



Key Developments

- In December 2016 **over €3.1 billion of debit card spending was attributable to Point of Sale (PoS) activity**; this was an increase of **€388 million, or 14 per cent on the equivalent December 2015 figure**. Total transactions on debit cards amounted to €4.9 billion, with the remaining €1.7 billion accounted for by ATM transactions (Chart 1). **For credit cards, PoS spending amounted to €966 million in the month.**
- In November 2016 debit card e-commerce¹ expenditure reached **€869 million**, its highest level since this series began in January 2015. This amount decreased to €789 million in December. A quarter of all new PoS transactions were attributable to e-commerce in December. Similarly, **total credit card e-commerce** has increased by 37 per cent over the past year to stand at €371 million at end-December.
- Slightly under €1.2 billion of outstanding credit card balances included an accrued interest component at end-December 2016. Chart 3 provides a breakdown of interest-bearing balances as a percentage of credit card limits. This shows that **8 per cent of cards have exceeded their credit limit, while 36 per cent had balances between 76 and 100 per cent of their credit limit**. These proportions have remained virtually unchanged over the past year.

Chart 1: Gross New PoS Spending On All Cards

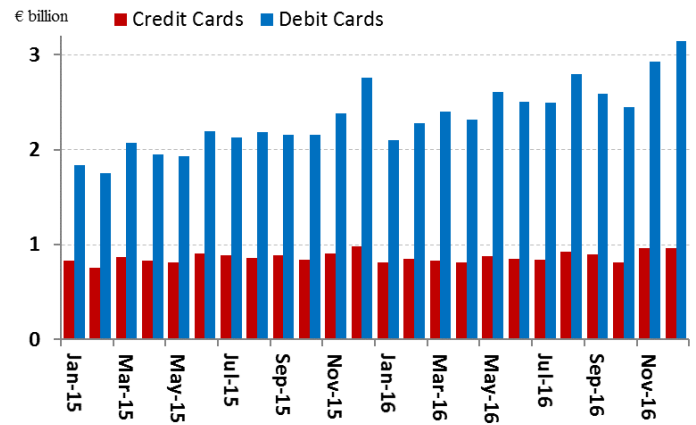


Chart 2: E-Commerce Spending

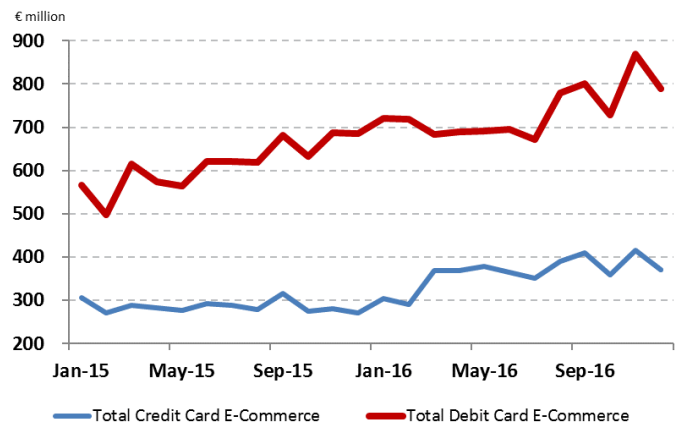
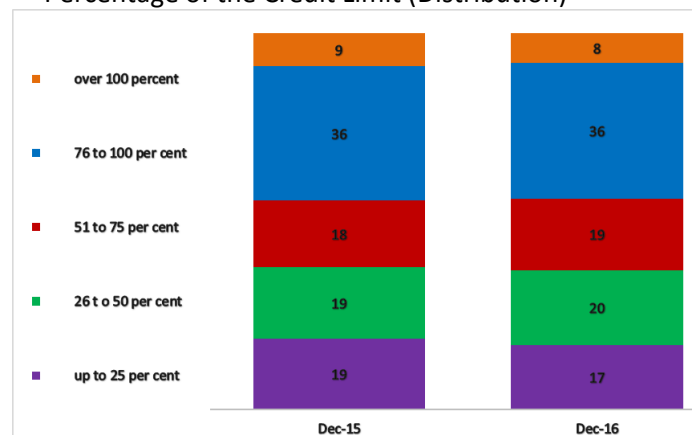


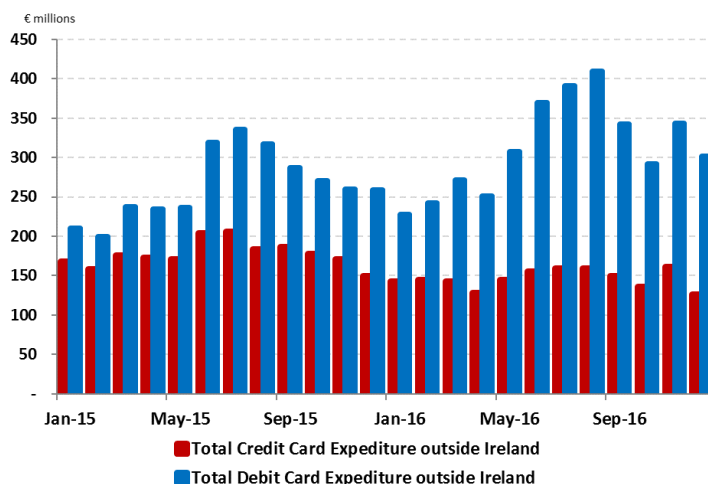
Chart 3: Credit Cards' Outstanding Balance as a Percentage of the Credit Limit (Distribution)



¹ Expenditure where the physical credit or debit card is not present provides a proxy for e-commerce.

- Total debit card expenditure outside Ireland averaged €312 million during 2016, compared with €264 million during 2015 (Chart 4).** Credit or debit card expenditure outside Ireland (when the physical card is present) provides an indication of expenditure abroad by Irish tourists. Debit card expenditure abroad during Q4 2016 peaked at €344 million in November 2016, an increase of 32 per cent on the November 2015 figure. This increase was not reflected in credit card expenditure outside Ireland which has declined year-on-year for each month in 2016, including a 16 per cent decline in December 2016 compared to December 2015’s figure. The total value of debit card expenditure outside Ireland (including ATM transactions) is more than double the value of equivalent credit card expenditure.

Chart 4: Expenditure Outside Ireland (Including both PoS and ATM Transactions)



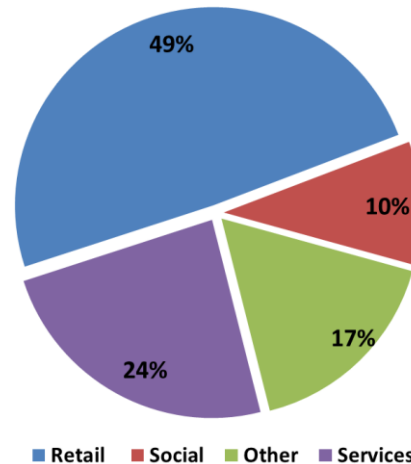
- New PoS debit card spending per month was over three times greater for debit cards than for credit cards in December 2016.** Credit card expenditure decreased slightly during the year, from €984 million in December 2015 to €966 million in December 2016. **PoS spending on debit cards increased by €388 million from the same month a year earlier,** to stand at over €3.1 billion (Table 1). The majority of debit card expenditure occurs in the retail sector, where transactions valued at €1.8 billion were recorded in December 2016. In the services sector there has been a noticeable increase in expenditure on Health and Utilities over the past year, while there have been significant decreases in spending in the Transport and Education sectors.

Table 1: Debit Card Sectoral Spending (€000’s)

	Dec-15	Dec-16
Total Debit Card PoS Spending	2,754,918	3,143,298
<i>of which:</i>		
Total Retail	1,537,652	1,773,105
Groceries/Perishables	786,914	777,916
Clothing	255,753	271,887
Electrical Goods	83,043	95,832
Hardware	172,955	177,136
Total Services	454,622	514,068
Transport	168,518	123,111
Accommodation	70,233	81,535
Education	31,678	16,889
Health	30,265	55,036
Utilities	62,396	104,608
Professional Services	89,670	129,267
Total Social	305,264	321,953
Restaurants/Dining	141,269	171,807
Entertainment	156,827	139,449

- Just over 73 per cent of all personal credit card expenditure in December 2016 was split between the retail and services sectors (Chart 5).** In comparison, debit card expenditure in the retail sector accounted for 56 per cent of all new debit card PoS transactions.

Chart 5: New Spending on Personal Credit Cards – Sectoral Breakdown



Note:

The primary aim of the data collected in the CDR (Credit/Debit Card Return) 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. Only euro-denominated credit/debit cards issued to Irish residents are included in the compilation of the CDR data. Monthly CDR data is derived from a sample of reporting entities heavily engaged in the provision of credit/debit services to Irish residents.

The CDR sectoral breakdown is compiled referencing the MCC code system for credit/debit card transactions. A merchant category code (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.

Table A.13 Credit and Debit Card Statistics - Card Numbers

	Jul-16	Aug-16	Sep-16	Oct-16	Nov-16	Dec-16
Credit Cards (units)						
Total Number of Cards in Issue	1,917,225	1,916,253	1,881,668	1,882,075	1,883,823	1,884,261
Active Use	1,572,060	1,575,201	1,544,964	1,541,733	1,538,963	1,540,187
Non-Active Use	345,165	341,052	336,704	340,342	344,860	344,074
Number of Personal Cards in Issue	1,750,705	1,749,948	1,714,695	1,714,286	1,715,781	1,716,097
Active Use	1,439,581	1,442,895	1,411,263	1,408,127	1,407,463	1,407,228
Non-Active Use	311,124	307,053	303,432	306,159	308,318	308,869
Number of Business Cards in Issue	166,520	166,305	166,973	167,789	168,042	168,164
Active Use	132,479	132,306	133,701	133,606	131,500	132,959
Non-Active Use	34,041	33,999	33,272	34,183	36,542	35,205
Total Number of Accounts	1,427,659	1,426,580	1,427,249	1,427,135	1,424,512	1,422,847
One active card on the account	1,029,347	1,033,351	1,033,680	1,031,210	1,027,065	1,026,855
More than one active card on the account	284,947	280,624	281,675	281,589	279,769	278,711
Total Number of Transactions during the Month	9,901,299	10,879,404	10,075,164	9,712,672	11,462,555	11,685,226
Personal Cards	8,703,101	9,587,200	8,690,295	8,392,801	10,017,632	10,337,687
Business Cards	1,198,198	1,292,204	1,384,869	1,319,871	1,444,923	1,347,539
Credit Cards (percentage share)						
Number of Accounts with an Outstanding Balance to Credit Limit Percentage of:						
up to 25 per cent	53	53	52	53	52	51
26 to 50 per cent	16	16	16	16	16	16
51 to 75 per cent	11	11	11	11	11	11
76 to 100 per cent	16	17	17	17	17	17
Over 100 per cent	4	4	4	4	4	4
Debit Cards (units)						
Total Number of Cards in Issue	4,600,789	4,623,317	4,651,914	4,655,279	4,885,211	4,888,530
Active Use	3,952,015	3,981,270	4,005,205	4,013,846	4,063,379	4,129,254
Non-Active Use	648,774	642,047	646,709	641,433	821,832	759,276
Total Number of Transactions during the Month	63,209,322	69,992,659	65,105,320	64,146,236	72,999,939	76,608,775
ATM Transactions	13,125,031	13,730,049	13,174,143	12,770,529	13,234,784	13,079,287
Point of Sale Transactions	50,084,291	56,262,610	51,931,177	51,375,707	59,765,155	63,529,488

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