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Monthly survey on retail trade 2021Aug

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Turnover in retail trade fell slightly in August

Total industrial goods and food sales: M/M-1 change (%)

Notes: August and July 2021 m-o-m comparison; seasonally and working-day adjusted volume terms

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Sectors are classified according to the relative weight of the products included in the total aggregate of retail

trade (see methodology) retail-trade-august-2021.pdf

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The trend in retail sales does not reflect that of total household consumption: the latter includes other items such as health care, 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. In August, turnover in retail trade declined by 3.0% compared with the previous month (adjusted for seasonal and working-day variations). Food sales were down by 2.3%, and industrial goods sales by 3.4%. Over the last three months, however, total turnover rose by a marked 4.8% compared with the three previous months, with a 12.6% jump in industrial goods sales overcoming the 1.1% decline in food.

Month-on-month, the biggest falls were in furniture, jewellery and timepieces, and games and toys, where sales fell respectively by 14.4%, 11.9% and 5.9%. Conversely, the biggest rises were in automotive equipment, pharmaceuticals and new cars, with respective growth of 4.3%, 3.4% and 2.4%.

In terms of distribution channels, small retailers posted a 2.6% fall in sales, while large general retailers saw a steeper 4.0% drop. Final data for distance selling are not yet available for August. However, in July it rose by 2.3% year-on-year, following a 4.6% decline in June.