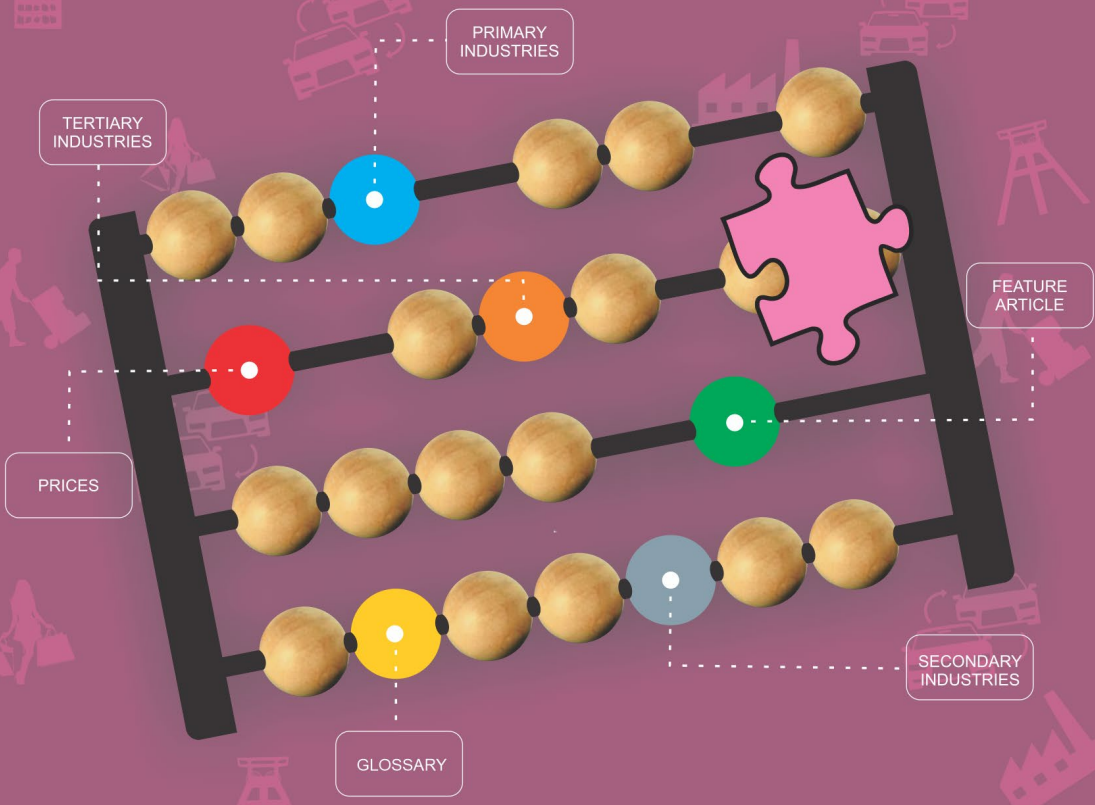


Mbalo Brief

the missing piece of the puzzle

April 2026



Issue 03/2026

IMPROVING LIVES THROUGH DATA ECOSYSTEMS



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Editor's Comment



is
stands

South Africa will mark 32 years of freedom on 27 April this year, commemorating the first democratic elections held on the same day and month in 1994. For the first time, millions of South Africans of all races were able to vote, marking the end of apartheid and the beginning of a new political era under the leadership of Nelson Mandela, the country's first democratically elected president. This day now commemorated as Freedom Day and it stands as a testament to South Africans' unwavering commitment to justice, equality, and human dignity.

The theme for Freedom Day 2026 is "*Freedom and the Rule of Law: Thirty Years of Democratic Citizenship*," commemorating the 30th anniversary of the adoption of the Constitution of South Africa in 1996. Over three decades, South Africa's democracy has delivered important gains, including expanded access to basic services, the extension of social grants to millions of vulnerable citizens, and a robust legal framework that allows individuals to challenge injustice through the courts. As South Africa reflects on this milestone, Freedom Day serves as both a celebration of progress made and a reminder of the work that remains.

This month's feature article is based on migration statistics from the 2022/2023 Income and Expenditure Survey (IES) (Report No. 03-04-05), published by Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) on 25 February 2026. Also, do not miss our monthly crossword puzzle and the March 2026 solutions. Articles in this issue draw on the results of industry surveys conducted for January and February 2026.

Enjoy the read!

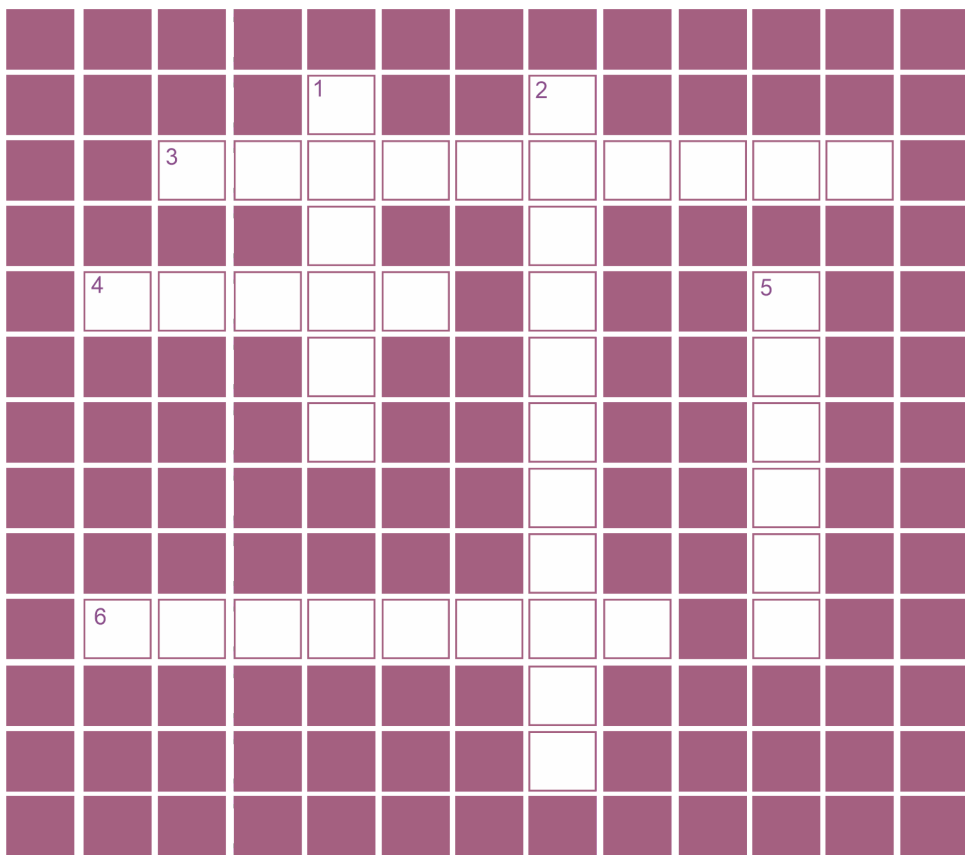


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Crossword Puzzle



Across

3. Which public holiday in South Africa is celebrated annually on 27 April?
4. True or false? South Africa has 11 official languages.
6. Which city serves as the administrative (executive) capital of South Africa?

Down

1. What is the name of the survey conducted to determine the population of a country?
2. Which country is home to the world's largest wine route?
5. In which country will the opening match of the 2026 FIFA World Cup take place?

Solutions for March 2026

Across

3. June
4. Limpopo
5. Mbuyiseli
6. Ngqura

Down

1. Phagophobia
2. Hundred





Feature article

Feature article on migration statistics

1. Introduction

Migration in South Africa is influenced by a combination of economic, social, political and environmental factors. These drivers shape both internal migration and international migration dynamics. Based on historical data, employment opportunities, population movement from rural to urban areas, and the search for better opportunities were found to be the main drivers of migration in South Africa. Furthermore, education opportunities were also found to be a social driver of migration, especially among youth, as learners and students move from rural areas to cities in search of higher education. Thus, the movement of people, both within and across national borders, reflects a persistent search for improved livelihoods, education, and living conditions.

This article provides a comprehensive analysis of migration in South Africa, drawing on recent data in the *Report on Migration statistics from the 2022/2023 Income and Expenditure Survey (IES)* (Report No. 03-04-05) published by Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) on 25 February 2026. The article examines both international and internal migration patterns. It begins by exploring the demographic and socio-economic characteristics of immigrants, including their population profile, settlement patterns, and regional origins. The article further investigates key social dimensions such as education access, health outcomes, income and expenditure, and subjective well-being, highlighting differences between immigrants and the South African-born population.

In addition, the article examines internal migration dynamics, focusing on lifetime and period migrants as well as the interprovincial migration streams and corridors that shape population movement across South African provinces. Particular attention is given to the main drivers of migration,

including employment opportunities, family-related factors, and access to education.

2. Background of migration statistics

Migration is the movement of people from one place to another with the intent of settling temporarily or permanently in a new location (Stats SA, 2024). This can occur between countries (international migration) or within a country (internal migration). Census 2022 recorded 2,4 million immigrants in South Africa, representing approximately 3,9% of South Africa's population and reflecting an increase from the 1 million reported in 2001. Global migration comes from middle- and low-income countries that migrate largely to high-income nations. Most immigrants in South Africa came from the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region, accounting for 83,7% of the total migrant population in 2022. This reflects the significance of neighbouring countries in contributing to South Africa's immigrant population.

The relationship between migration and inequality is complex, as inequality functions both as a driver and an outcome of human migration. For instance, South Africa's national Gini coefficient declined from a series low of 0,635 in 2023 to 0,720 in 2006. The Gini coefficient is a measure used to show how evenly income (or wealth) is distributed within a population. It is one of the most commonly used indicators of inequality. Research highlights a strong link between migration and inequality through remittance dynamics, consumption patterns, and broader socio-economic factors. Globally, migrants send substantial funds back to their countries of origin. In the South African context, remittance inflows were estimated at R755 million in 2016, increasing to R873 million in 2022. Over the same period, remittance outflows also rose, from approximately R897 million in 2016 to R1,01 billion in 2022.

3. International migration

International migration has significantly increased in the past few decades, becoming a central feature of globalisation. The causes of international migration are many, as individuals migrate from developing countries to wealthier regions seeking better job opportunities, higher wages, and improved standards of living.



3.1 Study populations

This portion on international migration presents insights and patterns by focusing on two study populations: South African-born (SA-born) individuals and immigrants. A non-migrant/SA-born person is a person who resides in the country where he/she was born and has not crossed international borders for residence purposes. An international migrant is a person who has changed his/ her country of residence and established a new usual residence in the country within a given year (6 months and 1 day). An international migrant can be either 'immigrant' or 'emigrant' and includes those with national or foreign citizenship, or stateless persons.

3.2 Immigrants

Table 1 presents the distribution of the population by migratory status using data from IES 2022/23. The results indicate that immigrants contributed marginally to the overall population size of South Africa, accounting for 5,1% (over 3 million people).

Figure 1 – Distribution of the population by migratory status, IES 2022/23

Migratory	Count	Percent
 SA-born	58 067 815	94,9
 Immigrant	3 094 927	5,1
Total	61 162 742	100,0

Among the SA-born population, there were more females (51,5%) compared with males (48,5%). On the other hand, the picture is different among immigrants, with more males (56,2%) than females (43,8%).

In terms of age, the larger proportion of immigrant males were in the age group 35–39 years (9,2%) while females were in the age group 30–34 years (7,1%). The age profile of both male and female immigrants shows an increase beginning at ages 20–24 (5,2% for males and 4,3% for females), followed by a gradual decline from the 40–44 age group onward. The results further indicate that the average age of immigrants between 1923 and 1977 was low. The average age in this period ranged between 2 and 11 years old. However, the average age increased significantly between 1992 and 2023. During this period, the average age ranged between 18 and 26 years. The average age shows a gradual upward trend, reaching about 25–26 years by 2023.

A larger percentage of the immigrant population were black Africans, accounting for 83,8%, followed by the white population with 9,9%. The SA-born population followed the same trend, with black Africans constituting 80,9%, followed by the coloured population at 9,3%.

A larger percentage of the immigrant population was legally married, accounting for 42,1%, followed by those who indicated that they were single and never married at 29,1%. However, when looking at the SA-born population, the results indicate that those who were single and never married accounted for 57,9%, and those who were legally married accounted for 22,0%.

Only 11,4% of immigrants reported that they were South African citizens, and only 1,9% identified as stateless persons. Looking at the characteristics of stateless immigrants (according to the Department of Home Affairs, a person who is not considered a national by any State under the operation of its law), the results indicate that there were 58 962 immigrants who reported that they were stateless. The majority of these were males (53,9%), falling in the 30–34 (20,9%) and 35–39 (31,1%) age groups. The largest proportion was recorded in Gauteng (36,5%), followed by Limpopo (28,6%).

The largest proportion of immigrants (63,60%) in South Africa was from the SADC region, followed by immigrants from the rest of Africa (25,5%). Most of the immigrant population indicated Gauteng as their province of

enumeration, accounting for 51,2%, followed by Western Cape (13,3%). Regarding the SA-born population, the majority of the population was found in Gauteng (25,4%), KwaZulu-Natal (19,6%) and Western Cape (11,9%).

Among immigrants, 27% were found in the City of Johannesburg, followed by the City of Ekurhuleni (12%) and the City of Cape Town (9,2%). On the other hand, when looking at the SA-born population, the majority was found in the non-metros of KwaZulu-Natal (12,8%), followed by non-metros in Limpopo (9,9%). The only leading metropolitan municipality that hosted most of the SA-born population was the City of Johannesburg with 9,2%.

3.3 Educational profile

3.3.1 Education by migratory status

In terms of children aged 0–6 years attending Early Childhood Development (ECD) programmes, the results indicate that among the SA-born population, 18,4% of children were attending a crèche/educare centre, while among immigrants only 16,6% were attending.

Among immigrants, 23,4% did not attend any educational institutions, compared with 5,3% of the SA-born population. The result further indicates that among immigrants who did not attend an educational institution, 12,9% were females in the age group 15–19 (16,4%). Moreover, 16,7% of the immigrant population reported post-schooling as their level of education compared with 9,9% among the SA-born population. The results further indicate that among immigrants, 24,3% completed secondary education (Grade 12/matric), while among the SA-born population 21,3% completed secondary education.

3.4 Individual health

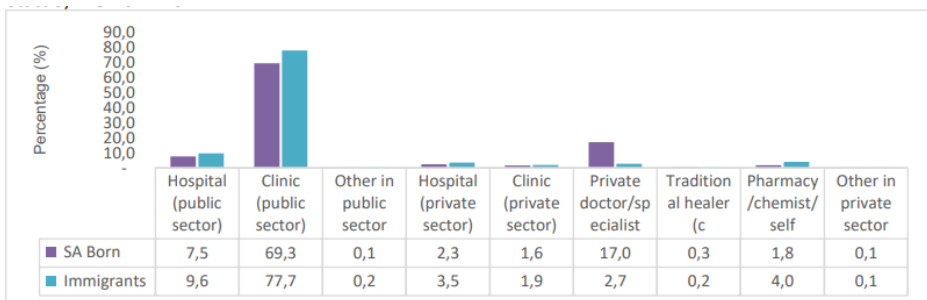
3.4.1 Health profile of the population

The results for perceived health status by migratory status for persons 15 years and older indicate that most persons perceived their health status to be “good”, followed by those with “excellent” health status. The largest proportion of immigrants (55,9%) perceived their health status as “good”, while only 50,5% among the SA-born population perceived their health status as “good”.

Type of healthcare facility by migratory status

Figure 1 presents the percentage distribution of the type of place of seeking healthcare by migratory status from the IES 2022/23. The majority of respondents reported having a place to seek healthcare. Among immigrants, the majority reported accessing healthcare from public clinics (77,7%), followed by public hospitals at 9,6%. Similarly, among the SA-born population the majority (69,3%) sought healthcare at public clinics, followed by those who indicated that they visit private doctors/specialists at 17,0%.

Figure 2 – Percentage distribution of population by type of place of seeking healthcare by migratory status, IES 2022/23



Source: Statistics South Africa, IES 2022/2023
This figure excludes cases that were not known or unspecified cases

Causes of delays in assessing healthcare

The findings show that long queues were the most frequently cited reason for delaying healthcare among both the SA-born (39,5%) and immigrant populations (40,5%). The second most common reason was long waiting times, reported by 22,2% of the SA-born population and 21,0% of immigrants. The least cited reason for delaying healthcare among the SA-born population (0,5%) and immigrants (0,7%) was fear of stigmatisation.

4. Internal migration

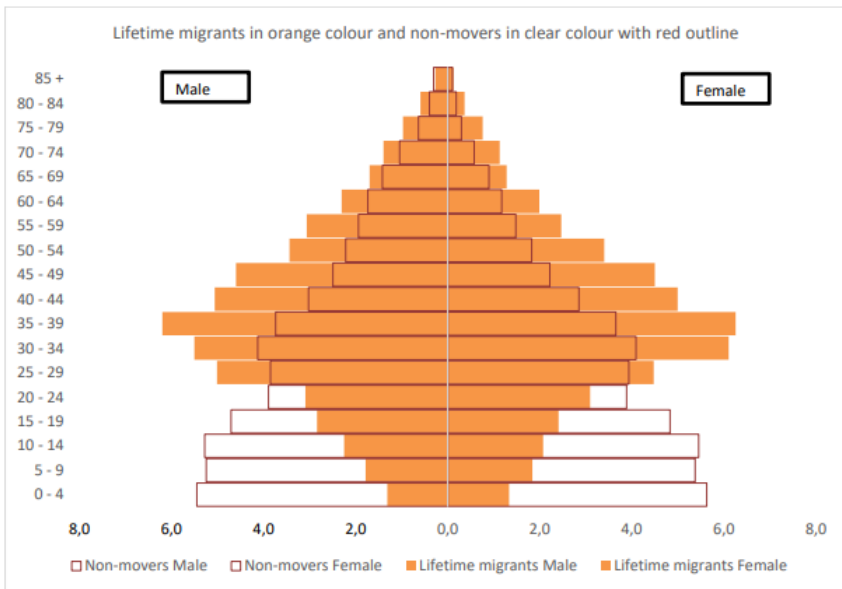
An internal migrant is any person who is moving or has moved within a province or between provinces to establish a new temporary or permanent residence, or because of displacement. It is often influenced by various factors that differ by country and region.

4.1 Lifetime migrants

A lifetime migrant is an individual whose province of enumeration at the date of enumeration differs from his/her province of birth, while a non-mover is an individual who was born in a province that is the same as their province of enumeration.

In 2022/2023, lifetime migration continued to shape the South African population distribution, with Gauteng and Western Cape emerging as the principal destinations for movers with 4 553 644 and 1 526 581, respectively. Gauteng recorded the largest net-migration gain of 3,3 million people, followed by Western Cape with 1,2 million, while North West experienced a net inflow of 86 thousand. In contrast, net-migration losses were observed in the Eastern Cape (-1,7 million) and Limpopo (-1,5 million), confirming their roles as major sending provinces. KwaZulu-Natal (-665 thousand), Free State (-453 thousand), Mpumalanga (-208 thousand) and Northern Cape (-100 thousand) also recorded net outflows. Overall, nearly 9,1 million people moved across South Africa's provincial boundaries; among them, 3,1 million immigrants were enumerated in the country. The majority of lifetime migrants (30,8%) reported Gauteng as the province in which they were enumerated, followed by Western Cape with 22,2%. These patterns underscore Gauteng's role as the dominant migration hub and highlight the persistent out-migration pressures from largely rural provinces.

Figure 3 – Age and sex structure of the population by migratory status, IES 2022/2023



Source: Statistics South Africa, IES 2022/2023
This figure excludes cases that were not known and unspecified cases
**Figure excludes age of persons born outside SA

Figure 2 shows the age and sex distribution of the population by migratory status. The pyramid illustrates the age-selective nature of migration, with the greatest impact observed among working-age groups. The majority of lifetime migrants were concentrated in the 20–39-year age range, peaking at 35–39 years, accounting for approximately 6,3% of the male population and 6,2% of the female population. A secondary peak is observed in the 25–29 age group, with around 6,1% of males and 5,5% of females classified as lifetime migrants. Migration declines sharply in the older age groups, underscoring that movement is concentrated during the economically active years.

The majority of both lifetime migrants and non-movers were black African, accounting for 79,4% and 81,2%, respectively. Among the white population group, 15% were lifetime migrants, while 6% were non-movers. Among the coloured population, 10,3% were non-movers, while 3,4% were lifetime migrants.

4.2 Interprovincial streams and corridors

Migration streams refer to the patterns and flow of large numbers of people moving from one geographic area to another. When a particular migration stream and the stream in the opposite direction both cover a significant proportion of all migratory moves in the country, one can refer to it as an internal migration corridor. These streams and corridors can be driven by various factors, including economic opportunities, political instability, environmental conditions, social networks, or cultural ties. Migration streams can be internal (within a country) or international (between countries).

4.2.1 Migration streams

Figure 4 – Migration streams, IES 2022/2023

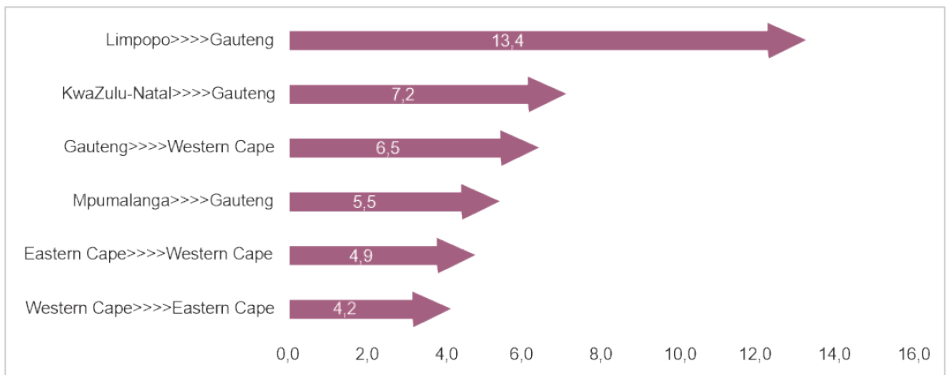
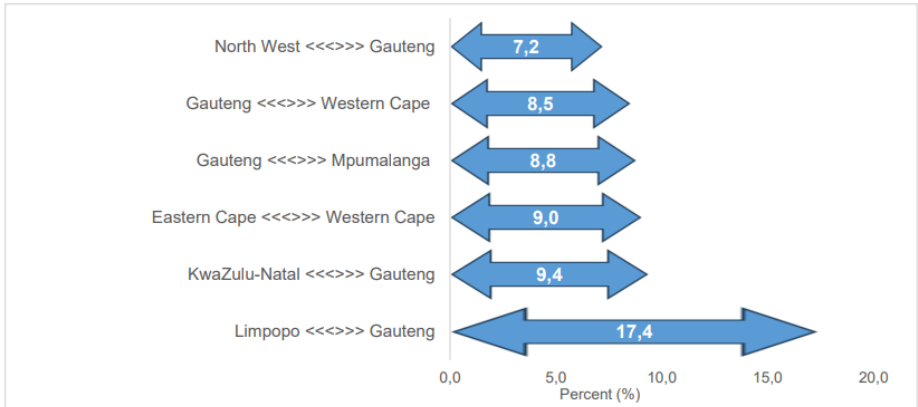


Figure 3 shows the interprovincial streams, based on IES 2022/2023. The results show that the most dominant streams were Limpopo to Gauteng with 13,4% and KwaZulu-Natal to Gauteng with 7,2%.

4.2.2 Migration corridors

Figure 4 – Interprovincial corridor by sex, IES 2022/2023



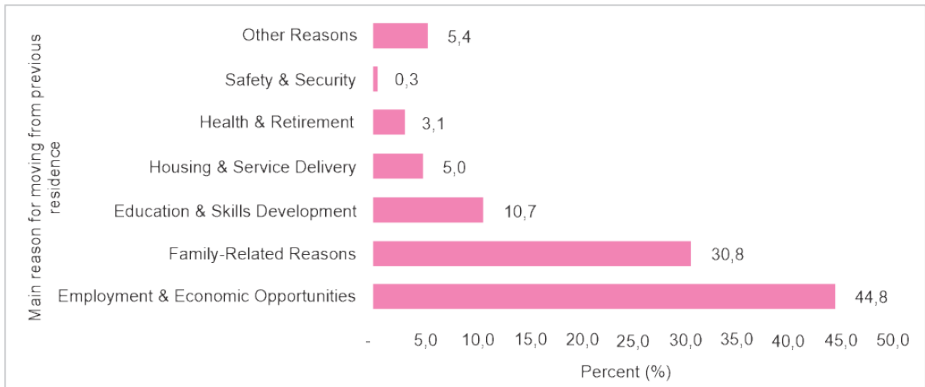
Source: Statistics South Africa, IES 2022/2023

Note** This figure excludes cases that are residing outside SA, are not known and not applicable

Figure 4 shows the interprovincial corridors by sex between 2017 and 2022. The results show that the prominent interprovincial migration corridors in South Africa were Gauteng and Limpopo, with 17,4%. This was followed by an interprovincial corridor between KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng at 9,4%. The least prominent interprovincial migration corridor was North West to Gauteng at 7,2%.

4.2.3 Main reason for moving from previous place of residence

Figure 5 – Main reason for migration, IES 2022/2023



The results indicate that migration from previous residence was largely driven by employment and economic opportunities, accounting for 44,8% of all reported reasons for moving. This was followed by family-related reasons at 30,8%, while education and skills development contributed 10,7%. Housing and service delivery-related movements comprised 5,0%, and health and retirement accounted for 3,1% of migration reasons. Safety and security concerns represented 0,3% of the reported main reasons for migration, while other reasons collectively made up 5,4%.

5. Household income and expenditure

5.1 Households by migratory status

The total number of households in South Africa was about 21,3 million households, with the vast majority of households headed by the non-migrant population (14 million), and only about 2,1 million households were immigrant-headed households; 5,2 million households were headed by internal migrants. In terms of average household size, South African households have an average size of 2,9 persons per household. Immigrant-headed households were smaller, with an average size of 1,5 persons per household, while non-migrant households were the largest with 3,5 persons per household on average.

Households headed by males dominate across all population groups. Male-headed households accounted for at least 51,8%, while female-headed households accounted for 48,2% of the total non-migrant households. Among immigrant-headed households, male-headed households accounted for a majority of 74,1%, while female-headed households accounted for 25,9% of immigrant-headed households. Among internal migrants, male-headed households (62,1%) were almost double the number of female-headed households (37,9%).

The majority of internal migrant and immigrant-headed households were concentrated in Gauteng (54,4% and 52,9% respectively), followed by Western Cape, accounting for 17,3% and 12,4% respectively. When looking at non-migrant-headed households, the majority of households were distributed between Gauteng (22,5%) and KwaZulu-Natal (18%).

The results indicate that income from work forms the largest share of total income across all groups, ranging from 66,9% among non-migrants to 77,3% among immigrants. Pension and social insurance contribute between 7,9% among immigrants and 12,5% among non-migrants, while imputed rent accounts for 9,5% among internal migrants to 5,0% among immigrants. Smaller proportions are observed for income from capital (1,3%–2,1%), income from individuals (1,2%–1,7%), and other income (4,0%–4,9%).

Nationally, the total household income amounted to R42,45 trillion. Non-migrant households recorded the highest total income of R2 486 trillion, followed by internal migrant households with R1 325 trillion, and immigrant households with R432 billion. Across all migration groups, income from work was the main income source, totalling R2,992 trillion nationally. Non-migrant households recorded the highest income from work (R1 664 trillion), followed by internal migrant households with R993 billion and immigrant households with R334 billion.

The results indicate that male-headed households reported higher levels of income than female-headed households across all migratory status groups in both average and median terms. Among male-headed households, internal migrants recorded the highest average income (R294 378), followed by immigrants (R220 701) and non-migrants (R210 407). A similar pattern was observed for median income, with internal migrant male-headed households reporting the highest median income (R125 273).

Female-headed households reported lower income levels across all groups. Internal migrant female-headed households had the highest average income (R187 337), followed by immigrant-headed (R171 643) and non-migrant households (R143 432). Median income followed a similar trend, with internal migrant female-headed households recording the highest median income (R92 031).

5.2 Household expenditure by migratory status

Nationally, total household expenditure amounted to R2 953 trillion, with non-migrant households recording the highest total expenditure at R1 800 trillion, followed by internal migrant households at R886 billion and immigrant households at R266 billion. On average, internal migrant households spent R169 760 per year, which was higher than the national average of R138 905. Non-migrant households spent an average of R128 996, while immigrant households had the lowest average expenditure at R127 963. National totals were consistent with the figures from IES 2022/203. However, due to further disaggregation by migratory status, there are slight differences.

Across all population migratory statuses, the largest spending category was housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels, totalling R956 billion. Average expenditure in this category was R44 991. Among internal migrants, average expenditure was R52 547 while among immigrants it was R43 740, and R42 351 among non-migrants. Food and non-alcoholic beverages formed the next major expenditure category with a total of R498 billion, where non-migrant-headed households spent an average of R23 660, internal migrants R23 909, and immigrants R20 854.

Transport accounted for R466 billion in total spending, with internal migrants showing the highest household average at R30 990, followed by non-migrants at R19 086 and immigrants at R18 337. Other notable categories included insurance and financial services (R285 billion), and furnishings and household equipment (R126 billion). The lowest expenditure categories were education services (R43 billion) and health (R31 billion). Overall, the data indicate that internal migrant households had the highest average expenditure across most spending categories, while immigrant households consistently recorded the lowest.

6. Conclusion

Migration in South Africa is largely driven by adults seeking better economic opportunities, with movement concentrated along key interprovincial corridors toward major economic hubs. Immigrants make up a relatively small share of the population but are predominantly young to middle-aged adults, with a higher proportion of males and a strong representation from the SADC region. Settlement patterns show a clear concentration in provinces like Gauteng and Western Cape, particularly in metropolitan areas such as Johannesburg. Immigrants generally report positive health and well-being and rely heavily on public services.

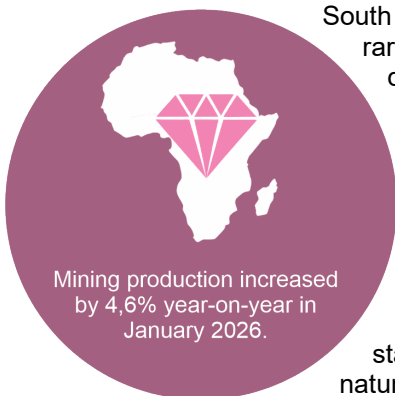
Income from work is the main source of household income across all groups, with internal migrant households – particularly those headed by males – recording the highest average and median income levels. While total household income is highest among non-migrants due to their larger population share, internal migrant households demonstrate relatively stronger income performance on average. Female-headed households consistently report lower income levels across all groups. Internal migrant households record the highest average expenditure, while immigrant households spend the least on average. Across all groups, the largest share of expenditure is allocated to housing and utilities, followed by food and transport, highlighting the cost pressures associated with urban living in economic centres.

Overall, both international and internal migration patterns reflect a strong link between mobility and the pursuit of improved livelihoods, reinforcing the importance of economic centres as key destinations within South Africa's migration landscape.



Primary industries

Mining: Production and sales



South Africa is one of the leading sources of the rarest and most exceptional coloured diamonds in the world. Some of the popular coloured diamonds were discovered at Cullinan Mine, formerly known as Premier Mine, which is the most important source of blue diamonds. In January 2026, Petra Diamonds, the owner of Cullinan Mine, announced the discovery of a 41,82 carat natural blue diamond. The diamond is shaped like an African map, and Petra Mine stated that it is a type IIb (exceptionally rare, natural occurring diamonds representing 0,1%

of all gem diamonds) the mine has produced in the past five years. The discovery of the rare diamond plays a vital role by boosting the economy of the country while generating revenue for Petra Mine. Overall, the mining industry performed well in January 2026 as the mining production increased. According to Statistics South Africa (Stats SA), mining production increased by 4,6% in January 2026. This article summarises the results of the *Mining: Production and sales* (Statistical release P2041) for January 2026.



Mining production increased by 4,6% year-on-year in January 2026 (see Table A).

The largest positive contributors were:

- PGMs (10,8%, contributing 2,7 percentage points);
- chromium ore (37,3%, contributing 1,8 percentage points); and
- manganese ore (12,5%, contributing 1,0 percentage point).

Iron ore (-1,9%, contributing -0,3 of a percentage point) was the largest negative contributor.

Table A – Key growth rates in the volume of mining production for January 2026

	Aug-25	Sep-25	Oct-25	Nov-25	Dec-25	Jan-26
Year-on-year % change, unadjusted	0,4	1,5	6,1	-2,4	2,8	4,6
Month-on-month % change, seasonally adjusted	-0,9	2,1	2,4	-5,2	-1,6	2,9
3-month % change, seasonally adjusted ¹	3,2	2,7	2,2	1,7	-0,6	-3,1

¹ Percentage change between the previous 3 months and the 3 months ending in the month indicated.

A full release on *Mining: Production and sales* (Statistical release P2041) is available on the Stats SA website www.statssa.gov.za.

Mineral sales at current prices increased by 31,7% year-on-year in January 2026 (see **Table B**). The largest positive contributors were:

- PGMs (122,4%, contributing 23,1 percentage points);
- gold (35,9%, contributing 8,4 percentage points); and
- chromium ore (66,7%, contributing 3,4 percentage points).

Coal (-10,3%, contributing -2,8 percentage points) and iron ore (-11,9%, contributing -1,5 percentage points) were the largest negative contributors.

Table B – Key growth rates in mineral sales at current prices for January 2026

	Aug-25	Sep-25	Oct-25	Nov-25	Dec-25	Jan-26
Year-on-year % change, unadjusted	22,8	16,4	13,6	-0,1	48,0	31,7
Month-on-month % change, seasonally adjusted	-2,7	8,7	-0,3	-1,6	23,0	-9,1
3-month % change, seasonally adjusted ¹	4,6	8,2	7,2	9,4	11,1	12,6

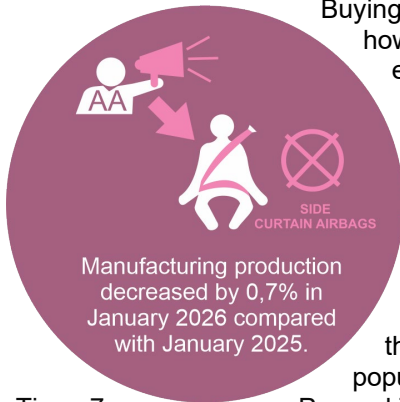
¹ Percentage change between the previous 3 months and the 3 months ending in the month indicated.

A full release on *Mining: Production and sales* (Statistical release P2041) is available on the Stats SA website www.statssa.gov.za.



Secondary industries

Manufacturing: Production and sales



Buying an entry-level car may be cost-effective; however, it could endanger your life. While entry-level cars are the most affordable, they may compromise some safety features to keep production costs low. One feature that is often omitted from entry-level models is side curtain airbags. Unlike standard side airbags that are installed in the car to protect the torso, side curtain airbags are designed to protect the head in case of a side collision. The absence of this feature has led to a poor crash score for popular car models in South Africa. The Chery

Tiggo 7

Pro and Toyota Corolla Cross received two out of five stars, while the Hyundai Grand i10 received zero stars in the Global New Car Assessment Programme (NCAP). This has prompted the Automotive Association (AA) to call on car makers to raise the safety standards on all locally manufactured vehicles by installing side curtain airbags for free. Doing so will improve safety and reduce head injuries during side impacts, and potentially save lives. However, for manufacturers, it will likely increase the overall costs of manufacturing cars due to the added feature. Increasing costs could potentially put strain on the already struggling sector. According to Statistics South Africa (Stats SA), manufacturing production decreased by 0,7% in January 2026 compared with January 2025. This article summarises the results of the *Manufacturing: Production and sales* (statistical release P3041.2) for January 2026.



Manufacturing production decreased by 0,7% in January 2026 compared with January 2025 (see Table C).

The largest negative contributions were made by the wood and wood products, paper, publishing and printing division (-11,0%, contributing -1,3 percentage points) and the basic iron and steel, non-ferrous metal products, metal products and machinery division (-5,7%, contributing -1,2 percentage points).

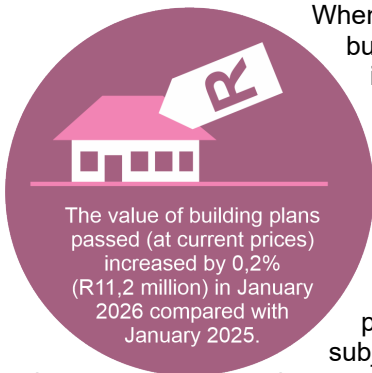
The petroleum, chemical products, rubber and plastic products division was the largest positive contributor (6,7%, contributing 1,4 percentage points).

Table C – Key growth rates in the volume of manufacturing production for January 2026

	Aug-25	Sep-25	Oct-25	Nov-25	Dec-25	Jan-26
Year-on-year % change, unadjusted	-1,6	1,0	0,7	-2,1	-1,5	-0,7
Month-on-month % change, seasonally adjusted	0,3	0,2	1,2	-2,2	-1,3	1,5
3-month % change, seasonally adjusted ¹	1,4	0,2	0,2	0,1	-0,5	-1,7

¹ Percentage change between the previous 3 months and the 3 months ending in the month indicated. A full release on *Manufacturing: Production and sales* (Statistical release P3041.2) is available on the Stats SA website: www.statssa.gov.za.

Selected building statistics of the private sector



When buying property in South Africa, prospective buyers should exercise caution before entering into agreements to purchase. This is important because estate agents sometimes use enthusiastic and often exaggerated promotional language to advertise property and attract prospective buyers. This practice is known as “sales puffery” and is a common and acceptable principle in real estate; however, it is not legally binding. Sales puffery usually reflects the estate agents’ subjective opinions rather than factual information

about the property. For example, the description in the advertisement may state “stunning views”, “perfect location” or “proximity to the best schools” to entice buyers. While the description may be used as the selling point, it may not always be a true reflection of the state of the property, including the structural integrity, safety or regulatory compliance. It

is for this reason that prospective buyers should do research and view the property to avoid future disputes or claims of misrepresentation. Data published by Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) for January 2026 suggest there's improved activity in the property sector, marked by an increase of 0,2% or R11,2% million in the value of building plans passed. When building activity increases, estate agents may use sales puffery to market new developments. This article summarises the results of the *Selected building statistics of the private sector* (Statistical release P5041.1) for January 2026.



The value of building plans passed (at current prices) increased by 0,2% (R11,2 million) in January 2026 compared with January 2025 (see Table D).

An increase was reported for non-residential buildings (R334,5 million). Decreases were reported for additions and alterations (-R289,8 million) and residential buildings (-R33,5 million).

The largest positive contributors to the total increase of 0,2% (R11,2 million) were Gauteng (contributing 5,8 percentage points or R363,2 million), Eastern Cape (contributing 4,3 percentage points or R266,9 million) and Limpopo (contributing 2,2 percentage points or R140,6 million).

The largest negative contributors were Western Cape (contributing -6,8 percentage points or -R424,8 million) and KwaZulu-Natal (contributing -4,6 percentage points or -R289,1 million).

Buildings reported as completed at current prices

The value of buildings reported as completed (at current prices) decreased by 30,7% (-R898,0 million) in January 2026 compared with January 2025. Decreases were reported for non-residential buildings (-R872,5 million) and residential buildings (-R116,8 million). An increase was reported for additions and alterations (R91,2 million).

Five out of the nine provinces reported year-on-year decreases in the value of buildings completed in January 2026. The largest negative contributors

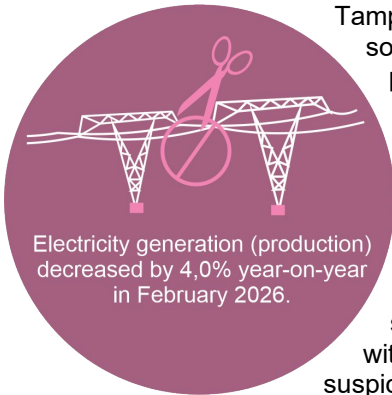
were Gauteng (contributing -37,7 percentage points or -R1 100,9 million) and KwaZulu-Natal (contributing -7,4 percentage points or -R217,6 million).

Table D – Building plans passed by larger municipalities at current prices by type of building, January 2026

Type of building	Jan 2025	Jan 2026	Difference in value between Jan 2025 and Jan 2026	% change between Jan 2025 and Jan 2026
	R'000	R'000	R'000	
Residential buildings	3 186 144	3 152 634	-33 510	-1,1
- Dwelling houses	2 195 922	1 849 538	-346 384	-15,8
- Flats and townhouses	911 397	823 863	-87 534	-9,6
- Other residential buildings	78 825	479 233	400 408	508,0
Non-residential buildings	1 206 164	1 540 679	334 515	27,7
Additions and alterations	1 871 867	1 582 028	-289 839	-15,5
Total	6 264 175	6 275 341	11 166	0,2

A full release on *Selected building statistics of the private sector as reported by local government institutions* (statistical release P5041.1) is available on the Stats SA website: www.statssa.gov.za.

Electricity generated and available for distribution



Tampering with and bypassing electricity by some consumers have become a major problem in South Africa, costing the power utility billions each year. Consumers who are found to have tampered with or bypassed electricity are typically disconnected from the electricity supply. However, there are consumers who claim that they were disconnected illegally and did not tamper with or bypass electricity. In such cases, consumers who are dissatisfied with disconnection of electricity due to suspicion of tampering or bypassing, have a right

to lodge a formal dispute in writing. According to the Electrical Contractors Association of South Africa (ECASA), an association for electrical contractors in South Africa, consumers can also request a formal written inspection report from the power utility. ECASA further advises that consumers may obtain an independent assessment from a suitable registered electrical contractor to dispute the disconnection. Excessive tampering and bypassing can result in the power utility to bar or disconnect an area, and that may cause less electricity distributed to South African communities. According to Statistics South Africa (Stats SA), electricity distribution decreased by 3,5% year-on-year in January 2026. Presented in this article is a summary of the findings of *Electricity generated and available for distribution* (Statistical release P4141) for February 2026.



Electricity generation (production) decreased by 4,0% year-on-year in February 2026 (see Table E).

Table E – Key growth rates in the volume of electricity generated for February 2026

	Sep-25	Oct-25	Nov-25	Dec-25	Jan-26	Feb-26
Year-on-year % change, unadjusted	-5,7	-5,2	-7,3	-7,8	-6,1	-4,0
Month-on-month % change, seasonally adjusted	-1,3	-0,7	-1,2	-1,4	1,5	-0,2
3-month % change, seasonally adjusted ¹	-1,7	-2,7	-2,9	-3,2	-2,5	-1,5

¹ Percentage change between the previous 3 months and the 3 months ending in the month indicated. A full release on *Electricity generated and available for distribution* (Statistical release P4141) is available on the Stats SA website: www.statssa.gov.za.

Electricity distribution (consumption) decreased by 3,5% year-on-year in February 2026 (see Table F).

Table F – Key growth rates in the volume of electricity distributed for February 2026

	Sep-25	Oct-25	Nov-25	Dec-25	Jan-26	Feb-26
Year-on-year % change, unadjusted	-7,9	-7,2	-7,7	-6,9	-6,1	-3,5
Month-on-month % change, seasonally adjusted	-2,6	-0,6	-0,4	0,4	0,3	0,0
3-month % change, seasonally adjusted ¹	-2,5	-3,7	-3,7	-2,9	-1,3	0,2

¹ Percentage change between the previous 3 months and the 3 months ending in the month indicated. A full release on *Electricity generated and available for distribution* (Statistical release P4141) is available on the Stats SA website: www.statssa.gov.za.



Tertiary industries

Wholesale trade sales



Wholesale trade sales decreased by 3,8% in January 2026 compared with January 2025.

Wholesale trade is the resale (sale without transformation) of new and used goods and products to other wholesalers, retailers, agricultural, industrial, commercial, institutional and professional users either directly or through agents on a fee or contract basis. One of the wholesale trade types covered by the survey is wholesale trade in pharmaceuticals and toiletries, which includes beauty and skincare products. Beauty and skincare products are in demand across the world due to trends displayed by social media and advertised

products in the media. Beauty and skincare from international wholesalers are dominating in African retailers and spas, among others. According to the latest data from the Observatory of Economic Complexity (OEC), a data research platform focused on the geography and dynamics of economic activities, international products dominate South Africa's beauty and skincare sector and data show that these products account for approximately 90% of market sales. The OEC reported that in 2024, the leading exporters of beauty products in the world were China (\$12,3 billion), South Korea (\$8,8 billion) and the United States (\$6,41 billion). The same year, the main importers of beauty products were China, the USA and Hong Kong. In Africa, South Africa was the leading exporter of beauty products, followed by Cote d'Ivoire, Togo and Senegal. South Africa was also the leading importer of beauty products in Africa, followed by Morocco, Nigeria and Ghana. The wholesale trade sales data published by Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) revealed that wholesale trade sales decreased by 3,8% in January 2026 compared with January 2025. This article summarises the results of the *Wholesale trade sales* (Statistical release P6141.2) for January 2026.



Wholesale trade sales decreased by 3,8% in January 2026 compared with January 2025 (see Table G).

The main negative contributor was dealers in solid, liquid and gaseous fuels and related products (-17,6%, contributing -4,5 percentage points).

The main positive contributor was dealers in food, beverages and tobacco (10,6%, contributing 1,5 percentage points).

Wholesale trade sales increased by 0,2% in the three months ended January 2026 compared with the three months ended January 2025. The main positive contributor was dealers in food, beverages and tobacco (7,4%, contributing 1,2 percentage points).

Table G – Key growth rates in wholesale trade sales for January 2026

	Aug-25	Sep-25	Oct-25	Nov-25	Dec-25	Jan-26
Year-on-year % change unadjusted	2,5	2,8	-0,9	1,3	2,6	-3,8
Month-on-month % change, seasonally adjusted	0,0	-0,7	0,6	0,3	0,5	-1,3
3-month % change, seasonally adjusted ¹	1,4	1,2	1,1	0,4	0,6	0,4

¹ Percentage change between the previous 3 months and the 3 months ending in the month indicated. A full release on *Wholesale trade sales* (Statistical release 6141.2) is available on the Stats SA website: www.statssa.gov.za.

Retail trade sales



The South African retail landscape is continuously evolving to meet changing consumer needs.

Retailers are increasingly integrating technology to simplify the shopping experience and address real-life challenges, such as high food prices and limited access to affordable food. One example is Skubu, the world's first fully automated retail store developed by tech start-up company, Sonke. Skubu retail uses automated dispensing machines that allow customers to refill everyday essentials such as

rice, sugar, maize, cooking oil and cleaning products using their own containers. Unlike traditional retailers, the automated retail store reduces single-use plastic packaging and allows consumers to buy the exact quantities they need, making it both affordable and environmentally friendly. In addition, the store is equipped with Internet of Things (IoT) technology, which enables live sales tracking, automated stock replenishment alerts and real-time inventory monitoring. Although the concept was initially developed for low-income households in Diepsloot, it has broader potential. It could be scaled across the country to improve access to essential goods while also reducing plastic waste. Data published by Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) indicate that retailer sales grew by 4,2% year-on-year in January 2026, suggesting possible expansion in the sector. Presented in this article is a summary of *Retail trade sales* (statistical release P6242.1) for January 2026.



Retail trade sales increased by 4,2% year-on-year in January 2026 (see Table H).

The largest positive contributors to this increase were:

- retailers in textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods (9,9%, contributing 1,6 percentage points);
- all 'other' retailers (10,3%, contributing 1,2 percentage points); and
- general dealers (1,7%, contributing 0,7 of a percentage point).

Retail trade sales increased by 3,3% in the three months ended January 2026 compared with the three months ended January 2025. The largest positive contributors to this increase were:

- general dealers (2,7%, contributing 1,2 percentage points);
- all 'other' retailers (8,8%, contributing 0,9 of a percentage point); and
- retailers in textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods (3,1%, contributing 0,6 of a percentage point).

The only negative contributor was retailers in food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores (-4,1%, contributing -0,4 of a percentage point).

Table H – Key growth rates in retail trade sales for January 2026

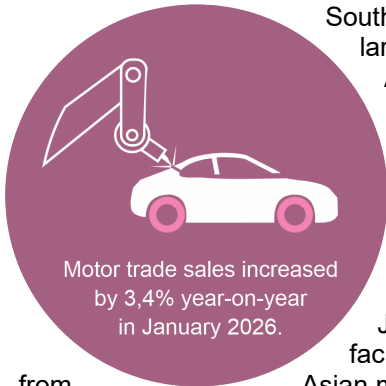
	Aug-25	Sep-25	Oct-25	Nov-25	Dec-25	Jan-26
Year-on-year % change, unadjusted	2,2	3,0	3,0	3,6	2,5	4,2
Month-on-month % change, seasonally adjusted	-1,4	0,0	1,0	0,7	-0,5	0,9
3-month % change, seasonally adjusted ^{1/}	1,0	1,0	0,4	0,7	0,8	1,3

^{1/} Percentage change between the previous 3 months and the 3 months ending in the month indicated.

A full release on *Retail trade sales* (Statistical release P6242.1) is available on the Stats SA website:

www.statssa.gov.za

Motor trade sales



South Africa lost its long-held position as Africa's largest vehicle producer to Morocco in 2025.

According to Business Insider Africa, Morocco led in manufacturing capacity, producing 1 million vehicles by early December 2025, compared with South Africa's 600 000 vehicles. This marked the end of the country's nearly century-long dominance, despite strong local car sales (new vehicle sales increased by 15,8% in January 2026). One of the key challenges facing the industry is intensifying competition

from Asian manufacturers, particularly from India and China. In addition, South Africa continues to grapple with rising electricity costs, policy delays, increasing production expenses, and tariff increases imposed by the United States. However, in January 2026 the Deputy Minister of Trade, Industry and Competition, Zuko Godlimpi, indicated that the government is considering several measures to boost the local vehicle manufacturing industry. These include potential adjustments to the ad valorem (luxury) tax on higher-value vehicles, as well as a review of tariffs on imported vehicles. He also noted that discussions are underway with Chinese car manufacturers to encourage further investment in local production facilities in South Africa. Presented in this article is a summary of the *Motor trade sales* (svitastistical release P6343.2) for January 2026.



Motor trade sales increased by 3,4% year-on-year in January 2026 (see Table C).

The positive contributors to this increase were:

- new vehicle sales (15,8%, contributing 4,2 percentage points); and
- used vehicle sales (3,4%, contributing 0,7 of a percentage point).

The main negative contributors were:

- sales of accessories (-3,3%, contributing -0,7 of a percentage point);
- workshop income (-10,8%, contributing -0,4 of a percentage point); and
- fuel sales (-1,6%, contributing -0,4 of a percentage point).

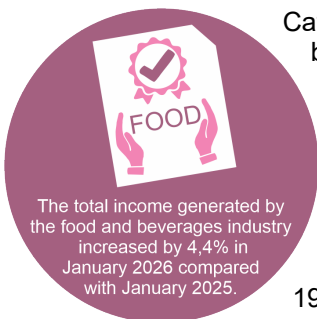
Motor trade sales increased by 3,3% in the three months ended January 2026 compared with the three months ended January 2025. The main positive contributor to this increase was new vehicle sales (15,8%, contributing 4,1 percentage points). The main negative contributor was fuel sales (-2,9%, contributing -0,8 of a percentage point).

Table C – Key growth rates in the volume of motor trade sales for January 2026

	Aug-25	Sep-25	Oct-25	Nov-25	Dec-25	Jan-26
Year-on-year % change, unadjusted	1,8	9,1	1,8	0,3	6,5	3,4
Month-on-month % change, seasonally adjusted	0,6	-0,6	0,7	0,7	0,0	-0,3
3-month % change, seasonally adjusted ¹	1,7	1,5	1,1	0,7	0,9	0,8

¹ Percentage change between the previous 3 months and the 3 months ending in the month indicated. A full release on *Motor trade sales* (Statistical release P6343.2) is available on the Stats SA website: www.statssa.gov.za.

Food and beverages



Catering services offer professional food and beverage services for various events, handling menu planning, food preparation and setup, among others. Some of the catering services are offered by private and corporate companies, restaurants and hawkers. In South Africa, catering services are regulated by the National Department of Health. According to the Foodstuffs, Cosmetics and Disinfectants Act, 1972 (Act No. 50 of 1972), all caterers such as restaurants, catering companies, supermarkets, food

stalls, food processing plants and food preparation establishments must obtain a Certificate of Acceptability (COA) from local authorities to operate. The COA ensures that food premises meet minimum hygiene and food

safety standards to protect public health and ensure food handling practices align with public health requirements. According to Statistics South Africa (Stats SA), total income generated by the food and beverages industry increased by 4,4% in January 2026. The only negative contributor to the 4,4% year-on-year increase was catering services (-1,8%, contributing -0,2% percentage points) in January 2026. This article presents a summary of *Food and beverages* (Statistical release P6420) for January 2026.



The total income generated by the food and beverages industry increased by 4,4% in January 2026 compared with January 2025 (see Table J).

Positive annual growth rates were recorded for 'other' income (21,9%) and food sales (7,1%).

Total income increased by 4,2% in the three months ended January 2026 compared with the three months ended January 2025.

The positive contributors to this increase were takeaway and fast-food outlets (6,5%, contributing 2,6 percentage points) and restaurants and coffee shops (4,5%, contributing 2,2 percentage points).

Table J – Year-on-year percentage change in food and beverages income at constant 2019 prices by type of income for January 2026

Type of income	Aug-25	Sep-25	Oct-25	Nov-25	Dec-25	Jan-26
Food sales	9,5	7,8	8,5	8,3	6,9	7,1
Bar sales	-14,0	-4,6	-5,3	-10,7	-22,8	-15,4
Other income	12,8	8,4	13,3	16,3	-3,8	21,9
Total	6,4	6,3	7,0	6,1	2,5	4,4

A full release on *Food and beverages* (Statistical release P6420) is available on the Stats SA website: www.statssa.gov.za.

Tourist accommodation



The tourist accommodation industry in South Africa continues to show signs of recovery, but recent data highlight the impact of seasonal patterns and shifting consumer behaviour. In January 2026, the occupancy rate for South African hotels declined to 51,6%, from 56,7% in December 2025. This decrease indicates that fewer tourists stayed in accommodation establishments during this period, which in turn resulted in lower total income for the industry, even though room prices may have remained

relatively high. A key reason for this decline is the seasonality of tourism in South Africa. December is traditionally the peak holiday season, driven by festive travel from both local and international tourists. During this time, accommodation establishments experience high demand and increased occupancy rates. However, January typically brings a post-holiday slowdown. As people return to work and school, travel activity decreases, leading to reduced demand for accommodation services. This seasonal dip is further influenced by the fact that January is widely regarded as a financially constrained month for many households. After the heavy spending associated with the festive season, individuals often cut back on expenses to recover financially, resulting in fewer trips, shorter stays, or a preference for more affordable accommodation options. This article summarises the results of the *Tourist accommodation* (Statistical release P6410) for January 2026.



Total income for the tourist accommodation industry decreased by 1,5% in January 2026 compared with January 2025 (see Table K).

Income from accommodation increased by 2,9% year-on-year in January 2026, the result of a 2,3% increase in the number of stay unit nights sold and a 0,6% increase in the average income per stay unit night sold.

In January 2026, the positive contributors to the 2,9% year-on-year increase in income from accommodation were:

- 'other' accommodation (15,9%, contributing 5,3 percentage points); and

- guest-houses and guest-farms (17,3%, contributing 0,7 of a percentage point).

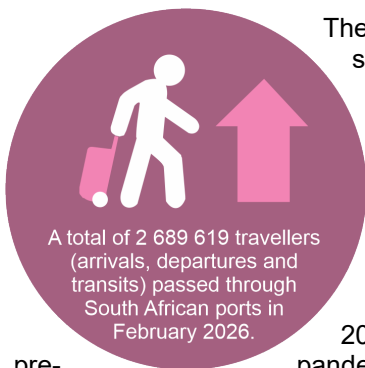
Table K – Year-on-year percentage change in tourist accommodation statistics for January 2026

	Aug-25	Sep-25	Oct-25	Nov-25	Dec-25	Jan-26
Stay units available	0,1	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,1	0,1
Stay unit nights sold	6,4	0,7	10,1	7,8	2,1	2,3
Average income per stay unit night sold	6,7	2,2	4,7	3,6	2,0	0,6
Income from accommodation	13,5	2,9	15,3	11,7	4,1	2,9
Total income¹	10,8	1,9	12,7	10,6	3,7	-1,5

¹Includes restaurant and bar sales and 'other' income.

A full release on *Tourist accommodation* (Statistical release P6410) is available on the Stats SA website: www.statssa.gov.za.

International tourism



pre-

highest number of international arrivals on record, according to the

The South African tourism industry reached a significant record-breaking milestone in 2025 by surpassing the number of international visitors recorded before the COVID-19 pandemic in 2019. According to the Minister of Tourism, Patricia de Lille, the country welcomed 10,5 million international visitors between January and December 2025, which is 17,6% higher than the 8,9 million international arrivals recorded between January and December 2024. This figure is also 2,6% higher than the pandemic figure of 10,2 million in 2019 and the

Department of Tourism. This growth can be attributed to improved air connectivity, stronger destination marketing and closer collaboration between the private and public sector. The performance also cements South Africa as a premium travel destination and demonstrates its growing role as a key driver of economic growth and job creation. In February 2026, a total of 2 689 619 travellers passed through South African ports of entry/exit, with international arrivals reaching 1 126 271 according to the latest *International tourism* statistical release published by Statistics South Africa (Stats SA). This article summarises the results of *International tourism* (statistical release P0350) for February 2026.



A total of 2 689 619 travellers (arrivals, departures and transits) passed through South African ports in February 2026 (see Table L).

These travellers were made up of 594 114 South African residents and 2 095 505 foreign travellers. A further breakdown of the figures for South African residents indicates that there were 296 413 arrivals, 297 220 departures and 481 travellers in transit. The corresponding volumes for foreign arrivals, departures and travellers in transit were 1 126 271, 935 359 and 33 875, respectively.

A comparison of movements in January 2026 and February 2026 shows that the volumes of arrivals, departures and transits decreased for both groups of travellers. For South African residents, the volume of arrivals decreased by 43,9% (from 528 664 in January 2026 to 296 413 in February 2026), departures decreased by 17,8% (from 361 592 in January 2026 to 297 220 in February 2026), and transits decreased by 19,0% (from 594 in January 2026 to 481 in February 2026). For foreign travellers, arrivals decreased by 21,8% (from 1 439 386 in January 2026 to 1 126 271 in February 2026), departures decreased by 7,1% (from 1 007 203 in January 2026 to 935 359 in February 2026) and transits decreased by 7,2% (from 36 492 in January 2026 to 33 875 in February 2026).

A comparison of movements in February 2025 and February 2026 indicates that the volumes of arrivals and departures decreased for South African residents but increased for foreign travellers, while that of transits increased

for both groups of travellers. For South African residents, the volume of arrivals decreased by 0,3% (from 297 388 in February 2025 to 296 413 in February 2026), departures decreased by 1,8% (from 302 781 in February 2025 to 297 220 in February 2026), whereas transits increased by 24,3% (from 387 in February 2025 to 481 in February 2026). For foreign travellers, arrivals increased by 9,9% (from 1 024 787 in February 2025 to 1 126 271 in February 2026), departures increased by 8,5% (from 861 915 in February 2025 to 935 359 in February 2026) and transits increased by 11,8% (from 30 293 in February 2025 to 33 875 in February 2026).

Mode of travel of travellers

In February 2026, road was the most common mode of travel used by 1 751 418 (65,1%) of the 2 689 619 travellers. The total number of air travellers was 895 939 (33,3%). Compared with air and road, a smaller number of travellers [42 262 (1,6%)] used sea transport into and out of South Africa. Information on arrivals of South African residents shows that 127 036 (42,9%) came by air, 154 445 (52,1%) came by road and 14 932 (5,0%) came by sea. For departures, 124 980 (42,0%) used air, 157 948 (53,1%) used road and 14 292 (4,8%) left by sea. All travellers in transit [481 (100,0%)] used air travel.

Visitors

In February 2026, 26 115 (2,3%) of foreign arrivals were classified as non-visitors, while 1 100 156 (97,7%) were classified as visitors. Visitors were categorised into three groups:

- i. Arrivals only – comprising visitors who entered the country in February 2026 but did not depart in February 2026 [477 316 (43,4%)].
- ii. Single trips – visitors who came to South Africa once in February 2026 and left in February 2026 [341 708 (31,1%)].
- iii. Multiple trips – visitors who came to and left South Africa more than once in February 2026 [281 132 (25,6%)].

Visitors were further grouped as same-day visitors and overnight visitors/tourists. In February 2026, there were 235 622 (21,4%) same-day visitors and 864 534 (78,6%) tourists. Between January 2026 and February 2026, the volume of same-day visitors decreased by 10,7% (from 263 888 in

January 2026 to 235 622 in February 2026) and that of tourists decreased by 23,7% (from 1 133 533 in January 2026 to 864 534 in February 2026). Between February 2025 and February 2026, the volume of same-day visitors decreased by 0,4% (from 236 553 in February 2025 to 235 622 in February 2026), whereas that of tourists increased by 13,1% (from 764 111 in February 2025 to 864 534 in February 2026).

Tourists

Sex and age distribution of tourists

Sex

In February 2026, there were more male [510 219 (59,0%)] than female [354 315 (41,0%)] tourists. Male tourists constituted the majority of tourists for all three regions: SADC countries [381 818 (61,2%)]; overseas countries [117 579 (52,7%)]; and 'other' African countries [10 339 (62,7%)]. Similarly, the largest portion of female tourists was from SADC countries [242 476 (38,8%)], followed by overseas countries [105 399 (47,3%)] and 'other' African countries [6 148 (37,3%)].

Age

The age distribution indicates that out of all tourists, 4,0% (34 386) were aged younger than 15; 8,9% (76 686) were aged between 15 and 24; 24,2% (209 507) were aged between 25 and 34; 28,3% (244 849) were aged between 35 and 44; 18,3% (158 479) were aged between 45 and 54; 9,6% (83 138) were aged between 55 and 64; and 6,6% (57 489) were aged 65 and older.

Purpose of visit of tourists

In February 2026, the majority of tourists [838 236 (97,0%)] were in South Africa for holiday compared with 21 399 (2,5%), 4 672 (0,5%) and 227 (less than 0,1%) who were in South Africa for business, study and medical treatment, respectively.

Mode of travel of tourists

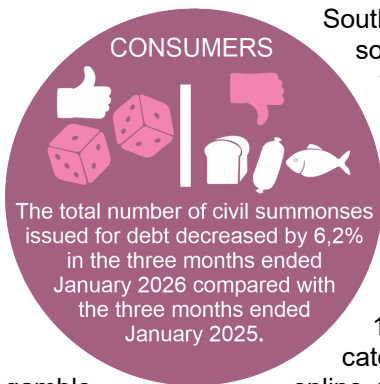
In February 2026, 210 922 (94,6%) overseas tourists arrived in the country by air, while 11 048 (5,0%) came by road and 1 008 (0,5%) came by sea. Tourists from the SADC countries, on the other hand, came predominantly

by road [572 656 (91,7%)], 51 141 (8,2%) came by air and 497 (0,1%) arrived by sea. The number of tourists who came into South Africa by air from 'other' African countries was 14 658 (88,9%), while 1 816 (11,0%) used road transport and 13 (0,1%) preferred sea transport. Most tourists who arrived by road came through Lebombo port (203 977) in Mpumalanga and Beit Bridge port (132 406) in Limpopo. The majority of tourists who came by air entered through OR Tambo International Airport (152 692) and Cape Town International Airport (121 612). Tourists who arrived by sea came through Cape Town Harbour (894) and Durban Harbour (624).

Table L – Number of South African residents and foreign travellers by travel direction, February 2025

Travel direction	February	January	February	% Change	% Change
	2025	2026	2026	Jan 2026 – Feb 2026	Feb 2025 – Feb 2026
Total	2 517 551	3 373 931	2 689 619	-20,3	6,8
South African residents	600 556	890 850	594 114	-33,3	-1,1
Arrivals	297 388	528 664	296 413	-43,9	-0,3
Departures	302 781	361 592	297 220	-17,8	-1,8
Transits	387	594	481	-19,0	24,3
Foreign travellers	1 916 995	2 483 081	2 095 505	-15,6	9,3
Arrivals	1 024 787	1 439 386	1 126 271	-21,8	9,9
Departures	861 915	1 007 203	935 359	-7,1	8,5
Transits	30 293	36 492	33 875	-7,2	11,8

Statistics of civil cases for debt



South African consumers are spending less on some household essentials and redirecting the funds towards online gambling to try and cope with expenses and manage debt. This is according to a 2025 survey conducted by market research company, Trade Intelligence. The survey was based on a list of 10 categories where 700 respondents had to choose where their money would have been spent. Out of the 10 categories, grocery spend was the leading category where respondents redirected funds to

gamble online, followed by the fast food and takeaway category. Nearly two in every three respondents said that the reason they gamble online is to win money in the hope of covering everyday expenses, and not for excitement or entertainment. However, almost half of the respondents admitted that they lose more money than they win, and 25% said they do not keep track of how much they spend, win or lose. Data from the National Gambling Board (NGB) also show the extent of the gambling problem in the country. Between 2024 and 2025, about R1,5 trillion was wagered in South Africa's gambling industry, with many running the risk of becoming addicted. Gambling addiction can worsen an individual's financial situation, leading to unpaid bills and mounting debts, which may ultimately result in civil cases. Presented in this article is a summary of the results of *Statistics of civil cases for debt* (statistical release P0041) for January 2026.

The number of civil summonses issued for debt



The total number of civil summonses issued for debt decreased by 6,2% in the three months ended January 2026 compared with the three months ended January 2025 (see Table M).

The largest contributors to the 6,2% decrease in civil summonses issued were:

- money lent (contributing -4,5 percentage points); and
- services (contributing -2,9 percentage points).

The number of civil judgements recorded for debt

The total number of civil judgements recorded for debt decreased by 6,2% in the three months ended January 2026 compared with the three months ended January 2025. The largest negative contributors to the 6,2% decrease were civil judgements relating to:

- money lent (contributing -4,6 percentage points);
- rent (contributing -1,9 percentage points); and
- 'other' debts (contributing -1,6 percentage points).

The value of civil judgements recorded for debt

The total value of civil judgements recorded for debt decreased by 6,2% in the three months ended January 2026 compared with the three months ended January 2025. The largest negative contributors were:

- rent (contributing -4,5 percentage points); and
- money lent (contributing -3,3 percentage points).

Promissory notes (contributing 2,1 percentage points) and services (contributing 2,0 percentage points) were the only positive contributors.

In January 2026, 7 075 civil judgements for debt amounting to R217,8 million were recorded. The largest contributors to the total value of judgements were:

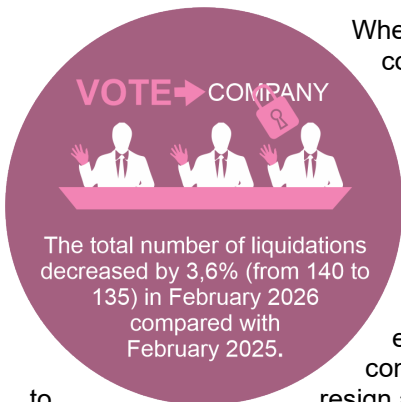
- services (R55,6 million or 25,5%);
- money lent (R54,3 million or 24,9%);
- 'other' debts (R49,1 million or 22,6%); and
- promissory notes (R31,1 million or 14,3%).

Table M – Key figures for January 2026

Actual estimates	Jan 2026	% change between Jan 2024 and Jan 2026	% change between Nov–Jan 2025 and Nov–Jan 2026
Number of civil summonses issued for debt	21 233	-8,1	-6,2
Number of civil judgements recorded for debt	7 075	-10,1	-6,2
Value of civil judgements recorded for debt (R million)	217,8	-4,5	-6,2

A full release on *Statistics of civil cases for debt* (Statistical release P0041) is available on the Stats SA website: www.statssa.gov.za.

Statistics of liquidations



When directors of a company or close corporation, by own choice, resolve to wind up its affairs through a special resolution with the Companies and Intellectual Property Commission (CIPC), there are legal consequences (the result of an action that directly or indirectly affects legal rights or obligations). According to the CIPC, one of the legal consequences is that directors cannot resign or act during liquidation to ensure neutral management and avoid conflict of interest. However, if directors happen

to resign and it is established that they are guilty, they will be held liable. Some directors of companies are proactively avoiding liabilities and consider voluntary liquidation rather than compulsory liquidation to close dormant entities. Data from Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) show that the number of liquidations recorded in February 2026 was 135, of which 127 liquidations were voluntary while 8 were compulsory. This article summarises the results of the *Statistics of liquidations* (Statistical release P0043.1) for February 2026.



The total number of liquidations decreased by 3,6% (from 140 to 135) in February 2026 compared with February 2025 (see Table N).

Liquidations of close corporations decreased by 9 cases, while liquidations of companies increased by 4 cases during this period.

The total number of liquidations decreased by 1,5% (from 336 to 331) in the three months ended February 2026 compared with the three months ended February 2025.

The total number of liquidations in the first two months of 2026 decreased by 6,1% (from 246 to 231) compared with the first two months of 2025.

Table N – Key growth rates in the number of liquidations for February 2026

Number of liquidations Feb 2026	% change between Feb 2025 and Feb 2026	% change between Dec 2024 – Feb 2025 and Dec 2025 – Feb 2026	% change between Jan – Feb 2025 and Jan – Feb 2026
135	-3,6	-1,5	-6,1

A full release on *Statistics of liquidations* (Statistical release P0043.1) is available on the Stats SA website: www.statssa.gov.za.

Land transport



The volume of goods transported (payload) decreased by 2,7% in January 2026 compared with January 2025.

Countries around the world have started to phase out cars, taxis, trucks, buses, and other vehicles that emit carbon dioxide in order to reduce emissions by 45% by 2030 and reach net zero by 2050. To help reduce emissions, South Africa’s first electric minibus taxi will be launched in October 2026 in Cape Town’s Century City. The 15-seater vehicle can travel more than 200 kilometres on a single charge and takes about 75 minutes to fully recharge using a fast charger. The electric taxi

can also be charged overnight over a 10-hour period. Data for land transport published by Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) in January 2026 indicate that the number of passenger journeys decreased by 2,0%. The addition of electric minibus taxis in the transport sector will complement the current fleet of taxis and might assist in increasing passenger journeys. This article summarises the results of *Land transport* (Statistical release P7162) for January 2026.



The volume of goods transported (payload) decreased by 2,7% in January 2026 compared with January 2025 (see Table O).

The corresponding income increased by 3,0% over the same period.

Table O – Year-on-year percentage change in freight transportation for January 2026

	Aug-25	Sep-25	Oct-25	Nov-25	Dec-25	Jan-26
Freight payload	0,0	3,8	3,0	-1,7	0,4	-2,7
Freight income	0,5	6,4	6,6	3,4	5,0	3,0

A full release on *Land transport* (Statistical release P7162) is available on the Stats SA website: www.statssa.gov.za.

Passenger transportation

The number of passenger journeys decreased by 2,0% in January 2026 compared with January 2025. The corresponding income increased by 5,8% over the same period.

Table P – Year-on-year percentage change in passenger transportation for January 2026

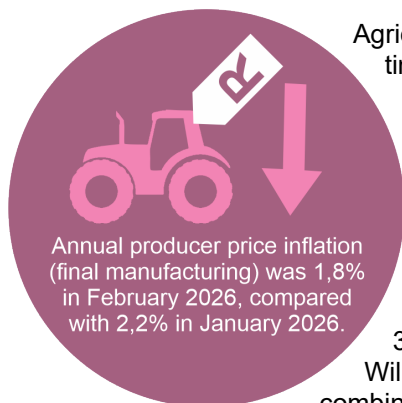
	Aug-25	Sep-25	Oct-25	Nov-25	Dec-25	Jan-26
Passenger payload	9,1	9,1	3,8	4,0	4,3	-2,0
Passenger income	11,1	8,1	15,6	17,5	12,0	5,8

A full release on *Land transport* (Statistical release P7162) is available on the Stats SA website: www.statssa.gov.za.



Prices

Producer price index (PPI)



Agricultural machinery sales dropped for the first time in 14 months due to uncertainty in the South African farming sector. According to the March 2026 figures published by the South African Agricultural Machinery Association (SAAMA), tractor sales fell by nearly 8% year-on-year to 618 units in March 2026, down from 671 units sold in March 2025. Combine harvester sales also declined by 22%, dropping to 29 units from 37 units in March 2025. Chairman of SAAMA, Willie Human, has attributed the slowdown to a combination of external pressures weighing on

farmers' investment decisions. "Although market sentiment remains positive, several external factors, such as the value of the rand and the current diesel and fertilizer prices, are currently holding farmers back from buying capital equipment," Willie Human stated. Among these factors, diesel prices have an immediate and direct impact on farming because agricultural machinery, which relies on diesel, is used extensively for land preparation, planting and harvesting, among others. When the price of diesel is high, it leads to higher input costs for farmers and significantly impacts their profit, or may result in less investment in machinery, leading to a decline in sales. In February 2026, annual producer price inflation was 1,8%, the highest in seven months since July 2025 when it was 1,5%. This article summarises the results of the *Producer price index (PPI)* (Statistical release P0142.1) for February 2026.



Annual producer price inflation (final manufacturing) was 1,8% in February 2026, compared with 2,2% in January 2026 (see Table Q).

The producer price index (PPI) remained unchanged month-on-month in February 2026.

The main positive contributors to the headline PPI annual inflation rate were food products, beverages and tobacco products (2,3%, contributing 0,7 of a percentage point) and furniture and other manufacturing (12,1%, contributing 0,5 of a percentage point).

Intermediate manufactured goods

The annual percentage change in the PPI for intermediate manufactured goods was 7,8% in February 2026, compared with 10,5% in January 2026. The index decreased by 0,7% month-on-month.

The main positive contributors to the annual rate were basic and fabricated metals (21,7%, contributing 10,2 percentage points) and sawmilling and wood (8,4%, contributing 0,8 of a percentage point).

The main negative contributor to the monthly rate was chemicals, rubber and plastic products (-1,9%, contributing -0,5 of a percentage point).

Electricity and water

The annual percentage change in the PPI for electricity and water was 15,4% in February 2026, compared with 16,7% in January 2026.

The index increased by 0,3% month-on-month. The contributors to the annual rate were electricity (15,9%, contributing 13,1 percentage points) and water (11,6%, contributing 2 percentage points).

The contributor to the monthly rate was electricity (0,3%, contributing 0,3 of a percentage point).

Mining

The annual percentage change in the PPI for mining was 30,3% in February 2026, compared with 28,4% in January 2026. The index increased by 3,5% month-on-month. The positive contributors to the annual rate were non-

ferrous metal ores (57,1%, contributing 24,9 percentage points) and gold and other metal ores (18,8%, contributing 5,3 percentage points).

The main positive contributors to the monthly rate were non-ferrous metal ores (6,3% and contributing 3,2 percentage points) and coal and gas (3,7% and contributing 0,6 of a percentage point).

Agriculture, forestry and fishing

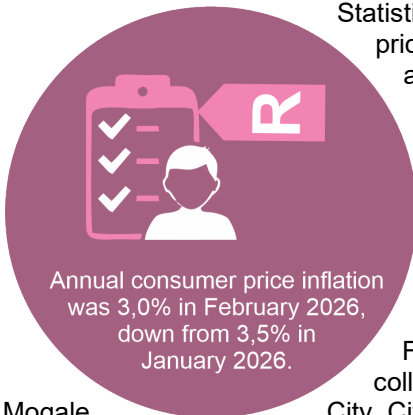
The annual percentage change in the PPI for agriculture, forestry and fishing was -5,1% in February 2026, compared with -5,8% in January 2026. The index decreased by 1,6% month-on-month. The negative contributor to the annual rate was agriculture (-7,1%, contributing -6,2 percentage points). The negative contributor to the monthly rate was agriculture (-2,1%, contributing -1,8 percentage points).

Table Q – Key PPI figures for February 2026

Product	Weight	Index (Dec 2023=100)			% change	
		Feb 2025	Jan 2026	Feb 2026	Feb 2026 vs. Jan 2026	Feb 2026 vs. Feb 2025
Final manufactured goods	100,00	101,6	103,4	103,4	0,0	1,8
Intermediate manufactured goods	100,00	110,1	119,5	118,7	-0,7	7,8
Electricity and water	100,00	112,4	129,3	129,7	0,3	15,4
Mining	100,00	103,3	130,1	134,6	3,5	30,3
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	100,00	101,1	97,5	95,9	-1,6	-5,1

A full release on the *Producer price index* (Statistical release P0142.1) is available on the website: www.statssa.gov.za.

Consumer price index (CPI)



Annual consumer price inflation was 3,0% in February 2026, down from 3,5% in January 2026.

Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) collects the prices of a wide range of consumer goods and services to compile the country's monthly consumer price index (CPI). Prices are the main part of the CPI to track the cost of living and directly measure inflation (price increases) or deflation (price decreases). The prices are collected from all provinces, covering all large urban areas and at least one smaller urban and a rural area.

Mogale

City, City of Johannesburg and Ekurhuleni, while in Limpopo, prices are collected in Polokwane and Greater Tzaneen. In February 2026, Stats SA reported that annual consumer price inflation decreased to 3,0% from 3,5% in January 2026, indicating a decrease in prices of goods and services. Presented in this article is a summary of the *Consumer price index* (Statistical release P0141) for February 2026.

Headline consumer price index (CPI) for all urban areas



Annual consumer price inflation was 3,0% in February 2026, down from 3,5% in January 2026. (see Table R).

The CPI increased by 0,4% month-on-month in February 2026.

The main contributors to the 3,0% annual inflation rate were:

- housing and utilities (4,8%, contributing 1,1 percentage points);
- food and non-alcoholic beverages (3,7%, contributing 0,7 of a percentage point); and
- insurance and financial services (4,7%, contributing 0,5 of a percentage point).

In February 2026, the annual inflation rate for:

- goods was 1,9%, down from 2,7% in January 2026; and
- services was 3,8%, down from 4,2% in January 2026.

Table R – Consumer price index: Index numbers and year-on-year rates
Base year: Dec 2024 = 100

Year	Index /rate	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Average ¹
2022	Index	86,3	86,8	87,7	88,2	88,8	89,8	91,1	91,3	91,4	91,7	92,0	92,3	89,8
	Rate	5,7	5,7	5,9	5,9	6,5	7,4	7,8	7,6	7,5	7,6	7,4	7,2	6,9
2023	Index	92,2	92,9	93,9	94,2	94,4	94,6	95,4	95,7	96,3	97,2	97,1	97,1	95,1
	Rate	6,9	7,0	7,1	6,8	6,3	5,4	4,7	4,8	5,4	5,9	5,5	5,1	6,0
2024	Index	97,2	98,1	98,9	99,1	99,3	99,4	99,8	99,9	100,0	99,9	99,9	100,0	99,3
	Rate	5,3	5,6	5,3	5,2	5,2	5,1	4,6	4,4	3,8	2,8	2,9	3,0	4,4
2025	Index	100,3	101,2	101,6	101,9	102,1	102,4	103,3	103,2	103,4	103,5	103,4	103,6	102,5
	Rate	3,2	3,2	2,7	2,8	2,8	3,0	3,5	3,3	3,4	3,6	3,5	3,6	3,2
2026	Index	103,8	104,2											
	Rate	3,5	3,0											

^{1/} Annual average. A full release on the *Consumer price index* (Statistical release P0141) is available on the Stats SA website: www.statssa.gov.za.



Glossary



Primary industries

Gigawatt-hour (gWh): one gigawatt-hour of electricity is equal to one million kilowatt-hours. A kilowatt-hour is the basic unit of electrical energy equal to one kilowatt of power supplied to or taken from an electric circuit steadily for one hour. One kilowatt-hour equals one thousand watt-hours.

Index of physical volume of manufacturing production: also known as a production index, is a statistical measure of the change in the volume of production. The production index of a major group is the ratio between the volume of production of a major group in a given period and the volume of production of the same major group in the base period.

Index of physical volume of mining production: a statistical measure of the change in the volume of production. The production index of a mineral group is the ratio between the volume of production of a mineral group in a given period and the volume of production of the same mineral group in the base period.

Index of the physical volume of electricity production: a statistical measure of the change in the volume of production of electricity in a given period and the volume of production of electricity in the base period.

Industry: a group of establishments engaged in the same or similar kinds of economic activity.

PGMs – Platinum group metals: include platinum; iridium; osmium, palladium; rhodium; ruthenium and osmium.

Sales: total value of sales and transfers-out of goods mined by the mining establishments and the amounts received for installation, erection or assembly or other services.



Secondary industries

Additions and alterations: extensions to existing buildings as well as internal and external alterations of existing buildings.

Blocks of flats: a structure, usually multi-storey, consisting of a number of dwellings sharing the same residential address, and usually sharing a common entrance, foyer or staircase.

Dwelling houses: a free-standing, complete structure on a separate stand or a self-contained dwelling-unit, e.g. granny flat, on the same premises as the existing residence. Out-buildings and garages are included.

Other residential buildings: include institutions for the disabled, boarding houses, old age homes, hostels, hotels, motels, guest houses, holiday chalets, bed and breakfast accommodation, entertainment centres and casinos.

Residential buildings: dwelling houses, flats, townhouses and other residential buildings.



Tertiary industries

Acknowledgements of debt: a statement by a person/debtor in which he admits that he owes money to an individual or a company or a bank.

Acting household head: any member of the household acting on behalf of the head of the household.

Average income per stay unit night sold: average rate per stay unit (i.e. rate per room in a hotel or powered site in a caravan park) is calculated by dividing the total income from accommodation by the number of stay unit nights sold in the survey period.

Catering services: enterprises involved in the sale and supply of meals and drinks prepared on the premises on a contract basis and brought to other premises chosen by the person ordering them, to be served for immediate consumption to guests or customers. Include bars, taverns, other drinking places, ice-cream parlours, etc.

Civil judgements: decisions taken in a civil matter or a dispute between two people or parties.

Civil summonses: notices to appear before the court of law where a dispute between two parties or people has to be heard, i.e. not for criminal offence.

Day trip: a trip outside of the respondent's usual environment, where they leave and return within the same day (i.e. do not stay overnight).

Domestic tourism: a trip within the boundaries of South Africa but outside of the respondent's usual environment.

Note: The following categories are excluded from the definition of domestic visitor:

- persons travelling to another place within the country with the intention of setting up their usual residence in that place.

- Persons who travel to another place within the country and are remunerated from within the place visited.
- Persons who travel regularly or frequently between neighbouring localities as defined by the 'usual environment' rule.

Dwelling unit: structure or part of a structure or group structures occupied or meant to be occupied by one or more than one household.

Enterprise: a legal entity or a combination of legal units that includes and directly controls all functions necessary to carry out its sales activities.

Expenditure: the total consumption expenditure made by a visitor or on behalf of a visitor during his/her trip and stay at a destination.

Foreign traveller: a person who resides outside South Africa and visits the country temporarily.

Household: a group of persons who live together and provide themselves jointly with food and/or other essentials for living, or a single person who lives alone.

Household head: the main decision-maker, or the person who owns or rents the dwelling, or the person who is the main breadwinner.

Income from accommodation industry: income from amounts charged for rooms or equivalent. Other income is excluded (e.g. income from meals).

Income from bar sales: refers to income from liquor sales.

Income from food sales: refers to income from the sale of meals and non-alcoholic drinks.

Income from restaurant and bar sales: income from meals, banqueting and beverages and tobacco sales.

Insolvency: refers to an individual or partnership which is unable to pay its debt and is placed under final sequestration. The number of insolvencies does not refer to the number of persons involved, as a partnership which is unable to pay its debt is regarded as one insolvency, irrespective of the number of partners.

Liquidation: refers to the winding-up of the affairs of a company or close corporation when liabilities exceed assets and it can be resolved by voluntary action or by an order of the court.

Main purpose of trip: this is the purpose in the absence of which the trip would not have been made.

Microdata: data gathered on a small scale, such as data on an individual.

'Other' African countries: refers to all non SADC African countries.

Other income: includes all income not earned from food sales or bar sales.

Other SADC: refers to the thirteen countries, excluding South Africa, that belong to the Southern African Development Community.

Professional services: refer to medical doctors, dentists, advocates, attorney, auditors, accountants, architects, engineers, hospital services etc.

Promissory notes: written undertaking, signed by a person or party, to pay money to another person or to be the bearer of such a note on a specific date or on demand.

Restaurants and coffee shops: enterprises involved in the sale and provision of meals and drinks, ordered from a menu, prepared on the premises for immediate consumption and with provided seating.

Retailer: a retailer is an enterprise deriving more than 50% of its turnover from sales of goods to the general public for household use.

Retail trade: includes the resale (sale without transformation) of new and used goods and products to the general public for household use.

Stay unit: unit accommodation available to be charged out to guests, for example, a powered site in a caravan park or a room in a hotel.

Stay unit night sold: total number of stay units occupied on each night during the survey period.

Takeaway and fast-food outlets: enterprises involved in the sale and provision of meals and drinks, ordered from a menu, prepared on the premises for takeaway purposes in a packaged format, at a stand or in a location, with or without provided seating.

Total income: includes income from food sales, income from bar sales and other income.

Tourism: comprises the activities of persons travelling to, and staying in places outside their usual environment, for not more than one consecutive year, for leisure, business and other purposes not related to the exercise of an activity remunerated from within the place visited.

Tourist: a visitor who stays at least one night in the place visited.

Tourist accommodation: any facility that regularly (or occasionally) provides 'paid' or 'unpaid' overnight accommodation for tourists.

Traveller: any person on a trip between two or more countries or between two or more localities within his/her country of residence.

Voluntary liquidation: takes place when a company or close corporation, by own choice, resolves to wind-up its affairs.

Wholesale trade: includes the resale (sale without transformation) of new and used goods and products to other wholesalers, retailers, agricultural, industrial, commercial, institutional and professional users either directly or through agents on a fee or contract basis.



Prices

Annual percentage change: change in the index of the relevant month of the current year compared with the index of the same month in the previous year expressed as a percentage.

Consumer price index (CPI): an index that measures the price of a fixed basket of consumer goods and services.

Inflation rate: annual percentage change in the CPI for all items of the relevant month of the current year compared with the CPI for all items of the same month in the previous year expressed as a percentage.

Monthly percentage change: change in the index of the relevant month compared to the index of the previous month expressed as a percentage.

Year-on-year: a term used frequently in investment research and other reports to mean 'compared with the same period in the previous fiscal year'.

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