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Your monthly update on South Africa's economic indicators

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Economic headlines

Falling fuel prices drag inflation down



Consumer inflation dropped to 4,0% in January 2019, the lowest rate since March 2018 (click [here](#) to read more).

Manufacturing: winners and losers of 2018



The manufacturing industry rebounded in 2018, its strongest performance in five years (click [here](#) to read more).

Dismal December for retailers



Usually a boom time for shopping, the festive season saw a slump in retail trade (click [here](#) to read more).

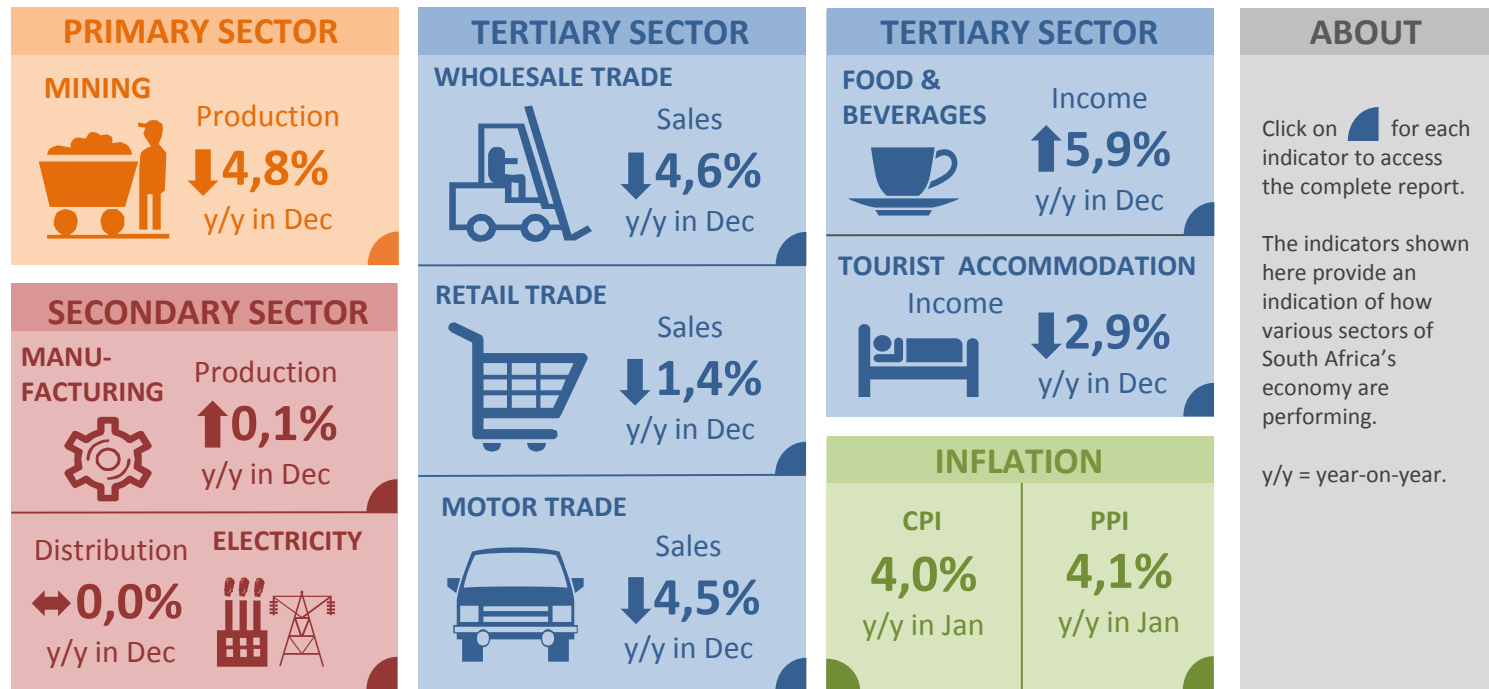
Unemployment drops in Q4: 2018



The unemployment rate edged slightly lower in the fourth quarter (click [here](#) to read more).

Click [here](#) to browse more headlines.

Monthly economic indicators



Feature article

Mining production stumbles in 2018

Mining had a lacklustre year. Production fell by 1,6% in 2018 compared with 2017, down from the 3,9% rise in 2017. Gold, copper and iron ore were the biggest drags on activity.

Gold continued its long-term decline with a 14,5% drop in production in 2018, the biggest annual slump since 2008 when production tumbled by 16,2%. Strike action during the year contributed to the fall in activity in 2018.

Copper production fell by 28,5% in 2018. This is the biggest annual fall on record since 1981, the year Stats SA started publishing growth figures in the current series. Iron ore was the third largest contributor to mining's slump in 2018, falling by 2,3%.

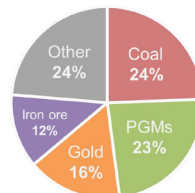
South African diamond production climbed by 7,7% in 2018, the fourth consecutive year of positive growth for the precious stone.

Click [here](#) to read more.

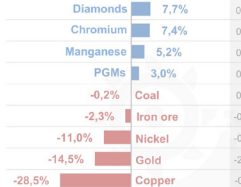
South African mining: winners and losers of 2018

Diamond production grew by 7,7% in 2018, while copper production fell by 28,5%

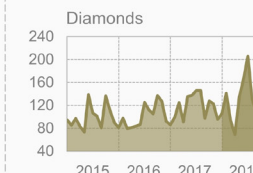
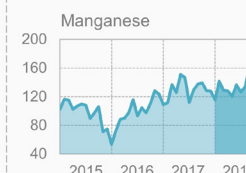
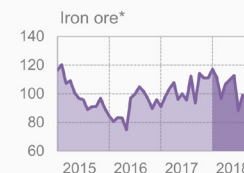
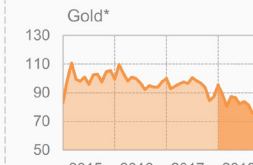
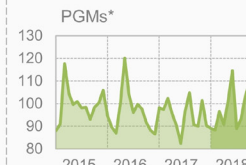
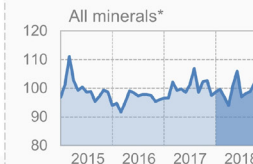
Who are the biggest players in the mining industry?
Contribution to total mining value added



Production growth in 2018 compared with 2017



Volume of mining production
(Index: 2015=100)



* Seasonally adjusted

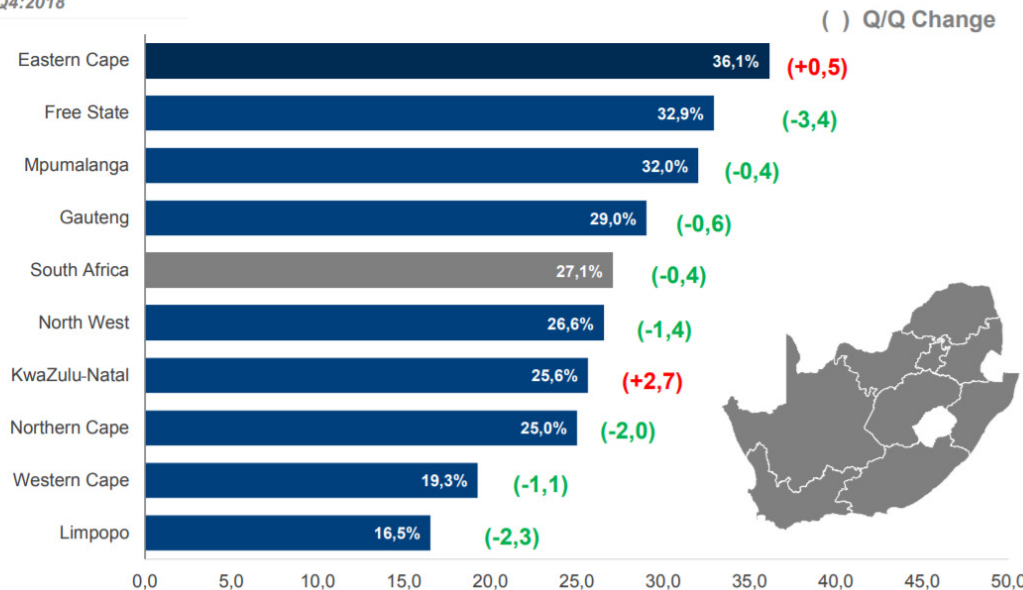
Infographic of the month



Provincial snapshot

KZN and EC WERE THE ONLY PROVINCES THAT SHOWED AN INCREASE IN THEIR UNEMPLOYMENT RATE BETWEEN Q3:2018 AND Q4:2018

Provincial unemployment rate:
Official Q4:2018



Eastern Cape has the highest unemployment rate

The national unemployment rate softened to 27,1% in the fourth quarter of 2018 from 27,5% in the third quarter.

The unemployment rate decreased in seven of the nine provinces, with the largest declines recorded in Free State (36,3% to 32,9%), Limpopo (18,9% to 16,5%), and Northern Cape (27,0% to 25,0%).

The unemployment rate increased in KwaZulu-Natal and Eastern Cape.

Eastern Cape had the highest unemployment rate in the fourth quarter, followed by Free State.

Provincial unemployment figures are available [here](#).

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