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STATISTICAL RELEASE

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Retail trade sales (Preliminary)

July 2023

The results published today are based on a new sample. This is an annual procedure which typically affects the level of sales at both current and constant prices. To avoid breaks in time series and to minimise revisions to historical growth rates, historical sales levels were revised (i.e. they were linked to the estimates based on the new sample).

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Sales at constant 2019 prices: results for July 2023

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

	Feb-23	Mar-23	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23
Year-on-year % change, unadjusted	-1,9	-1,4	-2,6	-2,9	-1,8	-1,8
Month-on-month % change, seasonally adjusted	-0,6	-0,1	-0,2	-0,9	0,3	0,0
3-month % change, seasonally adjusted 1/	0,1	0,4	-0,2	-0,5	-0,9	-0,9

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 1,8% year-on-year in July 2023. The largest negative contributors to this decrease were:

- general dealers (-4,1% and contributing -1,7 percentage points); and
- retailers in hardware, paint and glass (-6,8% and contributing -0,6 of a percentage point) – see Tables 5 and 6.

Seasonally adjusted retail trade sales remained unchanged in July 2023 compared with June 2023. This followed month-on-month changes of 0,3% in June 2023 and -0,9% in May 2023.

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

Type of retailer	May – Jul 2022 (R million)	Weight (%)	May – Jul 2023 (R million)	% change between May – Jul 2022 and May – Jul 2023	Contribution (% points) to the total % change
General dealers	123 633	44,1	117 884	-4,7	-2,1
Food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores	21 523	7,7	21 156	-1,7	-0,1
Pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries	21 147	7,5	20 649	-2,4	-0,2
Textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods	47 156	16,8	50 373	6,8	1,1
Household furniture, appliances and equipment	12 346	4,4	12 311	-0,3	0,0
Hardware, paint and glass	23 918	8,5	22 198	-7,2	-0,6
All other retailers	30 598	10,9	29 695	-3,0	-0,3
Total	280 321	100,0	274 266	-2,2	-2,2

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

- general dealers (-4,7% and contributing -2,1 percentage points); and
- retailers in hardware, paint and glass (-7,2% and contributing -0,6 of a percentage point).

Retailers in textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods was the only positive contributor (6,8% and contributing 1,1 percentage points) – 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	Feb – Apr 2023 (R million)	Weight (%)	May – Jul 2023 (R million)	% change between Feb – Apr 2023 and May – Jul 2023	Contribution (% points) to the total % change
General dealers	123 774	43,0	122 569	-1,0	-0,4
Food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores	22 608	7,8	22 438	-0,8	-0,1
Pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries	21 210	7,4	20 919	-1,4	-0,1
Textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods	52 468	18,2	52 916	0,9	0,2
Household furniture, appliances and equipment	13 114	4,6	13 075	-0,3	0,0
Hardware, paint and glass	23 313	8,1	22 549	-3,3	-0,3
All other retailers	31 627	11,0	31 144	-1,5	-0,2
Total	288 112	100,0	285 610	-0,9	-0,9

Seasonally adjusted retail trade sales decreased by 0,9% in the three months ended July 2023 compared with the previous three months. The largest negative contributors were:

- general dealers (-1,0% and contributing -0,4 of a percentage point); and
- retailers in hardware, paint and glass (-3,3% and contributing -0,3 of a percentage point) – see Table C.

Figure 1 – Retail trade sales at constant 2019 prices

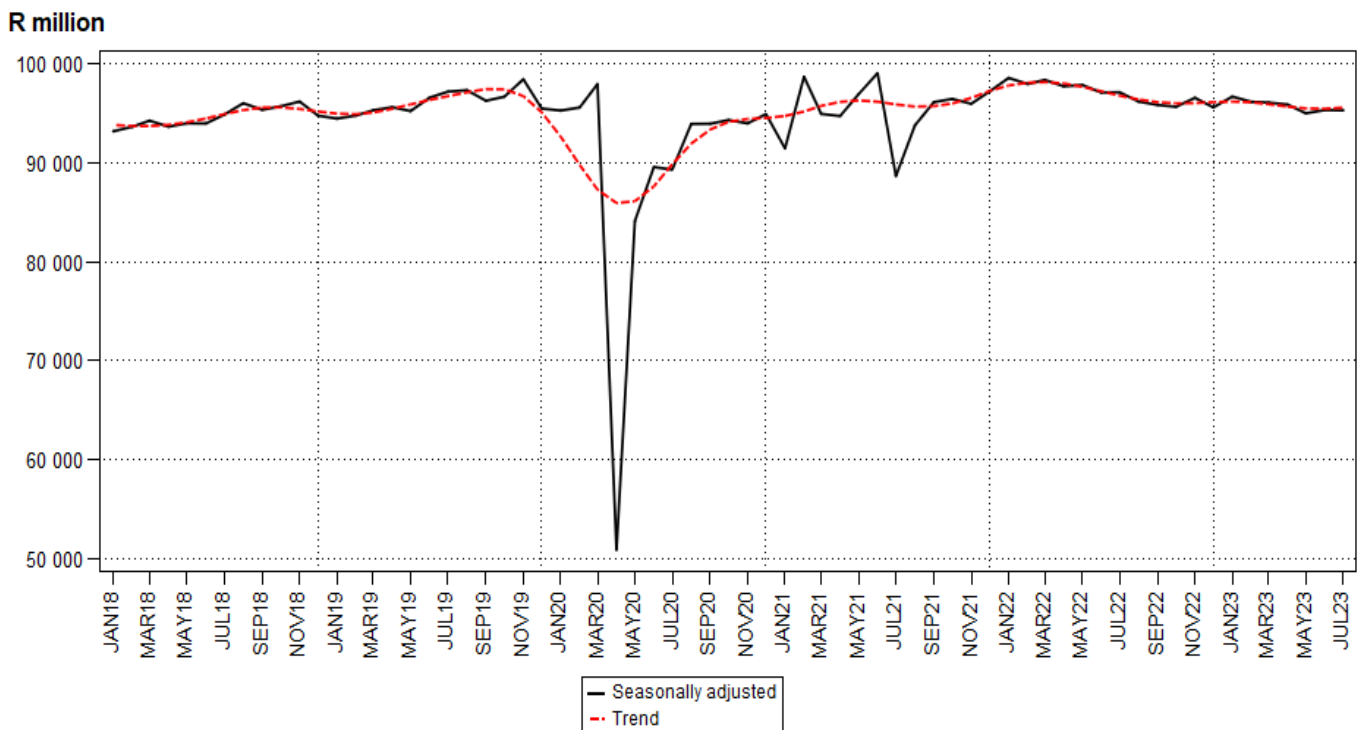
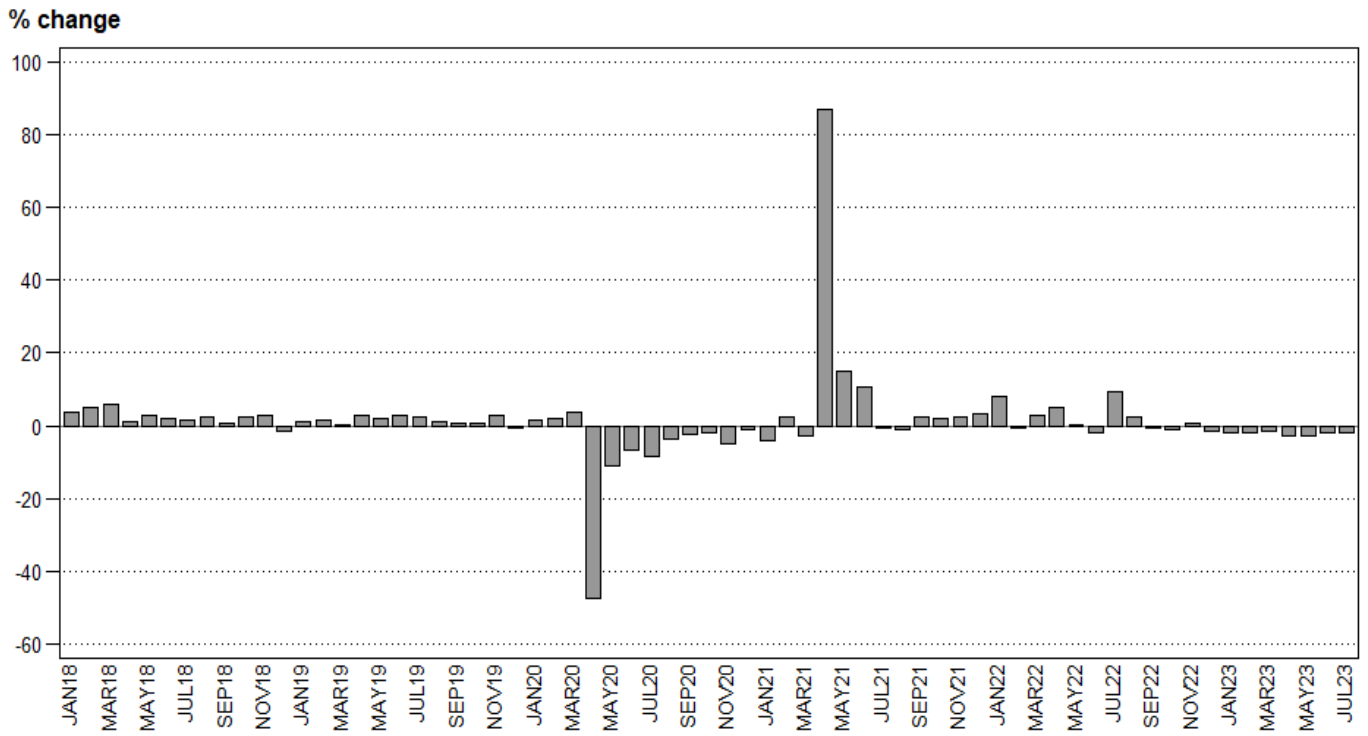


Figure 2 – Retail trade sales at constant 2019 prices: year-on-year percentage change



Sales at current prices: results for July 2023**Table D – Key growth rates in retail trade sales at current prices**

	Feb-23	Mar-23	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23
Year-on-year % change, unadjusted	6,1	6,9	5,5	4,4	5,0	4,6
Month-on-month % change, seasonally adjusted	0,3	0,6	0,1	-0,8	0,8	0,1
3-month % change, seasonally adjusted 1/	1,9	2,2	1,7	1,2	0,3	0,0

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	May – Jul 2022 (R million)	Weight (%)	May – Jul 2023 (R million)	% change between May – Jul 2022 and May – Jul 2023	Contribution (% points) to the total % change
General dealers	142 306	45,8	149 432	5,0	2,3
Food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores	25 524	8,2	26 894	5,4	0,4
Pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries	24 203	7,8	25 511	5,4	0,4
Textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods	48 411	15,6	53 022	9,5	1,5
Household furniture, appliances and equipment	12 412	4,0	12 418	0,0	0,0
Hardware, paint and glass	27 022	8,7	26 788	-0,9	-0,1
All other retailers	31 105	10,0	31 430	1,0	0,1
Total	310 982	100,0	325 494	4,7	4,7

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

Type of retailer	Feb – Apr 2023 (R million)	Weight (%)	May – Jul 2023 (R million)	% change between Feb – Apr 2023 and May – Jul 2023	Contribution (% points) to the total % change
General dealers	154 360	45,7	154 846	0,3	0,1
Food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores	28 661	8,5	28 513	-0,5	0,0
Pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries	25 399	7,5	25 668	1,1	0,1
Textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods	54 889	16,2	55 459	1,0	0,2
Household furniture, appliances and equipment	13 354	4,0	13 224	-1,0	0,0
Hardware, paint and glass	27 917	8,3	27 169	-2,7	-0,2
All other retailers	33 277	9,8	33 081	-0,6	-0,1
Total	337 857	100,0	337 959	0,0	0,0

Risenga Maluleke
Statistician-General

Note: Changes to the survey and the impact on the statistical series

Business register and samples

Today Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) publishes results for the monthly survey of retail trade sales from a new sample drawn in April 2023, which replaces the previous sample that was drawn in April 2022. The sample was drawn from a business register of enterprises with an annual turnover of at least R1 461 520 and that are required to register with the South African Revenue Service for value-added tax.

Owing to the evolving nature of business, the business register is maintained on a continuous basis. The maintenance process is aimed, amongst other things, at capturing changes related to new businesses, ceased businesses, merged businesses and classification changes. In addition, Stats SA undertakes quality improvement surveys related to the business register, the primary objective of which is to capture up-to-date information about the structures and activities of large and complex businesses. This process enables Stats SA to review classification codes for these businesses. These changes are an essential part of the statistical architecture.

Comparison of total sales between the previous (revised) and new samples for the retail trade industry

The reported level of total sales for the monthly survey of the retail trade industry for the months April to June 2023 based on the new sample was 1,9% higher than the level of total sales recorded for the previous sample (see Table G and Figure 3). The previous sample was drawn in April 2022 and was operational for the last half of 2022 and the first half of 2023.

Table G – Total retail trade sales at current prices for previous and new samples: April to June 2023

Retail trade industry	Previous sample (R million)	New sample (R million)	Difference	
			(R million)	(%)
	319 451	325 567	6 116	1,9

Figure 3 – Total retail trade sales at current prices: monthly levels of previous and new samples for April to June 2023

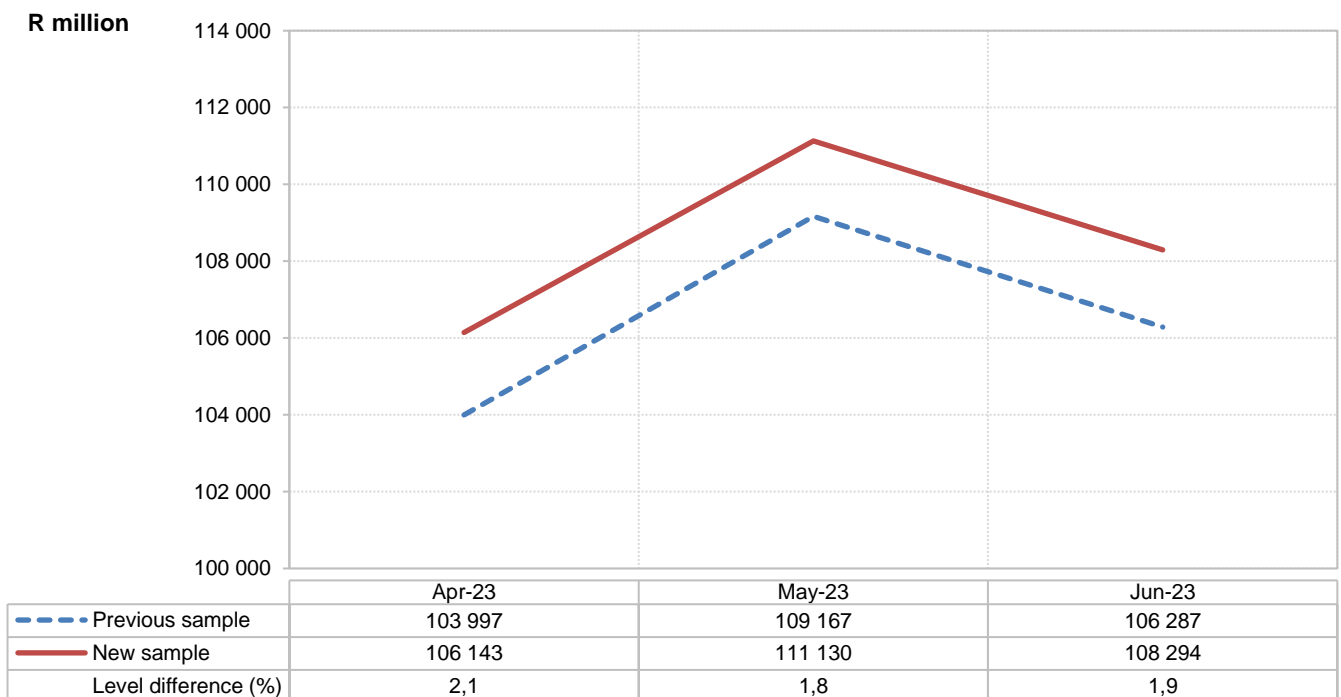


Table H – Retail trade sales for previous and new samples by type of retailer: April to June 2023

Type of retailer	Previous sample (R million)	New sample (R million)	Difference	
			(R million)	(%) 1/
General dealers	147 912	149 851	1 939	1,3
Food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores	27 830	26 856	-974	-3,5
Pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries	23 860	25 445	1 585	6,6
Textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods	51 935	52 992	1 057	2,0
Household furniture, appliances and equipment	12 689	12 123	-566	-4,5
Hardware, paint and glass	25 645	26 382	737	2,9
All other retailers	29 580	31 918	2 338	7,9
Total retail trade sales	319 451	325 567	6 116	1,9

1/ The percentage difference is the new sample minus the previous sample, divided by the previous sample, multiplied by 100.

The largest percentage differences were recorded for:

- all 'other' retailers (7,9% or R2 338 million higher in the new sample);
- retailers in pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries (6,6% or R1 585 million higher in the new sample);
- retailers in household furniture, appliances and equipment (4,5% or R566 million lower in the new sample); and
- retailers in food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores (3,5% or R974 million lower in the new sample).

Backcasting

To avoid breaks in the time series and to minimise revisions to historical growth rates, historical sales levels were revised (i.e. they were linked to the estimates based on the new sample).

Tables

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

Month	2017 *	2018 *	2019 *	2020 *	2021 *	2022 *	2023 1/ *
Jan	82 541	85 722	86 812	88 073	84 671	91 515	89 596
Feb	83 449	87 701	88 985	90 750	92 993	92 392	90 677
Mar	86 562	91 618	91 853	95 253	92 786	95 269	93 900
Apr	86 365	87 236	89 698	47 006	88 006	92 263	89 871
May	89 917	92 511	94 335	83 774	96 403	96 689	93 897
Jun	87 494	89 348	91 723	85 416	94 509	92 772	91 113
Jul	87 709	89 074	91 067	83 539	83 111	90 860	89 256
Aug	91 713	93 882	95 103	91 524	90 406	92 525	
Sep	91 079	91 615	92 199	89 996	91 986	91 670	
Oct	90 721	92 765	93 484	91 618	93 427	92 424	
Nov	103 988	106 983	110 099	104 853	107 150	107 935	
Dec	129 530	127 432	127 205	125 707	129 590	127 868	
Total	1 111 068	1 135 887	1 152 563	1 077 509	1 145 038	1 164 182	

1/ Figures for the latest month are preliminary.

* Revised, see note on page 6.

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	3,9	1,3	1,5	-3,9	8,1	-2,1	-2,1
Feb	5,1	1,5	2,0	2,5	-0,6	-1,9	-2,0
Mar	5,8	0,3	3,7	-2,6	2,7	-1,4	-1,8
Apr	1,0	2,8	-47,6	87,2	4,8	-2,6	-2,0
May	2,9	2,0	-11,2	15,1	0,3	-2,9	-2,2
Jun	2,1	2,7	-6,9	10,6	-1,8	-1,8	-2,1
Jul	1,6	2,2	-8,3	-0,5	9,3	-1,8	-2,1
Aug	2,4	1,3	-3,8	-1,2	2,3		
Sep	0,6	0,6	-2,4	2,2	-0,3		
Oct	2,3	0,8	-2,0	2,0	-1,1		
Nov	2,9	2,9	-4,8	2,2	0,7		
Dec	-1,6	-0,2	-1,2	3,1	-1,3		
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	95 269	91 441	98 571	96 685	-0,2	-3,7	1,4	1,1
Feb	95 581	98 701	97 956	96 153	0,3	7,9	-0,6	-0,6
Mar	97 954	94 932	98 375	96 078	2,5	-3,8	0,4	-0,1
Apr	50 815	94 719	97 721	95 881	-48,1	-0,2	-0,7	-0,2
May	84 098	96 922	97 857	94 995	65,5	2,3	0,1	-0,9
Jun	89 557	99 054	97 099	95 324	6,5	2,2	-0,8	0,3
Jul	89 299	88 640	97 123	95 291	-0,3	-10,5	0,0	0,0
Aug	93 921	93 775	96 181		5,2	5,8	-1,0	
Sep	93 939	96 126	95 842		0,0	2,5	-0,4	
Oct	94 314	96 449	95 652		0,4	0,3	-0,2	
Nov	93 972	95 959	96 558		-0,4	-0,5	0,9	
Dec	94 918	97 211	95 590		1,0	1,3	-1,0	

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

Type of retailer	Feb-23 *	Mar-23 *	Apr-23 *	May-23 *	Jun-23	Jul-23 1/
General dealers	40 322	41 730	37 718	40 189	40 770	36 925
Food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores	7 067	7 433	7 238	6 793	7 069	7 294
Pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries	6 459	6 965	7 350	6 814	6 589	7 246
Textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods	15 149	15 716	16 359	18 157	15 825	16 391
Household furniture, appliances and equipment	3 981	4 338	3 916	3 956	4 101	4 254
Hardware, paint and glass	7 098	7 305	7 223	7 649	6 988	7 561
All other retailers	10 601	10 413	10 067	10 339	9 771	9 585
Total	90 677	93 900	89 871	93 897	91 113	89 256

1/ Figures are preliminary.

* Revised, see note on page 6.

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

Type of retailer	Feb-23	Mar-23	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23
General dealers	-2,7	-2,9	-3,3	-5,9	-3,9	-4,1
Food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores	-1,1	-4,4	-3,9	-4,6	1,9	-2,3
Pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries	-2,8	-3,1	-3,2	-2,9	-1,0	-3,1
Textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods	4,2	9,0	-3,7	7,8	5,5	7,1
Household furniture, appliances and equipment	-1,4	-3,3	-3,9	-3,9	2,3	0,8
Hardware, paint and glass	-7,8	-3,1	3,4	-6,8	-8,1	-6,8
All other retailers	-2,6	-4,3	-0,1	-3,2	-3,7	-1,9
Total	-1,9	-1,4	-2,6	-2,9	-1,8	-1,8

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	Feb-23	Mar-23	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23
General dealers	-1,2	-1,3	-1,4	-2,6	-1,8	-1,7
Food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores	-0,1	-0,4	-0,3	-0,3	0,1	-0,2
Pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries	-0,2	-0,2	-0,3	-0,2	-0,1	-0,3
Textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods	0,7	1,4	-0,7	1,4	0,9	1,2
Household furniture, appliances and equipment	-0,1	-0,2	-0,2	-0,2	0,1	0,0
Hardware, paint and glass	-0,6	-0,2	0,3	-0,6	-0,7	-0,6
All other retailers	-0,3	-0,5	0,0	-0,4	-0,4	-0,2
Total	-1,9	-1,4	-2,6	-2,9	-1,8	-1,8

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

Type of retailer	Feb-23	Mar-23	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	<i>Month-on-month % change</i>
General dealers	41 283	41 168	41 323	40 727	40 955	40 887	-0,2
Food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores	7 630	7 468	7 510	7 266	7 705	7 467	-3,1
Pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries	7 086	7 060	7 064	6 973	6 982	6 964	-0,3
Textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods	17 598	17 758	17 112	17 760	17 529	17 627	0,6
Household furniture, appliances and equipment	4 417	4 364	4 333	4 284	4 368	4 423	1,3
Hardware, paint and glass	7 615	7 724	7 974	7 574	7 433	7 542	1,5
All other retailers	10 525	10 536	10 566	10 411	10 351	10 382	0,3
Total	96 153	96 078	95 881	94 995	95 324	95 291	0,0

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

Month	2017 *	2018 *	2019 *	2020 *	2021 *	2022 *	2023 1/ *
Jan	78 657	82 971	85 645	89 225	87 657	98 088	103 070
Feb	79 652	85 111	88 067	92 243	96 648	99 637	105 673
Mar	82 998	88 922	91 279	97 127	97 188	103 523	110 627
Apr	82 849	85 156	89 267	48 146	92 363	100 564	106 143
May	86 580	90 466	94 245	85 102	101 285	106 472	111 130
Jun	83 995	87 391	91 783	86 913	99 827	103 098	108 294
Jul	84 458	87 235	91 125	85 143	87 917	101 412	106 070
Aug	88 182	91 872	95 451	93 621	96 081	104 425	
Sep	87 444	89 766	92 741	92 271	97 783	104 136	
Oct	87 496	90 954	93 950	94 381	99 665	105 329	
Nov	100 225	105 165	110 893	108 261	114 204	122 892	
Dec	124 822	125 230	128 112	129 835	138 076	145 478	
Total	1 067 358	1 110 239	1 152 563	1 102 268	1 208 694	1 295 054	

1/ Figures for the latest month are preliminary.

* Revised, see note on page 6.

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	5,1	5,1
Feb	6,9	3,5	4,7	4,8	3,1	6,1	5,6
Mar	7,1	2,7	6,4	0,1	6,5	6,9	6,0
Apr	2,8	4,8	-46,1	91,8	8,9	5,5	5,9
May	4,5	4,2	-9,7	19,0	5,1	4,4	5,6
Jun	4,0	5,0	-5,3	14,9	3,3	5,0	5,5
Jul	3,3	4,5	-6,6	3,3	15,3	4,6	5,4
Aug	4,2	3,9	-1,9	2,6	8,7		
Sep	2,7	3,3	-0,5	6,0	6,5		
Oct	4,0	3,3	0,5	5,6	5,7		
Nov	4,9	5,4	-2,4	5,5	7,6		
Dec	0,3	2,3	1,3	6,3	5,4		
Total	4,0	3,8	-4,4	9,7	7,1		

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	96 747	95 012	105 990	111 783	0,0	-3,9	1,4	1,7
Feb	97 627	102 921	105 880	112 148	0,9	8,3	-0,1	0,3
Mar	99 492	99 300	106 202	112 782	1,9	-3,5	0,3	0,6
Apr	51 846	98 775	106 485	112 927	-47,9	-0,5	0,3	0,1
May	84 932	101 282	107 295	112 044	63,8	2,5	0,8	-0,8
Jun	91 075	104 550	107 685	112 892	7,2	3,2	0,4	0,8
Jul	90 532	93 239	108 057	113 023	-0,6	-10,8	0,3	0,1
Aug	95 897	99 395	108 046		5,9	6,6	0,0	
Sep	96 300	101 973	108 466		0,4	2,6	0,4	
Oct	97 150	102 847	108 830		0,9	0,9	0,3	
Nov	97 441	102 819	110 531		0,3	0,0	1,6	
Dec	98 821	104 525	109 967		1,4	1,7	-0,5	

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

Type of retailer	Feb-23 *	Mar-23 *	Apr-23 *	May-23 *	Jun-23	Jul-23 1/
General dealers	49 742	52 078	47 402	50 758	51 691	46 983
Food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores	8 858	9 433	9 232	8 637	8 987	9 270
Pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries	7 669	8 364	8 908	8 371	8 166	8 974
Textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods	15 890	16 536	17 227	19 139	16 626	17 257
Household furniture, appliances and equipment	4 062	4 477	4 011	4 013	4 099	4 306
Hardware, paint and glass	8 435	8 779	8 717	9 271	8 394	9 123
All other retailers	11 017	10 960	10 646	10 941	10 331	10 158
Total	105 673	110 627	106 143	111 130	108 294	106 070

1/ Figures are preliminary.

* Revised, see note on page 6.

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

Type of retailer	Feb-23	Mar-23	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23
General dealers	8,3	8,5	8,1	4,3	5,9	4,9
Food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores	8,2	4,8	5,3	2,7	9,2	4,4
Pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries	3,7	3,6	3,6	4,6	6,9	4,8
Textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods	7,7	12,6	-0,6	11,0	7,8	9,6
Household furniture, appliances and equipment	1,2	0,1	-1,5	-2,7	1,1	1,7
Hardware, paint and glass	-0,4	4,9	11,7	0,5	-2,2	-1,0
All other retailers	1,2	0,4	4,8	1,4	0,0	1,8
Total	6,1	6,9	5,5	4,4	5,0	4,6

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	Feb-23	Mar-23	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23
General dealers	3,8	3,9	3,5	2,0	2,8	2,2
Food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores	0,7	0,4	0,5	0,2	0,7	0,4
Pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries	0,3	0,3	0,3	0,3	0,5	0,4
Textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods	1,1	1,8	-0,1	1,8	1,2	1,5
Household furniture, appliances and equipment	0,0	0,0	-0,1	-0,1	0,0	0,1
Hardware, paint and glass	0,0	0,4	0,9	0,0	-0,2	-0,1
All other retailers	0,1	0,0	0,5	0,1	0,0	0,2
Total	6,1	6,9	5,5	4,4	5,0	4,6

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

Type of retailer	Feb-23	Mar-23	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Month-on-month % change
General dealers	51 125	51 436	51 799	51 276	51 763	51 807	0,1
Food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores	9 608	9 482	9 571	9 195	9 790	9 528	-2,7
Pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries	8 434	8 457	8 508	8 522	8 553	8 593	0,5
Textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods	18 416	18 555	17 918	18 516	18 467	18 476	0,0
Household furniture, appliances and equipment	4 481	4 461	4 412	4 335	4 414	4 475	1,4
Hardware, paint and glass	9 047	9 259	9 611	9 140	8 919	9 110	2,1
All other retailers	11 037	11 132	11 108	11 061	10 986	11 034	0,4
Total	112 148	112 782	112 927	112 044	112 892	113 023	0,1

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 2023 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 This survey covers retail enterprises according to the following types of retailers:
 - general dealers:
 - 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:
 - 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:
 - 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:
 - 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 *Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities* (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 *International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities* (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 July 2023 was 79,0%. The collection rate for June 2023 for the new sample was 78,8%.

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 3 038 enterprises from a population of 22 677 enterprises. Completed questionnaires are required to be returned to Stats SA within ten 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 2023 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 three 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	1 461 520	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 – July 2023

	Lower limit (R million)	Sales (R million)	Upper limit (R million)	Relative standard error (RSE) (%)
Retail trade sales	104 000	106 070	108 140	0,9

- 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 (SNA)</i> in the same way as in the <i>Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities (SIC)</i> , 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	<table><tr><td>BSF</td><td>Business sampling frame</td></tr><tr><td>CPI</td><td>Consumer price index</td></tr><tr><td>GDP</td><td>Gross domestic product</td></tr><tr><td>ISIC</td><td>International Standard Industrial Classification</td></tr><tr><td>SARS</td><td>South African Revenue Service</td></tr><tr><td>SIC</td><td>Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities</td></tr><tr><td>SNA</td><td>System of National Accounts</td></tr><tr><td>Stats SA</td><td>Statistics South Africa</td></tr><tr><td>VAT</td><td>Value-added tax</td></tr></table>	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
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																		

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