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Retail trade sales (Preliminary)

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Sales at constant 2019 prices: results for May 2026

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

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

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 increased by 2,3% year-on-year in May 2026. The largest positive contributors to this increase were:

- all 'other' retailers (6,7% and contributing 0,7 of a percentage point);
- retailers in textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods (3,7% and contributing 0,7 of a percentage point); and
- general dealers (1,0% and contributing 0,4 of a percentage point) – see Table 5 and Table 6.

Seasonally adjusted retail trade sales increased by 0,1% in May 2026 compared with April 2026. This followed month-on-month changes of 0,8% in April 2026 and 0,1% in March 2026.

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

Type of retailer	Mar – May 2025 (R million)	Weight (%)	Mar – May 2026 (R million)	% change between Mar – May 2025 and Mar – May 2026	Contribution (% points) to the total % change
General dealers	127 885	43,9	129 469	1,2	0,5
Food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores	24 952	8,6	24 424	-2,1	-0,2
Pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries	22 158	7,6	22 719	2,5	0,2
Textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods	50 962	17,5	52 071	2,2	0,4
Household furniture, appliances and equipment	11 956	4,1	13 052	9,2	0,4
Hardware, paint and glass	21 841	7,5	21 836	0,0	0,0
All other retailers	31 583	10,8	33 536	6,2	0,7
Total	291 337	100,0	297 107	2,0	2,0

Retail trade sales increased by 2,0% in the three months ended May 2026 compared with the three months ended May 2025. The largest positive contributors to this increase were:

- all 'other' retailers (6,2% and contributing 0,7 of a percentage point); and
- general dealers (1,2% and contributing 0,5 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	Dec 2025 – Feb 2026 (R million)	Weight (%)	Mar – May 2026 (R million)	% change between Dec 2025 – Feb 2026 and Mar – May 2026	Contribution (% points) to the total % change
General dealers	135 115	43,9	134 892	-0,2	-0,1
Food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores	24 982	8,1	25 285	1,2	0,1
Pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries	22 674	7,4	22 438	-1,0	-0,1
Textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods	54 974	17,9	55 367	0,7	0,1
Household furniture, appliances and equipment	13 842	4,5	14 014	1,2	0,1
Hardware, paint and glass	22 574	7,3	22 594	0,1	0,0
All other retailers	33 664	10,9	34 167	1,5	0,2
Total	307 826	100,0	308 759	0,3	0,3

Seasonally adjusted retail trade sales increased by 0,3% in the three months ended May 2026 compared with the previous three months. The largest positive contributor was all 'other' retailers (1,5% and contributing 0,2 of a percentage point) – see Table C.

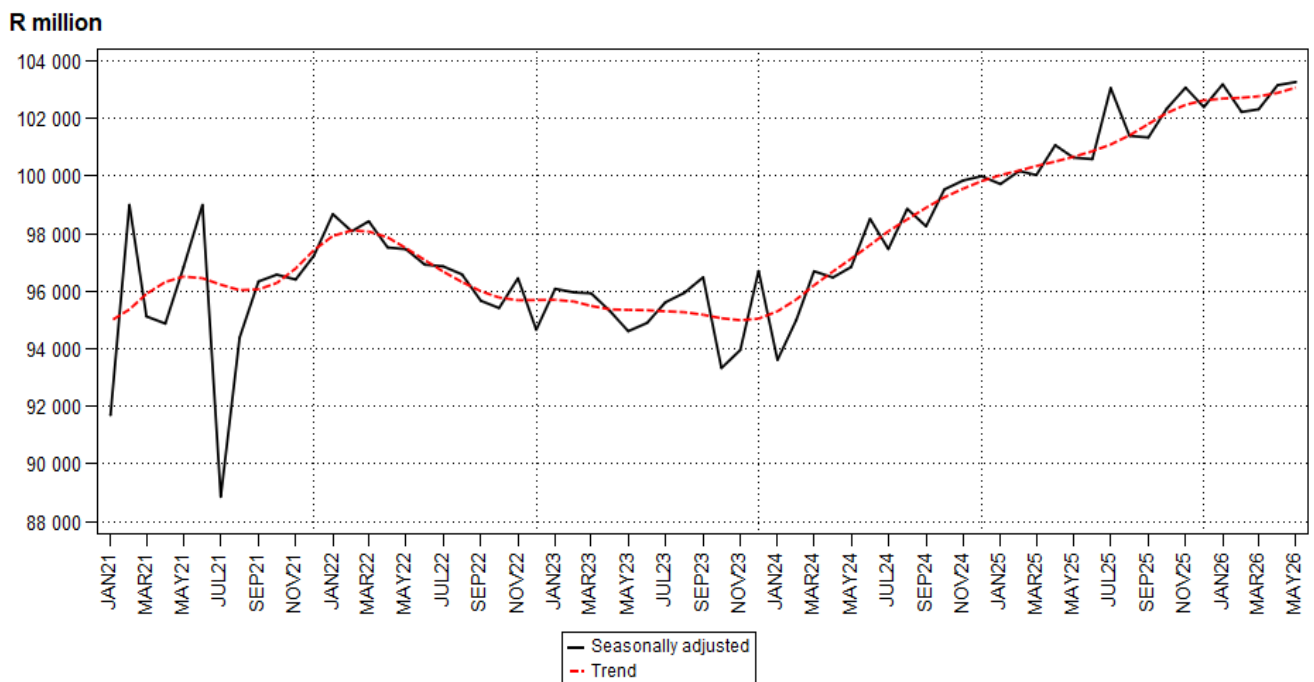
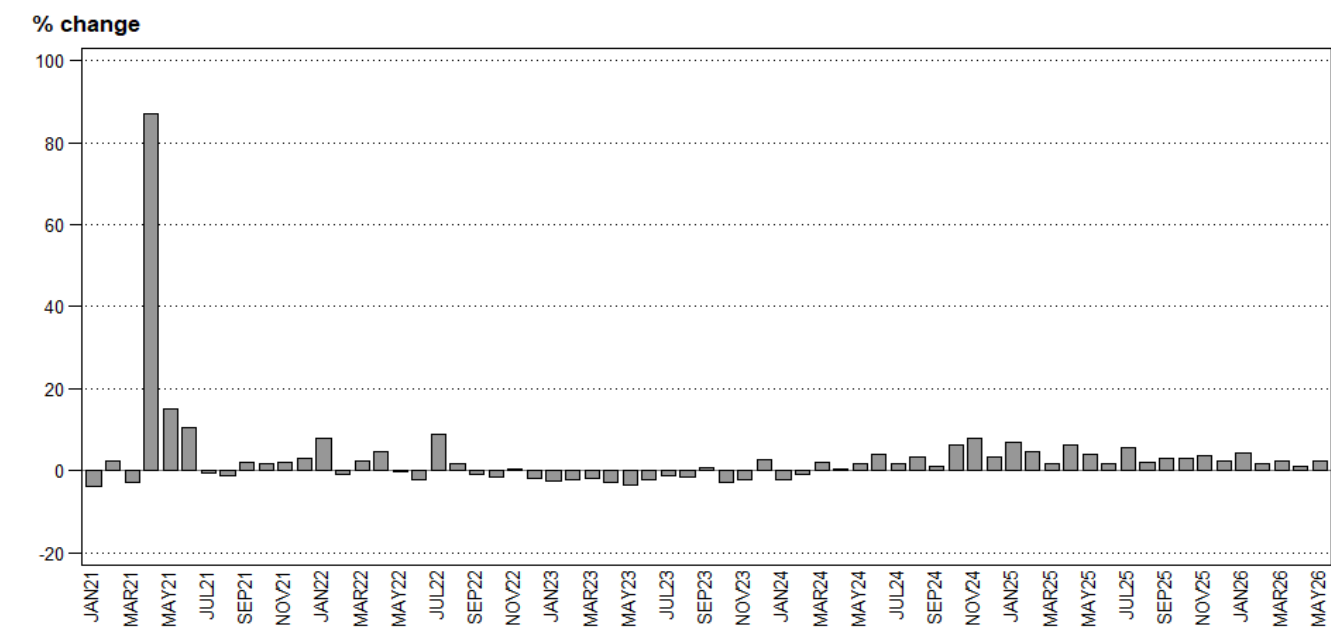
Figure 1 – Retail trade sales at constant 2019 prices

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



Sales at current prices: results for May 2026

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

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

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	Mar – May 2025 (R million)	Weight (%)	Mar – May 2026 (R million)	% change between Mar – May 2025 and Mar – May 2026	Contribution (% points) to the total % change
General dealers	173 242	47,4	179 202	3,4	1,6
Food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores	34 255	9,4	35 415	3,4	0,3
Pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries	29 700	8,1	31 208	5,1	0,4
Textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods	56 194	15,4	57 662	2,6	0,4
Household furniture, appliances and equipment	11 675	3,2	12 238	4,8	0,2
Hardware, paint and glass	26 892	7,4	27 454	2,1	0,2
All other retailers	33 384	9,1	35 043	5,0	0,5
Total	365 342	100,0	378 220	3,5	3,5

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

Type of retailer	Dec 2025 – Feb 2026 (R million)	Weight (%)	Mar – May 2026 (R million)	% change between Dec 2025 – Feb 2026 and Mar – May 2026	Contribution (% points) to the total % change
General dealers	186 487	47,7	186 661	0,1	0,0
Food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores	36 181	9,3	36 610	1,2	0,1
Pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries	30 967	7,9	30 864	-0,3	0,0
Textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods	61 119	15,6	61 436	0,5	0,1
Household furniture, appliances and equipment	13 003	3,3	13 096	0,7	0,0
Hardware, paint and glass	27 974	7,2	28 197	0,8	0,1
All other retailers	35 005	9,0	35 617	1,7	0,2
Total	390 735	100,0	392 482	0,4	0,4


Risenga Maluleke
 Statistician-General

Tables

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

Month	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
Jan	88 360	84 894	91 575	89 196	87 319	93 239	97 326
Feb	91 047	93 226	92 448	90 366	89 587	93 708	95 209
Mar	95 558	93 010	95 303	93 550	95 426	97 009	99 422
Apr	47 167	88 199	92 258	89 579	89 987	95 554	96 677
May	84 036	96 600	96 545	93 359	94 963	98 774	101 008
Jun	85 667	94 722	92 610	90 673	94 174	95 753	
Jul	83 783	83 287	90 655	89 568	90 988	96 145	
Aug	91 789	90 585	92 283	90 927	93 952	96 004	
Sep	90 259	92 170	91 462	92 094	93 149	95 934	
Oct	91 867	93 589	92 181	89 542	95 283	98 115	
Nov	105 131	107 342	107 583	105 383	113 828	117 907	
Dec	126 021	129 796	127 315	130 770	135 406	138 834	
Total	1 080 685	1 147 420	1 162 218	1 145 007	1 174 062	1 216 976	

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

Month	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2026 year-to-date
Jan	-3,9	7,9	-2,6	-2,1	6,8	4,4	4,4
Feb	2,4	-0,8	-2,3	-0,9	4,6	1,6	3,0
Mar	-2,7	2,5	-1,8	2,0	1,7	2,5	2,8
Apr	87,0	4,6	-2,9	0,5	6,2	1,2	2,4
May	15,0	-0,1	-3,3	1,7	4,0	2,3	2,4
Jun	10,6	-2,2	-2,1	3,9	1,7		
Jul	-0,6	8,8	-1,2	1,6	5,7		
Aug	-1,3	1,9	-1,5	3,3	2,2		
Sep	2,1	-0,8	0,7	1,1	3,0		
Oct	1,9	-1,5	-2,9	6,4	3,0		
Nov	2,1	0,2	-2,0	8,0	3,6		
Dec	3,0	-1,9	2,7	3,5	2,5		
Total	6,2	1,3	-1,5	2,5	3,7		

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

Month	R million				Month-on-month % change			
	2023	2024	2025	2026	2023	2024	2025	2026
Jan	96 085	93 612	99 726	103 194	1,5	-3,2	-0,3	0,8
Feb	95 959	95 005	100 179	102 231	-0,1	1,5	0,5	-0,9
Mar	95 930	96 695	100 037	102 325	0,0	1,8	-0,1	0,1
Apr	95 312	96 479	101 077	103 162	-0,6	-0,2	1,0	0,8
May	94 612	96 843	100 643	103 272	-0,7	0,4	-0,4	0,1
Jun	94 900	98 519	100 593		0,3	1,7	0,0	
Jul	95 616	97 466	103 065		0,8	-1,1	2,5	
Aug	95 944	98 865	101 399		0,3	1,4	-1,6	
Sep	96 485	98 257	101 346		0,6	-0,6	-0,1	
Oct	93 328	99 538	102 343		-3,3	1,3	1,0	
Nov	93 959	99 852	103 077		0,7	0,3	0,7	
Dec	96 707	99 999	102 401		2,9	0,1	-0,7	

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

Type of retailer	Dec-25	Jan-26	Feb-26	Mar-26	Apr-26	May-26
General dealers	58 655	41 333	42 684	45 440	41 125	42 904
Food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores	11 732	7 868	7 486	7 996	8 237	8 191
Pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries	7 916	7 911	7 106	7 518	7 746	7 455
Textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods	32 378	16 911	15 995	15 706	17 061	19 304
Household furniture, appliances and equipment	6 350	4 220	4 180	4 503	4 255	4 294
Hardware, paint and glass	8 059	6 916	6 725	7 333	6 867	7 636
All other retailers	13 744	12 167	11 033	10 926	11 386	11 224
Total	138 834	97 326	95 209	99 422	96 677	101 008

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

Type of retailer	Dec-25	Jan-26	Feb-26	Mar-26	Apr-26	May-26
General dealers	4,0	2,4	-1,1	1,7	1,0	1,0
Food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores	-5,8	-6,1	-5,3	-5,5	-0,3	-0,4
Pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries	1,5	4,8	6,4	5,0	0,6	2,1
Textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods	0,0	9,7	4,2	3,9	-1,0	3,7
Household furniture, appliances and equipment	11,3	10,7	8,8	10,8	8,6	8,1
Hardware, paint and glass	2,1	1,9	-0,1	0,3	0,1	-0,4
All other retailers	7,6	11,1	9,9	7,2	4,8	6,7
Total	2,5	4,4	1,6	2,5	1,2	2,3

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	Dec-25	Jan-26	Feb-26	Mar-26	Apr-26	May-26
General dealers	1,7	1,0	-0,5	0,8	0,4	0,4
Food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores	-0,5	-0,5	-0,4	-0,5	0,0	0,0
Pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries	0,1	0,4	0,5	0,4	0,0	0,2
Textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods	0,0	1,6	0,7	0,6	-0,2	0,7
Household furniture, appliances and equipment	0,5	0,4	0,4	0,5	0,4	0,3
Hardware, paint and glass	0,1	0,1	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0
All other retailers	0,7	1,3	1,1	0,8	0,5	0,7
Total	2,5	4,4	1,6	2,5	1,2	2,3

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

Type of retailer	Dec-25	Jan-26	Feb-26	Mar-26	Apr-26	May-26	Month-on-month % change
General dealers	45 166	45 320	44 629	44 811	45 153	44 928	-0,5
Food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores	8 325	8 521	8 136	8 228	8 524	8 533	0,1
Pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries	7 343	7 671	7 660	7 594	7 352	7 492	1,9
Textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods	18 333	18 123	18 518	18 239	18 380	18 748	2,0
Household furniture, appliances and equipment	4 604	4 642	4 596	4 650	4 679	4 685	0,1
Hardware, paint and glass	7 541	7 631	7 402	7 596	7 497	7 501	0,1
All other retailers	11 088	11 286	11 290	11 206	11 577	11 384	-1,7
Total	102 401	103 194	102 231	102 325	103 162	103 272	0,1

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

Month	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
Jan	89 551	87 977	98 447	103 447	106 642	115 801	122 834
Feb	92 581	97 002	100 002	106 060	110 127	116 843	120 692
Mar	97 483	97 544	103 903	111 032	117 751	121 504	126 626
Apr	48 322	92 700	100 932	106 636	110 969	119 606	122 979
May	85 414	101 656	106 862	111 413	117 176	124 232	128 615
Jun	87 231	100 192	103 476	108 710	116 706	121 322	
Jul	85 454	88 239	101 783	107 303	112 498	121 450	
Aug	93 964	96 434	104 807	109 425	116 517	121 981	
Sep	92 609	98 142	104 517	111 357	116 244	122 318	
Oct	94 727	100 030	105 715	108 766	118 648	124 151	
Nov	108 658	114 622	123 342	128 100	140 718	148 405	
Dec	130 311	138 583	146 011	158 246	166 343	173 595	
Total	1 106 305	1 213 121	1 299 797	1 370 495	1 450 339	1 531 208	

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

Month	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2026 year-to-date
Jan	-1,8	11,9	5,1	3,1	8,6	6,1	6,1
Feb	4,8	3,1	6,1	3,8	6,1	3,3	4,7
Mar	0,1	6,5	6,9	6,1	3,2	4,2	4,5
Apr	91,8	8,9	5,7	4,1	7,8	2,8	4,1
May	19,0	5,1	4,3	5,2	6,0	3,5	4,0
Jun	14,9	3,3	5,1	7,4	4,0		
Jul	3,3	15,3	5,4	4,8	8,0		
Aug	2,6	8,7	4,4	6,5	4,7		
Sep	6,0	6,5	6,5	4,4	5,2		
Oct	5,6	5,7	2,9	9,1	4,6		
Nov	5,5	7,6	3,9	9,9	5,5		
Dec	6,3	5,4	8,4	5,1	4,4		
Total	9,7	7,1	5,4	5,8	5,6		

Table 10 – Seasonally adjusted retail trade sales at current prices

Month	R million				Month-on-month % change			
	2023	2024	2025	2026	2023	2024	2025	2026
Jan	112 322	115 226	124 677	131 212	2,8	-2,3	0,6	1,4
Feb	113 206	117 698	125 605	130 181	0,8	2,1	0,7	-0,8
Mar	113 754	119 074	124 641	130 221	0,5	1,2	-0,8	0,0
Apr	113 299	118 884	126 816	130 869	-0,4	-0,2	1,7	0,5
May	112 789	119 298	126 520	131 392	-0,5	0,3	-0,2	0,4
Jun	113 632	121 872	127 050		0,7	2,2	0,4	
Jul	114 139	120 155	129 767		0,4	-1,4	2,1	
Aug	114 669	121 897	128 025		0,5	1,4	-1,3	
Sep	115 864	121 540	128 042		1,0	-0,3	0,0	
Oct	112 984	123 462	128 943		-2,5	1,6	0,7	
Nov	114 479	123 869	130 369		1,3	0,3	1,1	
Dec	117 924	123 931	129 342		3,0	0,1	-0,8	

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

Type of retailer	Dec-25	Jan-26	Feb-26	Mar-26	Apr-26	May-26
General dealers	80 359	56 822	58 724	62 650	56 980	59 572
Food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores	16 898	11 467	10 834	11 552	11 995	11 868
Pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries	10 745	10 782	9 701	10 288	10 653	10 267
Textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods	35 587	18 651	17 641	17 343	18 904	21 415
Household furniture, appliances and equipment	5 896	3 981	3 940	4 227	3 989	4 022
Hardware, paint and glass	9 907	8 539	8 387	9 164	8 588	9 702
All other retailers	14 202	12 592	11 464	11 403	11 870	11 770
Total	173 595	122 834	120 692	126 626	122 979	128 615

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

Type of retailer	Dec-25	Jan-26	Feb-26	Mar-26	Apr-26	May-26
General dealers	6,7	5,0	1,3	4,1	3,3	2,9
Food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores	2,5	2,7	2,8	1,5	5,2	3,5
Pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries	5,3	8,7	10,1	7,7	3,2	4,5
Textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods	0,3	10,3	4,7	4,3	-0,5	4,2
Household furniture, appliances and equipment	5,5	5,7	4,9	6,3	4,5	3,6
Hardware, paint and glass	2,1	2,3	1,5	2,0	2,1	2,2
All other retailers	4,7	8,5	7,7	5,7	3,5	5,8
Total	4,4	6,1	3,3	4,2	2,8	3,5

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	Dec-25	Jan-26	Feb-26	Mar-26	Apr-26	May-26
General dealers	3,0	2,4	0,6	2,0	1,5	1,4
Food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores	0,2	0,3	0,3	0,1	0,5	0,3
Pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries	0,3	0,7	0,8	0,6	0,3	0,4
Textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods	0,1	1,5	0,7	0,6	-0,1	0,7
Household furniture, appliances and equipment	0,2	0,2	0,2	0,2	0,1	0,1
Hardware, paint and glass	0,1	0,2	0,1	0,1	0,1	0,2
All other retailers	0,4	0,8	0,7	0,5	0,3	0,5
Total	4,4	6,1	3,3	4,2	2,8	3,5

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

Type of retailer	Dec-25	Jan-26	Feb-26	Mar-26	Apr-26	May-26	Month-on-month % change
General dealers	62 177	62 471	61 839	62 187	62 203	62 271	0,1
Food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores	12 014	12 202	11 965	11 872	12 401	12 337	-0,5
Pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries	10 038	10 451	10 478	10 409	10 129	10 326	1,9
Textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods	19 951	20 551	20 617	20 263	20 367	20 806	2,2
Household furniture, appliances and equipment	4 316	4 365	4 322	4 354	4 374	4 368	-0,1
Hardware, paint and glass	9 327	9 434	9 213	9 446	9 341	9 410	0,7
All other retailers	11 520	11 738	11 747	11 689	12 054	11 874	-1,5
Total	129 342	131 212	130 181	130 221	130 869	131 392	0,4

Explanatory notes

Introduction	1	Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) conducts a monthly survey of the retail trade industry, covering retail enterprises (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 for value-added tax (VAT). Published retail trade sales estimates include VAT.
Purpose of the survey	2	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	3	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	4	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	5	The preliminary collection rate for the survey on retail trade sales for May 2026 was 74,9%. The revised collection rate for April 2026 was 77,3%.

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 New base year for constant prices	Jan-02 - 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 *Stats in Brief* 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 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 11 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 1 671 enterprises from a population of 19 052 enterprises. Completed questionnaires are required to be returned to Stats SA within ten 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 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 6,0%.

Class limits

- 3 The retail sampling frame is divided into four size groups. All large enterprises (size group one) are completely enumerated. Simple random sampling is applied to size groups two, three and four (medium, small and very small) enterprises. 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	2 692 651	12 000 000
Small	3	12 000 001	57 000 000
Medium	2	57 000 001	117 000 000
Large	1	117 000 001	

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 February 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 – May 2026

	Lower limit (R million)	Sales (R million)	Upper limit (R million)	Relative standard error (RSE) (%)
Retail trade sales	125 270	128 615	131 961	1,3

- 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	CPI	Consumer price index
	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
	SNA	System of National Accounts
	Stats SA	Statistics South Africa
	VAT	Value-added tax
	*	Revised figures

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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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Advance release calendar

A release calendar is disseminated on www.statssa.gov.za.

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Stats SA also provides a subscription service.

Electronic services

A large range of data is available via online services. For more details about our electronic services, contact Stats SA's user information service at (012) 310 8600.

You can also visit us on the internet at: www.statssa.gov.za.

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