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## **STATISTICAL RELEASE**

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# **Wholesale trade sales (Preliminary)**

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## Sales at constant 2019 prices: results for May 2026

**Table A – Key growth rates in wholesale trade sales at constant 2019 prices**

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

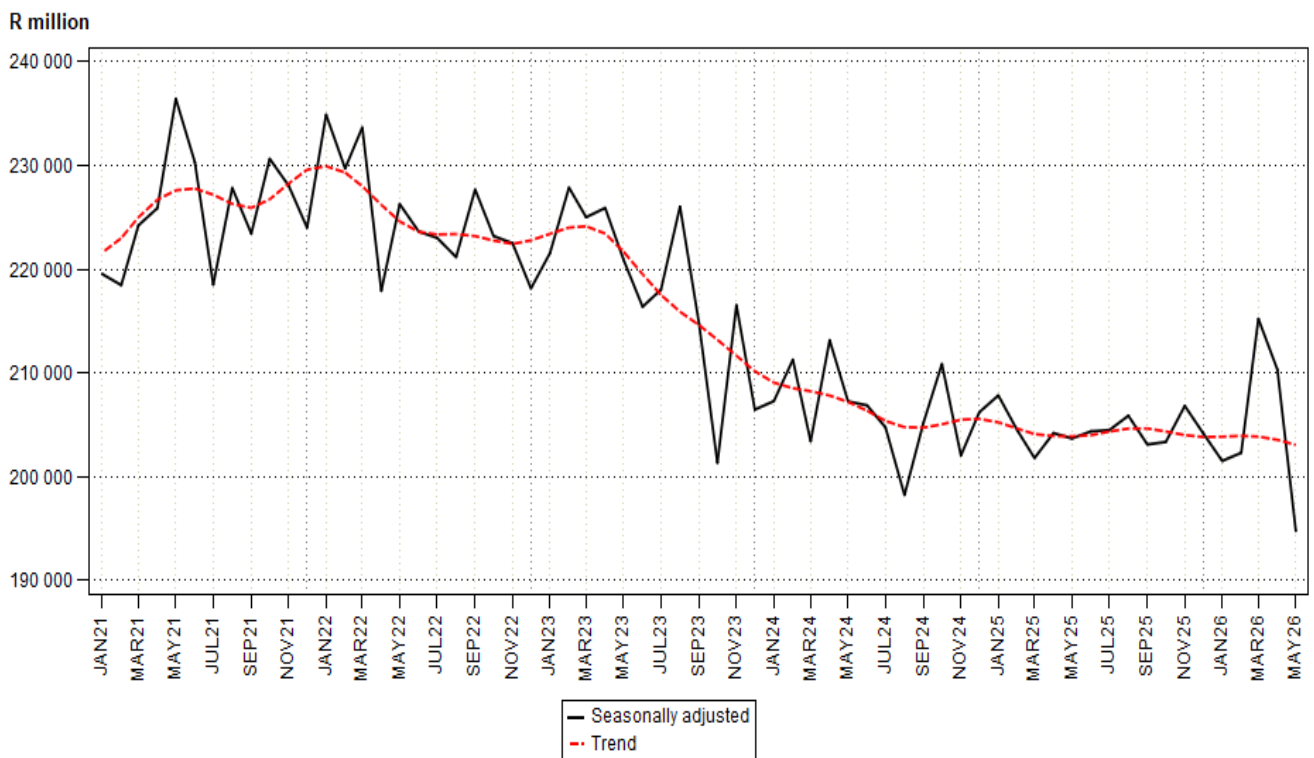
<sup>1</sup> Percentage change between the previous 3 months and the 3 months ending in the month indicated.

Measured in real terms (constant 2019 prices), wholesale trade sales decreased by 6,9% in May 2026 compared with May 2025.

Seasonally adjusted wholesale trade sales decreased by 7,4% in May 2026 compared with April 2026. This followed month-on-month changes of -2,3% in April 2026 and 6,4% in March 2026.

In the three months ended May 2026, seasonally adjusted wholesale trade sales increased by 2,0% compared with the previous three months.

**Figure 1 – Wholesale trade sales at constant 2019 prices**



## Sales at current prices: results for May 2026

**Table B – Key growth rates in wholesale trade sales at current prices**

|                                                    | Dec-25 | Jan-26 | Feb-26 | Mar-26 | Apr-26 | May-26 |
|----------------------------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Year-on-year % change, unadjusted                  | 2,6    | -3,5   | -1,5   | 10,0   | 10,9   | 4,0    |
| Month-on-month % change, seasonally adjusted       | 0,5    | -1,3   | -0,3   | 5,4    | 3,7    | -4,3   |
| 3-month % change, seasonally adjusted <sup>1</sup> | 0,7    | 0,6    | 0,1    | 0,8    | 3,8    | 5,8    |

<sup>1</sup> Percentage change between the previous 3 months and the 3 months ending in the month indicated.

Measured in nominal terms (current prices), wholesale trade sales increased by 4,0% in May 2026 compared with May 2025. The main positive contributor was dealers in solid, liquid and gaseous fuels and related products (24,2% and contributing 5,6 percentage points).

The main negative contributor was dealers in agricultural raw materials and livestock (-14,3% and contributing -1,0 percentage point) – see Table 8 and Table 9.

**Table C – Wholesale trade sales at current prices for the latest three months by type of dealer**

| Type of dealer                                       | Mar – May 2025<br>(R million) | Weight<br>(%) | Mar – May 2026<br>(R million) | % change between<br>Mar – May 2025<br>and<br>Mar – May 2026 | Contribution<br>(% points) to<br>the total %<br>change |
|------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| Fee or contract basis                                | 26 696                        | 3,2           | 24 701                        | -7,5                                                        | -0,2                                                   |
| Agricultural raw materials and livestock             | 57 400                        | 6,8           | 53 602                        | -6,6                                                        | -0,4                                                   |
| Food, beverages and tobacco                          | 132 878                       | 15,8          | 135 588                       | 2,0                                                         | 0,3                                                    |
| Textiles, clothing and footwear                      | 18 279                        | 2,2           | 18 439                        | 0,9                                                         | 0,0                                                    |
| Other household goods except precious stones         | 92 160                        | 11,0          | 96 015                        | 4,2                                                         | 0,5                                                    |
| Precious stones, jewellery and silverware            | 9 388                         | 1,1           | 9 113                         | -2,9                                                        | 0,0                                                    |
| Solid, liquid and gaseous fuels and related products | 195 507                       | 23,3          | 242 362                       | 24,0                                                        | 5,6                                                    |
| Metals and metal ores                                | 25 656                        | 3,1           | 27 571                        | 7,5                                                         | 0,2                                                    |
| Construction and building materials                  | 40 416                        | 4,8           | 43 889                        | 8,6                                                         | 0,4                                                    |
| Other intermediate products, waste and scrap         | 39 445                        | 4,7           | 48 314                        | 22,5                                                        | 1,1                                                    |
| Machinery, equipment and supplies                    | 130 854                       | 15,6          | 137 195                       | 4,8                                                         | 0,7                                                    |
| Other goods                                          | 71 088                        | 8,5           | 71 933                        | 1,2                                                         | 0,1                                                    |
| <b>Total</b>                                         | <b>839 768</b>                | <b>100,0</b>  | <b>908 723</b>                | <b>8,2</b>                                                  | <b>8,2</b>                                             |

Wholesale trade sales increased by 8,2% in the three months ended May 2026 compared with the three months ended May 2025. The main positive contributors were dealers in:

- solid, liquid and gaseous fuels and related products (24,0% and contributing 5,6 percentage points); and
- 'other' intermediate products, waste and scrap (22,5% and contributing 1,1 percentage points) – see Table C.

  
**Risenga Maluleke**  
 Statistician-General

## Tables

**Table 1 – Wholesale trade sales at constant 2019 prices (R million)**

| Month        | 2020             | 2021             | 2022             | 2023             | 2024             | 2025             | 2026    |
|--------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|---------|
| Jan          | 204 190          | 189 179          | 203 072          | 196 024          | 185 722          | 185 852          | 178 013 |
| Feb          | 216 888          | 207 572          | 218 170          | 217 175          | 208 397          | 194 870          | 192 124 |
| Mar          | 220 757          | 232 483          | 239 191          | 231 606          | 201 470          | 199 274          | 217 073 |
| Apr          | 123 747          | 207 280          | 196 853          | 199 343          | 199 274          | 188 950          | 195 246 |
| May          | 179 270          | 235 054          | 230 168          | 226 868          | 211 631          | 204 518          | 190 381 |
| Jun          | 209 346          | 233 127          | 225 623          | 221 078          | 200 571          | 202 587          |         |
| Jul          | 224 794          | 222 847          | 221 940          | 216 046          | 210 325          | 209 034          |         |
| Aug          | 218 559          | 230 394          | 226 735          | 230 690          | 202 611          | 205 666          |         |
| Sep          | 230 971          | 231 836          | 238 992          | 220 736          | 210 195          | 213 063          |         |
| Oct          | 241 382          | 247 185          | 238 798          | 220 615          | 233 236          | 226 150          |         |
| Nov          | 236 693          | 252 538          | 243 936          | 236 872          | 222 687          | 221 055          |         |
| Dec          | 219 963          | 218 825          | 210 385          | 193 927          | 196 537          | 197 816          |         |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>2 526 560</b> | <b>2 708 320</b> | <b>2 693 863</b> | <b>2 610 980</b> | <b>2 482 656</b> | <b>2 448 835</b> |         |

**Table 2 – Year-on-year percentage change in wholesale trade sales at constant 2019 prices**

| Month        | 2021       | 2022        | 2023        | 2024        | 2025        | 2026 | 2026<br>year-to-date |
|--------------|------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|------|----------------------|
| Jan          | -7,4       | 7,3         | -3,5        | -5,3        | 0,1         | -4,2 | -4,2                 |
| Feb          | -4,3       | 5,1         | -0,5        | -4,0        | -6,5        | -1,4 | -2,8                 |
| Mar          | 5,3        | 2,9         | -3,2        | -13,0       | -1,1        | 8,9  | 1,2                  |
| Apr          | 67,5       | -5,0        | 1,3         | 0,0         | -5,2        | 3,3  | 1,8                  |
| May          | 31,1       | -2,1        | -1,4        | -6,7        | -3,4        | -6,9 | -0,1                 |
| Jun          | 11,4       | -3,2        | -2,0        | -9,3        | 1,0         |      |                      |
| Jul          | -0,9       | -0,4        | -2,7        | -2,6        | -0,6        |      |                      |
| Aug          | 5,4        | -1,6        | 1,7         | -12,2       | 1,5         |      |                      |
| Sep          | 0,4        | 3,1         | -7,6        | -4,8        | 1,4         |      |                      |
| Oct          | 2,4        | -3,4        | -7,6        | 5,7         | -3,0        |      |                      |
| Nov          | 6,7        | -3,4        | -2,9        | -6,0        | -0,7        |      |                      |
| Dec          | -0,5       | -3,9        | -7,8        | 1,3         | 0,7         |      |                      |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>7,2</b> | <b>-0,5</b> | <b>-3,1</b> | <b>-4,9</b> | <b>-1,4</b> |      |                      |

**Table 3 – Seasonally adjusted wholesale trade sales at constant 2019 prices**

| Month | R million |         |         |         | Month-on-month % change |      |      |      |
|-------|-----------|---------|---------|---------|-------------------------|------|------|------|
|       | 2023      | 2024    | 2025    | 2026    | 2023                    | 2024 | 2025 | 2026 |
| Jan   | 221 543   | 207 281 | 207 829 | 201 519 | 1,6                     | 0,4  | 0,8  | -1,3 |
| Feb   | 227 856   | 211 270 | 204 459 | 202 302 | 2,8                     | 1,9  | -1,6 | 0,4  |
| Mar   | 225 001   | 203 413 | 201 795 | 215 209 | -1,3                    | -3,7 | -1,3 | 6,4  |
| Apr   | 225 894   | 213 154 | 204 204 | 210 312 | 0,4                     | 4,8  | 1,2  | -2,3 |
| May   | 220 898   | 207 253 | 203 681 | 194 780 | -2,2                    | -2,8 | -0,3 | -7,4 |
| Jun   | 216 376   | 206 872 | 204 368 |         | -2,0                    | -0,2 | 0,3  |      |
| Jul   | 218 021   | 204 753 | 204 489 |         | 0,8                     | -1,0 | 0,1  |      |
| Aug   | 226 025   | 198 231 | 205 875 |         | 3,7                     | -3,2 | 0,7  |      |
| Sep   | 214 760   | 205 209 | 203 104 |         | -5,0                    | 3,5  | -1,3 |      |
| Oct   | 201 336   | 210 857 | 203 347 |         | -6,3                    | 2,8  | 0,1  |      |
| Nov   | 216 538   | 202 046 | 206 821 |         | 7,6                     | -4,2 | 1,7  |      |
| Dec   | 206 467   | 206 216 | 204 184 |         | -4,7                    | 2,1  | -1,3 |      |

**Table 4 – Wholesale trade sales at current prices (R million)**

| Month        | 2020             | 2021             | 2022             | 2023             | 2024             | 2025             | 2026    |
|--------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|---------|
| Jan          | 207 083          | 194 533          | 239 828          | 266 435          | 260 708          | 261 741          | 252 520 |
| Feb          | 219 939          | 216 940          | 261 247          | 295 097          | 294 123          | 275 643          | 271 515 |
| Mar          | 222 733          | 246 364          | 296 988          | 315 347          | 287 757          | 282 286          | 310 447 |
| Apr          | 122 238          | 222 475          | 249 911          | 272 373          | 287 186          | 267 930          | 297 204 |
| May          | 173 998          | 252 961          | 300 215          | 310 875          | 306 584          | 289 552          | 301 072 |
| Jun          | 205 257          | 252 585          | 301 209          | 300 775          | 287 369          | 286 788          |         |
| Jul          | 225 090          | 244 124          | 303 536          | 295 929          | 299 030          | 298 820          |         |
| Aug          | 221 462          | 254 840          | 307 137          | 319 695          | 286 786          | 294 083          |         |
| Sep          | 233 968          | 259 712          | 326 076          | 314 195          | 295 309          | 303 614          |         |
| Oct          | 245 678          | 279 541          | 328 256          | 318 181          | 324 867          | 321 989          |         |
| Nov          | 240 723          | 291 796          | 334 862          | 340 969          | 311 620          | 315 681          |         |
| Dec          | 223 682          | 257 628          | 290 683          | 275 660          | 275 649          | 282 920          |         |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>2 541 851</b> | <b>2 973 499</b> | <b>3 539 948</b> | <b>3 625 531</b> | <b>3 516 988</b> | <b>3 481 047</b> |         |

**Table 5 – Year-on-year percentage change in wholesale trade sales at current prices**

| Month        | 2021        | 2022        | 2023       | 2024        | 2025        | 2026 | 2026<br>year-to-date |
|--------------|-------------|-------------|------------|-------------|-------------|------|----------------------|
| Jan          | -6,1        | 23,3        | 11,1       | -2,1        | 0,4         | -3,5 | -3,5                 |
| Feb          | -1,4        | 20,4        | 13,0       | -0,3        | -6,3        | -1,5 | -2,5                 |
| Mar          | 10,6        | 20,5        | 6,2        | -8,7        | -1,9        | 10,0 | 1,8                  |
| Apr          | 82,0        | 12,3        | 9,0        | 5,4         | -6,7        | 10,9 | 4,1                  |
| May          | 45,4        | 18,7        | 3,6        | -1,4        | -5,6        | 4,0  | 4,0                  |
| Jun          | 23,1        | 19,3        | -0,1       | -4,5        | -0,2        |      |                      |
| Jul          | 8,5         | 24,3        | -2,5       | 1,0         | -0,1        |      |                      |
| Aug          | 15,1        | 20,5        | 4,1        | -10,3       | 2,5         |      |                      |
| Sep          | 11,0        | 25,6        | -3,6       | -6,0        | 2,8         |      |                      |
| Oct          | 13,8        | 17,4        | -3,1       | 2,1         | -0,9        |      |                      |
| Nov          | 21,2        | 14,8        | 1,8        | -8,6        | 1,3         |      |                      |
| Dec          | 15,2        | 12,8        | -5,2       | 0,0         | 2,6         |      |                      |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>17,0</b> | <b>19,0</b> | <b>2,4</b> | <b>-3,0</b> | <b>-1,0</b> |      |                      |

**Table 6 – Seasonally adjusted wholesale trade sales at current prices**

| Month | R million |         |         |         | Month-on-month % change |      |      |      |
|-------|-----------|---------|---------|---------|-------------------------|------|------|------|
|       | 2023      | 2024    | 2025    | 2026    | 2023                    | 2024 | 2025 | 2026 |
| Jan   | 304 522   | 296 371 | 299 099 | 290 644 | 0,7                     | 1,1  | 3,0  | -1,3 |
| Feb   | 314 434   | 303 519 | 293 752 | 289 909 | 3,3                     | 2,4  | -1,8 | -0,3 |
| Mar   | 304 862   | 291 500 | 279 661 | 305 511 | -3,0                    | -4,0 | -4,8 | 5,4  |
| Apr   | 300 711   | 301 106 | 288 917 | 316 838 | -1,4                    | 3,3  | 3,3  | 3,7  |
| May   | 303 048   | 299 577 | 286 267 | 303 151 | 0,8                     | -0,5 | -0,9 | -4,3 |
| Jun   | 295 808   | 290 503 | 286 243 |         | -2,4                    | -3,0 | 0,0  |      |
| Jul   | 296 189   | 292 139 | 291 462 |         | 0,1                     | 0,6  | 1,8  |      |
| Aug   | 310 701   | 279 860 | 291 937 |         | 4,9                     | -4,2 | 0,2  |      |
| Sep   | 304 223   | 286 191 | 289 788 |         | -2,1                    | 2,3  | -0,7 |      |
| Oct   | 291 905   | 294 706 | 291 076 |         | -4,0                    | 3,0  | 0,4  |      |
| Nov   | 313 632   | 284 411 | 293 233 |         | 7,4                     | -3,5 | 0,7  |      |
| Dec   | 293 231   | 290 325 | 294 575 |         | -6,5                    | 2,1  | 0,5  |      |

**Table 7 – Wholesale trade sales at current prices by type of dealer (R million)**

| Type of dealer                                       | Dec-25         | Jan-26         | Feb-26         | Mar-26         | Apr-26         | May-26         |
|------------------------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Fee or contract basis                                | 10 573         | 8 002          | 7 118          | 7 317          | 8 562          | 8 822          |
| Agricultural raw materials and livestock             | 21 395         | 16 747         | 19 335         | 19 660         | 16 263         | 17 679         |
| Food, beverages and tobacco                          | 54 362         | 44 372         | 45 253         | 48 408         | 43 293         | 43 887         |
| Textiles, clothing and footwear                      | 4 446          | 4 494          | 5 351          | 6 609          | 6 772          | 5 058          |
| Other household goods except precious stones         | 31 185         | 26 812         | 29 487         | 34 498         | 30 643         | 30 874         |
| Precious stones, jewellery and silverware            | 2 350          | 1 542          | 2 761          | 2 774          | 3 284          | 3 055          |
| Solid, liquid and gaseous fuels and related products | 58 202         | 56 344         | 57 682         | 74 190         | 84 963         | 83 209         |
| Metals and metal ores                                | 6 310          | 7 005          | 8 226          | 9 684          | 8 681          | 9 206          |
| Construction and building materials                  | 11 914         | 11 204         | 14 862         | 15 321         | 13 844         | 14 724         |
| Other intermediate products, waste and scrap         | 15 922         | 15 803         | 14 521         | 15 735         | 14 865         | 17 714         |
| Machinery, equipment and supplies                    | 40 006         | 39 078         | 43 689         | 51 988         | 41 834         | 43 373         |
| Other goods                                          | 26 256         | 21 116         | 23 231         | 24 263         | 24 200         | 23 470         |
| <b>Total</b>                                         | <b>282 920</b> | <b>252 520</b> | <b>271 515</b> | <b>310 447</b> | <b>297 204</b> | <b>301 072</b> |

**Table 8 – Year-on-year percentage change in wholesale trade sales at current prices by type of dealer**

| Type of dealer                                       | Dec-25     | Jan-26      | Feb-26      | Mar-26      | Apr-26      | May-26     |
|------------------------------------------------------|------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|------------|
| Fee or contract basis                                | 9,6        | 2,1         | 1,8         | -5,0        | 2,0         | -16,8      |
| Agricultural raw materials and livestock             | -1,7       | -5,7        | -8,8        | -4,0        | -0,2        | -14,3      |
| Food, beverages and tobacco                          | 7,5        | 16,0        | 14,7        | 14,0        | -3,9        | -3,3       |
| Textiles, clothing and footwear                      | 5,9        | -3,8        | -4,2        | -0,4        | 5,9         | -3,7       |
| Other household goods except precious stones         | 5,8        | -8,4        | -1,1        | 6,3         | 6,5         | -0,2       |
| Precious stones, jewellery and silverware            | -38,2      | -42,1       | -38,2       | 15,4        | 6,5         | -21,7      |
| Solid, liquid and gaseous fuels and related products | -2,6       | -16,6       | -6,5        | 14,3        | 33,6        | 24,2       |
| Metals and metal ores                                | 6,9        | -5,7        | 4,2         | 10,4        | 9,5         | 2,8        |
| Construction and building materials                  | 7,4        | -2,0        | 11,0        | 8,8         | 7,8         | 9,2        |
| Other intermediate products, waste and scrap         | 2,8        | 7,4         | -0,9        | 21,6        | 17,5        | 27,9       |
| Machinery, equipment and supplies                    | 1,1        | 1,2         | -10,9       | 12,1        | 2,2         | -0,5       |
| Other goods                                          | 7,8        | -1,6        | 8,2         | 5,1         | 9,9         | -9,7       |
| <b>Total</b>                                         | <b>2,6</b> | <b>-3,5</b> | <b>-1,5</b> | <b>10,0</b> | <b>10,9</b> | <b>4,0</b> |

**Table 9 – Contribution of type of dealer to the year-on-year percentage change in wholesale trade sales at current prices**

| Type of dealer                                       | Dec-25     | Jan-26      | Feb-26      | Mar-26      | Apr-26      | May-26     |
|------------------------------------------------------|------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|------------|
| Fee or contract basis                                | 0,3        | 0,1         | 0,0         | -0,1        | 0,1         | -0,6       |
| Agricultural raw materials and livestock             | -0,1       | -0,4        | -0,7        | -0,3        | 0,0         | -1,0       |
| Food, beverages and tobacco                          | 1,4        | 2,3         | 2,1         | 2,1         | -0,7        | -0,5       |
| Textiles, clothing and footwear                      | 0,1        | -0,1        | -0,1        | 0,0         | 0,1         | -0,1       |
| Other household goods except precious stones         | 0,6        | -0,9        | -0,1        | 0,7         | 0,7         | 0,0        |
| Precious stones, jewellery and silverware            | -0,5       | -0,4        | -0,6        | 0,1         | 0,1         | -0,3       |
| Solid, liquid and gaseous fuels and related products | -0,6       | -4,3        | -1,5        | 3,3         | 8,0         | 5,6        |
| Metals and metal ores                                | 0,1        | -0,2        | 0,1         | 0,3         | 0,3         | 0,1        |
| Construction and building materials                  | 0,3        | -0,1        | 0,5         | 0,4         | 0,4         | 0,4        |
| Other intermediate products, waste and scrap         | 0,2        | 0,4         | 0,0         | 1,0         | 0,8         | 1,3        |
| Machinery, equipment and supplies                    | 0,2        | 0,2         | -1,9        | 2,0         | 0,3         | -0,1       |
| Other goods                                          | 0,7        | -0,1        | 0,6         | 0,4         | 0,8         | -0,9       |
| <b>Total</b>                                         | <b>2,6</b> | <b>-3,5</b> | <b>-1,5</b> | <b>10,0</b> | <b>10,9</b> | <b>4,0</b> |

## Explanatory notes

|                              |          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|------------------------------|----------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Introduction</b>          | <b>1</b> | Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) conducts a monthly survey covering enterprises in the wholesale trade industry (see point 3 below). This survey is based on a sample drawn from Stats SA's 2025 statistical business register (SBR) that contains businesses registered at the South African Revenue Service (SARS) for value-added tax (VAT) and income tax (IT). Stats SA continuously updates its SBR, which is linked to the SARS administrative data. Published wholesale trade sales estimates exclude VAT.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Purpose of the survey</b> | <b>2</b> | The results of the monthly wholesale trade sales survey are used to compile estimates of the gross domestic product (GDP) and its components, which are used in monitoring the state of the economy and formulation of economic policy. These statistics are also used in the analysis of comparative business and industry performance.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Scope of the survey</b>   | <b>3</b> | <p>This survey covers wholesale enterprises according to the following types of dealers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• wholesale trade on a fee or contract basis – sales by commission agents, commodity brokers, auctioneers and 'other' wholesale trade on a fee or contract basis;</li> <li>• wholesale trade in agricultural raw materials and livestock;</li> <li>• wholesale trade in food, beverages and tobacco;</li> <li>• wholesale trade in textiles, clothing and footwear;</li> <li>• wholesale trade in 'other' household goods except precious stones. This group includes wholesale trade in household furniture, requisites and appliances, wholesale trade in books and stationery, wholesale trade in pharmaceuticals and toiletries and wholesale trade in 'other' household goods not elsewhere classified;</li> <li>• wholesale trade in precious stones, jewellery and silverware;</li> <li>• wholesale trade in solid, liquid and gaseous fuels and related products;</li> <li>• wholesale trade in metals and metal ores;</li> <li>• wholesale trade in construction materials, hardware, plumbing and heating equipment and supplies;</li> <li>• wholesale trade in 'other' intermediate products, waste and scrap;</li> <li>• wholesale trade in machinery, equipment and supplies; and</li> <li>• wholesale trade in 'other' goods. This group covers general wholesale trade and 'other' wholesale trade not classified elsewhere.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Classification</b>        | <b>4</b> | The 1993 edition of the <i>Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities</i> (SIC), Fifth Edition, Report No. 09-90-02, was used to classify the statistical units in the survey. The SIC is based on the 1990 <i>International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities</i> (ISIC) with suitable adaptations for local conditions. Each enterprise is classified to the industry which reflects its predominant activity. Statistics in this publication are presented at SIC group four-digit level.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Collection rate</b>       | <b>5</b> | The preliminary collection rate for the survey on wholesale trade sales for May 2026 was 74,0%. The revised collection rate for April 2026 was 78,6%.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |

**Statistical unit** 6 The statistical unit for which information is compiled and published is the enterprise, defined as a legal unit or a combination of legal units that includes and directly controls all functions necessary to carry out its sales activities. The statistical units are derived from and linked to the South African Revenue Service (SARS) administrative data.

**Revised figures** 7 Revised figures are mainly due to late submission of data to Stats SA, or respondents reporting revisions or corrections to their figures. The reasons for routine revisions are outlined in the following schedule. Any unscheduled revisions will be promptly indicated in relevant tables to maintain transparency and accuracy. It is important to note that seasonally adjusted figures are revised monthly.

| Statistical release                                                             | Reason for revision                                                          | Period subject to revision |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| May-26                                                                          | Additional information from respondents                                      | Apr-26                     |
| Jun-26                                                                          | Additional information from respondents                                      | May-26                     |
| Jul-26                                                                          | Additional information from respondents                                      | Jun-26                     |
| Aug-26                                                                          | Additional information from respondents                                      | Jul-26                     |
| Sep-26                                                                          | Additional information from respondents                                      | Aug-26                     |
| Oct-26                                                                          | Additional information from respondents                                      | Sep-26                     |
| Nov-26                                                                          | Additional information from respondents                                      | Oct-26                     |
| Dec-26                                                                          | Additional information from respondents                                      | Nov-26                     |
| Jan-27                                                                          | Additional information from respondents<br>New base year for constant prices | Jan-98 - Dec-26            |
| Feb-27                                                                          | Additional information from respondents                                      | Jan-27                     |
| Mar-27                                                                          | Additional information from respondents                                      | Feb-27                     |
| Apr-27                                                                          | Additional information from respondents                                      | Mar-27                     |
| New base year in 2026/27 - periodic, approximately four- to five-year intervals |                                                                              |                            |

**Related publications** 8 Users may also refer to the *Stats in Brief* publication available from Stats SA.

**Rounding-off of figures** 9 Where figures have been rounded off, discrepancies may occur between sums of the component items and the totals.

**Historical data** 10 Historical wholesale trade sales data are available on the Stats SA website. To access the data electronically, use the following link:  
[Click to download historical data.](#)

**Past publications** 11 Past wholesale trade sales releases are available on the Stats SA website. To access the releases electronically, use the following link:  
[Click to download past releases.](#)

## Technical notes

### Survey methodology and design

- 1 The survey is conducted monthly. Questionnaires are sent to a sample of 1 730 enterprises from a population of 18 170 enterprises. Completed questionnaires are required to be returned to Stats SA within 10 days after the end of the reference month. Email and telephone reminders are used to follow up on non-respondents.
- 2 A stratified random sample was drawn at the SIC four-digit level in April 2025 from Stats SA's statistical business register (SBR). Strata were formed using a combination of Standard Industrial Classification and the measure of size classes for enterprises (see point 3 below). The Neyman optimal allocation formula given below was used to allocate samples to each stratum:

$$n_h = n * ( N_h * S_h ) / [ \sum ( N_i * S_i ) ].$$

Neyman allocation formula not only allocates sample sizes to each stratum but also calculates the relative precision for each stratum as well as the relative precision for all strata. The relative precision for these strata was 5,25%.

### Class limits

- 3 The wholesale sampling frame is divided into four size groups. All large enterprises (size group one) are completely enumerated. Simple random sampling is applied to the remaining size groups (medium, small and very small). The total value of sales of the large enterprises (size group one) is added to the weighted totals of size groups two, three and four to reflect the total value of sales.

#### Measure of size classes (Rand)

| Enterprise size | Size group | Lower limit | Upper limit |
|-----------------|------------|-------------|-------------|
| Very small      | 4          | 6 738 900   | 36 000 000  |
| Small           | 3          | 36 000 001  | 192 000 000 |
| Medium          | 2          | 192 000 001 | 384 000 000 |
| Large           | 1          | 384 000 001 |             |

### Sample weighting

- 4 For those strata not completely enumerated, the weights to produce estimates are the inverse ratio of the sampling fraction, modified to take account of non-response in the survey. Stratum estimates are calculated and then aggregated with the completely enumerated stratum to form group estimates. These procedures are consistent with international best practice.

### Seasonal adjustment

- 5 Seasonally adjusted estimates are generated each month using the X-12-ARIMA Seasonal Adjustment Program developed by the United States Census Bureau. Seasonal adjustment is a means of removing the estimated effects of normal seasonal variation from the series so that the effects of other influences on the series can be more clearly recognised. Seasonal adjustment does not aim to remove irregular or non-seasonal influences that may be present in any particular month. Influences that are volatile or unsystematic can still make it difficult to interpret the movement of the series even after adjustment for seasonal variations. Therefore, the month-to-month movements of seasonally adjusted estimates may not be reliable indicators of trend behaviour. The X-12-ARIMA procedure for wholesale trade sales is described in more detail on the Stats SA website:  
[Click to download seasonal adjustment wholesale trade sales February 2022.](#)

### Trend cycle

- 6 The trend is the long-term pattern or movement of a time series. The X-12-ARIMA Seasonal Adjustment Program is used for smoothing seasonally adjusted estimates to estimates of the underlying trend cycle.

**Constant prices**

- 7** Stats SA compiles its monthly estimates of wholesale trade sales at current prices from a survey of wholesalers in the formal sector. From January 1998 to December 2011, wholesale trade sales at constant prices were calculated using the 'all groups' PPI for domestic output, but excluding electricity and other utilities.

From January 2012, wholesale trade sales at constant prices are compiled as follows:

- (1) Deflate sales of dealers in agricultural raw materials and livestock using the PPI for agriculture.
- (2) Deflate sales of dealers in food, beverages and tobacco using the final manufacturing PPI for food products, beverages and tobacco.
- (3) Deflate sales of dealers in textiles, clothing and footwear using the final manufacturing PPI for textiles, clothing and footwear.
- (4) Deflate sales of dealers in solid, liquid and gaseous fuels and related products using the final manufacturing PPI for coal and petroleum products.
- (5) Deflate sales of dealers in machinery, equipment and supplies using the final manufacturing PPIs for general and special purpose machinery; household appliances and office machinery; and electrical machinery and communication and metering equipment.
- (6) Deflate the remaining wholesale trade sales using the headline PPI (final manufacturing) excluding the PPIs for food products, beverages and tobacco; textiles, clothing and footwear; coal and petroleum products; general and special purpose machinery; household appliances and office machinery; electrical machinery and communication and metering equipment; and transport equipment. The PPI for transport equipment is excluded because it measures producer prices of motor vehicles, which are not included in wholesale trade.

Total wholesale trade sales at constant prices are obtained by aggregating (1) to (6).

**Reliability of estimates**

- 8** Data presented in this publication are based on information obtained from a sample and are, therefore, subject to sampling variability; that is, they may differ from the figures that would have been produced if the data had been obtained from all enterprises in the wholesale industry in South Africa. Estimates are subject to sampling and non-sampling errors.
- 9** Inaccuracies may occur because of imperfections in reporting by enterprises and errors made in the collection and processing of the data. Inaccuracies of this kind are referred to as non-sampling errors. Every effort is made to minimise non-sampling errors by careful design of questionnaires, testing them in pilot studies, editing reported data and implementing efficient operating procedures. Fluctuations may occur in consecutive months as a result of seasonal and economic factors.

- Relative standard error** 10 One measure is the standard error (SE), which indicates the extent to which an estimate might have varied by chance because only a sample of enterprises was used. The relative standard error (RSE) provides an immediate indication of the percentage errors likely to have occurred due to sampling, and thus avoids the need to refer to the size of the estimate.

**Estimates of total wholesale trade sales within 95% confidence limits – May 2026**

|                       | Lower limit<br>(R million) | Sales<br>(R million) | Upper limit<br>(R million) | Relative<br>standard error<br>(RSE)<br>% |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|----------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| Wholesale trade sales | 292 975                    | 301 072              | 309 170                    | 1,3                                      |

- Month-on-month percentage change** 11 The month-on-month percentage change in a variable for any given month is the change between that month and the previous month, expressed as a percentage of the latter.
- Year-on-year percentage change** 12 The year-on-year percentage change in a variable for any given period is the change between that period and the corresponding period of the previous year, expressed as a percentage of the latter.
- Contribution (percentage points)** 13 The contribution (percentage points) to the year-on-year percentage change is calculated by multiplying the percentage change of each type of wholesaler by its corresponding weight, divided by 100. The weight is the percentage contribution of each type of wholesaler to total wholesale trade sales in the corresponding period of the previous year.

## Glossary

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

**Industry** An industry is made up of enterprises engaged in the same or similar kinds of economic activity. Industries are defined in the *System of National Accounts* (SNA) in the same way as in the *Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities* (SIC), Fifth Edition, Report No. 09-90-02 of January 1993.

**Symbols and abbreviations**

|          |                                                                             |
|----------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| GDP      | Gross domestic product                                                      |
| ISIC     | International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities |
| SARS     | South African Revenue Service                                               |
| SBR      | Statistical Business Register                                               |
| SIC      | Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities               |
| Stats SA | Statistics South Africa                                                     |
| VAT      | Value-added tax                                                             |
| *        | Revised figures                                                             |

**Wholesale trade** 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.

**Wholesaler** A wholesaler is an enterprise deriving 50% or more of its turnover from sales of goods to other businesses and institutions.

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## General information

Stats SA publishes approximately 300 different statistical releases each year. It is not economically viable to produce them in more than one of South Africa's 12 official languages. Since the releases are used extensively locally and by international economic and social-scientific communities, Stats SA releases are published in English only.

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A release calendar is disseminated on [www.statssa.gov.za](http://www.statssa.gov.za).

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## General enquiries

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