



Press release

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Household consumption in February up 1.6 percent

The volume of domestic consumption expenditure by households in February 2003 increased by 1.6 percent on the same month a year ago. In January consumption grew by 1.5 percent, according to the latest figures by Statistics Netherlands. The shopping day pattern was more favourable this year than last year, particularly in January. This had a positive influence, especially on the volume growth of food, beverages and tobacco consumption. Consumers spent less on services during the first two months than a year ago.

More consumption of food, beverages and tobacco

In February the volume of expenditure on food, beverages and tobacco grew by 2.2 percent on the year before. In January the volume growth was 6.2 percent. This was partly due to the favourable shopping day pattern this year. Expenditure on durable goods, such as cars, household appliances, furniture, clothing, and shoes was up 3.1 percent on February 2002. In January the volume was up by 2.3 percent. Consumers spent 6.8 percent more on other goods, including fuel and energy, in February and 1.4 percent more in January. The relatively great increase in February was due to greater energy use in this rather cold month.

In February the volume of total expenditure on goods increased by 4.0 percent on the year before. In January the volume increase was 3.1 percent.

Less consumption of services

There is no volume growth in the expenditure on services. This fits in with the trend of decreasing growth rates that has been taking place in this consumption category for several years. The volume growth in expenditure on services reached its peak in 1999 with 4.8 percent. Then the growth rate decreased to 3.9 percent in 2000, 2.0 percent in 2001, and 0.8 percent in 2002. Consumers spent less on services in February (-0.5 percent) and in January (-0.1 percent) of 2003 than they did the year before. This is also true for the figure corrected for price changes.

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