



Press release

Embargo: 01.02.2022, 08:30

06 Industry and services

Retail trade turnover in December 2021

Swiss retail trade turnover fell in December by 0.5% - rise of 4.2% in 2021 as a whole

Turnover adjusted for sales days and holidays rose in the retail sector by 0.5% in nominal terms in December 2021 compared with the previous year. Seasonally adjusted, nominal turnover fell by 2.2% compared with the previous month. The result for 2021 was a considerable nominal rise of 4.2%. All sectors were able to offset most of the losses suffered partly due to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. These are provisional findings from the Federal Statistical Office (FSO).

Real turnover adjusted for sales days and holidays fell in the retail sector by 0.4% in December 2021 compared with the previous year. Real growth takes inflation into consideration. Compared with the previous month, real, seasonally adjusted retail trade turnover registered a decline of 2.0%.

Retail sector excluding service stations

Adjusted for sales days and holidays, the retail sector excluding service stations showed a 1.8% decrease in nominal turnover in December 2021 compared with December 2020 (in real terms -1.5%). Retail sales of food, drinks and tobacco registered a decline in nominal turnover of 7.7% (in real terms -6.9%), whereas the non-food sector registered a nominal plus of 2.9% (in real terms +2.8%).

Excluding service stations, the retail sector showed a seasonally adjusted decline in nominal turnover of 2.2% compared with the previous month (in real terms -2.1%). Retail sales of food, drinks and tobacco registered a nominal minus of 1.9% (in real terms -1.7%). The non-food sector showed a minus of 2.5% (in real terms -2.8%).

2021 as a whole: Sectors saw some major increases in turnover

For 2021 as a whole, Swiss retail trade registered a provisional increase in nominal turnover of 4.2% (+0.8% in real terms) compared with the previous year. In the previous year, the increase was 1.0% (in real terms +1.7%). With the exception of the food industry, all sectors showed strong growth and were able to offset most of the losses seen in the previous year.

Although retail trade of food, drinks and tobacco stagnated in nominal terms (in real terms +1.2%), in the previous year it rose sharply in nominal terms with 8.9% (in real terms +8.6%).

The non-food sector recorded a nominal plus of 7.4% (in real terms +7.6%). In 2020, turnover showed negative figures (in nominal terms -3.7%; in real terms -2.5%).

The sectors "information and communication equipment" (+7.8%; +11.4% in real terms) and "market stalls, retail sale via mail order houses or via internet" (+6.3%; +6.8% in real terms) confirmed their upwards trend. In the previous year, with nominal +17.1% (in real terms +25.8%) and +14.3% (in real terms +15.0%) respectively, they had already shown positive figures. The sector "other household equipment, textiles, DIY and furniture" also joined this trend with a rise in turnover (in nominal terms +3.5% and in real terms +1.8%), (2020: in nominal terms +2.7%; in real terms +3.3%).

The sectors "other goods (clothing, chemists, watches and jewellery)" (+11.0%; in real terms +11.9%) and "cultural and recreation goods in specialised stores" (+6.6%; in real terms +55.9%) were able to compensate their losses of the previous year.

Lastly, the sector "service stations" was able to post a nominal increase of 12.8% (2020: -14.2%). In real terms, turnover fell in both 2021 (-3.0%) and 2020 (-3.9%).

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.

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

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.

Information concerning the survey

The retail trade turnover statistics are based on a random sample of approximately 3000 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.

Information

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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.