**Documentation of statistics for
Retail Trade Index 2016**

1 Introduction

The Retail Trade Index shows the development in turnover within the retail trade sector. The statistics is published monthly and is primarily used as short term indicator for private consumption as well as the general business cycle movement.

2 Statistical presentation

Retail trade indices are published for 43 industries and for three main commodity groups: food and other everyday commodities, clothing etc., and other commodities. Furthermore special industry aggregates are produced for Eurostat. Value as well as volume indices are produced. The volume indices only for the main commodity groups and the indices for Eurostat. The statistics is based on survey data from all large retail trade enterprises and a sample of the remaining retail trade enterprises. seasonal adjustment is performed on the main commodity groups and the total.

2.1 Data description

The value indices show the development of the turnover in current prices. The volume index is calculated indirectly by dividing the value index with a corresponding price index. Seasonal adjusted series for the main commodity groups as well as the total are published as well. This includes adjustment for moving holidays (Easter), working day and trading day effects. Eurostat also receives seasonal adjusted data as well as data adjusted for working day and trading day effects only.

2.2 Classification system

The industry coding follows the Danish industrial classifications, Dansk Branchekode 2007 (DB07), which is the national version of NACE rev. 2. A complete overview can be found at the DB07 site.

An overview of the retail trade industries covered can be found in the industry appendix.

For some smaller retail trade industries no figures are published, either due to confidentiality issues or because of lack of accuracy. The turnover of these industries, however, is included in the aggregated figures.

The main commodity groups used for national publications are as follows:

Food and other everyday commodities cover all turnover at grocery stores and specialized food stores, as well as the sales of these commodities at supermarkets, discount stores and department stores. In addition to this the non-fuel sales at service stations are included in this group.

Clothing etc. covers all turnover in stores specialized in clothing and footwear, as well as the sales of these commodities at supermarkets, discount stores and department stores.

Other consumer goods covers primarily the turnover in shops selling furnishing, electronics leisure equipment, as well as DIY centres and pharmacies. It also includes the sales of these commodities at supermarkets, discount stores and department stores. In addition to this the fuel sales at service stations are included in this group.

A detailed overview of the relations between industries and commodity groups can be found in the appendix industry groupings.

A detailed overview of the commodities' placement in commodity groups can be found in the appendix commodity groupings.

2.3 Sector coverage

The retail trade sector.

2.4 Statistical concepts and definitions

Retail Trade: Sales of commodities to private individuals.

Retail Trade Enterprise: Enterprise mainly engaged in distributive sales of commodities to private individuals, here excluding sales of motorised vehicles.

Food and Other Everyday Commodities: Convenience goods are consumer goods that are consumed relatively quickly by a consumer and that cease to exist when consumed. Convenience goods are primarily foods and products for personal hygiene, but also tobacco.

Clothing etc.: Clothes, footwear and leather goods, incl. baby clothes and baby things.

Other Consumer Goods: Commodities not categorized as convenience goods or clothing etc. E.g. household appliances, leisure goods, medicine and fuel.

2.5 Statistical unit

The units of the retail trade index are enterprises, each enterprise being a legal unit. In the Statistical Business Register of Statistics Denmark a legal units is identified by its CVR-number from the Central Business Register.

In isolated cases a unit can be different from an enterprise. It could be an enterprise with shops having significant turnover within several retail trade industries, in which case the enterprise can be accordingly divided in several statistical units. The reverse example also exists, where more enterprises within the same industry are merged to one statistical unit, e.g. if they gave a common administration that would in any case report for all the enterprises in question.

2.6 Statistical population

The statistics covers the population consisting of all enterprises with main activity, or in a few rare cases secondary activity within retail trade, with the exception of retail trade of motor vehicles. Furthermore, bakeries with their own production are also included in the population. Enterprises with annual turnover below 2.5 mill. DKK (1.0 mill. DKK for some industries) are disregarded. The population consists altogether of approximately 10.000 enterprises.

2.7 Reference area

The statistics covers retail trade in Denmark by Danish retail trade enterprises, excluding Greenland and Farao Islands.

Foreign enterprises with retail trade to Danish consumers (e.g. near-border enterprises or foreign internet shops) are not included in the statistics.

2.8 Time coverage

The statistics covers the period from 2000 and forward. Older time series are described under *Comparability over time*.

2.9 Base period

The base year for the Retail Trade Index is 2010.

2.10 Unit of measure

The unit of measure is index points. Value indices as well as volume indices are published. Read more about indices in this publication (only in Danish).

2.11 Reference period

The reference time for the monthly figures is the entire month. The enterprises thus report the turnover of the entire month. A few enterprises have 4- or 5-weeks accounting periods and many normally only make up their accounts on a quarterly basis, which can cause the monthly turnover reports to be somewhat inaccurate. This, however, is not assessed as a significant quality issue.

The population used for estimation usually has a reference time that is the quarter ending previous to the actual month. This does not significantly affect the calculations of the monthly growth rates, due to the use of month-on-month linking where the actual and the previous month turnover is always estimated using the same population.

2.12 Frequency of dissemination

These statistics are published monthly.

2.13 Legal acts and other agreements

Law on Statistics Denmark §8 secures the legal ground for collecting the data.

The statistics falls under council regulation (EF) no. 1165/98 of 19 May 1998 og no. 1893/2006 of 20 December 2006 regarding short terms statistics.

2.14 Cost and burden

The response burden is estimated to 2.8 years of work.

2.15 Comment

The retail trade index has a Subject Page.

3 Statistical processing

Turnover figures are collected each month from a sample of 3.500 retail trade enterprises, reporting the figures either by web or by dial-in. The submitted data is error checked by a number of measures, e.g. by comparing the turnover growth in similar enterprises.

Survey data is grossed up in part by including information from administrative sources on the VAT turnover in the previous quarter for the entire population.

From the estimated turnover indices on industry level as well as commodity group and total level are calculated. The total and the commodity group indices are seasonal adjusted.

3.1 Source data

The survey is based on a sample of Danish retail trade enterprises. The sample includes approximately 3.500 enterprises, and at the time of first publication, the figures for a month are based on responses from approximately 2.700 of these enterprises.

The enterprises are sampled on the basis of yearly turnover, based on VAT-declarations to the Tax administrations. In the sample all enterprises with a turnover of more than 20 million DKK/year (ex VAT) are included. The remaining sample is based on stratified random selection. Thus, the sample is divided in 4 size classes by the yearly turnover: 2.5-5.0 mill. DKK/year (in some industries 1.0-5.0 mill. DKK/year), 5-10 mill. DKK/year, 10-20 mill. DKK/year and more than 20 mill. DKK/year. For the strata of enterprises with yearly turnover below 20 mill. DKK, the size of the sample is optimized yearly. The cut-off limit of 2.5/1.0 mill. DKK/year is chosen to limit the response burden for smaller enterprises.

The total sample size was approximately 3.500 enterprises on 1 January 2014. Every year between 1/4 and 1/3 of the enterprises with yearly turnover between 1 and 20 mill. DKK are rotated out of the sample and the sample is renewed with a mix of old and new enterprises. This way the sample size is kept at a somewhat fixed level and the actuality of the sample is secured. In addition to this, the method of rotating panel sampling ensures that most enterprises have periods out of the sample, when possible.

3.2 Frequency of data collection

Data is collected monthly.

3.3 Data collection

The turnover figures are reported by the enterprises in the sample either via a dial-in phone solution or an online questionnaire. Completion of the questionnaires is mandatory.

Supermarkets, discount stores, department stores as well as service stations sell a very wide variety of goods. In order to be able to estimate and publish the turnover index divided into three main commodity groups: Food and other everyday commodities, Clothing etc. and Other Consumption Goods, the enterprises in these industries are requested to report the turnovers for those three main commodity groups separately. If the enterprise is unable to submit accurate figures, it is requested to estimate the sales stemming from each group.

Online form and instructions can be found on the [information page](#) (only in Danish).

3.4 Data validation

The submitted data undergo an error control. If the reported turnover deviates considerably from earlier records or from similar enterprises, then the enterprise in question is asked to investigate the correctness of the returned turnover figures. It is assumed that not all errors in submitted forms are detected, and therefore the statistic is a subject to some uncertainty connected to report errors. The error checking focuses on the reports with most impact on the results, and the uncertainty connected to report errors is therefore normally considered quite low, especially when it comes to the monthly growth rates on aggregated level.

3.5 Data compilation

Totals are estimated from grossing up the collected data to the full population of retail trade enterprises, although enterprises below the cut-off limit are disregarded. This limit is for most industries 2.5 million DKK yearly turnover, 1 mill. for some smaller industries, and the enterprises below the cut-off have less than 5 pct. of the total retail trade turnover. In case of non-response amongst the largest enterprises, imputation is used. Usually it is only necessary to impute values for less than 5 units, corresponding to an imputation rate below 0.2 pct.

In the estimation process bias in the non-response pattern as well as in the sample is corrected by applying ratio-estimation, which includes a turnover variable from VAT registration for the past year, available for the entire population of retail trade enterprises. This full population including the VAT-turnover on unit level is named the estimation population.

The calculation of the turnover totals behind the index figures is based on month-to-month chain linking. This means, that every month growth rates are calculated by estimating totals for the month of interest and at the same time recalculate the previous month, applying the same estimation populations. The ratio between these two totals is the growth rate for the month of interest. These growth rates are used to calculate turnover totals, by chaining the growth rates on the actual estimated turnover for a single month. This month is currently January 2011.

The turnover is calculated by chain-linking on industry level. For the industries that split their turnover on commodity groups, the chain-linking is performed on the level of commodity groups. The aggregated commodity group totals are calculated by simple addition of the relevant industry and commodity group totals.

Index values for a given month are calculated as the turnover of that month divided by the average monthly turnover of the base year (currently 2010). On industry level as well as commodity group and total level the turnovers are aggregated prior to the calculation of indices. In this way no explicit weights are applied for calculation of aggregated indices. Instead, there is an implied use of internal weights, which are the turnover shares of the total turnover in the base year. These weights can be found in the appendix weights.

The internal weights can for a given month be used to weight the industry indices to the total index, but to obtain a weight for an industry in the current month, a further calculation is necessary. This weight, which will be the turnover share in the current month, is calculated by multiplying the turnover share in the base year by the index value in the current month and divide it by the index value of the total in the current month.

Only indices are published, not absolute turnover figures. For an idea of the level of total retail trade turnover split on industries, refer to the monthly statistics on Purchases and sales by enterprises, based on VAT declarations.

The volume indices for the commodity groups are calculated by deflating the value indices. This is done by dividing the turnover totals with appropriate price indices from the Consumer Price Index (CPI). The deflation is performed on the level of the commodity groups, with the exception of the turnover of other consumer goods at service stations, which is deflated by separate fuel price index. The deflated turnover totals are used for index calculations, and the result is a so-called indirect volume index.

More details on the calculations can be found in this methodology document (only in Danish).

3.6 Adjustment

Seasonal adjustment is applied to the commodity group figures as well as the Eurostat aggregates and this is done for value as well as volume indices. Indirect seasonal adjustment is used, i.e. for the seasonal adjusted total is calculated by weighting the seasonal adjusted commodity group indices.

4 Relevance

Many users who monitor the current business trends have interest in the published statistics of retail trade. The statistics is in demand from trade associations, bank and finance sector, politicians, public and private institutions, researchers, enterprises, news media and Eurostat. The statistics provide input to the quarterly national accounts statistics. The users view the retail he retail trade index as an important short term indicator, and it often gets a lot of attention in the media and amongst other professional users.

4.1 User Needs

The retail trade statistics is of great interest to many enterprises within the retail trade sector, as publications allow them to compare their own sales development to the general trend of their trade industry.

Some users have a need for more commodity-based figures. The detailed industry figures are based solely on industry activity, thus enterprises with a broad commodity selection, in reality covering more industries, causes problems with comparability. Since a more commodity based statistics would greatly increase the response burden, this is not a user need, which can be met at the moment.

4.2 User Satisfaction

The users in general view the retail trade index as an important an fast short term indicator. The statistics are often cited in the media and used widely by other professional users. The detailed industry figures are used to monitor the development in the single industries, but in some instances a more commodity-oriented approach has been demanded, because some larger enterprises in reality is spread over several industries.

4.3 Data completeness rate

For some industries no detailed index figures are published due to confidentiality or quality issues.

This statistics is affected by demands from EU. In terms of completeness all these demands are fully met.

5 Accuracy and reliability

The overall accuracy of the total index is that the error is less than 1 pct. On commodity group level, the accuracy of the group food and other everyday commodities is about the same, whereas for clothing etc. the error can be up to 3 pct. and for other consumer goods up to 2 pct.

The accuracy of the monthly growth rate is very high. For the total index the error is less than 0.2 pct., while it can be a little higher on commodity group level.

5.1 Overall accuracy

The general assessment is that the quality of the statistics is high, with a few certain reservations. Using the time series for long-term analysis can be problematic. This is because of the way the retail trade index is designed and calculated, where not all structural changes in the population and sample are should be reflected in the figures (e.g. changes/corrections in the activity codes causing units to enter or leave the retail trade sector), which is secured by the month-to-month chain linking in the calculations (see data compilation).

Moreover, there will typically be a slight underestimation of the volume index, when consumers are buying cheaper goods and/or in cheaper in cheaper stores, and accordingly there will be an overestimation, when consumers are buying more expensive good and/or in more expensive stores. This is caused by the use of CPI sub indices as deflators for calculating the volume indices. The quality of the volume indices is generally very dependent on the composition of these deflators. In periods with changing buying patterns, the deflation, and hence the volume indices, are less accurate, because CPI does not reflect all the changes.

A provisional analysis shows that the lack of consideration of the above-mentioned substitution effects in the deflation, in the latter years have had an effect on the volume index causing an underestimation of the yearly growth rates at approximately 0.2-0.4 percent point.

To state the overall accuracy one must distinguish between the accuracy of the estimated totals and the accuracy if the monthly growth rates, which is the prime focus of this statistics.

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5.2 Sampling error

Sample errors have been calculated for the estimated turnover totals behind the index values. For the total it is less than 0.5 pct. and for the commodity groups less than 1 pct. On industry level the sampling error can be somewhat higher. For the larger industries it is normally below 2 pct., for medium sized industries it is less than 5 pct., and for the smaller industries it can be as high as 10 pct., but only in vary unusual cases higher than this.

A sample error has also been calculated for the total growth rate. It is below 0.1 pct.

5.3 Non-sampling error

The overall accuracy is affected by sampling error and non-sampling error combined. Non-sampling errors include measurement error and non-response error.

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The accuracy of the monthly growth rate is very high. For the total index the error is less than 0.2 pct., while it can be a little higher on commodity group level. Here too, approximately half of this error is due to non-sampling errors.

Non-response from significant units can occasionally lower the accuracy slightly.

The un-weighted response rate on unit-level, i.e. without considering the size of the enterprises is:

20 pct. at first publication of new figures. 10 pct. at first revision, below 5 pct. at second and final revision.

Most units are only required to respond to one question. The remaing units, required to respond to 2-3 questions, nearly always responds to all required questions. Hence the item non-response rate, is normally similar to the unit non-response rate:

20 pct. at first publication of new figures. 10 pct. at first revision, below 5 pct. at second and final revision.

5.4 Quality management

Statistics Denmark follows the recommendations on organisation and management of quality given in the Code of Practice for European Statistics (CoP) and the implementation guidelines given in the Quality Assurance Framework of the European Statistical System (QAF). A Working Group on Quality and a central quality assurance function have been established to continuously carry through control of products and processes.

5.5 Quality assurance

Statistics Denmark follows the principles in the Code of Practice for European Statistics (CoP) and uses the Quality Assurance Framework of the European Statistical System (QAF) for the implementation of the principles. This involves continuous decentralized and central control of products and processes based on documentation following international standards. The central quality assurance function reports to the Working Group on Quality. Reports include suggestions for improvement that are assessed, decided and subsequently implemented.

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5.7 Data revision - policy

Statistics Denmark revises published figures in accordance with the Revision Policy for Statistics Denmark. The common procedures and principles of the Revision Policy are for some statistics supplemented by a specific revision practice.

5.8 Data revision practice

The first published figures for a given month is publsihed 20-22 days after the end of the reference period and only includes figures on commodity groups (not industries). On industry level the first publication is one month later. At the same time the first published figures on commodity groups are revised. Hence, these figures are published 50-52 days after the end of the reference period.

One month later, the final revision of the figures are made, for both the commodity groups and the figures on industry level (which are thus only revised once). Hence, the final figures are published 70-72 days after the end of the reference month.

In case of major changes in methodology or in case of errors, the figures can be revised further back. This was latest done I May 2012, where the complete time series were backcasted using new methods. More on that complete revision can be found in this publication (in Danish).

Size of revisions

The first published figures on commodity groups are revised twice, and they are generally relatively small, especially bearing in mind the very short production time.

Measured on the monthly growth rate of the seasonal adjusted volume index, the first revision is normally less than 0.2 percent points (and often less than 0.05 percent points). Occasionally revisions can be up to 0.5 percent points, but normally that will be caused by changes in the seasonal pattern, and not corrections in the raw data.

Measured on the monthly growth rate of the unadjusted volume index the first revision is normally between 0.1 and 0.3 percent points, primarily caused by late submitted data, and to a lesser degree corrections of timely submitted data.

The second revision is normally below 0.05 percent points.

On the commodity group level, the revisions can in general be twice the size of the revisions to the total index. Revisions on industry level are normally quite small, due to the high response rate at the time of first publication.

6 Timeliness and punctuality

Indices on the main commodity groups are published already 20-22 days after the end of the month. This is rather quick for a survey based statistics such as this. One month later the indices on the most detailed industry level is published.

The punctuality is high, with delays happening very rarely.

6.1 Timeliness and time lag - final results

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The punctuality is high, with delays happening very rarely.

7 Comparability

The statistics has been compiled since 1939, but the statistics is not suited for long term time series analysis, because of structural changes in the retail trade sector. The sample design and the calculation methods have been adjusted several times, latest in May 2012, where the time series back to 2000 where backcasted using new methods.

7.1 Comparability - geographical

Every month figures are submitted to the statistical office of EU, Eurostat. This includes special industry aggregates, not published nationally. Data for all EU countries can be found in the Eurostat database. The statistics are produced following the principles of an EU regulation, so the results are comparable.

7.2 Comparability over time

The statistics has been compiled since 1939, but the statistics is not suited for long term time series analysis, because of structural changes in the retail trade sector. The sample design and the calculation methods have been adjusted several times, latest in May 2012, where the time series back to 2000 where backcasted using new methods. More on that complete revision can be found in this publication (in Danish)

In the Statbank historical time series going back to 1979 can be found, but due to differences in methodology and classifications comparisons to the current time series going back to 2000 is not advisable.

7.3 Coherence - cross domain

Other short term statistics also covers the turnover development in the retail trade sector. Below a list is included, describing the relationship between the retail trade index and the other statistics.

Purchases and sales by enterprises ("VAT statistics") Apart from being a register based statistics with (in theory) complete coverage, the VAT statistics is different from the retail trade index when it comes to the turnover definition. The turnover in the VAT statistics includes all sales applicable for VAT, whereas the turnover submitted for the retail trade statistics only includes turnover from sales to private persons (retail trade turnover). The VAT statistics is based on the continuous VAT payments from the enterprises, which in principle means that any changes in the population have immediate effect on the figures. The same cannot be said of the retail trade index. Moreover, small and medium sized retail trade enterprises do not submit VAT payments monthly, so the survey based retail trade index will have more data for calculation of the monthly growth rates.

Consumption of goods in national accounts The quarterly national accounts includes figures on the consumption split on types of goods. The private consumption of certain types of goods are sold in retail trade enterprises, but the tow indicators does not show the same development, since other sources than the retail trade index are incorporated in the private consumption figures.

Other statistics Apart from the above mentioned statistics to some extend covering the retail trade, there are other indicators covering the development in parts of the private consumption:

• Monthly statistics on purchased cars based on registrations • Monthly tendency survey on retail trade

Credit card turnover ("Dankort") Each month Nets publish figures on the monthly turnover from Dankort transactions. They are strongly connected to the retail trade turnover figures, of course, but there are several circumstances making the two indicators develop quite differently. More on this topic can be found in this publication (in Danish) and in more detail in this paper (in Danish).

7.4 Coherence - internal

Seasonal adjustment is performed indirectly, which results in consistency between seasonal adjusted aggregates and their subcomponents. There are no other sources for possible internal inconsistency.

8 Accessibility and clarity

New figures are published in a monthly news article News from Statistics Denmark, and all figures can be found in the Statbank.

The Retail Trade Index also has a subject page.

8.1 Release calendar

The publication date appears in the release calendar. The date is confirmed in the weeks before.

8.2 Release calendar access

The Release Calender can be accessed on our English website: [Release Calender](#).

8.3 User access

Statistics are always published at 8:00 a.m. at the day announced in the release calendar. No one outside of Statistics Denmark can access the statistics before they are published.

8.4 News release

The figures are published in a monthly news release: [NYT from Statistics Denmark](#).

8.5 Publications

The figures are included in [Statistical Yearbook](#).

8.6 On-line database

All figures are published in the on-line database [Statbank](#)

8.7 Micro-data access

There is no micro-data access.

8.8 Other

A subscription product with year-to-year and year-to-date indices on the detailed industry level is produced each month. It can be purchased via the Customer Centre, more info at [this page](#) (only in Danish).

8.9 Confidentiality - policy

[The confidentiality policy of Statistics Denmark](#) is followed (only in Danish).

8.10 Confidentiality - data treatment

In the compilation of the retail trade index, the confidentiality policy of Statistics Denmark is followed [(link, in Danish)](#). When a detailed industry figure is affected by confidentiality issues, no figures are published, but they are included in overlying aggregates.

8.11 Documentation on methodology

In addition to this quality declaration a more detailed paper describing the calculations is available in this [paper](#) (only in Danish).

8.12 Quality documentation

Results from the quality evaluation of products and selected processes are available in detail for each statistics and in summary reports for the Working Group on Quality.

9 Contact

The administrative placement of these statistics are in the division of Short Term Statistics. The persons responsible are:

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