Statistical release

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Wholesale trade sales (Preliminary)

March 2014

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	Oct-13	Nov-13	Dec-13	Jan-14	Feb-14	Mar-14
Year-on-year % change, unadjusted	5,9	5,7	6,4	8,7	7,2	6,0
Month-on-month % change, seasonally adjusted	0,8	1,1	-1,1	3,4	-0,4	-5,2
3-month % change, seasonally adjusted 1/	1,0	1,3	1,3	2,0	2,1	1,0

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 increased by 6,0% year-on-year in March 2014. Seasonally adjusted wholesale trade sales decreased by 5,2% in March 2014 compared with February 2014. This followed month-on-month changes of -0,4% in February 2014 and 3,4% in January 2014.

Seasonally adjusted wholesale trade sales increased by 1,0% in the first quarter of 2014 compared with the previous quarter.

Figure 1 – Wholesale trade sales at constant 2012 prices
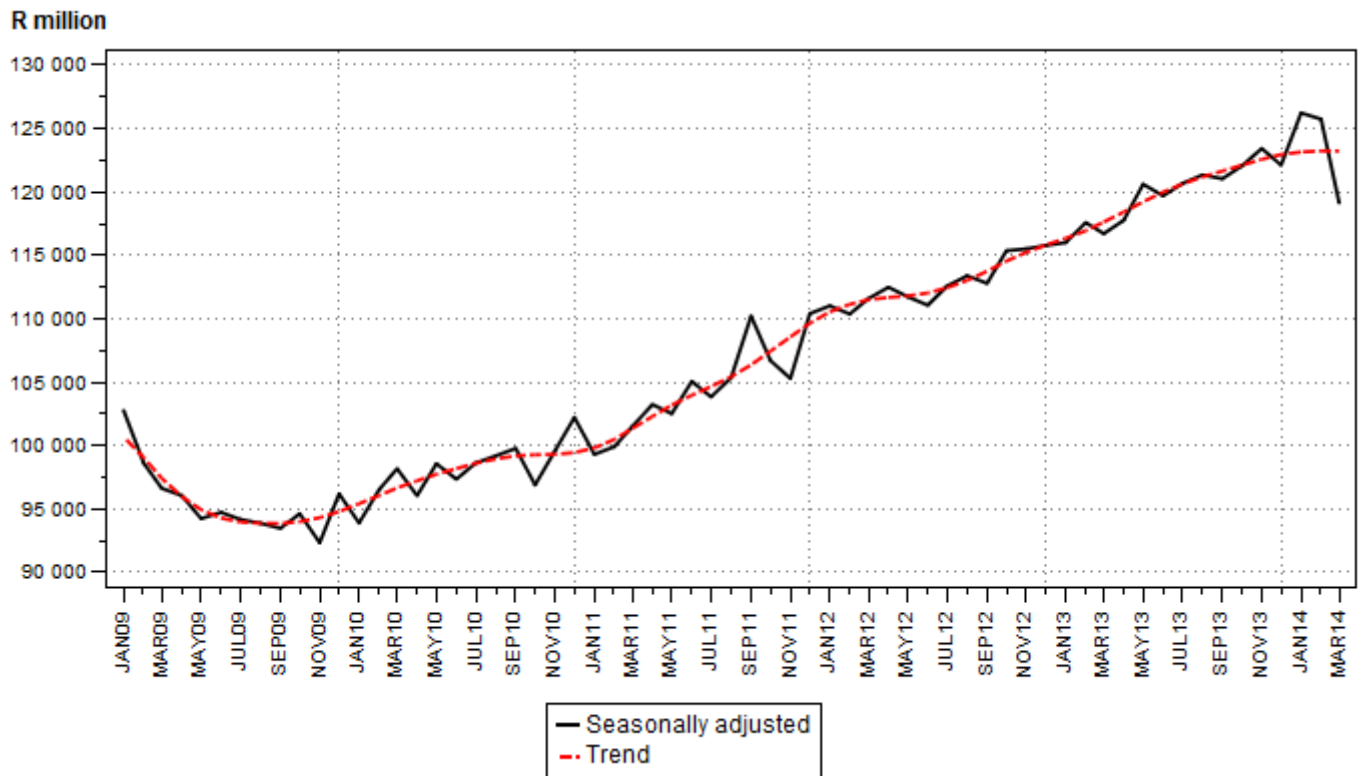
Sales at current prices: results for March 2014

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

	Oct-13	Nov-13	Dec-13	Jan-14	Feb-14	Mar-14
Year-on-year % change, unadjusted	12,4	11,6	12,9	16,1	15,5	14,7
Month-on-month % change, seasonally adjusted	3,4	1,2	-2,1	3,2	1,6	-3,4
3-month % change, seasonally adjusted 1/	3,3	4,5	4,2	3,4	2,4	2,0

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 14,7% in March 2014 compared with March 2013. The major contributors to this increase were dealers in:
- machinery, equipment and supplies (34,7% and contributing 4,4 percentage points);
- solid, liquid and gaseous fuels and related products (12,8% and contributing 3,2 percentage points); and
- 'other' household goods except precious stones (12,0% and contributing 1,2 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	Jan – Mar 2013 (R million)	Weight	Jan – Mar 2014 (R million)	% change between Jan – Mar 2013 and Jan – Mar 2014	Contribution (% points) to the total % change
Fee or contract basis	15 703	4,6	18 170	15,7	0,7
Agricultural raw materials and livestock	22 241	6,5	25 923	16,6	1,1
Food, beverages and tobacco	53 933	15,8	57 582	6,8	1,1
Textiles, clothing and footwear	6 675	2,0	8 519	27,6	0,6
Other household goods except precious stones	32 358	9,5	36 002	11,3	1,1
Precious stones, jewellery and silverware	4 653	1,4	7 382	58,7	0,8
Solid, liquid and gaseous fuels and related products	83 196	24,4	95 719	15,1	3,7
Metal and metal ores	9 536	2,8	9 966	4,5	0,1
Construction and building materials	16 011	4,7	19 743	23,3	1,1
Other intermediate products, waste and scrap	12 015	3,5	15 998	33,2	1,2
Machinery, equipment and supplies	46 757	13,7	58 348	24,8	3,4
Other goods	37 602	11,0	39 862	6,0	0,7
Total	**340 681**	**100,0**	**393 213**	**15,4**	**15,4**

Wholesale trade sales increased by 15,4% in the first quarter of 2014 compared with the first quarter of 2013. The major contributors to this increase were dealers in:
- solid, liquid and gaseous fuels and related products (15,1% and contributing 3,7 percentage points);
- machinery, equipment and supplies (24,8% and contributing 3,4 percentage points); and
- 'other' intermediate products, waste and scrap (33,2% and contributing 1,2 percentage points) – see Table C.

PJ Lehohla
Statistician-General

Tables

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

Month	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014 1/
Jan	93 359	90 909	81 816	86 961	98 214	104 817	113 909
Feb	100 920	92 995	91 044	94 455	109 215	111 873	119 892
Mar	102 959	98 354	99 784	105 560	113 422	112 988	119 807
Apr	105 674	89 364	90 892	94 631	103 597	113 537	
May	104 341	91 685	96 356	101 274	112 627	121 187	
Jun	105 129	95 074	97 720	105 340	109 114	116 134	
Jul	107 840	95 435	98 122	101 280	111 076	121 167	
Aug	104 118	93 699	99 933	108 103	115 977	122 392	
Sep	106 993	95 675	101 944	111 456	111 345	120 673	
Oct	112 229	101 026	101 725	112 583	125 173	132 550	
Nov	118 203	102 874	112 873	119 905	131 023	138 532	
Dec	104 274	98 741	104 897	111 885	115 939	123 318	
Total	**1 266 039**	**1 145 831**	**1 177 106**	**1 253 433**	**1 356 722**	**1 439 168**	

1/ Latest month is preliminary.

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

Month	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	*2014 year-to-date*
Jan	-2,6	-10,0	6,3	12,9	6,7	8,7	*8,7*
Feb	-7,9	-2,1	3,7	15,6	2,4	7,2	*7,9*
Mar	-4,5	1,5	5,8	7,4	-0,4	6,0	*7,3*
Apr	-15,4	1,7	4,1	9,5	9,6		
May	-12,1	5,1	5,1	11,2	7,6		
Jun	-9,6	2,8	7,8	3,6	6,4		
Jul	-11,5	2,8	3,2	9,7	9,1		
Aug	-10,0	6,7	8,2	7,3	5,5		
Sep	-10,6	6,6	9,3	-0,1	8,4		
Oct	-10,0	0,7	10,7	11,2	5,9		
Nov	-13,0	9,7	6,2	9,3	5,7		
Dec	-5,3	6,2	6,7	3,6	6,4		
Total	**-9,5**	**2,7**	**6,5**	**8,2**	**6,1**		

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

Month	R million				Month-on-month % change			
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2011	2012	2013	2014
Jan	99 300	111 010	116 004	126 223	-2,8	0,6	0,2	3,4
Feb	99 906	110 368	117 577	125 733	0,6	-0,6	1,4	-0,4
Mar	101 505	111 583	116 707	119 142	1,6	1,1	-0,7	-5,2
Apr	103 234	112 482	117 765		1,7	0,8	0,9	
May	102 511	111 726	120 606		-0,7	-0,7	2,4	
Jun	105 056	111 060	119 691		2,5	-0,6	-0,8	
Jul	103 835	112 574	120 660		-1,2	1,4	0,8	
Aug	105 345	113 381	121 335		1,5	0,7	0,6	
Sep	110 205	112 791	121 035		4,6	-0,5	-0,2	
Oct	106 699	115 360	122 042		-3,2	2,3	0,8	
Nov	105 287	115 505	123 420		-1,3	0,1	1,1	
Dec	110 396	115 771	122 111		4,9	0,2	-1,1	

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

Month	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014 1/
Jan	74 352	78 327	71 709	79 433	95 462	107 792	125 175
Feb	81 538	79 762	80 031	87 662	106 998	115 383	133 250
Mar	85 077	84 450	88 086	98 978	111 745	117 506	134 788
Apr	88 938	76 616	81 134	88 822	102 631	118 201	
May	92 421	77 692	86 031	95 324	112 388	126 102	
Jun	93 878	79 868	87 770	99 464	108 622	121 571	
Jul	97 413	80 646	87 736	96 612	110 671	127 734	
Aug	94 515	79 308	89 633	104 215	116 256	130 209	
Sep	95 629	80 634	91 061	108 567	111 965	129 164	
Oct	100 073	85 737	90 886	110 017	127 037	142 736	
Nov	103 910	88 108	101 562	117 597	134 173	149 725	
Dec	90 490	85 257	94 674	109 665	118 774	134 038	
Total	**1 098 234**	**976 405**	**1 050 313**	**1 196 356**	**1 356 722**	**1 520 161**	

1/ Latest month is preliminary.

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

Month	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	*2014 year-to-date*
Jan	5,3	-8,4	10,8	20,2	12,9	16,1	*16,1*
Feb	-2,2	0,3	9,5	22,1	7,8	15,5	*15,8*
Mar	-0,7	4,3	12,4	12,9	5,2	14,7	*15,4*
Apr	-13,9	5,9	9,5	15,5	15,2		
May	-15,9	10,7	10,8	17,9	12,2		
Jun	-14,9	9,9	13,3	9,2	11,9		
Jul	-17,2	8,8	10,1	14,6	15,4		
Aug	-16,1	13,0	16,3	11,6	12,0		
Sep	-15,7	12,9	19,2	3,1	15,4		
Oct	-14,3	6,0	21,0	15,5	12,4		
Nov	-15,2	15,3	15,8	14,1	11,6		
Dec	-5,8	11,0	15,8	8,3	12,9		
Total	**-11,1**	**7,6**	**13,9**	**13,4**	**12,0**		

Table 6 – Seasonally adjusted wholesale trade sales at current prices

Month	R million				Month-on-month % change			
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2011	2012	2013	2014
Jan	89 910	106 403	118 081	136 463	-3,6	-1,7	0,3	3,2
Feb	92 177	110 931	120 570	138 621	2,5	4,3	2,1	1,6
Mar	96 080	109 155	121 628	133 846	4,2	-1,6	0,9	-3,4
Apr	95 923	110 734	121 805		-0,2	1,4	0,1	
May	95 793	111 769	125 379		-0,1	0,9	2,9	
Jun	99 614	110 139	125 050		4,0	-1,5	-0,3	
Jul	98 083	111 465	127 749		-1,5	1,2	2,2	
Aug	102 171	113 625	127 844		4,2	1,9	0,1	
Sep	106 243	112 914	129 208		4,0	-0,6	1,1	
Oct	104 951	119 277	133 555		-1,2	5,6	3,4	
Nov	105 648	119 280	135 093		0,7	0,0	1,2	
Dec	108 261	117 778	132 221		2,5	-1,3	-2,1	

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

Type of dealer	Oct-13	Nov-13	Dec-13	Jan-14	Feb-14	Mar-14 1/
Fee or contract basis	7 795	7 908	6 740	5 911	6 075	6 184
Agricultural raw materials and livestock	9 729	10 815	10 188	8 646	8 849	8 428
Food, beverages and tobacco	20 203	21 633	26 246	17 369	19 305	20 908
Textiles, clothing and footwear	3 718	4 268	2 471	2 485	2 581	3 453
Other household goods except precious stones	14 086	14 296	10 679	11 385	11 753	12 864
Precious stones, jewellery and silverware	2 778	3 262	1 614	1 693	3 023	2 666
Solid, liquid and gaseous fuels and related products	32 061	32 637	31 641	31 630	31 367	32 722
Metals and metal ores	3 810	3 918	2 136	3 123	3 656	3 187
Construction and building materials	7 466	7 093	4 841	5 995	6 836	6 912
Other intermediate products, waste and scrap	6 543	6 216	4 526	4 926	6 304	4 768
Machinery, equipment and supplies	19 455	20 881	16 997	18 867	19 368	20 113
Other goods	15 091	16 798	15 959	13 144	14 133	12 585
Total	**142 736**	**149 725**	**134 038**	**125 175**	**133 250**	**134 788**

1/ Preliminary.

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

Type of dealer	Oct-13	Nov-13	Dec-13	Jan-14	Feb-14	Mar-14
Fee or contract basis	31,7	16,3	3,5	10,5	20,2	16,6
Agricultural raw materials and livestock	15,6	10,4	6,8	15,2	16,7	17,9
Food, beverages and tobacco	6,3	6,1	12,5	6,7	8,5	5,2
Textiles, clothing and footwear	9,3	22,2	11,4	35,0	13,8	34,6
Other household goods except precious stones	9,3	7,4	9,2	12,4	9,4	12,0
Precious stones, jewellery and silverware	54,2	73,1	29,7	89,2	92,4	21,9
Solid, liquid and gaseous fuels and related products	8,5	12,1	20,8	17,3	15,3	12,8
Metals and metal ores	8,0	7,4	9,0	9,5	6,2	-1,7
Construction and building materials	13,8	0,2	14,9	27,8	22,2	20,7
Other intermediate products, waste and scrap	24,5	15,0	15,2	27,9	46,2	23,8
Machinery, equipment and supplies	10,6	23,3	16,8	24,4	16,2	34,7
Other goods	14,9	2,9	4,1	7,2	7,5	3,2
Total	**12,4**	**11,6**	**12,9**	**16,1**	**15,5**	**14,7**

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

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

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 2013 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 March 2014 was 78,6%. The improved collection rate for February 2014 was 88,9%.

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 publications available from Stats SA:

- *Bulletin of Statistics* issued quarterly;
- *Stats in Brief* issued annually; and
- *South African Statistics* 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 webpage. To access the data electronically, use the following link: http://beta2.statssa.gov.za/?page_id=1849
Past publications	**12**	Past wholesale trade sales releases are available on the Stats SA webpage. To access the releases electronically, use the following link: http://beta2.statssa.gov.za/?page_id=1866&PPN=P6141.2&SCH=5717

Technical notes

Survey methodology and design

1   The survey is conducted monthly. Questionnaires are sent to a sample of about 1 050 enterprises from a population of about 19 300 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 2013 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:

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

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 strata did not exceed 6,0%.

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	0	27 000 000
Small	3	27 000 001	128 000 000
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, 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. The X-12-ARIMA procedure for wholesale trade sales is described in more detail on the Stats SA website: http://www.statssa.gov.za/Publications/P61412/Seasonal_adjustment_wholesale_Jun13.pdf
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 in three stages:
(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 PPI for food products, beverages and tobacco.
(3) Deflate the remaining wholesale trade sales with the headline PPI (final manufacturing) excluding the PPIs for food products, beverages and tobacco; and transport equipment.
Total wholesale trade sales at constant prices is obtained by aggregating (1), (2) and (3).

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

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.

Technical enquiries

Nthabiseng Sebeyi	Telephone number: (012) 310 8930
	Email: nthabisengs@statssa.gov.za
Keshnee Govender	Telephone number: (012) 310 8423
	Email: keshneeg@statssa.gov.za

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

General enquiries

User information services	Telephone number: (012) 310 8600 Email address: info@statssa.gov.za
Orders/subscription services	Telephone number: (012) 310 8358 Email address: magdaj@statssa.gov.za
Postal address	Private Bag X44, Pretoria, 0001

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