



# Press release

Statistics Netherlands

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## Consumer confidence leaps up

Consumers are much more confident in the developments of the Dutch economy in September than they were in August, according to figures from Statistics Netherlands. They were especially more positive about the economic climate, but their willingness to buy remains unchanged at a high level. Consumer confidence seems to have completely recovered from the strong falls in September and October last year, and is nearly back at the record level of June 1998.

### Consumers more positive about economic climate

Consumers are much more positive in their judgements of the economic climate in September. On balance, 24% of consumers were optimistic on this factor compared with 6% in August. Such an increase is very rare: March 1991 was the only month in the last fifteen years with a larger increase. Consumers were particularly positive about economic developments in the past twelve months. The balance of positive answers was 20 percent points higher than in August, the largest increase since January 1985.

There was also more optimism with respect to future economic developments. The percentage of optimists – those consumers who expect an improvement in the next twelve months - rose from 18% in August to 25% in September. The percentage of pessimists – those who expect economic deterioration - fell from over 20% to 12%. The resulting balance rose from -2% to 13%, the first positive balance since September last year. The lessening pessimism might be fuelled by favourable reports about the Dutch economy.

### Willingness to buy remains high

Consumers' willingness to spend their money continues at its high level. People are optimistic about their own financial situation in the coming twelve months. The willingness to buy large items rose slightly. If seasonal effects are taken into account willingness to buy is even substantially higher than in August. Consumers are slightly less positive about their own financial situation in September than they were in August, but in August they were exceptionally optimistic on this point.

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