

## OVERVIEW

As we enter 2022, Dutch firms are facing several converging challenges. With the economic and cultural impact of COVID-19 continuing to reshape the business environment, the new year sees leaders from across the Netherlands seeking ways to meet the needs of changing consumer behaviours, overcome the difficulties of talent acquisition and generate profitable growth amidst rising costs.

For a while now it's been clear that the Netherlands is facing an employment crisis. A record number of vacancies and the ongoing decline in unemployment are making it difficult for companies to hire talent. Unemployment is at pre-pandemic levels and businesses should therefore expect prolonged recruitment challenges over the next 12 months.

The Dutch economy is improving thanks to increased household consumption. GDP is at its highest level for over a year and most indicators suggest the business environment is buoyant across key sectors as we move into 2022. This is particularly evident in the fact that manufacturing confidence reached a record high towards the end of 2021.

Consumer spending remains confident after many companies across consumer industries experienced strong demand for products and services following an easing of lockdown restrictions in 2021.

Inflation shocks could stall this growth trajectory. We've already experienced rapid rises in the cost of fuel, food and clothing. And imminent gas and electricity price increases will inevitably impact household consumption. Between October and November 2021, the cost of consumer goods and services had risen by 1.2% and were 5.9% more expensive than in November 2020.

The rising costs of raw materials, freight, and packaging – something all firms have faced during the previous two years – will also inevitably be passed on to consumers. And moving forward, as wages rise to offset inflation, factors such as customer loyalty, innovation and business transformation will remain critical to the success of brands and manufacturers in 2022.

We hope you enjoy reading our latest Netherlands Consumer Sector Salaries Report. Inside you will find up-to-date figures for the salaries commanded by executive, sales, marketing, operations, HR and finance professionals. Should you have further questions, please do not hesitate to contact a member of our team who will be more than happy to discuss any of the roles presented.