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Your monthly update on South Africa's economic indicators

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Economic headlines

Debt in the formal business sector



Debt can quickly become a curse if businesses take on more than they can handle (click [here](#) to read more).

A decade on from #FeesMustFall



Higher education institutions rely more on tuition fees to support their budgets (click [here](#) to read more).

Inflation softens in January



Consumer price inflation dipped to 3,5% in January 2026 from 3,6% in December 2025 (click [here](#) to read more).
















Work drives internal migration



The largest inter-provincial migration flow is from Limpopo to Gauteng (click [here](#) to read more).

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

Monthly economic indicators

	y/y percentage change			m/m percentage change			q/q	Annual
	Oct-25	Nov-25	Dec-25	Oct-25	Nov-25	Dec-25	Q4: 2025	2025
Mining production 	6,1	-2,4	2,5	2,5	-5,4	-1,2	-0,5	0,1
Manufacturing production 	0,5	-2,0	-1,4	1,1	-2,1	-1,2	-0,5	-1,3
Electricity generation 	-5,2	-7,3	-7,9	-0,7	-1,3	-1,4	-3,2	-2,0
Buildings completed (value) 	-4,2	0,4	13,9	-1,7	18,0	8,0	5,8	0,1
Wholesale trade sales 	-3,0	-0,7	0,3	0,2	1,8	-1,1	0,6	-1,4
Retail trade sales 	3,0	3,6	2,6	1,0	0,6	-0,4	0,8	3,7
Motor trade sales 	1,8	0,3	7,0	0,9	0,9	0,6	1,5	2,0
Income from tourist accommodation 	15,3	11,7	3,9	5,8	-1,1	-4,1	1,0	9,9
Restaurants, catering & fast-food income 	7,0	6,1	1,5	1,0	-0,1	-2,6	0,8	3,4
Rail transport: Freight payload 	5,7	10,5	3,1	1,1	-0,6	-0,5	3,6	4,7
Road transport: Freight payload 	2,6	-3,5	1,7	-1,1	-1,8	2,4	-1,3	-0,3
Rail transport: Passenger journeys 	23,4	15,6	28,0	-2,4	-4,0	9,5	-0,1	39,9
Road transport: Passenger journeys 	-3,0	-0,2	-1,9	-1,7	-3,2	3,1	-4,0	1,2
	Nov-25	Dec-25	Jan-26	Nov-25	Dec-25	Jan-26		
Consumer Price Index (CPI) 	3,5	3,6	3,5	-0,1	0,2	0,2		
Producer Price Index (PPI) 	2,9	2,9	2,2	0,0	0,2	-0,2		

ABOUT

The indicators shown here provide an overview of how various sectors of South Africa's economy are performing

Click on an indicator name to access the complete report on Stats SA's website

y/y = year-on-year
 m/m = month-on-month
 q/q = quarter-on-quarter percentage change, Q4: 2025 compared with Q3: 2025

Keep up to date with our release schedule [here](#). A complete catalogue of Stats SA releases and reports is available [here](#).



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Department:
 Statistics South Africa
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

IMPROVING LIVES THROUGH DATA ECOSYSTEMS



Feature article

Back to school: Price changes in uniform and stationery items over the last year January 2026 vs January 2025

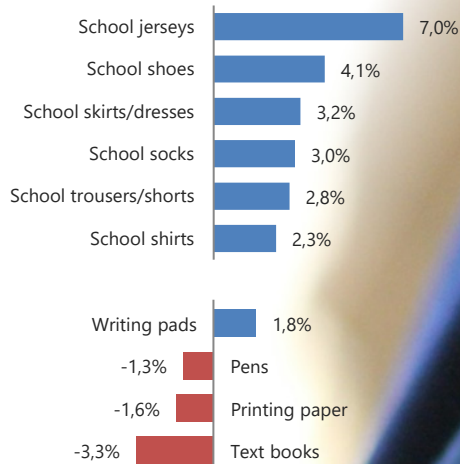


Photo: Robin Worrall, unsplash.com
Data source: Consumer Price Index (CPI), January 2026

Back-to-school prices rise for uniforms, fall for stationery

January marked the beginning of the new school year which means stocking up on uniforms and stationery.

Stats SA has included school uniform items in the consumer price index (CPI) basket since January 2025. These items recorded higher inflation rates than the average clothing & footwear rate of 1,2%.

For example, prices for school jerseys rose by 7,0% in January 2026 compared with January 2025. School skirts or dresses increased by 3,2% and school shoes by 4,1% over the same period.

Most stationery items registered decreases, with pens 1,3%, printing paper 1,6% and text books 3,3% cheaper than a year ago.

Read more on the latest inflation figures [here](#).

Infographic of the month

Great on the grill, but how tough on the wallet?

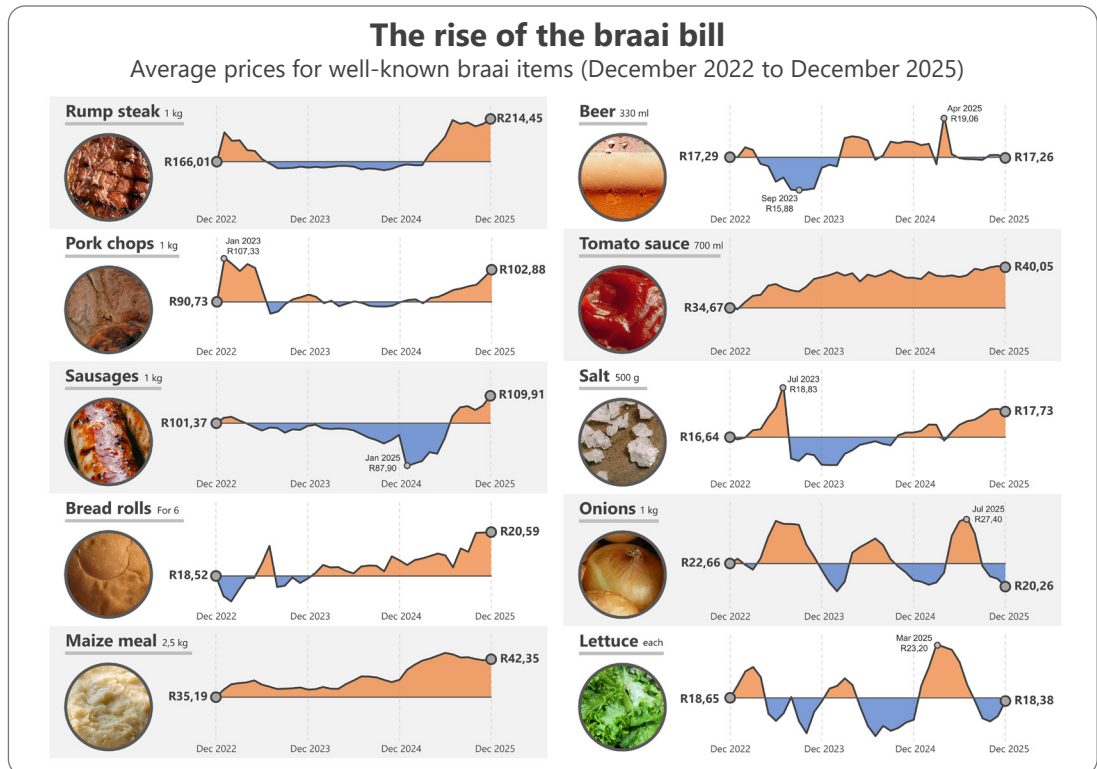
The braai brought many friends and family together this past December. South Africa's favourite pastime is a staple of any holiday season, but it has become pricier over time.

The graphic shows how prices for ten favourite braai products have shifted over three years.

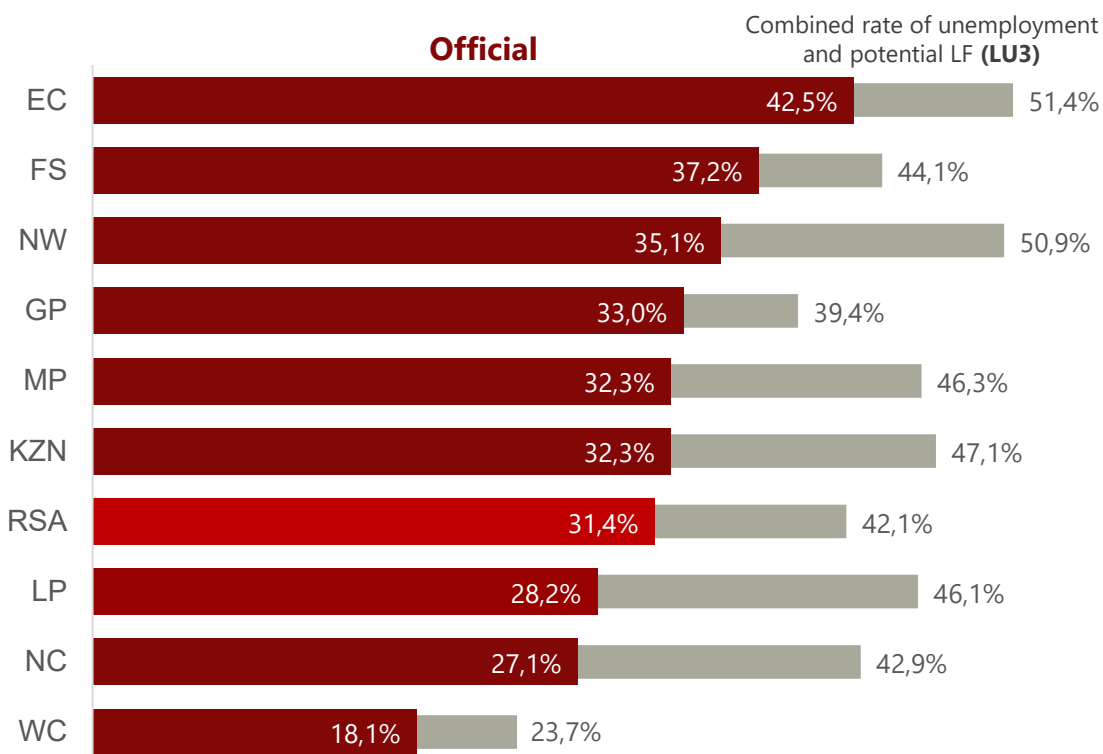
Beef rump steak recorded the sharpest price increase. The average price for a kilogram of rump steak was R166,01 during the festive season in 2022. In December 2025, a rump steak sizzling on the grill would have set you back an average of R214,45. That is an eye-watering rise of 29%.

Maize meal recorded the second highest increase (+20%), followed by tomato sauce (+16%) and pork chops (+13%).

Read more [here](#).



Provincial snapshot



Unemployment rate eases in six provinces

The unemployment rate decreased in six of the nine provinces in the fourth quarter of 2025 compared with the third quarter.

The largest decreases were recorded in Northern Cape (31,2% to 27,1%) and North West (38,1% to 35,1%). The rate was also lower in Mpumalanga, Limpopo, Western Cape and Gauteng.

The chart shows provincial unemployment rates in the fourth quarter. Eastern Cape had the highest official unemployment rate, followed by Free State and North West. Western Cape and Northern Cape had the lowest.

Provincial unemployment figures are available in the latest *Quarterly Labour Force Survey (QLFS)* statistical release (see Table E), available [here](#).

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