STATISTICAL RELEASE

P6242.1

Retail trade sales
(Preliminary)

September 2023

Embargoed until:
15 November 2023
13:00

ENQUIRIES:	FORTHCOMING ISSUE:	EXPECTED RELEASE DATE:
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Sales at constant 2019 prices: results for September 2023

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

	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23
Year-on-year % change, unadjusted	-2,6	-2,9	-1,8	-1,0	-0,3	0,9
Month-on-month % change, seasonally adjusted	-0,2	-0,8	0,5	0,5	0,3	0,1
3-month % change, seasonally adjusted [1]	-0,2	-0,4	-0,8	-0,5	0,3	0,8

[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 0,9% year-on-year in September 2023. The largest positive contributors to this increase were retailers in:
- textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods (13,5% and contributing 2,0 percentage points); and
- food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores (2,0% and contributing 0,2 of a percentage point) – see Tables 5 and 6.

Seasonally adjusted retail trade sales increased by 0,1% in September 2023 compared with August 2023. This followed month-on-month changes of 0,3% in August 2023 and 0,5% in July 2023.

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

Type of retailer	Jul – Sep 2022 (R million)	Weight (%)	Jul – Sep 2023 (R million)	% change between Jul – Sep 2022 and Jul – Sep 2023	Contribution (% points) to the total % change
General dealers	123 057	44,7	119 629	-2,8	-1,3
Food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores	21 529	7,8	21 538	0,0	0,0
Pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries	21 566	7,8	21 190	-1,7	-0,1
Textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods	43 163	15,7	48 263	11,8	1,9
Household furniture, appliances and equipment	12 442	4,5	12 420	-0,2	0,0
Hardware, paint and glass	24 484	8,9	23 059	-5,8	-0,5
All other retailers	28 814	10,5	28 573	-0,8	-0,1
Total	**275 055**	**100,0**	**274 672**	**-0,1**	**-0,1**

Retail trade sales decreased by 0,1% in the third quarter of 2023 compared with the third quarter of 2022. The largest negative contributors to this decrease were:
- general dealers (-2,8% and contributing -1,3 percentage points); and
- retailers in hardware, paint and glass (-5,8% and contributing -0,5 of a percentage point).

Retailers in textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods were the largest positive contributors (11,8% and contributing 1,9 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	Apr – Jun 2023 (R million)	Weight (%)	Jul – Sep 2023 (R million)	% change between Apr – Jun 2023 and Jul – Sep 2023	Contribution (% points) to the total % change
General dealers	123 233	43,0	123 323	0,1	0,0
Food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores	22 462	7,8	22 439	-0,1	0,0
Pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries	21 023	7,3	20 924	-0,5	0,0
Textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods	52 648	18,4	55 374	5,2	1,0
Household furniture, appliances and equipment	12 972	4,5	13 183	1,6	0,1
Hardware, paint and glass	22 957	8,0	22 407	-2,4	-0,2
All other retailers	31 323	10,9	31 176	-0,5	-0,1
Total	**286 620**	**100,0**	**288 826**	**0,8**	**0,8**

Seasonally adjusted retail trade sales increased by 0,8% in the third quarter of 2023 compared with the second quarter of 2023. The largest positive contributors were retailers in:
- textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods (5,2% and contributing 1,0 percentage point); and
- household furniture, appliances and equipment (1,6% and contributing 0,1 of a percentage point) – see Table C.

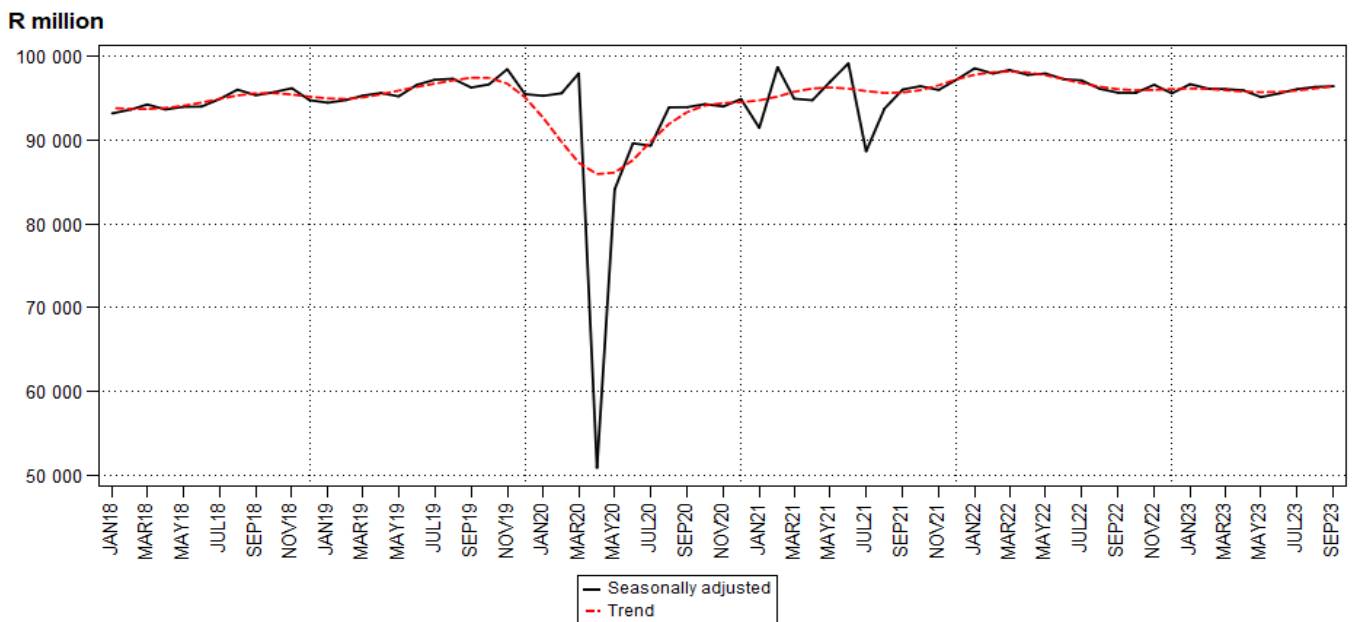**Figure 1 – Retail trade sales at constant 2019 prices**

Figure 2 – Retail trade sales at constant 2019 prices: year-on-year percentage change
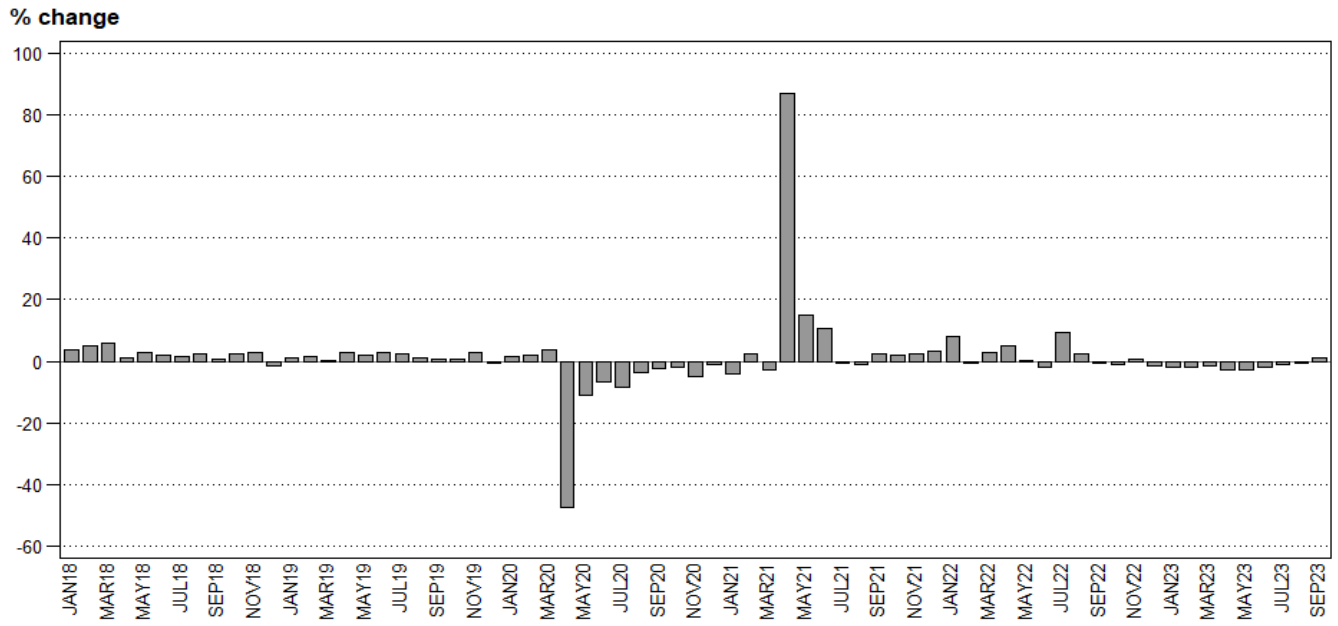
Sales at current prices: results for September 2023

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

	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23
Year-on-year % change, unadjusted	5,5	4,4	5,0	5,4	5,4	6,5
Month-on-month % change, seasonally adjusted	0,2	-0,7	0,7	0,7	0,5	0,7
3-month % change, seasonally adjusted [1]	1,7	1,3	0,5	0,4	1,0	1,5

[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	Jul – Sep 2022 (R million)	Weight (%)	Jul – Sep 2023 (R million)	% change between Jul – Sep 2022 and Jul – Sep 2023	Contribution (% points) to the total % change
General dealers	144 829	46,7	152 589	5,4	2,5
Food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores	25 804	8,3	27 365	6,0	0,5
Pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries	24 801	8,0	26 310	6,1	0,5
Textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods	44 573	14,4	50 878	14,1	2,0
Household furniture, appliances and equipment	12 449	4,0	12 561	0,9	0,0
Hardware, paint and glass	27 988	9,0	27 844	-0,5	0,0
All other retailers	29 529	9,5	30 371	2,9	0,3
Total	**309 973**	**100,0**	**327 917**	**5,8**	**5,8**

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

Type of retailer	Apr – Jun 2023 (R million)	Weight (%)	Jul – Sep 2023 (R million)	% change between Apr – Jun 2023 and Jul – Sep 2023	Contribution (% points) to the total % change
General dealers	154 868	45,8	156 886	1,3	0,6
Food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores	28 528	8,4	28 662	0,5	0,0
Pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries	25 620	7,6	26 017	1,5	0,1
Textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods	55 386	16,4	58 401	5,4	0,9
Household furniture, appliances and equipment	13 150	3,9	13 370	1,7	0,1
Hardware, paint and glass	27 636	8,2	27 037	-2,2	-0,2
All other retailers	33 130	9,8	33 040	-0,3	0,0
Total	**338 318**	**100,0**	**343 413**	**1,5**	**1,5**

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	92 474
Oct	90 721	92 765	93 484	91 618	93 427	92 424	
Nov	103 988	106 983	110 099	104 853	107 150	107 935	
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	0,9	*-1,5*
Oct	2,3	0,8	-2,0	2,0	-1,1		
Nov	2,9	2,9	-4,8	2,2	0,7		
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	95 274	91 441	98 557	96 669	-0,2	-3,6	1,4	1,2
Feb	95 576	98 692	97 939	96 130	0,3	7,9	-0,6	-0,6
Mar	97 951	94 934	98 363	96 085	2,5	-3,8	0,4	0,0
Apr	50 818	94 746	97 778	95 930	-48,1	-0,2	-0,6	-0,2
May	84 103	96 956	97 941	95 119	65,5	2,3	0,2	-0,8
Jun	89 603	99 148	97 264	95 571	6,5	2,3	-0,7	0,5
Jul	89 314	88 637	97 115	96 070	-0,3	-10,6	-0,2	0,5
Aug	93 898	93 735	96 112	96 335	5,1	5,8	-1,0	0,3
Sep	93 920	96 033	95 640	96 421	0,0	2,5	-0,5	0,1
Oct	94 284	96 423	95 627		0,4	0,4	0,0	
Nov	93 994	95 981	96 592		-0,3	-0,5	1,0	
Dec	94 890	97 195	95 568		1,0	1,3	-1,1	

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

Type of retailer	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23 [1]
General dealers	37 718	40 189	40 770	36 968	40 531	42 130
Food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores	7 238	6 793	7 069	7 321	6 993	7 224
Pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries	7 350	6 814	6 589	7 236	7 369	6 585
Textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods	16 359	18 157	15 825	16 974	15 548	15 741
Household furniture, appliances and equipment	3 916	3 956	4 101	4 251	4 111	4 058
Hardware, paint and glass	7 223	7 649	6 988	7 523	7 876	7 660
All other retailers	10 067	10 339	9 771	9 717	9 780	9 076
Total	**89 871**	**93 897**	**91 113**	**89 990**	**92 208**	**92 474**

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

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

Type of retailer	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	*Month-on-month % change*
General dealers	41 377	40 799	41 057	41 066	40 998	41 259	*0,6*
Food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores	7 509	7 256	7 697	7 485	7 458	7 496	*0,5*
Pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries	7 061	6 975	6 987	6 959	7 039	6 926	*-1,6*
Textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods	17 127	17 837	17 684	18 188	18 533	18 653	*0,6*
Household furniture, appliances and equipment	4 327	4 281	4 364	4 421	4 352	4 410	*1,3*
Hardware, paint and glass	7 967	7 563	7 427	7 497	7 420	7 490	*0,9*
All other retailers	10 561	10 408	10 354	10 454	10 535	10 187	*-3,3*
Total	**95 930**	**95 119**	**95 571**	**96 070**	**96 335**	**96 421**	*0,1*

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	110 953
Oct	87 496	90 954	93 950	94 381	99 665	105 329	
Nov	100 225	105 165	110 893	108 261	114 204	122 892	
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	6,5	*5,6*
Oct	4,0	3,3	0,5	5,6	5,7		
Nov	4,9	5,4	-2,4	5,5	7,6		
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	96 771	95 023	106 013	111 700	0,1	-3,8	1,5	1,6
Feb	97 552	102 827	105 802	112 081	0,8	8,2	-0,2	0,3
Mar	99 539	99 351	106 211	112 777	2,0	-3,4	0,4	0,6
Apr	51 846	98 871	106 588	113 019	-47,9	-0,5	0,4	0,2
May	85 117	101 544	107 512	112 252	64,2	2,7	0,9	-0,7
Jun	91 017	104 491	107 754	113 047	6,9	2,9	0,2	0,7
Jul	90 486	93 195	107 947	113 818	-0,6	-10,8	0,2	0,7
Aug	95 874	99 327	108 027	114 425	6,0	6,6	0,1	0,5
Sep	96 219	101 888	108 265	115 170	0,4	2,6	0,2	0,7
Oct	97 151	102 841	108 943		1,0	0,9	0,6	
Nov	97 436	102 813	110 489		0,3	0,0	1,4	
Dec	98 760	104 460	109 924		1,4	1,6	-0,5	

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

Type of retailer	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23 [1]
General dealers	47 402	50 758	51 691	47 038	51 652	53 899
Food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores	9 232	8 637	8 987	9 304	8 869	9 192
Pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries	8 908	8 371	8 166	8 962	9 151	8 197
Textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods	17 227	19 139	16 626	17 871	16 384	16 623
Household furniture, appliances and equipment	4 011	4 013	4 099	4 303	4 157	4 101
Hardware, paint and glass	8 717	9 271	8 394	9 077	9 512	9 255
All other retailers	10 646	10 941	10 331	10 297	10 388	9 686
Total	**106 143**	**111 130**	**108 294**	**106 851**	**110 113**	**110 953**

[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	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23
General dealers	8,1	4,3	5,9	5,0	4,3	6,7
Food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores	5,3	2,7	9,2	4,8	5,9	7,5
Pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries	3,6	4,6	6,9	4,7	7,1	6,5
Textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods	-0,6	11,0	7,8	13,5	13,4	15,6
Household furniture, appliances and equipment	-1,5	-2,7	1,1	1,7	-0,6	1,6
Hardware, paint and glass	11,7	0,5	-2,2	-1,5	1,1	-1,1
All other retailers	4,8	1,4	0,0	3,2	4,5	0,8
Total	**5,5**	**4,4**	**5,0**	**5,4**	**5,4**	**6,5**

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

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

Type of retailer	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	*Month-on-month % change*
General dealers	51 801	51 277	51 790	51 897	52 160	52 829	*1,3*
Food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores	9 559	9 177	9 792	9 545	9 510	9 607	*1,0*
Pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries	8 509	8 530	8 581	8 603	8 732	8 682	*-0,6*
Textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods	18 053	18 765	18 568	19 151	19 551	19 699	*0,8*
Household furniture, appliances and equipment	4 406	4 331	4 413	4 475	4 415	4 480	*1,5*
Hardware, paint and glass	9 595	9 118	8 923	9 046	8 942	9 049	*1,2*
All other retailers	11 097	11 052	10 981	11 101	11 115	10 824	*-2,6*
Total	**113 019**	**112 252**	**113 047**	**113 818**	**114 425**	**115 170**	***0,7***

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 September 2023 was 77,5%. The improved collection rate for August 2023 was 80,4%.

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 – September 2023

	Lower limit (R million)	Sales (R million)	Upper limit (R million)	Relative standard error (RSE) %
Retail trade sales	108 458	110 953	113 449	1,1

| **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 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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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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