



## Press release

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### 06 Industry and Services

Retail trade turnover in December 2020

## Swiss retail trade turnover rose in December by 3.5% – total figure for 2020 remained stable despite pandemic

Retail trade turnover adjusted for sales days and holidays showed nominal growth of 3.5% in December 2020 compared with the same month of the previous year. Seasonally adjusted, nominal turnover grew by 2.2% compared with the previous month. Despite the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the whole of 2020, provisional results show nominal growth of 0.1%. This positive growth consists of contrasting developments in the sectors with some strong turnover losses and gains. These are provisional findings from the Federal Statistical Office (FSO).

Real turnover adjusted for sales days and holidays rose in the retail sector by 4.7% in December 2020 compared with the previous year. Real growth takes inflation into consideration. Compared with the previous month, real, seasonally adjusted retail trade turnover registered an increase of 2.6%.

#### Retail sector excluding service stations

Adjusted for sales days and holidays, the retail sector excluding service stations showed a 5.1% increase in nominal turnover in December 2020 compared with December 2019 (in real terms +6.2%). Retail sales of food, drinks and tobacco registered an increase in nominal turnover of 13.0% (in real terms +13.3%), whereas the non-food sector registered a nominal negative of 1.3% (in real terms +0.1%).

Excluding service stations, the retail sector showed a seasonally adjusted increase in nominal turnover of 2.1% compared with the previous month (in real terms +2.7%). Retail sales of food, drinks and tobacco registered a plus of 3.9% (in real terms +4.5%). The non-food sector showed a minus of 0.1% (in real terms +0.1%).

#### 2020 as a whole Pandemic had varied impact on economic sectors

For 2020 as a whole, Swiss retail trade registered a provisional increase in nominal turnover of 0.1% (+0.8% in real terms) compared with the previous year. The measures taken to curb the Covid-19 pandemic had varying effects on the different economic sectors. While retail sales of food, drinks and tobacco recorded an increase in nominal turnover of 8.5% (in real terms +8.2%) the non-food sector registered a nominal minus of 4.7% (in real terms -3.5%). The sectors "service stations" (-16.1%; in real terms -6.0%), "other goods (clothing, chemists, watches and jewellery)" (-12.5%; in real terms -11.8%) and "cultural and recreation goods in specialised stores" (-7.1%; in real terms -8.0%) were most affected by the crisis. In contrast, the sectors "market stalls, retail sale via mail

order houses or via internet" (+14.1%; +14.9 in real terms), "information and communication equipment" (+13.8%; in real terms +22.3%) and "other household equipment, textiles, DIY and furniture" (+2.2%; in real terms +2.8%) showed positive turnover figures.

## **Pandemic and statistical results**

The COVID-19 pandemic is currently affecting all of society and the economy. To measure this impact the Federal Statistical Office (FSO) must continue in these difficult circumstances to provide the public, but in particular the media and decision makers, with reliable data.

The results published in this press release are based on the data currently available. They may need to be corrected or revised.

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## **Methodological notice**

Unadjusted, adjusted for calendar effects and seasonally adjusted time series are available and can be consulted on the statistics website: [www.dhu.bfs.admin.ch](http://www.dhu.bfs.admin.ch)

A breakdown by commodity groups and by business size is also available: only unadjusted figures are calculated for this breakdown.

The results are presented in index form (2015=100) in both nominal and real terms. The real values are obtained by adjusting the nominal values for price changes using the Swiss Consumer Price Index (CPI).

Data are seasonally adjusted in order to exclude seasonal fluctuations from the time series. This is done using the X12-ARIMA method. On each occasion the whole time series is re-calculated. Furthermore all time series are adjusted for calendar effects (not every month has the same number of sales days and holidays). The method used for calendar adjustment is to estimate the calendar effect by means of a regression model.

For each series, the model calculates an average weight for each individual day of the week and applies these weights to each month. The resulting monthly factors are used to adjust turnover accordingly. The adjustment made in December may be somewhat distorted, as the adjustment factor is applied to turnover for the month of December as a whole, despite the fact that the Christmas turnover is not dependent on the number of weekdays. In December 2016 (and in 2011 and 2005) this effect was particularly noticeable, as Christmas Day and Boxing Day fell on a Saturday and Sunday, meaning that the month had more weekdays of high turnover than usual.

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## **Information concerning the survey**

The retail trade turnover statistics are based on a random sample of approximately 4000 businesses. It is a monthly survey, with small-sized companies being asked to provide monthly turnover figures on a quarterly basis.

The statistics are based on the General Classification of Economic Activities (NOGA) from the year 2008, which meets international standards and classifies businesses into different economic activities based on their economic activities.

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## Information

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## Online

Further information and publications: [www.bfs.admin.ch/news/en/2021-0062](http://www.bfs.admin.ch/news/en/2021-0062)  
Statistics counts for you: [www.statistics-counts.ch](http://www.statistics-counts.ch)  
NewsMail subscription in German, French and Italian: [www.news-stat.admin.ch](http://www.news-stat.admin.ch)  
FSO website: [www.statistics.admin.ch](http://www.statistics.admin.ch)

## Access to results

This press release has been established on the basis of the European Statistics Code of Practice, which ensures the independence, integrity and accountability of national and community statistical offices. Privileged access is supervised and under embargo.

The Swiss National Bank (exercise of its monetary policy) and the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (production of quarterly GDP estimate) received the data forming the basis of this press release five working days before publication for the purpose of the tasks mentioned. The press agencies received this press release with an embargo of 15 minutes.