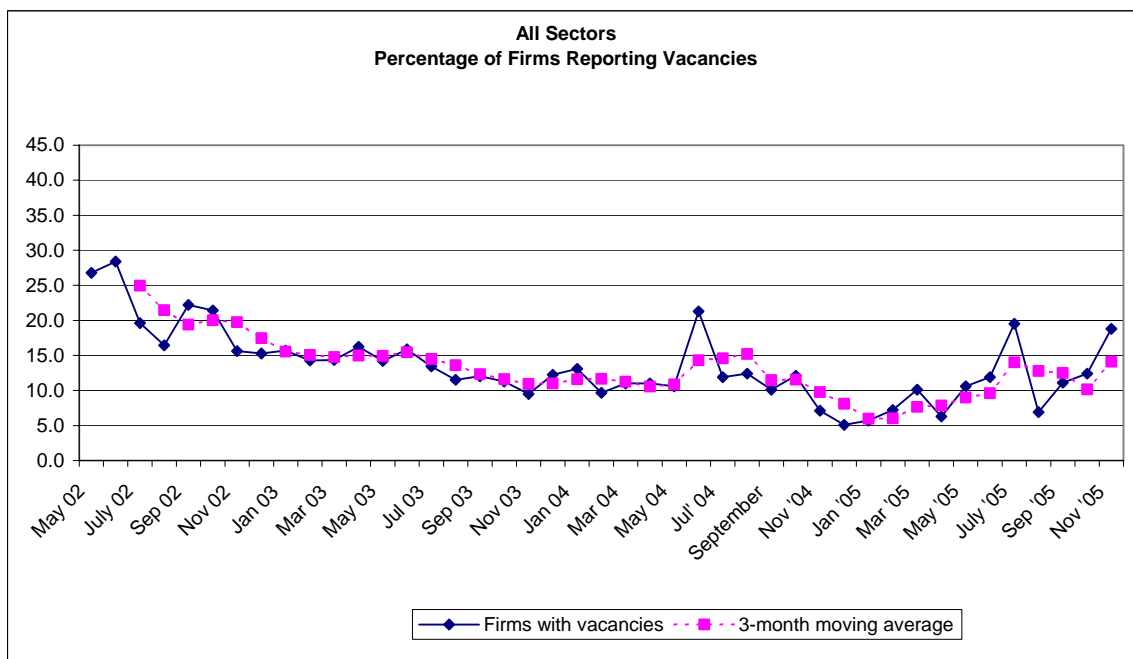




Employment and Vacancies Survey: November 2005

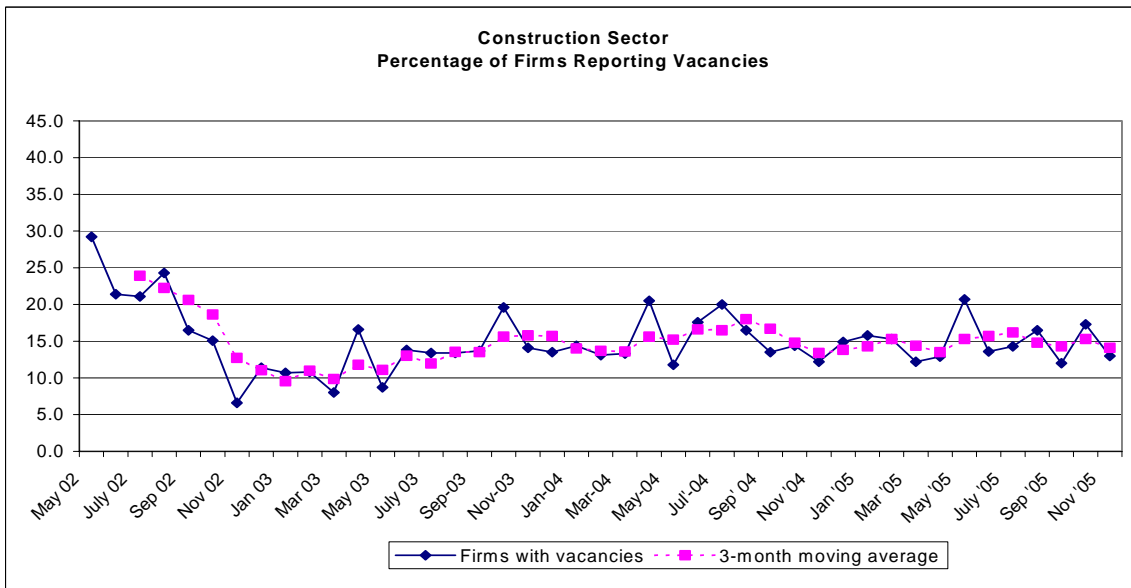
Economy wide Vacancies Increased Significantly in November 2005

Economy wide vacancies increased by a significant 7 percentage points in the month of November 2005. The percentage of firms across all sectors reporting vacancies increased from 12 per cent in October 2005 to 19 per cent in November 2005. The increase in economy wide vacancies reflects a dramatic increase in the percentage of service sector firms reporting vacancies and slight increases in the percentage of industry and retail sector firms reporting vacancies. The percentage of construction sector firms with vacancies fell in the month of November 2005.



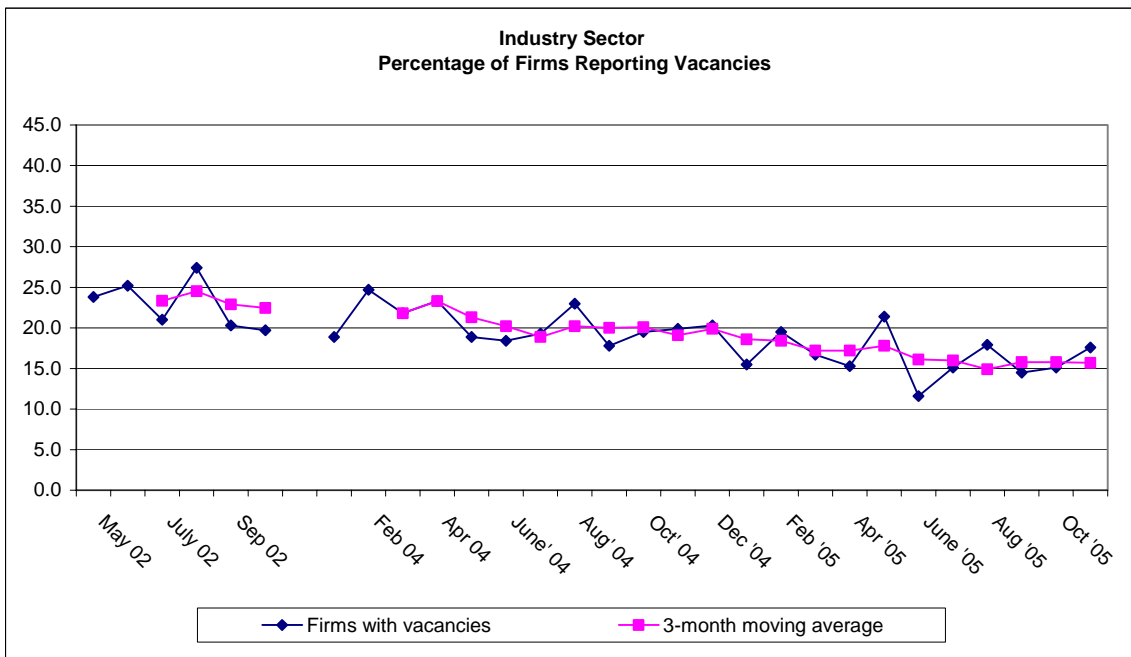
Construction Sector

The percentage of construction sector firms reporting vacancies fell by 4 percentage points from 17 per cent in October 2005 to 13 per cent in November 2005. This decrease in the percentage of firms with vacancies in the sector is most likely due to seasonal effects.



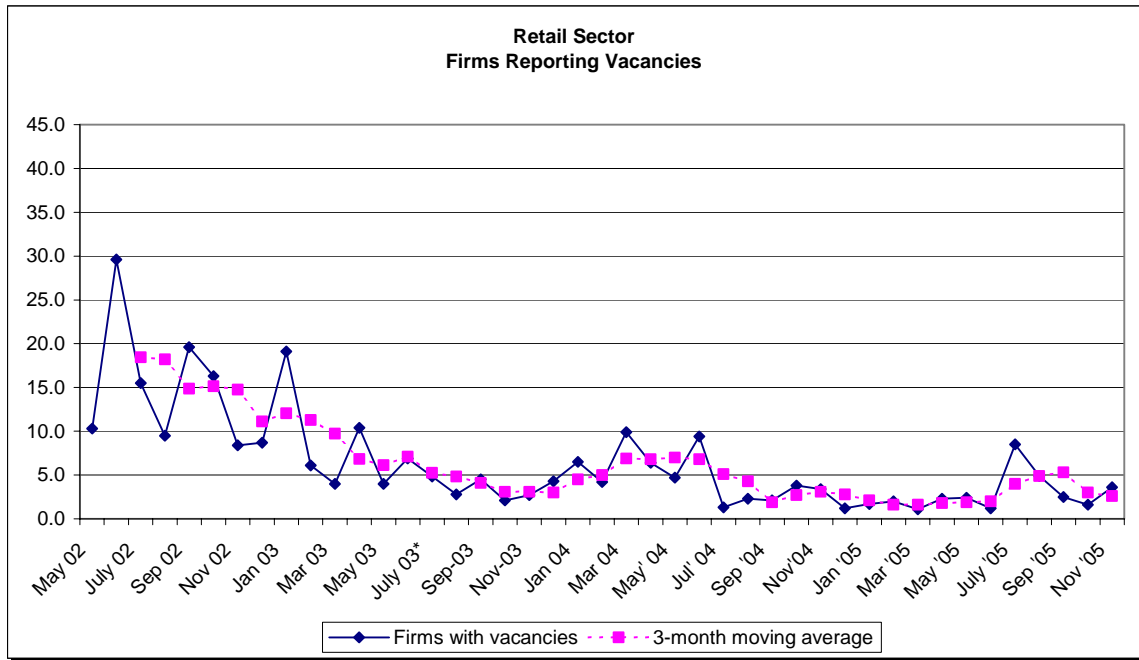
Industry Sector

The industry sector experienced an increase of 3 percentage points in the percentage of firms reporting vacancies. The percentage of firms with vacancies within the sector increased from 15 per cent in October 2005 to 18 per cent in November 2005.



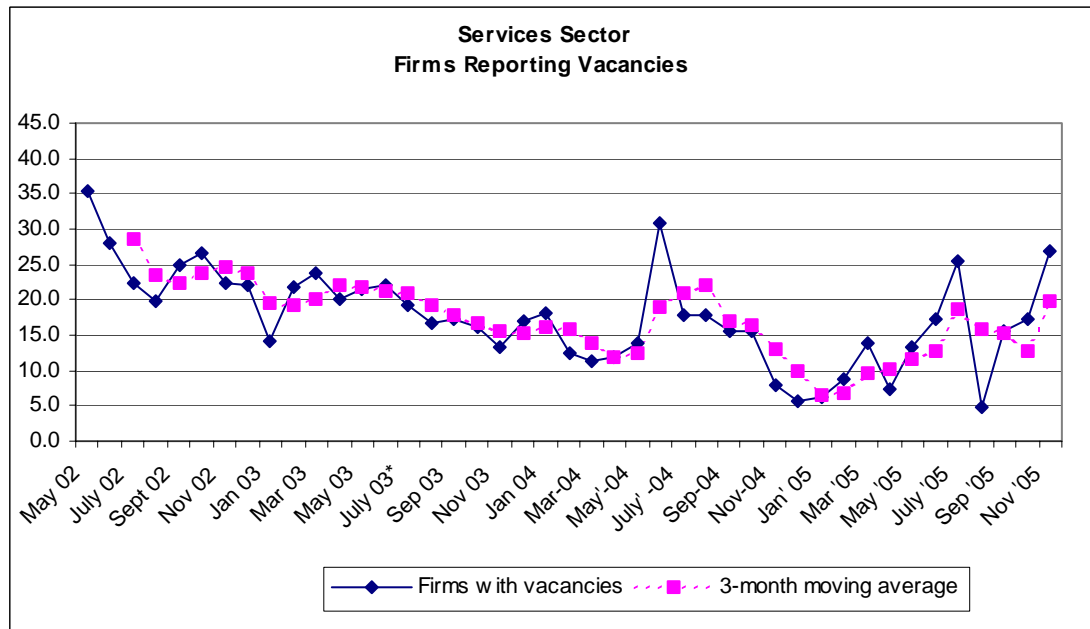
Retail Sector

The percentage of firms reporting vacancies within the retail sector increased by two percentage points from 2 per cent in October 2005 to 4 per cent in November 2005. The increase is a seasonal effect as data for previous years gives evidence of slight increases before Christmas.



Services Sector

The percentage of service sector firms reporting vacancies reached its highest level for over a year in November 2005. The percentage firms reporting vacancies in this sector increased significantly by 10 percentage points from 17 per cent in October 2005 to 27 per cent in November 2005. The percentage of service sector firms with vacancies has been increasing since hitting a low level of 5 per cent in August of this year.



Difficult-to-Fill Vacancies

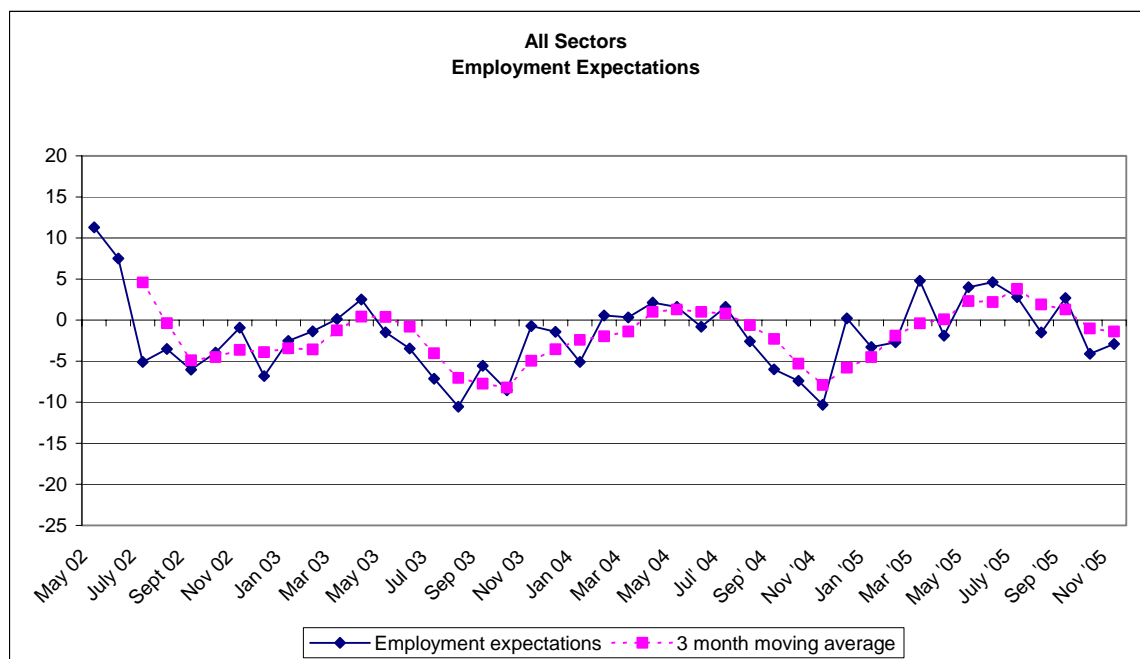
Firms are asked if they are experiencing difficulty in filling the vacancies they have and what these vacancies are. This provides an indication of the jobs which employers are finding most difficult-to-fill. In the sectors surveyed a much higher percentage of employers in construction than in other sectors have consistently reported difficult-to-fill vacancies.

The most frequently mentioned difficult-to-fill vacancies in November 2005 for the various sectors were:

- quantity surveyors and site managers in the construction sector
- machinists and general operatives in the industry sector
- managers and sales personnel in the retail sector
- supervisors and receptionists in the services sector

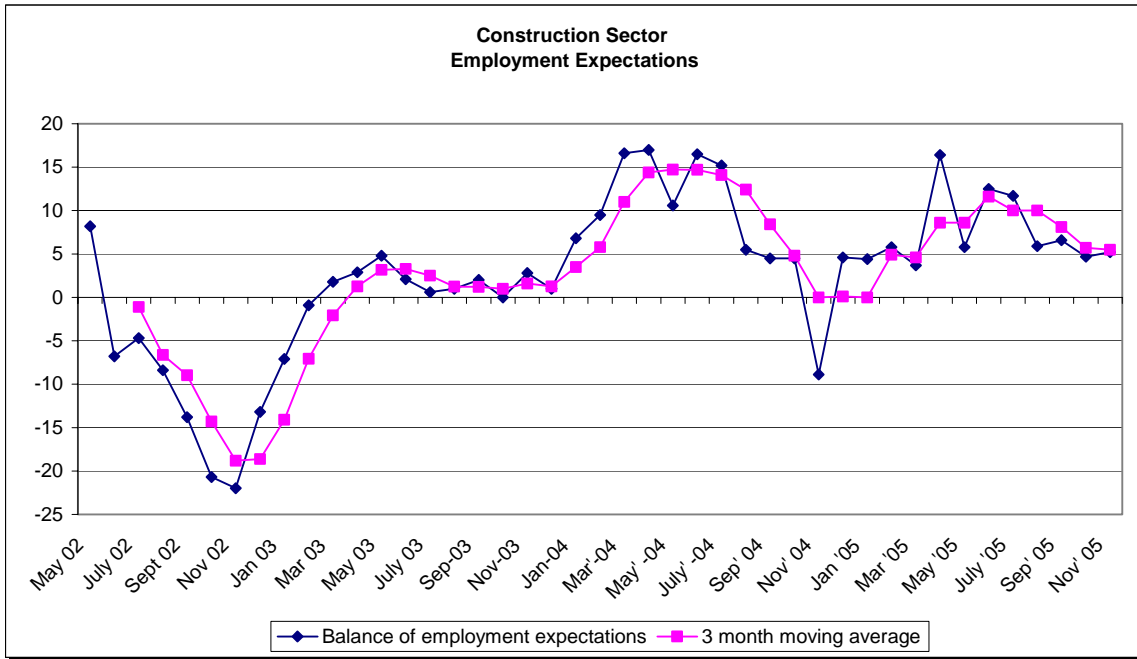
Employers Employment Expectations Improved but Remain Pessimistic

Survey results for November 2005 indicate that employer expectations regarding future employment improved slightly but remained pessimistic. The Net Employment Expectations indicator for all sectors increased by one percentage point from minus 4 per cent in October 2005 to minus 3 per cent in November 2005. This indicates that 3 per cent more employers across all sectors feel employment levels in their firms will fall rather than rise over the coming months. The improvement in the all sector indicator reflected increases in the Net Employment Expectations indicators of the industry and retail sectors. The expectations of service sector employers regarding future employment levels in their firms deteriorated in November 2005. The Net Employment Expectations indicator for the construction sector remained relatively stable.



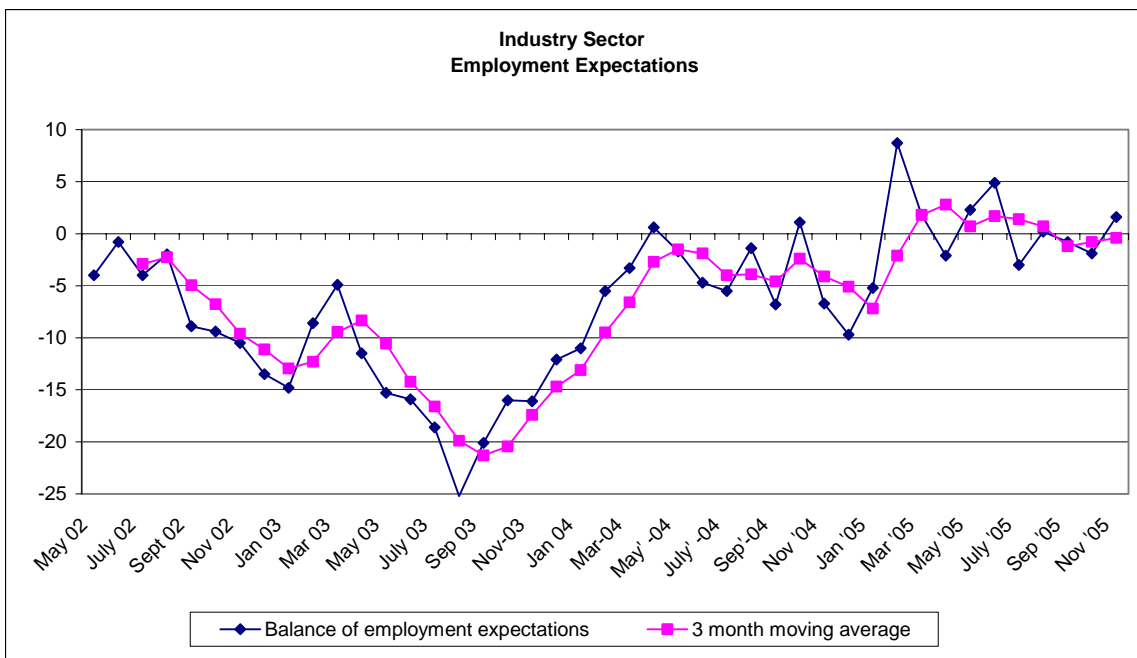
Construction Sector

Employers in the construction sector remained optimistic about future employment levels in their firms. The Net Employment Expectations indicator for the sector remained at 5 per cent in November 2005. This indicates that 5 per cent more employers in the construction sector feel that employment levels will increase rather than decrease in the near future. Employers in the construction sector have been consistently positive in 2005 about future employment levels in their firms.



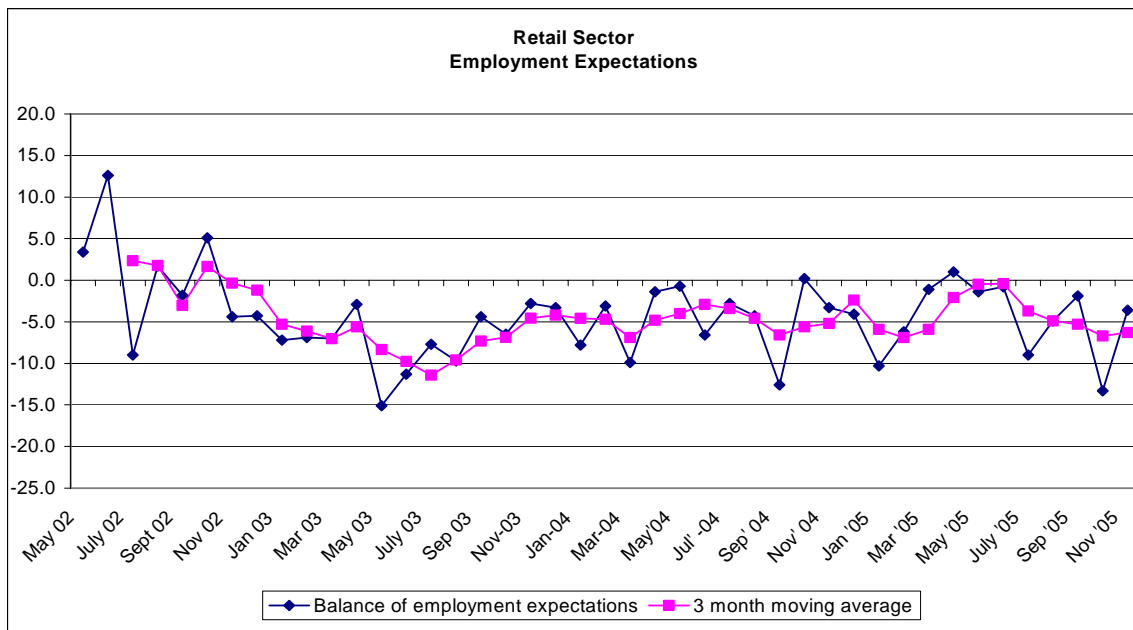
Industry Sector

The Net Employment Expectations indicator for the industry sector climbed 4 percentage points to reach 2 per cent in November 2005. This indicates that 2 per cent more employers feel employment levels will increase rather than decrease over the coming months. The increase represents a deviation from the downward trend the indicator had been exhibiting since August of this year.



Retail Sector

The retail sector experienced an improvement in employer sentiment in November 2005; the Net Employment Expectations indicator increased by 9 percentage points from minus 13 per cent to minus 4 per cent. This indicates that 4 per cent more employers feel employment levels will decrease rather than increase over the coming months. Therefore although employer opinion regarding future employment levels in the retail sector improved it remained pessimistic.



Services Sector

The services sector was the only sector that experienced a deterioration in employer sentiment in November 2005. The Net Employment Expectations indicator for the sector fell 3 percentage points to minus 4 per cent indicating that more employers feel employment levels will fall rather rise in the near future.

