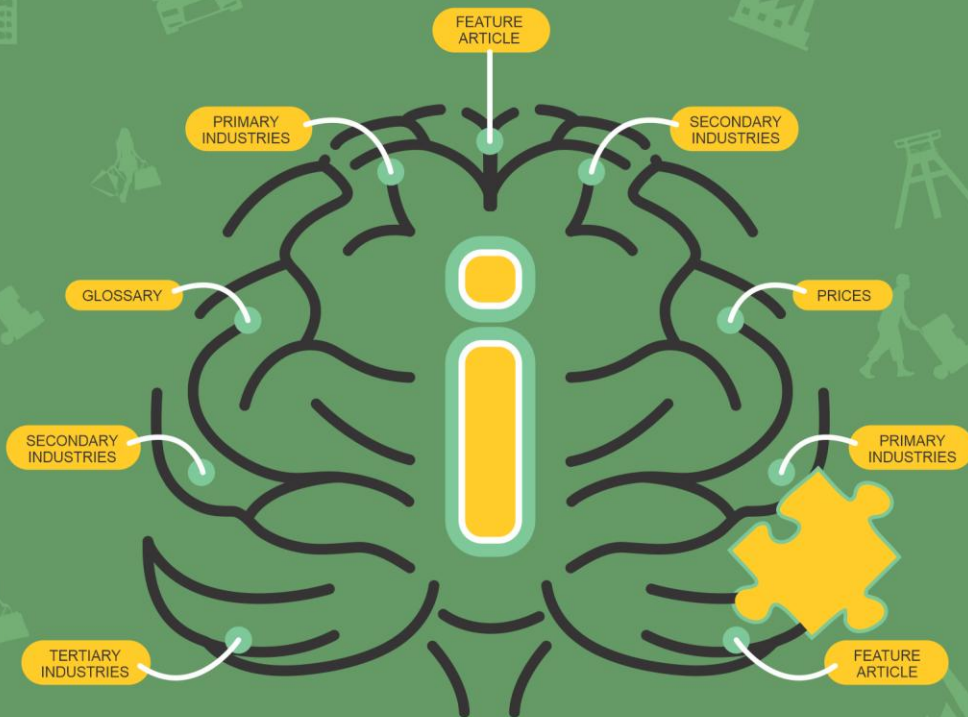


# Mbalo Brief

the missing piece of the puzzle

June 2026



Issue 05/2026

IMPROVING LIVES THROUGH DATA ECOSYSTEMS



stats sa

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## Editor's Comment



Adolescents and young people represent a growing share of people living with human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) worldwide. According to the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) 2025 estimates, about 1 million older adolescents between the ages of 15 and 19 were living with HIV worldwide. UNAIDS 2025 estimates indicate that Eastern and Southern Africa was the region most affected by HIV in

the world with the highest number of young girls between the age of 15 and 19 (86%) newly infected with HIV, while young boys aged between 15 and 19 accounted for 14%, the lowest proportion recorded in the world. In order to minimise the infection among adolescents, on 05 June 2026 President Cyril Ramaphosa and Health Minister Dr Aaron Motsoaledi launched the rollout of Lenacapavir, a long-acting antiretroviral drug injectable for HIV prevention, at Secunda in Mpumalanga. Lenacapavir is delivered via injection only twice a year, offering six months of continuous protection per dose. Those two injections a year offer protection from HIV, a contrast to the daily pills or bi-monthly injections that have been used so far. Lenacapavir rollout targets adolescent girls, young women and other vulnerable populations at 360 healthcare facilities across six provinces and 24 high-burden districts in South Africa. However, it is important to note that lenacapavir is not intended as treatment for people already living with HIV, but a preventative intervention for HIV-negative individuals.

This month's feature article is based on the *General Household Survey* (GHS) 2025, (Statistical release P0318) published by Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) on 26 May 2026. Also, do not miss our monthly crossword puzzle and April 2026 solutions. Articles in this issue draw on results of industry surveys conducted for March to April 2026.

Enjoy the read!





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### Across

3. *God Save the Queen* was once the national anthem of South Africa. [True or False]
6. .... was the historic headquarters and administrative complex for the City of Tshwane (Pretoria) before it was renamed Tshwane House.
7. Which province had the highest prevalence of children living with either parent in South Africa? [Read feature article for clue]
8. What is the name of a long-acting antiretroviral drug injectable for HIV prevention? [Read Editor's comment for clue]

### Down

1. Who said I came, I saw, I conquered?
2. How many countries are jointly hosting the 2026 FIFA World Cup?
4. In which month is the annual international World Population Day observed?
5. How many colours are in the South African flag?

## Solutions for April 2026

### Across

3. Eastern Cape
4. Stapes
5. Vow
7. Civil
10. Andesvirus

### Down

1. Part
2. Meteorologist
6. White
8. True
9. Nine



## Feature article

# Feature article on General Household Survey, 2025

## 1. Introduction

The South African constitution mandates local municipalities to act as the primary providers of essential basic services such as water and sanitation, electricity reticulation and refuse removal among others. The general household survey (GHS) plays a vital role in tracking household access to basic services, housing, education and health, social development, food security and agriculture to ensure the fundamental socio-economic rights of citizens are met. The GHS as a tracking tool, helps government to identify communities that lack services or are underserved and ensure that resources are allocated fairly based on needs. The GHS is a comprehensive annual survey conducted by Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) since 2002.

This feature article is based on *General Household Survey (GHS) 2025*, (Statistical release P0318) published by Stats SA on 26 May 2026. The overall objective of this report is to assess the progress of development and identify persistent service delivery gaps in South Africa. This article explores the household composition, education status, children's living arrangements and access to water, among others.

## 2. Household estimates

Household estimates were calculated using the 2017 series Mid-year population estimates (MYPE) for 2025 and the United Nations headship ratio methodology.

The model estimates that the number of households increased from 11,2 million in 2002 to 20,1 million in 2025, reflecting sustained demographic and socio-economic change over the period. Gauteng (from 2,785 million in 2002 to 6,193 million in 2025) accounted for the largest share of households, followed by KwaZulu-Natal (from 2,070 million in 2002 to 3,483 million in



2025), Western Cape (from 1,217 million in 2002 to 2,256 million in 2025), Limpopo (from 1,121 million in 2002 to 1,870 million in 2025), and Eastern Cape (from 1,506 million in 2002 to 1,799 million in 2025). Northern Cape recorded the lowest number of households from 247 000 in 2002 to 397 000 in 2025.

### 3. Household composition and living arrangements

Most individuals rely on families and households for their physical, social and economic well-being and survival; hence, most people consider families and households as their most important social institutions and social reference groups.

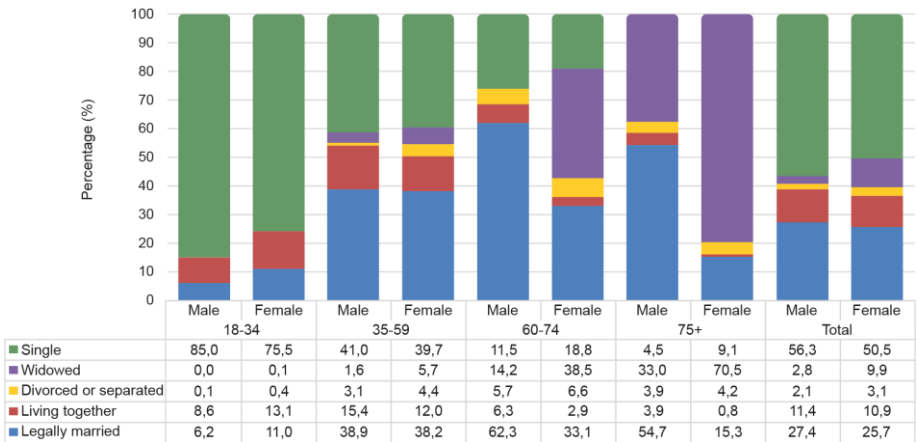
Stats SA defines households as all individuals who live together under the same roof or in the same yard, and who share resources such as food or money to keep the household functioning. The definition is more restrictive than the concept of a family, which usually refers to individuals who are related by blood and who may live far apart. Although household members are usually related, blood relations are not a prerequisite for the formation of a household. The living arrangements of individuals are generally defined in terms of marital status and the composition of households.

#### 3.1 Percentage distribution of individuals aged 18 years and older by marital status, 2025

In 2025, a marginally higher proportion of males than females aged 18 years and older were classified as single (56,3% compared with 50,5%). Conversely, females in this age group were more likely than males to be widowed (9,9% compared with 2,8%) or divorced/separated (3,1% compared with 2,1%).

Among individuals aged 18–34 years, marriage and cohabitation were more prevalent among females (11,0% were legally married and 13,1% were living together like husband and wife) than males (6,2% were legally married and 8,6% were living together like husband and wife). However, this pattern reverses in older age groups, particularly among individuals aged 60 years and older. Marriage was substantially more common among males than females in both the 60–74 age group (62,3% compared with 33,1%) and the 75 years and older age group (54,7% compared with 15,3%). In contrast, a large majority of women aged 75 years and older (79,6%) were either single or widowed, compared with 37,5% of men in the same age group.

**Figure 1: Percentage distribution of individuals aged 18 years and older by marital status, 2025**



### 3.2 Percentage distribution of household size by province and rural/urban status, 2025

In 2025, more than one-quarter (26,6%) of South African households consisted of a single person. Single-person households were most common in Gauteng (29,2%) and least common in Western Cape (17,6%). By contrast, households that comprised six people or more were most common in KwaZulu-Natal (20,0%) and Northern Cape (17,2%). Larger households with more than six members were more common in rural areas (19,0%) than urban areas (10,1%).

### 3.3 Percentage distribution of female-headed households by province and urban/rural status, 2025

In 2025, more than four-tenths (42,6%) of households in South Africa were headed by females. There were 40,4% of urban and 47,6% of rural households headed by females. Female-headed households were most common in KwaZulu-Natal (48,4%), followed by Eastern Cape (48,1%), Northern Cape (47,3%) and Limpopo (47,1%). Female-headed households were least common in Gauteng (36,2%).

### 3.4 Percentage distribution of children’s living arrangements by province and urban/rural status, 2025

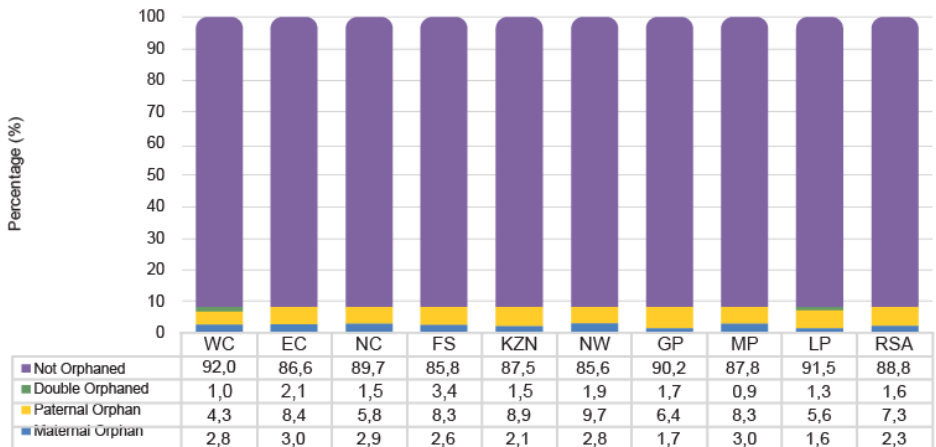
In 2025, 18,5% of all children were not living with either of their biological parents, while 31,4% lived with both parents. A substantially higher proportion of children lived exclusively with their mothers (45,9%) compared with those living exclusively with their fathers (4,2%). The prevalence of children not living with either parent was highest in Eastern Cape (34,0%), followed by KwaZulu-Natal (23,6%) and Free State (19,8%), and lowest in Western Cape (9,3%) and Gauteng (9,7%).

In urban areas, the largest proportions of children who lived with both parents (40,2%) while 41,9% lived with their mothers only. In contrast, in rural areas more than half of all children (51,4%) lived with their mothers only, while fewer than one in five (19,3%) lived with both parents.

### 3.5 Percentage distribution of children’s orphanhood status by province, 2025

In 2025, about 11,2% of children in South Africa could be classified as orphans who lost either one or both of their parents. While 1,6% had lost both parents, 2,3% had lost their mothers and 7,3% had lost their fathers. The percentage of orphaned children was the highest in North West (14,4%) and Free State (14,2%), and lowest in Western Cape (8,1%).

**Figure 2: Percentage distribution of children’s orphanhood status by province, 2025**



## 4. Education

The systematic monitoring of core education and education-related indicators on an annual basis enables detailed analysis of the changing circumstances of learners and the broader education system. This section provides an overview of key dimensions of the education profile of South Africans over the period 2002 to 2025. In particular, the analysis highlights major patterns and trends in early childhood attendance among children aged 0–4 years; participation in schooling and higher education; overall educational attendance rates; and the educational attainment of individuals aged 20 years and older.

### 4.1 Educational profile of learners aged 0–4 years

Nationally, over half (58,0%) of children aged 0–4 stayed home with a parent or guardian, or with another adult. The figure was most pronounced in KwaZulu-Natal (70,1%) and Northern Cape (68,7%) had the highest proportion of children aged 0–4 stayed home with a parent or guardian, or with another adult. Only 36,3% of children in this age group attended formal early childhood development (ECD) facilities, nationally. Attendance of ECD facilities was most common in Free State (48,5%), Gauteng (41,5%), Western Cape (39,7%), and Limpopo (39,7%), and least common in Northern Cape (23,0%) and KwaZulu-Natal (26,5%).

### 4.2 General attendance of individuals aged five years and older at educational institutions and by province

Almost one-third (30,7%) of individuals aged five years and older attended some kind of educational institution. Nationally, 87,7% of these individuals attended primary or secondary schools, while a further 5,4% attended tertiary institutions. Only 2,5% of individuals attended Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges.

The percentage of individuals aged five years and older who attended school was the highest in Eastern Cape (92,3%), Mpumalanga (91,3%), Limpopo (91,2%) and KwaZulu-Natal (91,1%) and lowest in Gauteng (78,4%). Attendance at higher education institutions was most common in Gauteng (9,7%) and Western Cape (8,4%) and least common in Mpumalanga (2,9%) and Eastern Cape (1,9%).

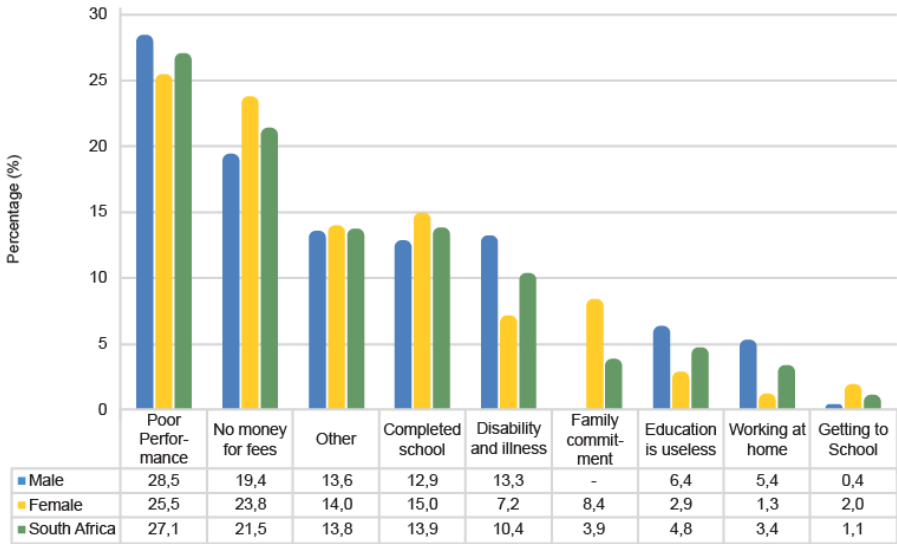
### **4.3 Percentage distribution of individuals aged 7–24 years who attended educational institutions by province, 2002 and 2025**

Nationally, the percentage of persons aged 7–24 years who attended educational institutions increased from 73,1% in 2002 to 75,5% in 2025. Attendance increased across most provinces between 2002 and 2025 with the highest increase observed in Northern Cape (+6,9 percentage points), North West (+5,2 percentage points) and KwaZulu-Natal (+4,9 percentage points). Mpumalanga had the lowest increase at 0,2 of a percentage point between 2002 and 2025.

### **4.4 Percentage distribution of main reasons given by individuals aged 7–18 years for not attending an educational institution by sex, 2025**

In 2025, learners in the age group 7–18 years commonly reported poor performance (27,1%), no money for fees (21,5%) and completed school (13,9%) as the main reasons for not attending an educational institution. Less than one-fifth of individuals aged 7–18 years indicated either other reasons (13,8%) or disability and illness (10,4%) as the main reason for not attending school. Although 3,9% of individuals left their studies as a result of family commitments (i.e. getting married, minding children and pregnancy), it more commonly applied to females (8,4%) than males (0,0%).

**Figure 3: Percentage distribution of main reasons given by individuals aged 7–18 years for not attending an educational institution by sex, 2025**



#### 4.5 Attendance at institutions of higher education

The total number of students enrolled at higher education institutions increased by 59,1% between 2002 and 2025, growing to 976 147. Black African students comprised almost three-quarters (73,9%) of all students in 2025 (up from 60,2% in 2002). White students comprised 13,7% of all students in 2025, down from 27,5% a few decades earlier. Indian/Asian students comprised 6,9% of all students in 2025, increased from 5,8% in 2002. Even though most students are black African, the education participation rate of this population group remained proportionally low in comparison with the Indian/Asian and white population groups.

**Table 1: Distribution of students enrolled at higher education institutions by population group, 2002 and 2025**

Population Group	2002	2025
Black African	60,2	73,9
Coloured	6,6	5,5
Indian/Asian	5,8	6,9
White	27,5	13,7
<b>Total per cent</b>	<b>100,0</b>	<b>100,0</b>
<b>Total Number ('000)</b>	<b>613</b>	<b>976</b>

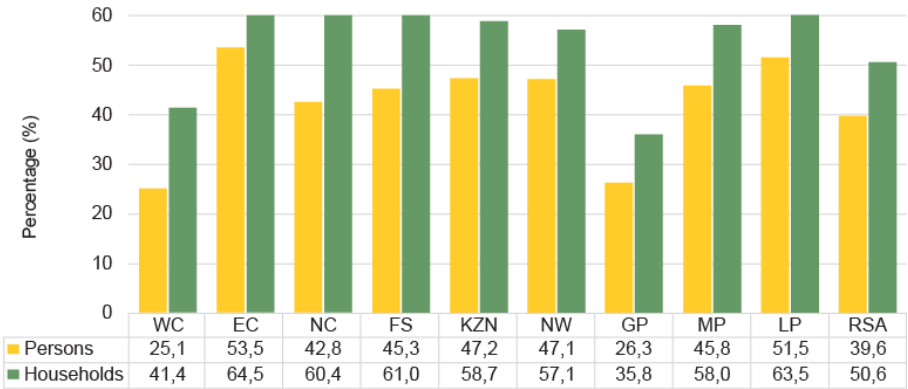
#### **4.6 Percentage distribution of the type of healthcare facility consulted first by households when members fall ill or get injured by province, 2025**

Nationally, 73,3% of households said that they would first go to public clinics, hospitals or other public institutions, while 24,4% of households said that they would first consult a private doctor, private clinic or hospital. The use of public health facilities was least common in Western Cape (56,8%) and Gauteng (66,2%), and most common in Limpopo (85,8%), Eastern Cape (80,2%) and Mpumalanga (79,7%).

#### **4.7 Percentage distribution of individuals and households benefiting from social grants by province, 2025**

Nationally, there were 39,6% grant beneficiaries and 50,6% households that received at least one type of social grant. In 2025, grant beneficiaries were most common in Eastern Cape (53,5%) and Limpopo (51,5%), and least common in Western Cape (25,1%) and Gauteng (26,3%). Households that received at least one type of social grant were most common in Eastern Cape (64,5%), Limpopo (63,5%) and Free State (61,0%), and least common in Gauteng (35,8%) and Western Cape (41,4%).

**Figure 4: Percentage distribution of individuals and households benefiting from social grants by province, 2025**



### Percentage distribution of households that lived in formal, informal and traditional dwellings by province, 2025

In 2025, more than eight-tenths (84,2%) of South African households lived in formal dwellings, followed by 12,1% in informal dwellings, and 3,4% in traditional dwellings. Households that lived in formal dwellings were most common in Limpopo (96,8%) and Mpumalanga (91,0%). North West (19,2%) had the highest percentage of households that lived in informal dwellings, followed by Gauteng (18,9%) and Western Cape (17,6%). Traditional dwellings were most common in Eastern Cape (16,2%) and KwaZulu-Natal (8,7%).

### Access to drinking water

The provision of safe and readily available water is important for public health and poverty reduction. This chapter will report on the proportion of households with access to piped or tap water in their dwellings, off-site or on-site by province.

## Percentage distribution of households with access to piped or tap water in their dwellings, off-site or on-site by province, selected years 2002–2025

Tap water inside dwellings, on-site, or off-site was most common among households in Western Cape (99,5%), Gauteng (98,3%), and Northern Cape (95,5%) and least common in Limpopo (63,2%) and Eastern Cape (67,7%). Although the percentage of households in Eastern Cape with access to water in the dwelling, on- or off-site increased by 23,1 percentage points between 2002 and 2012, access has declined by 11,5 percentage points to 67,7% since then. A similar pattern is observed in Limpopo where access to piped or tap water in dwellings, off-site or on-site increased from 73,8% to 84,0% in 2010, before declining to 63,2% in 2025, just over 10 percentage points lower than in two decades earlier in 2002. Access to water in KwaZulu-Natal increased by 5,8 percentage points to 81,2% over this period.

Although, nationally, access to tap water inside dwellings, off-site or on-site improved by 3,0 percentage points between 2002 and 2025, it is notable that access declined in four provinces during this period. Declines were observed in Limpopo (-10,6 percentage points), Mpumalanga (-4,2 percentage points), Free State (-0,5 of a percentage point) and Gauteng (-0,4 of a percentage point). Although the percentage of households with access to water has been declining, it is important to note that a larger number of households received tap water in 2025 than two decades earlier.

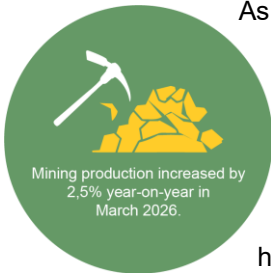
## Conclusion

The number of households increased from 11,2 million in 2002 to 20,1 million in 2025. The findings indicate that Gauteng accounted for the largest share of households, followed by KwaZulu-Natal while Northern Cape recorded the lowest number of households. In addition, more than one-quarter of households consisted of a single person, with Gauteng recording the highest proportion of single-person households. Furthermore, households in Western Cape were more likely to have access to tap water inside dwelling, on-site or off-site.



## Primary industries

### Mining: Production and sales



As global economic turmoil and geopolitical tensions continue to affect countries around the world, many investors are turning to gold as a safe and reliable investment. During times of economic crisis, demand for gold bars, coins, jewellery and Exchange Traded Funds (ETFs) is likely to increase as more people move their money away from volatile stocks to gold. Gold is widely regarded as a safe-haven asset because of its ability to retain its value over

long periods of time. Its durability, resistance to corrosion and ease of shaping into products such as jewellery and coins have also contributed to its appeal. As demand for gold rises, higher prices may encourage mining companies to increase production and invest in new exploration projects, equipment and infrastructure. The growing demand for gold has also helped boost mining activity in South Africa, as mining production increased by 2,5% year-on-year in March 2026. Gold increased by 17,1% and contributed 1,6 percentage points to overall mining growth in March 2026, indicating increased demand for the precious metal. This article summarises the results of *Mining: Production and sales* (Statistical release P2041) for March 2026.



Mining production increased by 2,5% year-on-year in March 2026 (see Table A).

The largest positive contributors were:

- PGMs (10,5%, contributing 2,6 percentage points);
- gold (17,1%, contributing 1,6 percentage points); and

- manganese ore (14,4%, contributing 1,1 percentage points).

Coal (-9,6%, contributing -2,5 percentage points) was the largest negative contributor.

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

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

<sup>1</sup> 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](http://www.statssa.gov.za).

Mineral sales at current prices increased by 30,2% year-on-year in March 2026 (see **Table B**). The largest positive contributors were:

- PGMs (113,5%, contributing 21,0 percentage points);
- gold (51,7%, contributing 8,2 percentage points); and
- chromium ore (38,6%, contributing 2,9 percentage points).

Iron ore (-18,7%, contributing -2,5 percentage points) was the largest negative contributor.

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

	Oct-25	Nov-25	Dec-25	Jan-26	Feb-26	Mar-26
Year-on-year % change, unadjusted	13,6	-0,1	47,7	31,5	57,9	30,2
Month-on-month % change, seasonally adjusted	-0,4	-1,9	22,2	-8,4	9,0	-8,6
3-month % change, seasonally adjusted <sup>1</sup>	6,9	9,0	10,4	11,9	17,1	6,6

<sup>1</sup> 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](http://www.statssa.gov.za).



## Secondary industries

### Manufacturing: Production and sales



Manufacturing is a vital pillar of South Africa's economy, contributing to economic growth, employment creation and the production of goods that support both domestic consumption and exports. The latest statistics on manufacturing production in South Africa show that production decreased by 2,9% in April 2026 compared with April 2025 mainly because some of the country's largest manufacturing industries produced significantly

less output than a year earlier. One of these is the basic iron and steel, non-ferrous metal products, metal products and machinery which recorded - 6,0%, contributing -1,4 percentage points in April 2026. Steel and metal products are important materials in the construction industry and are widely used in the construction of houses, offices, factories, and infrastructure projects. When construction activity slows, demand for products such as steel, cement, machinery and other metal products also declines. As a result, manufacturers that supply the construction sector reduce their production. In addition, higher prices for construction materials can make many projects more expensive and less profitable. These factors continue to weigh on construction and industrial activity and, in turn, influence the performance of South Africa's manufacturing sector. Presented in this article is a summary of the *Manufacturing: Production and sales* (Statistical release P3041.2) for April 2026.



Manufacturing production decreased by 2,9% in April 2026 compared with April 2025 (see Table C).

The largest negative contributions were made by the following divisions:

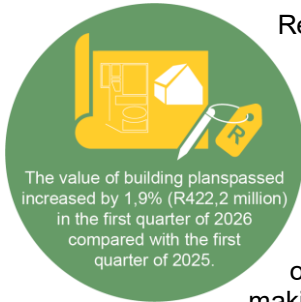
- basic iron and steel, non-ferrous metal products, metal products and machinery (-6,0%, contributing -1,4 percentage points);
- wood and wood products, paper, publishing and printing (-10,0%, contributing -1,0 percentage point); and
- motor vehicles, parts and accessories and other transport equipment (-11,0%, contributing -0,9 of a percentage point).

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

	Nov-25	Dec-25	Jan-26	Feb-26	Mar-26	Apr-26
Year-on-year % change, unadjusted	-2,1	-1,4	-0,2	-2,2	1,5	-2,9
Month-on-month % change, seasonally adjusted	-2,3	-1,4	1,8	-1,8	1,2	-2,7
3-month % change, seasonally adjusted <sup>1</sup>	0,1	-0,5	-1,8	-2,0	-0,9	-1,3

<sup>1</sup> 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](http://www.statssa.gov.za).

## Selected building statistics of the private sector



Retail construction plays a vital role in economic development by creating spaces where businesses can operate, consumers can access goods and services, and communities can thrive. However, recent store closures across South Africa may have implications for the demand for new retail construction projects. According to Reuters, The Foschini Group (TFG) plans to close more than 100 of its approximately 300 underperforming or loss-making stores while reducing store expansion and capital

expenditure, opting instead to drive growth through its Bash online platform and fulfilment network. This reflects a broader trend in which retailers are adapting to changing consumer behaviour, weak economic growth, rising operating costs and increasing competition from online shopping. As a result, retailers may become more cautious about expanding their physical store networks, potentially reducing demand for new retail developments. This trend may already be reflected in building activity, as the value of non-residential building plans passed decreased by R692,5 million in the first quarter of 2026 compared with the first quarter of 2025, despite an overall increase of 1,9% (R422,2 million) in the total value of building plans passed. This article summarises the results of the *Selected building statistics of the private sector* (Statistical release P4041.1) for March 2026.

### Building plans passed



The value of building plans passed increased by 1,9% (R422,2 million) in the first quarter of 2026 compared with the first quarter of 2025. An increase was reported for residential buildings (R1 308,5 million) (see Table D).

Decreases were reported for non-residential buildings (-R692,5 million) and additions and alterations (-R193,8 million).

## Building plans passed by larger municipalities by province

The largest positive contributors to the total increase of 1,9% (R422,2 million) were Western Cape (contributing 3,6 percentage points or R786,0 million) and KwaZulu-Natal (contributing 2,0 percentage points or R446,4 million). The largest negative contributors were Gauteng (contributing -2,8 percentage points or -R607,2 million) and Mpumalanga (contributing -2,4 percentage points or -R536,8 million).

## Buildings reported as completed

The value of buildings reported as completed increased by 8,8% (R921,3 million) in the first quarter of 2026 compared with the first quarter of 2025. Increases were reported for residential buildings (R832,4 million) and additions and alterations (R675,1 million). A decrease was reported for non-residential buildings (-R586,1 million).

## Buildings reported as completed to larger municipalities by province

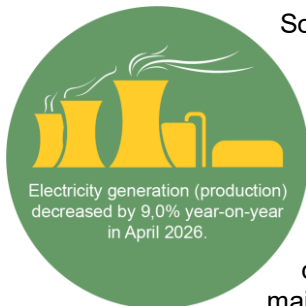
Five out of the nine provinces reported year-on-year increases in the value of buildings completed in the first quarter of 2026. The largest positive contributors were Western Cape (contributing 9,5 percentage points or R990,4 million) and Mpumalanga (contributing 2,5 percentage points or R259,1 million). The largest negative contributors were KwaZulu-Natal (contributing -3,7 percentage points or -R389,5 million) and North West (contributing -2,1 percentage points or -R216,8 million).

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

Type of building	Jan – Mar 2025	Jan – Mar 2026	Difference in value between Jan – Mar 2025 and Jan – Mar 2026	% change between Jan – Mar 2025 and Jan – Mar 2026
	R'000	R'000	R'000	
<b>Residential buildings</b>	10 225 407	11 533 914	1 308 507	12,8
- Dwelling houses	6 906 179	7 046 001	139 822	2,0
- Flats and townhouses	2 844 640	3 575 070	730 430	25,7
- Other residential buildings	474 588	912 843	438 255	92,3
<b>Non-residential buildings</b>	4 986 915	4 294 390	-692 525	-13,9
<b>Additions and alterations</b>	6 808 869	6 615 061	-193 808	-2,8
<b>Total</b>	22 021 191	22 443 365	422 174	1,9

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](http://www.statssa.gov.za).

## Electricity generated and available for distribution



South Africa has been generating less electricity over the past decade. According to the latest *Electricity, gas, and water supply industry report* published by Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) on 06 May 2026, South Africa generated 214 562 gigawatt-hours (GWh) of electricity in 2024. This was less than the electricity generated in 2016 (237 168 GWh) and 2021 (225 833 GWh), indicating a long-term decline in electricity production. Coal remained the main source of electricity generation in the country, contributing 82,7% or 177 334 GWh of energy in 2024, while renewable energy sources — including water, wind and sun – were gaining momentum

and contributed 9,0% or 19 408 GWh of electricity, followed by 'nuclear material' (3,8% or 8 226 GWh). Similarly, the *Electricity generated and available for distribution* statistical release for April 2026 notes a similar trend of declining electricity production. Electricity generation (production) decreased by 9,0% year-on-year in April 2026 compared with April 2025, meaning the country also produced less electricity than it did a year ago. This article summarises the *Electricity generated and available for distribution* (Statistical release P4141) for April 2026.



Electricity generation (production) decreased by 9,0% year-on-year in April 2026 (see Table E).

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

	Nov-25	Dec-25	Jan-26	Feb-26	Mar-26	Apr-26
Year-on-year % change, unadjusted	-7,3	-7,8	-6,1	-3,9	-6,9	-9,0
Month-on-month % change, seasonally adjusted	-1,3	-1,4	1,4	-0,8	-1,4	-1,7
3-month % change, seasonally adjusted <sup>1</sup>	-3,0	-3,3	-2,7	-1,8	-1,0	-1,8

<sup>1</sup> 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](http://www.statssa.gov.za).

Electricity distribution (consumption) decreased by 5,0% year-on-year in April 2026 (see Table F).

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

	<b>Nov-25</b>	<b>Dec-25</b>	<b>Jan-26</b>	<b>Feb-26</b>	<b>Mar-26</b>	<b>Apr-26</b>
Year-on-year % change, unadjusted	-7,7	-6,9	-6,1	-3,4	-3,3	-5,0
Month-on-month % change, seasonally adjusted	-0,4	0,4	0,2	-0,6	2,4	-1,3
3-month % change, seasonally adjusted <sup>1</sup>	-3,8	-3,0	-1,4	-0,2	0,7	0,8

<sup>1</sup> 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](http://www.statssa.gov.za).



## Tertiary industries

### Wholesale trade sales



South Africa continues to be a key export market for many countries, exporting more goods than it imports. According to the latest data released by the South African Revenue Service (SARS), the country exported goods worth R190,6 billion and imported goods worth R175,4 billion in April 2026, resulting in a trade surplus of R15,2 billion. Export flows for April increased by 14,8% year-on-year, rising from R165,9 billion in April 2025 to R190,6 billion in April 2026. SARS attributes the overall export growth in April 2026 to higher exports of gold, platinum group metals (PGMs) and petroleum oils, excluding crude oil, to countries such as Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho and Namibia. Increased export activity can also stimulate demand throughout the supply chain, including in the wholesale trade sector. Supporting this view, in March 2026 wholesale trade sales increased by 9,3% compared with March 2025. Presented in this article is a summary of the *Wholesale trade sales* (Statistical release P6141.2) for March 2026.



Wholesale trade sales increased by 9,3% in March 2026 compared with March 2025 (see Table G).

The main positive contributors were dealers in:

- solid, liquid and gaseous fuels and related products (11,5%, contributing 2,6 percentage points);
- food, beverages and tobacco (14,6%, contributing 2,2 percentage points); and

- machinery, equipment and supplies (13,5%, contributing 2,2 percentage points).

The main positive contributor was dealers in food, beverages and tobacco (13,5%, contributing 1,9 percentage points).

Wholesale trade sales increased by 1,6% in the first quarter of 2026 compared with the first quarter of 2025. The main positive contributor was dealers in food, beverages and tobacco (15,1%, contributing 2,2 percentage points).

The main negative contributor was dealers in solid, liquid and gaseous fuels and related products (-4,0%, contributing -0,9 of a percentage point).

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

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

<sup>1</sup> 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](http://www.statssa.gov.za)

## Retail trade sales



Many retailers have physical and online stores as both remain important drivers of sales, with each having their own unique strengths and weaknesses. However, some South African consumers are shifting from purchasing goods from traditional stores towards online primarily for unmatched convenience, endless variety and better pricing, among others. On 5 June 2026, The Foschini Group (TFG) Limited, one of the leading South African retail clothing and lifestyle groups, announced that their online

sales increased more than physical store sales. The TFG further stated that the increase was driven by its online Bash platform, with 8,2% to its total sales. In order to maintain consumers, online stores need to ensure their websites are easy to use and compatible with smartphones, tablets, etc. Data published by Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) indicate that retailer sales increased by 2,6% year-on-year in March 2026 and retailers in textile, clothing, footwear and leather goods. Presented in this article is a summary of *Retail trade sales* (Statistical release P6242.1) for March 2026.



Retail trade sales increased by 2,6% year-on-year in March (see Table H).

The largest positive contributors to this increase were:

- general dealers (1,7%, contributing 0,8 of a percentage point); and
- all 'other' retailers (7,1%, contributing 0,7 of a percentage point).

Retail trade sales increased by 2,6% in the first quarter of 2026 compared with the first quarter of 2025. The largest positive contributors to this increase were:

- all 'other' retailers (9,4%, contributing 1,0 percentage point); and
- retailers in textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods (6,0%, contributing 1,0 percentage point).

The only negative contributor was retailers in food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores (-5,7%, contributing -0,5 of a percentage point).

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

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

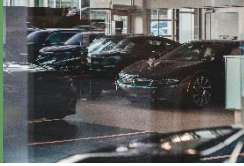
<sup>1/</sup> Percentage change between the previous 3 months and the 3 months ending in the month indicated. A full release on *Retail trade sales* (Statistical release P6242.1) is available on the Stats SA website: [www.statssa.gov.za](http://www.statssa.gov.za).

## Motor trade sales



Vehicle sales play an important role in the economy and are influenced by a range of factors, including consumer demand, financing costs and overall economic conditions. According to the latest Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) data, the motor industry maintained its positive momentum in March 2026, continuing the growth trend that began in 2025. Motor trade sales increased by 14,7% year-on-year in March 2026, driven primarily by new vehicle sales, which increased by 23,4%, contributing 6,3

percentage points to overall growth. This was followed by used vehicle sales, which increased by 19,1%, contributing 3,7 percentage points. Interest rates are one of the key factors influencing vehicle sales, as most vehicle purchases, particularly new vehicles, are financed. Lower interest rates reduce monthly loan repayments, making vehicles more affordable and encouraging consumer spending, while higher rates tend to have the opposite effect. Following the South African Reserve Bank's (SARB) interest rate cuts in late 2025, borrowing conditions remained relatively favourable in early 2026. The repo rate stood at 6,75% and the prime lending rate at 10,25%, with the SARB opting to keep rates unchanged in both January and March 2026. This stable interest-rate environment likely supported demand for both new and used vehicles during the period. This article summarises the results of the *Motor trade sales* (Statistical release P6343.2) for March 2026.



Motor trade sales increased by 14,7% year-on-year in March 2026 (see Table I).

The main contributors to this increase were:

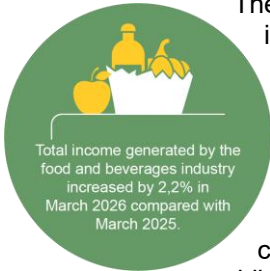
- new vehicle sales (23,4%, contributing 6,3 percentage points);
- used vehicle sales (19,1%, contributing 3,7 percentage points);
- fuel sales (9,5%, contributing 2,4 percentage points); and
- sales of accessories (9,3%, contributing 1,9 percentage points).

**Table I – Key growth rates in motor trade sales for March 2026**

	Oct-25	Nov-25	Dec-25	Jan-26	Feb-26	Mar-26
Year-on-year % change, unadjusted	1,8	0,3	6,5	2,7	5,6	14,7
Month-on-month % change, seasonally adjusted	0,7	1,0	0,4	-0,7	1,5	3,9
3-month % change, seasonally adjusted <sup>1</sup>	1,3	1,0	1,4	1,3	1,3	2,2

<sup>1</sup> 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](http://www.statssa.gov.za).

## Food and beverages



The performance of South Africa's food and beverages industry often fluctuates in response to changing economic conditions and consumer spending patterns. Although demand for prepared food and beverages remains relatively stable, consumers tend to adjust where and how they spend their money depending on factors such as income growth, inflation, interest rates and consumer confidence. The latest data on food and beverages published by Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) shows that

total income generated by the food and beverages industry increased by 2,2% in March 2026 compared with March 2025. However, performance varied across the different segments of the industry. Income from takeaway and fast-food outlets increased by 5,8%, while restaurants and coffee shops decreased by 0,9%. These fluctuations may reflect changing consumer preferences and budget constraints. During periods of financial pressure, households often reduce discretionary spending by dining less frequently at restaurants and opting for more affordable takeaway meals. Rising operating costs, including food ingredients, electricity, rentals and labour, may also affect the ability of restaurants and bars to attract and retain customers. At the same time, takeaway outlets may benefit from convenience, affordability and the growing use of food delivery services. This article summarises the results of *Food and beverages* (Statistical release P6420) for March 2026.



Total income generated by the food and beverages industry increased by 2,2% in March 2026 compared with March 2025 (see Table J).

Positive annual growth rates were recorded for 'other' income (10,0%) and food sales (3,7%).

In March 2026, the positive contributors to the 2,2% year-on-year increase were takeaway and fast-food outlets (5,8%, contributing 2,3 percentage points) and catering services (2,5%, contributing 0,3 of a percentage point).

Total income increased by 4,0% in the first quarter of 2026 compared with the first quarter of 2025. The main contributors to this increase were takeaway and fast-food outlets (6,4%, contributing 2,5 percentage points)

and restaurants and coffee shops (2,9%, contributing 1,4 percentage points).

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

Type of income	Oct-25	Nov-25	Dec-25	Jan-26	Feb-26	Mar-26
Food sales	8,5	8,3	6,9	8,7	5,7	3,7
Bar sales	-5,3	-10,7	-22,8	-15,9	-6,8	-8,9
Other income	13,3	16,3	-3,8	21,5	7,6	10,0
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,0</b>	<b>6,1</b>	<b>2,5</b>	<b>5,7</b>	<b>4,2</b>	<b>2,2</b>

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

## Tourist accommodation



The price of accommodation is one of the most influential factors that make tourists switch from traditional hotels to alternative accommodation like lodges, bed-and-breakfast (B&B) and self-catering, among others. However, other tourists are frequently prompted to switch to lodges for outdoor or nature experiences, B&B for traditional or kasi-flavoured food and self-catering for flexibility in meal choices rather than sticking to a hotel's restrictive meal plan of hotel. Others want to experience sleeping in a tent after watching the stars, and thus prefer camping sites. The tourist accommodation data published by Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) in March 2026 show that 'other' accommodation (not elsewhere classified) was popularly used by tourists, contributing to the 14,1% year-on-year increase in income from accommodation compared with hotels. This article summarises the results of the *Tourist accommodation* (Statistical release P6410) for March 2026.



Total income for the tourist accommodation industry increased by 12,1% in March 2026 compared with March 2025 (see Table K).

Income from accommodation increased by 14,1% year-on-year in March 2026, the result of an 11,1% increase in the number of stay unit nights sold and a 2,7% increase in the average income per stay unit night sold. In March 2026, the main contributors to the 14,1% year-on-year increase in income from accommodation were:

- 'other' accommodation (22,9%, contributing 8,0 percentage points); and
- hotels (9,2%, contributing 5,4 percentage points).

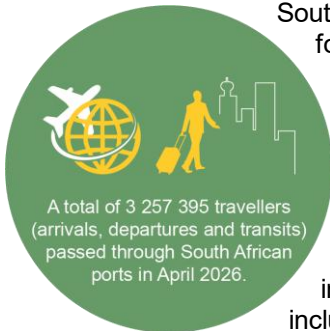
**Table K – Year-on-year percentage change in tourist accommodation statistics for March 2026**

	Oct-25	Nov-25	Dec-25	Jan-26	Feb-25	Mar-25
Stay units available	0,0	0,0	0,1	0,1	0,0	0,0
Stay unit nights sold	10,1	7,8	2,1	0,9	5,3	11,1
Average income per stay unit night sold	4,7	3,6	2,0	1,8	2,0	2,7
Income from accommodation	15,3	11,7	4,1	2,7	7,5	14,1
<b>Total income<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>12,7</b>	<b>10,6</b>	<b>3,7</b>	<b>-1,8</b>	<b>6,2</b>	<b>12,1</b>

<sup>1</sup>Includes 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](http://www.statssa.gov.za)

## International tourism



South Africa remains one of Africa's main destinations for migrants due to its relatively large economy and perceived employment opportunities. Most immigrants come from neighbouring countries within the Southern African Development Community (SADC), particularly Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Malawi and Lesotho. At the same time, the government is introducing reforms aimed at strengthening border security and improving the management of labour migration, including tougher action against employers who hire

undocumented workers. As part of these reforms, the Employment Services Amendment Bill (B16 – 2026) was introduced in the National Assembly on 29 May 2026. The Bill proposes significant changes to South Africa's labour market by extending the Employment Services Act, 2014 (Act No. 4 of 2014) to include foreign nationals and introducing stricter requirements for employing foreign workers. Under the proposed legislation, employers would need to show that no suitably qualified South African citizens, permanent residents, refugees or asylum seekers are available before recruiting a foreign national. The Bill also introduces much harsher penalties for employers' non-compliance, with fines ranging from R100 000 for a first offence to as much as R1 million or 10% of annual turnover for repeated violations. Overall, the proposed measures seek to align labour migration policies with existing immigration and refugee laws to ensure that foreign recruitment addresses genuine skills shortages and discourages the unlawful employment of foreign nationals. Presented in this article is a summary of the *International tourism* (Statistical release P0350) for April 2026.

## Travellers

### Number of travellers



A total of 3 257 395 travellers (arrivals, departures and transits) passed through South African ports in April 2026 (see Table L).

These travellers were made up of 806 121 South African residents and 2 451 274 foreign travellers. A further breakdown of the figures for South African residents indicates that there were 396 609 arrivals, 408 887 departures and 625 travellers in transit. The corresponding volumes for foreign arrivals, departures and travellers in transit were 1 284 245, 1 123 070 and 43 959, respectively.

A comparison of movements in March 2026 and April 2026 shows that the volumes of arrivals, departures and transits increased for both groups of travellers. For South African residents, the volume of arrivals increased by 13,5% (from 349 439 in March 2026 to 396 609 in April 2026), departures increased by 9,5% (from 373 332 in March 2026 to 408 887 in April 2026), and transits increased by 5,4% (from 593 in March 2026 to 625 in April 2026). For foreign travellers, arrivals increased by 7,0% (from 1 200 534 in March 2026 to 1 284 245 in April 2026), departures increased by 4,7% (from 1 073 128 in March 2026 to 1 123 070 in April 2026) and transits increased by 7,9% (from 40 730 in March 2026 to 43 959 in April 2026).

A comparison of movements in April 2025 and April 2026 indicates that the volume of departures decreased for South African travellers but increased for foreign travellers, while that of arrivals and transits increased for both groups of travellers. For South African residents, the volume of arrivals increased by 1,2% (from 391 787 in April 2025 to 396 609 in April 2026), departures decreased by 3,8% (from 425 073 in April 2025 to 408 887 in April 2026) whereas transits increased by 26,8% (from 493 in April 2025 to 625 in April 2026). For foreign travellers, arrivals increased by 15,1% (from 1 115 585 in April 2025 to 1 284 245 in April 2026), departures increased by 11,5% (from 1 007 258 in April 2025 to 1 123 070 in April 2026) and transits increased by 15,1% (from 38 178 in April 2025 to 43 959 in April 2026).

### Mode of travel of travellers

In April 2026, road was the most common mode of travel used by 2 234 452 (68,6%) of the 3 257 395 travellers. The total number of air travellers was 993 478 (30,5%). Compared to air and road, a smaller number of travellers, 29 465 (0,9%) used sea transport into and out of South Africa. Information

on arrivals of South African residents shows that 169 607 (42,8%) came by air, 220 056 (55,5%) came by road and 6 946 (1,8%) came by sea. For departures, 179 370 (43,9%) used air, 224 787 (55,0%) used road and 4 730 (1,2%) left by sea. All travellers in transit, 625 (100,0%) used air.

## Visitors

In April 2026, 37 249 (2,9%) of foreign arrivals were classified as non-visitors, while 1 246 996 (97,1%) were classified as visitors. Visitors were categorised into three groups:

- i. Arrivals only – comprising visitors who entered the country in April 2026 but did not depart in April 2026 [512 896 (41,1%)].
- ii. Single trips – visitors who came to South Africa once in April 2026 and left in April 2026 [392 163 (31,4%)].
- iii. Multiple trips – visitors who came to and left South Africa more than once in April 2026 [341 937 (27,4%)].

Visitors were further grouped as same-day visitors and overnight visitors/tourists. In April 2026, there were 257 667 (20,7%) same-day visitors and 989 329 (79,3%) tourists. Between March 2026 and April 2026, the volume of same-day visitors decreased by 0,8% (from 259 778 in March 2026 to 257 667 in April 2026) and that of tourists increased by 8,5% (from 911 962 in March 2026 to 989 329 in April 2026). Between April 2025 and April 2026, the volume of same-day visitors decreased by 1,0% (from 260 359 in April 2025 to 257 667 in April 2026) whereas that of tourists increased by 19,5% (from 827 886 in April 2025 to 989 329 in April 2026).

Of the 257 667 same-day visitors, a majority, 233 551 (90,6%) arrived in the country by road, 24 037 (9,3%) arrived by air and 79 (less than 0,1%) arrived by sea. Information on tourists shows that 739 768 (74,8%) used road, 247 055 (25,0%) used air and 2 506 (0,3%) used sea.

## Tourists

### Sex and age distribution of tourists

#### Sex

There were more male [560 550 (56,7%)] than female [428 779 (43,3%)] tourists. Male tourists constituted the majority of tourists for all three regions, SADC countries [453 239 (57,6%)], overseas countries [95 168 (52,3%)] and 'other' African countries [11 616 (60,8%)]. Similarly, the largest portion of female tourists was from SADC countries [334 250 (42,4%)], followed by overseas countries [86 628 (47,7%)] and 'other' African countries [7 485 (39,2%)].

## Age

The age distribution indicates that out of all tourists, [5,6% (55 196)] were aged younger than 15; [8,7% (86 458)] were aged between 15 and 24; [23,8% (235 003)] were aged between 25 and 34; [29,2% (289 075)] were aged between 35 and 44; [18,8% (186 407)] were aged between 45 and 54; [8,6% (85 020)] were aged between 55 and 64 and [5,3% (52 170)] were aged 65 and older.

## Purpose of visit of tourists

In April 2026, the majority of tourists, 965 632 (97,6%), were in South Africa for holiday compared to 19 234 (1,9%); 4 221 (0,4%) and 242 (less than 0,1%) who were in South Africa for business, study and medical treatment, respectively.

## Mode of travel of tourists

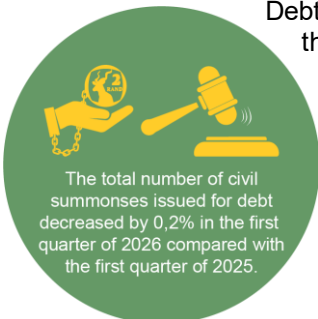
In April 2026, 165 251 (90,9%) overseas tourists arrived in the country by air, whilst 14 216 (7,8%) came by road and 2 329 (1,3%) came by sea. Tourists from the SADC countries, on the other hand, came predominantly by road, 722 967 (91,8%), 64 353 (8,2%) came by air and 169 (less than 0,1%) arrived by sea. The number of tourists who came into South Africa by air from 'other' African countries was 16 699 (87,4%); while 2 395 (12,5%) used road transport and seven (less than 0,1%) preferred sea. Most tourists who arrived by road came through Lebombo port (204 870) in Mpumalanga and Beit Bridge port (177 295) in Limpopo. The majority of tourists who came by air entered through OR Tambo International Airport (163 255) and Cape Town International Airport (81 978). Tourists who arrived by sea came through Cape Town Harbour (2 491) and Durban Harbour (15).

**Table L – Number of South African residents and foreign travellers by travel direction, April 2026**

Travel direction	April	March	April	% Change	% Change
	2025	2026	2026	Mar 2026 – Apr 2026	Apr 2025 – Apr 2026
<b>Total</b>	2 978 374	3 037 756	3 257 395	7,2	9,4
<b>South African residents</b>	817 353	723 364	806 121	11,4	-1,4
Arrivals	391 787	349 439	396 609	13,5	1,2
Departures	425 073	373 332	408 887	9,5	-3,8
Transits	493	593	625	5,4	26,8
<b>Foreign travellers</b>	2 161 021	2 314 392	2 451 274	5,9	13,4
Arrivals	1 115 585	1 200 534	1 284 245	7,0	15,1
Departures	1 007 258	1 073 128	1 123 070	4,7	11,5
Transits	38 178	40 730	43 959	7,9	15,1

A full release on *International tourism* (Statistical release P0350) is available on the Stats SA website: [www.statssa.gov.za](http://www.statssa.gov.za).

## Statistics of civil cases for debt



Debt remained a concern for many South Africans in the first quarter of 2026, as households across income groups faced increasing pressure to balance everyday expenses and debt repayments. The latest data on *Civil cases for debt*, published by Statistics South Africa (Stats SA), shows that the total value of civil judgements recorded for debt increased by

0,6% in the first quarter of 2026 compared with the first quarter of 2025. This may suggest that, although the total number of civil summonses issued for debt decreased by 0,2% in the first quarter of 2026, consumers may be taking on larger debts or struggling with higher repayment balances. Moreover, the small decline in summonses could partly reflect greater use of debt counselling mechanisms, which help consumers restructure repayments and avoid legal action. Civil cases for debt, therefore, offer a useful overview of consumer debt management and provide insight into the financial well-being of households in South Africa. This article summarises the results of *Civil cases for debt* (Statistical release P0041) for March 2026.



The total number of civil summonses issued for debt decreased by 0,2% in the first quarter of 2026 compared with the first quarter of 2025 (see Table I).

### The number of civil summonses issued for debt

The negative contributors to the 0,2% decrease in civil summonses issued were:

- services (contributing -2,5 percentage points);
- money lent (contributing -0,6 of a percentage point); and
- rent (contributing -0,6 of a percentage point).

'Other' debts (contributing 2,0 percentage points) was the largest positive contributor.

### The number of civil judgements recorded for debt

The total number of civil judgements recorded for debt decreased by 1,7% in the first quarter of 2026 compared with the first quarter of 2025. The largest negative contributors to the 1,7% decrease were civil judgements relating to:

- rent (contributing -2,1 percentage points); and
- services (contributing -0,7 of a percentage point).

Goods sold (contributing 0,7 of a percentage point) was the largest positive contributor.

### The value of civil judgements recorded for debt

The total value of civil judgements recorded for debt increased by 0,6% in the first quarter of 2026 compared with the first quarter of 2025. The largest positive contributors were:

- money lent (contributing 3,2 percentage points); and
- ‘other’ debts (contributing 2,3 percentage points).

Rent (contributing -3,4 percentage points) was the largest negative contributor.

In March 2026, 9 847 civil judgements for debt amounting to R306,7 million were recorded. The largest contributors to the total value of judgements were:

- services (R76,3 million or 24,9%);
- money lent (R72,0 million or 23,5%);
- ‘other’ debts (R65,8 million or 21,5%); and
- promissory notes (R49,8 million or 16,2%).

**Table M – Key figures for March 2026**

Actual estimates	Mar 2026	% change between Mar 2025 and Mar 2026	% change between Jan – Mar 2025 and Jan – Mar 2026
Number of civil summonses issued for debt	33 646	6,6	-0,2
Number of civil judgements recorded for debt	9 847	-1,9	-1,7
Value of civil judgements recorded for debt (R million)	306,7	-3,8	0,6

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

## Statistics of liquidations

When a business closes its doors, it could indicate that it is under severe financial strain and can no longer



keep operations afloat. According to Statistics South Africa (Stats SA), from January to April 2026, 891 businesses were liquidated; this is 32 businesses more than the same period in 2025 (859). Furthermore, in April 2026, 233 businesses were liquidated, with more than half of these liquidations being from unclassified businesses (157). Unclassified businesses are those which are not assigned to a specific sector like manufacturing, mining, finance, etc. This normally happens during the registration of the company when the sector is not provided in the application documents or it was omitted in court papers at the time of liquidation. A high number of unclassified liquidations may make it difficult to identify which industries are under more financial pressure. Presented in this article is a summary of the *Statistics of liquidations* (Statistical release P0043.1) for April 2026.



The total number of liquidations increased by 17,1% (from 199 to 233) in April 2026 compared with April 2025 (see Table N).

Liquidations of companies increased by 23 cases and liquidations of close corporations increased by 11 cases during this period.

The number of liquidations increased by 8,8% (from 673 to 732) in the three months ended April 2026 compared with the three months ended April 2025.

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

Number of liquidations Apr 2026	% change between Apr 2025 and Apr 2026	% change between Feb – Apr 2025 and Feb – Apr 2026	% change between Jan – Apr 2025 and Jan – Apr 2026
233	17,1	8,8	3,7

## Land transport



South Africa has the longest road network in Africa, spanning about 750 000 km and is estimated to be worth R2,1 trillion, according to the Department of Transport. Nigeria (195 000 km) ranks second on the continent, while Ethiopia (161 452 km) has the third-longest road network. Globally, the United States of America (USA) ranks first for having the longest road network in the world at an impressive 6,6 million km, followed closely by India (6,4 million km). South Africa ranks 10th globally in

terms of the longest road network. The road network is a vital part of the economy, connecting people to places of work, schools and essential services and facilitating the movement of goods. However, despite the importance of the road network, many roads in South Africa are poorly maintained, which causes damage over time and leaves many commuters vulnerable to road accidents and causes delays in the transportation of goods. In March 2026, both volumes of goods transported and the number of passenger journeys increased by 1,6% and 5,1%, respectively. The increase in both goods and passengers transported shows that there is increased demand for transport services, which makes well-maintained roads a priority for economic growth. This article summarises the results of the *Land transport* (Statistical release P7162) for March 2026.

## Freight transportation



The volume of goods transported (payload) increased by 1,6% in March 2026 compared with March 2025 (see Table O).

The corresponding income increased by 4,4% over the same period.

Income from freight transportation increased by 2,9% in the first quarter of 2026 compared with the first quarter of 2025. The main positive contributors to this increase were:

- agriculture and forestry primary products (44,5%, contributing 2,9 percentage points); and
- parcels (26,7%, contributing 0,7 of a percentage point).

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

	Oct-25	Nov-25	Dec-25	Jan-26	Feb-26	Mar-26
<b>Freight payload</b>	3,0	-1,7	0,4	-2,9	-2,3	1,6
<b>Freight income</b>	6,6	3,4	5,0	3,1	1,2	4,4

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

## Passenger transportation

The number of passenger journeys increased by 5,1% in March 2026 compared with March 2025 (**see Table P**). The corresponding income increased by 6,9% over the same period.

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

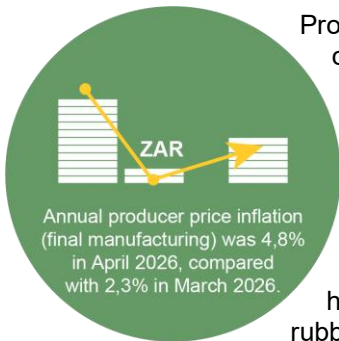
	Oct-25	Nov-25	Dec-25	Jan-26	Feb-26	Mar-26
<b>Passenger payload</b>	3,8	4,0	4,3	-2,4	4,0	5,1
<b>Passenger income</b>	15,6	17,5	12,0	4,4	7,5	6,9

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



## Prices

### Producer price index (PPI)



Producer price inflation provides insight into the costs faced by manufacturers and can offer an early indication of price pressures building up in the economy. Annual producer price inflation for final manufactured goods increased from 2,3% in March 2026 to 4,8% in April 2026, suggesting that manufacturers faced higher production costs during the month. The increase was largely driven by higher prices for coke, petroleum, chemical, rubber and plastic products, which recorded annual

inflation of 11,8% and contributed 2,5 percentage points to the headline producer price index (PPI). These products are used throughout the economy, from manufacturing and transport to packaging and distribution, making them important inputs for many businesses. As the cost of these inputs rises, manufacturers may face higher operating expenses. Some businesses may absorb these costs to remain competitive, while others may look for ways to improve efficiency or reduce spending elsewhere. Although higher producer prices do not necessarily lead to higher prices for consumers, sustained increases in production costs can move through the supply chain over time. When this happens, businesses may pass some of these costs on to consumers, potentially contributing to broader inflationary pressures. Presented in this article is a summary of the *Producer price index (PPI)* (Statistical release P0142.1) for April 2026.



Annual producer price inflation (final manufacturing) was 4,8% in April 2026, compared with 2,3% in March 2026 (see Table Q).

The producer price index (PPI) increased by 3,0% month-on-month in April 2026.

The main positive contributors to the headline PPI annual inflation rate were:

- coke, petroleum, chemical, rubber and plastic products (11,8%, contributing 2,5 percentage points);
- food products, beverages and tobacco products (1,9%, contributing 0,6 of a percentage point); and
- paper and printed products (6,4%, contributing 0,5 of a percentage point).

The main positive contributor to the headline PPI monthly inflation rate was coke, petroleum, chemical, rubber and plastic products (12,8%, contributing 2,7 percentage points).

### Intermediate manufactured goods

The annual percentage change in the PPI for intermediate manufactured goods was 10,0% in April 2026, compared with 9,1% in March 2026. The index increased by 3,2% month-on-month. The main positive contributors to the annual rate were:

- basic and fabricated metals (14,7%, contributing 7,1 percentage points);
- chemicals, rubber and plastic products (5,3%, contributing 1,6 percentage points); and
- sawmilling and wood (7,6%, contributing 0,7 of a percentage point).

The main positive contributor to the monthly rate was chemicals, rubber and plastic products (15,7% and contributing 4,0 percentage points).

## Electricity and water

The annual percentage change in the PPI for electricity and water was 12,5% in April 2026, compared with 17,9% in March 2026. The index increased by 1,5% month-on-month. The contributors to the annual rate were electricity (12,7% and contributing 10,6 percentage points) and water (11,0% and contributing 1,8 percentage points). The contributors to the monthly rate were electricity (1,7% and contributing 1,4 percentage points) and water (0,5% and contributing 0,1 of a percentage point).

## Mining

The annual percentage change in the PPI for mining was 24,9% in April 2026, compared with 33,0% in March 2026. The index decreased by 3,1% month-on-month. The main positive contributors to the annual rate were non-ferrous metal ores (47,4%, contributing 21,0 percentage points) and gold and other metal ores (11,3%, contributing 3,3 percentage points). The main negative contributors to the monthly rate were non-ferrous metal ores (-3,1%, contributing -1,6 percentage points) and coal and gas (-9,0%, contributing -1,6 percentage points).

## Agriculture, forestry and fishing

The annual percentage change in the PPI for agriculture, forestry and fishing was -6,5% in April 2026, compared with -2,9% in March 2026. The index increased by 0,6% month-on-month. The negative contributor to the annual rate was agriculture (-8,8%, contributing -7,5 percentage points). The main contributor to the monthly rate was agriculture (0,5%, contributing 0,5 of a percentage point).

**Table Q – Key PPI figures for April 2026**

Product	Weight	Index (Dec 2023=100)			% change	
		Apr 2025	Mar 2026	Apr 2026	Apr 2026 vs. Mar 2026	Apr 2026 vs. Apr 2025
Final manufactured goods	100,00	102,7	104,5	107,6	3,0	4,8
Intermediate manufactured goods	100,00	112,8	120,2	124,1	3,2	10,0
Electricity and water	100,00	116,8	129,5	131,4	1,5	12,5
Mining	100,00	108,1	139,3	135,0	-3,1	24,9
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	100,00	103,0	95,7	96,3	0,6	-6,5

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

## Consumer price index (CPI)



After decreasing for three consecutive months since January 2026, the consumer price index (CPI) spiked in April 2026, marking its highest increase in two years and is an indication of the strain on South African households. The April 2026 CPI was 4,0%, up from 3,1% in March 2026, the highest since August 2026 when it was 4,4%.

One of the main contributors to the April CPI was transport (4,9%, contributing 0,7 of a percentage point), driven mostly by surging fuel prices as a result of soaring global oil prices caused by conflicts in the Middle East. Higher fuel prices not only make it more expensive for motorists to fill up their cars but also affect businesses that rely on fuel to transport goods such as food, clothing, and other household items. Businesses absorb these fuel increases and pass it on to consumers,

making some goods more expensive. This article presents a summary of the *Consumer price index* (Statistical release P0141) for March 2026.

## Headline consumer price index (CPI) for all urban areas



Annual consumer price inflation was 4,0% in April 2026, up from 3,1% in March 2026 (see Table R).

The CPI increased by 1,1% month-on-month in April 2026.

The main contributors to the 4,0% annual inflation rate were:

- housing and utilities (5,2%, contributing 1,2 percentage points);
- transport (4,9%, contributing 0,7 of a percentage point); and
- insurance and financial services (5,7%, contributing 0,6 of a percentage point).

In April 2026, the annual inflation rate for:

- goods was 3,4%, up from 1,8% in March 2026; and
- services was 4,6%, up from 4,2% in March 2026.

**Table R – Consumer price index: Index numbers and year-on-year rates**

Year	Index /rate	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Average <sup>1</sup>
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	104,8	106,0									
	Rate	3,5	3,0	3,1	4,0									

<sup>1/</sup> Annual average. A full release on the *Consumer price index* (Statistical release P0141) is available on the Stats SA website: [www.statssa.gov.za](http://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; osmiridium, 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.



**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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