

Retail trade sales climb 0.5% in April

According to Stats SA, retail trade sales increased by 0,5% year-on-year in April 2018.



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Positive annual growth rates were recorded for:

Retailers in household furniture, appliances and equipment (11,0%);

Retailers in pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries (6,2%); and

All 'other' retailers (5,6%).

The main contributor to the 0,5% increase was all 'other' retailers (contributing 0,6 of a percentage point), the statistics office said.

Seasonally adjusted retail trade sales decreased by 1,2% in April 2018 compared with March 2018. This followed month-on-month changes of -0,2% in March 2018 and 1,4% in February 2018. In the three months ended April 2018, seasonally adjusted retail trade sales decreased by 1,2% compared with the previous three months.

Retail trade sales increased by 3,1% in the three months ended April 2018 compared with the three months ended April 2017. The main contributors to this increase were:

Retailers in textiles, clothing, footwear and leather goods (5,1% and contributing 0,8 of a percentage point);

General dealers (1,5% and contributing 0,7 of a percentage point);

Retailers in household furniture, appliances and equipment (14,2% and contributing 0,6 of a percentage point); and

All 'other' retailers (5,4% and contributing 0,6 of a percentage point).

Muted results

"The latest retail figures don't show strong growth, instead delivering muted results. However, they are picking up from a weak performance in March," commented Stefan Salzer, partner and managing director at Boston Consulting Group.

"The best performing sectors are household furniture, appliances and equipment (11%), as well as pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetics and toiletries (6.2%). Increased spending in these areas doesn't come as a surprise during the cold winter months, and are classified as necessity-driven spending as they involve no discretionary spend on the part of the consumer. Overall, the high growth rate in both these sectors is a good sign of confidence in the economy."

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