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Department:
Statistics South Africa
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Private Bag X44, Pretoria, 0001, South Africa, ISibalo House, Koch Street, Salvokop, Pretoria, 0002
www.statssa.gov.za, info@statssa.gov.za, Tel +27 12 310 8911

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Retail trade sales (Preliminary)

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JP Terblanche
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Sales at constant 2019 prices: results for April 2024

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

	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24
Year-on-year % change, unadjusted	-1,0	3,2	-2,0	-0,7	2,3	0,6
Month-on-month % change, seasonally adjusted	1,0	1,5	-3,4	0,9	1,3	0,5
3-month % change, seasonally adjusted ¹	0,1	0,0	0,0	-0,3	-1,1	0,1

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

Measured in real terms (constant 2019 prices), retail trade sales increased by 0,6% year-on-year in April 2024. The largest contributors to this increase were retailers in:

- pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries (4,1% and contributing 0,3 of a percentage point); and
- household furniture, appliances and equipment (5,6% and contributing 0,2 of a percentage point) – see Tables 5 and 6.

Seasonally adjusted retail trade sales increased by 0,5% in April 2024 compared with March 2024. This followed month-on-month changes of 1,3% in March 2024 and 0,9% in February 2024.

Table B – Retail trade sales at constant 2019 prices for the latest three months by type of retailer

Type of retailer	Feb – Apr 2023 (R million)	Weight (%)	Feb – Apr 2024 (R million)	% change between Feb – Apr 2023 and Feb – Apr 2024	Contribution (% points) to the total % change
General dealers	119 770	43,6	122 885	2,6	1,1
Food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores	21 738	7,9	21 875	0,6	0,0
Pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries	20 774	7,6	20 906	0,6	0,0
Textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods	47 224	17,2	46 465	-1,6	-0,3
Household furniture, appliances and equipment	12 235	4,5	12 698	3,8	0,2
Hardware, paint and glass	21 626	7,9	21 033	-2,7	-0,2
All other retailers	31 081	11,3	30 666	-1,3	-0,1
Total	274 448	100,0	276 528	0,8	0,8

Retail trade sales increased by 0,8% in the three months ended April 2024 compared with the three months ended April 2023. The largest contributor to this increase was general dealers (2,6% and contributing 1,1 percentage points) – see Table B.

Table C – Seasonally adjusted retail trade sales at constant 2019 prices for the latest three months by type of retailer

Type of retailer	Nov 2023 – Jan 2024 (R million)	Weight (%)	Feb – Apr 2024 (R million)	% change between Nov 2023 – Jan 2024 and Feb – Apr 2024	Contribution (% points) to the total % change
General dealers	125 325	43,5	126 322	0,8	0,3
Food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores	22 348	7,8	22 579	1,0	0,1
Pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries	20 721	7,2	21 237	2,5	0,2
Textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods	52 314	18,1	51 447	-1,7	-0,3
Household furniture, appliances and equipment	13 506	4,7	13 545	0,3	0,0
Hardware, paint and glass	22 512	7,8	22 605	0,4	0,0
All other retailers	31 590	11,0	30 948	-2,0	-0,2
Total	288 315	100,0	288 684	0,1	0,1

Seasonally adjusted retail trade sales increased by 0,1% in the three months ended April 2024 compared with the previous three months. The largest positive contributors to the increase were:

- general dealers (0,8% and contributing 0,3 of a percentage point); and
- retailers in pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries (2,5% and contributing 0,2 of a percentage point).

The largest negative contributors were retailers in textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods (-1,7% and contributing -0,3 of a percentage point) and all 'other' retailers (-2,0% and contributing -0,2 of a percentage point) – see Table C.

Figure 1 – Retail trade sales at constant 2019 prices

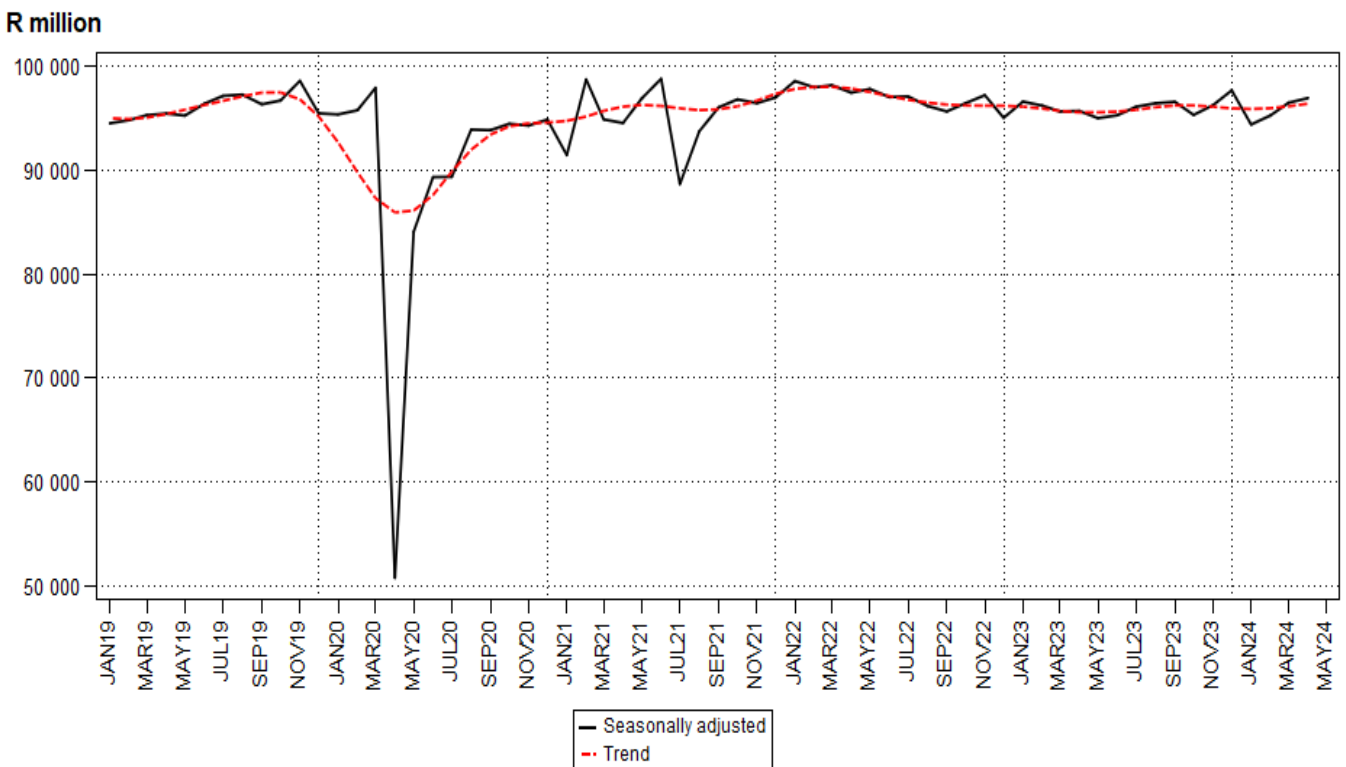
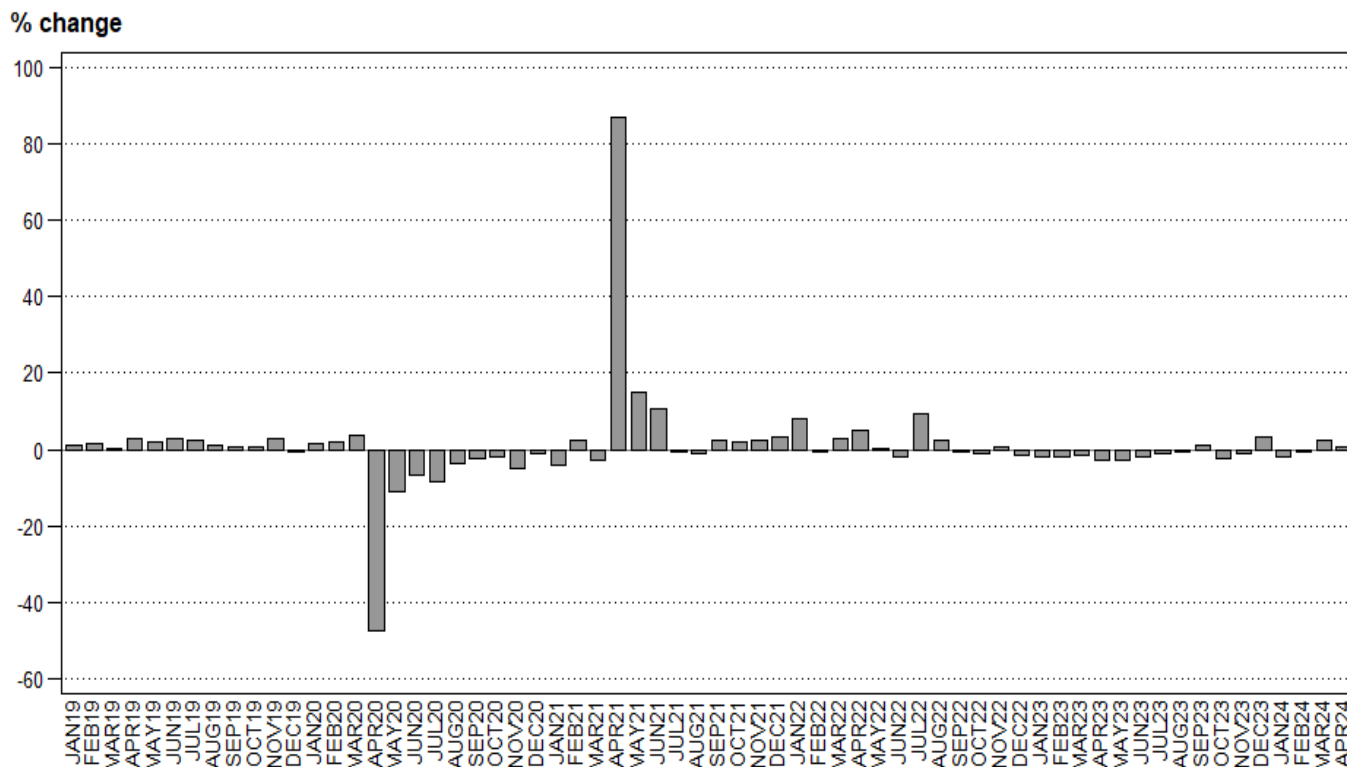


Figure 2 – Retail trade sales at constant 2019 prices: year-on-year percentage change



Sales at current prices: results for April 2024

Table D – Key growth rates in retail trade sales at current prices

	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24
Year-on-year % change, unadjusted	4,5	8,5	3,0	3,8	6,2	4,1
Month-on-month % change, seasonally adjusted	1,5	1,5	-2,6	1,2	1,0	0,7
3-month % change, seasonally adjusted ¹	1,4	1,3	1,3	0,9	0,0	0,9

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

Table E – Retail trade sales at current prices for the latest three months by type of retailer

Type of retailer	Feb – Apr 2023 (R million)	Weight (%)	Feb – Apr 2024 (R million)	% change between Feb – Apr 2023 and Feb – Apr 2024	Contribution (% points) to the total % change
General dealers	149 222	46,3	161 437	8,2	3,8
Food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores	27 523	8,5	28 476	3,5	0,3
Pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries	24 941	7,7	26 965	8,1	0,6
Textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods	49 653	15,4	49 408	-0,5	-0,1
Household furniture, appliances and equipment	12 550	3,9	12 730	1,4	0,1
Hardware, paint and glass	25 931	8,0	25 738	-0,7	-0,1
All other retailers	32 623	10,1	32 924	0,9	0,1
Total	322 443	100,0	337 680	4,7	4,7

Table F – Seasonally adjusted retail trade sales at current prices for the latest three months by type of retailer

Type of retailer	Nov 2023 – Jan 2024 (R million)	Weight (%)	Feb – Apr 2024 (R million)	% change between Nov 2023 – Jan 2024 and Feb – Apr 2024	Contribution (% points) to the total % change
General dealers	163 481	46,8	166 207	1,7	0,8
Food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores	28 916	8,3	29 427	1,8	0,1
Pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries	26 337	7,5	27 316	3,7	0,3
Textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods	55 457	15,9	54 658	-1,4	-0,2
Household furniture, appliances and equipment	13 572	3,9	13 514	-0,4	0,0
Hardware, paint and glass	27 424	7,9	27 615	0,7	0,1
All other retailers	33 807	9,7	33 244	-1,7	-0,2
Total	348 993	100,0	351 982	0,9	0,9


Risenga Maluleke
 Statistician-General

Tables

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

Month	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Jan	85 722	86 812	88 073	84 671	91 515	89 596	87 804
Feb	87 701	88 985	90 750	92 993	92 392	90 677	90 021
Mar	91 618	91 853	95 253	92 786	95 269	93 900	96 061
Apr	87 236	89 698	47 006	88 006	92 263	89 871	90 446
May	92 511	94 335	83 774	96 403	96 689	93 897	
Jun	89 348	91 723	85 416	94 509	92 772	91 113	
Jul	89 074	91 067	83 539	83 111	90 860	89 990	
Aug	93 882	95 103	91 524	90 406	92 525	92 208	
Sep	91 615	92 199	89 996	91 986	91 670	92 624	
Oct	92 765	93 484	91 618	93 427	92 424	90 331	
Nov	106 983	110 099	104 853	107 150	107 935	106 842	
Dec	127 432	127 205	125 707	129 590	127 868	131 985	
Total	1 135 887	1 152 563	1 077 509	1 145 038	1 164 182	1 153 034	

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

Month	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2024 year-to-date
Jan	1,3	1,5	-3,9	8,1	-2,1	-2,0	-2,0
Feb	1,5	2,0	2,5	-0,6	-1,9	-0,7	-1,4
Mar	0,3	3,7	-2,6	2,7	-1,4	2,3	-0,1
Apr	2,8	-47,6	87,2	4,8	-2,6	0,6	0,1
May	2,0	-11,2	15,1	0,3	-2,9		
Jun	2,7	-6,9	10,6	-1,8	-1,8		
Jul	2,2	-8,3	-0,5	9,3	-1,0		
Aug	1,3	-3,8	-1,2	2,3	-0,3		
Sep	0,6	-2,4	2,2	-0,3	1,0		
Oct	0,8	-2,0	2,0	-1,1	-2,3		
Nov	2,9	-4,8	2,2	0,7	-1,0		
Dec	-0,2	-1,2	3,1	-1,3	3,2		
Total	1,5	-6,5	6,3	1,7	-1,0		

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

Month	R million				Month-on-month % change			
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2021	2022	2023	2024
Jan	91 444	98 574	96 596	94 388	-3,6	1,6	1,6	-3,4
Feb	98 734	97 962	96 203	95 262	8,0	-0,6	-0,4	0,9
Mar	94 880	98 176	95 651	96 486	-3,9	0,2	-0,6	1,3
Apr	94 534	97 459	95 696	96 936	-0,4	-0,7	0,0	0,5
May	96 902	97 807	95 000		2,5	0,4	-0,7	
Jun	98 796	97 027	95 280		2,0	-0,8	0,3	
Jul	88 647	97 099	96 099		-10,3	0,1	0,9	
Aug	93 736	96 181	96 437		5,7	-0,9	0,4	
Sep	96 039	95 647	96 576		2,5	-0,6	0,1	
Oct	96 811	96 440	95 313		0,8	0,8	-1,3	
Nov	96 448	97 212	96 249		-0,4	0,8	1,0	
Dec	96 988	95 033	97 678		0,6	-2,2	1,5	

Table 4 – Retail trade sales at constant 2019 prices by type of retailer (R million)

Type of retailer	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24
General dealers	45 850	54 592	37 179	40 712	44 363	37 810
Food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores	7 348	10 566	6 813	7 166	7 549	7 160
Pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries	6 632	7 416	6 980	6 629	6 623	7 654
Textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods	20 626	32 287	15 077	14 191	15 844	16 430
Household furniture, appliances and equipment	5 740	6 189	4 047	4 021	4 540	4 137
Hardware, paint and glass	8 677	8 030	6 603	6 967	6 963	7 103
All other retailers	11 969	12 905	11 105	10 335	10 179	10 152
Total	106 842	131 985	87 804	90 021	96 061	90 446

Table 5 – Year-on-year percentage change in retail trade sales at constant 2019 prices by type of retailer

Type of retailer	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24
General dealers	-1,1	2,9	0,5	1,0	6,3	0,2
Food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores	-2,5	0,1	-0,6	1,4	1,6	-1,1
Pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries	-2,9	-1,7	-3,0	2,6	-4,9	4,1
Textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods	-0,6	9,0	-6,5	-6,3	0,8	0,4
Household furniture, appliances and equipment	-1,7	6,0	3,6	1,0	4,7	5,6
Hardware, paint and glass	-3,6	-1,2	-4,7	-1,8	-4,7	-1,7
All other retailers	3,1	-1,7	-4,2	-2,5	-2,2	0,8
Total	-1,0	3,2	-2,0	-0,7	2,3	0,6

Table 6 – Contribution of each type of retailer to the year-on-year percentage change in retail trade sales at constant 2019 prices (percentage points)

Type of retailer	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24
General dealers	-0,5	1,2	0,2	0,4	2,8	0,1
Food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores	-0,2	0,0	0,0	0,1	0,1	-0,1
Pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries	-0,2	-0,1	-0,2	0,2	-0,4	0,3
Textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods	-0,1	2,1	-1,2	-1,1	0,1	0,1
Household furniture, appliances and equipment	-0,1	0,3	0,2	0,0	0,2	0,2
Hardware, paint and glass	-0,3	-0,1	-0,4	-0,1	-0,4	-0,1
All other retailers	0,3	-0,2	-0,5	-0,3	-0,2	0,1
Total	-1,0	3,2	-2,0	-0,7	2,3	0,6

Table 7 – Seasonally adjusted retail trade sales at constant 2019 prices by type of retailer (R million)

Type of retailer	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	Month-on-month % change
General dealers	41 479	42 050	41 796	41 805	42 654	41 863	-1,9
Food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores	7 381	7 493	7 474	7 609	7 465	7 505	0,5
Pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries	6 891	6 917	6 913	7 220	6 739	7 278	8,0
Textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods	17 640	18 702	15 972	16 518	17 315	17 614	1,7
Household furniture, appliances and equipment	4 488	4 510	4 508	4 464	4 533	4 548	0,3
Hardware, paint and glass	7 492	7 582	7 438	7 455	7 412	7 738	4,4
All other retailers	10 878	10 423	10 289	10 191	10 368	10 389	0,2
Total	96 249	97 678	94 388	95 262	96 486	96 936	0,5

Table 8 – Retail trade sales at current prices (R million)

Month	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Jan	82 971	85 645	89 225	87 657	98 088	103 070	106 210
Feb	85 111	88 067	92 243	96 648	99 637	105 673	109 736
Mar	88 922	91 279	97 127	97 188	103 523	110 627	117 499
Apr	85 156	89 267	48 146	92 363	100 564	106 143	110 445
May	90 466	94 245	85 102	101 285	106 472	111 130	
Jun	87 391	91 783	86 913	99 827	103 098	108 294	
Jul	87 235	91 125	85 143	87 917	101 412	106 851	
Aug	91 872	95 451	93 621	96 081	104 425	110 113	
Sep	89 766	92 741	92 271	97 783	104 136	111 122	
Oct	90 954	93 950	94 381	99 665	105 329	108 699	
Nov	105 165	110 893	108 261	114 204	122 892	128 425	
Dec	125 230	128 112	129 835	138 076	145 478	157 900	
Total	1 110 239	1 152 563	1 102 268	1 208 694	1 295 054	1 368 047	

Table 9 – Year-on-year percentage change in retail trade sales at current prices

Month	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2024 year-to-date
Jan	3,2	4,2	-1,8	11,9	5,1	3,0	3,0
Feb	3,5	4,7	4,8	3,1	6,1	3,8	3,5
Mar	2,7	6,4	0,1	6,5	6,9	6,2	4,4
Apr	4,8	-46,1	91,8	8,9	5,5	4,1	4,3
May	4,2	-9,7	19,0	5,1	4,4		
Jun	5,0	-5,3	14,9	3,3	5,0		
Jul	4,5	-6,6	3,3	15,3	5,4		
Aug	3,9	-1,9	2,6	8,7	5,4		
Sep	3,3	-0,5	6,0	6,5	6,7		
Oct	3,3	0,5	5,6	5,7	3,2		
Nov	5,4	-2,4	5,5	7,6	4,5		
Dec	2,3	1,3	6,3	5,4	8,5		
Total	3,8	-4,4	9,7	7,1	5,6		

Table 10 – Seasonally adjusted retail trade sales at current prices

Month	R million				Month-on-month % change			
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2021	2022	2023	2024
Jan	95 063	106 121	111 765	114 886	-3,4	2,2	2,7	-2,6
Feb	102 872	105 847	112 195	116 252	8,2	-0,3	0,4	1,2
Mar	99 357	106 048	112 408	117 462	-3,4	0,2	0,2	1,0
Apr	98 781	106 401	112 777	118 268	-0,6	0,3	0,3	0,7
May	101 531	107 436	112 207		2,8	1,0	-0,5	
Jun	104 331	107 632	112 797		2,8	0,2	0,5	
Jul	93 255	108 024	113 988		-10,6	0,4	1,1	
Aug	99 365	108 151	114 620		6,6	0,1	0,6	
Sep	101 942	108 326	115 367		2,6	0,2	0,7	
Oct	103 103	109 723	114 491		1,1	1,3	-0,8	
Nov	103 331	111 191	116 164		0,2	1,3	1,5	
Dec	103 845	108 858	117 943		0,5	-2,1	1,5	

Table 11 – Retail trade sales at current prices by type of retailer (R million)

Type of retailer	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24
General dealers	59 647	70 979	48 543	53 273	58 314	49 850
Food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores	9 515	13 699	8 895	9 301	9 822	9 353
Pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries	8 357	9 376	8 845	8 492	8 542	9 931
Textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods	21 818	34 153	15 970	15 060	16 844	17 504
Household furniture, appliances and equipment	5 794	6 205	4 069	4 040	4 545	4 145
Hardware, paint and glass	10 514	9 723	8 028	8 515	8 522	8 701
All other retailers	12 780	13 766	11 859	11 054	10 910	10 960
Total	128 425	157 900	106 210	109 736	117 499	110 445

Table 12 – Year-on-year percentage change in retail trade sales at current prices by type of retailer

Type of retailer	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24
General dealers	7,0	11,0	7,6	7,1	12,0	5,2
Food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores	3,2	5,8	3,8	5,0	4,1	1,3
Pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries	4,6	6,1	4,5	10,7	2,1	11,5
Textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods	1,1	10,8	-5,1	-5,2	1,9	1,6
Household furniture, appliances and equipment	-1,3	5,7	2,8	-0,5	1,5	3,3
Hardware, paint and glass	0,1	2,6	-1,6	0,9	-2,9	-0,2
All other retailers	6,7	1,5	-1,1	0,3	-0,5	2,9
Total	4,5	8,5	3,0	3,8	6,2	4,1

Table 13 – Contribution of each type of retailer to the year-on-year percentage change in retail trade sales at current prices (percentage points)

Type of retailer	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24
General dealers	3,2	4,8	3,3	3,3	5,7	2,3
Food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores	0,2	0,5	0,3	0,4	0,3	0,1
Pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries	0,3	0,4	0,4	0,8	0,2	1,0
Textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods	0,2	2,3	-0,8	-0,8	0,3	0,3
Household furniture, appliances and equipment	-0,1	0,2	0,1	0,0	0,1	0,1
Hardware, paint and glass	0,0	0,2	-0,1	0,1	-0,2	0,0
All other retailers	0,6	0,1	-0,1	0,0	0,0	0,3
Total	4,5	8,5	3,0	3,8	6,2	4,1

Table 14 – Seasonally adjusted retail trade sales at current prices by type of retailer (R million)

Type of retailer	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	Month-on-month % change
General dealers	53 939	54 691	54 851	54 972	55 741	55 494	-0,4
Food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores	9 554	9 731	9 631	9 899	9 820	9 708	-1,1
Pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries	8 711	8 802	8 824	9 251	8 699	9 366	7,7
Textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods	18 740	19 798	16 919	17 517	18 389	18 752	2,0
Household furniture, appliances and equipment	4 529	4 520	4 523	4 467	4 512	4 535	0,5
Hardware, paint and glass	9 101	9 243	9 080	9 151	9 160	9 304	1,6
All other retailers	11 590	11 159	11 058	10 994	11 141	11 109	-0,3
Total	116 164	117 943	114 886	116 252	117 462	118 268	0,7

Explanatory notes

- Introduction** 1 Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) conducts a monthly survey of the retail trade industry, covering retail enterprises (see point 3 below). This survey is based on a sample drawn from Stats SA's 2023 statistical business register (SBR) that contains businesses registered for value-added tax (VAT). Published retail trade sales estimates include VAT.
- Purpose of the survey** 2 The results of the monthly retail 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** 3 This survey covers retail enterprises according to the following types of retailers:
- general dealers:
 - retail trade in non-specialised stores with food, beverages and tobacco predominating; and
 - 'other' retail trade in non-specialised stores.
 - retailers in food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores:
 - retailers in fresh fruit and vegetables;
 - retailers in meat and meat products;
 - retailers in bakery products;
 - retailers in beverages;
 - retailers in tobacco; and
 - retailers in 'other' food in specialised stores.
 - retailers in pharmaceutical and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries;
 - retailers in textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods:
 - retailers in men's and boys' clothing;
 - retailers in ladies', girls' and infants' clothing;
 - general outfitters; and
 - retailers in footwear.
 - retailers in household furniture, appliances and equipment;
 - retailers in hardware, paint and glass; and
 - all 'other' retailers:
 - retailers in reading matter and stationery;
 - retailers in jewellery, watches and clocks;
 - retailers in sport goods and entertainment requisites;
 - retailers in 'other' specialised stores;
 - repair of personal and household goods;
 - retail trade in second-hand goods in stores; and
 - retail trade not in stores.
- 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. Each enterprise is classified to the industry which reflects its predominant activity. Statistics in this publication are presented at SIC group (four digit) level.
- Collection rate** 5 The preliminary collection rate for the survey on retail trade sales for April 2024 was 74,7%. The revised collection rate for March 2024 was 79,9%.

Statistical unit 6 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 7 Revised figures are mainly due to late submission of data to Stats SA, or respondents reporting revisions or corrections to their figures. The reasons for routine revisions are outlined in the following schedule. Any unscheduled revisions will be promptly indicated in relevant tables to maintain transparency and accuracy. It is important to note that seasonally adjusted figures are revised monthly.

Statistical release	Reason for revision	Period subject to revision
Apr-24	Additional information from respondents	Mar-24
May-24	Additional information from respondents	Apr-24
Jun-24	Additional information from respondents	May-24
Jul-24	Additional information from respondents New sample	Jan-02 - Jun-24
Aug-24	Additional information from respondents	Jul-24
Sep-24	Additional information from respondents	Aug-24
Oct-24	Additional information from respondents	Sep-24
Nov-24	Additional information from respondents	Oct-24
Dec-24	Additional information from respondents	Nov-24
Jan-25	Additional information from respondents	Dec-24
Feb-25	Additional information from respondents	Jan-25
Mar-25	Additional information from respondents	Feb-25
New weights for retail deflators in 2025/26 - periodic, approximately four- to five-year intervals		
New base year in 2027/28 - periodic, approximately four- to five-year intervals		

Related publications 8 Users may also refer to the following publication available from Stats SA:

- *Stats in Brief* issued annually.

Rounding-off of figures 9 Where figures have been rounded off, discrepancies may occur between sums of the component items and the totals.

Historical data 10 Historical retail 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 11 Past retail trade sales releases are available on the Stats SA website. To access the releases electronically, use the following link:
[Click to download past releases.](#)

Technical notes

- Survey methodology and design**
- 1 The survey is conducted on a monthly basis. Questionnaires are sent to a sample of 3 038 enterprises from a population of 22 677 enterprises. Completed questionnaires are required to be returned to Stats SA within ten days after the end of the reference month. Fax, email and telephone reminders are used to follow up on non-respondents.
 - 2 A stratified random sample was drawn at the SIC four-digit level in April 2023 from Stats SA's statistical business register (SBR). Strata were formed using a combination of the Standard Industrial Classification and the measure of size classes for enterprises (see point three below).

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

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

Neyman allocation formula not only allocates sample sizes to each stratum, but also calculates the relative precision for each stratum as well as the relative precision for all strata. The relative precision for these strata did not exceed 8,0%.

- Class limits**
- 3 The retail sampling frame is divided into four size groups. All large and medium enterprises (size groups one and two) are completely enumerated. Simple random sampling is applied to size groups three and four (small and very small) enterprises. The total value of sales of the large and medium enterprises (size groups one and two) is added to the weighted totals of size groups three and four to reflect the total value of sales.

Measure of size classes (Rand)

Enterprise size	Size group	Lower limit	Upper limit
Very small	4	1 461 520	8 000 000
Small	3	8 000 001	38 000 000
Medium	2	38 000 001	78 000 000
Large	1	78 000 001	

- 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 Seasonal Adjustment Program developed by the United States Census Bureau. Seasonal adjustment is a means of removing the estimated effects of normal seasonal variation from the series so that the effects of other influences on the series can be recognised more clearly. 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 retail trade sales is described in more detail on the Stats SA website: [Click to download seasonal adjustment retail trade sales December 2022](#).
- Trend cycle**
- 6 The trend is the long-term pattern or movement of a time series. The X-12 Seasonal Adjustment Program is used for smoothing seasonally adjusted estimates to estimate the underlying trend cycle.

- Constant prices** **7** For January 2002 to December 2007 retail trade sales at constant prices were calculated using the consumer price index (CPI) for goods, excluding petrol and purchases of vehicles, for all urban areas to deflate total sales at current prices. From January 2008 onwards total retail trade sales at constant prices are obtained by adding up the deflated sales by type of retailer.
 - 8** Retail trade sales at constant prices by type of retailer are obtained by deflating estimated sales at current prices by the relevant weighted price index. To obtain total retail trade sales at constant prices, estimates of the deflated sales for each type of retailer are aggregated.
 - Reliability of estimates** **9** 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 retail industry in South Africa. Estimates are subject to sampling and non-sampling errors.
 - 10** Inaccuracies may occur because of imperfections in reporting by enterprises and errors made in the collection and processing of the data. Inaccuracies of this kind are referred to as non-sampling errors. Every effort is made to minimise non-sampling errors by careful design of questionnaires, testing them in pilot studies, editing reported data and implementing efficient operating procedures. Fluctuations may occur in consecutive months as a result of seasonal and economic factors.
 - Relative standard error** **11** One measure of the likely difference is given by the standard error (SE), which indicates the extent to which an estimate might have varied by chance because only a sample of enterprises was used. The relative standard error (RSE) provides an immediate indication of the percentage errors likely to have occurred due to sampling, and thus avoids the need to refer to the size of the estimate.
- Estimates of total retail trade sales within 95% confidence limits – April 2024**
- | | Lower limit
(R million) | Sales
(R million) | Upper limit
(R million) | Relative standard error
(RSE) (%) |
|--------------------|----------------------------|----------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Retail trade sales | 108 108 | 110 445 | 112 782 | 1,0 |
- Month-on-month percentage change** **12** 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** **13** 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)** **14** The contribution (percentage points) to the year-on-year percentage change for any given period is calculated by multiplying the percentage change of each type of retailer by its corresponding weight, divided by 100. The weight is the percentage contribution of each type of retailer to total retail 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 <i>System of National Accounts</i> (SNA) in the same way as in the <i>Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities</i> (SIC), Fifth Edition, Report No. 09-90-02 of January 1993.	
Retail trade	Retail trade includes the resale (sale without transformation) of new and used goods and products to the general public for household use.	
Retailer	A retailer is an enterprise deriving more than 50% of its turnover from sales of goods to the general public for household use.	
Symbols and abbreviations	CPI	Consumer price index
	GDP	Gross domestic product
	ISIC	International Standard Industrial Classification
	SARS	South African Revenue Service
	SBR	Statistical Business Register
	SIC	Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities
	SNA	System of National Accounts
	Stats SA	Statistics South Africa
	VAT	Value-added tax
	*	Revised figures

Technical enquiries

Raquel Floris	Telephone number: (012) 337 6488 Email: raquelf@statssa.gov.za
JP Terblanche	Telephone number: (012) 310 2965 Email: juan-pierret@statssa.gov.za

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Stats SA publishes approximately 300 different statistical releases each year. It is not economically viable to produce them in more than one of South Africa's 12 official languages. Since the releases are used extensively, not only locally but also by international economic and social-scientific communities, Stats SA releases are published in English only.

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General enquiries

User information services	Telephone number: (012) 310 8600 Email: info@statssa.gov.za
Orders/subscription services	Telephone number: (012) 310 8619 Email: millies@statssa.gov.za
Postal address	Private Bag X44, Pretoria, 0001

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