



# Press release

Statistics Netherlands

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## ***Retail turnover 4.6% up in first quarter***

In the first quarter of this year the turnover in the retail trade was 4.6% higher than in the first quarter last year, according to figures from Statistics Netherlands.

The results of the past quarter were pushed up by the substantial turnover growth in the non-food sectors (8.4%), with furniture and photographic equipment selling particularly well. The turnover in the food sector declined by 0.2% compared with the same period last year.

## ***Turnover first quarter 34 billion***

Shoppers spent 34 billion guilders in the first quarter of this year, the equivalent of 5,100 guilders per household. Of this amount, 3,100 guilders were spent on non-food items and 2,000 guilders on the daily groceries from supermarkets, butchers and greengrocers.

## ***Retail sales rocketed in March***

While the turnover growth in January and February was quite modest, in March it shot up (+10.6%). The turnover growth in the non-food sector in particular was remarkable compared with March 1998, rising by more than 14.5%. The turnover in the furniture sector increased by even more (over 16%). The high level of consumers' willingness to buy shown in Statistics Netherlands surveys, seems to be translating into action.

The food sector also had a better turnover growth in March (6%) than in January (-7%) and February (+1.8%).

The figures for March are somewhat flattered because of a more favourable composition of shopping days compared with March last year; the adjusted growth of the turnover in the retail trade amounts about 7.4%.

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