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## **STATISTICAL RELEASE** P6141.2

# Wholesale trade sales (Preliminary)

June 2020

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#### Sales at constant 2015 prices: results for June 2020

Table A - Key growth rates in wholesale trade sales at constant 2015 prices

|  | Jan-20 | Feb-20 | Mar-20 | Apr-20 | May-20 | Jun-20 |
|--|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Year-on-year % change, unadjusted            | 2,6    | 1,4    | -3,3   | -42,0  | -19,9  | -2,6   |
| Month-on-month % change, seasonally adjusted | 3,1    | -2,6   | -0,4   | -34,6  | 29,6   | 9,7    |
| 3-month % change, seasonally adjusted 1/     | -2,3   | -2,1   | -0,9   | -12,6  | -17,6  | -19,9  |

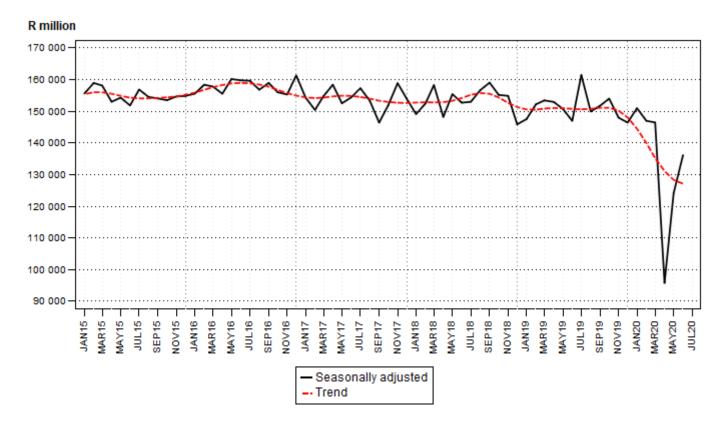
<sup>1/</sup> Percentage change between the previous 3 months and the 3 months ending in the month indicated.

The COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown regulations since 27 March 2020 have had an extensive impact on economic activity. Measured in real terms (constant 2015 prices), wholesale trade sales decreased by 2,6% in June 2020 compared with June 2019.

Seasonally adjusted wholesale trade sales increased by 9,7% in June 2020 compared with May 2020. This followed month-on-month changes of 29,6% in May 2020 and -34,6% in April 2020.

In the second quarter of 2020, seasonally adjusted wholesale trade sales decreased by 19,9% compared with the first quarter of 2020.

Figure 1 - Wholesale trade sales at constant 2015 prices



#### Sales at current prices: results for June 2020

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

|  | Jan-20 | Feb-20 | Mar-20 | Apr-20 | May-20 | Jun-20 |
|--|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Year-on-year % change, unadjusted            | 7,7    | 6,1    | -1,0   | -43,1  | -22,9  | -6,0   |
| Month-on-month % change, seasonally adjusted | 6,8    | -1,5   | -5,2   | -38,3  | 33,4   | 13,1   |
| 3-month % change, seasonally adjusted 1/     | -1,0   | 0,3    | 1,2    | -13,7  | -22,0  | -24,1  |

<sup>1/</sup> 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 6,0% in June 2020 compared with June 2019. The main negative contributor to this decrease was dealers in solid, liquid and gaseous fuels and related products (-37,6% and contributing -9,7 percentage points).

The main positive contributors were dealers in:

- 'other' household goods except precious stones (17,6% and contributing 2,0 percentage points); and
- agricultural raw materials and livestock (19,5% and contributing 1,4 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                                       | Apr – Jun<br>2019<br>(R million) | Weight | Apr – Jun<br>2020<br>(R million) | %change<br>between<br>Apr – Jun<br>2019<br>and<br>Apr – Jun<br>2020 | Contribution<br>(% points) to<br>the total %<br>change |
|--|----------------------------------|--------|----------------------------------|---|--|
| Fee or contract basis                                | 23 374                           | 4,3    | 22 835                           | -2,3  | -0,1   |
| Agricultural raw materials and livestock             | 37 563                           | 6,8    | 41 828                           | 11,4  | 0,8  |
| Food, beverages and tobacco                          | 83 776                           | 15,2   | 76 793                           | -8,3  | -1,3   |
| Textiles, clothing and footwear                      | 11 102                           | 2,0    | 4 927                            | -55,6   | -1,1   |
| Other household goods except precious stones         | 63 137                           | 11,5   | 60 771                           | -3,7  | -0,4   |
| Precious stones, jewellery and silverware            | 13 529                           | 2,5    | 7 297                            | -46,1   | -1,2   |
| Solid, liquid and gaseous fuels and related products | 138 773                          | 25,2   | 70 101                           | -49,5   | -12,5  |
| Metals and metal ores                                | 13 200                           | 2,4    | 7 306                            | -44,7   | -1,1   |
| Construction and building materials                  | 30 198                           | 5,5    | 16 034                           | -46,9   | -2,6   |
| Other intermediate products, waste and scrap         | 25 232                           | 4,6    | 20 765                           | -17,7   | -0,8   |
| Machinery, equipment and supplies                    | 67 685                           | 12,3   | 56 083                           | -17,1   | -2,1   |
| Other goods  | 42 049                           | 7,7    | 33 830                           | -19,5   | -1,5   |
| Total  | 549 619                          | 100,0  | 418 572                          | -23,8   | -23,8  |

Wholesale trade sales decreased by 23,8% in the second quarter of 2020 compared with the second quarter of 2019. The main negative contributors to this decrease were dealers in:

- solid, liquid and gaseous fuels and related products (-49,5% and contributing -12,5 percentage points);
- construction and building materials (-46,9% and contributing -2,6 percentage points); and
- machinery, equipment and supplies (-17,1% and contributing -2,1 percentage points) see Table C.

Risenga Maluleke Statistician-General

#### **Tables**

Table 1 – Wholesale trade sales at constant 2015 prices (R million)

| Month | 2014      | 2015      | 2016      | 2017      | 2018      | 2019      | 2020 1/ |
|-------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|---------|
| Jan   | 138 998   | 140 072   | 136 357   | 137 680   | 134 431   | 133 237   | 136 671 |
| Feb   | 147 556   | 152 922   | 161 677   | 143 550   | 144 651   | 143 661   | 145 705 |
| Mar   | 148 636   | 162 436   | 160 352   | 159 717   | 159 536   | 153 783   | 148 743 |
| Apr   | 141 316   | 139 052   | 145 691   | 140 879   | 136 514   | 143 745   | 83 339  |
| May   | 146 670   | 149 704   | 158 174   | 152 460   | 155 382   | 150 487   | 120 608 |
| Jun   | 148 766   | 154 044   | 159 454   | 158 058   | 155 273   | 145 369   | 141 552 |
| Jul   | 144 792   | 155 319   | 154 867   | 151 509   | 150 834   | 160 884   |         |
| Aug   | 150 604   | 151 976   | 159 571   | 156 465   | 159 676   | 153 354   |         |
| Sep   | 158 911   | 161 670   | 167 498   | 152 801   | 160 136   | 154 279   |         |
| Oct   | 165 663   | 166 035   | 164 736   | 164 298   | 169 544   | 168 419   |         |
| Nov   | 161 774   | 169 476   | 172 520   | 174 022   | 172 804   | 164 061   |         |
| Dec   | 155 228   | 155 912   | 161 392   | 150 131   | 140 494   | 144 045   |         |
| Total | 1 808 914 | 1 858 618 | 1 902 289 | 1 841 570 | 1 839 275 | 1 815 324 |         |

<sup>1/</sup> Figures for latest month are preliminary.

Table 2 – Year-on-year percentage change in wholesale trade sales at constant 2015 prices

| Month | 2015 | 2016 | 2017  | 2018 | 2019 | 2020  | 2020<br>year-to-date |
|-------|------|------|-------|------|------|-------|----------------------|
| Jan   | 0,8  | -2,7 | 1,0   | -2,4 | -0,9 | 2,6   | 2,6                  |
| Feb   | 3,6  | 5,7  | -11,2 | 0,8  | -0,7 | 1,4   | 2,0                  |
| Mar   | 9,3  | -1,3 | -0,4  | -0,1 | -3,6 | -3,3  | 0,1                  |
| Apr   | -1,6 | 4,8  | -3,3  | -3,1 | 5,3  | -42,0 | -10,4                |
| May   | 2,1  | 5,7  | -3,6  | 1,9  | -3,2 | -19,9 | -12,4                |
| Jun   | 3,5  | 3,5  | -0,9  | -1,8 | -6,4 | -2,6  | -10,8                |
| Jul   | 7,3  | -0,3 | -2,2  | -0,4 | 6,7  |       |                      |
| Aug   | 0,9  | 5,0  | -1,9  | 2,1  | -4,0 |       |                      |
| Sep   | 1,7  | 3,6  | -8,8  | 4,8  | -3,7 |       |                      |
| Oct   | 0,2  | -0,8 | -0,3  | 3,2  | -0,7 |       |                      |
| Nov   | 4,8  | 1,8  | 0,9   | -0,7 | -5,1 |       |                      |
| Dec   | 0,4  | 3,5  | -7,0  | -6,4 | 2,5  |       |                      |
| Total | 2,7  | 2,3  | -3,2  | -0,1 | -1,3 |       |                      |

Table 3 – Seasonally adjusted wholesale trade sales at constant 2015 prices

| M 41: |         | R m     | illion  |         | Month-on-month % change |      |      |       |  |
|-------|---------|---------|---------|---------|-------------------------|------|------|-------|--|
| Month | 2017    | 2018    | 2019    | 2020    | 2017                    | 2018 | 2019 | 2020  |  |
| Jan   | 154 338 | 149 115 | 147 549 | 150 991 | -4,3                    | -3,2 | 1,1  | 3,1   |  |
| Feb   | 150 430 | 152 481 | 152 201 | 146 992 | -2,5                    | 2,3  | 3,2  | -2,6  |  |
| Mar   | 154 763 | 158 291 | 153 450 | 146 475 | 2,9                     | 3,8  | 0,8  | -0,4  |  |
| Apr   | 158 411 | 148 218 | 152 962 | 95 774  | 2,4                     | -6,4 | -0,3 | -34,6 |  |
| May   | 152 526 | 155 433 | 150 754 | 124 120 | -3,7                    | 4,9  | -1,4 | 29,6  |  |
| Jun   | 154 416 | 152 723 | 146 990 | 136 122 | 1,2                     | -1,7 | -2,5 | 9,7   |  |
| Jul   | 157 301 | 153 003 | 161 472 |         | 1,9                     | 0,2  | 9,9  |       |  |
| Aug   | 153 360 | 156 674 | 149 939 |         | -2,5                    | 2,4  | -7,1 |       |  |
| Sep   | 146 448 | 159 054 | 151 756 |         | -4,5                    | 1,5  | 1,2  |       |  |
| Oct   | 151 898 | 155 179 | 154 009 |         | 3,7                     | -2,4 | 1,5  |       |  |
| Nov   | 158 891 | 154 883 | 148 010 |         | 4,6                     | -0,2 | -3,9 |       |  |
| Dec   | 153 989 | 145 881 | 146 441 |         | -3,1                    | -5,8 | -1,1 |       |  |

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

| Month | 2014      | 2015      | 2016      | 2017      | 2018      | 2019      | 2020 1/ |
|-------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|---------|
| Jan   | 138 966   | 132 824   | 140 664   | 149 796   | 155 500   | 160 366   | 172 681 |
| Feb   | 148 477   | 145 340   | 167 909   | 157 920   | 166 393   | 172 810   | 183 401 |
| Mar   | 151 465   | 159 202   | 166 178   | 175 902   | 181 678   | 187 642   | 185 731 |
| Apr   | 144 483   | 138 746   | 153 668   | 155 084   | 157 693   | 178 663   | 101 674 |
| May   | 149 741   | 150 562   | 167 088   | 169 166   | 182 054   | 188 309   | 145 181 |
| Jun   | 152 156   | 156 371   | 170 734   | 174 665   | 184 468   | 182 647   | 171 717 |
| Jul   | 148 916   | 158 135   | 167 361   | 167 530   | 181 177   | 200 851   |         |
| Aug   | 153 967   | 153 293   | 170 398   | 173 748   | 192 524   | 191 785   |         |
| Sep   | 162 066   | 162 769   | 177 849   | 172 129   | 194 427   | 192 740   |         |
| Oct   | 168 125   | 169 187   | 176 422   | 186 969   | 210 584   | 211 576   |         |
| Nov   | 162 481   | 172 870   | 187 122   | 199 923   | 214 427   | 205 646   |         |
| Dec   | 153 497   | 159 318   | 175 335   | 174 465   | 171 892   | 181 345   |         |
| Total | 1 834 340 | 1 858 617 | 2 020 728 | 2 057 297 | 2 192 817 | 2 254 380 |         |

<sup>1/</sup> Figures for latest month are preliminary.

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

| Month | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020  | 2020<br>year-to-date |
|-------|------|------|------|------|------|-------|----------------------|
| Jan   | -4,4 | 5,9  | 6,5  | 3,8  | 3,1  | 7,7   | 7,7                  |
| Feb   | -2,1 | 15,5 | -5,9 | 5,4  | 3,9  | 6,1   | 6,9                  |
| Mar   | 5,1  | 4,4  | 5,9  | 3,3  | 3,3  | -1,0  | 4,0                  |
| Apr   | -4,0 | 10,8 | 0,9  | 1,7  | 13,3 | -43,1 | -8,0                 |
| May   | 0,5  | 11,0 | 1,2  | 7,6  | 3,4  | -22,9 | -11,2                |
| Jun   | 2,8  | 9,2  | 2,3  | 5,6  | -1,0 | -6,0  | -10,3                |
| Jul   | 6,2  | 5,8  | 0,1  | 8,1  | 10,9 |       |                      |
| Aug   | -0,4 | 11,2 | 2,0  | 10,8 | -0,4 |       |                      |
| Sep   | 0,4  | 9,3  | -3,2 | 13,0 | -0,9 |       |                      |
| Oct   | 0,6  | 4,3  | 6,0  | 12,6 | 0,5  |       |                      |
| Nov   | 6,4  | 8,2  | 6,8  | 7,3  | -4,1 |       |                      |
| Dec   | 3,8  | 10,1 | -0,5 | -1,5 | 5,5  |       |                      |
| Total | 1,3  | 8,7  | 1,8  | 6,6  | 2,8  |       |                      |

Table 6 – Seasonally adjusted wholesale trade sales at current prices

| Manth |         | R mi    | llion   |         | Month-on-month % change |      |      |       |  |
|-------|---------|---------|---------|---------|-------------------------|------|------|-------|--|
| Month | 2017    | 2018    | 2019    | 2020    | 2017                    | 2018 | 2019 | 2020  |  |
| Jan   | 170 274 | 175 735 | 181 563 | 194 773 | -2,5                    | -0,7 | 3,2  | 6,8   |  |
| Feb   | 166 263 | 175 863 | 183 092 | 191 830 | -2,4                    | 0,1  | 0,8  | -1,5  |  |
| Mar   | 169 938 | 181 555 | 185 660 | 181 872 | 2,2                     | 3,2  | 1,4  | -5,2  |  |
| Apr   | 174 175 | 169 393 | 193 371 | 112 242 | 2,5                     | -6,7 | 4,2  | -38,3 |  |
| May   | 168 706 | 182 180 | 188 389 | 149 730 | -3,1                    | 7,5  | -2,6 | 33,4  |  |
| Jun   | 172 043 | 184 274 | 186 232 | 169 389 | 2,0                     | 1,1  | -1,1 | 13,1  |  |
| Jul   | 170 405 | 180 613 | 197 996 |         | -1,0                    | -2,0 | 6,3  |       |  |
| Aug   | 170 463 | 188 405 | 188 218 |         | 0,0                     | 4,3  | -4,9 |       |  |
| Sep   | 166 384 | 192 321 | 187 691 |         | -2,4                    | 2,1  | -0,3 |       |  |
| Oct   | 172 408 | 192 594 | 193 308 |         | 3,6                     | 0,1  | 3,0  |       |  |
| Nov   | 179 871 | 191 455 | 186 203 |         | 4,3                     | -0,6 | -3,7 |       |  |
| Dec   | 176 918 | 175 975 | 182 397 |         | -1,6                    | -8,1 | -2,0 |       |  |

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

| Type of dealer                                       | Jan-20  | Feb-20  | Mar-20  | Apr-20  | May-20  | Jun-20 1/ |
|--|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|-----------|
| Fee or contract basis                                | 6 340   | 6 640   | 7 294   | 7 404   | 7 030   | 8 401     |
| Agricultural raw materials and livestock             | 11 775  | 13 331  | 12 882  | 11 991  | 14 096  | 15 741    |
| Food, beverages and tobacco                          | 28 173  | 28 322  | 31 422  | 21 213  | 26 843  | 28 737    |
| Textiles, clothing and footwear                      | 2 572   | 3 637   | 3 509   | 614     | 1 815   | 2 498     |
| Other household goods except precious stones         | 19 115  | 20 100  | 24 838  | 13 878  | 21 898  | 24 995    |
| Precious stones, jewellery and silverware            | 4 743   | 6 121   | 4 230   | 1 335   | 2 072   | 3 890     |
| Solid, liquid and gaseous fuels and related products | 48 501  | 46 140  | 38 784  | 17 054  | 23 488  | 29 559    |
| Metals and metal ores                                | 3 516   | 4 069   | 4 140   | 1 066   | 2 763   | 3 477     |
| Construction and building materials                  | 7 205   | 9 035   | 8 855   | 1 207   | 6 000   | 8 827     |
| Other intermediate products, waste and scrap         | 8 826   | 9 146   | 9 137   | 5 470   | 7 514   | 7 781     |
| Machinery, equipment and supplies                    | 20 677  | 24 654  | 27 949  | 11 795  | 19 954  | 24 334    |
| Other goods  | 11 238  | 12 207  | 12 691  | 8 646   | 11 707  | 13 477    |
| Total  | 172 681 | 183 401 | 185 731 | 101 674 | 145 181 | 171 717   |

<sup>1/</sup> Figures are preliminary.

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

| Type of dealer                                       | Jan-20 | Feb-20 | Mar-20 | Apr-20 | May-20 | Jun-20 |
|--|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Fee or contract basis                                | -1,7   | -4,2   | 7,8    | 3,7    | -13,7  | 3,9    |
| Agricultural raw materials and livestock             | 4,9    | 21,4   | -0,3   | 1,3    | 12,2   | 19,5   |
| Food, beverages and tobacco                          | 16,5   | 6,6    | 7,1    | -23,5  | -5,4   | 3,9    |
| Textiles, clothing and footwear                      | -11,6  | 12,7   | -1,5   | -86,1  | -54,9  | -5,8   |
| Other household goods except precious stones         | 4,0    | 0,6    | 14,0   | -33,3  | 4,0    | 17,6   |
| Precious stones, jewellery and silverware            | 7,7    | 65,5   | -10,9  | -73,6  | -51,7  | -7,1   |
| Solid, liquid and gaseous fuels and related products | 16,1   | 9,6    | -21,5  | -61,4  | -50,3  | -37,6  |
| Metals and metal ores                                | -1,7   | -3,6   | -1,7   | -75,7  | -40,5  | -16,7  |
| Construction and building materials                  | 0,1    | 4,4    | -6,2   | -86,4  | -51,3  | -2,0   |
| Other intermediate products, waste and scrap         | 2,4    | -3,7   | 13,7   | -34,8  | -15,8  | -1,9   |
| Machinery, equipment and supplies                    | -1,2   | 0,9    | 11,2   | -46,5  | -11,4  | 5,3    |
| Other goods  | 4,9    | -2,5   | 3,3    | -37,6  | -17,5  | -3,7   |
| Total  | 7,7    | 6,1    | -1,0   | -43,1  | -22,9  | -6,0   |

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

| Type of dealer                                       | Jan-20 | Feb-20 | Mar-20 | Apr-20 | May-20 | Jun-20 |
|--|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Fee or contract basis                                | -0,1   | -0,2   | 0,3    | 0,1    | -0,6   | 0,2    |
| Agricultural raw materials and livestock             | 0,3    | 1,4    | 0,0    | 0,1    | 0,8    | 1,4    |
| Food, beverages and tobacco                          | 2,5    | 1,0    | 1,1    | -3,6   | -0,8   | 0,6    |
| Textiles, clothing and footwear                      | -0,2   | 0,2    | 0,0    | -2,2   | -1,2   | -0,1   |
| Other household goods except precious stones         | 0,5    | 0,1    | 1,6    | -3,9   | 0,4    | 2,0    |
| Precious stones, jewellery and silverware            | 0,2    | 1,4    | -0,3   | -2,1   | -1,2   | -0,2   |
| Solid, liquid and gaseous fuels and related products | 4,2    | 2,3    | -5,7   | -15,2  | -12,6  | -9,7   |
| Metals and metal ores                                | 0,0    | -0,1   | 0,0    | -1,9   | -1,0   | -0,4   |
| Construction and building materials                  | 0,0    | 0,2    | -0,3   | -4,3   | -3,3   | -0,1   |
| Other intermediate products, waste and scrap         | 0,1    | -0,2   | 0,6    | -1,6   | -0,7   | -0,1   |
| Machinery, equipment and supplies                    | -0,2   | 0,1    | 1,5    | -5,7   | -1,4   | 0,7    |
| Other goods  | 0,3    | -0,2   | 0,2    | -2,9   | -1,3   | -0,3   |
| Total  | 7,7    | 6,1    | -1,0   | -43,1  | -22,9  | -6,0   |

#### **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 2019 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

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

- 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

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

The preliminary collection rate for the survey on wholesale trade sales for June 2020 was 80,7%. The improved collection rates for April 2020 and May 2020 were 90,2% and 87,4% respectively.

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#### Statistical unit

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**

Where figures have been rounded off, discrepancies may occur between sums of the component items and the totals.

#### Historical data

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

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

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#### **Technical notes**

### Survey methodology and design

- 1 The survey is conducted monthly. Questionnaires are sent to a sample of 1 423 enterprises from a population of 19 570 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 2019 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:

$$nh = n * (Nh * Sh) / [\Sigma (Ni * Si)].$$

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 limits | Upper limits |
|-----------------|------------|--------------|--------------|
| Very small      | 4          | 2 656 495    | 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

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:

**Note:** Owing to the impact of the COVID-19 lockdown, a transitory change adjustment was applied to April 2020. Transitory (temporary) change describes a temporary effect on the level of a series after a certain point in

time. The methodology will be reviewed as more data points are added to the time series.

#### 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 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.

## 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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#### **General information**

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 eleven 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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#### Advance release calendar

A release calendar is disseminated on www.statssa.gov.za

#### Stats SA products

A complete set of Stats SA publications is available at the Stats SA Library and the following libraries:

National Library of South Africa, Pretoria Division National Library of South Africa, Cape Town Division Natal Society Library, Pietermaritzburg Library of Parliament, Cape Town Bloemfontein Public Library Johannesburg Public Library Eastern Cape Library Services, King William's Town Central Regional Library, Polokwane Central Reference Library, Mbombela Central Reference Collection, Kimberley Central Reference Library, Mmabatho

Stats SA also provides a subscription service.

#### **Electronic services**

A large range of data is available via online services. For more details about our electronic data services, contact Stats SA's user information service at (012) 310 8600.

You can visit us on the internet at: www.statssa.gov.za

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