



Press release

Statistics Netherlands

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Household spending 1.6% higher in January

The volume of consumer spending by households was 1.6% higher in January than in the same month last year. According to Statistics Netherlands, this modest growth was caused partly by the effect of the less favourable pattern of shopping days. Spending on food and drink fell sharply, while the increase in spending on durable goods is high (6.4%) but lower than the growth rates measured in recent months.

Sharp fall in spending on food

Households spent a lot less on food, drink and smoking (-9.4%). The decrease was observed for all items in this category, but largest for potatoes, fruit and vegetables.

There were fewer shopping days in January this year, one Thursday fewer and one Sunday more than in January last year. Shopping around the New Year's day holiday also affected the development in January.

More spent on means of transport

Spending on durable consumer goods rose strongly but not as much as in the last few months. The 8.7% rise in 1998 in spending on this category was exceptionally high; growth rates of this order have not been observed since 1970.

The most substantial growth was observed for means of transport, although spending on consumer electronics grew strongly as well, just as last year. Less was spent on shoes and household items than in January last year.

Services and other goods: 2.6% volume growth

Around two-thirds of all domestic consumer expenditure is spent on services and other goods. The volume of spending on this category is 2.6% higher than the level of January last year. Spending on financial and business services, fuels, transport and communications grew by more than average, while less was spent on heating, electricity and water because of the relatively mild weather.

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