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Retail trade sales (Preliminary)

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Contents

Sales at constant 2019 prices: results for November 2023	2
Table A – Key growth rates in retail trade sales at constant 2019 prices.....	2
Table B – Retail trade sales at constant 2019 prices for the latest three months by type of retailer	2
Table C – Seasonally adjusted retail trade sales at constant 2019 prices for the latest three months by type of retailer	3
Figure 1 – Retail trade sales at constant 2019 prices	3
Figure 2 – Retail trade sales at constant 2019 prices: year-on-year percentage change.....	4
Sales at current prices: results for November 2023.....	5
Table D – Key growth rates in retail trade sales at current prices.....	5
Table E – Retail trade sales at current prices for the latest three months by type of retailer	5
Table F – Seasonally adjusted retail trade sales at current prices for the latest three months by type of retailer	5
Tables.....	6
Table 1 – Retail trade sales at constant 2019 prices (R million)	6
Table 2 – Year-on-year percentage change in retail trade sales at constant 2019 prices	6
Table 3 – Seasonally adjusted retail trade sales at constant 2019 prices	6
Table 4 – Retail trade sales at constant 2019 prices by type of retailer (R million)	7
Table 5 – Year-on-year percentage change in retail trade sales at constant 2019 prices by type of retailer	7
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)	7
Table 7 – Seasonally adjusted retail trade sales at constant 2019 prices by type of retailer (R million)	8
Table 8 – Retail trade sales at current prices (R million).....	9
Table 9 – Year-on-year percentage change in retail trade sales at current prices	9
Table 10 – Seasonally adjusted retail trade sales at current prices	9
Table 11 – Retail trade sales at current prices by type of retailer (R million)	10
Table 12 – Year-on-year percentage change in retail trade sales at current prices by type of retailer.....	10
Table 13 – Contribution of each type of retailer to the year-on-year percentage change in retail trade sales at current prices (percentage points)	10
Table 14 – Seasonally adjusted retail trade sales at current prices by type of retailer (R million)	11
Survey information.....	12
Technical notes	14
Glossary.....	16
Technical enquiries.....	16
General information	17

Sales at constant 2019 prices: results for November 2023

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

	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23
Year-on-year % change, unadjusted	-1,8	-1,0	-0,3	1,0	-2,3	-0,9
Month-on-month % change, seasonally adjusted	0,4	0,6	0,2	0,0	-1,4	0,4
3-month % change, seasonally adjusted ¹	-0,8	-0,6	0,2	0,7	0,3	-0,5

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 decreased by 0,9% year-on-year in November 2023. The largest negative contributors to this decrease were retailers in:

- hardware, paint and glass (-5,3% and contributing -0,4 of a percentage point); and
- textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods (-2,0% and contributing -0,4 of a percentage point) – see Tables 5 and 6.

Seasonally adjusted retail trade sales increased by 0,4% in November 2023 compared with October 2023. This followed month-on-month changes of -1,4% in October 2023 and 0,0% in September 2023.

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

Type of retailer	Sep – Nov 2022 (R million)	Weight (%)	Sep – Nov 2023 (R million)	% change between Sep – Nov 2022 and Sep – Nov 2023	Contribution (% points) to the total % change
General dealers	128 072	43,9	125 783	-1,8	-0,8
Food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores	22 443	7,7	22 478	0,2	0,0
Pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries	20 835	7,1	20 454	-1,8	-0,1
Textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods	50 092	17,2	52 584	5,0	0,9
Household furniture, appliances and equipment	14 166	4,9	14 081	-0,6	0,0
Hardware, paint and glass	25 540	8,7	24 094	-5,7	-0,5
All other retailers	30 881	10,6	30 412	-1,5	-0,2
Total	292 029	100,0	289 886	-0,7	-0,7

Retail trade sales decreased by 0,7% in the three months ended November 2023 compared with the three months ended November 2022. The largest negative contributors to this decrease were:

- general dealers (-1,8% and contributing -0,8 of a percentage point); and
- retailers in hardware, paint and glass (-5,7% and contributing -0,5 of a percentage point).

Retailers in textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods was the largest positive contributor (5,0% and contributing 0,9 of a percentage point) – 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	Jun – Aug 2023 (R million)	Weight (%)	Sep – Nov 2023 (R million)	% change between Jun – Aug 2023 and Sep – Nov 2023	Contribution (% points) to the total % change
General dealers	123 234	42,8	122 904	-0,3	-0,1
Food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores	22 634	7,9	22 368	-1,2	-0,1
Pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries	20 971	7,3	20 739	-1,1	-0,1
Textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods	53 978	18,8	53 944	-0,1	0,0
Household furniture, appliances and equipment	13 151	4,6	13 211	0,5	0,0
Hardware, paint and glass	22 352	7,8	22 238	-0,5	0,0
All other retailers	31 437	10,9	31 006	-1,4	-0,2
Total	287 757	100,0	286 409	-0,5	-0,5

Seasonally adjusted retail trade sales decreased by 0,5% in the three months ended November 2023 compared with the previous three months. The largest negative contributor to the decrease was all ‘other’ retailers (-1,4% and contributing -0,2 of a percentage point) – see Table C.

Figure 1 – Retail trade sales at constant 2019 prices

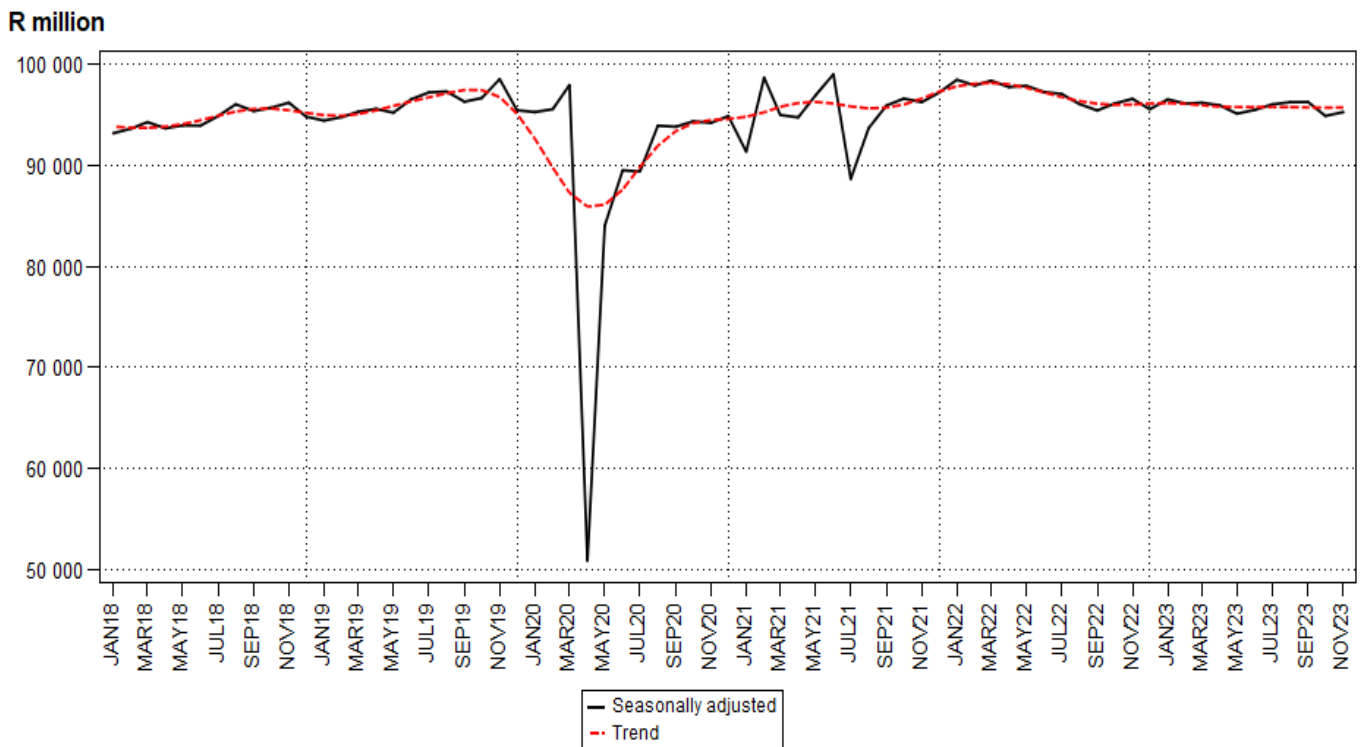
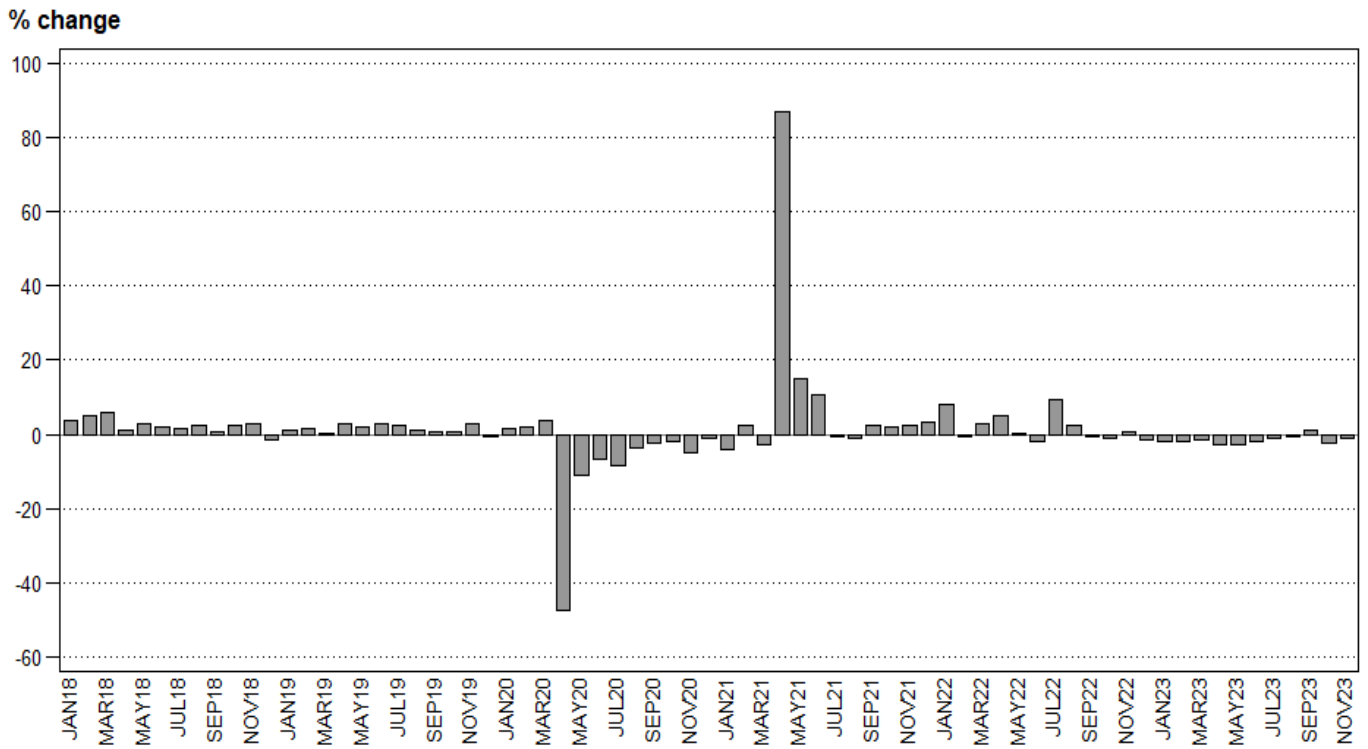


Figure 2 – Retail trade sales at constant 2019 prices: year-on-year percentage change



Sales at current prices: results for November 2023**Table D – Key growth rates in retail trade sales at current prices**

	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23
Year-on-year % change, unadjusted	5,0	5,4	5,4	6,7	3,2	4,7
Month-on-month % change, seasonally adjusted	0,9	0,6	0,6	0,6	-0,8	0,9
3-month % change, seasonally adjusted ¹	0,5	0,2	1,0	1,5	1,5	1,0

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	Sep – Nov 2022 (R million)	Weight (%)	Sep – Nov 2023 (R million)	% change between Sep – Nov 2022 and Sep – Nov 2023	Contribution (% points) to the total % change
General dealers	153 130	46,1	162 452	6,1	2,8
Food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores	27 285	8,2	28 904	5,9	0,5
Pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries	24 232	7,3	25 639	5,8	0,4
Textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods	52 056	15,7	55 618	6,8	1,1
Household furniture, appliances and equipment	14 194	4,3	14 240	0,3	0,0
Hardware, paint and glass	29 651	8,9	29 154	-1,7	-0,1
All other retailers	31 810	9,6	32 471	2,1	0,2
Total	332 357	100,0	348 478	4,9	4,9

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

Type of retailer	Jun – Aug 2023 (R million)	Weight (%)	Sep – Nov 2023 (R million)	% change between Jun – Aug 2023 and Sep – Nov 2023	Contribution (% points) to the total % change
General dealers	155 994	45,7	158 646	1,7	0,8
Food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores	28 833	8,5	28 915	0,3	0,0
Pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries	25 885	7,6	26 097	0,8	0,1
Textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods	56 804	16,7	57 315	0,9	0,2
Household furniture, appliances and equipment	13 308	3,9	13 414	0,8	0,0
Hardware, paint and glass	26 900	7,9	26 937	0,1	0,0
All other retailers	33 271	9,8	33 048	-0,7	-0,1
Total	340 994	100,0	344 371	1,0	1,0

Risenga Maluleke
Statistician-General

Tables

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

Month	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023 ¹
Jan	82 541	85 722	86 812	88 073	84 671	91 515	89 596
Feb	83 449	87 701	88 985	90 750	92 993	92 392	90 677
Mar	86 562	91 618	91 853	95 253	92 786	95 269	93 900
Apr	86 365	87 236	89 698	47 006	88 006	92 263	89 871
May	89 917	92 511	94 335	83 774	96 403	96 689	93 897
Jun	87 494	89 348	91 723	85 416	94 509	92 772	91 113
Jul	87 709	89 074	91 067	83 539	83 111	90 860	89 990
Aug	91 713	93 882	95 103	91 524	90 406	92 525	92 208
Sep	91 079	91 615	92 199	89 996	91 986	91 670	92 624
Oct	90 721	92 765	93 484	91 618	93 427	92 424	90 331
Nov	103 988	106 983	110 099	104 853	107 150	107 935	106 931
Dec	129 530	127 432	127 205	125 707	129 590	127 868	
Total	1 111 068	1 135 887	1 152 563	1 077 509	1 145 038	1 164 182	

¹ Figures for the latest month are preliminary.

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

Month	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2023 year-to-date
Jan	3,9	1,3	1,5	-3,9	8,1	-2,1	-2,1
Feb	5,1	1,5	2,0	2,5	-0,6	-1,9	-2,0
Mar	5,8	0,3	3,7	-2,6	2,7	-1,4	-1,8
Apr	1,0	2,8	-47,6	87,2	4,8	-2,6	-2,0
May	2,9	2,0	-11,2	15,1	0,3	-2,9	-2,2
Jun	2,1	2,7	-6,9	10,6	-1,8	-1,8	-2,1
Jul	1,6	2,2	-8,3	-0,5	9,3	-1,0	-2,0
Aug	2,4	1,3	-3,8	-1,2	2,3	-0,3	-1,8
Sep	0,6	0,6	-2,4	2,2	-0,3	1,0	-1,4
Oct	2,3	0,8	-2,0	2,0	-1,1	-2,3	-1,5
Nov	2,9	2,9	-4,8	2,2	0,7	-0,9	-1,5
Dec	-1,6	-0,2	-1,2	3,1	-1,3		
Total	2,2	1,5	-6,5	6,3	1,7		

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

Month	R million				Month-on-month % change			
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2020	2021	2022	2023
Jan	95 262	91 337	98 465	96 520	-0,2	-3,7	1,3	1,0
Feb	95 554	98 676	97 898	96 105	0,3	8,0	-0,6	-0,4
Mar	97 950	94 975	98 374	96 187	2,5	-3,8	0,5	0,1
Apr	50 813	94 735	97 744	95 935	-48,1	-0,3	-0,6	-0,3
May	84 017	96 920	97 866	95 103	65,3	2,3	0,1	-0,9
Jun	89 496	99 011	97 243	95 488	6,5	2,2	-0,6	0,4
Jul	89 373	88 627	97 066	96 025	-0,1	-10,5	-0,2	0,6
Aug	93 918	93 671	96 064	96 244	5,1	5,7	-1,0	0,2
Sep	93 810	95 915	95 420	96 263	-0,1	2,4	-0,7	0,0
Oct	94 341	96 600	96 112	94 882	0,6	0,7	0,7	-1,4
Nov	94 196	96 248	96 574	95 264	-0,2	-0,4	0,5	0,4
Dec	94 868	97 193	95 547		0,7	1,0	-1,1	

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

Type of retailer	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23 ¹
General dealers	40 770	36 968	40 531	42 068	37 179	46 536
Food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores	7 069	7 321	6 993	7 290	7 820	7 368
Pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries	6 589	7 236	7 369	6 612	7 218	6 624
Textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods	15 825	16 974	15 548	15 736	16 502	20 346
Household furniture, appliances and equipment	4 101	4 251	4 111	4 059	4 191	5 831
Hardware, paint and glass	6 988	7 523	7 876	7 693	7 876	8 525
All other retailers	9 771	9 717	9 780	9 166	9 545	11 701
Total	91 113	89 990	92 208	92 624	90 331	106 931

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	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23
General dealers	-3,9	-4,0	-3,5	-1,1	-5,1	0,4
Food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores	1,9	-1,9	0,2	2,9	0,0	-2,3
Pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries	-1,0	-3,2	-0,7	-0,8	-1,6	-3,0
Textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods	5,5	10,9	11,2	13,5	6,7	-2,0
Household furniture, appliances and equipment	2,3	0,7	-1,6	0,3	-2,1	-0,2
Hardware, paint and glass	-8,1	-7,2	-4,7	-5,1	-6,5	-5,3
All other retailers	-3,7	-0,5	0,8	-1,9	-3,9	0,8
Total	-1,8	-1,0	-0,3	1,0	-2,3	-0,9

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	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23
General dealers	-1,8	-1,7	-1,6	-0,5	-2,2	0,2
Food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores	0,1	-0,2	0,0	0,2	0,0	-0,2
Pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries	-0,1	-0,3	-0,1	-0,1	-0,1	-0,2
Textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods	0,9	1,8	1,7	2,0	1,1	-0,4
Household furniture, appliances and equipment	0,1	0,0	-0,1	0,0	-0,1	0,0
Hardware, paint and glass	-0,7	-0,6	-0,4	-0,4	-0,6	-0,4
All other retailers	-0,4	-0,1	0,1	-0,2	-0,4	0,1
Total	-1,8	-1,0	-0,3	1,0	-2,3	-0,9

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

Type of retailer	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Month-on-month % change
General dealers	41 104	41 104	41 026	41 240	40 463	41 201	1,8
Food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores	7 696	7 482	7 456	7 508	7 491	7 369	-1,6
Pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries	6 986	6 954	7 031	6 935	6 927	6 877	-0,7
Textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods	17 525	18 089	18 364	18 392	18 224	17 328	-4,9
Household furniture, appliances and equipment	4 372	4 425	4 354	4 410	4 334	4 467	3,1
Hardware, paint and glass	7 425	7 489	7 438	7 480	7 373	7 385	0,2
All other retailers	10 380	10 482	10 575	10 298	10 071	10 637	5,6
Total	95 488	96 025	96 244	96 263	94 882	95 264	0,4

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

Month	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023 ¹
Jan	78 657	82 971	85 645	89 225	87 657	98 088	103 070
Feb	79 652	85 111	88 067	92 243	96 648	99 637	105 673
Mar	82 998	88 922	91 279	97 127	97 188	103 523	110 627
Apr	82 849	85 156	89 267	48 146	92 363	100 564	106 143
May	86 580	90 466	94 245	85 102	101 285	106 472	111 130
Jun	83 995	87 391	91 783	86 913	99 827	103 098	108 294
Jul	84 458	87 235	91 125	85 143	87 917	101 412	106 851
Aug	88 182	91 872	95 451	93 621	96 081	104 425	110 113
Sep	87 444	89 766	92 741	92 271	97 783	104 136	111 122
Oct	87 496	90 954	93 950	94 381	99 665	105 329	108 699
Nov	100 225	105 165	110 893	108 261	114 204	122 892	128 657
Dec	124 822	125 230	128 112	129 835	138 076	145 478	
Total	1 067 358	1 110 239	1 152 563	1 102 268	1 208 694	1 295 054	

¹ Figures for the latest month are preliminary.

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

Month	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2023 year-to-date
Jan	5,5	3,2	4,2	-1,8	11,9	5,1	5,1
Feb	6,9	3,5	4,7	4,8	3,1	6,1	5,6
Mar	7,1	2,7	6,4	0,1	6,5	6,9	6,0
Apr	2,8	4,8	-46,1	91,8	8,9	5,5	5,9
May	4,5	4,2	-9,7	19,0	5,1	4,4	5,6
Jun	4,0	5,0	-5,3	14,9	3,3	5,0	5,5
Jul	3,3	4,5	-6,6	3,3	15,3	5,4	5,5
Aug	4,2	3,9	-1,9	2,6	8,7	5,4	5,5
Sep	2,7	3,3	-0,5	6,0	6,5	6,7	5,6
Oct	4,0	3,3	0,5	5,6	5,7	3,2	5,4
Nov	4,9	5,4	-2,4	5,5	7,6	4,7	5,3
Dec	0,3	2,3	1,3	6,3	5,4		
Total	4,0	3,8	-4,4	9,7	7,1		

Table 10 – Seasonally adjusted retail trade sales at current prices

Month	R million				Month-on-month % change			
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2020	2021	2022	2023
Jan	96 805	94 939	105 864	111 537	0,1	-3,9	1,2	1,4
Feb	97 457	102 799	105 733	112 018	0,7	8,3	-0,1	0,4
Mar	99 507	99 394	106 194	112 832	2,1	-3,3	0,4	0,7
Apr	51 864	98 891	106 524	112 950	-47,9	-0,5	0,3	0,1
May	84 908	101 242	107 208	112 002	63,7	2,4	0,6	-0,8
Jun	90 902	104 369	107 699	112 956	7,1	3,1	0,5	0,9
Jul	90 452	93 037	107 808	113 660	-0,5	-10,9	0,1	0,6
Aug	95 952	99 359	108 058	114 378	6,1	6,8	0,2	0,6
Sep	96 233	101 862	108 112	115 019	0,3	2,5	0,0	0,6
Oct	97 203	103 027	109 425	114 134	1,0	1,1	1,2	-0,8
Nov	97 719	103 220	110 680	115 218	0,5	0,2	1,1	0,9
Dec	98 758	104 583	110 043		1,1	1,3	-0,6	

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

Type of retailer	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23 ¹
General dealers	51 691	47 038	51 652	53 819	48 094	60 539
Food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores	8 987	9 304	8 869	9 277	10 086	9 541
Pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries	8 166	8 962	9 151	8 231	9 062	8 346
Textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods	16 626	17 871	16 384	16 617	17 479	21 522
Household furniture, appliances and equipment	4 099	4 303	4 157	4 102	4 253	5 885
Hardware, paint and glass	8 394	9 077	9 512	9 295	9 529	10 330
All other retailers	10 331	10 297	10 388	9 782	10 195	12 494
Total	108 294	106 851	110 113	111 122	108 699	128 657

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	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23
General dealers	5,9	5,0	4,3	6,6	2,6	8,6
Food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores	9,2	4,8	5,9	8,5	6,0	3,5
Pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries	6,9	4,7	7,1	7,0	6,0	4,5
Textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods	7,8	13,5	13,4	15,6	8,6	-0,3
Household furniture, appliances and equipment	1,1	1,7	-0,6	1,6	-0,8	0,3
Hardware, paint and glass	-2,2	-1,5	1,1	-0,7	-2,6	-1,6
All other retailers	0,0	3,2	4,5	1,8	-0,3	4,3
Total	5,0	5,4	5,4	6,7	3,2	4,7

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	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23
General dealers	2,8	2,2	2,0	3,2	1,2	3,9
Food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores	0,7	0,4	0,5	0,7	0,5	0,3
Pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries	0,5	0,4	0,6	0,5	0,5	0,3
Textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods	1,2	2,1	1,8	2,2	1,3	-0,1
Household furniture, appliances and equipment	0,0	0,1	0,0	0,1	0,0	0,0
Hardware, paint and glass	-0,2	-0,1	0,1	-0,1	-0,2	-0,1
All other retailers	0,0	0,3	0,4	0,2	0,0	0,4
Total	5,0	5,4	5,4	6,7	3,2	4,7

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

Type of retailer	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Month-on-month % change
General dealers	51 881	51 943	52 170	52 737	52 281	53 628	2,6
Food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores	9 783	9 542	9 508	9 662	9 678	9 575	-1,1
Pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries	8 569	8 594	8 722	8 693	8 717	8 687	-0,3
Textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods	18 418	18 972	19 414	19 452	19 390	18 473	-4,7
Household furniture, appliances and equipment	4 417	4 477	4 414	4 477	4 408	4 529	2,7
Hardware, paint and glass	8 926	9 035	8 939	9 037	8 928	8 972	0,5
All other retailers	10 962	11 098	11 211	10 963	10 732	11 353	5,8
Total	112 956	113 660	114 378	115 019	114 134	115 218	0,9

Survey information

- 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 November 2023 was 64,0%. The improved collection rate for October 2023 was 77,9%.

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 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 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:

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

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 – November 2023**
- | | Lower limit
(R million) | Sales
(R million) | Upper limit
(R million) | Relative
standard error
(RSE) % |
|--------------------|----------------------------|----------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Retail trade sales | 126 242 | 128 657 | 131 072 | 0,9 |
- 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 (SNA)</i> in the same way as in the <i>Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities (SIC)</i> , 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

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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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Advance release calendar

A release calendar is disseminated on www.statssa.gov.za.

Stats SA products

A complete set of Stats SA publications is available at the Stats SA Library and the following libraries:

National Library of South Africa, Pretoria Division
National Library of South Africa, Cape Town Division
Natal Society Library, Pietermaritzburg
Library of Parliament, Cape Town
Bloemfontein Public Library
Johannesburg Public Library
Eastern Cape Library Services, Qonce
Central Regional Library, Polokwane
Central Reference Library, Mbombela
Central Reference Collection, Kimberley
Central Reference Library, Mmabatho

Stats SA also provides a subscription service.

Electronic services

A large range of data is available via online services. For more details about our electronic services, contact Stats SA's user information service at (012) 310 8600.

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

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