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Department:
Statistics South Africa
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Private Bag X44, Pretoria, 0001, South Africa, ISibalo House, Koch Street, Salvokop, Pretoria, 0002
www.statssa.gov.za, info@statssa.gov.za, Tel +27 12 310 8911

STATISTICAL RELEASE

P6242.1

Retail trade sales (Preliminary)

January 2023

This release provides an analysis of revisions. If you have any questions or comments, please send these to Keshnee Naidoo, keshneen@statssa.gov.za.

**Embargoed until:
15 March 2023
13:00**

ENQUIRIES:
Keshnee Naidoo
(072) 310 3798

FORTHCOMING ISSUE:
February 2023

EXPECTED RELEASE DATE:
19 April 2023

Dipalopalo tsa Aforikaborwa • Dipalopalo tsa Aforika Borwa • Ezazibalo zaseNingizimu Afrika • Tshitatistika Afrika Tshipembe • Tinhlayo Afrika-Dzonga

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IMPROVING LIVES THROUGH DATA ECOSYSTEMS



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Sales at constant 2019 prices: results for January 2023

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

	Aug-22	Sep-22	Oct-22	Nov-22	Dec-22	Jan-23
Year-on-year % change, unadjusted	2,1	-0,4	-0,7	0,8	-0,5	-0,8
Month-on-month % change, seasonally adjusted	-0,6	-0,2	0,3	1,1	-0,5	1,5
3-month % change, seasonally adjusted 1/	-1,3	-1,0	-0,8	-0,1	0,4	1,3

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

Measured in real terms (constant 2019 prices), retail trade sales decreased by 0,8% year-on-year in January 2023. The largest negative contributors to this decrease were retailers in:

- food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores (-7,3% and contributing -0,7 of a percentage point); and
- hardware, paint and glass (-4,8% and contributing -0,4 of a percentage point) – see Tables 5 and 6.

Seasonally adjusted retail trade sales increased by 1,5% in January 2023 compared with December 2022. This followed month-on-month changes of -0,5% in December 2022 and 1,1% in November 2022.

Table B – Retail trade sales at constant 2019 prices for the latest three months by type of retailer

Type of retailer	Nov 2021 – Jan 2022 (R million)	Weight (%)	Nov 2022 – Jan 2023 (R million)	% change between Nov 2021 – Jan 2022 and Nov 2022 – Jan 2023	Contribution (% points) to the total % change
General dealers	134 267	42,0	134 202	0,0	0,0
Food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores	27 046	8,5	25 915	-4,2	-0,4
Pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries	20 924	6,5	20 078	-4,0	-0,3
Textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods	62 659	19,6	65 348	4,3	0,8
Household furniture, appliances and equipment	15 953	5,0	16 201	1,6	0,1
Hardware, paint and glass	24 821	7,8	23 475	-5,4	-0,4
All other retailers	33 796	10,6	33 723	-0,2	0,0
Total	319 466	100,0	318 942	-0,2	-0,2

Retail trade sales decreased by 0,2% in the three months ended January 2023 compared with the three months ended January 2022. The largest negative contributors to this decrease were retailers in:

- hardware, paint and glass (-5,4% and contributing -0,4 of a percentage point);
- food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores (-4,2% and contributing -0,4 of a percentage point); and
- pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries (-4,0% and contributing -0,3 of a percentage point).

The largest positive contributor was retailers in textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods (4,3% and contributing 0,8 of a percentage point) – see Table B.

Table C – Seasonally adjusted retail trade sales at constant 2019 prices for the latest three months by type of retailer

Type of retailer	Aug – Oct 2022 (R million)	Weight (%)	Nov 2022 – Jan 2023 (R million)	% change between Aug – Oct 2022 and Nov 2022 – Jan 2023	Contribution (% points) to the total % change
General dealers	123 553	44,1	123 345	-0,2	-0,1
Food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores	22 673	8,1	23 016	1,5	0,1
Pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries	19 840	7,1	19 740	-0,5	0,0
Textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods	48 863	17,4	51 290	5,0	0,9
Household furniture, appliances and equipment	13 724	4,9	13 794	0,5	0,0
Hardware, paint and glass	22 645	8,1	22 733	0,4	0,0
All other retailers	28 999	10,3	30 126	3,9	0,4
Total	280 296	100,0	284 043	1,3	1,3

Seasonally adjusted retail trade sales increased by 1,3% in the three months ended January 2023 compared with the previous three months. The largest contributors to this increase were:

- retailers in textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods (5,0% and contributing 0,9 of a percentage point); and
- all 'other' retailers (3,9% and contributing 0,4 of a percentage point) – see Table C.

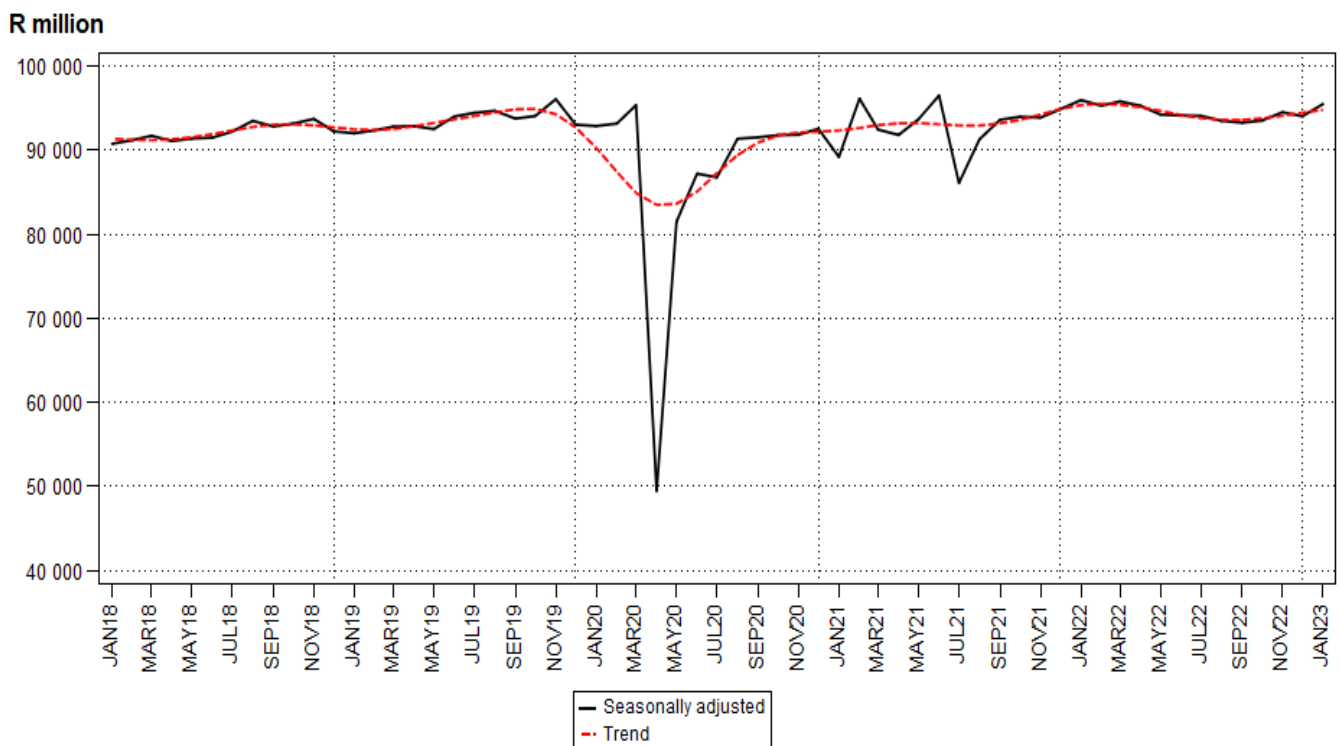
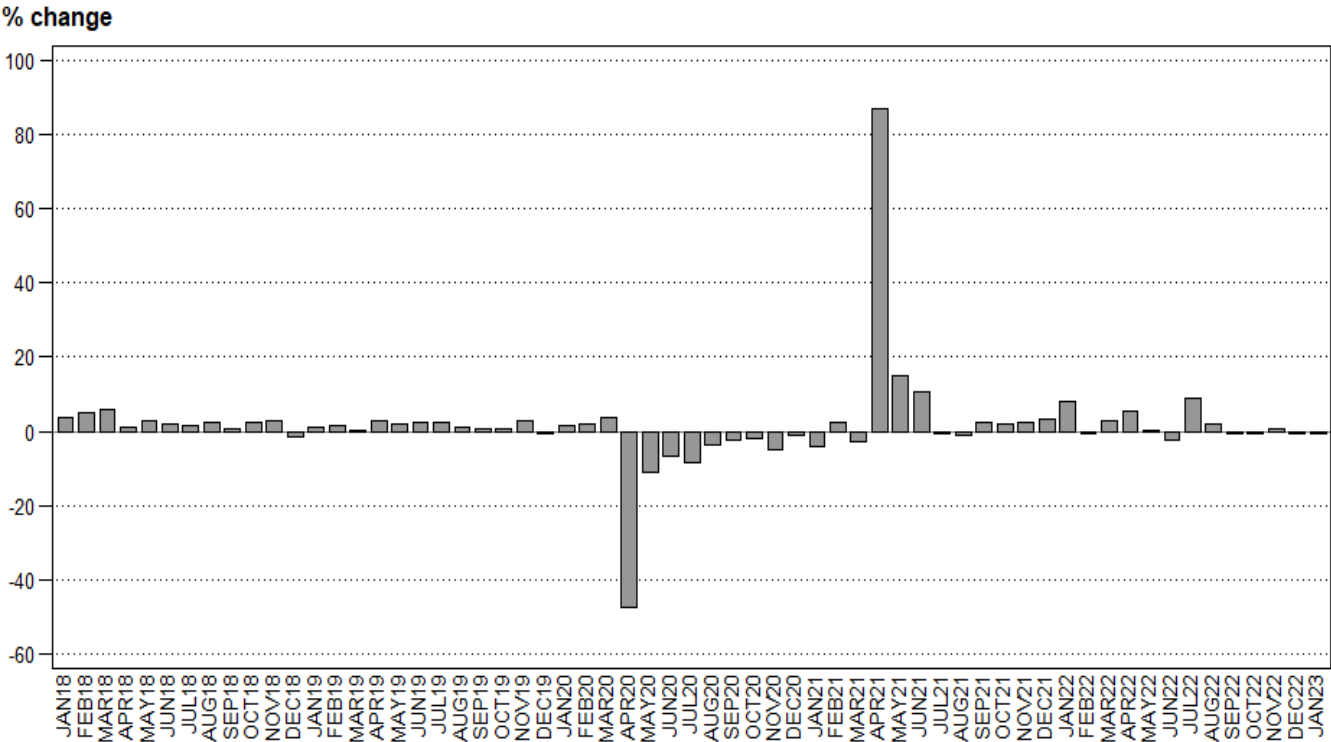
Figure 1 – Retail trade sales at constant 2019 prices

Figure 2 – Retail trade sales at constant 2019 prices: year-on-year percentage change



Sales at current prices: results for January 2023

Table D – Key growth rates in retail trade sales at current prices

	Aug-22	Sep-22	Oct-22	Nov-22	Dec-22	Jan-23
Year-on-year % change, unadjusted	8,5	6,4	6,0	7,7	6,3	6,5
Month-on-month % change, seasonally adjusted	-0,1	0,4	0,7	1,5	0,1	2,1
3-month % change, seasonally adjusted 1/	0,8	0,8	0,9	1,4	1,9	2,8

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

Table E – Retail trade sales at current prices for the latest three months by type of retailer

Type of retailer	Nov 2021 – Jan 2022 (R million)	Weight (%)	Nov 2022 – Jan 2023 (R million)	% change between Nov 2021 – Jan 2022 and Nov 2022 – Jan 2023	Contribution (% points) to the total % change
General dealers	147 126	43,1	162 171	10,2	4,4
Food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores	30 657	9,0	31 942	4,2	0,4
Pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries	23 087	6,8	23 536	1,9	0,1
Textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods	63 528	18,6	68 029	7,1	1,3
Household furniture, appliances and equipment	15 829	4,6	16 316	3,1	0,1
Hardware, paint and glass	26 987	7,9	27 446	1,7	0,1
All other retailers	33 821	9,9	34 834	3,0	0,3
Total	341 036	100,0	364 274	6,8	6,8

Table F – Seasonally adjusted retail trade sales at current prices for the latest three months by type of retailer

Type of retailer	Aug – Oct 2022 (R million)	Weight (%)	Nov 2022 – Jan 2023 (R million)	% change between Aug – Oct 2022 and Nov 2022 – Jan 2023	Contribution (% points) to the total % change
General dealers	145 967	46,1	148 695	1,9	0,9
Food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores	27 451	8,7	28 383	3,4	0,3
Pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries	22 971	7,3	23 221	1,1	0,1
Textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods	50 672	16,0	53 396	5,4	0,9
Household furniture, appliances and equipment	13 780	4,4	13 930	1,1	0,0
Hardware, paint and glass	26 078	8,2	26 628	2,1	0,2
All other retailers	29 448	9,3	31 095	5,6	0,5
Total	316 366	100,0	325 350	2,8	2,8

Risenga Maluleke
Statistician-General

Tables

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

Month	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023 1/
Jan	80 369	83 447	84 492	85 721	82 408	89 055	88 307
Feb	81 253	85 374	86 614	88 330	90 505	89 914	
Mar	84 281	89 187	89 408	92 714	90 310	92 713	
Apr	84 086	84 915	87 307	45 754	85 654	90 389	
May	87 546	90 051	91 822	81 544	93 829	93 906	
Jun	85 184	86 977	89 281	83 143	91 985	89 880	
Jul	85 392	86 704	88 641	81 318	80 897	88 057	
Aug	89 293	91 389	92 568	89 087	87 990	89 856	
Sep	88 677	89 182	89 743	87 598	89 525	89 125	
Oct	88 329	90 296	90 998	89 176	90 925	90 268	
Nov	101 234	104 135	107 171	102 058	104 290	105 109	
Dec	126 094	124 041	123 820	122 354	126 121	125 526	
Total	1 081 738	1 105 698	1 121 865	1 048 797	1 114 439	1 133 798	

1/ Figures for the latest month are preliminary.

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

Month	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2023 year-to-date
Jan	3,8	1,3	1,5	-3,9	8,1	-0,8	-0,8
Feb	5,1	1,5	2,0	2,5	-0,7		
Mar	5,8	0,2	3,7	-2,6	2,7		
Apr	1,0	2,8	-47,6	87,2	5,5		
May	2,9	2,0	-11,2	15,1	0,1		
Jun	2,1	2,6	-6,9	10,6	-2,3		
Jul	1,5	2,2	-8,3	-0,5	8,9		
Aug	2,3	1,3	-3,8	-1,2	2,1		
Sep	0,6	0,6	-2,4	2,2	-0,4		
Oct	2,2	0,8	-2,0	2,0	-0,7		
Nov	2,9	2,9	-4,8	2,2	0,8		
Dec	-1,6	-0,2	-1,2	3,1	-0,5		
Total	2,2	1,5	-6,5	6,3	1,7		

Table 3 – Seasonally adjusted retail trade sales at constant 2019 prices

Month	R million				Month-on-month % change			
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2020	2021	2022	2023
Jan	92 880	89 202	95 963	95 485	-0,2	-3,6	1,1	1,5
Feb	93 166	96 138	95 298		0,3	7,8	-0,7	
Mar	95 358	92 451	95 812		2,4	-3,8	0,5	
Apr	49 413	91 812	95 282		-48,2	-0,7	-0,6	
May	81 489	93 686	94 236		64,9	2,0	-1,1	
Jun	87 207	96 508	94 132		7,0	3,0	-0,1	
Jul	86 764	86 098	94 086		-0,5	-10,8	0,0	
Aug	91 362	91 298	93 497		5,3	6,0	-0,6	
Sep	91 534	93 621	93 275		0,2	2,5	-0,2	
Oct	91 784	93 974	93 524		0,3	0,4	0,3	
Nov	91 840	93 877	94 517		0,1	-0,1	1,1	
Dec	92 549	94 878	94 041		0,8	1,1	-0,5	

Table 4 – Retail trade sales at constant 2019 prices by type of retailer (R million)

Type of retailer	Aug-22	Sep-22	Oct-22	Nov-22	Dec-22	Jan-23 1/
General dealers	40 972	41 460	37 950	45 602	52 197	36 403
Food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores	7 124	7 126	8 026	7 627	10 882	7 406
Pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries	6 940	6 252	6 927	6 277	7 027	6 774
Textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods	13 676	13 520	15 132	20 242	29 050	16 056
Household furniture, appliances and equipment	4 369	4 201	4 497	6 019	6 119	4 063
Hardware, paint and glass	7 884	7 827	8 142	8 729	7 941	6 805
All other retailers	8 891	8 739	9 594	10 613	12 310	10 800
Total	89 856	89 125	90 268	105 109	125 526	88 307

1/ Figures are preliminary.

Table 5 – Year-on-year percentage change in retail trade sales at constant 2019 prices by type of retailer

Type of retailer	Aug-22	Sep-22	Oct-22	Nov-22	Dec-22	Jan-23
General dealers	6,0	1,7	-0,4	0,3	-0,6	0,3
Food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores	-5,6	-8,1	-2,4	-4,4	-1,8	-7,3
Pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries	-2,3	-4,8	-3,8	-5,3	-4,8	-2,0
Textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods	5,7	4,4	2,9	7,7	3,1	2,3
Household furniture, appliances and equipment	2,9	1,5	1,7	5,6	-0,3	-1,2
Hardware, paint and glass	-9,7	-7,2	-5,6	-5,9	-5,5	-4,8
All other retailers	1,3	-1,8	-0,6	1,5	-1,1	-0,9
Total	2,1	-0,4	-0,7	0,8	-0,5	-0,8

Table 6 – Contribution of each type of retailer to the year-on-year percentage change in retail trade sales at constant 2019 prices (percentage points)

Type of retailer	Aug-22	Sep-22	Oct-22	Nov-22	Dec-22	Jan-23
General dealers	2,6	0,8	-0,2	0,1	-0,2	0,1
Food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores	-0,5	-0,7	-0,2	-0,3	-0,2	-0,7
Pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries	-0,2	-0,4	-0,3	-0,3	-0,3	-0,2
Textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods	0,8	0,6	0,5	1,4	0,7	0,4
Household furniture, appliances and equipment	0,1	0,1	0,1	0,3	0,0	-0,1
Hardware, paint and glass	-1,0	-0,7	-0,5	-0,5	-0,4	-0,4
All other retailers	0,1	-0,2	-0,1	0,2	-0,1	-0,1
Total	2,1	-0,4	-0,7	0,8	-0,5	-0,8

Table 7 – Seasonally adjusted retail trade sales at constant 2019 prices by type of retailer (R million)

Type of retailer	Aug-22	Sep-22	Oct-22	Nov-22	Dec-22	Jan-23	Month-on-month % change
General dealers	41 406	41 205	40 942	41 108	40 966	41 271	0,7
Food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores	7 591	7 375	7 707	7 604	7 685	7 727	0,5
Pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries	6 697	6 522	6 621	6 531	6 535	6 674	2,1
Textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods	16 247	16 313	16 303	17 051	16 743	17 496	4,5
Household furniture, appliances and equipment	4 572	4 584	4 568	4 699	4 536	4 559	0,5
Hardware, paint and glass	7 354	7 697	7 594	7 539	7 530	7 664	1,8
All other retailers	9 631	9 579	9 789	9 985	10 046	10 095	0,5
Total	93 497	93 275	93 524	94 517	94 041	95 485	1,5

Table 8 – Retail trade sales at current prices (R million)

Month	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023 1/
Jan	76 563	80 761	83 365	86 848	85 323	95 475	101 666
Feb	77 531	82 844	85 721	89 787	94 074	96 984	
Mar	80 787	86 554	88 848	94 541	94 600	100 766	
Apr	80 642	82 889	86 890	46 864	89 902	98 502	
May	84 274	88 056	91 735	82 835	98 588	103 440	
Jun	81 758	85 064	89 338	84 599	97 168	99 932	
Jul	82 209	84 912	88 699	82 876	85 576	98 339	
Aug	85 834	89 426	92 908	91 128	93 522	101 447	
Sep	85 115	87 375	90 271	89 814	95 179	101 256	
Oct	85 166	88 532	91 448	91 868	97 010	102 843	
Nov	97 556	102 364	107 939	105 378	111 162	119 744	
Dec	121 498	121 895	124 700	126 378	134 399	142 864	
Total	1 038 933	1 080 672	1 121 865	1 072 916	1 176 503	1 261 592	

1/ Figures for the latest month are preliminary.

Table 9 – Year-on-year percentage change in retail trade sales at current prices

Month	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2023 year-to-date
Jan	5,5	3,2	4,2	-1,8	11,9	6,5	6,5
Feb	6,9	3,5	4,7	4,8	3,1		
Mar	7,1	2,7	6,4	0,1	6,5		
Apr	2,8	4,8	-46,1	91,8	9,6		
May	4,5	4,2	-9,7	19,0	4,9		
Jun	4,0	5,0	-5,3	14,9	2,8		
Jul	3,3	4,5	-6,6	3,3	14,9		
Aug	4,2	3,9	-1,9	2,6	8,5		
Sep	2,7	3,3	-0,5	6,0	6,4		
Oct	4,0	3,3	0,5	5,6	6,0		
Nov	4,9	5,4	-2,4	5,5	7,7		
Dec	0,3	2,3	1,3	6,3	6,3		
Total	4,0	3,8	-4,4	9,7	7,2		

Table 10 – Seasonally adjusted retail trade sales at current prices

Month	R million				Month-on-month % change			
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2020	2021	2022	2023
Jan	94 172	92 417	102 937	109 972	0,2	-3,7	1,4	2,1
Feb	94 970	100 202	103 202		0,8	8,4	0,3	
Mar	96 965	97 004	103 875		2,1	-3,2	0,7	
Apr	50 505	96 126	104 334		-47,9	-0,9	0,4	
May	82 669	98 423	103 825		63,7	2,4	-0,5	
Jun	88 676	101 877	104 595		7,3	3,5	0,7	
Jul	88 525	91 137	105 107		-0,2	-10,5	0,5	
Aug	93 284	96 684	104 960		5,4	6,1	-0,1	
Sep	93 655	99 164	105 331		0,4	2,6	0,4	
Oct	94 404	99 913	106 075		0,8	0,8	0,7	
Nov	94 848	100 081	107 647		0,5	0,2	1,5	
Dec	95 988	101 562	107 731		1,2	1,5	0,1	

Table 11 – Retail trade sales at current prices by type of retailer (R million)

Type of retailer	Aug-22	Sep-22	Oct-22	Nov-22	Dec-22	Jan-23 1/
General dealers	48 319	49 212	45 426	54 837	62 940	44 394
Food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores	8 542	8 601	9 765	9 328	13 354	9 260
Pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries	7 987	7 216	8 072	7 339	8 231	7 966
Textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods	14 135	14 014	15 738	21 060	30 226	16 743
Household furniture, appliances and equipment	4 374	4 192	4 505	6 049	6 152	4 115
Hardware, paint and glass	8 975	9 038	9 456	10 180	9 251	8 015
All other retailers	9 114	8 985	9 881	10 951	12 710	11 173
Total	101 447	101 256	102 843	119 744	142 864	101 666

1/ Figures are preliminary.

Table 12 – Year-on-year percentage change in retail trade sales at current prices by type of retailer

Type of retailer	Aug-22	Sep-22	Oct-22	Nov-22	Dec-22	Jan-23
General dealers	15,4	11,4	9,2	10,4	9,5	11,0
Food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores	1,2	-0,8	5,5	3,8	6,5	1,4
Pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries	3,9	1,3	2,6	0,7	1,1	4,1
Textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods	8,0	7,0	5,8	10,6	5,8	5,1
Household furniture, appliances and equipment	4,5	2,7	3,2	7,0	1,1	0,6
Hardware, paint and glass	-4,8	-1,0	1,1	1,3	1,5	2,5
All other retailers	3,1	1,0	1,9	4,5	1,9	2,7
Total	8,5	6,4	6,0	7,7	6,3	6,5

Table 13 – Contribution of each type of retailer to the year-on-year percentage change in retail trade sales at current prices (percentage points)

Type of retailer	Aug-22	Sep-22	Oct-22	Nov-22	Dec-22	Jan-23
General dealers	6,9	5,3	3,9	4,6	4,1	4,6
Food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores	0,1	-0,1	0,5	0,3	0,6	0,1
Pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries	0,3	0,1	0,2	0,0	0,1	0,3
Textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods	1,1	1,0	0,9	1,8	1,2	0,9
Household furniture, appliances and equipment	0,2	0,1	0,1	0,4	0,0	0,0
Hardware, paint and glass	-0,5	-0,1	0,1	0,1	0,1	0,2
All other retailers	0,3	0,1	0,2	0,4	0,2	0,3
Total	8,5	6,4	6,0	7,7	6,3	6,5

Table 14 – Seasonally adjusted retail trade sales at current prices by type of retailer (R million)

Type of retailer	Aug-22	Sep-22	Oct-22	Nov-22	Dec-22	Jan-23	Month-on-month % change
General dealers	48 694	48 614	48 659	49 201	49 376	50 118	1,5
Food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores	9 090	9 004	9 357	9 307	9 451	9 625	1,8
Pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries	7 693	7 569	7 709	7 649	7 707	7 865	2,1
Textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods	16 800	16 915	16 957	17 725	17 435	18 236	4,6
Household furniture, appliances and equipment	4 590	4 597	4 593	4 724	4 578	4 628	1,1
Hardware, paint and glass	8 377	8 888	8 813	8 795	8 818	9 015	2,2
All other retailers	9 716	9 744	9 988	10 246	10 366	10 483	1,1
Total	104 960	105 331	106 075	107 647	107 731	109 972	2,1

Analysis of revisions

Introduction

Preliminary monthly values for retail trade are published approximately seven weeks after the reference month, e.g. preliminary retail sales for March are published around mid-May. The preliminary values are revised the following month, using additional information received from respondents. This and other reasons for revising retail trade values from time to time are shown in the following revisions schedule.

Revisions schedule for retail trade

Reason for revision	Schedule
Additional information from respondents	Monthly (revision of previous month)
New sample	Annual (July reference month published in September)
New weights for retail deflators	Periodic, approximately four- to five-year intervals
New base year (year for constant prices)	Periodic, approximately four- to five-year intervals

Note that seasonally adjusted values are revised monthly.

Analysis

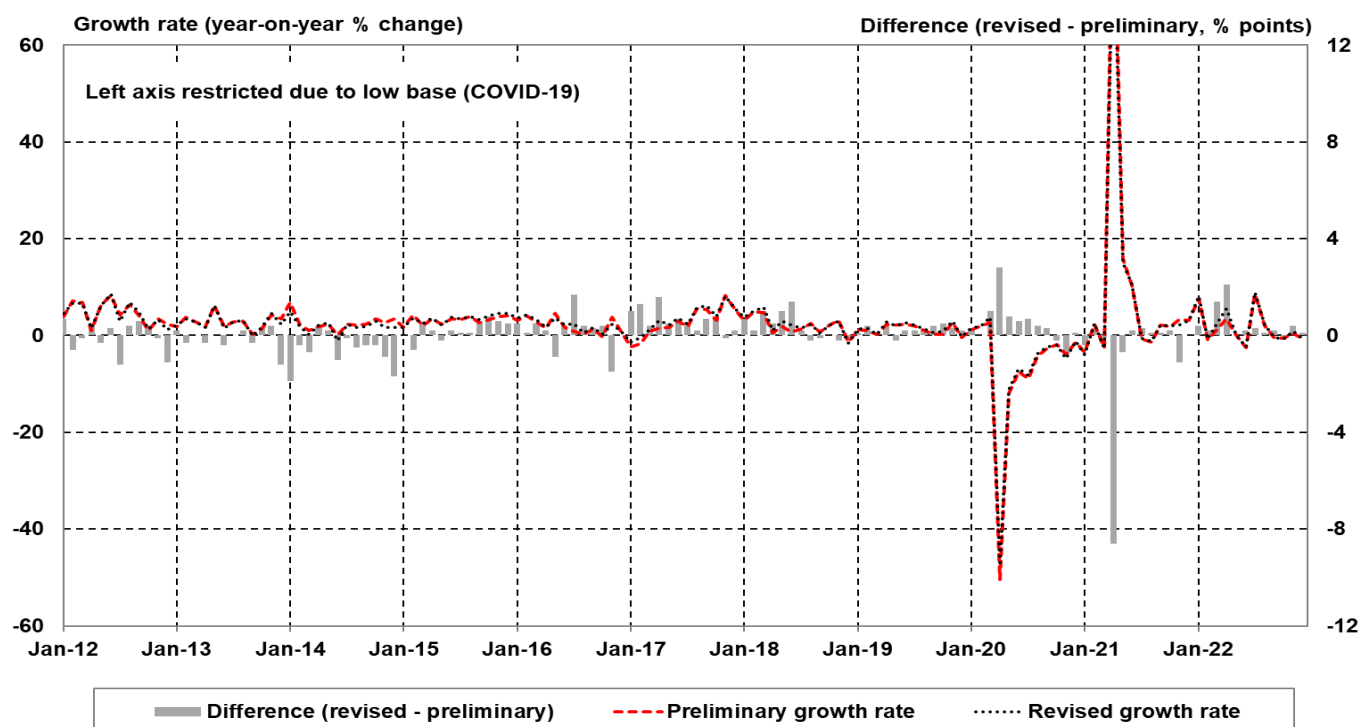
Revisions may be analysed in terms of several dimensions, namely rand values and/or growth rates (e.g. month-on-month percentage changes, year-on-year percentage changes); current prices and/or constant prices; seasonally adjusted and/or unadjusted data; totals and/or components; preliminary estimate compared with first revision and/or latest available revision; and various combinations of these options.

This analysis is confined to the following:

- Total retail trade, year-on-year growth rate, constant prices, unadjusted.
- Preliminary growth rates are compared with the latest available revised growth rates, where the preliminary growth rate refers to the first year-on-year growth rate published for the month in question.
- Time period: January 2012 to December 2022.

Figure 3 shows the preliminary and revised growth rates (line chart, left vertical axis) and the difference between them (bar chart, right vertical axis, where difference = revised - preliminary).

Table 15 provides key results relating to revisions.

Figure 3 – Retail trade year-on-year growth rates: preliminary and revised**Table 15 – Retail trade year-on-year growth rates: preliminary and revised**

Description	Value / outcome	Comment
Average year-on-year growth rate over the whole period	Preliminary: 2,36% Revised: 2,45%	The average of revised growth rates is higher than the average of preliminary growth rates
Mean revision	0,09 of a percentage point	This is the average of the revisions
Mean absolute revision	0,55 of a percentage point	Average of the revisions, but based on the absolute value of each revision (positives and negatives do not cancel each other)
Largest upward revision	2,8 percentage points	Preliminary -50,4% was revised up to -47,6% (April 2020; affected by COVID-19)
Largest downward revision	-8,6 percentage points	Preliminary 95,8% was revised down to 87,2% (April 2021; affected by COVID-19)
Range for all revisions	-8,6 to 2,8 percentage points	
Range within which 90% of the revisions lie	-1,1 to 1,3 percentage points	This may be regarded as the normal range for revisions, with revisions outside this range being outliers
Number of upward revisions	83 (or 62,9% of the total observations)	
Number of downward revisions	39 (or 29,5% of the total observations)	

Description	Value / outcome	Comment
Number of zero revisions	10 (or 7,6% of the total observations)	
Is the mean revision (0,09) significantly different from zero?	No	This indicates that there is no bias in the preliminary estimate – see Note 1 below
Standard deviation of the revisions	1,01 percentage points	Standard deviation is a measure of dispersion about the mean – see the row below
Percentage of revisions that lie within one standard deviation of the mean	87,9%	This is the percentage of revisions that lie between - 0,92 and 1,10 percentage points; the higher the percentage, the lower is the dispersion about the mean – see Figure 4

Note 1: Is the mean revision significantly different from zero?

The formula for the test statistic is as follows:

$$test\ statistic = \frac{\bar{R}}{\sqrt{\left(\frac{1}{n(n-1)}\right) \left(\sum_{t=1}^n \hat{\epsilon}_t^2 + \frac{3}{4} \sum_{t=2}^n \hat{\epsilon}_t \hat{\epsilon}_{t-1} + \frac{2}{3} \sum_{t=3}^n \hat{\epsilon}_t \hat{\epsilon}_{t-2}\right)}}$$

where

n = number of observations

\bar{R} = mean revision

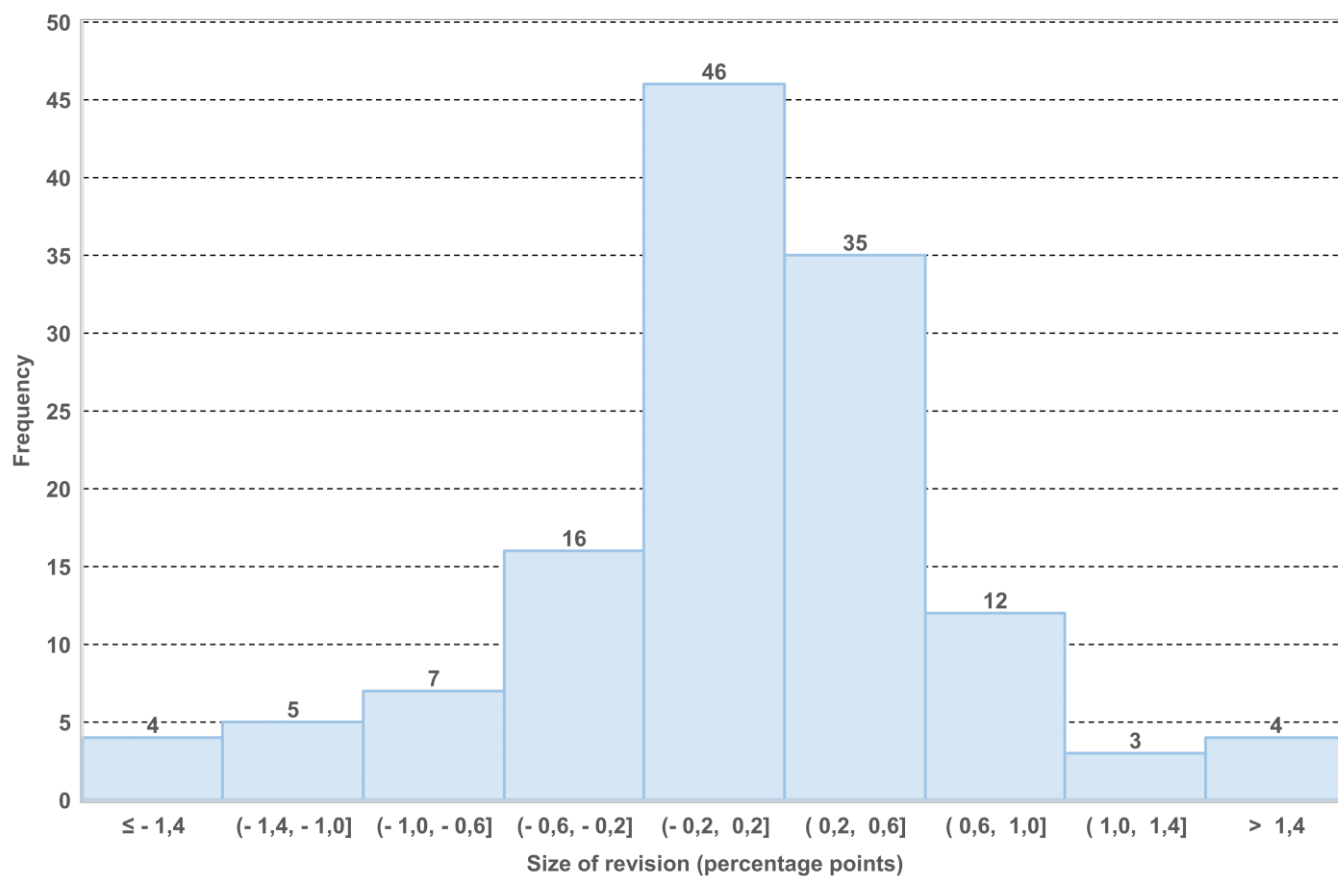
$\hat{\epsilon}_t = R_t - \bar{R}$, with R_t = revision in period t

Note that if the test statistic shows that the mean revision (MR) is significantly different from zero, then there is bias in the preliminary estimates. Bias in a series suggests there is scope to enhance the compilation of that series in an attempt to remove or minimise the bias. $MR > 0$ (statistically significant) implies under-estimation of the preliminary estimates. $MR < 0$ (statistically significant) implies over-estimation of the preliminary estimates.

In this case the test statistic is 0,93, which lies below the critical value of 1,98, indicating that the MR is not significantly different from zero at a 5% significance level. Accordingly, no bias is detected in the preliminary estimates.

Figure 4 shows the revisions in terms of a histogram. There were 16 revisions between -0,6 and -0,2 ($-0,6 < \text{revision} \leq -0,2$); 46 revisions between -0,2 and 0,2 ($-0,2 < \text{revision} \leq 0,2$); and 35 revisions between 0,2 and 0,6 ($0,2 < \text{revision} \leq 0,6$). 73,5% of revisions lay between -0,6 and 0,6 of a percentage point.

Figure 4 – Retail trade year-on-year growth rates: histogram of revisions



Survey information

Introduction	1	Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) conducts a monthly survey of the retail trade industry, covering retail enterprises (see point 4 below). This survey is based on a sample drawn from Stats SA's 2022 business sampling frame (BSF) that contains businesses registered for value-added tax (VAT).
	2	In order to improve timeliness, some information for the latest month had to be estimated due to late response. These estimates will be revised in future statistical releases as soon as information becomes available. Published retail trade sales estimates include VAT.
Purpose of the survey	3	The results of the monthly retail 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.
Scope of the survey	4	<p>This survey covers retail enterprises according to the following types of retailers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • general dealers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ retail trade in non-specialised stores with food, beverages and tobacco predominating; and ➢ 'other' retail trade in non-specialised stores. • retailers in food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ retailers in fresh fruit and vegetables; ➢ retailers in meat and meat products; ➢ retailers in bakery products; ➢ retailers in beverages; ➢ retailers in tobacco; and ➢ retailers in 'other' food in specialised stores. • retailers in pharmaceutical and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries; • retailers in textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ retailers in men's and boys' clothing; ➢ retailers in ladies', girls' and infants' clothing; ➢ general outfitters; and ➢ retailers in footwear. • retailers in household furniture, appliances and equipment; • retailers in hardware, paint and glass; and • all 'other' retailers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ retailers in reading matter and stationery; ➢ retailers in jewellery, watches and clocks; ➢ retailers in sport goods and entertainment requisites; ➢ retailers in 'other' specialised stores; ➢ repair of personal and household goods; ➢ retail trade in second-hand goods in stores; and ➢ retail trade not in stores.
Classification	5	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.
Collection rate	6	The preliminary collection rate for the survey on retail trade sales for January 2023 was 73,3%. The improved collection rate for December 2022 was 76,3%.

Statistical unit	7	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	8	Revised figures are mainly due to late submission of data to Stats SA, or respondents reporting revisions or corrections to their figures. Preliminary figures, as indicated in the relevant tables, are subject to change and when revised will not be indicated as such.
Related publications	9	Users may also refer to the following publication available from Stats SA: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Stats in Brief</i> issued annually.
Rounding-off of figures	10	Where figures have been rounded off, discrepancies may occur between sums of the component items and the totals.
Historical data	11	Historical retail 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	12	Past retail 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 on a monthly basis. Questionnaires are sent to a sample of 3 339 enterprises from a population of 21 864 enterprises. Completed questionnaires are required to be returned to Stats SA within 10 days after the end of the reference month. Fax, 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 2022 from Stats SA's business sampling frame (BSF). Strata were formed using a combination of the 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 did not exceed 8,0%.

Class limits

- 3 The retail sampling frame is divided into four size groups. All large and medium enterprises (size group one and two) are completely enumerated. Simple random sampling is applied to size group three and four (small and very small) enterprises. The total value of sales of the large and medium enterprises (size group one and two) is added to the weighted totals of size group 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	1 361 310	8 000 000
Small	3	8 000 001	38 000 000
Medium	2	38 000 001	78 000 000
Large	1	78 000 001	

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 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 recognised more clearly. Seasonal adjustment does not aim to remove irregular or non-seasonal influences which 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 retail trade sales is described in more detail on the Stats SA website: [Click to download seasonal adjustment retail trade sales December 2022](#)

Trend cycle

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

- Constant prices**
- 7 For January 2002 to December 2007 retail trade sales at constant prices were calculated using the consumer price index (CPI) for goods, excluding petrol and purchases of vehicles, for all urban areas to deflate total sales at current prices. From January 2008 onwards total retail trade sales at constant prices are obtained by adding up the deflated sales by type of retailer.
- 8 Retail trade sales at constant prices by type of retailer are obtained by deflating estimated sales at current prices by the relevant weighted price index. To obtain total retail trade sales at constant prices, estimates of the deflated sales for each type of retailer are aggregated.
- Reliability of estimates**
- 9 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 retail industry in South Africa. Estimates are subject to sampling and non-sampling errors.
- 10 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**
- 11 One measure of the likely difference is given by 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 retail trade sales within 95% confidence limits – January 2023**
- | | Lower limit
(R million) | Sales
(R million) | Upper limit
(R million) | Relative
standard error
(RSE) % |
|--------------------|----------------------------|----------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Retail trade sales | 98 320 | 101 666 | 105 012 | 1,6 |
- Month-on-month percentage change**
- 12 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**
- 13 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)**
- 14 The contribution (percentage points) to the year-on-year percentage change for any given period is calculated by multiplying the percentage change of each type of retailer by its corresponding weight, divided by 100. The weight is the percentage contribution of each type of retailer to total retail 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 <i>System of National Accounts</i> (SNA) in the same way as in the <i>Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities</i> (SIC), Fifth Edition, Report No. 09-90-02 of January 1993.	
Retail trade	Retail trade includes the resale (sale without transformation) of new and used goods and products to the general public for household use.	
Retailer	A retailer is an enterprise deriving more than 50% of its turnover from sales of goods to the general public for household use.	
Symbols and abbreviations	BSF	Business sampling frame
	CPI	Consumer price index
	GDP	Gross domestic product
	ISIC	International Standard Industrial Classification
	SARS	South African Revenue Service
	SIC	Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities
	SNA	System of National Accounts
	Stats SA	Statistics South Africa
	VAT	Value-added tax

Technical enquiries

Raquel Floris	Telephone number: 072 205 2608 Email: raquelf@statssa.gov.za
Keshnee Naidoo	Telephone number: 072 310 3798 Email: keshneen@statssa.gov.za

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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 eleven official languages. Since the releases are used extensively, not only locally but also by international economic and social-scientific communities, Stats SA releases are published in English only.

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User information services	Telephone number: (012) 310 8600 Email: info@statssa.gov.za
Orders/subscription services	Telephone number: (012) 310 8619 Email: millies@statssa.gov.za
Postal address	Private Bag X44, Pretoria, 0001

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