



Press release

Statistics Netherlands

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Retail turnover 1.6% down in January

Shop sales were 1.6% lower in January 1999 than in the same month last year, according to figures from Statistics Netherlands. One of the reasons for this fall was the unfavourable number of shopping days in January 1999.

Retail sales of groceries were particularly disappointing. Sales of durable consumer goods did rise, but by less than recent months.

A total of just over 11 billion guilders was spent in Dutch shops in January, an average of 1,700 guilders per household. Nearly 60% of this was spent on durable consumer goods, the remainder on daily groceries in supermarkets and other specialist food outlets such as butchers and greengrocers.

Lower sales in food sector

January was characterised by a sharp fall in sales by food outlets. Compared with the same month last year turnover in food shops was 7% down. Even if the unfavourable number of shopping days is taken into account the figure is 3% lower.

Remarkably, supermarkets also lost out on January 1998 although it should be kept in mind that the 9% rise in sales in January last year was particularly high.

Sales in non-food sector up 2.7%

Non-food retailers sold 2.7% more in January compared with January last year. Taking into account the pattern of shopping days turnover would have increased by 6.5%. Clothes shops were one of the best branches in non-food with a 4% rise in sales, higher than the non-food average.

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