STATISTICAL RELEASE

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Retail trade sales
(Preliminary)

March 2024

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Dipalopalo tsa Aforikaborwa ● Dipalopalo tsa Aforika Borwa ● Ezazibalo zaseNingizimu Afrika ● Tshitatistika Afrika Tshipembe ● Tinhlayo Afrika-Dzonga

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IMPROVING LIVES THROUGH DATA ECOSYSTEMS

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

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

[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 2,3% year-on-year in March 2024. The largest contributor to this increase was general dealers (6,4% and contributing 2,8 percentage points) – see Tables 5 and 6.

Seasonally adjusted retail trade sales increased by 1,4% in March 2024 compared with February 2024. This followed month-on-month changes of 1,0% in February 2024 and -3,3% in January 2024.

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

Type of retailer	Jan – Mar 2023 (R million)	Weight (%)	Jan – Mar 2024 (R million)	% change between Jan – Mar 2023 and Jan – Mar 2024	Contribution (% points) to the total % change
General dealers	119 036	43,4	122 301	2,7	1,2
Food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores	21 352	7,8	21 530	0,8	0,1
Pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries	20 623	7,5	20 260	-1,8	-0,1
Textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods	46 995	17,1	45 132	-4,0	-0,7
Household furniture, appliances and equipment	12 227	4,5	12 545	2,6	0,1
Hardware, paint and glass	21 333	7,8	20 491	-3,9	-0,3
All other retailers	32 607	11,9	31 634	-3,0	-0,4
Total	**274 173**	**100,0**	**273 893**	**-0,1**	**-0,1**

Retail trade sales decreased by 0,1% in the first quarter of 2024 compared with the first quarter of 2023. The largest negative contributors to this decrease were:
- retailers in textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods (-4,0% and contributing -0,7 of a percentage point);
- all 'other' retailers (-3,0% and contributing -0,4 of a percentage point); and
- retailers in hardware, paint and glass (-3,9% and contributing -0,3 of a percentage point).

The largest positive contributor was general dealers (2,7% and contributing 1,2 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	Oct – Dec 2023 (R million)	Weight (%)	Jan – Mar 2024 (R million)	% change between Oct – Dec 2023 and Jan – Mar 2024	Contribution (% points) to the total % change
General dealers	124 132	42,9	126 649	2,0	0,9
Food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores	22 373	7,7	22 534	0,7	0,1
Pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries	20 716	7,2	20 868	0,7	0,1
Textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods	54 717	18,9	49 866	-8,9	-1,7
Household furniture, appliances and equipment	13 332	4,6	13 435	0,8	0,0
Hardware, paint and glass	22 439	7,8	22 170	-1,2	-0,1
All other retailers	31 358	10,8	30 804	-1,8	-0,2
Total	**289 068**	**100,0**	**286 326**	**-0,9**	**-0,9**

Seasonally adjusted retail trade sales decreased by 0,9% in the first quarter of 2024 compared with the fourth quarter of 2023. The largest negative contributor to the decrease was retailers in textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods (-8,9% and contributing -1,7 percentage points). The largest positive contributor was general dealers (2,0% and contributing 0,9 of a percentage point) – see Table C.

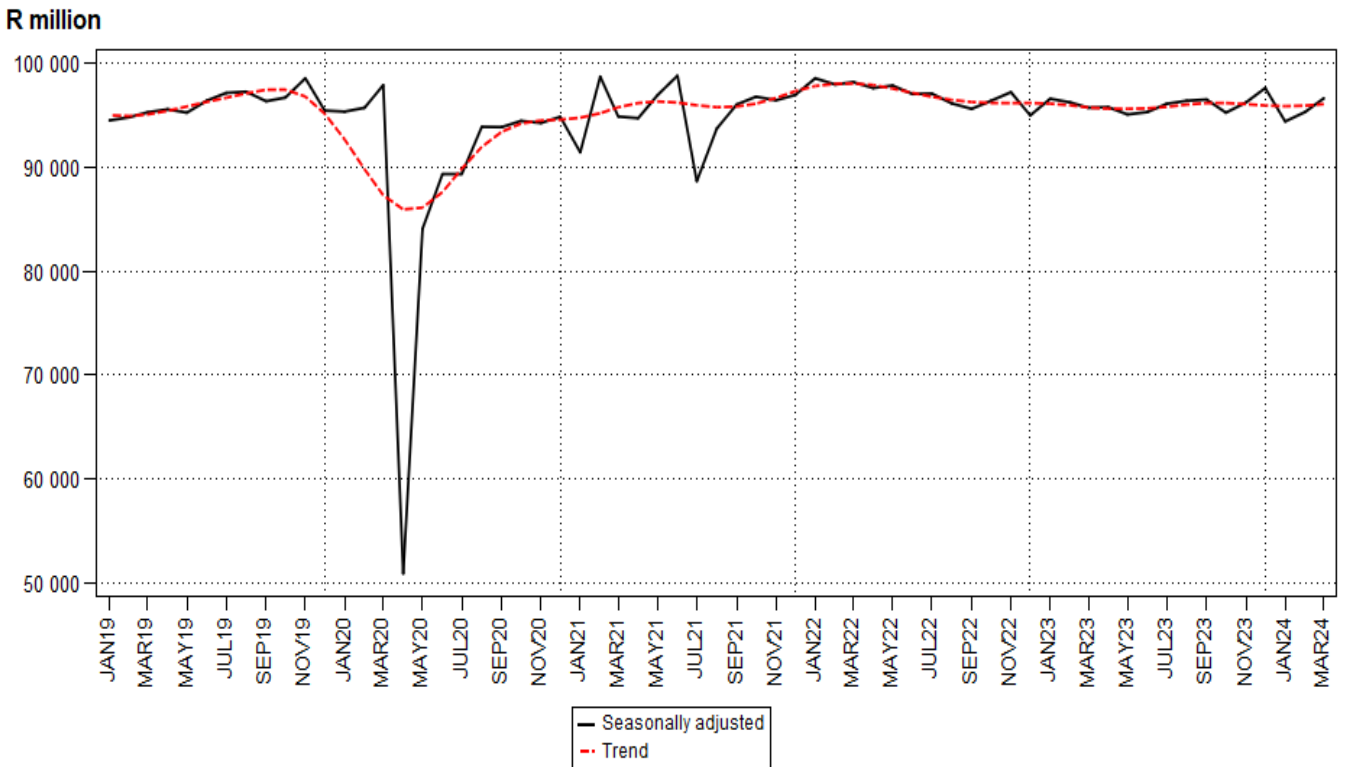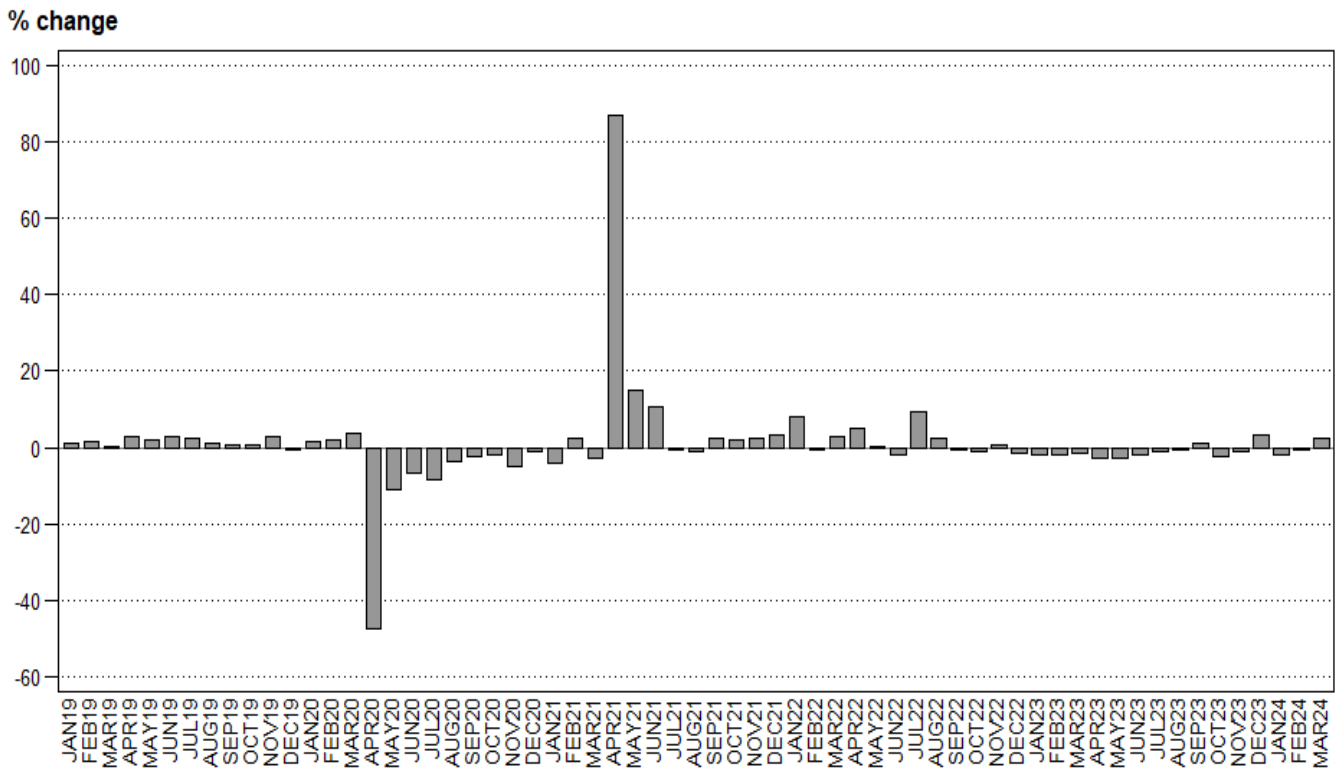**Figure 1 – Retail trade sales at constant 2019 prices**

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

Sales at current prices: results for March 2024

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

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

[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	Jan – Mar 2023 (R million)	Weight (%)	Jan – Mar 2024 (R million)	% change between Jan – Mar 2023 and Jan – Mar 2024	Contribution (% points) to the total % change
General dealers	146 923	46,0	160 192	9,0	4,2
Food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores	26 859	8,4	28 021	4,3	0,4
Pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries	24 498	7,7	25 915	5,8	0,4
Textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods	49 246	15,4	47 895	-2,7	-0,4
Household furniture, appliances and equipment	12 497	3,9	12 590	0,7	0,0
Hardware, paint and glass	25 376	7,9	25 014	-1,4	-0,1
All other retailers	33 971	10,6	33 839	-0,4	0,0
Total	**319 370**	**100,0**	**333 469**	**4,4**	**4,4**

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

Type of retailer	Oct – Dec 2023 (R million)	Weight (%)	Jan – Mar 2024 (R million)	% change between Oct – Dec 2023 and Jan – Mar 2024	Contribution (% points) to the total % change
General dealers	161 074	46,2	165 906	3,0	1,4
Food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores	28 966	8,3	29 377	1,4	0,1
Pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries	26 189	7,5	26 743	2,1	0,2
Textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods	58 029	16,7	52 848	-8,9	-1,5
Household furniture, appliances and equipment	13 449	3,9	13 440	-0,1	0,0
Hardware, paint and glass	27 270	7,8	27 268	0,0	0,0
All other retailers	33 385	9,6	33 170	-0,6	-0,1
Total	**348 363**	**100,0**	**348 754**	**0,1**	**0,1**

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Statistician-General

Tables

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

Month	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024 [1]
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	96 068
Apr	87 236	89 698	47 006	88 006	92 263	89 871	
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**	

[1] Figures for the latest month are preliminary.

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		
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	91 420	98 552	96 583	94 392	-3,6	1,7	1,7	-3,3
Feb	98 716	97 956	96 230	95 308	8,0	-0,6	-0,4	1,0
Mar	94 869	98 183	95 716	96 626	-3,9	0,2	-0,5	1,4
Apr	94 710	97 617	95 776		-0,2	-0,6	0,1	
May	96 928	97 855	95 069		2,3	0,2	-0,7	
Jun	98 805	97 038	95 301		1,9	-0,8	0,2	
Jul	88 629	97 083	96 095		-10,3	0,0	0,8	
Aug	93 702	96 136	96 388		5,7	-1,0	0,3	
Sep	96 027	95 606	96 509		2,5	-0,6	0,1	
Oct	96 778	96 383	95 237		0,8	0,8	-1,3	
Nov	96 434	97 214	96 221		-0,4	0,9	1,0	
Dec	96 947	94 977	97 610		0,5	-2,3	1,4	

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

Type of retailer	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24 [1]
General dealers	37 179	45 850	54 592	37 179	40 712	44 410
Food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores	7 820	7 348	10 566	6 813	7 166	7 551
Pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries	7 218	6 632	7 416	6 980	6 629	6 651
Textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods	16 502	20 626	32 287	15 077	14 191	15 864
Household furniture, appliances and equipment	4 191	5 740	6 189	4 047	4 021	4 477
Hardware, paint and glass	7 876	8 677	8 030	6 603	6 967	6 921
All other retailers	9 545	11 969	12 905	11 105	10 335	10 194
Total	**90 331**	**106 842**	**131 985**	**87 804**	**90 021**	**96 068**

[1] Figures are preliminary.

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

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

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

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

Type of retailer	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Month-on-month % change
General dealers	40 648	41 439	42 045	41 850	41 918	42 881	2,3
Food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores	7 503	7 379	7 491	7 471	7 605	7 458	-1,9
Pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries	6 928	6 882	6 906	6 896	7 210	6 762	-6,2
Textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods	18 332	17 695	18 690	15 981	16 535	17 350	4,9
Household furniture, appliances and equipment	4 348	4 482	4 502	4 499	4 453	4 483	0,7
Hardware, paint and glass	7 390	7 482	7 567	7 419	7 412	7 339	-1,0
All other retailers	10 087	10 861	10 410	10 276	10 176	10 352	1,7
Total	**95 237**	**96 221**	**97 610**	**94 392**	**95 308**	**96 626**	**1,4**

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

Month	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024 [1]
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	117 523
Apr	85 156	89 267	48 146	92 363	100 564	106 143	
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**	

[1] Figures for the latest month are preliminary.

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		
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	95 088	106 066	111 783	114 926	-3,4	2,1	2,8	-2,5
Feb	102 886	105 858	112 225	116 278	8,2	-0,2	0,4	1,2
Mar	99 396	106 079	112 485	117 550	-3,4	0,2	0,2	1,1
Apr	98 781	106 369	112 719		-0,6	0,3	0,2	
May	101 275	107 306	112 178		2,5	0,9	-0,5	
Jun	104 515	107 863	113 132		3,2	0,5	0,9	
Jul	93 201	108 025	113 918		-10,8	0,2	0,7	
Aug	99 394	108 174	114 596		6,6	0,1	0,6	
Sep	101 936	108 294	115 275		2,6	0,1	0,6	
Oct	103 129	109 628	114 420		1,2	1,2	-0,7	
Nov	103 331	111 204	116 031		0,2	1,4	1,4	
Dec	103 876	108 778	117 912		0,5	-2,2	1,6	

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

Type of retailer	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24 [1]
General dealers	48 094	59 647	70 979	48 543	53 273	58 376
Food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores	10 086	9 515	13 699	8 895	9 301	9 825
Pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries	9 062	8 357	9 376	8 845	8 492	8 578
Textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods	17 479	21 818	34 153	15 970	15 060	16 865
Household furniture, appliances and equipment	4 253	5 794	6 205	4 069	4 040	4 481
Hardware, paint and glass	9 529	10 514	9 723	8 028	8 515	8 471
All other retailers	10 195	12 780	13 766	11 859	11 054	10 926
Total	**108 699**	**128 425**	**157 900**	**106 210**	**109 736**	**117 523**

[1] Figures are preliminary.

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

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

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

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

Type of retailer	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Month-on-month % change
General dealers	52 541	53 866	54 667	54 904	55 082	55 920	*1,5*
Food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores	9 677	9 555	9 734	9 636	9 909	9 832	*-0,8*
Pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries	8 711	8 696	8 782	8 796	9 239	8 708	*-5,7*
Textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods	19 456	18 728	19 845	16 959	17 474	18 415	*5,4*
Household furniture, appliances and equipment	4 415	4 525	4 509	4 517	4 458	4 465	*0,2*
Hardware, paint and glass	8 950	9 090	9 230	9 065	9 129	9 074	*-0,6*
All other retailers	10 670	11 570	11 145	11 048	10 985	11 137	*1,4*
Total	**114 420**	**116 031**	**117 912**	**114 926**	**116 278**	**117 550**	***1,1***

Explanatory notes

Introduction	1	Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) conducts a monthly survey of the retail trade industry, covering retail enterprises (see point 4 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).
	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 retail trade sales estimates include VAT.
Purpose of the survey	3	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	4	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	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 group (four digit) level.
Collection rate	6	The preliminary collection rate for the survey on retail trade sales for March 2024 was 77,3%. The improved collection rate for February 2024 was 80,5%.

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:

- *Stats in Brief* 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 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	**12**	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:

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

Neyman allocation formula not only allocates sample sizes to each stratum, but also calculates the relative precision for each stratum as well as the relative precision for all strata. The relative precision for these strata 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 – March 2024

	Lower limit (R million)	Sales (R million)	Upper limit (R million)	Relative standard error (RSE) (%)
Retail trade sales	114 506	117 523	120 540	1,3

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 *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.

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   CPI   Consumer price index
abbreviations   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

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General information

Stats SA publishes approximately 300 different statistical releases each year. It is not economically viable to produce them in more than one of South Africa's 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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