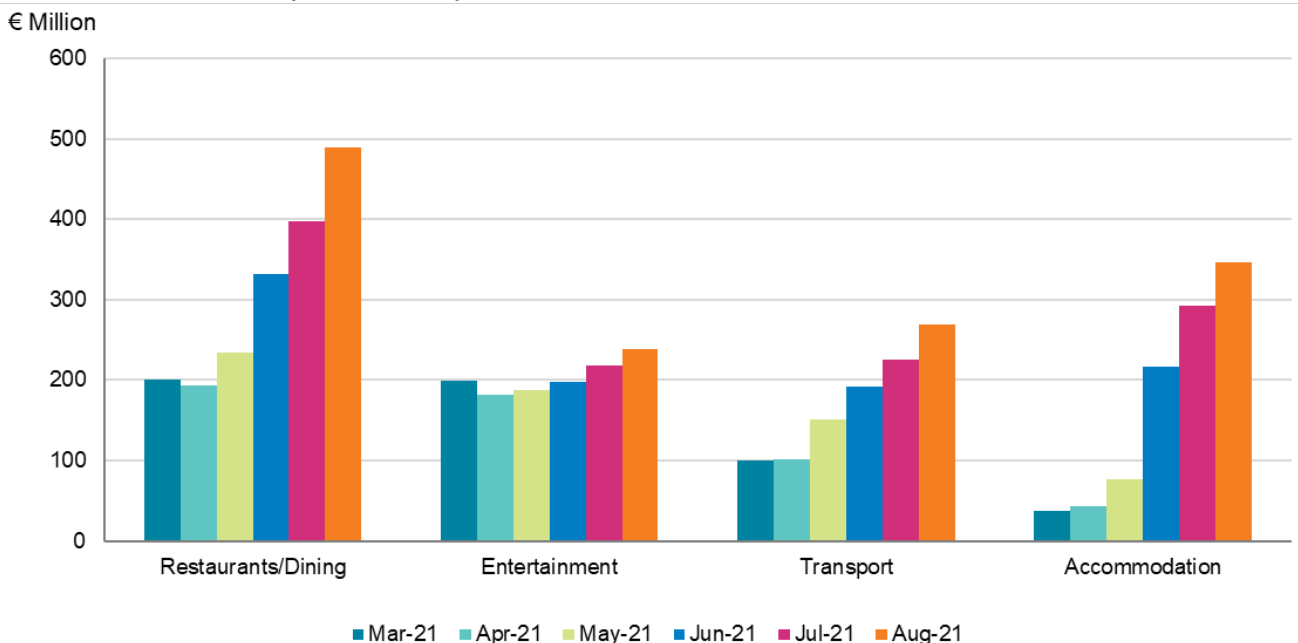




Key messages

- ❖ Total card spending, including ATM withdrawals, rose 6 per cent, or €437 million, in August 2021 compared to the previous month. Latest daily data to 20 September shows total spending increased over the month, with the average daily spend 3 per cent higher than August.
- ❖ Card expenditure outside of Ireland increased by 47 per cent to €346 million in August. In annual terms this is 70 per cent higher than spending observed in August 2020.
- ❖ Card spending on accommodation, dining and transport were strong in August, with accommodation spending up by 18 per cent compared to July to €347 million, representing a new series high. Meanwhile, card spending in restaurants increased by 23 per cent (€92 million) month-on-month.
- ❖ In-store spending increased by 6 per cent, or €201 million, month-on-month and accounted for 57 per cent of all PoS spending in August. In annual terms, in-store spending was 16 per cent, or €508 million, above August 2020 levels.
- ❖ The latest daily data to 20 September shows continued growth in spending in the transport sector, with decreases in the accommodation and restaurant sectors.

Chart 1: PoS Card Expenditure by sectors



Credit and Debit Card Statistics

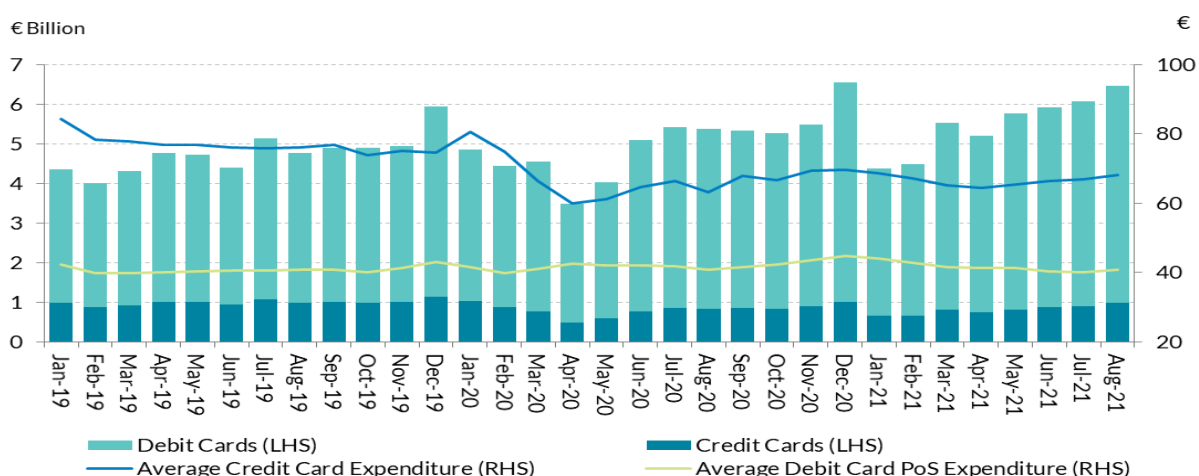
Detailed monthly data for August 2021 show that total card spending, including ATM withdrawals, equated to €7.7 billion, an increase of 6 per cent, or €437 million, compared to July. In annual terms, an increase of 18 per cent, or €1.2 billion, was recorded when compared to August 2020.

As indicated in the [Daily Credit and Debit Card Statistics](#)¹, which is a more-timely but less granular data collection, the average daily spending increased in September, with spending to 20 September up 3 per cent, or €138 million, on the same period of August.

Point of sale (PoS) spending was 7 per cent higher in August compared to July, at €6.5 billion (Chart 2). In annual terms, PoS spending was 21 per cent higher than August 2020. ATM withdrawals increased by 3 per cent month-on-month, to €1.2 billion, a fourth consecutive month of growth. However, ATM withdrawals remain subdued compared to pre-pandemic levels, and are 30 per cent below August 2019.

The volume of card transactions, excluding ATM usage, grew in August, with the number of transactions increasing by 5 per cent, or 7.3 million, compared to July. In annual terms, this represents an increase of 20 per cent compared to August 2020. In nominal terms the average value of all transactions remained flat at €43 per transaction.

Chart 2: PoS Card Expenditure (€)



Total card expenditure outside Ireland increased by 47 per cent, or €111 million, to €346 million in August. In annual terms this is 70 per cent higher than levels observed in August 2020. Additionally, this represents the highest point in the series since the introduction of Covid-19 restrictions.

¹ The monthly figures will not equate to the exact aggregated daily figures, please see Note 1 for further details. The latest daily card payments data is available in Table A13.2 [here](#).

Sectoral card spending

Total retail spending increased by 2 per cent in August compared to July. This represents a 10 per cent increase over spending in August 2020 (Table 1). Spending on clothing experienced the largest monthly increase, growing by 8 per cent, or €26 million.

Spending on services grew by 12 per cent compared to the previous month. Card spending in the accommodation sector rose to a new series high of €346 million in August, an increase of 18 per cent when compared to July. Spending on education increased by 184 per cent, or €67 million, a previously observed seasonal trend in spending for return to education in September. Transport spending increased by 19 per cent, continuing its recent growth following significant contraction at the outset of Covid-19 pandemic.

Social spending rose by 18 per cent compared to the previous month. Restaurant spending increased by 23 per cent, or €92 million when compared to July, representing a 36 per cent increase when compared to August 2020. Entertainment spending also experienced strong growth of 9 per cent, or €20 million.

The latest daily sectoral data to 20 September show increases in spending in the transport sector, with decreases in the accommodation and restaurant sectors.

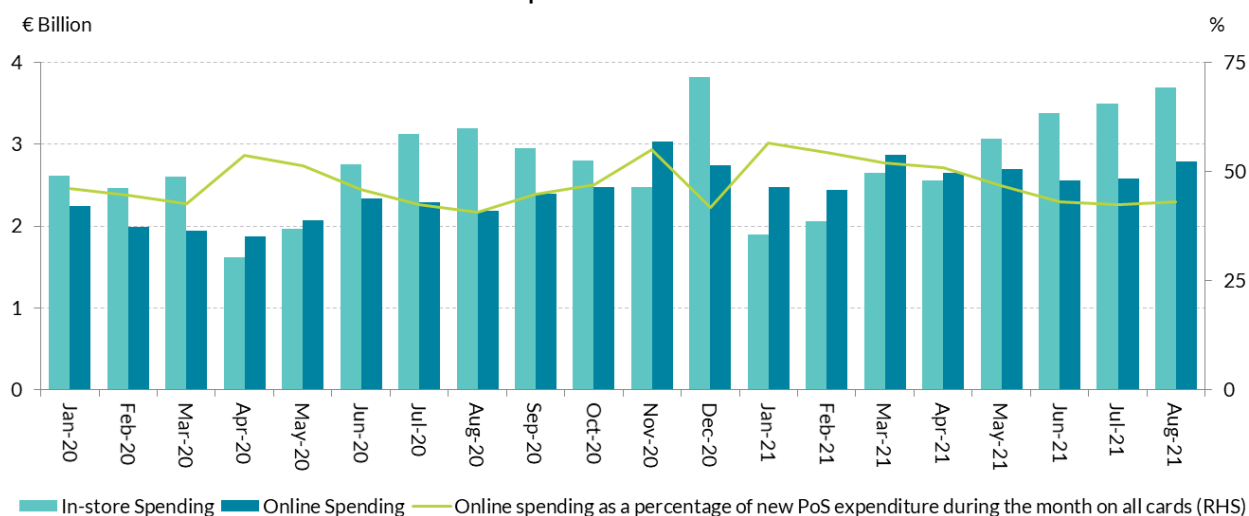
Table 1: Debit Card PoS and Credit Card Sectoral Expenditure (€000s)

| | Aug-20 | Jul-21 | Aug-21 | M-o-M % change | Y-o-Y % change |
|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------------|----------------|
| Total Spending | 6,509,673 | 7,227,412 | 7,664,644 | 6% | 18% |
| ATM Withdrawals | 1,132,914 | 1,152,245 | 1,184,841 | 3% | 5% |
| Total PoS Spending | 5,376,759 | 6,075,167 | 6,479,803 | 7% | 21% |
| <i>Sectoral PoS Spending:</i> | | | | | |
| Total Retail | 2,848,080 | 3,066,313 | 3,123,761 | 2% | 10% |
| Groceries/Perishables | 1,229,078 | 1,307,967 | 1,283,898 | -2% | 4% |
| Clothing | 288,047 | 317,506 | 343,632 | 8% | 19% |
| Electrical Goods | 152,688 | 151,170 | 155,578 | 3% | 2% |
| Hardware | 418,705 | 444,039 | 439,875 | -1% | 5% |
| Total Services | 1,087,522 | 1,362,408 | 1,524,398 | 12% | 40% |
| Transport | 106,806 | 225,927 | 269,737 | 19% | 153% |
| Accommodation | 230,666 | 292,596 | 346,125 | 18% | 50% |
| Education | 67,265 | 36,471 | 103,543 | 184% | 54% |
| Health | 127,612 | 166,913 | 159,943 | -4% | 25% |
| Utilities | 236,821 | 259,244 | 263,653 | 2% | 11% |
| Professional Services | 303,009 | 346,350 | 343,712 | -1% | 13% |
| Total Social | 562,312 | 629,887 | 745,852 | 18% | 33% |
| Restaurants/Dining | 358,836 | 397,193 | 489,381 | 23% | 36% |
| Entertainment | 177,378 | 217,980 | 238,305 | 9% | 34% |
| <i>Online and In-Store Spending Split:</i> | | | | | |
| Online Spending | 2,188,358 | 2,579,585 | 2,783,248 | 8% | 27% |
| In-Store Spending | 3,188,401 | 3,495,582 | 3,696,555 | 6% | 16% |

Total online expenditure² increased in August 2021 to €2.8 billion, an increase of 8 per cent from July. This represents an increase of 27 per cent in year-on-year terms. As a proportion of overall PoS spending, online spending remained relatively stable, accounted for 43 per cent of spending in August (Chart 3).

Total in-store spending increased by €201 million, or 6 per cent, from July and was 16 per cent higher than August 2021 levels. In-store spending accounted for 57 per cent of total PoS spending in August and remains the primary method for card spending.

Chart 3: Online and In-store Card Expenditure



² Also called e-commerce expenditure, defined as where the physical card is not present during the transaction, and provides a proxy for online spending. It includes instances where card details are processed online, or communicated via telephone. A breakdown by sector and country of spend is not available.

Note 1:

The daily card payments categories will not sum to the corresponding monthly Credit & Debit Card Return categories due to a methodological difference between the two data collections. The monthly return is collected on a settlement basis (i.e. the date on which the transaction settle on a bank's system), while in order to get accurate calendar day data, the daily card payments return is collected on transactional date basis (i.e. the date in which the transaction took place). For further information and a discussion of our initial analysis of this newly developed data please see a 'Behind the Data' research article, available [here](#).

Note 2:

The primary aim of the data collected in the Credit/Debit Card Return is to inform national and euro area policy making, and to enhance understanding of the role of credit/debit cards in the domestic financial system. Monthly data is collected from the largest issuers of credit/debit cards resident in Ireland. Only euro-denominated cards issued by these providers to Irish residents are included. Cards issued to Irish residents by issuers that are not resident in Ireland are not included in the compilation of data.

The sectoral breakdown is compiled referencing the merchant category code (MCC) system for retail financial services. A MCC is generally a four-digit number assigned to a business by credit card companies (e.g. American Express, MasterCard or Visa) when an entity first begins to accept one of these cards as a form of payment. The MCC is used to classify the business by the type of goods or services it typically provides.

Note 3:

The Sectors Retail, Services, and Social sectors will not sum to Total PoS Spending. The sub-categories pertaining to these sectors represent a subset of the full granularity, and will not sum to the respective 'Total' category