



Press release

Statistics Netherlands

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Slower consumption growth in the first quarter of 2001

The volume increase in domestic consumption during the first quarter was 1.9%. This low growth rate comes after a long period of relatively high consumption increases during the late nineties and the year 2000. Part of the explanation, according to Statistics Netherlands, lies in incidental facts related to the introduction of the new tax system on 1 January 2001. This led to extra purchases at the end of last year. Following this, the growth rate slowed down in the first quarter. The consumption growth is slowing down even if such incidents are not taken into account.

Less expenditure on durable goods

The volume of expenditure on durable goods was lower in the first quarter of this year than it was a year ago (-3.3%). Especially the purchase of new cars is down on a year ago. Expenditure on furniture, furnishings and household articles was also down on the first quarter in 2000. However, consumers spent substantially more on household appliances and clothing than a year ago.

Food, beverages and tobacco more expensive

The volume of expenditure on food, beverages and tobacco was up 1.4% on the first quarter of last year. Prices in this consumption category rose relatively much during the first few months of the year, with food, beverages and tobacco increasing in price by 5% on a year ago.

More consumption of services

The volume of expenditure on services was up 3.4% on the first quarter of 2000. Consumers spent less on hotels and restaurants, but in all other service branches the volume of expenditure was greater. The biggest increase was in transport and communication services, and in financial and business services. The same as in previous quarters. However, the growth rate is levelling off.

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