



FSO standpoint

Retail trade: statement following the publication of figures by GfK

On 3 February, the GfK institute published information about the retail trade in 2020 of the 40 largest enterprises in the sector. This publication gave rise to interpretations among the public that cast doubt on the Federal Statistical Office's (FSO) findings. The FSO had published on Monday complete figures for trends in this sector.

According to its methodology, the GfK institute gathered its figures from the 40 largest retailers in Switzerland, representing about 50% of sales, which does not represent all retail trade. The FSO survey collects data not only from large enterprises but also from small and medium enterprises in order to measure growth in overall retail trade turnover in Switzerland.

The data collected by the FSO for the large enterprises corroborate the figures from GfK, which do not, however, represent all retail trade. In other words, large enterprises increased their sales in 2020 despite the pandemic, but medium and small enterprises recorded a sharp drop in sales. This difference in the methodology explains the differences between the results of the GfK and the FSO.

Generally speaking, it is essential that the public can understand published figures, especially in this period of the coronavirus pandemic during which retail trade is under extreme pressure.

Neuchâtel, 5 February 2021