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STATISTICAL RELEASE

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Motor trade sales (Preliminary)

January 2025

To convert motor trade sales at current prices to sales at constant prices, Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) constructs deflators using the producer price index (PPI), consumer price index (CPI) and weights calculated from the large sample survey (LSS) for the motor trade industry. Currently the weights are based on the 2018 LSS. With effect from the next publication (February 2025), the deflators will be updated with weights from the 2022 LSS. For a short note on the construction of the motor trade sales deflators, see the January 2023 statistical release, available on the Stats SA website:

www.statssa.gov.za/publications/P63432/P63432January2023.pdf

This release also provides an analysis of revisions. If you have any questions or comments, please send these to JP Terblanche, juan-pierret@statssa.gov.za.

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IMPROVING LIVES THROUGH DATA ECOSYSTEMS



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Sales at constant 2019 prices: results for January 2025

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

	Aug-24	Sep-24	Oct-24	Nov-24	Dec-24	Jan-25
Year-on-year % change, unadjusted	-3,9	-6,7	2,0	-2,4	-4,3	0,2
Month-on-month % change, seasonally adjusted	-0,6	-1,4	1,9	0,0	1,5	0,7
3-month % change, seasonally adjusted ¹	2,2	-0,1	0,1	-0,7	1,3	2,1

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

Measured in real terms (constant 2019 prices), motor trade sales increased by 0,2% year-on-year in January 2025. The main positive contributors to this increase were:

- used vehicle sales (8,8% and contributing 1,7 percentage points); and
- new vehicle sales (2,9% and contributing 0,7 of a percentage point).

The largest negative contributor was fuel sales (-7,9% and contributing -2,3 percentage points) – see Table 5 and Table 6.

Seasonally adjusted motor trade sales increased by 0,7% in January 2025 compared with December 2024. This followed month-on-month changes of 1,5% in December 2024 and 0,0% in November 2024.

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

Type of activity	Nov 2023 – Jan 2024 (R million)	Weight (%)	Nov 2024 – Jan 2025 (R million)	% change between Nov 2023 – Jan 2024 and Nov 2024 – Jan 2025	Contribution (% points) to the total % change
New vehicle sales	43 257	24,5	42 867	-0,9	-0,2
Used vehicle sales	33 284	18,8	34 725	4,3	0,8
Workshop income	9 292	5,3	8 519	-8,3	-0,4
Income from the sales of accessories	33 905	19,2	33 044	-2,5	-0,5
Income from fuel sales	51 454	29,1	48 458	-5,8	-1,7
Income from convenience store sales ¹	5 476	3,1	5 264	-3,9	-0,1
Total	176 668	100,0	172 877	-2,1	-2,1

¹ Income from quickshop and café sales at filling stations, including 'other' sales and trading income.

Motor trade sales decreased by 2,1% in the three months ended January 2025 compared with the three months ended January 2024. The main negative contributors to this decrease were:

- fuel sales (-5,8% and contributing -1,7 percentage points);
- sales of accessories (-2,5% and contributing -0,5 of a percentage point); and
- workshop income (-8,3% and contributing -0,4 of a percentage point).

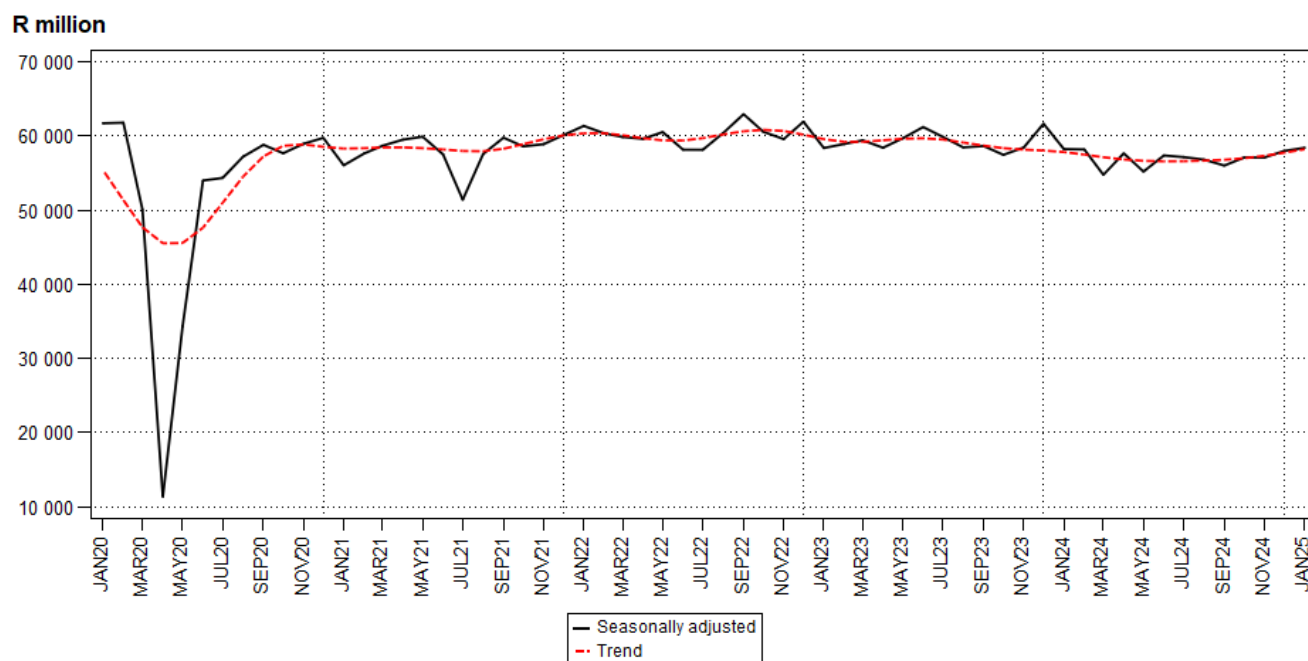
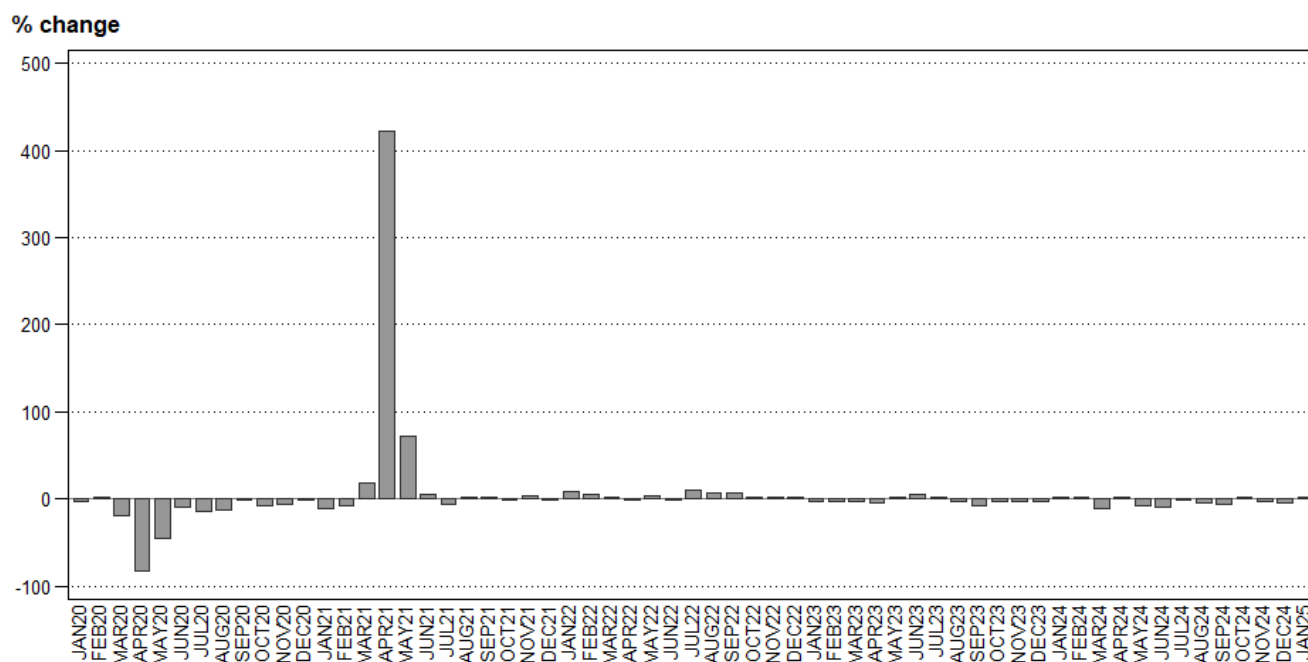
The only positive contributor was used vehicle sales (4,3% and contributing 0,8 of a percentage point) – see Table B.

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

Type of activity	Aug – Oct 2024 (R million)	Weight (%)	Nov 2024 – Jan 2025 (R million)	% change between Aug – Oct 2024 and Nov 2024 – Jan 2025	Contribution (% points) to the total % change
New vehicle sales	40 828	24,0	43 792	7,3	1,8
Used vehicle sales	34 440	20,3	35 314	2,5	0,5
Workshop income	9 091	5,3	8 858	-2,6	-0,1
Income from the sales of accessories	33 593	19,8	33 707	0,3	0,1
Income from fuel sales	46 932	27,6	46 797	-0,3	-0,1
Income from convenience store sales ¹	5 042	3,0	5 035	-0,1	0,0
Total	169 926	100,0	173 501	2,1	2,1

¹ Income from quickshop and café sales at filling stations, including 'other' sales and trading income.

Seasonally adjusted motor trade sales increased by 2,1% in the three months ended January 2025 compared with the previous three months. The largest positive contributor to this increase was new vehicle sales (7,3% and contributing 1,8 percentage points) – see Table C.

Figure 1 – Motor trade sales at constant 2019 prices**Figure 2 – Motor trade sales at constant 2019 prices: year-on-year percentage change**

Sales at current prices: results for January 2025

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

	Aug-24	Sep-24	Oct-24	Nov-24	Dec-24	Jan-25
Year-on-year % change, unadjusted	-0,6	-6,6	-1,7	-4,2	-6,1	0,2
Month-on-month % change, seasonally adjusted	-0,5	-4,1	3,4	-0,4	-2,3	5,5
3-month % change, seasonally adjusted ¹	1,8	-0,4	-1,0	-2,2	-0,6	0,7

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

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

Type of activity	Nov 2023 – Jan 2024 (R million)	Weight (%)	Nov 2024 – Jan 2025 (R million)	% change between Nov 2023 – Jan 2024 and Nov 2024 – Jan 2025	Contribution (% points) to the total % change
New vehicle sales	56 317	23,4	57 426	2,0	0,5
Used vehicle sales	42 250	17,6	43 822	3,7	0,7
Workshop income	10 950	4,6	10 380	-5,2	-0,2
Income from the sales of accessories	45 094	18,8	46 289	2,7	0,5
Income from fuel sales	78 225	32,6	66 882	-14,5	-4,7
Income from convenience store sales ¹	7 329	3,1	7 299	-0,4	0,0
Total	240 166	100,0	232 099	-3,4	-3,4

¹ Income from quickshop and café sales at filling stations, including 'other' sales and trading income.

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

Type of activity	Aug – Oct 2024 (R million)	Weight (%)	Nov 2024 – Jan 2025 (R million)	% change between Aug – Oct 2024 and Nov 2024 – Jan 2025	Contribution (% points) to the total % change
New vehicle sales	55 715	24,1	57 984	4,1	1,0
Used vehicle sales	44 212	19,1	44 341	0,3	0,1
Workshop income	11 042	4,8	10 908	-1,2	-0,1
Income from the sales of accessories	46 839	20,3	47 432	1,3	0,3
Income from fuel sales	66 335	28,7	65 079	-1,9	-0,5
Income from convenience store sales ¹	6 929	3,0	6 993	0,9	0,0
Total	231 070	100,0	232 735	0,7	0,7

¹ Income from quickshop and café sales at filling stations, including 'other' sales and trading income.


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Statistician-General

Tables

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

Month	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Jan	62 444	60 300	53 412	58 226	57 004	58 109	58 201
Feb	60 426	60 641	56 248	59 140	57 949	58 343	
Mar	63 367	51 639	61 522	62 687	61 347	54 819	
Apr	61 090	10 955	57 144	57 006	54 262	55 623	
May	62 633	34 056	58 808	60 721	60 814	55 865	
Jun	59 487	53 699	56 847	56 761	60 234	54 362	
Jul	65 931	56 326	53 053	58 325	59 612	59 197	
Aug	64 939	56 628	58 225	62 195	60 380	58 004	
Sep	60 367	59 370	59 793	63 548	58 452	54 539	
Oct	66 297	60 780	60 257	61 895	60 156	61 337	
Nov	64 202	60 454	62 715	63 436	61 483	60 032	
Dec	58 301	57 682	57 170	58 567	57 076	54 644	
Total	749 484	622 530	695 194	722 507	708 769	684 874	

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

Month	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2025 year-to-date
Jan	-3,4	-11,4	9,0	-2,1	1,9	0,2	0,2
Feb	0,4	-7,2	5,1	-2,0	0,7		
Mar	-18,5	19,1	1,9	-2,1	-10,6		
Apr	-82,1	421,6	-0,2	-4,8	2,5		
May	-45,6	72,7	3,3	0,2	-8,1		
Jun	-9,7	5,9	-0,2	6,1	-9,7		
Jul	-14,6	-5,8	9,9	2,2	-0,7		
Aug	-12,8	2,8	6,8	-2,9	-3,9		
Sep	-1,7	0,7	6,3	-8,0	-6,7		
Oct	-8,3	-0,9	2,7	-2,8	2,0		
Nov	-5,8	3,7	1,1	-3,1	-2,4		
Dec	-1,1	-0,9	2,4	-2,5	-4,3		
Total	-16,9	11,7	3,9	-1,9	-3,4		

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

Month	R million				Month-on-month % change			
	2022	2023	2024	2025	2022	2023	2024	2025
Jan	61 367	58 379	58 237	58 412	2,1	-5,7	-5,5	0,7
Feb	60 365	58 927	58 189		-1,6	0,9	-0,1	
Mar	59 870	59 416	54 764		-0,8	0,8	-5,9	
Apr	59 617	58 419	57 659		-0,4	-1,7	5,3	
May	60 529	59 690	55 200		1,5	2,2	-4,3	
Jun	58 152	61 215	57 377		-3,9	2,6	3,9	
Jul	58 141	59 876	57 156		0,0	-2,2	-0,4	
Aug	60 405	58 462	56 816		3,9	-2,4	-0,6	
Sep	62 946	58 649	56 013		4,2	0,3	-1,4	
Oct	60 571	57 458	57 097		-3,8	-2,0	1,9	
Nov	59 584	58 455	57 103		-1,6	1,7	0,0	
Dec	61 935	61 657	57 986		3,9	5,5	1,5	

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

Type of activity	Aug-24	Sep-24	Oct-24	Nov-24	Dec-24	Jan-25
New vehicle sales	14 357	12 651	15 202	15 762	12 293	14 812
Used vehicle sales	11 941	10 945	13 274	12 123	10 454	12 148
Workshop income	3 085	3 012	3 191	3 149	2 618	2 752
Income from the sales of accessories	11 286	10 800	12 036	11 636	9 924	11 484
Income from fuel sales	15 602	15 491	15 983	15 653	17 439	15 366
Income from convenience store sales ¹	1 733	1 640	1 651	1 709	1 916	1 639
Total	58 004	54 539	61 337	60 032	54 644	58 201

¹ Income from quickshop and café sales at filling stations, including 'other' sales and trading income.

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

Type of activity	Aug-24	Sep-24	Oct-24	Nov-24	Dec-24	Jan-25
New vehicle sales	-3,4	-13,2	-2,2	3,5	-9,8	2,9
Used vehicle sales	4,5	3,1	19,7	0,7	3,7	8,8
Workshop income	-12,6	-9,6	-5,6	-11,7	-8,1	-4,3
Income from the sales of accessories	-7,9	-7,0	-2,4	-5,4	-3,7	1,6
Income from fuel sales	-5,8	-6,2	-0,1	-5,6	-4,1	-7,9
Income from convenience store sales ¹	-1,2	-9,0	-8,0	-3,1	-5,1	-3,2
Total	-3,9	-6,7	2,0	-2,4	-4,3	0,2

¹ Income from quickshop and café sales at filling stations, including 'other' sales and trading income.

Table 6 – Contribution of each type of activity to the year-on-year percentage change in motor trade sales at constant 2019 prices

Type of activity	Aug-24	Sep-24	Oct-24	Nov-24	Dec-24	Jan-25
New vehicle sales	-0,8	-3,3	-0,6	0,9	-2,3	0,7
Used vehicle sales	0,9	0,6	3,6	0,1	0,7	1,7
Workshop income	-0,7	-0,5	-0,3	-0,7	-0,4	-0,2
Income from the sales of accessories	-1,6	-1,4	-0,5	-1,1	-0,7	0,3
Income from fuel sales	-1,6	-1,8	0,0	-1,5	-1,3	-2,3
Income from convenience store sales ¹	0,0	-0,3	-0,2	-0,1	-0,2	-0,1
Total	-3,9	-6,7	2,0	-2,4	-4,3	0,2

¹ Income from quickshop and café sales at filling stations, including 'other' sales and trading income.

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

Type of activity	Aug-24	Sep-24	Oct-24	Nov-24	Dec-24	Jan-25	Month-on-month % change
New vehicle sales	13 515	13 557	13 756	14 379	14 477	14 936	3,2
Used vehicle sales	11 499	11 291	11 650	11 526	11 822	11 966	1,2
Workshop income	3 080	3 003	3 008	2 958	2 929	2 971	1,4
Income from the sales of accessories	11 083	10 852	11 658	11 170	10 965	11 572	5,5
Income from fuel sales	15 868	15 644	15 420	15 385	16 105	15 307	-5,0
Income from convenience store sales ¹	1 771	1 665	1 606	1 685	1 688	1 662	-1,5
Total	56 816	56 013	57 097	57 103	57 986	58 412	0,7

¹ Income from quickshop and café sales at filling stations, including 'other' sales and trading income.

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

Month	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Jan	60 170	60 926	54 586	66 628	72 566	78 149	78 338
Feb	58 512	61 331	58 448	68 496	73 970	79 055	
Mar	62 183	52 097	64 931	74 337	79 618	75 862	
Apr	61 440	10 344	61 323	68 870	71 017	77 567	
May	63 524	31 632	63 273	74 310	79 567	77 819	
Jun	60 622	52 487	61 258	71 511	78 256	75 059	
Jul	66 234	56 835	57 590	76 029	78 104	80 854	
Aug	65 300	57 428	64 198	80 009	79 886	79 422	
Sep	60 866	60 350	66 096	80 807	79 214	74 009	
Oct	67 004	61 553	66 984	78 863	83 158	81 785	
Nov	64 720	61 056	71 118	82 010	83 897	80 388	
Dec	58 911	57 960	65 864	76 857	78 120	73 373	
Total	749 486	623 999	755 669	898 727	937 373	933 342	

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

Month	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2025 year-to-date
Jan	1,3	-10,4	22,1	8,9	7,7	0,2	0,2
Feb	4,8	-4,7	17,2	8,0	6,9		
Mar	-16,2	24,6	14,5	7,1	-4,7		
Apr	-83,2	492,8	12,3	3,1	9,2		
May	-50,2	100,0	17,4	7,1	-2,2		
Jun	-13,4	16,7	16,7	9,4	-4,1		
Jul	-14,2	1,3	32,0	2,7	3,5		
Aug	-12,1	11,8	24,6	-0,2	-0,6		
Sep	-0,8	9,5	22,3	-2,0	-6,6		
Oct	-8,1	8,8	17,7	5,4	-1,7		
Nov	-5,7	16,5	15,3	2,3	-4,2		
Dec	-1,6	13,6	16,7	1,6	-6,1		
Total	-16,7	21,1	18,9	4,3	-0,4		

Table 10 – Seasonally adjusted motor trade sales at current prices

Month	R million				Month-on-month % change			
	2022	2023	2024	2025	2022	2023	2024	2025
Jan	70 669	75 547	79 653	79 741	5,0	-3,7	-2,1	5,5
Feb	70 670	76 166	80 759		0,0	0,8	1,4	
Mar	71 202	76 771	76 110		0,8	0,8	-5,8	
Apr	71 413	75 238	78 481		0,3	-2,0	3,1	
May	73 895	77 993	76 443		3,5	3,7	-2,6	
Jun	72 607	78 973	78 226		-1,7	1,3	2,3	
Jul	76 146	78 184	78 713		4,9	-1,0	0,6	
Aug	78 440	78 217	78 303		3,0	0,0	-0,5	
Sep	79 800	79 226	75 097		1,7	1,3	-4,1	
Oct	77 286	80 620	77 670		-3,2	1,8	3,4	
Nov	78 484	80 319	77 390		1,6	-0,4	-0,4	
Dec	78 428	81 384	75 604		-0,1	1,3	-2,3	

Table 11 – Motor trade sales at current prices by type of activity (R million)

Type of activity	Aug-24	Sep-24	Oct-24	Nov-24	Dec-24	Jan-25
New vehicle sales	19 093	16 870	20 290	21 066	16 369	19 991
Used vehicle sales	15 172	13 883	16 813	15 331	13 184	15 307
Workshop income	3 754	3 666	3 884	3 838	3 190	3 352
Income from the sales of accessories	15 939	15 236	16 884	16 404	13 893	15 992
Income from fuel sales	23 070	22 081	21 618	21 380	24 084	21 418
Income from convenience store sales ¹	2 393	2 274	2 297	2 369	2 652	2 278
Total	79 422	74 009	81 785	80 388	73 373	78 338

¹ Income from quickshop and café sales at filling stations, including 'other' sales and trading income.

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

Type of activity	Aug-24	Sep-24	Oct-24	Nov-24	Dec-24	Jan-25
New vehicle sales	0,2	-9,6	1,3	7,0	-7,8	5,9
Used vehicle sales	6,2	4,0	20,0	0,4	3,0	7,9
Workshop income	-8,3	-5,2	-1,3	-7,8	-4,2	-3,1
Income from the sales of accessories	-1,6	-0,7	3,4	0,4	1,8	5,9
Income from fuel sales	-3,7	-13,9	-18,3	-18,1	-13,6	-11,6
Income from convenience store sales ¹	4,5	-3,8	-3,5	0,7	-1,7	0,0
Total	-0,6	-6,6	-1,7	-4,2	-6,1	0,2

¹ Income from quickshop and café sales at filling stations, including 'other' sales and trading income.

Table 13 – Contribution of each type of activity to the year-on-year percentage change in motor trade sales at current prices

Type of activity	Aug-24	Sep-24	Oct-24	Nov-24	Dec-24	Jan-25
New vehicle sales	0,0	-2,3	0,3	1,6	-1,8	1,4
Used vehicle sales	1,1	0,7	3,4	0,1	0,5	1,4
Workshop income	-0,4	-0,3	-0,1	-0,4	-0,2	-0,1
Income from the sales of accessories	-0,3	-0,1	0,7	0,1	0,3	1,1
Income from fuel sales	-1,1	-4,5	-5,8	-5,6	-4,9	-3,6
Income from convenience store sales ¹	0,1	-0,1	-0,1	0,0	-0,1	0,0
Total	-0,6	-6,6	-1,7	-4,2	-6,1	0,2

¹ Income from quickshop and café sales at filling stations, including 'other' sales and trading income.

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

Type of activity	Aug-24	Sep-24	Oct-24	Nov-24	Dec-24	Jan-25	Month-on-month % change
New vehicle sales	18 816	17 581	19 318	20 326	17 411	20 247	16,3
Used vehicle sales	14 717	14 060	15 435	14 492	14 686	15 163	3,2
Workshop income	3 686	3 678	3 678	3 628	3 607	3 673	1,8
Income from the sales of accessories	15 543	15 512	15 784	15 679	15 610	16 143	3,4
Income from fuel sales	23 125	21 992	21 218	20 915	21 956	22 208	1,1
Income from convenience store sales ¹	2 416	2 274	2 239	2 350	2 335	2 308	-1,2
Total	78 303	75 097	77 670	77 390	75 604	79 741	5,5

¹ Income from quickshop and café sales at filling stations, including 'other' sales and trading income.

Analysis of revisions

Introduction

Preliminary monthly values for motor trade are published approximately seven weeks after the reference month, e.g. preliminary motor 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 motor trade sales from time to time are shown in the explanatory notes (see note 7 on page 15).

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 motor trade, year-on-year growth rate, current 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 2024.

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 – Motor trade year-on-year growth rates: preliminary and revised

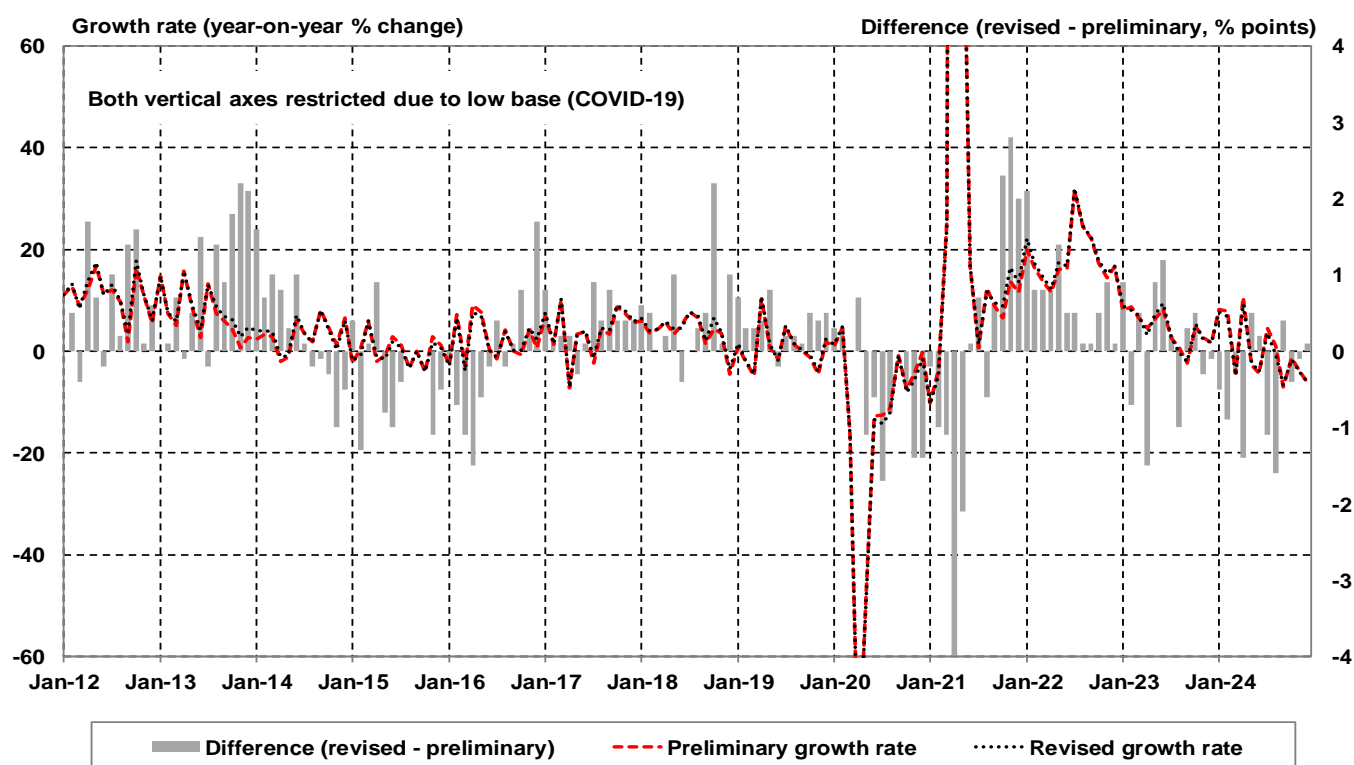


Table 15 – Motor trade year-on-year growth rates: preliminary and revised

Description	Value / outcome	Comment
Average year-on-year growth rate over the whole period	Preliminary: 7,53% Revised: 7,51%	The average of revised growth rates is slightly lower than the average of preliminary growth rates
Mean revision	-0,02 of a percentage point	This is the average of the revisions
Mean absolute revision	0,90 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 13,7% was revised up to 16,5% (November 2021)
Largest downward revision	-36,0 percentage points	Preliminary 528,8% was revised down to 492,8% (April 2021; affected by COVID-19)
Range for all revisions	-36,0 to 2,8 percentage points	
Range within which 90% of the revisions lie	-1,4 to 1,8 percentage points	This may be regarded as the normal range for revisions, with revisions outside this range being outliers
Number of upward revisions	96 (or 61,5% of the total observations)	
Number of downward revisions	51 (or 32,7% of the total observations)	
Number of zero revisions	9 (or 5,8% of the total observations)	
Is the mean revision (-0,02) significantly different from zero?	No	This indicates that there is no bias in the preliminary estimates – see Note 1 below
Standard deviation of the revisions	3,03 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	99,4%	This is the percentage of revisions that lie between -3,04 and 3,01 percentage points; the higher the percentage, the lower is the dispersion about the mean

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

The formula for the test statistic is as follows:

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

where

n = number of observations

\bar{R} = mean revision

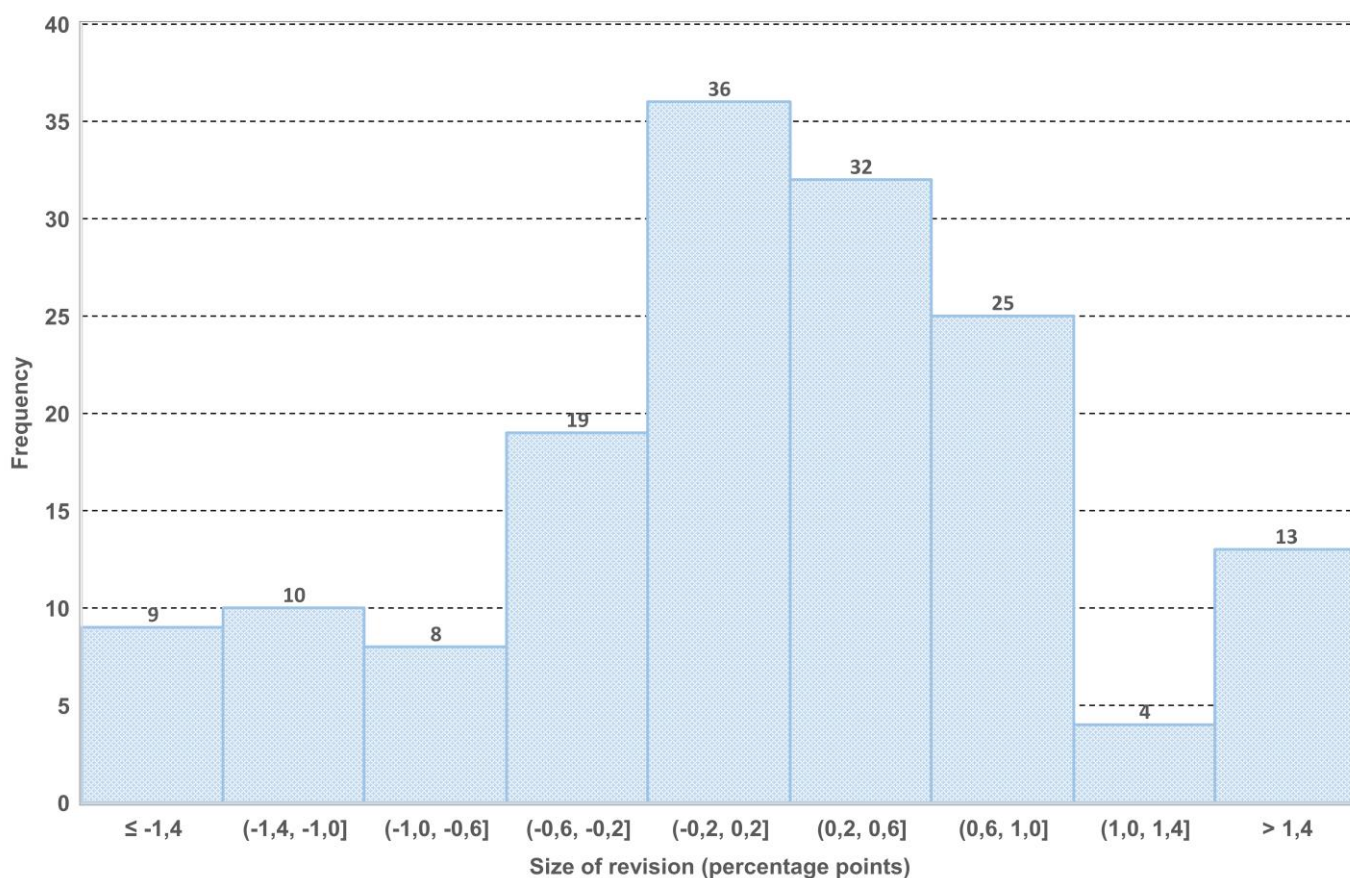
$\hat{\epsilon}_t = R_t - \bar{R}$, with R_t = revision in period t

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 -0,07, 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 36 revisions between -0,2 and 0,2 ($-0,2 < \text{revision} \leq 0,2$) and 32 revisions between 0,2 and 0,6 ($0,2 < \text{revision} \leq 0,6$). Around 76,9% of revisions lie between -1,0 and 1,0 percentage point.

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



Explanatory notes

- Introduction** 1 Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) conducts a monthly survey covering enterprises in the motor trade industry (see point 3 below). This survey is based on a sample drawn from Stats SA's 2024 statistical business register (SBR) that contains businesses registered at the South African Revenue Service (SARS) for value-added tax (VAT). Stats SA continuously updates its SBR, which is linked to the SARS administrative data. Published motor trade sales estimates exclude VAT.
- Purpose of the survey** 2 The results of the monthly motor 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 The survey collects information from a sample of enterprises in South Africa that are predominantly involved in motor trade. These enterprises include:
- motor vehicle dealers, filling stations and workshops;
 - motorcycle dealers;
 - spares and accessories;
 - tyre dealers;
 - automotive electricians;
 - radiator repairs;
 - panel beaters and spray painters;
 - 'other' specialised motor repair services; and
 - 'other' motor trade.
- Classification** 4 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** 5 The preliminary collection rate for the survey on motor trade sales for January 2025 was 57,9%. The revised collection rate for December 2024 was 63,8%.
- 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 and service activities.
- 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
Jan-25	Additional information from respondents	Dec-24
Feb-25	Additional information from respondents New weights for motor deflators	Jan-22–Jan-25
Mar-25	Additional information from respondents	Feb-25
Apr-25	Additional information from respondents	Mar-25
May-25	Additional information from respondents	Apr-25
Jun-25	Additional information from respondents	May-25
Jul-25	Additional information from respondents New sample	Jan-98–Jun-25
Aug-25	Additional information from respondents	Jul-25
Sep-25	Additional information from respondents	Aug-25
Oct-25	Additional information from respondents	Sep-25
Nov-25	Additional information from respondents	Oct-25
Dec-25	Additional information from respondents	Nov-25
New base year in 2027/28 - periodic, approximately four- to five-year intervals		

- Related publications** 8 Users may also refer to the *Stats in Brief* publication available from Stats SA.
- Rounding-off of figures** 9 Where figures have been rounded off, discrepancies may occur between sums of the component items and the totals.
- Historical data** 10 Historical motor trade 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 motor trade releases are available on the Stats SA website. To access the releases electronically, use the following link: [Click to download past releases](#).

Technical notes

- Survey methodology and design** 1 The survey is conducted monthly. Questionnaires are sent to a sample of 907 enterprises from a population of 9 252 enterprises. Completed questionnaires are required to be returned to Stats SA within 10 days after the end of the reference month. Email and telephone reminders are used to follow up on non-respondents.
- 2 A stratified random sample was drawn in April 2024 from Stats SA's statistical business register (SBR) at the SIC four-digit level. Strata were formed using a combination of SIC and the measure of size classes for enterprises (see point 3 below).

The Neyman optimal allocation formula given below was used to allocate samples to each stratum.

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

Neyman allocation formula not only allocates sample sizes to each stratum but also calculates the relative precision for each stratum as well as the relative precision for all strata. The relative precision for these strata was 6,6%.

- Class limits** 3 Each motor trade classification group (SIC at four-digit level) is divided into four size groups. All large enterprises (size group one) are completely enumerated. Simple random sampling is applied to medium and small enterprises (size groups two, three and four). The total value of sales of the large enterprises (size group one) per classification group 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	4 659 360	20 000 000
Small	3	20 000 001	95 000 000
Medium	2	95 000 001	195 000 000
Large	1	195 000 001	

- 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 classification group estimates. These procedures are consistent with international best practice.

- Seasonal adjustment** 5 Seasonally adjusted estimates are generated each month using the X-12-ARIMA Seasonal Adjustment Program developed by the United States Census Bureau. Seasonal adjustment is a means of removing the estimated effects of normal seasonal variation from the series so that the effects of other influences on the series can be 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 motor trade sales is described in more detail on the Stats SA website at:
[Click to download seasonal adjustment motor trade sales January 2023.](#)
- Trend cycle** 6 The trend is the long-term pattern or movement of a time series. The X-12-ARIMA Seasonal Adjustment Program is used for smoothing seasonally adjusted estimates to estimates of the underlying trend cycle.
- Constant prices** 7 Motor trade sales at constant prices by type of activity are obtained by deflating estimated sales at current prices by the relevant weighted price index. To obtain total motor trade sales at constant prices, estimates of the deflated sales for each type of activity are aggregated.
- Reliability of estimates** 8 Data presented in this publication are based on information obtained from a sample and are, therefore, subject to sampling variability; that is, they may differ from the figures that would have been produced if the data had been obtained from all enterprises in the motor trade industry in South Africa. Estimates are subject to sampling and non-sampling errors.
- 9 Inaccuracies may occur because of imperfections in reporting by enterprises and errors made in the collection and processing of the data. Inaccuracies of this kind are referred to as non-sampling errors. Every effort is made to minimise non-sampling errors by careful design of questionnaires, testing them in pilot studies, editing reported data and implementing efficient operating procedures. Fluctuations may occur in consecutive months as a result of seasonal and economic factors.
- Relative standard error** 10 One measure is the standard error (SE), which indicates the extent to which an estimate might have varied by chance because only a sample of enterprises was used. The relative standard error (RSE) provides an immediate indication of the percentage errors likely to have occurred due to sampling, and thus avoids the need to refer to the size of the estimate.

Estimates of total motor trade sales within 95% confidence limits – January 2025

	Lower limit (R million)	Sales (R million)	Upper limit (R million)	Relative standard error (RSE) %
Motor trade sales	72 555	78 338	84 121	3,7

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

Glossary

Enterprise

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

Industry

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

Symbols and Abbreviations

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

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