

Press release

Gottlieb Duttweiler Chair at the University of St. Gallen Celebrates 25th Anniversary

St. Gallen, June 2025 – Twenty-five years ago, with generous support from Migros, the Gottlieb Duttweiler Chair of International Retail Management was founded at the University of St. Gallen. The chair focuses on retail research and, in particular, backs the university's related teaching activities. On its anniversary, the chair looks back on a successful history marked by outstanding instruction, innovative research, and close collaboration with industry. Under the leadership of Prof. Dr. Thomas Rudolph, who has headed the chair since 2000, it has evolved into an internationally renowned center for research and teaching in retail management. From the initial skepticism toward e-commerce to today's digital retail landscape of omnichannel management, social commerce, and virtual spaces (the metaverse), the chair has consistently embraced and explored current retail developments in a practice-oriented way. "Our research must prove relevant and make an impact in the field," emphasizes Prof. Rudolph. "We remain true to that principle while pursuing the highest standards of academic excellence."

Milestones of the past 25 years include the launch of innovative degree programs, practice-oriented executive courses, and numerous high-profile publications. In just the last five years, more than 1,100 students have been trained, many doctoral candidates have earned their Ph.D.s, and ongoing exchanges with roughly 20 partner companies ensure a continuous transfer of knowledge between academia and practice.

At the anniversary celebration on June 19 in Rüschlikon, Ursula Nold, President of the Board of Directors of the Federation of Migros Cooperatives (FMC), underscored the importance of the Gottlieb Duttweiler Chair. As the only chair in Switzerland dedicated to retail, it provides students, executives, and researchers with training that is both realistic and academically rigorous.

The chair has just released the fifth edition of its book *Modern Retail Management*. Later this year, studies on cross-border shopping (September) and on the impact of artificial intelligence in retail will follow. Numerous articles have also appeared in practice-oriented and academic journals, with a special focus on customer inspiration in retail. In addition, the chair offers an extensive e-learning platform and innovative teaching formats. For example, in the "Action Learning in Retail Marketing" course, students spend three months working directly in retail stores to improve their profitability. These varied projects highlight the chair's dynamism and comprehensive coverage of current retail developments.