



Statistics Netherlands

# Press release

PB02-177  
29 August 2002  
9:30 AM

## ***Modest growth in consumption during the first six months of 2002***

The volume of domestic individual consumption in the first half of 2002 was 1.7% greater than in the same period last year. The growth in consumption was modest but stable. The second quarter increase virtually equalled the first quarter increase, according to the latest figures by Statistics Netherlands. The figures on the expenditure on goods, corrected for price changes, were 1.2% higher in the first half of this year than in the first half of 2001. The volume growth in expenditure on services was 2.0%.

### ***Less volume growth in durable goods***

The volume of expenditure on durable goods was 0.8% higher than in the first six months of in 2001. The second quarter growth rate (0.3%) was clearly lower than that in the first quarter (1.4%). The first quarter growth rate is a bit high because expenditure on cars was relatively low in the first quarter of last year. Before the end of 2000 many consumers carried out their plans for major purchases, such as cars, before the higher VAT rate would come into force on 1 January 2001. This had its repercussions on the expenditure in the first few months of 2001.

With the exception of consumer electronics and means of transport expenditure in the first half of 2002 was down on the same period in 2001 on all product groups. The volume of expenditure on leather products, shoes, home furnishings and household appliances was down 4 to 5% in this period. Expenditure on clothing and textile, corrected for price changes, was down by 1%.

Expenditure on food, beverages and tobacco increased modestly during the first half year. The volume was up by 0.8% on the same period last year.

### ***Expenditure on services stable***

The volume growth in the expenditure on services was 2.0% in the first six months of 2002. The largest increase was observed in the expenditure on medical services and care in the welfare sector plus on transport and communication. Consumers spent less on hotel and restaurants services in the first half of 2002.

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### ***Consumption in June 0.9% higher***

In June 2002 the volume of domestic individual consumption was up 0.9% on the same month last year. This modest growth rate is influenced by the unfavourable shopping day structure. June this year had a Friday less and a Sunday more than June last year. Moreover Pentecost was in May this year and not in June like last year. Pentecost stimulated expenditure on food, beverages and tobacco in May this year, but the reverse was true in June. In June the volume in this consumption category was down 3.7% on June last year. In May the growth rate was relatively high: 5.6%. The volume of expenditure on durable goods was 0.4% above the level of June 2001; expenditure on services was 1.6% higher than in June last year.