



Press release

Statistics Netherlands

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Retail trade 1% up in May

In May 1999 retail turnover was a modest 1% more than in the same month last year, at just under 13 billion guilders. This is the equivalent of nearly 2,000 guilders per households. Statistics Netherlands' figures show that this relatively small increase was mainly caused by a less favourable pattern of shopping days in May 1999. If the figures are adjusted for this, the increase is nearly 4%.

There are two opposing trends within the retail sector: turnover in food shops fell by -1.1%, while in the non-food sector sales were up by 3.1%.

Turnover in food sector stagnates

In the first five months of 1999 the turnover growth in food retail outlets came to a complete standstill, not only for specialist shops such as butchers and greengrocers, but for supermarkets too their was a slight losses (-0.1%) compared with the same period in 1998. In the first five months of 1998 supermarkets increased takings by 4.8%.

Non-food retailers set the tone

Retailers selling durable goods had little to complain about in the period January to May 1999: sales rose by 6.8%. As prices have been relatively stable, the volume of turnover increased by just over 5% compared with the same period in 1998. Furniture, home decoration and personal hygiene products were particular consumer favourites. Furniture stores sold nearly 10% more, do-it-yourself outlets 7.1% more and chemists 8.6% more.

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