

SA retail sales slump in December

Retail sales declined 1,4% year-on-year in December 2018, with five of the seven types of retailer reporting negative growth rates during the period, according to the latest figures from Stats SA. This is the first time retail sales declined since February 2017.



Seasonally adjusted retail trade sales decreased by 4,8% in December 2018 compared with November 2018. This followed month-on-month changes of 2,8% in November 2018 and 0,8% in October 2018. In the fourth quarter of 2018, seasonally adjusted retail trade sales increased by 0,8% compared with the previous quarter.

The largest negative contributions were recorded for retailers in textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods (-2,7% and contributing -0,6 of a percentage point); and general dealers (-1,0% and contributing -0,4 of a percentage point).

Sales were up 1% in the three months to the end of December compared with the same period last year, Statistics South Africa said. The main contributors to this increase were: all 'other' retailers (3,3% and contributing 0,4 of a percentage point); and retailers in household furniture, appliances and equipment (8,0% and contributing 0,4 of a percentage point).

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