

Bio Life Sciences – Opportunities in the Netherlands

Open market in Europe

The Dutch economy in general, through its size, its geographical position and its trading activities, is recognised as an open economy; this is also reflected in the pharmaceutical part of the Dutch economy. The Netherlands is a strong open market with few barriers to imported products. The Life Sciences sector is a young sector operating on an international level.

Current Dutch market situation

Companies in the Netherlands being involved in Life Sciences run into the hundreds and consist of about 157 companies that are dedicated to R&D. The Life Sciences sector is a sector which consists primarily of small businesses. The majority of companies in the Netherlands are capital-intensive businesses with relatively highly-educated employees.

- *About 80 privatised companies started up a business in the sector Life Sciences in 2007.*

Innovations on the Dutch market

Thanks to biotechnology, an increasing number of chemical processes can be replaced by more sustainable and enzymatic processes.

The entire Life Sciences sector is based up on innovation. There is an intensive, often necessary collaboration between the companies and the knowledge institutions and research institutes.

Biotechnological research within and outside of the Netherlands continuously provides new insights that create possibilities, either directly, or indirectly, for new innovative products. Over 400 companies are active in the life sciences in the Netherlands, which makes the Netherlands one of the frontrunners in the European Union.

Opportunities offered in the Bio Life Sciences sector

During the last years, the Bio Life Sciences sector showed a significant growth; employee numbers have developed and revenues have highly increased.

- *An increasing number of companies are bringing their products to the Dutch market and the number of companies bringing in revenue is increasing.*

This market is supposed to continue to develop into a full-grown sector that operates on an even broader international scale than currently is the case.

A significant proportion of the Life Sciences companies depend on imports from foreign businesses and knowledge institutions for their development and survival. The import of labour is playing an increasingly significant role. High-calibre employees are necessary for research and development work. These workers are often foreigners from the United States, Germany and the Far East.