



Statistics Netherlands

Press release

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Consumer confidence down

Consumer confidence is five points lower in March than in February, mainly because consumers are less positive about the last twelve months. Their opinions on both the economic climate and their own financial position in this period were more negative. Expectations for the coming twelve months are about the same as last month. At the end of 2001 there seemed to be a slight recovery in confidence, that had fallen especially strongly in the first half of 2001. According to Statistics Netherlands consumer confidence survey, consumer confidence is now at the same level as in July and August last year.

Willingness to buy falls further

Consumers' willingness to buy has fallen further in March. In January and February, too, it was lower than in the previous month. Willingness to buy is now at its lowest since December 1996. Willingness to buy is one of the two component indicators of the consumer confidence index. It is based on how consumers judge their own financial situation and whether it is a good time to make large purchases. Consumers are more negative about their financial situation in the last twelve months, while their expectations for their future financial situation have hardly changed. Moreover they do not think it is such a good time to buy durable consumer goods.

Consumers more negative about economic climate

Consumer opinions on the economic climate are slightly more negative than in February, halting the recovery of this component of the consumer confidence index. Consumer confidence hit a low following the terrorist attacks in the United States in September last year. Expectations for the coming months are quite stable but the opinions on the economy in the last twelve months are more negative.

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