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Monthly survey on retail trade 2020Oct

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In October, retail sales increased year-on-year, both in the industrial goods and food

Total industrial goods and food sales: year-on-year change (%)

October and September 2020, y-o-y comparison; seasonally and working-day adjusted volume terms

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The trend in retail sales does not reflect that of total household consumption: the latter includes other items such as healthcare, education and rents. The aggregated and by sub-sector series are seasonally adjusted on an individual basis: the seasonally adjusted series do not represent the sum of the seasonally adjusted components. The data in this survey were collected between 2 and 10 November. They refer to sales for the entire month of October 2020, during which several regions experienced a curfew from October 17th. They do not recover, except from the last two days of the month, the lockdown and the shutting down of "non-essential" shops.

In October, turnover in retail trade rose by 6.0 % year-on-year (adjusted for seasonal and working-day variations) after rising by 3.3% in September. The strong upward trend was observed in both food (+5.3 %) and industrial goods (+6.2 %). The biggest rises were in consumer electronics (+16.6 %), DIY (+23.8 %) and games and toys (+46.6 %), as households probably opted to do some of their Christmas shopping early in anticipation of a second lockdown. In contrast, sales of perfumes/personal care products and footwear both declined (-7.6 % and -3.7 % respectively).

In terms of distribution channels, small retailers reported a 4.2 % rise in sales year-on-year, while large retailers posted growth of 5.7 %. Among large retailers, activity remained robust at supermarkets (+8.9 %) and hypermarkets (+6.3 %), while at department stores it was still well below pre-crisis levels (-24.9 % year-on-year). Data observed at end of September suggest that distance selling was up by 19.7% year-on-year after growth of 27.3% in August.