



Press release

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Consumption down in January

The volume of domestic consumption by households in the Netherlands was 0.4 percent smaller in January 2005 than twelve months previously. After corrections for price changes, consumers spent 1.0 percent less on goods than in January 2004. Spending on services was at around the same level as January last year, according to figures from Statistics Netherlands. The figures have been corrected for differences in shopping day patterns.

Consumers spend less again on durable goods

Households were once again cautious in their spending on durable goods in January 2005. After correction for the difference in the composition of shopping days, the volume of spending on durable goods was 1.5 percent smaller than in the same month last year. This decrease was in the same order of magnitude as that in 2004, when the volume of spending on durable goods dropped by 1.3 percent.

New child care law affects household consumption

New child care legislation came into effect in the Netherlands on 1 January 2005. Under the new law, the costs of child care are not only attributed to households, but also to government consumption. This shift reduced household consumption by around a quarter of a percent point

This time last year, household consumption was pushed up by new policy measures in the care sector. As a result of a number of changes in legislation covering national health insurance and exceptional medical expenses, households had to pay more themselves. This upward effect on the development in household consumption is no longer present in 2005.