

**THE NETHERLANDS
NATIONAL MARKET REPORT 2010**

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1 GENERAL ECONOMIC TRENDS AFFECTING THE FOREST INDUSTRIES SECTOR

Dutch economy: Recovery after historical shrinkage

The expected growth of the Dutch economy in 2010 is 1¼%. For the next year a growth of 1¾ is expected. The increase in GDP is almost entirely accounted for by the exports. The Dutch exports in 2010 and 2011 increase by 10¾ and 7¾ respectively. The estimated growth of the consumption of households in both years is however very small and the gross private investments (excl. housing) even fall sharply. The unemployment increases to 6% of the labour force in 2011. The inflation will be 1½% in 2010 and increases slightly to 2% in 2011.

Little willingness to invest

The sharp decrease in production of 5% in 2009 causes an unwillingness of companies to invest in their production capacity. As a result of this the private investments (excl housing) decrease with 12% in 2010 from the already low level in 2009. Next year a slight increase of 1% is estimated. The criteria for credit granting will be less stringent than they were the year before. The profit on production will increase again in 2010 and 2011 and as a result the solvability is expected to be at a high level.

Moderate inflation

The estimated average inflation over the year 2010 will be 1½% and is expected to slightly increase to 2% in 2011. This is mainly caused by the development of the Euro and energy prices. During the last months the Euro has devaluated compared to the dollar, which causes an increase in the price for imported products that are paid in dollars. The prices for gas- and electricity decreased sharply in the first half of 2009, but haven't relatively changed since then.

Unemployment less severe than expected

In contrast to the expected historical high level of unemployment of 5½ and 9½% in 2009 and 2010 respectively, the actual level of unemployment is much lower. The average unemployment of 4.9% in 2009 will increase to 5¾% in 2010 and 6% in 2011. Compared to last years unprecedented decrease in production (decrease of GDP 4%) and a limited recovery this year, the increase in unemployment is relatively low. Apparently companies are willing and able to keep their employees employed. They may do this to anticipate on the expected shortage on the labour market in the coming years.

Export accounts for economic recovery

This year, export (re-exports included) increases with 10¾%, compared to last years decrease of 9.2%. Domestically produced exports increased by 6% in 2010 compared to a decrease of 11.6% in 2009. The re-exports are expected to increase with 15% in 2010 compared to a decrease of 6.9% in 2009. In 2011 exports are expected to increase with 7¾% (re-exports: +11¼ and domestically produced: +3¾%).

2 POLICY MEASURES INFLUENCING TIMBER TRADE AND MARKETING

a. National Guideline for the Assessment of Certified Wood Products

In relation with the discussions on the labelling act the Dutch government took the initiative in 2002 to set up a guideline for the assessment of certified wood products based on the Dutch standards for sustainable forest management. Wood and wooden products brought on the Dutch market which fulfil the standard could be provided with a special mark. At the end of 2005 there was an agreement about the content of the national guideline. However the environmental organisations could not agree with the proposed organisational structure and withdrew from the process. The ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and Environment (VROM) then decided to continue its work as it needed assessment criteria for green public procurement of timber.

Six certification systems were tested by the Equivalence Assessment Board (6 independent experts). It appeared that none of the systems were fully compatible with the Dutch criteria. The main reason for this was that criteria were too detailed and complex.

The Board recommended setting up an improved and simpler set of criteria that will be solely used for the purpose of *public timber procurement*. After an extra round of consultation-meetings with relevant stakeholders in May 2008 the Timber Procurement Assessment System (TPAS) was finalised and sent to Parliament on June 24th 2008.

The Timber Procurement Assessment Committee is responsible for the assessment of certification systems according to TPAS. The Procurement Criteria are structured into 3 categories: Sustainable Forest Management (SFM), Chain-of-Custody and Logo Use (CoC) and Development, Application and Management of certification systems (DAM). In addition, TPAC has developed a matrix for so-called meta-systems: Procedure on Acceptance of Certification Systems by a meta-system (PAC) like PEFC international.

To enable TPAC to make more thorough assessments of certification systems all stakeholders are invited to share their knowledge and opinions on the functioning of certification systems on an Internet forum www.tpac.smk.nl. The staff of certification systems is also invited to participate and provide additional information where necessary. Following the wrap-up of the forum discussion, TPAC reports back how the comments have been taken into account in the final assessments of the certification systems. These forum reports can be downloaded from the TPAC website.

Upon till the following systems have been assessed by TPAC and are conform the TPAS criteria:

- FSC International - final judgement: Conform (November 2008)
- PEFC Germany - final judgement: Conform (November 2008)
- PEFC Finland - final judgement: Conform (November 2008)
- Keurhout CoC - final judgement: Conform (June 2009)
- PEFC Sweden - final judgement: Conform (July 2009)
- PEFC Belgium - final judgement: Conform (November 2009)
- PEFC Austria - final judgement: Conform (January 2010)
- PEFC International - final judgement: Conform (June 2010)

An objection has been filed against TPAC's positive judgement on MTCS. The Dutch minister will await the outcome of the objection procedure before deciding on the acceptance of MTCS for the Dutch Procurement Policy. PEFC international has been accepted for the Dutch Procurement policy, with the exception of MTCS until the Dutch minister has reached a decision.

b. Public procurement in the Netherlands

The Netherlands is in the process of developing its public procurement policy on wood-based products. The policy will address the purchasing of all wood-based products for the Dutch government in order to secure the procurement of products that come from sustainable managed and legally harvested forests. In 2010 all timber procured by central government should come from a sustainable source. If sustainably produced timber is not available, timber from a legal source will be accepted. Municipalities and provinces are aiming respectively at 75% and 50% of their purchases being sustainably produced by 2010.

For legal timber the Dutch government has decided to use the UK (CPET) criteria legal timber and accept FSC, PEFC, CSA, SFI, MTCC, SGS TLTV and in future FLEGT licences as proof of legality. For sustainable timber the government will use the criteria laid down in the Timber Procurement Assessment System. To support public buyers a campaign has been set up under the name: "timber: growing towards 100% green procurement". The campaign consists of a website (www.inkoopduurzaamhout.nl), a hotline, brochures with model documents and training courses about timber procurement.

c. Combating Illegal Logging and related trade

The relation between global deforestation and activities in The Netherlands continued to hold on the public debate. In the past most of the efforts in forestry were focused on supporting timber producing countries in the management of their forests. Nowadays increasing attention is being paid to the role that demand-side measures can play. It is for this reason that, for example, the role of Government agencies as 'consumers' of timber products are gaining increasing prominence in the development of public procurement policies worldwide. In its Biodiversity policy programme the government states that the aim is to cease shifting our burden on biodiversity to other countries in a manner that is unsustainable. In the long term, all raw materials from natural resources or from nature that we use in the Netherlands – whether we obtain them in the Netherlands or abroad – must be produced sustainably

Last year the discussions continued as the discussions on the Due Diligence Regulation as proposed by the European Commission in October 2008 reached its final stage. During the Council of Agriculture ministers the Dutch Minister of Agriculture, Mrs. Verburg, called for stronger measures in this regard including an prohibition on timber that is illegally harvested. In June finally an agreement was reached between European Parliament and Council, that was overwhelmingly approved by the European Parliament. Council has already informally agreed with the terms of this draft legislation but will need to rubber stamp it before it can pass into law.

Not only government focus on demand side-measures also traders and retailers have taken the initiative. The global market for timber and timber products is changing regardless of what policy makers are doing and saying. A growing number of timber traders, retailers and end-users are seeking assurances with regard to the way in which the products that they buy and sell were produced and what social and environmental impacts that production process may have. Timber trade federations are developing codes of conduct for their members, large retailers choose to sell certified timber products, a growing number of companies are making supply chain controls an integral part of their production process.

In this respect The Netherlands Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality sponsored last March a workshop organized by UNECE and WTO on Emerging trade measures and wood markets which focused on the economic impacts of trade and trade-related measures on timber markets, taking into account the role of trade in timber markets and the link between trade liberalization and key challenges facing the forest-based sector such as forest degradation and loss, bio-diversity impoverishment, promotion of sustainable management of forests and climate change.

The Netherlands is of the opinion that the issue of illegal timber trade must also be addressed at the global level. From that point of view the Netherlands has offered to organize together with Finland, USA and Vietnam a Country Led Initiative on Enhancing legal timber production and trade: Creating enabling environments and opportunities for the private sector and other stakeholders. The event will be hosted by Vietnam November and will take place from 15-19 November in Hanoi. The CLI is timed to provide a key venue for catalyzing thinking on the legality of the international timber trade and strengthening its contribution to economic development and livelihoods: the next steps to be taken, dialogue and concrete proposals, in order to inform the 9th session of the UNFF in January 2011, and activities of the U.N. International Year of the Forest in 2011.

3 DEVELOPMENTS IN DUTCH FOREST PRODUCTS MARKETS SECTORS

a. Wood energy

The consumption of sustainable energy in The Netherlands in 2009 has increased to 3.8 percent of the Dutch energy supply originated from sustainable sources. The Dutch government has set goals for 5 percent sustainable energy in 2010, increasing to 20 percent in 2020.

With 2.5% biomass is still the greatest source for sustainable energy. It is mainly used in waste incineration units, co-firing in energy plants and as fuels for road transport.

Due to the commercial sensitivity, Dutch companies are rather reluctant to provide information concerning the use of biomass fuels. The availability of data has reduced significantly over the past years. The fuels can be generally categorized as wood pellets/wood chips, agricultural residues, residuals from the food and snack industry, bio-oil and animal waste. Imports of biomass have risen dramatically over the past years. In 2005 and the first half of 2006 it was estimated that 80% of the power plants generated electricity from imported biomass, mostly wood pellets, clean agricultural residues and palm oil. No real data are available for the input of woody biomass.

In 2007 the ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality has made an agreement with different branches in the agricultural industry to realize the production of 200 PJ sustainable energy in 2020. As a part of this agreement the Dutch forest industry together with the ministry is planning all kinds of actions to stimulate the input of biomass from forestry, landscape plantations and from nature conservation areas. Industry and government agreed to have 36 PJ from domestic biomass in 2020.

b. Round wood

In 2009 the removals from the Dutch forests were 9% lower as in the year before and reached a volume of 1 mln. m³ under bark. Consumption of coniferous sawlogs in the Netherlands decreased with 9%, consumption of non-coniferous sawlogs decreased by 18.7%.

Due to the fact that the Netherlands has just one small panel producer within the country, a large share of the removals is exported. In 2009 this volume was 360,000 m³ under bark. A reduction of 10% compared to the year before.

c. Certified forest products

In 2009 a second monitoring of the share of certified wood products on the Dutch market has been performed by Probos Foundation. The results show that a big step forwards has been made. In 2005 the market share of certified wood products on the Dutch market was 13.3% and this has increased to 33.8% in 2008. This market share corresponds to a market volume of 2.2 mln. m³ round wood equivalents under bark. This large increase in market share is caused by a large number of activities. FSC Netherlands has entered into new agreements with different public and private organisations to only buy FSC certified wood products. The Green Public Procurement Policy of the Dutch government the market became into force. The policy aims of the

Dutch Royal Timber Trade Federation have resulted in a large increase in the imported volume of certified wood products by its members.

d. Sawn softwood

The total imports of sawn softwood in the Netherlands has been reduced by 13% between 2008 and 2009. This resulted in a decrease of the stock. The reduction in the building volume and the decrease in the production volume within the packaging industry is clearly visible in the figures.

In 2006 and 2007 Germany was competing with Sweden to become the most important sawn softwood supplier for the Netherlands. In 2008 and 2009 the imports from Germany decreased with 18% and 16% respectively. Although the imports from Sweden even increased with 5%.

The imports from Finland also show a large decrease of 23% which equals an amount of app. 60,000 m³. Consequently Russia is still the third supplier of sawn softwood for the Netherlands, but the imported volume from Russia decreased by 32% between 2008 and 2009.

After the prosperous developments during the years 2006 and 2007 and the decrease in 2008 and 2009 the prospects for 2010 and 2011 are also not very promising.

As a consequence the Dutch wood traders expect that the consumption of sawn softwood this year will decrease with 10% and for 2011 a decrease of 9% is expected. The reduction in the imported volume will be lower (-5%) in 2011, compared to -11% in 2010.

Table 2

Key facts of the Dutch sawn softwood market

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
	X 1000 m ³								
Domestic Production	168	149	164	175	176	180	184	159	144
Net Imports	2,450	2,229	2,230	2,245	2,116	2,348	2,351	2,227	1,988
Stock Change	-125	-91	9	26	139	-70	26	-32	-25
Apparent Consumption	2,643	2,469	2,385	2,394	2,153	2,598	2,509	2,418	2,157

Sources: National Statistics (CBS) / Netherlands' s Timber Trade Association (VVNH)/ Probos

e. Sawn hardwood

The consumption of hardwoods in the Netherlands showed a large decrease of 32% in 2009. In the non-tropical hardwoods there was a decrease in consumption of 38%. The tropical hardwoods decreased with 32%.

Due to stock reductions in 2008 and 2009 the consumption of hardwoods has decreased. The tropical hardwood imports might show an increase in import volume in 2010 and might stabilize in 2011, but this is due to the fact that the stocks have reached such a level in 2009 or during 2010 that they have to be restocked. The temperate hardwood consumption is expected to decrease further in the year 2010 and might stabilize in 2011. This wood is mainly used for interior purposes and for that reason it is at the end of the investment cycle. This results in a continuing decrease of consumption in the year 2010.

Table 3

Key facts of the Dutch sawn hardwood market

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
	X 1000 m ³								
Domestic Production	100	109	105	98	103	86	87	84	66
of which tropical	23	25	22	19	19	19	20	18	12

Net Imports	532	431	533	534	492	511	492	469	310
of which tropical	327	277	347	377	359	381	370	349	239
Apparent Consumption	632	540	638	632	595	597	579	553	376
of which tropical	350	302	369	396	378	400	390	367	251

Sources: Probos, National Statistics (CBS)

f. Pulp and paper

Two paper plants in The Netherlands were using fresh fibres for the production of newsprint and for board for folding boxes. The fresh fibres are produced from Scots pine, Poplar and Norway spruce. Both production plants consume also recovered fibres. During 2009 one of the plants stopped using fresh fibres for the production of newsprint and shutdown one paper machine.

Table 4 shows a sharp decrease in the use of chips in 2009. This was caused by the, above mentioned, change in raw material use during 2009 by one of the Dutch plants. During the last years the input of chips was more or less stable. Most of the chips are imported from the European sawmill industries.

Table 4
Fibre furnish of the Dutch paper and board industry

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
	X 1000 m ³ round wood equivalents under bark							
Round wood	159	161	117	104	95	99	95	75
Chips	160	174	194	203	188	194	261	124
Market pulp	2,935	3,148	3,308	3,452	3,304	3,076	2,456	2,235
Recovered paper	7,710	7,725	7,735	8,001	7,625	7,498	7,257	6,507
Total fibre input	10,967	11,208	11,354	11,760	11,212	10,574	9,713	8,941

Source: Probos, Royal VNP

Economic status of the Dutch paper and board industry

The financial crisis also has an impact on the Dutch paper and board industry. Production of paper and board decreased 12% compared with 2008. Reason for this drop in production is mainly the result of the economic downturn, but it is strengthened by the closure of one paper machine in one of the Dutch mills during 2009. If the figures are adjusted for the closure of this papermachine the decrease in the total production of paper and board is only 8%. Which is less than the average within the CEPI countries. The turnover decreased in the same period with 18% to EUR 1,493 billion.

As a result of the economic situation in 2009 the number of employees in the paper and board industry decreased to 4,200. In recent years as a result of improving labour productivity the number of employees in the industry in the Netherlands already fell from around 5,700 (2005) to 5,100 (2006), but stabilized in 2007 and 2008 around 4,300. This refers to personnel operating the paper and board producing machinery. The indirect functions and support services amounted to around 800 employees (2006).

In 2004 the Dutch paper and board industry, together with the Ministry of Economic Affairs, launched the Energy Transition in the Paper Production Chain. The aim of this program is: "To halve the energy consumption per unit end-product in the chain in the period 2005–2020". This challenge is translated by relating energy savings with reduction of CO₂-emissions, cost efficiency, international competition and re-use of raw materials. In 2009 a new energy agreement has been signed between the paper and board industry and the government. The aim of this agreement is to improve the energy efficiency in production and the value chain..

Table 5
Recent developments of the Dutch paper and board industries

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Change in production in %:								
Thermo-mechanical pulp (integrated)	-9	+12	-9	9	-6	-3	6	-45***
Newsprint	-10	+20	-1	0	0	0	10	-41***
(Other) graphic papers	-5	+2	+4	-2	+6	-9	-31**	-8
Case materials	+14	-6	+3	+5	0	-1	-5	-7
Wrappings upto 150 gsm	+2	-4	+13	0	+6	-2	2	-7
Folding boxboard and other paper & board for packaging	+5	-3	-27*)	-1	-14	-7	-4	-5
Sanitary & household	-1	-1	+4	-5	-13	5	2	3
Total paper & board	+5	0	+4	0	-3	-4	-8	-12
(Turnover [million Euro])	2,165	2,032	1,996	1,910	1,998	2,111	1,828	1,493
Price change of production of paper and board industries	n.a.							

Source: Royal VNP

*) Fire damage in the Mayr-Melnhof factory.

***) Due to closure of 3 mills during 2007 and closure of one machine on an other production location.

****) The production of Norske Skog Parenco changed from newsprint to magazine paper grades based on recovered paper.

4. TABLES

A. ECONOMIC INDICATORS FOR THE NETHERLANDS

Change in %, unless otherwise specified	2008	2009	2010	2011
GDP	2.25	-4.0	1.25	1.75
Private consumption	1.3	-2.5	0.25	0.25
Private gross fixed investment (excl. housing)	7.4	-18.3	-12	1
Exports of goods	1.0	-9.2	10.75	7.75
Imports of goods	3.7	-10.4	8.5	6
Production, market sector	2.1	-5.0	1.75	2
Consumer Price Index (inflation)	2.5	1.2	1.5	2
Productivity, market sector	0.9	-2.6	4	2.5
Unit labour costs, manufacturing	2.2	-1.0	1	2
Labour income share, market sector, level in %	79.0	81.0	78.5	77.75
Employment, whole economy (persons)	1.5	0.5	0.0	0.25
Employment, market sector (labour years)	1.2	-2.5	-2	-0.5
Unemployment, level, % labour force	3.9	4.9	5.75	6
EMU-debt, level in % GDP	58.2	60.8	65.7	68.0
EMU-balance, level in % GDP	0.7	-5.4	-6.3	-4.7

Source: CPB (Netherlands Bureau for Economic Policy Analysis)

B. FOREST PRODUCTS PRODUCTION AND TRADE IN 2009, 2010 AND 2011

Table 7
Forest production and trade in 2009, 2010 and 2011

Product Code	Product	Unit	Revised	Estimate	Forecast
			2009	2010	2011
1.2.1.C	SAWLOGS AND VENEER LOGS, CONIFEROUS				
	Removals	1000 m ³	278	280	285
	Imports	1000 m ³	51	60	65
	Exports	1000 m ³	57	60	70
	Apparent consumption	1000 m ³	272	280	280
1.2.1.NC	SAWLOGS AND VENEER LOGS, NON-CONIFEROUS				
	Removals	1000 m ³	76	80	85
	Imports	1000 m ³	43	40	40
	Exports	1000 m ³	12	10	15
	Apparent consumption	1000 m ³	107	110	110
1.2.1.NC.T	of which, tropical logs				
	Imports	1000 m ³	7	6	6
	Exports	1000 m ³	0	0	0
	Net Trade	1000 m ³	6	6	6
1.2.2.C	PULPWOOD (ROUND AND SPLIT), CONIFEROUS				
	Removals	1000 m ³	173	180	180
	Imports	1000 m ³	18	18	18
	Exports	1000 m ³	155	163	163
	Apparent consumption	1000 m ³	36	35	35
1.2.2.NC	PULPWOOD (ROUND AND SPLIT), NON-CONIFEROUS				
	Removals	1000 m ³	152	150	150
	Imports	1000 m ³	8	8	8
	Exports	1000 m ³	115	120	120
	Apparent consumption	1000 m ³	45	38	38
3 + 4	WOOD RESIDUES, CHIPS AND PARTICLES				
	Domestic supply	1000 m ³	835	750	750
	Imports	1000 m ³	2,069	2,365	2,365
	Exports	1000 m ³	568	540	540
	Apparent consumption	1000 m ³	2,336	2,575	2,575
1.2.3.C	OTHER INDUSTRIAL ROUNDWOOD, CONIFEROUS				
	Removals	1000 m ³	38	38	38
1.2.3.NC	OTHER INDUSTRIAL ROUNDWOOD, NON-CONIFEROUS				
	Removals	1000 m ³	10	10	10
1.1.C	WOOD FUEL, CONIFEROUS				
	Removals	1000 m ³	50	50	50
1.1.NC	WOOD FUEL, NON-CONIFEROUS				
	Removals	1000 m ³	240	240	240

5.C	SAWNWOOD, CONIFEROUS				
	Production	1000 m ³	144	140	145
	Imports	1000 m ³	2.176	1.940	1.840
	Exports	1000 m ³	204	195	215
	Apparent consumption	1000 m ³	2.116	1.885	1.770
5.NC	SAWNWOOD, NON-CONIFEROUS				
	Production	1000 m ³	66	60	65
	Imports	1000 m ³	399	395	384
	Exports	1000 m ³	88	85	85
	Apparent consumption	1000 m ³	251	260	255
5.NC.T	of which, tropical sawnwood				
	Production	1000 m ³	12	10	10
	Imports	1000 m ³	298	305	300
	Exports	1000 m ³	60	55	55
	Apparent consumption	1000 m ³	251	260	255
6.1	VENEER SHEETS				
	Production	1000 m ³	0	0	0
	Imports	1000 m ³	34	34	34
	Exports	1000 m ³	6	6	6
	Apparent consumption	1000 m ³	28	28	28
6.1.NC.T	of which, tropical veneer sheets				
	Production	1000 m ³	0	0	0
	Imports	1000 m ³	11	11	11
	Exports	1000 m ³	1	1	1
	Apparent consumption	1000 m ³	10	10	10
6.2	PLYWOOD				
	Production	1000 m ³	0	0	0
	Imports	1000 m ³	457	390	390
	Exports	1000 m ³	49	50	50
	Apparent consumption	1000 m ³	407	340	340
6.2.NC.T	of which, tropical plywood				
	Production	1000 m ³	0	0	0
	Imports	1000 m ³	137	117	117
	Exports	1000 m ³	20	20	20
	Apparent consumption	1000 m ³	117	97	97
6.3	PARTICLE BOARD (including OSB)				
	Production	1000 m ³	0	0	0
	Imports	1000 m ³	573	487	487
	Exports	1000 m ³	151	150	150
	Apparent consumption	1000 m ³	423	337	337

0

6.3.1	of which, OSB				
	Production	1000 m ³	0	0	0
	Imports	1000 m ³	48	48	48
	Exports	1000 m ³	6	6	6
	Apparent consumption	1000 m ³	42	42	42
6.4	FIBREBOARD				
	Production	1000 m ³	46	46	46
	Imports	1000 m ³	431	413	413
	Exports	1000 m ³	95	95	95
	Apparent consumption	1000 m ³	382	364	364
6.4.1	Hardboard				
	Production	1000 m ³	0	0	0
	Imports	1000 m ³	68	68	68
	Exports	1000 m ³	2	2	2
	Apparent consumption	1000 m ³	66	66	66
6.4.2	MDF (Medium density)				
	Production	1000 m ³	0	0	0
	Imports	1000 m ³	284	265	265
	Exports	1000 m ³	90	90	90
	Apparent consumption	1000 m ³	194	175	175
6.4.3	Other fibreboard				
	Production	1000 m ³	46	46	46
	Imports	1000 m ³	79	80	80
	Exports	1000 m ³	3	3	3
	Apparent consumption	1000 m ³	122	123	123
7	WOOD PULP				
	Production	1000 m.t.	72	50	50
	Imports	1000 m.t.	921	1,004	1040
	Exports	1000 m.t.	561	560	560
	Apparent consumption	1000 m.t.	431	494	530
10	PAPER & PAPERBOARD				
	Production	1000 m.t.	2,609	2,850	2,950
	Imports	1000 m.t.	2,923	2,900	2,900
	Exports	1000 m.t.	2,007	2,395	2,300
	Apparent consumption	1000 m.t.	3,525	3,455	3,550