Wholesale trade sales
Preliminary: March 2006

Embargoed until:
8 June 2006
13:00

Table A - Key figures as at the end of March 2006

Estimates	March 2006 R million	% change between March 2005 and March 2006	% change between January to March 2005 and January to March 2006
Wholesale trade sales			
at current prices	52 664	+20,0	+15,9
at constant 2000 prices	39 025	+14,2	+10,2

Seasonally adjusted estimates	March 2006 R million	% change between February and March 2006	% change between October to December 2005 and January to March 2006
Wholesale trade sales			
at current prices	52 273	+3,8	+1,3
at constant 2000 prices	38 566	+3,2	+0,6

Key findings as at the end of March 2006

Wholesale trade sales increase in real terms

As indicated in table A, wholesale trade sales, at constant (2000) prices, for the first quarter of 2006 increased by 10,2% compared with the first quarter of 2005. Seasonally adjusted wholesale trade sales, at constant (2000) prices, for the first quarter of 2006 increased by 0,6% compared with the previous quarter .

Wholesale trade sales, at constant (2000) prices, for March 2006 increased by 14,2% compared with March 2005.

Wholesale trade sales increase at current prices

Wholesale trade sales, at current prices, for the first quarter of **2006 increased by 15,9% compared with the first quarter of 2005.**

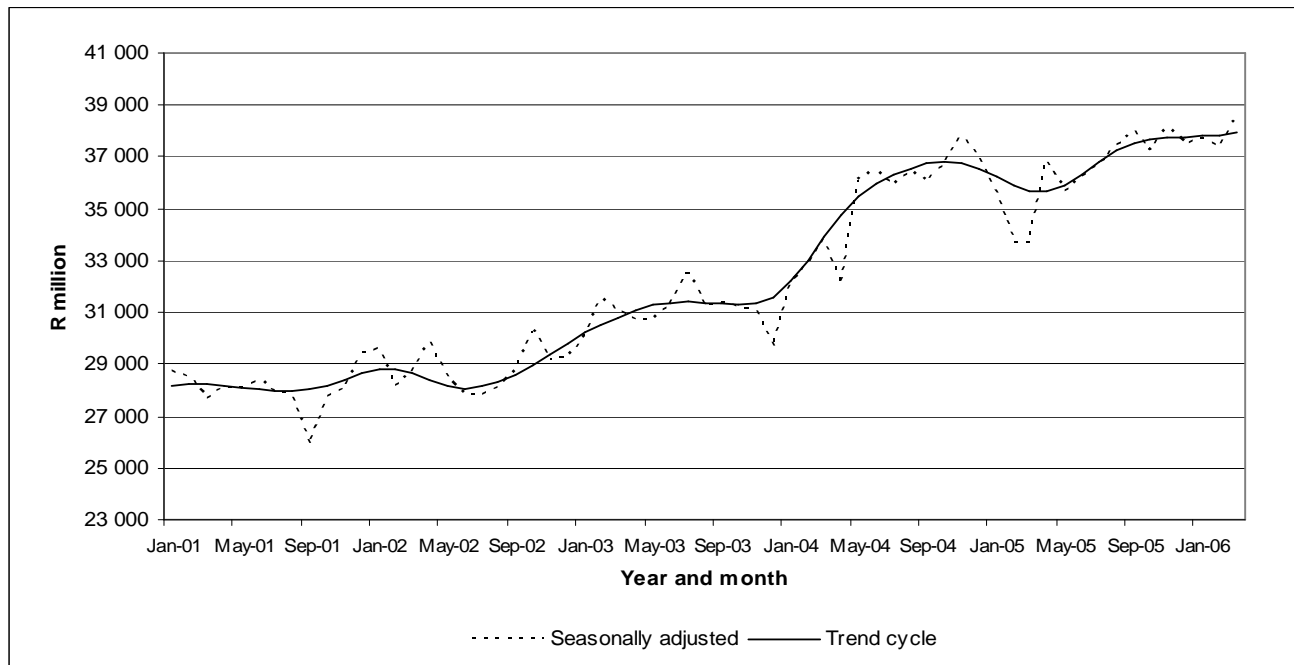**Table B – Contribution of the wholesale types of dealers to total value of sales at current prices**

Type of wholesale dealer	Sales by type of dealer for January to March 2005 R million	Weight 1/	Sales by type of dealer for January to March 2006 R million	Difference in sales of type of dealer between January to March 2005 and January to March 2006 R million	% change between January to March 2005 and January to March 2006
Wholesale trade on a fee or contract basis	3 433	2,8	4 680	1 247	36,3
Wholesale trade in agricultural raw materials and livestock	6 971	5,6	6 669	-302	-4,3
Wholesale trade in food, beverages and tobacco	25 087	20,2	28 973	3 886	15,5
Wholesale trade in textiles, clothing and footwear	3 043	2,4	3 154	111	3,6
Wholesale trade in other household goods except precious stones	11 261	9,1	15 287	4 026	35,8
Wholesale trade in precious stones, jewellery and silverware	4 060	3,3	3 493	-567	-14,0
Wholesale trade in solid, liquid and gaseous fuels and related products	20 253	16,3	26 788	6 535	32,3
Wholesale trade in metals and metal ores	4 706	3,8	5 383	677	14,4
Wholesale trade in construction and building materials	7 701	6,2	8 450	749	9,7
Wholesale trade in other intermediate products, waste and scrap	4 229	3,4	4 643	414	9,8
Wholesale trade in machinery, equipment and supplies	20 796	16,7	23 690	2 894	13,9
Wholesale trade in other goods	12 684	10,2	12 823	139	1,1
Total	**124 224**	**100**	**144 033**	**19 809**	**15,9**

1/ Weight is the contribution of each type of dealer to the total

Table B above shows the major contributors to the 15,9% increase in sales of wholesale trade sales at current prices for the first quarter of 2006 compared with the first quarter of 2005. These were dealers in solid fuels, liquid and gaseous fuels contributing (+5,3 percentage points), dealers in other household goods except precious stones (+3,2 percentage points or R4 026 million) and dealers in food, beverages and tobacco (+3,1 percentage points). In the same period, two types of dealers contributed negatively to the growth of the quarter, these were dealers in precious stones, jewellery and silverware (-0,5 of a percentage point) and dealers in agricultural raw materials and livestock (-0 2 of a percentage point).

Figure 1 below shows the seasonally adjusted and trend patterns for wholesale trade sales at constant (2000) prices between January 2001 and March 2006. The trend cycle showed a gradual upward trend from January 2001 until the beginning of 2004. Thereafter, the trend cycle started to increase sharply until October 2004. It then showed a slight decline at the beginning of 2005. It resumed an upward trend from the middle of 2005 up until the present.

Figure 1 – Wholesale trade sales (at constant 2000 prices)

P J Lehohla
Statistician-General

Contents

Notes

Forthcoming issue	**Issue**	**Expected release date**
	April 2006	6 July 2006

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.

Response Rate   The preliminary response rate for the survey on wholesale trade sales for March 2006 was 91,3%.

Detailed results

Outlined below in table 1 are wholesale trade sales according to type of dealer.

Table 1 - Total wholesale trade sales according to type of dealer at current prices (R million)

Year 1/	Month	Type A	Type B	Type C	Type D	Type E	Type F	Type G	Type H	Type I	Type J	Type K	Type L	Total 2/
2005	January	1 005	2 510	8 087	782	3 495	1 467	6 149	1 423	2 354	1 402	6 286	4 284	39 244
	February	1 176	2 445	8 358	1 080	3 597	810	6 737	1 673	2 642	1 343	7 268	3 968	41 097
	March	1 252	2 016	8 642	1 181	4 169	1 783	7 367	1 610	2 705	1 484	7 242	4 432	43 883
	April	1 234	2 018	9 034	1 159	4 234	1 766	7 843	1 656	2 901	1 399	7 501	4 370	45 115
	May	1 618	2 000	9 350	1 068	4 380	2 040	7 952	1 809	3 044	1 492	7 704	4 489	46 946
	June	1 866	2 214	9 277	994	4 437	1 838	9 488	1 730	2 977	1 716	7 695	4 404	48 637
	July	2 042	2 034	9 834	1 094	4 581	973	9 322	1 797	3 267	1 544	7 346	4 711	48 546
	August	1 891	2 129	8 856	1 296	4 864	1 385	10 011	1 887	3 272	1 613	7 858	4 876	49 938
	September	1 690	2 107	9 382	1 418	5 118	1 987	10 066	1 900	3 308	1 786	8 399	4 723	51 883
	October	1 932	2 203	10 016	1 498	5 682	2 043	10 261	1 879	3 376	1 835	8 104	4 827	53 655
	November	2 225	2 831	10 244	1 616	6 552	2 132	9 604	2 127	3 742	1 977	8 737	5 681	57 468
	December	1 977	2 454	11 814	1 016	5 384	1 575	9 301	1 237	2 267	1 327	6 644	4 746	49 741
	Total	**19 908**	**26 961**	**112 894**	**14 202**	**56 493**	**19 799**	**104 101**	**20 728**	**35 855**	**18 918**	**90 784**	**55 511**	**576 153**
2006	January	1 438	2 290	9 548	808	4 630	409	8 180	1 554	2 478	1 423	7 017	3 802	43 577
	February	1 527	2 133	9 292	1 118	5 362	1 360	8 298	1 932	2 977	1 585	7 568	4 639	47 791
	March	1 715	2 246	10 133	1 228	5 295	1 724	10 310	1 897	2 995	1 635	9 105	4 382	52 664

1/ Preliminary.
2/ The figures have been rounded off. Therefore, discrepancies may occur between the sums of the component items and the totals.

Description of type of dealers included in indicated group types in table 1 1/

Group type	Type of dealers included in group type
Type A	Wholesale trade on a fee or contract basis
Type B	Wholesale trade in agricultural raw materials and livestock
Type C	Wholesale trade in food, beverages and tobacco
Type D	Wholesale trade in textiles, clothing and footwear
Type E	Wholesale trade in other household goods except precious stones
Type F	Wholesale trade in precious stones, jewellery and silverware
Type G	Wholesale trade in solid, liquid and gaseous fuels and related products
Type H	Wholesale trade in metals and metal ores
Type I	Wholesale trade in construction and building materials
Type J	Wholesale trade in other intermediate products, waste and scrap
Type K	Wholesale trade in machinery, equipment and supplies
Type L	Wholesale trade in other goods

1/ See note 3 on page 10

Tables 2 and 3 show wholesale trade sales at current prices over the period January 1999 to March 2006.
Table 4 shows seasonally adjusted wholesale trade sales at current prices over the same period.

Table 2 - Total wholesale trade sales at current prices (R million)

Month	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005 1/	2006 1/
January	19 818	22 440	27 046	30 828	33 506	35 074	39 244	43 577
February	21 588	25 155	29 117	32 484	38 329	39 615	41 097	47 791
March	22 006	27 377	29 161	34 550	39 429	42 886	43 883	52 664
April	21 597	25 264	28 324	34 422	36 551	38 300	45 115	
May	22 380	27 145	30 066	35 064	38 634	46 230	46 946	
June	22 518	27 220	30 596	34 449	39 913	47 606	48 637	
July	22 860	26 339	29 621	33 911	40 674	45 604	48 546	
August	25 097	27 858	30 184	34 951	39 039	46 515	49 938	
September	25 594	27 877	28 865	36 672	39 886	47 056	51 883	
October	24 635	30 104	33 059	41 151	42 004	50 934	53 655	
November	27 583	31 014	34 233	40 608	42 887	54 290	57 468	
December	25 679	29 191	33 289	36 857	36 656	46 840	49 741	
Total	**281 355**	**326 984**	**363 561**	**425 947**	**467 508**	**540 950**	**576 153**	

1/ Preliminary.

Table 3 - Percentage change in total wholesale trade sales at current prices 1/

Month	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
January	5,5	13,2	20,5	14,0	8,7	4,7	11,9	11,0
February	6,0	16,5	15,8	11,6	18,0	3,4	3,7	16,3
March	3,5	24,4	6,5	18,5	14,1	8,8	2,3	20,0
April	4,8	17,0	12,1	21,5	6,2	4,8	17,8	
May	7,0	21,3	10,8	16,6	10,2	19,7	1,5	
June	5,0	20,9	12,4	12,6	15,9	19,3	2,2	
July	3,6	15,2	12,5	14,5	19,9	12,1	6,5	
August	12,2	11,0	8,3	15,8	11,7	19,2	7,4	
September	10,0	8,9	3,5	27,0	8,8	18,0	10,3	
October	4,0	22,2	9,8	24,5	2,1	21,3	5,3	
November	18,2	12,4	10,4	18,6	5,6	26,6	5,9	
December	18,0	13,7	14,0	10,7	-0,5	27,8	6,2	
Total	**8,3**	**16,2**	**11,2**	**17,2**	**9,8**	**15,7**	**6,5**	

1/ The percentage change is the difference between wholesale trade sales of the relevant year and those of the previous year expressed as a percentage.

Table 4 - Seasonally adjusted total wholesale trade sales at current prices (R million)

Month	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
January	21 936	24 792	29 982	34 415	37 861	40 178	45 522	50 908
February	22 129	25 738	29 842	33 347	39 676	41 263	43 140	50 351
March	21 886	27 205	28 920	34 284	39 125	42 554	43 496	52 273
April	22 537	26 435	29 765	36 252	38 500	40 338	47 501	
May	22 507	27 201	29 975	34 855	38 307	45 908	46 604	
June	22 643	27 285	30 492	34 084	39 256	46 684	47 565	
July	23 325	26 915	30 282	34 554	41 238	45 997	48 809	
August	24 828	27 686	30 159	35 019	39 133	46 526	49 848	
September	25 167	27 421	28 457	36 122	39 221	46 099	50 771	
October	23 026	28 102	30 788	38 301	38 994	47 262	49 764	
November	25 505	28 603	31 402	36 962	38 680	48 615	51 255	
December	25 519	29 042	33 258	36 977	36 976	47 464	50 534	

Tables 5 and 6 show wholesale trade sales at constant prices over the period January 1999 to March 2006. Table 7 shows seasonally adjusted wholesale trade sales at constant prices over the same period.

Table 5 - Total wholesale trade sales at constant 2000 prices (R million)

Month	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005 1/	2006 1/
January	22 032	23 351	25 930	26 541	26 709	28 138	30 828	32 496
February	23 880	26 027	27 783	27 413	30 493	31 604	32 170	35 585
March	24 169	28 209	27 759	28 900	31 367	34 240	34 164	39 025
April	23 681	25 596	26 695	28 319	29 089	30 289	34 838	
May	24 234	27 406	28 125	28 635	31 082	36 517	36 071	
June	24 343	27 329	28 422	28 019	31 689	36 990	36 818	
July	24 542	26 299	27 363	27 293	32 090	35 476	36 350	
August	26 813	27 514	27 679	27 860	30 922	36 156	37 225	
September	27 330	27 424	26 470	29 255	31 973	36 835	38 907	
October	26 165	29 428	29 891	32 608	33 684	39 683	40 221	
November	29 111	29 994	30 592	32 076	34 517	42 266	42 855	
December	26 973	28 123	29 590	29 228	29 466	36 637	37 065	
Total	**303 273**	**326 700**	**336 299**	**346 147**	**373 081**	**424 831**	**437 512**	

1/ Preliminary.

Table 6 - Percentage change in total wholesale trade sales at constant 2000 prices 1/

Month	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
January	0,9	6,0	11,0	2,4	0,6	5,4	9,6	5,4
February	0,6	9,0	6,7	-1,3	11,2	3,6	1,8	10,6
March	-2,5	16,7	-1,6	4,1	8,5	9,2	-0,2	14,2
April	-0,3	8,1	4,3	6,1	2,7	4,1	15,0	
May	1,0	13,1	2,6	1,8	8,5	17,5	-1,2	
June	-1,0	12,3	4,0	-1,4	13,1	16,7	-0,5	
July	-1,6	7,2	4,0	-0,3	17,6	10,6	2,5	
August	7,4	2,6	0,6	0,7	11,0	16,9	3,0	
September	5,7	0,3	-3,5	10,5	9,3	15,2	5,6	
October	-1,0	12,5	1,6	9,1	3,3	17,8	1,4	
November	11,9	3,0	2,0	4,9	7,6	22,4	1,4	
December	10,8	4,3	5,2	-1,2	0,8	24,3	1,2	
Total	**2,7**	**7,7**	**2,9**	**2,9**	**7,8**	**13,9**	**3,0**	

1/ The percentage change is the difference between wholesale trade sales of the relevant year and those of the previous year expressed as a percentage.

Table 7 - Seasonally adjusted total wholesale trade sales at constant 2000 prices (R million)

Month	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
January	24 437	25 828	28 746	29 570	30 068	32 046	35 512	37 675
February	24 466	26 646	28 512	28 183	31 591	32 908	33 702	37 375
March	24 165	28 170	27 647	28 736	31 110	33 877	33 736	38 566
April	24 753	26 823	28 098	29 898	30 752	32 052	36 873	
May	24 438	27 522	28 067	28 443	30 750	36 136	35 656	
June	24 470	27 409	28 374	27 815	31 302	36 465	36 222	
July	25 089	26 900	27 982	27 825	32 589	35 880	36 660	
August	26 681	27 493	27 798	28 071	31 200	36 455	37 487	
September	26 559	26 726	25 934	28 714	31 380	36 046	38 053	
October	24 407	27 400	27 764	30 276	31 213	36 772	37 266	
November	26 902	27 634	28 035	29 159	31 104	37 815	38 192	
December	26 719	27 893	29 477	29 235	29 630	37 002	37 531	

Outlined below in tables 8.1 and 8.2 are the percentage changes in wholesale trade sales at current prices, constant (2000) prices and seasonally adjusted estimates.

Table 8 – Estimates and percentage changes in total wholesale trade sales

Table 8.1 - Quarterly estimates and percentage changes

Estimates	January to March 2005 R million	January to March 2006 R million	% change between January to March 2005 and January to March 2006
Wholesale trade sales			
at current prices	124 224	144 032	+15,9
at constant 2000 prices	97 162	107 106	+10,2

Table 8.2 - Seasonally adjusted estimates with monthly and quarterly percentage changes.

Seasonally adjusted estimates	February 2006 R million	March 2006 R million	% change between February and March 2006	October to December 2005 R million	January to March 2006 R million	% change between October to December 2005 and January to March 2006
Wholesale trade sales						
at current prices	50 351	52 273	+3,8	151 553	153 532	+1,3
at constant 2000 prices	37 375	38 566	+3,2	112 989	113 616	+0,6

Wholesale trade sales, March 2006

Explanatory notes

Introduction 1 Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) conducts a monthly survey of the wholesale trade industry, covering wholesale enterprises (see 4 below). This survey is based on a sample drawn from the 2005 Business Sampling Frame (BSF) that contains businesses registered for value-added tax (VAT) and income tax.

2 As is usual, information for the latest month has had to be estimated for respondents who have not reported by the cut-off date for production of results. These estimates will be revised in future statistical releases when their reported information becomes available. Published wholesale trade sales estimates exclude VAT.

Scope of the survey 3 This survey covers wholesale enterprises according to the following types of dealer:
- 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
  - 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 and building materials
  - Wholesale trade in construction materials, hardware, plumbing and heating equipment and supplies;
- Wholesale trade in machinery, equipment and supplies;
- Wholesale trade in other intermediate products, waste and scrap; and
- Wholesale trade in other goods
  - General wholesale trade and other wholesale trade not elsewhere classified.

Classification 4 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. Statistics in this publication are presented at SIC division (four digit) level. Each enterprise is classified to the industry, which reflects its predominant activity.

Statistical unit 5 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.

Survey methodology and design 6 The survey is conducted monthly. Questionnaires are sent to a sample of about 800 enterprises from a population of about 19 000 enterprises. Completed questionnaires are required to be returned to Stats SA within 10 days after the end of the reference month. Fax and telephone reminders are used to follow up non-respondents.

7 The value of sales is obtained monthly from the sample of 800 enterprises (which was drawn in August 2005 at the SIC four-digit level) from a population then of about 19 000 wholesale enterprises. The wholesale industry is divided into four size groups. All large enterprises (size group one) are completely enumerated. Simple random sampling is applied to size groups two (medium sized), three and four (small) enterprises. The total value of sales of the large enterprises (size group one) is added to the weighted totals of size groups two, three and four to reflect the total value of sales.

Weighting methodology	8	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 division estimates. These procedures, which are in line with international best practice, are described in more detail on the Stats SA website at http://www.statssa.gov.za/publications/publicationsearch.asp.
Constant prices	9	The total sales at constant prices are calculated using a combination of the production price indices for consumption in South Africa and total output of South African industry groups from the Production Price Index (PPI) to deflate the sales at current prices. Sales by type of dealer will not be deflated until suitable deflators are found.
Seasonal adjustment	10	Seasonally adjusted estimates are generated each month, using the X-11 Seasonal Adjustment Program developed by the US Bureau of the Census, 1968. 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.
Trend cycle	11	The trend is the long-term pattern or movement of a time series. The X-11 Seasonal Adjustment Program is used for smoothing seasonally adjusted estimates to estimates of the underlying trend cycle.
Reliability of estimates	12	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. Preliminary figures are indicated in the tables.
	13	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.
Revised figures	14	Revised figures are due to respondents reporting revisions or corrections to their figures and late submission of their data to Stats SA. Preliminary figures are indicated in the relevant tables. Data are edited at the enterprise level.
Related publications	15	Users may also wish to refer to the following publications available from Stats SA - • *Bulletin of Statistics* issued quarterly. • *SA Statistics* issued annually.
Rounding of figures	16	Where figures have been rounded-off discrepancies may occur between sums of the component items and the totals.
Pre-release policy	17	Stats SA's pre-release policy may be inspected at its Website, www.statssa.gov.za.

Symbols and abbreviations	**18**	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
		*	Revised
		-	Figures not available

Technical note

Neyman optimal allocation

Before drawing in each of the surveys the population of enterprises on the Business Sampling Frame (BSF) was stratified. Strata were formed using a combination of Standard Industrial Classification and the measure of size classes for enterprises. The Neyman optimal allocation formula given below was used to allocate samples to each stratum.

$$n_h \; = \; \frac{N_h S_h}{\sum N_h S_h}$$

where N_h and S_h are the stratum population size and the stratum variance, respectively.

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 surveys did not exceed 6.4%.

Class limits

Enterprise size	Size Group	Lower limits	Upper limits
Very small	4	0	6 000 000
Small	3	6 000 001	32 000 000
Medium	2	32 000 001	64 000 000
Large	1	64 000 001	

Glossary

Enterprise The 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, Fifth Edition, Report No. 09-90-02 of January 1993 (SIC)*.

Statistical unit A statistical unit is a unit about which statistics are tabulated, compiled or published. The statistical units are derived from and linked to the South African Revenue Service (SARS) administrative data.

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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