

Mbalo Brief

the missing piece of the puzzle

July 2025



Issue 06/2025

IMPROVING LIVES THROUGH DATA ECOSYSTEMS



stats sa

Department:
Statistics South Africa
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



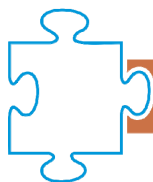
Statistics South Africa
Private Bag X44
Pretoria 0001
South Africa

ISibalo House, Koch Street, Salvokop
Pretoria 0002

User information services: (012) 310 8600
Main switchboard: (012) 310 8911

Website: www.statssa.gov.za
Email: info@statssa.gov.za





Editor's Comment



The 2030 Agenda acknowledges that eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development. The first Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) aims to end poverty in all its forms and reduce at least by half the proportion of men, women and children living in poverty. In order to alleviate poverty in South Africa, Free Basic

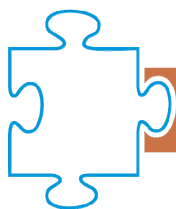
Services (FBS) was introduced in 2001 to provide free services such as water, electricity, sewerage and sanitation, and solid waste removal to the poorest households. Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) conducts an annual non-financial census of municipalities, which measures selected aspects of service delivery such as water, electricity, sewerage and sanitation, and solid waste management. On 27 March 2025, Stats SA published data on free basic services in its *Non-financial census of municipalities, 2023* (statistical release P9115). According to the findings, the municipalities provided water to 15,3 million consumer units in 2022, with 17% receiving the service for free (or at a subsidised rate). The number increased to 15,8 million consumer units in 2023. However, the proportion of consumer units benefitting from free basic water decreased to 16% during this period. For more information, download the 2023 *Non-financial census of municipalities* statistical release at:

https://www.statssa.gov.za/?page_id=1854&PPN=P9115&SCH=73862

This month's feature article is based on the *Survey of Employers and the Self-employed (SESE) 2023* (statistical release P0276), published by Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) on 18 March 2025. Look out for our monthly crossword puzzle and the solutions for June 2025. Articles published in this issue are based on the results of industry surveys conducted for April and May 2025.

Enjoy the read!





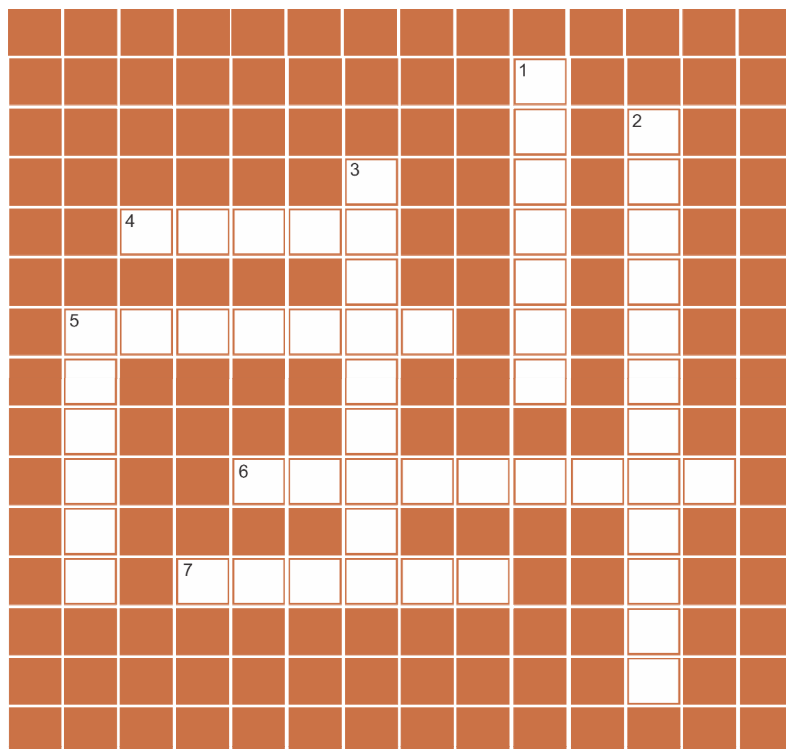
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Crossword Puzzle



Across

4. In which country are the Pyramids of Giza located?
5. What is the collective name of animals and plants that live on the lake bottom?
6. What is the name of the world's largest island?
7. What is the only continent with land in all four hemispheres?

Down

1. Which province had the highest working-age population running informal businesses in 2023? [Read feature article for a clue]
2. What is the largest province of South Africa?
3. What is the surname of the South African Police Services (SAPS) Provincial Commissioner of Gauteng?
5. What is the name of the tallest grass in the world?

Solution for June 2025 puzzle

Across

3. Limpopo
5. Amajita
8. Social grants
9. Nuclear
10. Australia

Down

1. Pietermaritzburg
2. Formal
4. In migration
6. False
7. Protection



Feature article on Survey of Employers and the Self-employed, 2023

Introduction



In South Africa, it is compulsory to register your business to operate and for value-added tax (VAT) to be recognised legally to access benefits such as funding, loan applications, etc. VAT is an indirect tax on the consumption of goods and services in the economy. However, some small businesses are ineligible to be registered for value-added tax (VAT) because their businesses have sales below the VAT threshold. Small businesses with a total value of taxable goods or services of more than R1 million in a 12-month period or expected to exceed the amount must register for VAT. A person may also choose to register voluntarily for VAT if the value of taxable supplies made or to be made is less than R1 million but has, under certain circumstances, exceeded R50 000 in the past period of 12 months.

The feature article for this month's issue of *Mbalo Brief* is based on the results of the *Survey of Employers and the Self-employed (SESE), 2023* release (statistical release P0276), published by Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) on 18 March 2025. The article highlights comparisons between the six SESEs for the years 2001, 2005, 2009, 2013, 2017 and 2023. The article outlines the profiles of persons running non-value-added tax (non-VAT) businesses, their access to loans to start registered businesses, the educational level of persons running businesses, and access to amenities and services, among others.

Individuals running at least one non-VAT registered business, 2001–2023

This section examines the characteristics of persons who ran non-VAT registered businesses (informal businesses) by sex, age group and population group.

The number of persons running informal businesses decreased from 2,3 million in 2001 to 1,1 million in 2009, but then rose again in 2013, 2017, and

2023, reaching 1,5 million, 1,8 million, and 1,9 million, respectively. In 2023, over 98,4% of individuals running non-VAT registered businesses operated just one business. Between 2001 and 2005, the sector had a higher proportion of women, but from 2009 to 2023 men were more likely to run informal businesses, with their share rising from 51,3% to 57,7% during this period. The number of individuals operating informal businesses for five or more years increased between 2001 and 2023, while those running businesses for less than five years declined.

Table 1 – Individuals running at least one non-VAT registered business, 2001–2023

	2001	2005*	2009	2013	2017	2023	2001	2005	2009	2013	2017	2023
	Thousand						Percent					
By sex												
Women	1 370	925	557	677	725	792	60,7	55,5	48,7	44,6	40,4	42,3
Men	888	743	587	840	1 068	1 080	39,3	44,5	51,3	55,4	59,6	57,7
Total	2 258	1 668	1 144	1 517	1 793	1 873	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0
By number of businesses												
1 business	2 217	1 610	1 125	1 490	1 762	1 843	98,2	96,5	98,3	98,3	98,2	98,4
2 businesses	38	56	7	26	29	29	1,7	3,4	0,6	1,7	1,6	1,5
3 businesses	3	1	12		3	1	0,1	0,1	1,0	0,0	0,1	0,1
Total	2 258	1 668	1 144	1 517	1 793	1 873	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0
Start of business												
Less than a year ago	559	299	244	308	321	308	24,8	17,9	21,3	20,3	17,9	16,4
1 year but less than 3 years ago	749	560	290	358	413	421	33,2	33,6	25,4	23,6	23,0	22,5
3 years but less than 5 years ago	403	352	187	268	294	324	17,8	21,1	16,4	17,7	16,4	17,3
5 years but less than 10 years ago	288	249	214	278	379	387	12,7	14,9	18,7	18,4	21,2	20,7
10 or more years ago	249	207	208	298	383	420	11,0	12,4	18,1	19,6	21,4	22,4
Don't know	9	2	1	6	3	13	0,4	0,1	0,1	0,4	0,2	0,7
Total	2 258	1 668	1 144	1 517	1 793	1 873	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0

Note: Due to rounding, totals may differ from the sum of the categories.

* The 2005 SESE estimates have not been adjusted to reflect the new population benchmarks.

Percentage of individuals running non-VAT registered businesses by population group, age group and province, 2001–2023

The proportion of black Africans running informal businesses increased from 89,4% in 2001 to 90,8% in 2017, before experiencing a slight decline to 88,9% in 2023, while the white population increased by 2,3 percentage points from 3,9% in 2017 to 6,2% in 2023. The Indian/Asian population saw a decrease from 1,8% in 2017 to 1,4% in 2023, while the coloured population group remained unchanged at 3,5% between 2017 and 2023.

In 2023, there was an increase in the proportion of individuals aged 35–64 years running informal businesses compared with 2001. The most significant rise was among those aged 35–44, which grew from 27,9% in 2001 to 33,1% in 2023. From 2001 to 2009, the highest proportion of informal businesses was concentrated in Gauteng, followed by KwaZulu-Natal, Limpopo, Mpumalanga and Western Cape, each with proportions above 10%. There was a decline in the proportion of informal businesses in five of the nine provinces between 2001 and 2023. In 2023, the highest concentration of informal businesses was in Gauteng (28,9%), followed by KwaZulu-Natal (16,8%) and Limpopo (15,8%).

Persons running non-VAT registered businesses as a percentage of the working-age population

This section focuses on the share of the working-age population running informal businesses by demographic characteristics (sex, age and population group), geographic location (province), as well as educational level.

Proportions of the working-age population running non-VAT registered businesses by sex and population group, 2001–2023

The proportion of the working-age population involved in informal businesses dropped from 8,2% in 2001 to 3,5% in 2009, before increasing to 4,3% in 2013 and 4,8% in 2017. The overall proportion of women running non-VAT registered businesses within the working-age population declined from 9,4% in 2001 to 3,8% in 2023, while that of men also declined, from 6,8% in 2001 to 5,3% in 2023.

Between 2001 and 2005, a larger proportion of working-age women (9,4% in 2001 and 5,9% in 2005) were involved in informal businesses compared with working-age men (6,8% in 2001 and 5,3% in 2005). However, between 2009 and 2023 this trend reversed, with a larger proportion of men (3,7% in 2009 and 5,3% in 2023) involved in running informal businesses compared with women (3,3% in 2009 and 3,8% in 2023).

The proportion of people running non-VAT registered businesses decreased across all population groups between 2001 and 2023, except for the white population, which increased to 4,2% in 2023. Among black Africans, the proportion of those running informal businesses declined from 9,7% in 2001 to 4,1% in 2009 and increased to 5,0% in 2023. For the white population group, the proportion remained stable at 1,8% between 2005 and 2009, but increased

to 4,2% in 2023 from 2,3% in 2017. In 2013, the percentage of the working-age population engaged in informal businesses increased across all population groups. However, in 2023 only the white population saw an increase to 4,2%, while the black African population and Indian/African group recorded declines at 5,0% and 2,5%, respectively. The coloured population remained unchanged at 1,8% in 2017 and 2023.

Figure 1 - Proportion of the working-age Population running non-VAT registered business by sex, 2001-2023

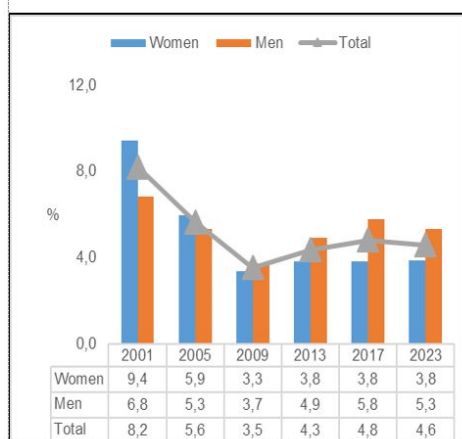
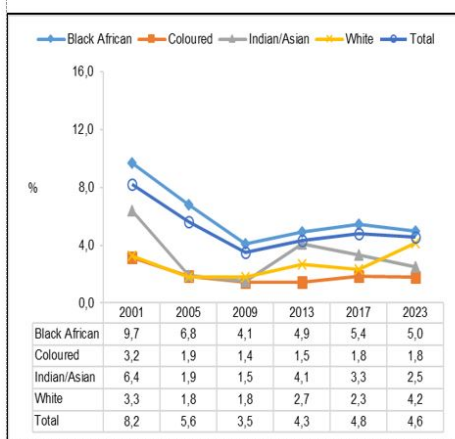


Figure 2 - Proportion of the working-age population running non-VAT registered business by population group, 2001-2023



Proportion of the working-age population running non-VAT registered businesses by education level, 2001–2023

The proportion of the working-age population running informal businesses across all education levels decreased from 8,2% in 2001 to 4,6% in 2023. Those with an education level below matric saw the largest decrease, from 9,0% in 2001 to 4,9% in 2023 (a drop of 4,1 percentage points). This was followed by individuals with matric (6,3% in 2001 to 4,1% in 2023) and tertiary education (5,8% in 2001 to 4,2% in 2023), with decreases of 2,2 and 1,6 percentage points, respectively.

Proportion of the working-age population running non-VAT registered businesses by province, 2001–2023

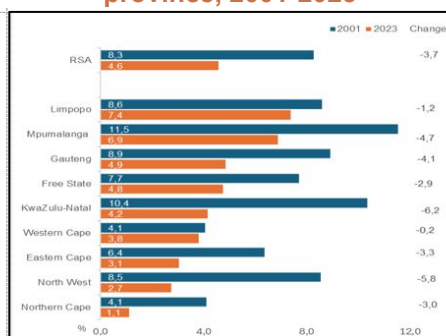
The proportion of the working-age population running non-VAT registered businesses declined between 2001 and 2009 in all provinces, whereas in 2013 the proportion increased in six of the nine provinces but remained unchanged in Eastern Cape (3,6%), Free State (3,3%) and North West (3,1%). In 2023, the proportion of the working-age population running informal businesses increased in three of the nine provinces compared with 2017. In 2023, the working-age population running informal businesses was highly concentrated in Limpopo (7,4%), followed by Mpumalanga (6,9%) and Gauteng (4,9%). In contrast, North West (2,7%) and Northern Cape (1,1%) recorded the lowest proportions of the working-age population running informal businesses.

Table 2 - Proportion of the working-age population running non-VAT registered businesses by province, 2001-2023

	2001	2005	2009	2013	2017	2023
	Per cent					
Western Cape	4,1	2,8	2,1	2,2	3,4	3,8
Eastern Cape	6,4	5,4	3,6	3,6	4,2	3,1
Northern Cape	4,1	1,7	1,2	1,6	1,1	1,1
Free State	7,7	5,9	3,3	3,3	4,8	4,8
KwaZulu-Natal	10,4	5,6	3,8	4,7	3,8	4,2
North West	8,5	5,9	3,1	3,1	4,4	2,7
Gauteng	8,9	6,3	3,3	5,0	5,1	4,9
Mpumalanga	11,5	6,5	5,1	6,1	6,4	6,9
Limpopo	8,6	8,1	4,8	6,3	8,0	7,4
RSA	8,3	5,7	3,5	4,3	4,8	4,6

Note: Due to rounding, totals may differ from the sum of the categories.

Figure 3 - Proportion of the working-age population running non-VAT registered businesses by province, 2001-2023



Access to amenities and services by persons running non-VAT registered businesses, 2001–2023

In 2023, more than one out of five persons (22,6%) running informal businesses had no electricity at their businesses. In addition, as many as 10,7% used water from a public tap, while an additional 27,5% had piped water on site. Almost 9 in 10 people had access to cellphones (87,8%) during this period. In 2001 about 65,5% of informal business owners had access to public phones, but in 2023 this had declined to 0,4%.

Financial record-keeping and education profile of persons running non-VAT registered businesses, 2001–2023

Almost 8 out of 10 persons (71,8%) running informal businesses did not keep any records, while businesses that kept simple informal records and businesses that kept full annual accounts of their business transactions were 12,9% and 6,2%, respectively in 2023. There was an increase in the proportion of persons running non-VAT registered businesses who did not complete their secondary education, at 42,2% in 2023 from 34,3% in 2001. Similarly, there were increases in those who completed secondary education and those who had tertiary education.

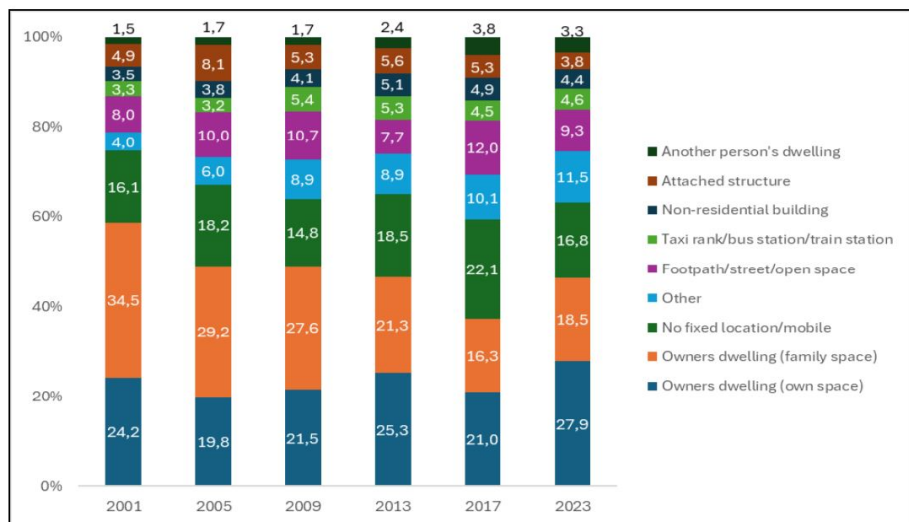
Licence to operate a business and issuing authority for persons running non-VAT registered businesses, 2001–2023

From 2001 to 2023, the proportion of persons with licences or permits to run an informal business increased from 7,3% in 2001 to 12,5% in 2013, then decreased to 8,2% in 2017 before increasing to 10,7% in 2023. Over the same period, most businesses (above 80%) were operating without licences/permits. In 2023, most people with business operating licences or permits (44,1%) obtained them from a municipal/provincial authority, followed by business associations (28,3%) and professional associations (24,4%).

Proportion of persons running non-VAT registered businesses by location, 2001–2023

In 2023, the majority of persons running non-VAT registered businesses (27,9%) ran their businesses from the owner's home, which is a separate space set aside at their own home. The minority of persons were most likely to run their businesses from another person's dwelling (3,3%). Furthermore, the proportion of businesses operating from another person's dwelling experienced an increase, from 1,5% in 2001 to 3,8% in 2017, then decreased to 3,3% in 2023.

Proportion of persons running non-VAT registered businesses by location, 2001–2023



Note: Due to rounding, totals may differ from the sum of the categories (Other includes Market, Customer's home/offices.)

Main reason for running non-VAT registered businesses, 2001–2023

Over the period 2001 to 2023, unemployment was identified as the main reason why people decided to start informal businesses. The proportion of persons who cited unemployment as their main reason for starting informal businesses decreased from 60,6% in 2001 to 57,1% in 2023. Inadequate income from other sources recorded the highest decrease of 10,6 percentage points from 12,3% in 2001 to 1,7% in 2023.

Proportion of those who needed various types of assistance, 2001–2023

Businesses in general require some form of assistance to undertake their day-to-day operations, especially non-VAT registered businesses since they generally operate at a small scale. Most non-VAT registered businesses required assistance with marketing of their products or services sold. The percentage of non-VAT registered businesses that required assistance with

marketing ranged from 27,4% in 2001 to 48,1% in 2017, and then to 34,3% in 2023. From 2001 to 2009, the second-highest percentage of non-VAT registered businesses that sought assistance were those seeking assistance with access to raw materials (21,8% in 2001, 36,1% in 2005, and 31,4% in 2009).

Turnover in the last month of persons running non-VAT registered businesses, 2001–2023

The proportion of people with businesses with a turnover of R351–R750 and R751–R1 500 remained above 11,0% in all years over the period 2001–2023. Consistent improvement in the turnover was observed among those in categories R1 501–R3 000 (from 8,5% in 2001 to 20,0% in 2023), R3 001–R6 000 (from 6,0% in 2001 to 15,3% in 2023), R6 001–R15 000 (from 3,2% in 2001 to 12,5% in 2023) and R15 001+ (0,5% in 2001 to 8,0% in 2023). During this period, the largest increase was among those who had businesses with a turnover of R1 501–R3 000 (up by 11,5 percentage points), followed by those with turnovers of R6 001–R15 000 and R3 001–R6 000 (up by 9,3 percentage points each). The largest decrease of 23,7 percentage points was recorded among those with business turnover of R101–R350, followed by those with R351–R750, which recorded a decline of 9,7 percentage points.

Conclusion

Over the period from 2001 to 2023, the majority of black Africans were running non-VAT businesses compared with other population groups. The findings indicate that the majority of businesses were operating without licences/permits. Furthermore, businesses that operated with licences/permits obtained them at a municipal/provincial authority. The majority of persons running non-VAT registered businesses did so from their homes.



Primary industries

Mining: Production and sales



Mining production decreased by 7,7% year-on-year in April 2025.

South Africa is renowned for its abundance of mineral resources, many of which are exported to global markets, including to the United States of America (USA). In 2024, South Africa's mineral exports to the United States totalled R65,3 billion (approximately \$5 billion), according to the South African Revenue Service (SARS). Platinum group metals (PGMs) were the dominant export, accounting for 76,3% of that total. PGMs are primarily used to make autocatalysts for vehicle exhaust systems, which help reduce

pollutants. On 7 July 2025, the President of the United States of America, Donald Trump, announced that effective from 1 August 2025 the USA will implement a 30% tariff tax on all South African exports, including some mineral resources. While PGMs will not be directly affected by the 30% tariff, the Minerals Council South Africa has raised concerns about the impact the tariff will have on these minerals. "Even though PGMs are excluded from the latest round of tariff increases, vehicle prices in the USA will increase because of the 25% tariff the Trump administration has imposed on all vehicle imports. Not only will this slow demand for automobiles in the USA, but car makers in other countries are likely to moderate production as a result," said Mzila Mthenjane, CEO of Minerals Council South Africa. When demand slows, so does the production of PGMs that are used in the automotive sector, thereby impacting mining production. Similarly, on the statistical front, PGMs were the biggest contributor to the 7,7% year-on-year decrease in mining production in April 2025. According to Statistics South Africa (Stats SA), PGMs production dropped by 24,1%, contributing -8,0 percentage points to the overall decrease. This article summarises the results of the *Mining: Production and sales* (statistical release P2041) for April 2025.



Mining production decreased by 7,7% year-on-year in April 2025 (see Table A).

The largest negative contributors were:

- PGMs (-24,1%, contributing -8,0 percentage points);
- gold (-2,5%, contributing -0,3 of a percentage point); and
- coal (-1,7%, contributing -0,3 of a percentage point).

The largest positive contributor was iron ore (5,3%, contributing 0,7 of a percentage point).

Table A – Key growth rates in the volume of mining production for April 2025

	Nov-24	Dec-24	Jan-25	Feb-25	Mar-25	Apr-25
Year-on-year % change, unadjusted	-0,8	-2,9	-1,7	-9,7	-2,5	-7,7
Month-on-month % change, seasonally adjusted	0,1	-4,7	0,4	-3,9	3,6	0,6
3-month % change, seasonally adjusted ¹	3,7	-1,0	-3,6	-6,5	-4,1	-2,7

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

A full release on *Mining: Production and sales* (statistical release P2041) is available on the Stats SA website www.statssa.gov.za.

Mineral sales at current prices increased by 0,7% year-on-year in April 2025 (see Table B). The largest positive contributors were gold (57,6%, contributing 9,4 percentage points) and manganese ore (66,6%, contributing 3,3 percentage points).

The largest negative contributors were PGMs (-20,1%, contributing -4,7 percentage points) and iron ore (-25,9%, contributing -3,5 percentage points).

Table B – Key growth rates in mineral sales at current prices for April 2025

	Nov-24	Dec-24	Jan-25	Feb-25	Mar-25	Apr-25
Year-on-year % change, unadjusted	8,3	-9,3	-6,1	-10,4	2,2	0,7
Month-on-month % change, seasonally adjusted	7,0	-11,2	1,5	-8,6	1,6	6,7
3-month % change, seasonally adjusted ¹	1,1	4,4	6,4	-8,1	-9,2	-8,5

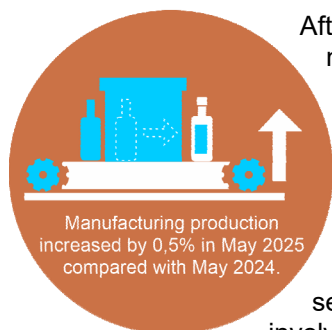
¹ Percentage change between the previous 3 months and the 3 months ending in the month indicated.

A full release on *Mining: Production and sales* (statistical release P2041) is available on the Stats SA website www.statssa.gov.za.



Secondary industries

Manufacturing: Production and sales



After six consecutive months of decline in manufacturing production since November 2024, South Africa's manufacturing sector is beginning to recover. The rebound is being driven primarily by growth in the basic iron and steel, non-ferrous metal products, metal products, and machinery division, which grew by 4,3%, contributing 0,9 of a percentage point to overall manufacturing output. This division includes

several key areas: basic iron and steel production, involving smelting and refining raw materials; non-ferrous metal processing, such as aluminium, copper, and other alloys; metal product manufacturing, which includes items like structural steel and fabricated components; and machinery production, which involves creating equipment made from metal parts. This sector plays a critical role in the economy, as it supplies the essential materials and machinery needed by major industries such as construction, mining, energy, transport, and broader manufacturing. As a result, growth in this sector stimulates activity across entire value chains, benefitting businesses involved in producing, processing, transporting, and selling related goods and services. This ripple effect helps drive broader economic growth and industrial development across the country. Presented in this article is a summary of *Manufacturing: Production and sales* (statistical release P3041.2) for May 2025.



Manufacturing production increased by 0,5% in May 2025 compared with May 2024 (see Table C).

The largest positive contribution was made by the basic iron and steel, non-ferrous metal products, metal products and machinery division (4,3%, contributing 0,9 of a percentage point), while the largest negative

contribution was reported for the motor vehicles, parts and accessories and other transport equipment division (-6,7%, contributing -0,6 of a percentage point).

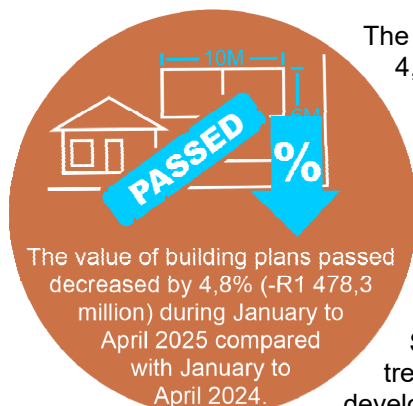
Table C – Key growth rates in the volume of manufacturing production for May 2025

	Dec-24	Jan-25	Feb-25	Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25
Year-on-year % change, unadjusted	-1,2	-2,8	-3,0	-0,8	-6,4	0,5
Month-on-month % change, seasonally adjusted	-2,1	0,7	0,1	-2,4	1,7	2,0
3-month % change, seasonally adjusted ¹	-0,9	-1,8	-2,1	-1,9	-1,2	-0,3

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

A full release on *Manufacturing: Production and sales* (statistical release P3041.2) is available on the Stats SA website: www.statssa.gov.za.

Selected building statistics of the private sector



The value of building plans passed decreased by 4,8% (-R1 478,3 million) during January to April 2025 compared with January to April 2024. This decline may signal a potential slowdown in future construction activity, as the approval of building plans is typically an early step in the development process. A reduction in approvals suggests fewer new projects are likely to enter the pipeline in the coming months.

Several factors could be contributing to this trend. These include: reduced investor and developer confidence, often driven by economic uncertainty; high interest rates, which raise the cost of borrowing for property development; rising prices of key construction materials such as steel, cement, concrete, and timber; and increased import costs, including the impact of higher United States of America's (USA) tariffs, which can disrupt global supply chains and lead to shortages of critical building materials. Together, these challenges may be prompting developers to delay or scale back planned projects, further weakening momentum in South Africa's construction sector. This article summarises the results of the *Selected building statistics of the private sector* (statistical release P5041.1) for April 2025.



The value of building plans passed decreased by 4,8% (-R1 478,3 million) during January to April 2025 compared with January to April 2024 (see Table D).

Decreases were reported for residential buildings (-R1 813,3 million) and non-residential buildings (-R178,5 million). An increase was reported for additions and alterations (R513,5 million).

The largest negative contributors to the total decrease of 4,8% (-R1 478,3 million) were Gauteng (contributing -9,3 percentage points or -R2 852,7 million) and North West (contributing -2,6 percentage points or -R798,1 million).

The largest positive contributors were:

- Western Cape (contributing 4,9 percentage points or R1 514,3 million);
- Mpumalanga (contributing 1,9 percentage points or R598,1 million); and
- Eastern Cape (contributing 0,8 of a percentage point or R239,8 million).

Buildings reported as completed at current prices

The value of buildings reported as completed (at current prices) decreased by 4,1% (-R597,1 million) during January to April 2025 compared with January to April 2024. Decreases were reported for additions and alterations (-R742,9 million) and non-residential buildings (-R292,3 million). An increase was reported for residential buildings (R438,1 million).

Seven out of the nine provinces reported year-on-year decreases in the value of buildings completed during January to April 2025. The following provinces were the largest negative contributors:

- Gauteng (contributing -5,2 percentage points or -R766,2 million);
- Eastern Cape (contributing -2,6 percentage points or -R386,0 million); and
- Mpumalanga (contributing -0,9 of a percentage point or -R130,5 million).

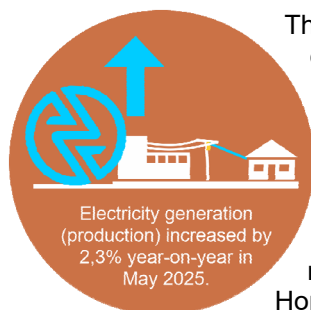
The largest positive contributors were Western Cape (contributing 4,8 percentage points or R711,3 million) and North West (contributing 1,1 percentage points or R155,2 million).

Table D – Building plans passed by larger municipalities at current prices by type of building, April 2025

Type of building	January to April 2024	January to April 2025	Difference in value between January to April 2024 and January to April 2025	% change between January to April 2024 and January to April 2025
	R'000	R'000	R'000	
Residential buildings	15 414 082	13 600 775	-1 813 307	-11,8
- Dwelling houses	9 229 926	9 087 368	-142 558	-1,5
- Flats and townhouses	5 813 107	4 026 663	-1 786 444	-30,7
- Other residential buildings	371 049	486 744	115 695	31,2
Non-residential buildings	6 635 097	6 456 597	-178 500	-2,7
Additions and alterations	8 631 337	9 144 823	513 486	5,9
Total	30 680 516	29 202 195	-1 478 321	-4,8

A full release on *Selected building statistics of the private sector as reported by local government institutions* (statistical release P5041.1) is available on the Stats SA website: www.statssa.gov.za.

Electricity generated and available for distribution



The national power utility, Eskom, has increased electricity prices by 12,74% following approval from the National Energy Regulator of South Africa (Nersa). While the price hike affects all South Africans, the amount you pay for electricity may vary depending on where you live. Tech website, MyBroadband, compared electricity prices across 13 local municipalities, including major metros in all nine provinces. They used the Eskom Homepower 4 tariff as a basis for the comparison.

Eskom's Homepower 4 tariff is intended for middle- and higher-income households, based on an average usage of 656 kWh and covers the majority of Eskom's residential customers. The analysis showed that East London, which falls under the Buffalo City Metropolitan Municipality, had the highest price for prepaid residential customers. Effective from 1 July 2025, 656 kWh of energy costs R2 270,74 in East London. This is inclusive of the fixed basic service charge of R489,61, taking the total bill to R2 760,35. The average price per kWh was R4,21. The second-most expensive prepaid residential electricity was the City of Cape Town Metropolitan Municipality, which had a slightly pricey variable energy component but a lower charge than Buffalo City. City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality, which includes Pretoria and Centurion, had the third-most expensive prepaid electricity. While City of Tshwane does not charge fixed fees, its variable energy costs are the most expensive. Despite higher electricity prices in South Africa, electricity production grew, signalling increased demand. According to Statistics South Africa (Stats SA), electricity generation (production) increased by 2,3% year-on-year in May 2025. This article summarises the results of the *Electricity generated and available for distribution* (statistical release P4141) for May 2025.



Electricity generation (production) increased by 2,3% year-on-year in May 2025 (see Table E).

Table E – Key growth rates in the volume of electricity for May 2025

	Dec-24	Jan-25	Feb-25	Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25
Year-on-year % change, unadjusted	3,6	5,7	0,2	1,2	0,1	2,3
Month-on-month % change, seasonally adjusted	-1,6	0,5	-2,9	1,0	0,2	1,5
3-month % change, seasonally adjusted ¹	-0,6	-0,5	-2,1	-1,9	-2,3	-0,1

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

A full release on *Electricity generated and available for distribution* (statistical release P4141) is available on the Stats SA website www.statssa.gov.za.

Electricity distribution (consumption) decreased by 0,4% year-on-year in May 2025 (see Table F).

Table F – Key growth rates in the volume of electricity distributed for May 2025

	Dec-24	Jan-25	Feb-25	Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25
Year-on-year % change, unadjusted	-0,4	0,8	-3,6	-1,5	-2,8	-0,4
Month-on-month % change, seasonally adjusted	-0,9	0,2	-2,9	1,3	0,4	1,6
3-month % change, seasonally adjusted ¹	-1,9	-1,4	-2,3	-2,0	-2,1	0,1

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

A full release on *Electricity generated and available for distribution* (statistical release P4141) is available on the Stats SA website www.statssa.gov.za.



Tertiary industries

Wholesale trade sales



Wholesale trade sales decreased by 7,8% in April 2025 compared with April 2024.

South Africa's wholesale industry plays a crucial role in the country's economy by acting as a bridge between manufacturers and retailers. It involves the bulk distribution of goods, including food, fuel, machinery and raw materials to businesses, government entities and other bulk buyers. This sector is sensitive to changes in the supply chain, consumer demand and global trade.

According to Statistics South Africa's (Stats SA) latest data on the wholesale trade

industry, the sector is currently experiencing

challenges due to declining sales. Wholesale trade sales decreased by 7,8% in April 2025 compared with April 2024. This marks one of the steepest declines in five months, following a 9,4% decline recorded in November 2024. A major contributor to this decline was a drop in sales of solid, liquid and gaseous fuels and related products, which fell by 21,1%, contributing -5,5 percentage points to the overall decrease. Since fuel products are major components in the wholesale trade industry, any sharp decline in this category has a substantial negative impact on the overall wholesale trade performance. Presented in this article is a summary of *Wholesale trade sales* (statistical release P6141.2) for April 2025.



Wholesale trade sales decreased by 7,8% in April 2025 compared with April 2024 (see Table G).

The main negative contributors were dealers in:

- solid, liquid and gaseous fuels and related products (-21,1%, contributing -5,5 percentage points);
- machinery, equipment and supplies (-7,6%, contributing -1,1 percentage points); and
- agricultural raw materials and livestock (-11,1%, contributing -0,7 of a percentage point).

Table G – Key growth rates in wholesale trade sales for April 2025

	Nov-24	Dec-24	Jan-25	Feb-25	Mar-25	Apr-25
Year-on-year % change unadjusted	-9,4	-1,0	-0,4	-7,2	-2,3	-7,8
Month-on-month % change, seasonally adjusted	-3,9	2,0	2,8	-2,3	-2,6	1,7
3-month % change, seasonally adjusted ¹	-1,4	0,7	1,1	1,8	0,2	-1,1

¹ Percentage change between the previous 3 months and the 3 months ending in the month indicated. A full release on *Wholesale trade sales* (statistical release 6141.2) is available on the Stats SA website: www.statssa.gov.za.

Retail trade sales



Retail trade sales in South Africa rose by 5,1% year-on-year in April 2025, marking the highest increase since January 2025, when growth peaked at 7,0%. This continues a positive trend for the retail sector, which has seen consistent gains in recent months. The last instance of negative growth was recorded in February 2024, with a decline of 0,7%. Several factors have contributed to the sector's recovery and continued momentum.

Notably, the significant reduction in loadshedding, beginning around March 2024, has improved trading conditions. In addition, lower inflation has provided the South African Reserve Bank (SARB) with room to ease interest rates, resulting in a decrease in borrowing costs and an improvement in consumers' spending power, as their disposable income increases. Another contributing factor has been the introduction of higher import duties on low-value goods. This introduction aims to reduce

purchases from international e-commerce platforms such as Shein and Temu, thereby encouraging consumers to return to local retailers. Together, these developments and others not mentioned have strengthened South Africa's retail trade performance. Presented in this article is a summary of the *Retail trade sales* release (statistical release P6242.1) for April 2025.



Retail trade sales increased by 5,1% year-on-year in April 2025 (see Table H).

The largest positive contributors to this increase were:

- general dealers (5,3%, contributing 2,3 percentage points); and
- retailers in textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods (12,5%, contributing 2,1 percentage points).

Retail trade sales increased by 3,4% in the three months ended April 2025 compared with the three months ended April 2024. The largest positive contributors to this increase were:

- retailers in textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods (10,5%, contributing 1,6 percentage points); and
- general dealers (2,8%, contributing 1,3 percentage points).

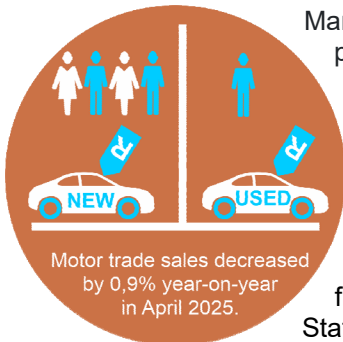
Table H – Key growth rates in retail trade sales for April 2025

	Nov-24	Dec-24	Jan-25	Feb-25	Mar-25	Apr-25
Year-on-year % change, unadjusted	7,6	3,1	7,0	4,1	1,2	5,1
Month-on-month % change, seasonally adjusted	1,0	-0,3	0,9	-1,1	-0,3	0,9
3-month % change, seasonally adjusted ^{1/}	1,1	2,0	1,9	1,1	0,1	-0,5

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

A full release on *Retail trade sales* (statistical release P6242.1) is available on the Stats SA website: www.statssa.gov.za.

Motor trade sales



Many South Africans aspire to own new cars, but prefer cost-effective cars over expensive models. According to the South African automotive industry organisation (Naamsa), new vehicle sales grew for nine consecutive months since October 2024, signalling the continued demand for new cars over used cars. New vehicle sales climbed by 47 294 units in June 2025, up 7 444 (18,7%) units, from the 39 850 units sold in June 2024.

Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) data also substantiate this as new vehicle sales were the main positive contributor to motor trade sales in June 2025 at 5,2%, contributing 1,2 percentage points. This growth in sales is largely driven by the segment of new vehicles from China and India entering the South African market priced below R400 000. Due to economic pressures and rising cost of living, consumers are budget-conscious and opt for these vehicles due to affordability, fuel-efficiency and practicality over luxury and high-end features. As such, brands such as Cherry, Haval, Suzuki and Hyundai are gaining ground in the South African vehicle market. Presented in this article is a summary of the results from the *Motor trade sales* (statistical release P6343.2) for April 2025.



Motor trade sales decreased by 0,9% year-on-year in April 2025 (see Table I).

The main negative contributors to this decrease were:

- fuel sales (-4,1%, contributing -1,1 percentage points);
- workshop income (-12,1%, contributing -0,7 of a percentage point); and
- used vehicle sales (-1,3%, contributing -0,3 of a percentage point).

The main positive contributor was new vehicle sales (5,2%, contributing 1,2 percentage points).

Motor trade sales decreased by 1,2% in the three months ended April 2025 compared with the three months ended April 2024.

The largest negative contributors to this decrease were:

- fuel sales (-5,8%, contributing -1,6 percentage points);
- workshop income (-12,5%, contributing -0,7 of a percentage point); and
- sales of accessories (-2,1%, contributing -0,4 of a percentage point).

The largest positive contributor was new vehicle sales (5,6%, contributing 1,3 percentage points).

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

	Nov-24	Dec-24	Jan-25	Feb-25	Mar-25	Apr-25
Year-on-year % change, unadjusted	-2,1	-4,0	0,3	-5,9	3,4	-0,9
Month-on-month % change, seasonally adjusted	0,0	-0,2	0,5	-1,1	1,4	-1,0
3-month % change, seasonally adjusted ¹	-0,8	1,0	1,2	0,7	0,2	-0,2

¹ Percentage change between the previous three months and the three months ending in the month indicated. A full release on *Motor trade sales* (statistical release P6343.2) is available on the Stats SA website: www.statssa.gov.za.

Food and beverages



Opening international fast-food chains contributes to economic growth in South Africa by creating jobs and strengthening the food and beverages sector as a whole. Earlier this year, Pret A Manger opened its first two franchises on African soil, located in Rosebank and Melrose Arch, Johannesburg. Pret A Manger, which means “ready to eat” in French, or Pret as it is commonly known, is a British multinational sandwich and coffee fast-food

chain with over 650 franchises across 18 countries. The franchise is well-known for its freshly prepared food and high-quality organic coffee, including sandwiches, salads, wraps, baked goods, snacks, and an array of organic coffees, teas and other hot and cold beverages. To cater to local tastes, Pret has added some uniquely South African flavour to its menu, including the Soutvleis Sandwich, the Braaibroodjie Toastie and a chakalala chicken wrap. The franchise has announced plans to expand to other major South African cities, like Cape Town, Durban and Pretoria. This expansion is expected to benefit customers by providing more food choices, increasing convenience and contributing to the growing takeaway and fast-food outlet subsector. In April 2025, this subsector was the largest positive contributor to the 4,7% year-on-year increase in the food and beverages industry, according to Statistics South Africa (Stats SA). The growth highlights the increasing demand for convenient and quality food options in South Africa. This article summarises the results of the *Food and beverages industry* (statistical release P6420) for April 2025.



The total income generated by the food and beverages industry increased by 4,7% in April 2025 compared with April 2024 (see Table J).

A positive annual growth rate was recorded for food sales (5,8%).

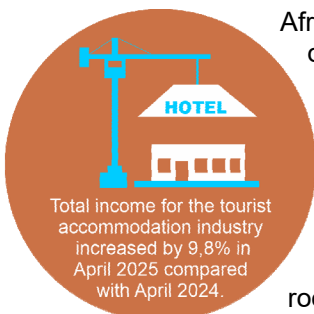
In April 2025, the largest positive contributor to the 4,7% year-on-year increase was takeaway and fast-food outlets (9,9%, contributing 3,8 percentage points). The only negative contributor was catering services (-5,9%, contributing -0,7 of a percentage point).

Table J – Year-on-year percentage change in food and beverages income at constant 2019 prices by type of income

Type of income	Nov-24	Dec-24	Jan-25	Feb-25	Mar-25	Apr-25
Food sales	2,8	-0,3	3,9	-0,1	1,8	5,8
Bar sales	3,1	1,0	2,0	-7,9	-2,5	-1,1
Other income	-13,2	-22,5	-7,7	8,1	4,2	-5,3
Total	2,3	-0,9	3,3	-0,8	1,3	4,7

A full release on *Food and beverages* (statistical release P6420) is available on the Stats SA website: www.statssa.gov.za.

Tourist accommodation



Africa is known for its rich cultural heritage and diverse natural attractions. The rich cultural heritage and diverse natural attractions have attracted renowned multinational hospitality brands to expand their ventures on the continent. One of the multinational hospitality brands to expand its footprint is Marriott International, which announced that it plans to add more than 50 properties and over 9 000 rooms in Africa by the end of 2027. As part of its

growth, Marriott International will build hotels in five new markets such as Cape Verde, Madagascar and the Democratic Republic of Congo, among others, while strengthening their existing presence in South Africa, Tanzania, Egypt, Morocco, Kenya and Nigeria. South Africa, which is Marriott International's largest African market, will see additions of Morea House, an Autograph Collection Hotel in Cape Town in 2025, followed by a new property within Kruger National Park precincts in 2026. The additions of hotels in South Africa will contribute to local job creation, attract visitors and boost the tourism industry. In April 2025, tourist accommodation increased by 9,8%, according to the latest data published by Statistics South Africa (Stats SA). One of the main contributors to the 14,8% year-on-year increase

in income from accommodation was hotels (11,1%, contributing 6,4 percentage points). This article summarises the results on *Tourist accommodation* (statistical release P6410) for April 2025.



Total income for the tourist accommodation industry increased by 9,8% in April 2025 compared with April 2024 (see Table K).

Income from accommodation increased by 14,8% year-on-year in April 2025, the result of a 4,5% increase in the number of stay unit nights sold and a 9,9% increase in the average income per stay unit night sold.

In April 2025, the main contributors to the 14,8% year-on-year increase in income from accommodation were:

- 'other' accommodation (21,2%, contributing 7,5 percentage points); and
- hotels (11,1%, contributing 6,4 percentage points).

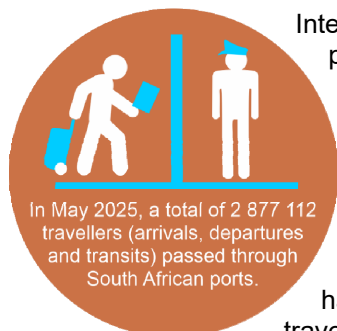
Table K – Year-on-year percentage change in tourist accommodation statistics for April 2025

	Nov-24	Dec-24	Jan-25	Feb-25	Mar-25	Apr-25
Stay units available	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,1	0,1	0,0
Stay unit nights sold	3,9	1,2	5,3	2,4	-1,6	4,5
Average income per stay unit night sold	8,6	11,5	10,8	10,0	7,5	9,9
Income from accommodation	12,9	12,8	16,6	12,6	5,7	14,8
Total income¹	9,8	7,7	11,8	5,8	2,0	9,8

¹Includes restaurant and bar sales and 'other' income.

A full release on *Tourist accommodation* (statistical release P6410) is available on the Stats SA website: www.statssa.gov.za.

International tourism



International tourism in South Africa is experiencing positive growth, with a notable increase in arrivals from both within Africa and overseas. In May 2025, 2 877 112 travellers (arrivals, departures and transits) entered and exited South Africa. Leisure travel remains the primary driver, with about 97,1% of all the tourists in South Africa visiting for holiday purposes. Although the number of travellers has been picking up, it still has not reached the pre-COVID-19 level when travellers were 3 285 819 in May 2019. According to

the Department of Tourism, South Africa is implementing several strategic measures to accelerate the recovery of the tourism industry from the challenges brought about by COVID-19 pandemic. These include restoring air travel routes through the new Route Development Marketing Strategy, promoting unique South African experiences in key international markets like China, India, and the Americas, and improving digital and AI-driven travel planning tools (enhancing traveller experiences with personalised digital platforms). The country is also focusing on expanding sustainable and cultural tourism, while strengthening safety and security measures to boost traveller confidence and protect local communities. Presented in this article is a summary of the results of *International tourism* (statistical release P0350) for May 2025.

Travellers

Number of travellers



In May 2025, a total of 2 877 112 travellers (arrivals, departures and transits) passed through South African ports (see Table L).

These travellers were made up of 736 622 South African residents and 2 140 490 foreign travellers. A further breakdown of the figures for South African residents indicates that there were 368 610 arrivals, 367 507 departures and 505 travellers in transit. The corresponding volume for

foreign arrivals, departures and travellers in transit was 1 125 559, 971 790 and 43 141, respectively.

A comparison between the movements in April 2025 and May 2025 indicates that the volume of arrivals decreased for South African residents but increased for foreign travellers. The volume of departures decreased for both South African residents and foreign travellers, whereas transits increased for both groups of travellers. For South African residents, the volume of arrivals decreased by 5,9% (from 391 787 in April 2025 to 368 610 in May 2025). Departures decreased by 13,5% (from 425 073 in April 2025 to 367 507 in May 2025) and transits increased by 2,4% (from 493 in April 2025 to 505 in May 2025). For foreign travellers, arrivals increased by 0,9% (from 1 115 585 in April 2025 to 1 125 559 in May 2025), departures decreased by 3,5% (from 1 007 258 in April 2025 to 971 790 in May 2025), and transits increased by 13,0% (from 38 178 in April 2025 to 43 141 in May 2025).

Mode of travel of travellers

In May 2025, road was the most common mode of travel used by 1 975 250 (68,7%) of the 2 877 112 travellers. The total number of air travellers was 890 035 (30,9%). Compared with air and road, a smaller number of travellers [11 827 (0,4%)] used sea into and out of South Africa. Information on arrivals of South African residents shows that 174 027 (47,2%) came by air, 194 495 (52,8%) came by road and 88 (less than 0,1%) arrived by sea. For departures, 166 722 (45,4%) used air, 200 622 (54,6%) used road and 163 (0,2%) left by sea. All travellers in transit [505 (100,0%)] used air. In the case of foreign travellers, 238 685 (21,2%) arrived by air, 885 895 (78,7%) came by road and 979 (0,1%) arrived by sea. When departing South Africa, 266 955 (27,5%) foreign travellers left by air, 694 238 (71,4%) left by road and 10 597 (1,1%) left by sea. Of all travellers in transit, 43 141 (100,0%) used air.

Visitors

In May 2025, 25 258 (2,2%) of foreign arrivals were classified as non-visitors, while 1 100 301 (97,8%) were classified as visitors. Visitors were categorised into three groups:

- i. Arrivals only – comprising visitors who entered the country in May 2025 but did not depart in May 2025 [375 924 (34,2%)].
- ii. Single trips – visitors who came to South Africa once in May 2025 and left in May 2025 [348 823 (31,7%)].

- iii. Multiple trips – visitors who came to and left South Africa more than once in May 2025 [375 554 (34,1%)].

Tourists

Sex and age distribution of tourists

Sex

In May 2025, there were more male [468 544 (58,3%)] than female [335 619 (41,7%)] tourists. Male tourists constituted the majority of tourists for all three regions, namely SADC countries [375 770 (59,1%)], overseas countries [82 293 (54,0%)] and 'other' African countries [9 817 (64,2%)]. Similarly, the largest portion of female tourists was from SADC countries [259 590 (40,9%)], followed by overseas countries [70 105 (46,0%)] and 'other' African countries [5 484 (35,8%)].

Age

The age distribution indicates that out of all tourists, [3,8% (30 601)] were aged younger than 15; [8,3% (66 886)] were aged between 15 and 24; [24,1% (193 798)] were aged between 25 and 34; [30,1% (241 758)] were aged between 35 and 44; [18,9% (152 225)] were aged between 45 and 54; [9,1% (73 235)] were aged between 55 and 64; [5,7% (45 660)] were aged 65 and older.

Purpose of visit of tourists

In May 2025, the majority of tourists [780 806 (97,1%)] were in South Africa for holiday compared with 19 531 (2,4%), 3 510 (0,4%) and 316 (less than 0,1%) who were in South Africa for business, study and medical treatment, respectively.

Mode of travel of tourists

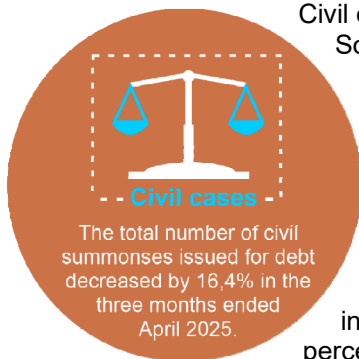
In May 2025, about 141 821 (93,1%) overseas tourists arrived in the country by air, while 10 434 (6,8%) came in by road and 143 (0,1%) arrived by sea. Tourists from the SADC countries, on the other hand, came predominantly by road [584 416 (92,0%)], 50 944 (8,0%) came by air and none arrived by sea. The number of tourists who came into South Africa by air from 'other' African countries was 13 404 (87,6%), while 1 897 (12,4%) used road transport and none preferred sea. Most tourists who arrived by road came

through Lebombo port (169 532) and Beit Bridge port (148 253). The majority of tourists who came by air entered through OR Tambo International Airport (145 750) and Cape Town International Airport (57 608). Tourists who arrived by sea came through Durban Harbour (122) and Cape Town Harbour (21).

Table L – Number of South African residents and foreign travellers by travel direction, May 2025

Travel direction	May	April	May	% Change	% Change
	2024	2025	2025	April 2025 – May 2025	May 2024 – May 2025
Total	2 354 432	2 978 374	2 877 112	-3,4%	22,2%
South African residents	649 610	817 353	736 622	-9,9%	13,4%
Arrivals	313 600	391 787	368 610	-5,9%	17,5%
Departures	335 511	425 073	367 507	-13,5%	9,5%
Transits	499	493	505	2,4%	1,2%
Foreign travellers	1 704 822	2 161 021	2 140 490	-1,0%	25,6%
Arrivals	881 544	1 115 585	1 125 559	0,9%	27,7%
Departures	783 999	1 007 258	971 790	-3,5%	24,0%
Transits	39 279	38 178	43 141	13,0%	9,8%

Statistics of the civil cases for debt



Civil cases for debt statistics published by Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) show that in April 2025, more than 30 500 civil summonses were issued for debt, with over 25 700 of these issued to individuals. Ordinary South Africans accounted for over R180 million of the R221 million total debt. Although the total number of summonses declined by 16,4% between February and April 2025 compared with the same period in 2024, outstanding rent increased slightly, contributing 0,1 of a percentage point to the total. According to Arcadia

Finance, one of the key reasons tenants struggle to meet rental obligations is that rent consumes a growing share of household income, reducing disposable income and making it difficult to save. In addition, premium rental markets – especially in Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal, and the Western Cape – continue to expand, making affordable rental options increasingly scarce. These factors eventually make it challenging for tenants to honour their lease agreements, leading to civil summonses for debt being issued against them. This article summarises the results of the *Statistics of the civil cases for debt* (statistical release P0041) for April 2025.

The number of civil summonses issued for debt



The total number of civil summonses issued for debt decreased by 16,4% in the three months ended April 2025 compared with the three months ended April 2024 (see Table M).

The largest negative contributors to the 16,4% decrease in civil summonses issued were:

- 'other' debts (contributing -5,9 percentage points);
- services (contributing -4,0 percentage points);
- money lent (contributing -2,7 percentage points); and
- promissory notes (contributing -2,4 percentage points).

Rent (contributing 0,1 of a percentage point) was the only positive contributor.

The number of civil judgements recorded for debt

The total number of civil judgements recorded for debt decreased by 19,5% in the three months ended April 2025 compared with the three months ended April 2024. The largest contributors to the 19,5% decrease were civil judgements relating to:

- services (contributing -8,6 percentage points);
- money lent (contributing -4,8 percentage points); and
- 'other' debts (contributing -3,2 percentage points).

The value of civil judgements recorded for debt

The total value of civil judgements recorded for debt decreased by 9,7% in the three months ended April 2025 compared with the three months ended April 2024. The largest negative contributors were:

- money lent (contributing -6,7 percentage points);
- services (contributing -1,7 percentage points); and
- goods sold (contributing -1,5 percentage points).

Promissory notes (contributing 1,3 percentage points) was the only positive contributor.

In April 2025, 8 049 civil judgements for debt amounting to R221,1 million were recorded. The largest contributors to the total value of judgements were:

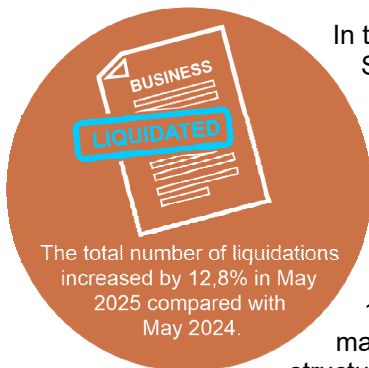
- services (R52,5 million or 23,8%);
- money lent (R49,6 million or 22,4%);
- 'other' debts (R44,1 million or 20,0%); and
- rent (R30,2 million or 13,7%).

Table M – Key figures for April 2025

Actual estimates	Apr 2025	% change between Apr 2024 and Apr 2025	% change between Feb–Apr 2024 and Feb–Apr 2025
Number of civil summonses issued for debt	30 595	-23,1	-16,4
Number of civil judgements recorded for debt	8 049	-31,4	-19,5
Value of civil judgements recorded for debt (R million)	221,1	-32,2	-9,7

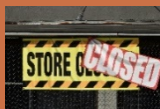
A full release on *Statistics of civil cases for debt* (statistical release P0041) is available on the Stats SA website: www.statssa.gov.za.

Statistics of liquidations



In the first five months of 2025, a total of 623 South African businesses were liquidated. This is 12,4% lower compared to the first five months of 2024. However, annual business liquidation data shows that the number of businesses closing their doors is increasing. According to Statistics South Africa's (Stats SA) liquidation data for May 2025, the number of business liquidations increased by 12,8% between May 2024 and May 2025. From major corporations with complex and bigger structures to smaller businesses with simpler

operations, companies of all sizes and types were impacted. Liquidations of companies increased by 12 cases (from 74 in May 2024 to 86 in May 2025), while close corporations increased by only four cases (from 51 in May 2025 to 55 in May 2025) during this period. Companies in South Africa are likely to record a higher number of liquidations due to several reasons. Companies tend to be larger in structure and have more complex operations, which may lead them to take on more debt as opposed to close corporations. Taking on more debt increases their exposure to credit and operational risks, making them more vulnerable to financial distress, which may lead to the possibility of liquidation. This article summarises the results of the *Statistics of liquidation* release (statistical release P0043.1) for May 2025.



The total number of liquidations increased by 12,8% in May 2025 compared with May 2024 (see Table N).

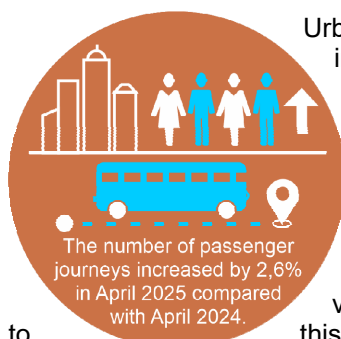
Liquidations of companies increased by 12 cases and liquidations of close corporations increased by four cases during this period. The number of liquidations decreased by 3,6% in the three months ended May 2025 compared with the three months ended May 2024. A decrease of 2,4% in the number of liquidations was recorded in the first five months of 2025 compared with the first five months of 2024.

Table N – Key growth rates in the number of liquidations for May 2025

Number of liquidations May 2025	% change between May 2024 and May 2025	% change between Mar – May 2024 and Mar – May 2025	% change between January to May 2024 and January to May 2025
141	12,8	-3,6	-2,4

A full release on *Statistics of liquidations* (statistical release P0043.1) is available on the Stats SA website: www.statssa.gov.za.


Land transport



Urbanisation and population growth have driven increased demand for efficient and affordable public transport in South Africa, with buses serving as a critical link between urban and suburban areas. Recent statistics show that the number of passenger journeys rose by 2,6% in April 2025 compared with April 2024, with a total of 27 107 journeys recorded, of which approximately 19 269 were undertaken via road transport, including buses. In response

to this rising demand, Golden Arrow Bus Services (GABS) in Cape Town has launched South Africa's first large-scale deployment of electric buses. The company has introduced 20 electric buses, with an additional 100 expected by the end of 2025. Electric buses offer significantly lower operational costs due to savings on fuel and maintenance, which could eventually translate into more affordable fares for

passengers. In addition, the smoother and quieter ride experience is expected to improve passenger comfort and satisfaction, encouraging greater use of public transport. Presented in this article is a summary of the *Land transport* (statistical release P7162) for April 2025.



The number of passenger journeys increased by 2,6% in April 2025 compared with April 2024 (**see Table O**). The corresponding income increased by 1,7% over the same period.

Table O – Year-on-year percentage change in passenger transportation for April 2025

	Nov-24	Dec-24	Jan-25	Feb-25	Mar-25	Apr-25
Passenger journeys	1,3	2,5	11,0	3,9	11,5	2,6
Passenger income	-4,0	-4,1	1,4	-1,6	4,1	1,7

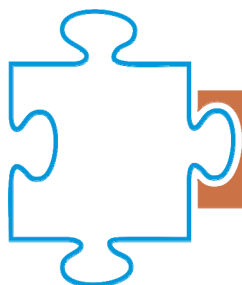
A full release on *Land transport* (statistical release P7162) is available on the Stats SA website: www.statssa.gov.za.

The volume of goods transported (payload) decreased by 5,5% in April 2025 compared with April 2024 (**see Table P**). The corresponding income decreased by 1,5% over the same period.

Table P – Year-on-year percentage change in freight transportation for April 2025

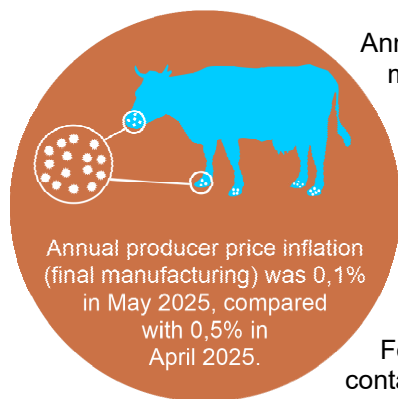
	Nov-24	Dec-24	Jan-25	Feb-25	Mar-25	Apr-25
Freight payload	-10,6	-6,9	-4,7	-4,1	-3,8	-5,5
Freight income	-6,1	-6,2	-3,0	-3,4	-0,8	-1,5

A full release on *Land transport* (statistical release P7162) is available on the Stats SA website: www.statssa.gov.za.



Prices

Producer price index (PPI)



Annual producer price inflation for final manufactured goods was 0,1% in May 2025 compared with 0,5% in April 2025. Despite the overall slowdown, food products, beverages, and tobacco products remained the main positive contributor to the annual headline PPI, recording an inflation rate of 3,7% and contributing 1,1 percentage points to the total. One of the key factors driving up food prices is partly the continued spread of Foot-and-mouth disease (FMD), a highly contagious viral illness affecting cloven-hoofed

animals such as cattle, sheep, and goats. The disease, which causes fever and painful blisters in infected animals, poses serious challenges for the livestock industry. In response to outbreaks, infected animals are typically culled or quarantined, leading to a reduction in red meat supply. At the same time, farmers face rising costs related to biosecurity, vaccinations, and containment measures. These combined factors, a supply shortage and higher production costs, are pushing up the price of red meat, contributing to broader food inflation and ultimately, an increase in the producer price index (PPI). This article summarises the results of the *Producer price index* (PPI) (statistical release P0142.1) for May 2025.

Final manufactured goods – headline PPI



Annual producer price inflation (final manufacturing) was 0,1% in May 2025, compared with 0,5% in April 2025 (see Table Q).

The producer price index (PPI) decreased by 0,3% month-on-month in May 2025. The main positive contributor to the headline PPI annual inflation rate was food products, beverages and tobacco products (3,7%, contributing 1,1 percentage points). The main contributor to the monthly rate was food products, beverages and tobacco products (-0,2%, contributing -0,1 of a percentage point).

Intermediate manufactured goods

The annual percentage change in the PPI for intermediate manufactured goods was 6,9% in May 2025, compared with 8,5% in April 2025. The index decreased by 0,9% month-on-month. The main contributors to the annual rate were basic and fabricated metals (12,3%, contributing 6,1 percentage points) and chemicals, rubber and plastic products (1,4%, contributing 0,4 of a percentage point). The main contributor to the monthly rate was basic and fabricated metals (-1,3%, contributing -0,7 of a percentage point).

Electricity and water

The annual percentage change in the PPI for electricity and water was 10,8% in May 2025, compared with 11,2% in April 2025. The index increased by 1,3% month-on-month. The contributors to the annual rate were electricity (11,9%, contributing 10,2 percentage points) and water (4,6%, contributing 0,7 of a percentage point). The main contributor to the monthly rate was electricity (1,5%, contributing 1,3 percentage points).

Mining

The annual percentage change in the PPI for mining was 2,8% in May 2025, compared with 4,1% in April 2025. The index decreased by 2,0% month-on-month. The positive contributors to the annual rate were gold and other metal ores (19,6%, contributing 5,2 percentage points) and stone quarrying, clay and diamonds (28,6%, contributing 1,3 percentage points). The negative contributors to the monthly rate were non-ferrous metal ores (-

3,7%, contributing -1,9 percentage points) and gold and other metal ores (-3,4%, contributing -1,0 percentage point).

Agriculture, forestry and fishing

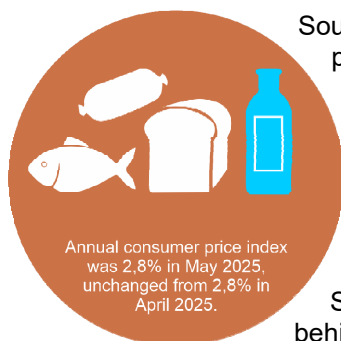
The annual percentage change in the PPI for agriculture, forestry and fishing was 6,0% in May 2025, compared with 4,4% in April 2025. The index increased by 0,2% month-on-month. The main contributor to the annual rate was agriculture (5,9%, contributing 5,1 percentage points). The main contributor to the monthly rate was fishing (4,8%, contributing 0,4 of a percentage point).

Table Q – Key PPI figures for May 2025

Product	Weight	Index (Dec 2023=100)			% change	
		May 2024	April 2025	May 2025	May 2025 vs. April 2025	May 2025 vs. May 2024
Final manufactured goods	100,00	102,3	102,7	102,4	-0,3	0,1
Intermediate manufactured goods	100,00	104,6	112,8	111,8	-0,9	6,9
Electricity and water	100,00	106,8	116,8	118,3	1,3	10,8
Mining	100,00	103,0	108,1	105,9	-2,0	2,8
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	100,00	97,4	103,0	103,2	0,2	6,0

A full release on the *Producer price index* (statistical release P0142.1) is available on the website: www.statssa.gov.za.

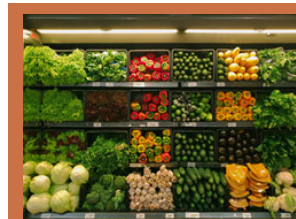
Consumer price index (CPI)



South Africa's main inflation indicator, the consumer price index (CPI), remained unchanged at 2,8% in May 2025, the same rate recorded in April 2025. This marks the third consecutive month that inflation remained below the South African Reserve Bank's (SARB) target range of 3% to 6%. Despite this, consumers are not feeling the relief yet as the cost of daily essentials continues to rise. According to Statistics South Africa (Stats SA), the main driver behind the 2,8% CPI rate is food and non-alcoholic

beverages. Prices in this category rose by 4,8%, contributing 0,9 of a percentage point to the overall inflation rate. Fruits and vegetables recorded a sharp increase rising by 13,5% and 10,3%, respectively, in May 2025 compared with May 2024, followed by processed foods (6,8%), oils and fats (5,6%), fish and other seafood (4,9%) and cereal products which include staples such as maize meal and samp (4,5%). The rise in food prices can be attributed to a combination of factors, including seasonal factors, supply chain disruptions and higher input costs, among others. This article summarises the results of the *Consumer price index* (CPI) (statistical release P0141) for May 2025.

Headline consumer price index (CPI) for all urban areas



Annual consumer price inflation was 2,8% in May 2025, unchanged from 2,8% in April 2025 (see Table R).

The CPI increased by 0,2% month-on-month in May 2025. The main contributors to the 2,8% annual inflation rate were:

- housing and utilities (4,5%, contributing 1,0 percentage point);
- food and non-alcoholic beverages (4,8%, contributing 0,9 of a percentage point); and
- alcoholic beverages and tobacco (4,3%, contributing 0,2 of a percentage point).

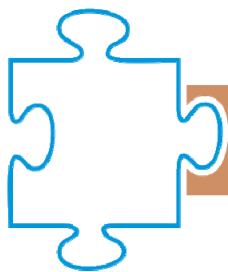
In May 2025, the annual inflation rate for:

- goods was 1,8%, up from 1,7% in April 2025; and
- services was 3,6%, down from 3,8% in April 2025.

Table R – Consumer price index: Index numbers and year-on-year rates
Base year: Dec 2024 = 100

Year	Index /rate	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Average ¹
2021	Index	81,7	82,2	82,8	83,3	83,4	83,5	84,5	84,8	85,0	85,3	85,6	86,1	84,0
	Rate	3,2	2,9	3,2	4,4	5,2	4,9	4,6	4,9	5,0	5,0	5,5	5,9	4,5
2022	Index	86,3	86,8	87,7	88,2	88,8	89,8	91,1	91,3	91,4	91,7	92,0	92,3	89,8
	Rate	5,7	5,7	5,9	5,9	6,5	7,4	7,8	7,6	7,5	7,6	7,4	7,2	6,9
2023	Index	92,2	92,9	93,9	94,2	94,4	94,6	95,4	95,7	96,3	97,2	97,1	97,1	95,1
	Rate	6,9	7,0	7,1	6,8	6,3	5,4	4,7	4,8	5,4	5,9	5,5	5,1	6,0
2024	Index	97,2	98,1	98,9	99,1	99,3	99,4	99,8	99,9	100,0	99,9	99,9	100,0	99,3
	Rate	5,3	5,6	5,3	5,2	5,2	5,1	4,6	4,4	3,8	2,8	2,9	3,0	4,4
2025	Index	100,3	101,2	101,6	101,9	102,1								
	Rate	3,2	3,2	2,7	2,8	2,8								

^{1/} Annual average. A full release on the *Consumer Price Index* (statistical release P0141) is available on the Stats SA website: www.statssa.gov.za.



Glossary



Primary industries

Gigawatt-hour (gWh): one gigawatt-hour of electricity is equal to one million kilowatt-hours. A kilowatt-hour is the basic unit of electrical energy equal to one kilowatt of power supplied to or taken from an electric circuit steadily for one hour. One kilowatt-hour equals one thousand watt-hours.

Index of physical volume of manufacturing production: also known as a production index, is a statistical measure of the change in the volume of production. The production index of a major group is the ratio between the volume of production of a major group in a given period and the volume of production of the same major group in the base period.

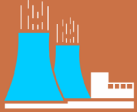
Index of physical volume of mining production: a statistical measure of the change in the volume of production. The production index of a mineral group is the ratio between the volume of production of a mineral group in a given period and the volume of production of the same mineral group in the base period.

Index of the physical volume of electricity production: a statistical measure of the change in the volume of production of electricity in a given period and the volume of production of electricity in the base period.

Industry: a group of establishments engaged in the same or similar kinds of economic activity.

PGMs – Platinum group metals: include platinum; iridium; osmiridium, palladium; rhodium; ruthenium and osmium.

Sales: total value of sales and transfers-out of goods mined by the mining establishments and the amounts received for installation, erection or assembly or other services.



Secondary industries

Additions and alterations: extensions to existing buildings as well as internal and external alterations of existing buildings.

Blocks of flats: a structure, usually multi-storey, consisting of a number of dwellings sharing the same residential address, and usually sharing a common entrance, foyer or staircase.

Dwelling houses: a free-standing, complete structure on a separate stand or a self-contained dwelling-unit, e.g. granny flat, on the same premises as the existing residence. Out-buildings and garages are included.

Other residential buildings: include institutions for the disabled, boarding houses, old age homes, hostels, hotels, motels, guest houses, holiday chalets, bed and breakfast accommodation, entertainment centres and casinos.

Residential buildings: dwelling houses, flats, townhouses and other residential buildings.



Tertiary industries

Acknowledgements of debt: a statement by a person/debtor in which he admits that he owes money to an individual or a company or a bank.

Acting household head: any member of the household acting on behalf of the head of the household.

Average income per stay unit night sold: average rate per stay unit (i.e. rate per room in a hotel or powered site in a caravan park) is calculated by dividing the total income from accommodation by the number of stay unit nights sold in the survey period.

Catering services: enterprises involved in the sale and supply of meals and drinks prepared on the premises on a contract basis and brought to other premises chosen by the person ordering them, to be served for immediate consumption to guests or customers. Include bars, taverns, other drinking places, ice-cream parlours, etc.

Civil judgements: decisions taken in a civil matter or a dispute between two people or parties.

Civil summonses: notices to appear before the court of law where a dispute between two parties or people has to be heard, i.e. not for criminal offence.

Day trip: a trip outside of the respondent's usual environment, where they leave and return within the same day (i.e. do not stay overnight).

Domestic tourism: a trip within the boundaries of South Africa but outside of the respondent's usual environment.

Note: The following categories are excluded from the definition of domestic visitor:

- persons travelling to another place within the country with the intention of setting up their usual residence in that place.
- Persons who travel to another place within the country and are remunerated from within the place visited.
- Persons who travel regularly or frequently between neighbouring localities as defined by the 'usual environment' rule.

Dwelling unit: structure or part of a structure or group structures occupied or meant to be occupied by one or more than one household.

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

Expenditure: the total consumption expenditure made by a visitor or on behalf of a visitor during his/her trip and stay at a destination.

Foreign traveller: a person who resides outside South Africa and visits the country temporarily.

Household: a group of persons who live together and provide themselves jointly with food and/or other essentials for living, or a single person who lives alone.

Household head: the main decision-maker, or the person who owns or rents the dwelling, or the person who is the main breadwinner.

Income from accommodation industry: income from amounts charged for rooms or equivalent. Other income is excluded (e.g. income from meals).

Income from bar sales: refers to income from liquor sales.

Income from food sales: refers to income from the sale of meals and non-alcoholic drinks.

Income from restaurant and bar sales: income from meals, banqueting and beverages and tobacco sales.

Insolvency: refers to an individual or partnership which is unable to pay its debt and is placed under final sequestration. The number of insolvencies does not refer to the number of persons involved, as a partnership which is unable to pay its debt is regarded as one insolvency, irrespective of the number of partners.

Liquidation: refers to the winding-up of the affairs of a company or close corporation when liabilities exceed assets and it can be resolved by voluntary action or by an order of the court.

Main purpose of trip: this is the purpose in the absence of which the trip would not have been made.

Microdata: data gathered on a small scale, such as data on an individual.

‘Other’ African countries: refers to all non-SADC African countries.

Other income: includes all income not earned from food sales or bar sales.

Other SADC: refers to the thirteen countries, excluding South Africa, that belong to the Southern African Development Community.

Professional services: refer to medical doctors, dentists, advocates, attorney, auditors, accountants, architects, engineers, hospital services etc.

Promissory notes: written undertaking, signed by a person or party, to pay money to another person or to be the bearer of such a note on a specific date or on demand.

Restaurants and coffee shops: enterprises involved in the sale and provision of meals and drinks, ordered from a menu, prepared on the premises for immediate consumption and with provided seating.

Retailer: a retailer is an enterprise deriving more than 50% of its turnover from sales of goods to the general public for household use.

Retail trade: includes the resale (sale without transformation) of new and used goods and products to the general public for household use.

Stay unit: unit accommodation available to be charged out to guests, for example, a powered site in a caravan park or a room in a hotel.

Stay unit night sold: total number of stay units occupied on each night during the survey period.

Takeaway and fast-food outlets: enterprises involved in the sale and provision of meals and drinks, ordered from a menu, prepared on the premises for takeaway purposes in a packaged format, at a stand or in a location, with or without provided seating.

Total income: includes income from food sales, income from bar sales and other income.

Tourism: comprises the activities of persons travelling to, and staying in places outside their usual environment, for not more than one consecutive year, for leisure, business and other purposes not related to the exercise of an activity remunerated from within the place visited.

Tourist: a visitor who stays at least one night in the place visited.

Tourist accommodation: any facility that regularly (or occasionally) provides 'paid' or 'unpaid' overnight accommodation for tourists.

Traveller: any person on a trip between two or more countries or between two or more localities within his/her country of residence.

Voluntary liquidation: takes place when a company or close corporation, by own choice, resolves to wind-up its affairs.

Wholesale trade: includes the resale (sale without transformation) of new and used goods and products to other wholesalers, retailers, agricultural, industrial, commercial, institutional and professional users either directly or through agents on a fee or contract basis.



Annual percentage change: change in the index of the relevant month of the current year compared with the index of the same month in the previous year expressed as a percentage.

Consumer price index (CPI): an index that measures the price of a fixed basket of consumer goods and services.

Inflation rate: annual percentage change in the CPI for all items of the relevant month of the current year compared with the CPI for all items of the same month in the previous year expressed as a percentage.

Monthly percentage change: change in the index of the relevant month compared to the index of the previous month expressed as a percentage.

Year-on-year: a term used frequently in investment research and other reports to mean 'compared with the same period in the previous fiscal year'.

**Editorial & Layout**

Maune Lerobane
Wendy Ngoveni
Mandla Mahlangu
Ouma Hlongoane

Language Editors

Salomien Rudolph
Shalom Noxolo Piorkowski
Rinao Emmah Tshatsinde

Design & Layout

Thabo Kgaile

Printing & Distribution

Brian Seaba
Johannes Serage
Joey Baker
Anneline Bezuidenhout
Millie Steenkamp
Enoch Baloyi
Piet Sibanyoni