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Statistical release

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Sales at constant 2012 prices: results for March 2016

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

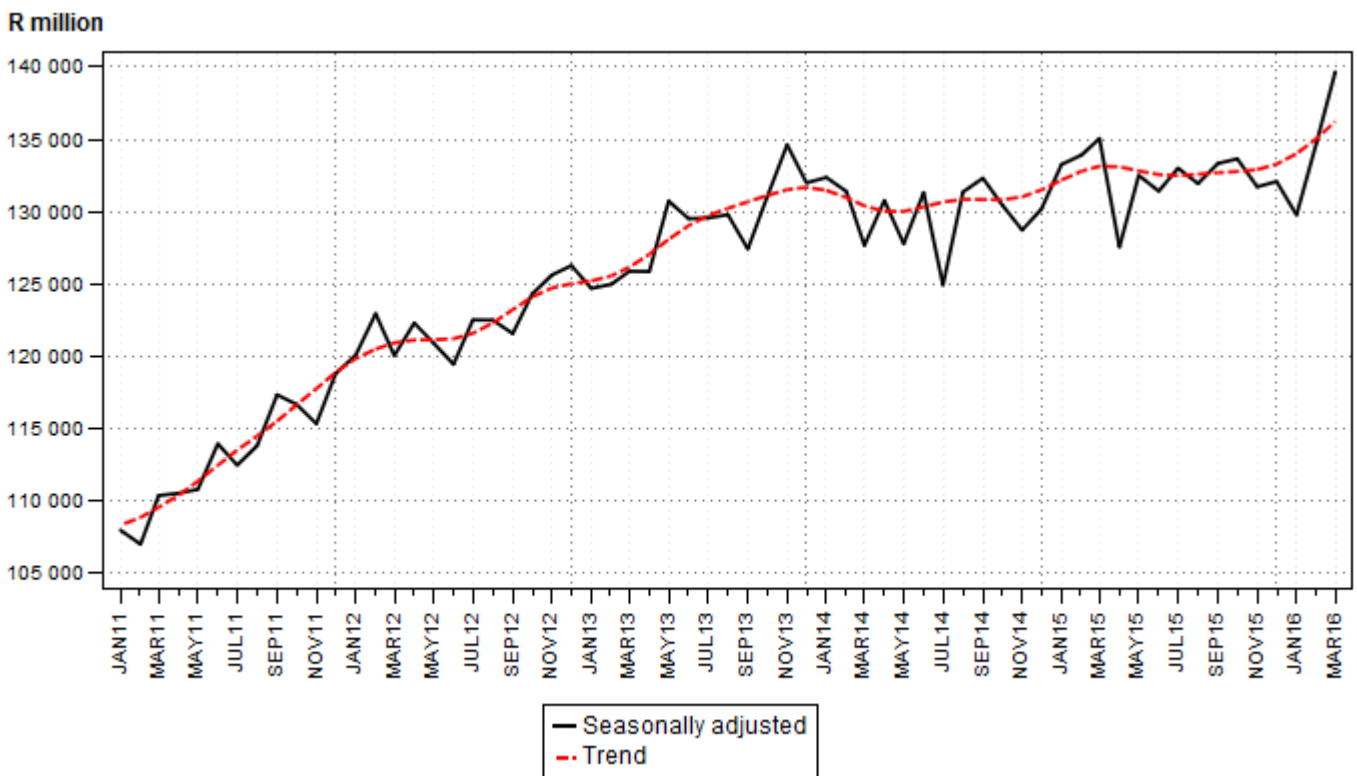
	Oct-15	Nov-15	Dec-15	Jan-16	Feb-16	Mar-16
Year-on-year % change, unadjusted	1,2	3,7	1,1	-4,8	1,2	1,8
Month-on-month % change, seasonally adjusted	0,2	-1,4	0,3	-1,8	3,8	3,6
3-month % change, seasonally adjusted 1/	0,5	0,6	-0,2	-1,3	-0,5	1,7

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 1,8% in March 2016 compared with March 2015. Seasonally adjusted wholesale trade sales increased by 3,6% in March 2016 compared with February 2016. This followed month-on-month changes of 3,8% in February 2016 and -1,8% in January 2016.

In the first quarter of 2016, seasonally adjusted wholesale trade sales increased by 1,7% compared with the previous quarter.

Figure 1 – Wholesale trade sales at constant 2012 prices



Sales at current prices: results for March 2016

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

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

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 9,4% in March 2016 compared with March 2015. The main contributors to this increase were dealers in:

- machinery, equipment and supplies (23,3% and contributing 4,3 percentage points);
- agricultural raw materials and livestock (57,0% and contributing 3,5 percentage points); and
- food, beverages and tobacco (13,7% and contributing 2,2 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 2015 (R million)	Weight	Jan – Mar 2016 (R million)	% change between Jan – Mar 2015 and Jan – Mar 2016	Contribution (% points) to the total % change
Fee or contract basis	14 939	3,6	16 914	13,2	0,5
Agricultural raw materials and livestock	27 442	6,5	40 110	46,2	3,0
Food, beverages and tobacco	65 572	15,6	72 463	10,5	1,6
Textiles, clothing and footwear	8 560	2,0	8 866	3,6	0,1
Other household goods except precious stones	43 647	10,4	45 564	4,4	0,5
Precious stones, jewellery and silverware	7 378	1,8	9 764	32,3	0,6
Solid, liquid and gaseous fuels and related products	80 161	19,1	72 003	-10,2	-1,9
Metals and metal ores	11 562	2,8	9 902	-14,4	-0,4
Construction and building materials	25 375	6,0	26 930	6,1	0,4
Other intermediate products, waste and scrap	19 256	4,6	20 055	4,1	0,2
Machinery, equipment and supplies	73 537	17,5	90 726	23,4	4,1
Other goods	42 801	10,2	43 665	2,0	0,2
Total	420 232	100,0	456 963	8,7	8,7

Wholesale trade sales increased by 8,7% in the first quarter of 2016 compared with the first quarter of 2015. The main contributors to this increase were dealers in:

- machinery, equipment and supplies (23,4% and contributing 4,1 percentage points);
- agricultural raw materials and livestock (46,2% and contributing 3,0 percentage points); and
- food, beverages and tobacco (10,5% and contributing 1,6 percentage points) – see Table C.

PJ Lehohla
Statistician-General

Tables

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

Month	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016 1/
Jan	88 524	94 094	106 568	113 092	120 344	119 564	113 863
Feb	98 512	102 202	118 340	120 507	127 071	129 804	131 402
Mar	107 967	114 218	122 788	121 288	128 118	138 224	140 739
Apr	98 346	102 391	111 941	122 643	122 043	118 666	
May	104 260	109 579	121 729	131 449	126 591	128 298	
Jun	105 735	113 981	118 288	124 930	128 609	131 850	
Jul	106 170	109 586	120 888	130 506	125 664	133 866	
Aug	108 129	116 969	125 758	131 364	129 984	130 271	
Sep	110 304	120 599	120 306	128 243	136 587	137 595	
Oct	110 068	121 816	134 957	142 356	142 236	143 881	
Nov	122 131	129 740	141 302	148 997	138 629	143 791	
Dec	113 501	121 061	125 140	132 404	132 823	134 219	
Total	1 273 647	1 356 236	1 468 005	1 547 779	1 558 699	1 590 029	

1/ Figures for latest month are preliminary.

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

Month	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2016 year-to-date
Jan	6,3	13,3	6,1	6,4	-0,6	-4,8	-4,8
Feb	3,7	15,8	1,8	5,4	2,2	1,2	-1,6
Mar	5,8	7,5	-1,2	5,6	7,9	1,8	-0,4
Apr	4,1	9,3	9,6	-0,5	-2,8		
May	5,1	11,1	8,0	-3,7	1,3		
Jun	7,8	3,8	5,6	2,9	2,5		
Jul	3,2	10,3	8,0	-3,7	6,5		
Aug	8,2	7,5	4,5	-1,1	0,2		
Sep	9,3	-0,2	6,6	6,5	0,7		
Oct	10,7	10,8	5,5	-0,1	1,2		
Nov	6,2	8,9	5,4	-7,0	3,7		
Dec	6,7	3,4	5,8	0,3	1,1		
Total	6,5	8,2	5,4	0,7	2,0		

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

Month	R million				Month-on-month % change			
	2013	2014	2015	2016	2013	2014	2015	2016
Jan	124 703	132 366	133 263	129 776	-1,2	0,3	2,4	-1,8
Feb	124 987	131 401	133 913	134 766	0,2	-0,7	0,5	3,8
Mar	125 887	127 676	135 052	139 637	0,7	-2,8	0,9	3,6
Apr	125 871	130 779	127 565		0,0	2,4	-5,5	
May	130 734	127 795	132 515		3,9	-2,3	3,9	
Jun	129 525	131 317	131 421		-0,9	2,8	-0,8	
Jul	129 565	124 935	133 006		0,0	-4,9	1,2	
Aug	129 799	131 364	131 950		0,2	5,1	-0,8	
Sep	127 429	132 318	133 335		-1,8	0,7	1,0	
Oct	131 022	130 466	133 655		2,8	-1,4	0,2	
Nov	134 628	128 733	131 720		2,8	-1,3	-1,4	
Dec	131 997	130 194	132 089		-2,0	1,1	0,3	

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

Month	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016 1/
Jan	77 589	85 948	103 292	116 632	133 522	127 620	133 838
Feb	86 596	94 852	115 774	124 847	142 659	139 647	155 790
Mar	95 310	107 096	120 911	127 144	145 530	152 965	167 335
Apr	87 788	96 106	111 049	127 981	138 823	133 460	
May	93 088	103 141	121 607	136 818	143 873	144 543	
Jun	94 969	107 623	117 532	131 084	146 195	150 218	
Jul	94 932	104 536	119 748	137 867	143 083	152 465	
Aug	96 985	112 762	125 792	140 395	147 934	148 102	
Sep	98 529	117 473	121 149	137 742	155 718	156 184	
Oct	98 340	119 040	137 457	153 685	161 539	166 150	
Nov	109 892	127 243	145 178	161 370	156 115	166 360	
Dec	102 439	118 659	128 515	144 700	147 484	154 814	
Total	1 136 457	1 294 479	1 468 004	1 640 265	1 762 475	1 792 528	

1/ Figures for latest month are preliminary.

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

Month	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2016 year-to-date
Jan	10,8	20,2	12,9	14,5	-4,4	4,9	4,9
Feb	9,5	22,1	7,8	14,3	-2,1	11,6	8,4
Mar	12,4	12,9	5,2	14,5	5,1	9,4	8,7
Apr	9,5	15,5	15,2	8,5	-3,9		
May	10,8	17,9	12,5	5,2	0,5		
Jun	13,3	9,2	11,5	11,5	2,8		
Jul	10,1	14,6	15,1	3,8	6,6		
Aug	16,3	11,6	11,6	5,4	0,1		
Sep	19,2	3,1	13,7	13,1	0,3		
Oct	21,0	15,5	11,8	5,1	2,9		
Nov	15,8	14,1	11,2	-3,3	6,6		
Dec	15,8	8,3	12,6	1,9	5,0		
Total	13,9	13,4	11,7	7,5	1,7		

Table 6 – Seasonally adjusted wholesale trade sales at current prices

Month	R million				Month-on-month % change			
	2013	2014	2015	2016	2013	2014	2015	2016
Jan	130 379	149 173	144 284	155 010	1,1	3,7	-0,5	1,7
Feb	130 784	149 164	145 749	159 126	0,3	0,0	1,0	2,7
Mar	129 654	142 667	148 924	164 592	-0,9	-4,4	2,2	3,4
Apr	132 468	149 822	142 876		2,2	5,0	-4,1	
May	136 528	144 995	148 527		3,1	-3,2	4,0	
Jun	134 689	147 821	149 587		-1,3	1,9	0,7	
Jul	138 704	143 954	152 679		3,0	-2,6	2,1	
Aug	137 912	147 820	147 835		-0,6	2,7	-3,2	
Sep	135 564	150 482	151 703		-1,7	1,8	2,6	
Oct	141 609	148 079	153 725		4,5	-1,6	1,3	
Nov	146 348	144 036	151 533		3,3	-2,7	-1,4	
Dec	143 885	144 961	152 476		-1,7	0,6	0,6	

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

Type of dealer	Oct-15	Nov-15	Dec-15	Jan-16	Feb-16	Mar-16 1/
Fee or contract basis	7 391	5 146	5 392	4 396	7 005	5 513
Agricultural raw materials and livestock	10 045	13 664	14 245	11 903	13 662	14 545
Food, beverages and tobacco	26 772	25 395	31 773	19 932	23 954	28 577
Textiles, clothing and footwear	4 463	4 543	2 169	2 547	2 876	3 443
Other household goods except precious stones	17 002	18 414	14 096	13 590	15 997	15 977
Precious stones, jewellery and silverware	3 113	3 520	2 206	2 201	3 744	3 819
Solid, liquid and gaseous fuels and related products	29 281	28 481	29 833	22 291	24 355	25 357
Metals and metal ores	3 855	3 637	2 180	2 876	3 499	3 527
Construction and building materials	10 831	11 273	6 879	7 030	9 925	9 975
Other intermediate products, waste and scrap	8 252	7 718	6 233	6 461	7 142	6 452
Machinery, equipment and supplies	28 529	27 722	23 340	27 117	28 507	35 102
Other goods	16 616	16 846	16 468	13 493	15 125	15 047
Total	166 150	166 360	154 814	133 838	155 790	167 335

1/ Figures are preliminary.

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

Type of dealer	Oct-15	Nov-15	Dec-15	Jan-16	Feb-16	Mar-16
Fee or contract basis	23,1	-4,7	-4,8	-3,0	31,0	9,0
Agricultural raw materials and livestock	-6,4	24,9	19,9	41,7	39,7	57,0
Food, beverages and tobacco	10,6	6,1	6,3	6,6	10,2	13,7
Textiles, clothing and footwear	12,5	13,3	-13,9	20,4	0,2	-3,7
Other household goods except precious stones	3,8	15,8	5,1	2,5	15,3	-3,2
Precious stones, jewellery and silverware	14,3	54,1	5,4	-0,2	35,8	58,1
Solid, liquid and gaseous fuels and related products	-13,3	-10,3	-0,6	-13,6	-3,8	-12,7
Metals and metal ores	-22,5	-17,1	-3,5	-14,9	-15,6	-12,6
Construction and building materials	6,2	13,8	20,6	1,5	13,1	3,1
Other intermediate products, waste and scrap	0,3	-2,3	-11,6	0,8	9,2	2,3
Machinery, equipment and supplies	7,7	13,5	4,4	24,6	22,3	23,3
Other goods	20,0	10,3	12,5	-4,4	-0,5	11,5
Total	2,9	6,6	5,0	4,9	11,6	9,4

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

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 2015 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 2016 was 81,1%. The improved collection rate for February 2016 was 86,5%.

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: http://www.statssa.gov.za/?page_id=1849
Past publications	12	Past wholesale trade sales releases are available on the Stats SA website. To access the releases electronically, use the following link: http://www.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 1 183 enterprises from a population of 18 800 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 2015 from Stats SA’s business sampling frame (BSF). Strata were formed using a combination of Standard Industrial Classification and the measure of size classes for enterprises (see point 3 below).

The Neyman optimal allocation formula given below was used to allocate samples to each stratum:

$$n_h = n * (N_h * S_h) / [\sum (N_i * S_i)].$$

Neyman allocation formula not only allocates sample sizes to each stratum but also calculates the relative precision for each stratum as well as the relative precision for all strata. The relative precision for these strata was 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	2 076 368	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. Seasonal adjustment is a means of removing the estimated effects of normal seasonal variation from the series so that the effects of other influences on the series can be more clearly recognised. Seasonal adjustment does not aim to remove irregular or non-seasonal influences which may be present in any particular month. Influences that are volatile or unsystematic can still make it difficult to interpret the movement of the series even after adjustment for seasonal variations. Therefore, the month-to-month movements of seasonally adjusted estimates may not be reliable indicators of trend behaviour. The X-12-ARIMA procedure for wholesale trade sales is described in more detail on the Stats SA website: [Click to Download Seasonal adjustment Wholesale Trade Sales July 2015](#)

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	<p>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.</p> <p>From January 2012, wholesale trade sales at constant prices are compiled as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Deflate sales of dealers in agricultural raw materials and livestock using the PPI for agriculture. (2) Deflate sales of dealers in food, beverages and tobacco using the final manufacturing PPI for food products, beverages and tobacco. (3) Deflate sales of dealers in textiles, clothing and footwear using the final manufacturing PPI for textiles, clothing and footwear. (4) Deflate sales of dealers in solid, liquid and gaseous fuels and related products using the final manufacturing PPI for coal and petroleum products. (5) Deflate sales of dealers in machinery, equipment and supplies using the final manufacturing PPIs for general and special purpose machinery; household appliances and office machinery; and electrical machinery and apparatus and subcomponents. (6) Deflate the remaining wholesale trade sales using the headline PPI (final manufacturing) excluding the PPIs for food products, beverages and tobacco; textiles, clothing and footwear; coal and petroleum products; general and special purpose machinery; household appliances and office machinery; electrical machinery and apparatus and subcomponents; and transport equipment. The PPI for transport equipment is excluded because it measures producer prices of motor vehicles, which are not included in wholesale trade. <p>Total wholesale trade sales at constant prices is obtained by aggregating (1) to (6).</p>
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

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