



Press release

Statistics Netherlands

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Retail turnover: highest growth since 1990

The increase in retail turnover in 1998 was the highest since 1990. Consumers spent nearly 6% more in the shops than in 1997. Figures from Statistics Netherlands show that turnover reached a new record of 145 billion guilders.

On average, every household in the Netherlands spent 22,000 guilders in the shops; 9,000 guilders on groceries and 13,000 on non-food items such as furniture and clothes.

Non-food pushed growth up

The increase in sales was mainly the consequence of consumers spending more on personal hygiene, home furnishings and consumer electronics. Turnover in the non-food sector was 8.5% higher in 1998 than in 1997. The highest increases were for shops selling household appliances and consumer electronics (+15.9%), furniture stores (+12.4%) and chemists (+10.1%)

Food sector lagged behind in 1998

Compared with the results for the non-food sector, supermarkets and specialist food outlets lagged behind. Turnover in the food sector was only 2.5% higher than in 1997. Supermarkets increased sales by 3.6%, with the largest ten chains doing better than the rest (+4.9%).

Specialist shops under pressure

Specialist outlets are facing tough competition from supermarkets. This was expressed by disappointing results again in 1998 for butchers (-5.3%), greengrocers (-2.4%) and off licences (-1.6%). Compared with 1995 turnover for butchers and greengrocers was 8% down, the equivalent of 400 million guilders. Fishmongers, on the other hand had no cause for complaint, they realised one of the strongest increases in sales in the food-sector, up 4.6% on 1997 and 17% on 1995.

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