

STATISTICAL RELEASE
P6141.2

Wholesale trade sales
(Preliminary)

April 2017

Embargoed until:
15 June 2017
10:00

ENQUIRIES:
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FORTHCOMING ISSUE:
May 2017

EXPECTED RELEASE DATE:
20 July 2017

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Contents

Sales at constant 2012 prices: results for April 2017	2
Table A – Key growth rates in wholesale trade sales at constant 2012 prices	2
Figure 1 – Wholesale trade sales at constant 2012 prices.....	2
Sales at current prices: results for April 2017.....	3
Table B – Key growth rates in wholesale trade sales at current prices.....	3
Table C – Wholesale trade sales at current prices for the latest three months by type of dealer	3
Tables	4
Table 1 – Wholesale trade sales at constant 2012 prices (R million).....	4
Table 2 – Year-on-year percentage change in wholesale trade sales at constant 2012 prices.....	4
Table 3 – Seasonally adjusted wholesale trade sales at constant 2012 prices	4
Table 4 – Wholesale trade sales at current prices (R million)	5
Table 5 – Year-on-year percentage change in wholesale trade sales at current prices	5
Table 6 – Seasonally adjusted wholesale trade sales at current prices.....	5
Table 7 – Wholesale trade sales at current prices by type of dealer (R million)	6
Table 8 – Year-on-year percentage change in wholesale trade sales at current prices by type of dealer	6
Table 9 – Contribution of type of dealer to the year-on-year percentage change in wholesale trade sales at current prices	6
Survey information.....	7
Technical notes	9
Glossary.....	11
Technical enquiries.....	11
General information	12

Sales at constant 2012 prices: results for April 2017

Table A – Key growth rates in wholesale trade sales at constant 2012 prices

	Nov-16	Dec-16	Jan-17	Feb-17	Mar-17	Apr-17
Year-on-year % change, unadjusted	2,4	3,9	2,1	-9,2	1,2	-2,1
Month-on-month % change, seasonally adjusted	-0,8	3,3	-3,8	-3,9	3,6	2,2
3-month % change, seasonally adjusted 1/	0,4	0,5	0,1	-1,4	-3,3	-2,3

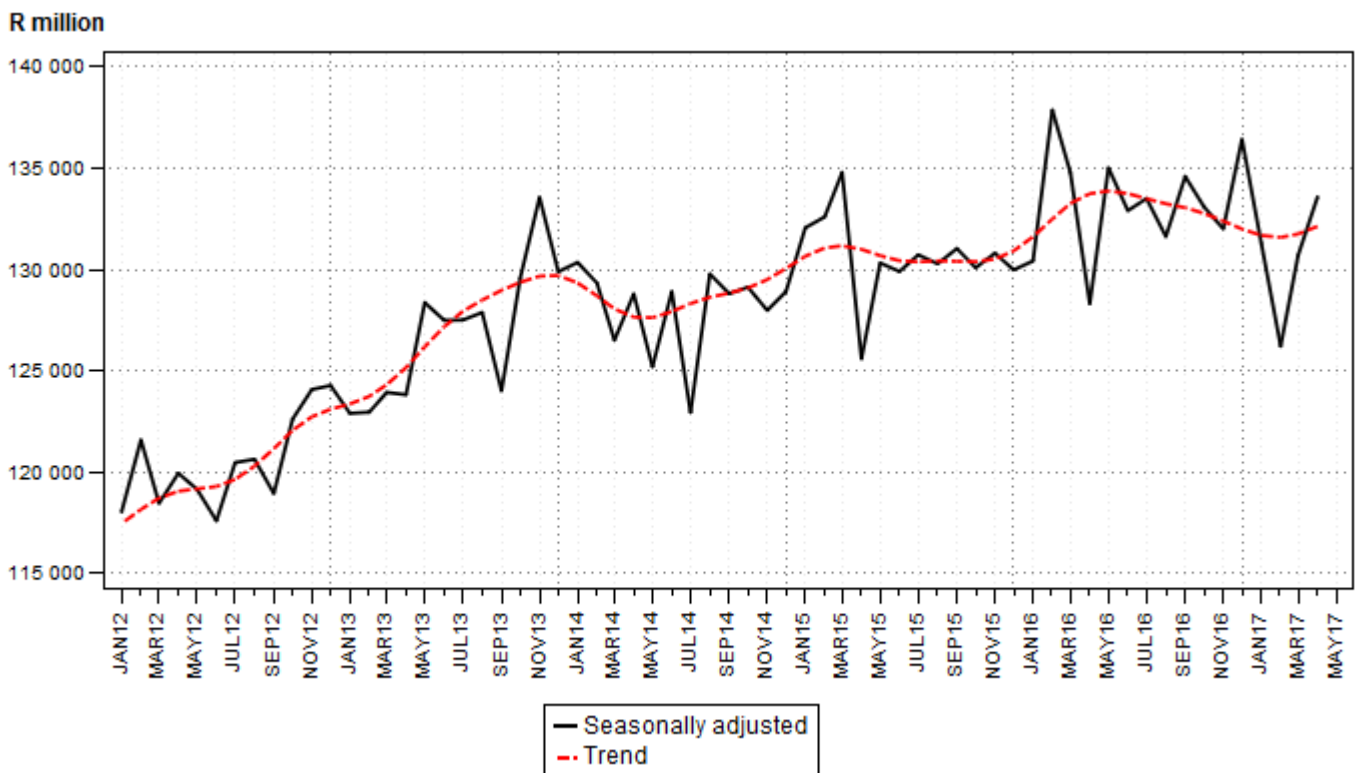
1/ Percentage change between the previous 3 months and the 3 months ending in the month indicated.

Measured in real terms (constant 2012 prices), wholesale trade sales decreased by 2,1% in April 2017 compared with April 2016.

Seasonally adjusted wholesale trade sales increased by 2,2% in April 2017 compared with March 2017. This followed month-on-month changes of 3,6% in March 2017 and -3,9% in February 2017.

In the three months ended April 2017, seasonally adjusted wholesale trade sales decreased by 2,3% compared with the previous three months.

Figure 1 – Wholesale trade sales at constant 2012 prices



Sales at current prices: results for April 2017

Table B – Key growth rates in wholesale trade sales at current prices

	Nov-16	Dec-16	Jan-17	Feb-17	Mar-17	Apr-17
Year-on-year % change, unadjusted	9,1	10,9	6,8	-4,2	7,3	1,6
Month-on-month % change, seasonally adjusted	1,1	3,4	-2,4	-1,7	2,0	2,4
3-month % change, seasonally adjusted 1/	0,3	0,7	2,1	1,3	-0,3	-0,1

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

Measured in nominal terms (current prices), wholesale trade sales increased by 1,6% in April 2017 compared with April 2016. The main contributors to this increase were dealers in:

- solid, liquid and gaseous fuels and related products (15,4% and contributing 2,8 percentage points);
- food, beverages and tobacco (9,2% and contributing 1,4 percentage points); and
- precious stones, jewellery and silverware (35,6% contributing 1,1 percentage points) – see Tables 8 and 9.

Table C – Wholesale trade sales at current prices for the latest three months by type of dealer

Type of dealer	Feb – Apr 2016 (R million)	Weight	Feb – Apr 2017 (R million)	% change between Feb – Apr 2016 and Feb – Apr 2017	Contribution (% points) to the total % change
Fee or contract basis	18 579	4,0	18 218	-1,9	-0,1
Agricultural raw materials and livestock	31 342	6,8	30 635	-2,3	-0,2
Food, beverages and tobacco	73 786	16,0	77 999	5,7	0,9
Textiles, clothing and footwear	10 983	2,4	9 217	-16,1	-0,4
Other household goods except precious stones	62 011	13,4	60 026	-3,2	-0,4
Precious stones, jewellery and silverware	11 903	2,6	15 288	28,4	0,7
Solid, liquid and gaseous fuels and related products	80 444	17,4	88 415	9,9	1,7
Metals and metal ores	10 912	2,4	11 825	8,4	0,2
Construction and building materials	30 408	6,6	30 374	-0,1	0,0
Other intermediate products, waste and scrap	19 771	4,3	20 192	2,1	0,1
Machinery, equipment and supplies	71 715	15,5	64 901	-9,5	-1,5
Other goods	40 742	8,8	42 757	4,9	0,4
Total	462 596	100,0	469 848	1,6	1,6

Wholesale trade sales increased by 1,6% in the three months ended April 2017 compared with the three months ended April 2016. The main contributor to this increase was dealers in solid, liquid and gaseous fuels and related products (9,9% and contributing 1,7 percentage points) – see Table C.

PJ Lehohla
Statistician-General

Tables

Table 1 – Wholesale trade sales at constant 2012 prices (R million)

Month	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017 1/
Jan	92 663	105 109	111 363	118 637	118 634	114 443	116 877
Feb	100 648	116 640	118 515	125 183	128 746	135 055	122 697
Mar	112 482	120 977	119 226	126 221	136 854	134 307	135 889
Apr	100 834	110 208	120 638	120 128	117 267	123 136	120 560
May	107 913	119 774	129 326	124 611	126 921	133 689	
Jun	112 249	116 408	122 847	126 528	130 235	132 474	
Jul	107 921	119 090	128 360	123 522	131 801	129 938	
Aug	115 190	123 738	129 266	127 988	128 209	133 906	
Sep	118 765	118 391	126 283	134 558	136 407	141 495	
Oct	119 965	132 915	140 263	140 319	139 557	139 455	
Nov	127 767	139 155	146 900	136 909	142 364	145 730	
Dec	119 221	123 279	130 511	131 421	131 867	136 966	
Total	1 335 618	1 445 684	1 523 498	1 536 025	1 568 862	1 600 594	

1/ Figures for latest month are preliminary.

Table 2 – Year-on-year percentage change in wholesale trade sales at constant 2012 prices

Month	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2017 year-to-date
Jan	13,4	6,0	6,5	0,0	-3,5	2,1	2,1
Feb	15,9	1,6	5,6	2,8	4,9	-9,2	-4,0
Mar	7,6	-1,4	5,9	8,4	-1,9	1,2	-2,2
Apr	9,3	9,5	-0,4	-2,4	5,0	-2,1	-2,2
May	11,0	8,0	-3,6	1,9	5,3		
Jun	3,7	5,5	3,0	2,9	1,7		
Jul	10,3	7,8	-3,8	6,7	-1,4		
Aug	7,4	4,5	-1,0	0,2	4,4		
Sep	-0,3	6,7	6,6	1,4	3,7		
Oct	10,8	5,5	0,0	-0,5	-0,1		
Nov	8,9	5,6	-6,8	4,0	2,4		
Dec	3,4	5,9	0,7	0,3	3,9		
Total	8,2	5,4	0,8	2,1	2,0		

Table 3 – Seasonally adjusted wholesale trade sales at constant 2012 prices

Month	R million				Month-on-month % change			
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2014	2015	2016	2017
Jan	130 354	132 065	130 425	131 295	0,4	2,4	0,3	-3,8
Feb	129 339	132 602	137 875	126 224	-0,8	0,4	5,7	-3,9
Mar	126 523	134 793	134 779	130 707	-2,2	1,7	-2,2	3,6
Apr	128 799	125 601	128 313	133 578	1,8	-6,8	-4,8	2,2
May	125 206	130 328	135 022		-2,8	3,8	5,2	
Jun	128 921	129 908	132 911		3,0	-0,3	-1,6	
Jul	122 953	130 729	133 508		-4,6	0,6	0,4	
Aug	129 785	130 291	131 635		5,6	-0,3	-1,4	
Sep	128 814	131 037	134 594		-0,7	0,6	2,2	
Oct	129 132	130 095	133 104		0,2	-0,7	-1,1	
Nov	127 990	130 807	132 014		-0,9	0,5	-0,8	
Dec	128 916	129 989	136 433		0,7	-0,6	3,3	

Table 4 – Wholesale trade sales at current prices (R million)

Month	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017 1/
Jan	84 641	101 722	114 859	131 492	125 680	133 098	142 114
Feb	93 410	114 014	122 949	140 490	137 524	158 879	152 260
Mar	105 468	119 073	125 211	143 318	150 639	157 241	168 783
Apr	94 645	109 361	126 036	136 712	131 284	146 476	148 805
May	101 573	119 758	134 739	141 686	142 464	158 850	
Jun	105 987	115 745	129 090	143 972	147 961	159 729	
Jul	102 947	117 927	135 770	140 908	149 629	157 523	
Aug	111 047	123 879	138 260	145 685	145 049	161 022	
Sep	115 687	119 307	135 648	153 350	154 014	169 430	
Oct	117 231	135 367	151 348	159 082	160 088	167 975	
Nov	125 308	142 970	158 916	153 742	163 571	178 458	
Dec	116 855	126 561	142 500	145 241	150 749	167 197	
Total	1 274 799	1 445 684	1 615 326	1 735 678	1 758 652	1 915 878	

1/ Figures for latest month are preliminary.

Table 5 – Year-on-year percentage change in wholesale trade sales at current prices

Month	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2017 year-to-date
Jan	20,2	12,9	14,5	-4,4	5,9	6,8	6,8
Feb	22,1	7,8	14,3	-2,1	15,5	-4,2	0,8
Mar	12,9	5,2	14,5	5,1	4,4	7,3	3,1
Apr	15,5	15,2	8,5	-4,0	11,6	1,6	2,7
May	17,9	12,5	5,2	0,5	11,5		
Jun	9,2	11,5	11,5	2,8	8,0		
Jul	14,6	15,1	3,8	6,2	5,3		
Aug	11,6	11,6	5,4	-0,4	11,0		
Sep	3,1	13,7	13,0	0,4	10,0		
Oct	15,5	11,8	5,1	0,6	4,9		
Nov	14,1	11,2	-3,3	6,4	9,1		
Dec	8,3	12,6	1,9	3,8	10,9		
Total	13,4	11,7	7,5	1,3	8,9		

Table 6 – Seasonally adjusted wholesale trade sales at current prices

Month	R million				Month-on-month % change			
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2014	2015	2016	2017
Jan	146 774	142 007	154 109	161 968	3,9	-0,3	4,0	-2,4
Feb	147 018	143 743	160 484	159 182	0,2	1,2	4,1	-1,7
Mar	141 964	147 896	157 098	162 326	-3,4	2,9	-2,1	2,0
Apr	147 828	141 401	155 529	166 219	4,1	-4,4	-1,0	2,4
May	142 297	145 333	159 687		-3,7	2,8	2,7	
Jun	145 554	147 195	159 259		2,3	1,3	-0,3	
Jul	141 725	149 843	162 076		-2,6	1,8	1,8	
Aug	146 271	145 555	157 909		3,2	-2,9	-2,6	
Sep	147 723	148 931	161 748		1,0	2,3	2,4	
Oct	146 356	148 602	158 746		-0,9	-0,2	-1,9	
Nov	140 994	147 565	160 415		-3,7	-0,7	1,1	
Dec	142 490	148 252	165 923		1,1	0,5	3,4	

Table 7 – Wholesale trade sales at current prices by type of dealer (R million)

Type of dealer	Nov-16	Dec-16	Jan-17	Feb-17	Mar-17	Apr-17 1/
Fee or contract basis	6 229	6 237	4 558	5 690	6 464	6 064
Agricultural raw materials and livestock	15 082	12 642	9 362	10 779	11 223	8 633
Food, beverages and tobacco	27 175	33 501	22 145	24 305	29 320	24 374
Textiles, clothing and footwear	4 056	2 431	1 982	2 861	3 294	3 062
Other household goods except precious stones	24 384	21 321	18 728	20 180	20 768	19 078
Precious stones, jewellery and silverware	4 593	3 253	2 006	5 527	3 722	6 039
Solid, liquid and gaseous fuels and related products	30 761	32 352	30 410	27 133	31 068	30 214
Metals and metal ores	4 613	2 534	3 122	4 137	4 464	3 224
Construction and building materials	12 868	7 119	8 071	9 815	11 265	9 294
Other intermediate products, waste and scrap	9 588	7 414	7 280	7 392	7 206	5 594
Machinery, equipment and supplies	23 771	23 518	21 057	20 582	24 890	19 429
Other goods	15 339	14 873	13 391	13 859	15 099	13 799
Total	178 458	167 197	142 114	152 260	168 783	148 805

1/ Figures are preliminary.

Table 8 – Year-on-year percentage change in wholesale trade sales at current prices by type of dealer

Type of dealer	Nov-16	Dec-16	Jan-17	Feb-17	Mar-17	Apr-17
Fee or contract basis	19,0	9,9	-0,7	-18,6	19,2	-1,7
Agricultural raw materials and livestock	43,5	20,7	6,6	6,8	5,8	-18,8
Food, beverages and tobacco	11,8	5,8	10,2	-0,2	8,2	9,2
Textiles, clothing and footwear	-20,9	-2,6	-32,1	-16,3	-17,8	-14,0
Other household goods except precious stones	2,2	17,8	4,5	-4,8	-1,2	-3,7
Precious stones, jewellery and silverware	35,1	51,7	-6,7	49,6	-0,9	35,6
Solid, liquid and gaseous fuels and related products	-0,2	0,1	23,7	1,8	12,6	15,4
Metals and metal ores	25,2	15,5	7,3	13,9	23,4	-12,0
Construction and building materials	10,2	1,9	12,0	-3,1	13,7	-10,4
Other intermediate products, waste and scrap	25,3	24,4	14,1	3,1	11,7	-9,1
Machinery, equipment and supplies	10,1	31,9	-5,5	-23,5	1,4	-4,1
Other goods	-2,4	-0,3	0,8	-5,2	14,0	7,1
Total	9,1	10,9	6,8	-4,2	7,3	1,6

Table 9 – Contribution of type of dealer to the year-on-year percentage change in wholesale trade sales at current prices

Type of dealer	Nov-16	Dec-16	Jan-17	Feb-17	Mar-17	Apr-17
Fee or contract basis	0,6	0,4	0,0	-0,8	0,7	-0,1
Agricultural raw materials and livestock	2,8	1,4	0,4	0,4	0,4	-1,4
Food, beverages and tobacco	1,8	1,2	1,5	0,0	1,4	1,4
Textiles, clothing and footwear	-0,6	0,0	-0,7	-0,4	-0,4	-0,3
Other household goods except precious stones	0,3	2,1	0,6	-0,6	-0,2	-0,5
Precious stones, jewellery and silverware	0,7	0,7	-0,1	1,1	0,0	1,1
Solid, liquid and gaseous fuels and related products	0,0	0,0	4,4	0,3	2,2	2,8
Metals and metal ores	0,6	0,2	0,2	0,3	0,5	-0,3
Construction and building materials	0,7	0,1	0,6	-0,2	0,9	-0,7
Other intermediate products, waste and scrap	1,2	1,0	0,7	0,1	0,5	-0,4
Machinery, equipment and supplies	1,3	3,8	-0,9	-4,0	0,2	-0,6
Other goods	-0,2	0,0	0,1	-0,5	1,2	0,6
Total	9,1	10,9	6,8	-4,2	7,3	1,6

Survey information

- Introduction**
- 1 Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) conducts a monthly survey covering enterprises in the wholesale trade industry (see 4 below). This survey is based on a sample drawn from Stats SA's 2016 business sampling frame (BSF) that contains businesses registered at the South African Revenue Service (SARS) for value added tax (VAT) and income tax (IT). Stats SA continuously updates its BSF, which is linked to the SARS administrative data.
 - 2 In order to improve timeliness, some information for the latest month had to be estimated due to late response. These estimates will be revised in future statistical releases as soon as information becomes available. Published wholesale trade sales estimates exclude VAT.
- Purpose of the survey**
- 3 The results of the monthly wholesale 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**
- 4 This survey covers wholesale enterprises according to the following types of dealers:
 - Wholesale trade on a fee or contract basis – sales by commission agents, commodity brokers, auctioneers and 'other' wholesale trade on a fee or contract basis;
 - Wholesale trade in agricultural raw materials and livestock;
 - Wholesale trade in food, beverages and tobacco;
 - Wholesale trade in textiles, clothing and footwear;
 - Wholesale trade in 'other' household goods except precious stones. This group includes wholesale trade in household furniture, requisites and appliances, wholesale trade in books and stationery, wholesale trade in pharmaceuticals and toiletries and wholesale trade in 'other' household goods not elsewhere classified;
 - Wholesale trade in precious stones, jewellery and silverware;
 - Wholesale trade in solid, liquid and gaseous fuels and related products;
 - Wholesale trade in metals and metal ores;
 - Wholesale trade in construction materials, hardware, plumbing and heating equipment and supplies;
 - Wholesale trade in 'other' intermediate products, waste and scrap;
 - Wholesale trade in machinery, equipment and supplies; and
 - Wholesale trade in 'other' goods. This group covers general wholesale trade and 'other' wholesale trade not classified elsewhere.
- Classification**
- 5 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 four digit level.
- Collection rate**
- 6 The preliminary collection rate for the survey on wholesale trade sales for April 2017 was 82,1%. The improved collection rate for March 2017 was 89,8%.

- Statistical unit** 7 The statistical unit for which information is compiled and published is the enterprise, defined as a legal unit or a combination of legal units that includes and directly controls all functions necessary to carry out its sales activities. The statistical units are derived from and linked to the South African Revenue Service (SARS) administrative data.
- Revised figures** 8 Revised figures are mainly due to late submission of data to Stats SA, or respondents reporting revisions or corrections to their figures. Preliminary figures, as indicated in the relevant tables, are subject to change and when revised will not be indicated as such.
- Related publications** 9 Users may also refer to the following publication available from Stats SA:
- *Stats in Brief* issued annually.
- Rounding-off of figures** 10 Where figures have been rounded off, discrepancies may occur between sums of the component items and the totals.
- Historical data** 11 Historical wholesale trade sales data are available on the Stats SA website. To access the data electronically, use the following link:
[Click to download historical data](#)
- Past publications** 12 Past wholesale trade sales releases are available on the Stats SA website. To access the releases electronically, use the following link:
[Click to download past releases](#)

Technical notes

Survey methodology and design

- 1 The survey is conducted monthly. Questionnaires are sent to a sample of 1 257 enterprises from a population of 19 401 enterprises. Completed questionnaires are required to be returned to Stats SA within 10 days after the end of the reference month. Email, fax and telephone reminders are used to follow up on non-respondents.
- 2 A stratified random sample was drawn at the SIC four-digit level in April 2016 from Stats SA's business sampling frame (BSF). Strata were formed using a combination of Standard Industrial Classification 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 7,0%.

Class limits

- 3 The wholesale sampling frame is divided into four size groups. All large enterprises (size group one) are completely enumerated. Simple random sampling is applied to the remaining size groups (medium, small and very small). The total value of sales of the large enterprises (size group one) is added to the weighted totals of size group two, three and four to reflect the total value of sales.

Measure of size classes (Rand)

Enterprise size	Size group	Lower limits	Upper limits
Very small	4	2 201 028	27 000 000
Small	3	27 000 001	144 000 000
Medium	2	144 000 001	288 000 000
Large	1	288 000 001	

Sample weighting

- 4 For those strata not completely enumerated, the weights to produce estimates are the inverse ratio of the sampling fraction, modified to take account of non-response in the survey. Stratum estimates are calculated and then aggregated with the completely enumerated stratum to form group estimates. These procedures are consistent with international best practice.

Seasonal adjustment

- 5 Seasonally adjusted estimates are generated each month using the X-12-ARIMA Seasonal Adjustment Program developed by the US Bureau of the Census. 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 more clearly recognised. 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 wholesale trade sales is described in more detail on the Stats SA website: [Click to Download Seasonal adjustment Wholesale Trade Sales July 2016](#)

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** Stats SA compiles its monthly estimates of wholesale trade sales at current prices from a survey of wholesalers in the formal sector. For January 1998 to December 2011, wholesale trade sales at constant prices were calculated using the 'all groups' PPI for domestic output, but excluding electricity and other utilities.

From January 2012, wholesale trade sales at constant prices are compiled as follows:

- (1) Deflate sales of dealers in agricultural raw materials and livestock using the PPI for agriculture.
- (2) Deflate sales of dealers in food, beverages and tobacco using the final manufacturing PPI for food products, beverages and tobacco.
- (3) Deflate sales of dealers in textiles, clothing and footwear using the final manufacturing PPI for textiles, clothing and footwear.
- (4) Deflate sales of dealers in solid, liquid and gaseous fuels and related products using the final manufacturing PPI for coal and petroleum products.
- (5) Deflate sales of dealers in machinery, equipment and supplies using the final manufacturing PPIs for general and special purpose machinery; household appliances and office machinery; and electrical machinery and apparatus and subcomponents.
- (6) Deflate the remaining wholesale trade sales using the headline PPI (final manufacturing) excluding the PPIs for food products, beverages and tobacco; textiles, clothing and footwear; coal and petroleum products; general and special purpose machinery; household appliances and office machinery; electrical machinery and apparatus and subcomponents; and transport equipment. The PPI for transport equipment is excluded because it measures producer prices of motor vehicles, which are not included in wholesale trade.

Total wholesale trade sales at constant prices is obtained by aggregating (1) to (6).

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 wholesale 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.

Month-on-month percentage change

- 10** 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

- 11** 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)

- 12** The contribution (percentage points) to the year-on-year percentage change is calculated by multiplying the percentage change of each type of wholesaler by its corresponding weight, divided by 100. The weight is the percentage contribution of each type of wholesaler to total wholesale 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	BSF	Business sampling frame
	GDP	Gross domestic product
	ISIC	International Standard Industrial Classification
	SIC	Standard Industrial Classification of all Economic Activities
	SARS	South African Revenue Service
	Stats SA	Statistics South Africa
VAT	Value added tax	

Wholesale trade 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.

Wholesaler A wholesaler is an enterprise deriving 50% or more of its turnover from sales of goods to other businesses and institutions.

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