

Snap | 29 September 2025

THE NETHERLANDS

Dutch business confidence wavers amid slow economic growth

Sentiment in Dutch commercial services and retail cooled in September, according to fresh data from the European Commission. While the mood isn't gloomy, it does echo our view that growth remains stuck below potential – for now



The Dutch composite sentiment indicator decreased from 100.6 in August to 99.9 in September, indicating a level of confidence that remains at its historical average, consistent with moderate economic growth going forward. Production and sales expectations for the next three months deteriorated in commercial services and retail. Commercial services were also more negative about selling price expectations, which also decreased slightly in industry.

Production and sales expectations improved for construction and industry, in particular. In fact, for industry, most developments were positive compared to August's figures. This includes a slightly less negative outlook on export orders and a considerably better view of production development over the past three months.

Consumer sentiment in September showed a modest improvement, driven by a more optimistic view of personal finances. However, relative to historical averages, consumers remain amongst the most pessimistic groups in the Dutch economy – highlighting ongoing

fragility in confidence. This low level of confidence was evidenced last week, when the figure for the discretionary savings rate of households in the second quarter of 2025 was published – it remains high compared to past levels. While purchasing power has been on the rise considerably, price perceptions and uncertainty are still weighing on consumer sentiment. Respondents with jobs, owner-occupied houses and higher education are particularly pessimistic compared to their own historic sentiment levels.

While recent monthly economic data for the Dutch economy have been volatile and mixed, a continuation of low growth still seems to be the most plausible scenario for the immediate future. Today's mediocre level of economic sentiment is in line with our forecast of growth below potential during the second half of 2025. With a gradually increasing GDP growth profile for the quarters ahead, we expect the quarters of 2026 to record a more normal pace.

While a significant amount of 2025 economic growth relies on government spending, 2026 should also see more broad-based growth, as we anticipate the household savings rate to fall and lower levels of uncertainty translate into somewhat stronger growth in investment and exports.

Author

Marcel Klok

Senior Economist, Netherlands

marcel.klok@ing.com

Disclaimer

This publication has been prepared by the Economic and Financial Analysis Division of ING Bank N.V. ("ING") solely for information purposes without regard to any particular user's investment objectives, financial situation, or means. *ING forms part of ING Group (being for this purpose ING Group N.V. and its subsidiary and affiliated companies)*. The information in the publication is not an investment recommendation and it is not investment, legal or tax advice or an offer or solicitation to purchase or sell any financial instrument. Reasonable care has been taken to ensure that this publication is not untrue or misleading when published, but ING does not represent that it is accurate or complete. ING does not accept any liability for any direct, indirect or consequential loss arising from any use of this publication. Unless otherwise stated, any views, forecasts, or estimates are solely those of the author(s), as of the date of the publication and are subject to change without notice.

The distribution of this publication may be restricted by law or regulation in different jurisdictions and persons into whose possession this publication comes should inform themselves about, and observe, such restrictions.

Copyright and database rights protection exists in this report and it may not be reproduced, distributed or published by any person for any purpose without the prior express consent of ING. All rights are reserved. ING Bank N.V. is authorised by the Dutch Central Bank and supervised by the European Central Bank (ECB), the Dutch Central Bank (DNB) and the Dutch Authority for the Financial Markets (AFM). ING Bank N.V. is incorporated in the Netherlands (Trade Register no. 33031431 Amsterdam). In the United Kingdom this information is approved and/or communicated by ING Bank N.V., London Branch. ING Bank N.V., London Branch is authorised by the Prudential Regulation Authority and is subject to regulation by the Financial Conduct Authority and limited regulation by the Prudential Regulation Authority. ING Bank N.V., London branch is registered in England (Registration number BR000341) at 8-10 Moorgate, London EC2 6DA. For US Investors: Any person wishing to discuss this report or effect transactions in any security discussed herein should contact ING Financial Markets LLC, which is a member of

THINK economic and financial analysis

the NYSE, FINRA and SIPC and part of ING, and which has accepted responsibility for the distribution of this report in the United States under applicable requirements.

Additional information is available on request. For more information about ING Group, please visit www.ing.com.