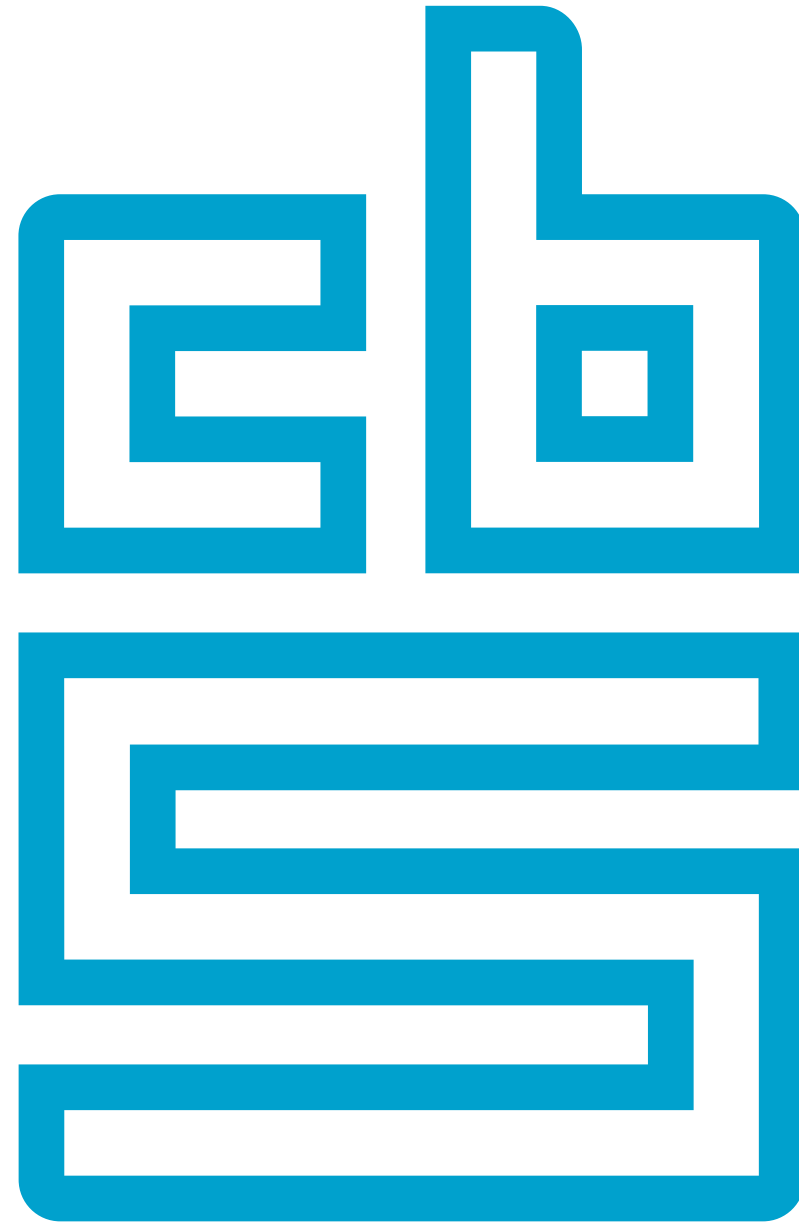




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Facts that matter