



Press release

Statistics Netherlands

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Retail turnover up 8% in January

In the first month of 2001 turnover in the retail trade was 8% higher than in January last year. Provisional figures from Statistics Netherlands put the increase in turnover by food retailers at 8.4%. For non-food stores the rise was 7.4%. The more favourable pattern of shopping days this January accounts for part of this strong increase.

Compared with January last year, prices in the shops were 3.3% higher. Part of this price increase was the result of the increase in the general rate of VAT which took effect on 1 January; it was raised from 17.5% to 19%. If we remove the effects of the higher prices, the increase in retail turnover is 4.6% higher than that of January 2000.

Consumers spend 5.5 billion euro in the shops

The nearly 100,000 shops in the Netherlands sold goods worth 5.5 billion euro in January, just over 825 euro per household. Nearly two thirds of this was spent in non-food retail outlets.

Higher sales for chemists and clothes shops

Chemists (+10.6%) and clothes shops (+11.1%) increased sales substantially in January compared with the same month a year ago, while do-it-yourself stores (+4.5%) and shops selling household articles (+4.7%) had below average turnover growth rates. The latter shops had below average growth rates in 2000 as well.

Turnover up for supermarkets and specialist food shops

Supermarkets increased takings substantially in January, 9.2% more than in January last year. Food specialist shops such as butchers and greengrocers increased sales by 5.4%.

Prices in food shops were 3.7% higher in January than twelve months previously. Price surveys by Statistics Netherlands show that prices of food products taxed at the low VAT rate have also undergone relatively large price increases in recent months. At the beginning of 2000 these prices decreased because of the strong competition between the main supermarket chains. If the effects of the price increases are removed, retail turnover is 4.5% higher than in January last year.

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