



Press release

Statistics Netherlands

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Consumer spending up 3.7%

The volume of domestic consumption was 3.7% larger in 2000 than in 1999. This is the fourth year in a row that the increase is 3.5% or more, according to figures from Statistics Netherlands. For services, the largest category of consumption, growth accelerated to 4.4% in 2000. The volume increase in spending durable consumer goods (3.8%) was much lower than in 1999 (7.4%), however.

Growth larger for services than for goods

The volume increase in spending on services (4.4%) in 2000 was larger than that for goods (2.8%). For the whole of 1999 the increase was 3.5%. With a growth rate in double figures the largest increase was in spending on financial and business services and on transport and communication. Domestic consumption totalled 244 billion euro in 2000. Nearly sixty per cent of this was spent on services.

Growth rates for spending on goods varied in 2000. The increase in spending on food, drink and tobacco (1.0%) was only small, and about the same level as in 1999. Purchases of durable goods did not rise as quickly as in 1999, probably because consumers bought fewer new cars than in 1999, particularly in the second and third quarters. On balance only one half of one per cent more was spent on means of transport in 2000 than in 1999.

Spending on durable goods picking up again

In the fourth quarter of 2000 the level of spending on durable goods was 5.0% higher than in the same period in 1999. Spending on this category has picked up again following the relatively low growth rates in the second (1.1%) and third (2.8%) quarters. Purchases of new cars showed a particularly strong recovery at the end of the year.

One possible explanation for this is that consumers bought more durable goods at the end of the year in anticipation of the increase in the rate of VAT introduced on 1 January this year.

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