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STATISTICAL RELEASE

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Wholesale trade sales (Preliminary)

July 2023

The results published today are based on a new sample. This is an annual procedure which typically affects the level of sales at both current and constant prices. To avoid breaks in time series and to minimise revisions to historical growth rates, historical sales levels were revised (i.e. they were linked to the estimates based on the new sample).

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Sales at constant 2019 prices: results for July 2023

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

	Feb-23	Mar-23	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23
Year-on-year % change, unadjusted	-0,4	-3,2	1,1	-1,4	-2,2	-3,2
Month-on-month % change, seasonally adjusted	2,7	-2,6	3,0	-3,7	-1,9	1,4
3-month % change, seasonally adjusted 1/	-1,3	1,0	2,4	0,7	-1,0	-3,5

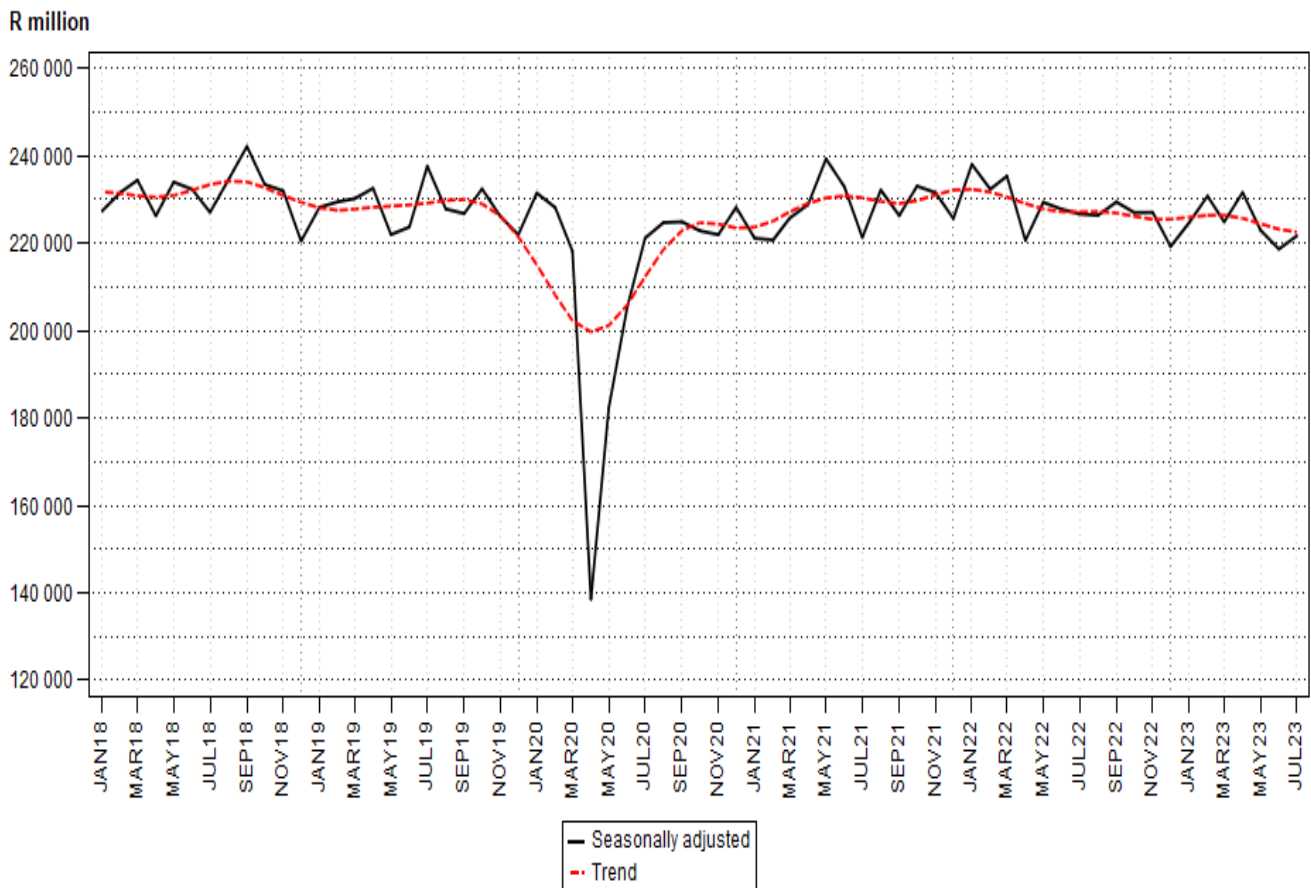
1/ Percentage change between the previous 3 months and the 3 months ending in the month indicated.

Measured in real terms (constant 2019 prices), wholesale trade sales decreased by 3,2% in July 2023 compared with July 2022.

Seasonally adjusted wholesale trade sales increased by 1,4% in July 2023 compared with June 2023. This followed month-on-month changes of -1,9% in June 2023 and -3,7% in May 2023.

In the three months ended July 2023, seasonally adjusted wholesale trade sales decreased by 3,5% compared with the previous three months.

Figure 1 – Wholesale trade sales at constant 2019 prices



Sales at current prices: results for July 2023

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

	Feb-23	Mar-23	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23
Year-on-year % change, unadjusted	13,0	6,2	8,8	3,7	-0,1	-2,8
Month-on-month % change, seasonally adjusted	3,6	-4,4	1,2	-0,5	-2,4	1,4
3-month % change, seasonally adjusted 1/	-1,0	0,2	0,8	-1,2	-1,8	-2,4

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 decreased by 2,8% in July 2023 compared with July 2022. The main negative contributors were dealers in:

- solid, liquid and gaseous fuels and related products (-7,7% and contributing -2,3 percentage points); and
- agricultural raw materials and livestock (-18,4% and contributing -1,5 percentage points).

The main positive contributor was dealers in machinery, equipment and supplies (15,3% and contributing 1,8 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	May – Jul 2022 (R million)	Weight (%)	May – Jul 2023 (R million)	% change between May – Jul 2022 and May – Jul 2023	Contribution (% points) to the total % change
Fee or contract basis	29 777	3,2	34 460	15,7	0,5
Agricultural raw materials and livestock	75 066	8,2	64 346	-14,3	-1,2
Food, beverages and tobacco	116 434	12,7	124 178	6,7	0,9
Textiles, clothing and footwear	14 451	1,6	17 383	20,3	0,3
Other household goods except precious stones	84 512	9,2	86 179	2,0	0,2
Precious stones, jewellery and silverware	13 656	1,5	11 474	-16,0	-0,2
Solid, liquid and gaseous fuels and related products	280 407	30,6	251 292	-10,4	-3,2
Metal and metal ores	31 382	3,4	33 787	7,7	0,3
Construction and building materials	45 445	5,0	52 716	16,0	0,8
Other intermediate products, waste and scrap	48 022	5,2	42 341	-11,8	-0,6
Machinery, equipment and supplies	109 219	11,9	135 258	23,8	2,8
Other goods	67 881	7,4	64 951	-4,3	-0,3
Total	916 254	100,0	918 368	0,2	0,2

Wholesale trade sales increased by 0,2% in the three months ended July 2023 compared with the three months ended July 2022. The main positive contributor was dealers in machinery, equipment and supplies (23,8% and contributing 2,8 percentage points).

The main negative contributor was dealers in solid, liquid and gaseous fuels and related products (-10,4% and contributing -3,2 percentage points) – see Table C.

Risenga Maluleke
Statistician-General

Note: Changes to the survey and the impact on the statistical series

Business register and samples

Today Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) publishes results for the monthly survey of wholesale trade sales from a new sample drawn in April 2023, which replaces the previous sample that was drawn in April 2022. The sample was drawn from a statistical business register of enterprises with an annual turnover of at least R3 745 800 and that are required to register with the South African Revenue Service for value-added tax.

Owing to the evolving nature of business, the statistical business register is maintained on a continuous basis. The maintenance process is aimed, amongst other things, at capturing changes related to new businesses, ceased businesses, merged businesses and classification changes. In addition, Stats SA undertakes quality improvement surveys related to the statistical business register, the primary objective of which is to capture up-to-date information about the structures and activities of large and complex businesses. This process enables Stats SA to review classification codes for these businesses. These changes are an essential part of the statistical architecture.

Comparison of sales between the previous (revised) and new samples for the wholesale trade industry

The reported level of total sales for the monthly survey of the wholesale trade industry for the months April to June 2023 based on the new sample was 5,0% (R42 565 million) higher than the level of total sales recorded for the previous sample (see Table D and Figure 2). The previous sample was drawn in April 2022 and was operational for the last half of 2022 and the first half of 2023.

Table D – Total sales for previous and new samples for the wholesale trade industry: April to June 2023

Wholesale trade industry	Previous sample (R million)	New sample (R million)	Difference (R million)	Difference (%)
	852 490	895 055	42 565	5,0

Figure 2 – Total wholesale trade sales: monthly levels of previous and new samples for April to June 2023

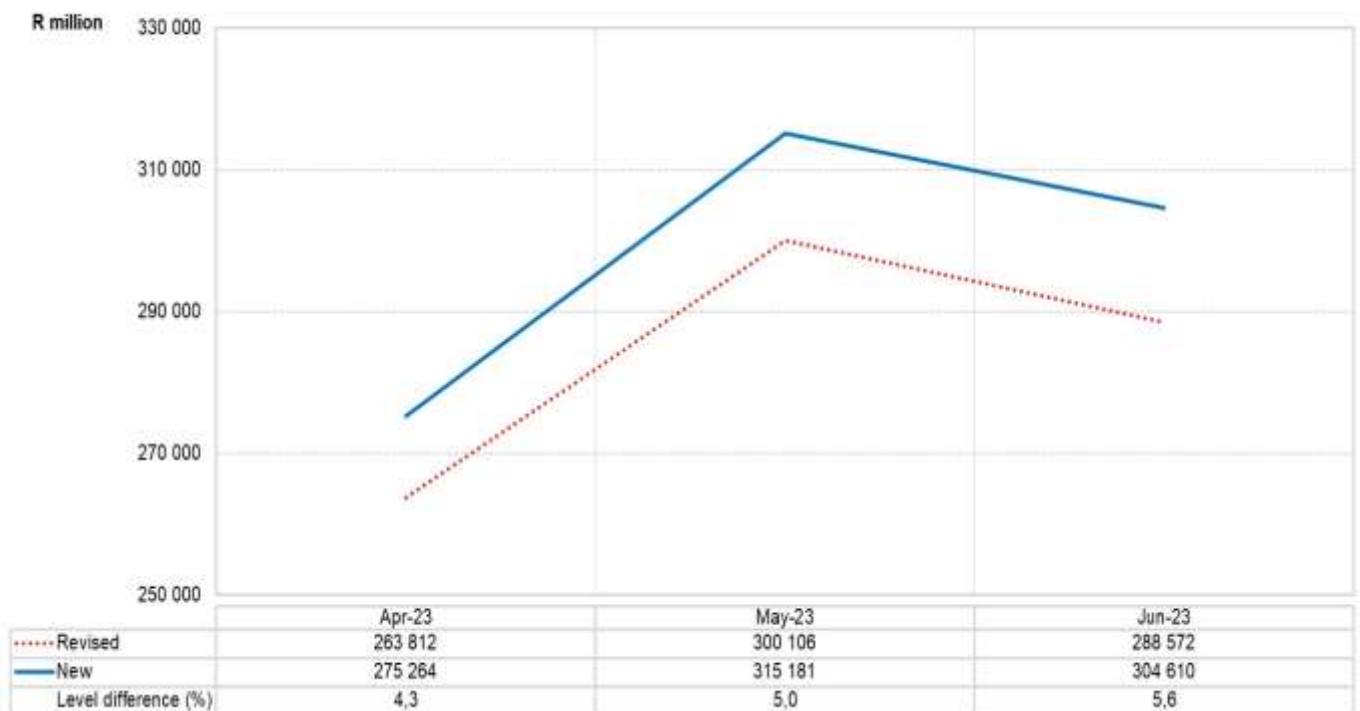


Table E – Wholesale trade sales for previous and new samples by type of dealer: April to June 2023

Type of dealer	Previous sample (R million)	New sample (R million)	Difference (R million)	Difference (%) 1/
Fee or contract basis	30 062	33 732	3 670	12,2
Agricultural raw materials and livestock	53 048	61 357	8 309	15,7
Food, beverages and tobacco	135 816	122 168	-13 648	-10,0
Textiles, clothing and footwear	15 638	18 366	2 728	17,4
Other household goods except precious stones	82 944	87 371	4 427	5,3
Precious stones, jewellery and silverware	14 077	11 094	-2 983	-21,2
Solid, liquid and gaseous fuels and related products	219 461	246 406	26 945	12,3
Metals and metal ores	26 563	32 203	5 640	21,2
Construction and building materials	44 653	50 218	5 565	12,5
Other intermediate products, waste and scrap	33 880	38 866	4 986	14,7
Machinery, equipment and supplies	130 482	132 738	2 256	1,7
Other goods	65 868	60 536	-5 332	-8,1
Total	852 490	895 055	42 565	5,0

1/ The percentage difference is the new sample minus the previous sample, divided by the previous sample, multiplied by 100.

The largest percentage differences were in the following types of dealers:

- metals and metal ores (21,2% or R5 640 million higher in the new sample);
- precious stones, jewellery and silverware (21,2% or R2 983 million lower in the new sample);
- textiles, clothing and footwear (17,4% or R2 728 million higher in the new sample);
- agricultural raw materials and livestock (15,7% or R8 309 million higher in the new sample); and
- 'other' intermediate products, waste and scrap (14,7% or R4 986 million higher in the new sample).

Backcasting

To avoid breaks in the time series and to minimise revisions to historical growth rates, historical sales levels were revised (i.e. they were linked to the estimates based on the new sample).

Tables

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

Month	2017 *	2018 *	2019 *	2020 *	2021 *	2022 *	2023 1/ *
Jan	208 820	203 686	201 714	206 719	191 258	205 693	198 794
Feb	216 985	219 068	217 204	219 586	209 979	221 030	220 129
Mar	241 300	242 246	232 433	223 442	235 280	242 473	234 787
Apr	213 911	206 909	216 618	125 172	209 827	199 643	201 872
May	230 523	235 032	226 758	181 178	237 879	233 471	230 187
Jun	238 995	234 177	218 858	211 665	235 883	229 071	223 984
Jul	229 744	227 340	242 294	227 392	225 526	225 437	218 174
Aug	237 421	240 610	231 359	221 132	233 242	230 383	
Sep	231 676	241 813	232 102	233 666	234 767	242 738	
Oct	249 222	255 679	253 492	244 092	250 296	242 427	
Nov	263 499	259 301	247 027	239 296	255 855	247 594	
Dec	227 353	211 833	217 391	222 356	221 722	213 440	
Total	2 789 449	2 777 694	2 737 250	2 555 696	2 741 514	2 733 400	

1/ Figures for the latest month are preliminary.

* Revised, see note on page 4.

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

Month	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2023 year-to-date
Jan	-2,5	-1,0	2,5	-7,5	7,5	-3,4	-3,4
Feb	1,0	-0,9	1,1	-4,4	5,3	-0,4	-1,8
Mar	0,4	-4,1	-3,9	5,3	3,1	-3,2	-2,3
Apr	-3,3	4,7	-42,2	67,6	-4,9	1,1	-1,5
May	2,0	-3,5	-20,1	31,3	-1,9	-1,4	-1,5
Jun	-2,0	-6,5	-3,3	11,4	-2,9	-2,2	-1,6
Jul	-1,0	6,6	-6,2	-0,8	0,0	-3,2	-1,9
Aug	1,3	-3,8	-4,4	5,5	-1,2		
Sep	4,4	-4,0	0,7	0,5	3,4		
Oct	2,6	-0,9	-3,7	2,5	-3,1		
Nov	-1,6	-4,7	-3,1	6,9	-3,2		
Dec	-6,8	2,6	2,3	-0,3	-3,7		
Total	-0,4	-1,5	-6,6	7,3	-0,3		

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

Month	R million				Month-on-month % change			
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2020	2021	2022	2023
Jan	231 492	221 150	238 061	224 677	4,3	-3,1	5,5	2,5
Feb	228 173	220 733	232 357	230 799	-1,4	-0,2	-2,4	2,7
Mar	218 172	225 745	235 360	224 877	-4,4	2,3	1,3	-2,6
Apr	138 499	228 880	220 639	231 627	-36,5	1,4	-6,3	3,0
May	182 322	239 324	229 371	223 003	31,6	4,6	4,0	-3,7
Jun	205 344	232 886	227 782	218 657	12,6	-2,7	-0,7	-1,9
Jul	221 179	221 293	226 696	221 681	7,7	-5,0	-0,5	1,4
Aug	224 726	232 187	226 387		1,6	4,9	-0,1	
Sep	224 894	226 331	229 448		0,1	-2,5	1,4	
Oct	222 851	233 075	227 011		-0,9	3,0	-1,1	
Nov	221 947	231 564	227 053		-0,4	-0,6	0,0	
Dec	228 222	225 640	219 239		2,8	-2,6	-3,4	

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

Month	2017 *	2018 *	2019 *	2020 *	2021 *	2022 *	2023 1/ *
Jan	181 880	188 807	194 716	209 668	196 960	242 820	269 760
Feb	191 744	202 034	209 825	222 684	219 646	264 507	298 779
Mar	213 579	220 592	227 832	225 513	249 439	300 693	319 281
Apr	188 302	191 470	216 932	123 764	225 251	253 029	275 264
May	205 401	221 049	228 644	176 169	256 118	303 962	315 181
Jun	212 076	223 980	221 768	207 818	255 736	304 968	304 610
Jul	203 414	219 983	243 872	227 899	247 170	307 324	298 577
Aug	210 964	233 761	232 865	224 225	258 019	310 969	
Sep	208 998	236 071	234 024	236 887	262 953	330 145	
Oct	227 016	255 690	256 893	248 743	283 029	332 352	
Nov	242 745	260 355	249 694	243 726	295 437	339 040	
Dec	211 835	208 709	220 188	226 474	260 842	294 310	
Total	2 497 954	2 662 501	2 737 253	2 573 570	3 010 600	3 584 119	

1/ Figures for the latest month are preliminary.

* Revised, see note on page 4.

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

Month	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2023 year-to-date
Jan	3,8	3,1	7,7	-6,1	23,3	11,1	11,1
Feb	5,4	3,9	6,1	-1,4	20,4	13,0	12,1
Mar	3,3	3,3	-1,0	10,6	20,5	6,2	9,9
Apr	1,7	13,3	-42,9	82,0	12,3	8,8	9,6
May	7,6	3,4	-23,0	45,4	18,7	3,7	8,3
Jun	5,6	-1,0	-6,3	23,1	19,3	-0,1	6,8
Jul	8,1	10,9	-6,5	8,5	24,3	-2,8	5,3
Aug	10,8	-0,4	-3,7	15,1	20,5		
Sep	13,0	-0,9	1,2	11,0	25,6		
Oct	12,6	0,5	-3,2	13,8	17,4		
Nov	7,3	-4,1	-2,4	21,2	14,8		
Dec	-1,5	5,5	2,9	15,2	12,8		
Total	6,6	2,8	-6,0	17,0	19,0		

Table 6 – Seasonally adjusted wholesale trade sales at current prices

Month	R million				Month-on-month % change			
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2020	2021	2022	2023
Jan	236 745	228 522	278 432	306 609	5,1	-1,7	4,2	1,2
Feb	235 809	233 748	281 588	317 568	-0,4	2,3	1,1	3,6
Mar	217 773	239 308	286 494	303 587	-7,6	2,4	1,7	-4,4
Apr	136 524	243 033	278 074	307 188	-37,3	1,6	-2,9	1,2
May	178 620	255 386	298 224	305 537	30,8	5,1	7,2	-0,5
Jun	202 898	252 330	300 531	298 190	13,6	-1,2	0,8	-2,4
Jul	224 551	245 040	310 476	302 236	10,7	-2,9	3,3	1,4
Aug	223 831	254 876	305 034		-0,3	4,0	-1,8	
Sep	226 491	250 853	314 491		1,2	-1,6	3,1	
Oct	228 124	265 265	311 461		0,7	5,7	-1,0	
Nov	223 897	268 057	311 061		-1,9	1,1	-0,1	
Dec	232 368	267 159	303 058		3,8	-0,3	-2,6	

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

Type of dealer	Feb-23 *	Mar-23 *	Apr-23 *	May-23 *	Jun-23	Jul-23 1/
Fee or contract basis	8 365	8 494	9 104	11 882	12 746	9 832
Agricultural raw materials and livestock	25 966	24 970	17 280	23 168	20 909	20 269
Food, beverages and tobacco	38 044	45 078	36 803	40 769	44 596	38 813
Textiles, clothing and footwear	5 996	6 360	6 775	5 510	6 081	5 792
Other household goods except precious stones	29 609	30 909	28 401	30 187	28 783	27 209
Precious stones, jewellery and silverware	3 122	4 950	4 019	4 737	2 338	4 399
Solid, liquid and gaseous fuels and related products	80 841	80 271	80 524	86 272	79 610	85 410
Metals and metal ores	9 827	11 339	9 767	11 472	10 964	11 351
Construction and building materials	15 758	18 428	14 752	17 834	17 632	17 250
Other intermediate products, waste and scrap	16 220	16 540	11 454	13 634	13 778	14 929
Machinery, equipment and supplies	43 548	49 584	39 892	46 418	46 428	42 412
Other goods	21 483	22 359	16 494	23 298	20 744	20 909
Total	298 779	319 281	275 264	315 181	304 610	298 577

1/ Figures are preliminary.

* Revised, see note on page 4.

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

Type of dealer	Feb-23	Mar-23	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23
Fee or contract basis	23,5	28,1	15,7	29,0	25,5	-5,5
Agricultural raw materials and livestock	42,0	24,0	4,4	-11,6	-13,0	-18,4
Food, beverages and tobacco	10,8	7,9	2,5	8,5	11,4	-0,1
Textiles, clothing and footwear	14,1	9,4	22,3	7,8	40,6	15,4
Other household goods except precious stones	14,3	-1,5	0,5	5,1	3,3	-2,6
Precious stones, jewellery and silverware	-28,8	-33,4	53,3	-0,6	-4,9	-31,6
Solid, liquid and gaseous fuels and related products	9,0	-8,9	11,2	-8,9	-14,6	-7,7
Metals and metal ores	10,1	-1,6	3,1	6,1	15,2	2,7
Construction and building materials	0,6	18,3	13,8	17,9	16,3	13,8
Other intermediate products, waste and scrap	-8,6	-6,0	-23,2	-13,5	-17,3	-4,4
Machinery, equipment and supplies	18,1	37,7	33,7	36,0	21,2	15,3
Other goods	32,9	19,4	-0,9	6,5	-10,8	-8,1
Total	13,0	6,2	8,8	3,7	-0,1	-2,8

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

Type of dealer	Feb-23	Mar-23	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23
Fee or contract basis	0,6	0,6	0,5	0,9	0,8	-0,2
Agricultural raw materials and livestock	2,9	1,6	0,3	-1,0	-1,0	-1,5
Food, beverages and tobacco	1,4	1,1	0,4	1,1	1,5	0,0
Textiles, clothing and footwear	0,3	0,2	0,5	0,1	0,6	0,2
Other household goods except precious stones	1,4	-0,2	0,1	0,5	0,3	-0,2
Precious stones, jewellery and silverware	-0,5	-0,8	0,5	0,0	0,0	-0,7
Solid, liquid and gaseous fuels and related products	2,5	-2,6	3,2	-2,8	-4,5	-2,3
Metals and metal ores	0,3	-0,1	0,1	0,2	0,5	0,1
Construction and building materials	0,0	1,0	0,7	0,9	0,8	0,7
Other intermediate products, waste and scrap	-0,6	-0,4	-1,4	-0,7	-1,0	-0,2
Machinery, equipment and supplies	2,5	4,5	4,0	4,0	2,7	1,8
Other goods	2,0	1,2	-0,1	0,5	-0,8	-0,6
Total	13,0	6,2	8,8	3,7	-0,1	-2,8

Survey information

- Introduction**
- 1 Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) conducts a monthly survey covering enterprises in the wholesale trade industry (see point 4 below). This survey is based on a sample drawn from Stats SA's 2023 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 group four-digit level.
- Collection rate**
- 6 The preliminary collection rate for the survey on wholesale trade sales for July 2023 was 77,4%. The collection rate for June 2023 for the new sample was 77,8%.

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: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Stats in Brief</i> 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 1 647 enterprises from a population of 19 981 enterprises. Completed questionnaires are required to be returned to Stats SA within ten 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 2023 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 three 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 5,8%.

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 limit	Upper limit
Very small	4	3 745 800	30 000 000
Small	3	30 000 001	160 000 000
Medium	2	160 000 001	320 000 000
Large	1	320 000 001	

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 United States Census Bureau. Seasonal adjustment is a means of removing the estimated effects of normal seasonal variation from the series so that the effects of other influences on the series can be 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 February 2022.](#)

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. From 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 communication and metering equipment.
- (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 communication and metering equipment; 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.

- Relative standard error** 10 One measure is the standard error (SE), which indicates the extent to which an estimate might have varied by chance because only a sample of enterprises was used. The relative standard error (RSE) provides an immediate indication of the percentage errors likely to have occurred due to sampling, and thus avoids the need to refer to the size of the estimate.

Estimates of total wholesale trade sales within 95% confidence limits – July 2023

	Lower limit (R million)	Sales (R million)	Upper limit (R million)	Relative standard error (RSE) (%)
Wholesale trade sales	291 674	298 577	305 479	1,1

- Month-on-month percentage change** 11 The month-on-month percentage change in a variable for any given month is the change between that month and the previous month, expressed as a percentage of the latter.
- Year-on-year percentage change** 12 The year-on-year percentage change in a variable for any given period is the change between that period and the corresponding period of the previous year, expressed as a percentage of the latter.
- Contribution (percentage points)** 13 The contribution (percentage points) to the year-on-year percentage change is calculated by multiplying the percentage change of each type of 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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Stats SA publishes approximately 300 different statistical releases each year. It is not economically viable to produce them in more than one of South Africa's 12 official languages. Since the releases are used extensively, not only locally but also by international economic and social-scientific communities. Stats SA releases are published in English only.

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