



The U.S. Department of Commerce announced today that total sales of retail stores in February were estimated at \$19.4 billion. Statistics prepared by the Department's Bureau of the Census show that this advance figure, after adjustment for seasonal variations and trading day differences, but not for price changes, was about 1 percent above January 1965 and 7 percent above the February 1964 level.

The Office of Business Economics noted that after adjustment for seasonal and trading day differences, the increase in sales of most nondurable lines of trade, other than general merchandise, was partly offset by a reduction in durable goods sales. Sales of automotive dealers in February continued at record rates. Based on the full sample, seasonally adjusted sales of all retail stores in January 1965 were little changed from the December 1964 level.

The February sales figures are based on a monthly survey of the Bureau of the Census conducted in cooperation with a representative cross-section of about 2,500 retail firms which, in total, operate some 48,000 stores in the United States. The firms which are cooperating in the early reporting of sales are part of a larger sample group which furnishes figures at a later date. The advance estimates are subject to revision by estimates subsequently derived from the full sample.

The revision of the total seldom exceeds 1.5 percent and for the past year has averaged 0.8 percent. For individual kind-of-business groups, revisions have been greater, ranging on the average from 1.1 percent for the food group to 2.9 percent for the lumber, building, hardware, farm equipment group.

(more)

ADVANCE RETAIL SALES FOR FEBRUARY 1965

Table 1.--SALES OF RETAIL STORES IN THE UNITED STATES, BY KIND-OF-BUSINESS GROUP

(NOT ADJUSTED for seasonal variations or trading day differences)

| Kind-of-business group                             | Sales (millions of dollars) |                      |          |
|--|-----------------------------|----------------------|----------|
|  | 1965                        |                      | 1964     |
|  | February <sup>1</sup>       | January <sup>2</sup> | February |
| Retail stores, total <sup>3</sup> .....            | 19,364                      | 20,567               | 18,758   |
| Durable-goods stores, total <sup>3</sup> .....     | 6,466                       | 6,649                | 6,122    |
| Nondurable-goods stores, total <sup>3</sup> .....  | 12,989                      | 13,918               | 12,636   |
| Food group.....                                    | 4,831                       | 5,249                | 4,849    |
| Grocery stores.....                                | 4,382                       | 4,784                | 4,395    |
| Eating and drinking places.....                    | 1,450                       | 1,554                | 1,386    |
| General merchandise group.....                     | 1,942                       | 2,069                | 1,875    |
| Department stores.....                             | 1,131                       | 1,233                | 1,069    |
| Apparel group.....                                 | 906                         | 1,097                | 927      |
| Furniture and appliance group.....                 | 925                         | 947                  | 920      |
| Lumber, building, hardware, farm equip. group..... | 955                         | 968                  | 956      |
| Automotive group.....                              | 4,105                       | 4,193                | 3,684    |
| Gasoline service stations.....                     | 1,543                       | 1,686                | 1,480    |
| Drug and proprietary stores.....                   | 703                         | 723                  | 656      |

See footnotes below table 2.

Source: Bureau of the Census

Table 2. SALES OF RETAIL STORES IN THE UNITED STATES, BY KIND-OF-BUSINESS GROUP

(ADJUSTED for seasonal variations and trading day differences)

| Kind-of-business group                                | Percentage change, Feb. 1965 from-- |           | Sales (millions of dollars) |                   |        |        | Percentage change, Jan. 1965 from-- |           |     |
|---|-------------------------------------|-----------|-----------------------------|-------------------|--------|--------|-------------------------------------|-----------|-----|
|   | Jan. 1965                           | Feb. 1964 | 1965                        |                   | 1964   |        | Dec. 1964                           | Jan. 1964 |     |
|   |                                     |           | Feb. <sup>1</sup>           | Jan. <sup>2</sup> | Dec.   | Jan.   |                                     |           |     |
| Retail stores, total <sup>3</sup> .....               | +1                                  | +7        | 23,015                      | 22,881            | 22,781 | 21,000 | 0                                   | +9        |     |
| Durable-goods stores, total <sup>3</sup> .....        | -1                                  | +7        | 7,744                       | 7,840             | 7,645  | 6,855  | +3                                  | +14       |     |
| Nondurable-goods stores, total <sup>3</sup> .....     | +2                                  | +7        | 15,271                      | 15,041            | 15,136 | 14,145 | -1                                  | +6        |     |
| Food group.....                                       |                                     |           |                             | 5,200             | 5,409  | 5,031  |                                     | -4        | +3  |
| Eating and drinking places.....                       |                                     |           |                             | 1,698             | 1,653  | 1,580  |                                     | +3        | +7  |
| General merchandise group.....                        |                                     |           |                             | 2,799             | 2,762  | 2,481  |                                     | +1        | +13 |
| Apparel group.....                                    |                                     |           |                             | 1,325             | 1,300  | 1,250  |                                     | +2        | +6  |
| Furniture and appliance group.....                    |                                     |           |                             | 1,095             | 1,113  | 1,019  |                                     | -2        | +7  |
| Lumber, building, hardware, farm equipment group..... |                                     |           |                             | 1,394             | 1,310  | 1,269  |                                     | +6        | +10 |
| Automotive group.....                                 |                                     |           |                             | 4,680             | 4,588  | 3,951  |                                     | +2        | +18 |
| Gasoline service stations.....                        |                                     |           |                             | 1,756             | 1,755  | 1,638  |                                     | 0         | +7  |
| Drug and proprietary stores.....                      |                                     |           |                             | 742               | 731    | 694    |                                     | +2        | +7  |

<sup>1</sup> Advance sample estimates.

<sup>2</sup> Preliminary estimates of full sample.

<sup>3</sup> Totals include data for kinds of business not shown separately.