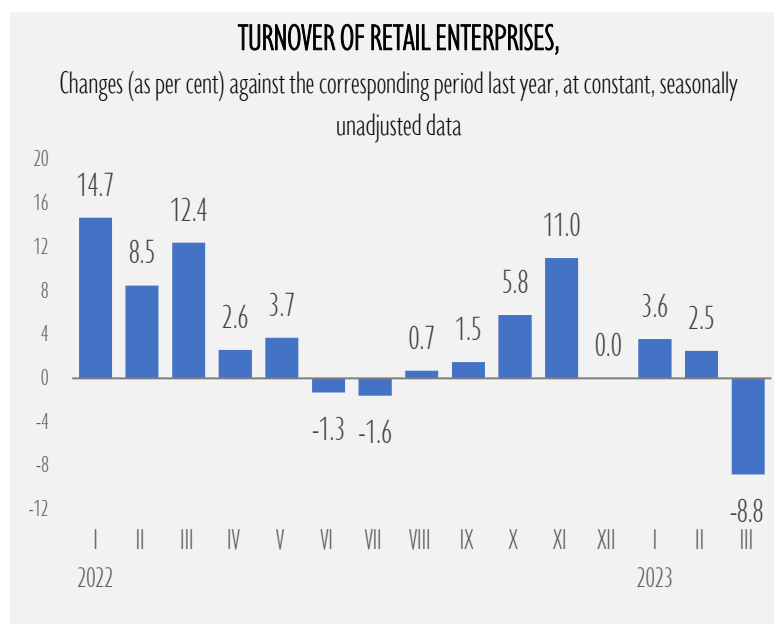


## On Retail Turnover in March 2023

## In March 2023, a sharp decline in retail trade was observed

Considering the high base in March 2022, when all trade restrictions related to the spread of Covid-19 were lifted and a rapid increase in retail turnover was observed, as well as the fact that prices are still high, retail turnover fell sharply in March 2023. The total turnover of retail enterprises in actual prices was unchanged during the year; however, considering the rapid rise in prices, it decreased by 8.8% at constant prices (unadjusted data). The fall in the volume of retail sales can also be observed on a monthly basis. In March 2023, compared to February, retail sales decreased by 2.7% (seasonally adjusted data), affected by a sharp decline in retail sales of food products.



On an annual basis, the retail turnover of food products decreased faster, while the decline was slightly more moderate for the retail turnover of non-food goods and fuel.

In March, the turnover of **non-food** retail sales decreased by 7.4% year-on-year. It decreased in all major non-food product groups. The sharpest drop in turnover was observed in the retail trade of sporting goods and games (by 31.1%). The retail turnover continued to decrease in the retail trade of watches, jewellery and new goods not classified elsewhere (by 21.8%), in the trade of flowers, plants, seeds, fertilizers, pets and their feed (by 13%) and in specialized stores for the retail sale of household electrical appliances (by 8.2 %). After a sharp rise in the previous months, the decline was observed in the trade of metal products, tools, building materials and plumbing (by 9%), in the trade of cosmetics and toiletries (by 6.5%), in the trade of clothes, shoes and leather goods (by 3.6%), in the trade of pharmaceutical, medical supplies (by 2.8%), and in the trade of textiles, carpets, floor coverings, wallpapers, furniture, lighting devices and other types of household goods (by 2.2%). On the other hand, the turnover of retail trade was essentially unchanged (decrease by 0.1%) in the trade of books, newspapers, stationery, audio and video recordings, and the trade of information and communication technology equipment.

The increase in turnover was observed in retail trade in stalls and markets (by 1.1%) and other retail trade outside shops, stalls, and markets (by 1.5%). After a rapid increase in the first month of the year, retail sales by mail or on the Internet decreased in March as in February (by 4.4%).

In March 2023, the retail turnover of **food** products decreased for the sixth consecutive month, and in March it decreased particularly sharply - by 11.2%, which continued to be determined by the high price level of food products.

The turnover of retail sales of **fuel** at gas stations, after an increase in the previous seven months, decreased by 7.9% in March 2023, compared to the corresponding month last year. This was largely determined by the high volume of retail sales of fuel in March 2022.

Overall, in January-March 2023, retail sales turnover was 1.4% lower than in January-March 2022, which was largely determined by a 5.5% drop in food retail sales turnover due to high food prices. Retail sales of non-food goods and fuel grew very modestly at just 0.8% and 1.2% respectively, driven by a high base at the start of 2022 when all trade restrictions were gradually lifted, and retail sales grew significantly.

In the coming months, retail sales volumes will continue to be affected by high prices - residents will be more cautious in making larger purchases, preferring to shop in low-priced stores. However, the negative impact on retail turnover in

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April will continue to be mitigated by state support for residents to cover heat energy costs, as well as other types of support to increase residents' purchasing power.