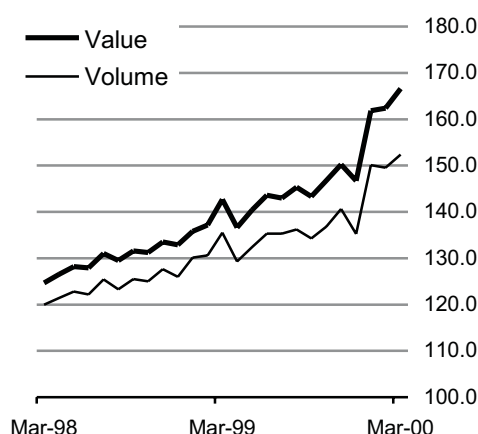




Central Statistics Office
An Phríomh-Oifig Staidrimh

26 May 2000

Retail Sales Index
Seasonally adjusted



Retail Sales Index

March 2000 (First Estimates)

Retail Sales Index – All Businesses
(Base year 1995 = 100)

	Value Index	Volume Index
March 1999	142.7	135.5
March 2000	166.6	152.4
% change	+16.7%	+12.5%

Retail Sales up 16.7%

The *value* of retail sales rose by 16.7% in March 2000 compared to March 1999. The March 2000 index was 2.6% higher than the February 2000 index.

The *volume* of retail sales (i.e. excluding price effects) increased by 12.5% in March 2000 compared to March 1999.

On a three month basis, which gives a more stable indication of recent underlying trends, the January-March 2000 volume figures show a 9.8% increase compared with the three months ending December 1999.

February is the latest month for which final detailed sectoral figures are available. The three month December 1999 - February 2000 volume figures show that, compared with the three months ending November 1999:

- ◆ The largest increase in the volume of sales was in the *Textile and Clothing* (+11.4%) sector.
- ◆ The largest decrease in volume was in the *Books, Newspapers & Stationery* (-4.9%) sector.

All figures provided in this release are seasonally adjusted based on patterns up to June 1999.

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Ref 90/2000

ISSN 0791-315X

Table 1 Seasonally Adjusted Indices of Total Retail Sales ¹

Base: year 1995=100

Period	Total Retail Sales for all Businesses Combined						Total Retail Sales excluding Motor Trades	
	Value of Sales			Volume of Sales				
	Index	% change on previous period	Annual % change	Index	% change on previous period	Annual % change	Value Index	Volume Index
1997 Year	117.6	9.0	9.0	114.3	7.9	7.9	115.1	112.5
1998 Year	128.7	9.7	9.7	123.2	8.1	8.1	125.5	120.4
1999 Year	142.7	10.9	10.9	134.4	9.1	9.1	137.1	129.6
1998 Quarter 1	124.3	0.6	10.5	120.1	0.7	9.5	120.8	117.2
Quarter 2	127.1	2.3	11.2	121.7	1.3	9.2	124.0	119.1
Quarter 3	130.7	2.8	10.2	124.7	2.5	8.0	126.4	120.7
Quarter 4	132.6	1.5	7.4	126.2	1.2	5.8	130.9	124.7
1999 Quarter 1	138.9	4.8	11.7	132.3	4.8	10.2	132.2	126.0
Quarter 2	140.2	0.9	10.3	132.3	0.0	8.7	134.0	126.9
Quarter 3	143.8	2.6	10.0	135.2	2.2	8.4	138.3	130.7
Quarter 4	147.8	2.8	11.5	137.4	1.6	8.9	143.9	134.8
2000 Quarter 1 ²	163.8	10.8	17.9	150.8	9.8	14.0	145.9	135.6
1999 February	137.2	1.0	8.9	130.6	0.4	7.4	131.4	125.2
March	142.7	4.0	14.5	135.5	3.8	12.9	135.7	128.8
April	136.6	-4.3	8.6	129.3	-4.6	7.0	131.4	124.9
May	140.4	2.8	9.5	132.4	2.4	7.8	134.4	127.3
June	143.6	2.3	12.3	135.3	2.2	10.7	135.7	128.2
July	143.0	-0.4	9.3	135.3	0.0	8.1	137.0	130.2
August	145.3	1.6	12.2	136.2	0.7	10.5	138.0	130.3
September	143.3	-1.4	8.9	134.3	-1.4	7.0	139.5	131.4
October	146.8	2.4	11.9	136.8	1.9	9.4	141.5	132.4
November	150.2	2.3	12.5	140.6	2.8	10.2	145.3	136.8
December	146.7	-2.3	10.4	135.2	-3.8	7.3	144.8	135.0
2000 January	161.8	10.3	19.1	150.1	11.0	15.4	143.1	134.1
February	162.4	0.3	18.4	149.5	-0.4	14.5	146.0	135.6
March ²	166.6	2.6	16.7	152.4	1.9	12.5	148.1	136.7
12 months ending Feb. 2000	146.7	12.7	12.7	137.4	10.5	10.5	139.3	131.2
12 months ending Mar. 2000 ²	149.0	13.0	13.0	139.0	10.5	10.5	140.5	132.0
3 months ending Feb. 2000	156.2	6.6	15.6	144.2	5.3	12.0	144.6	134.9
3 months ending Mar. 2000 ²	163.8	10.8	17.9	150.8	9.8	14.0	145.9	135.6

¹ Based on seasonal patterns up to June 1999² Provisional value and volume of sales indices based on early returns from sample retailers

Table 2 Seasonally Adjusted¹ Value and Volume Indices of Retail Sales for 13 Retail Businesses, February 2000**Base Year: 1995 = 100**

Retail Business - NACE REV 1	February 2000						December 1999 - February 2000					
	Value of Sales			Volume of Sales			Value of Sales			Volume of Sales		
	Index	% change on previous month	Annual % change	Index	% change on previous month	Annual % change	Index	% change on previous 3 months	Annual % change	Index	% change on previous 3 months	Annual % change
Motor Trades - NACE 50	205.7	0.4	33.1	183.7	0.4	26.1	183.7	13.0	24.7	164.8	10.9	18.1
Non-Specialised Stores (excluding Department Stores) - NACE 52.11	138.6	-1.0	8.5	120.4	-1.4	4.4	138.3	1.4	9.2	120.4	-0.3	5.2
Department Stores - NACE 52.12	175.1	5.4	17.4	187.7	1.9	18.8	165.1	2.9	12.6	179.0	4.9	15.0
of which:-												
Clothing and Footwear	192.1	3.4	19.2				179.8	6.4	12.7			
Furniture, Soft Furnishing, etc.	174.7	4.0	15.4				178.9	-1.8	17.2			
Other Goods and Services	153.9	5.0	15.9				145.0	3.8	11.9			
<u>Specialised Stores - NACE 52 (remainder)</u>												
Food, Beverages and Tobacco	108.3	0.1	5.8	99.2	-0.6	2.4	106.5	1.0	4.8	98.0	0.8	1.7
Pharmaceutical, Medical & Cosmetic Articles	167.5	-9.9	13.9	151.9	-10.2	11.3	183.0	8.9	21.8	166.3	8.6	19.1
Textiles and Clothing	161.6	11.5	16.3	206.4	5.8	23.0	149.2	7.7	15.1	192.9	11.4	24.1
Footwear and Leather	154.3	4.7	11.0	175.4	2.9	12.8	147.8	6.9	7.7	168.4	8.8	10.4
Furniture and Lighting	153.3	1.9	7.0	142.1	0.5	5.7	150.4	2.5	6.7	139.8	2.2	5.7
Electrical Goods	188.2	7.7	11.0	200.1	7.2	12.7	197.2	5.8	13.7	209.9	6.2	15.7
Hardware, Paints and Glass	159.7	7.5	15.3	147.7	7.1	12.3	147.1	-1.3	11.3	136.4	-2.1	8.4
Books, Newspapers and Stationery	136.6	-0.1	16.6	117.8	-0.6	10.5	136.3	-2.4	14.9	117.9	-4.9	9.3
Other Retail Sales	166.2	6.5	20.7	161.7	5.1	18.6	161.1	2.0	18.6	157.5	1.4	17.0
Bars - NACE 55.4	138.2	7.2	8.1	117.9	6.6	2.8	131.7	-2.0	4.2	113.0	-3.6	-0.6
All Businesses excl. Motor Trades	146.0	2.0	11.1	135.6	1.1	8.3	144.6	1.9	10.9	134.9	1.1	8.4
All Businesses	162.4	0.3	18.4	149.5	-0.4	14.5	156.2	6.6	15.6	144.2	5.3	12.0

¹ Based on Seasonal Patterns up to June 1999, individual series are independently adjusted

Background Notes

Retail Sales Index	<p>Introduction of updated series with a new business classification and with base year 1995 = 100.</p> <p>An updated Retail Sales Index (RSI) was introduced in the December 1999 release. A detailed description of the new series was published in the March 2000 issue of the <i>Statistical Bulletin</i>. The underlying methodology remains unchanged. The index is primarily intended to measure short-term trends. For long term analysis allowance must be made for the fact that the series does not reflect changes in retail structures between datings.</p>
New Business Classification	<p>Commencing with October 1999 the set of monthly indices of retail sales have been compiled according to the Statistical Classification of Economic Activities in the European Community (NACE Rev. 1). The business categories are based mainly on the classification of enterprises in the 1995 Annual Services Inquiry (ASI). There are some fairly substantial discontinuities in the classification of enterprises compared with the former series.</p>
New Base Year	<p>The set of new monthly retail sales indices has been compiled with reference to base year 1995 = 100. The underlying structural weighting system is mainly based on the 1995 Annual Services Inquiry. Weights are updated from year to year using ratios of average weekly turnover by size class within business type.</p>
Scope and Coverage	<p>The Retail Sales Index covers, on a sample basis, the retail sales of retail businesses, wholesale businesses with sizeable retailing activity and the separate sales establishments of non-distribution enterprises. Excluded from the index coverage are the direct retail sales from non-distribution establishments together with the incidental retail sales of wholesale businesses. Also excluded are sales by hawkers, street stalls and other retailing activities not conducted from permanent business premises. The statistical unit used for reporting sales figures in this inquiry is the enterprise (i.e. Complete business covering all branches).</p>
Methodology	<p>The business categories and the underlying structural weighting of the Retail Sales Index is based mainly on the Statistical Classification of Economic Activities in the European Community (NACE Rev. 1). The index system is structured on the retailing enterprises covered in the 1995 Annual Services Inquiry classified by 13 retail business categories and four turnover (excluding VAT) ranges*.</p> <p>The value indices are calculated by updating the aggregate 1995 retail turnover (including VAT) of these enterprises in these fifty one cells using the monthly retail sales data provided by the enterprise respondent panel from 1995 onwards.</p> <p>The compilation of the index for a current month is based on the percentage change in average weekly sales in these cells over the corresponding monthly period of the previous year. The monthly volume indices are calculated by deflating the seasonally unadjusted value indices by specially constructed retail price indices derived from the Consumer Price Index (CPI).</p>
Seasonal Adjustment	<p>The seasonally adjusted series are updated twice yearly, in the January and July index compilations, using patterns up to and including the preceding month. The present seasonally adjusted monthly value and volume series are based on seasonal patterns from January 1995 to June 1999. This duration is just sufficient for seasonal adjustment; the process will improve as the series is extended. The adjustment is completed by applying the X-11 Variant of the US Bureau of the Census Method 11 Seasonal Adjustment program based on a multiplicative model. The unadjusted series, from which trading day variations have been eliminated, are available on request.</p>
References	<p>A detailed description of the Retail Sales Index is provided in the March 2000 issue of the <i>Statistical Bulletin</i>. Retrospective details covering three years are provided for all series on both a seasonally adjusted and an unadjusted basis in each issue of the <i>Statistical Bulletin</i>.</p> <p>* The Department Stores business category is not classified by annual turnover but is sub-divided into three retail activity categories.</p>