

STATEMENT

SARS MEDIA RELEASE

UNDER EMBARGO – 2pm Friday, 30 January 2026

SARS releases the preliminary trade statistics for December 2025

Pretoria, 30 January 2026 – South Africa recorded a preliminary trade balance surplus of R23.2 billion in December 2025. This surplus was attributable to exports of R164.3 billion and imports of R141.1 billion, inclusive of trade with Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho and Namibia (BELN).

The year-to-date (01 January to 31 December 2025) preliminary trade balance surplus of R201.6 billion was higher than the R197.1 billion trade balance surplus for the comparable period in 2024. On a year-on-year basis, export flows for December 2025 (R164.3 billion) were 3.4% higher compared to R158.9 billion recorded in December 2024. Import flows were lower by 2.2%, having decreased from R144.3 billion in December 2024 to R141.1 billion in the current period.

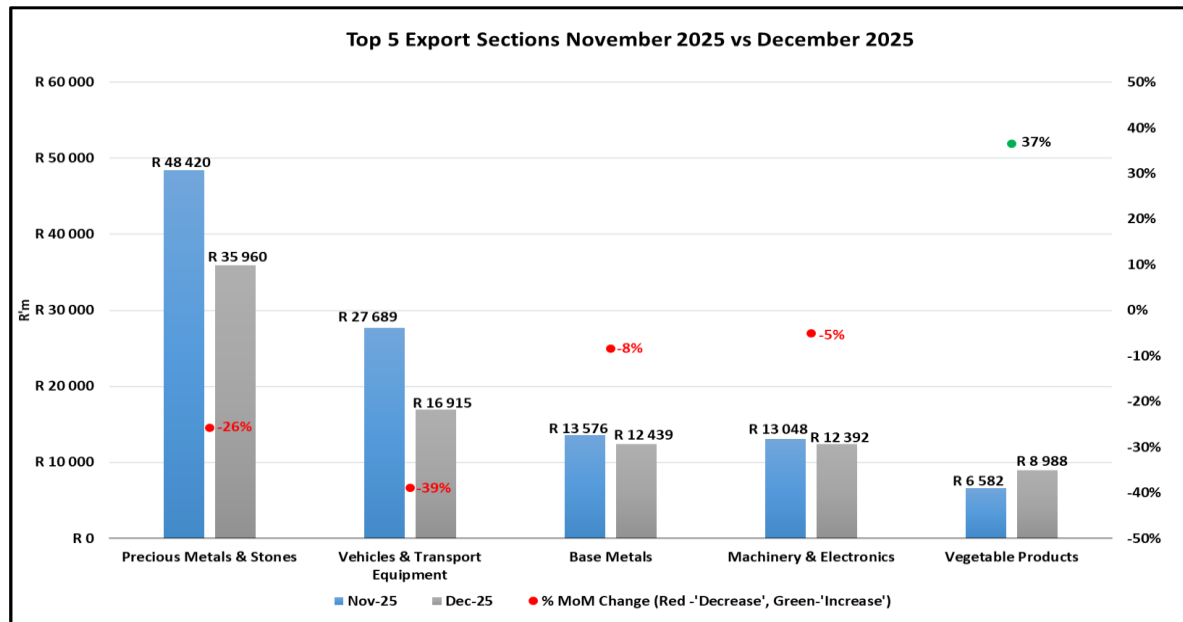
On a month-on-month basis, exports decreased by R23.4 billion (-12.5%) from R187.6 billion to R164.3 billion between November and December 2025, whilst imports decreased by R8.6 billion (-5.8%) from R149.7 billion to R141.1 billion over the same period. Export flows decreased in December 2025, driven by Gold, Vehicles (Passengers), and Vehicles (Goods). Import flows decreased on the back of lower importation of Crude Oil, Automatic Data Processing Machines, and Electric Generating Sets & Rotary Converters.

Due to ongoing Vouchers of Correction (VOCs), the preliminary trade balance surplus of R37.7 billion announced for November 2025 was revised upwards by R0.2 billion, with the final number at R37.9 billion.

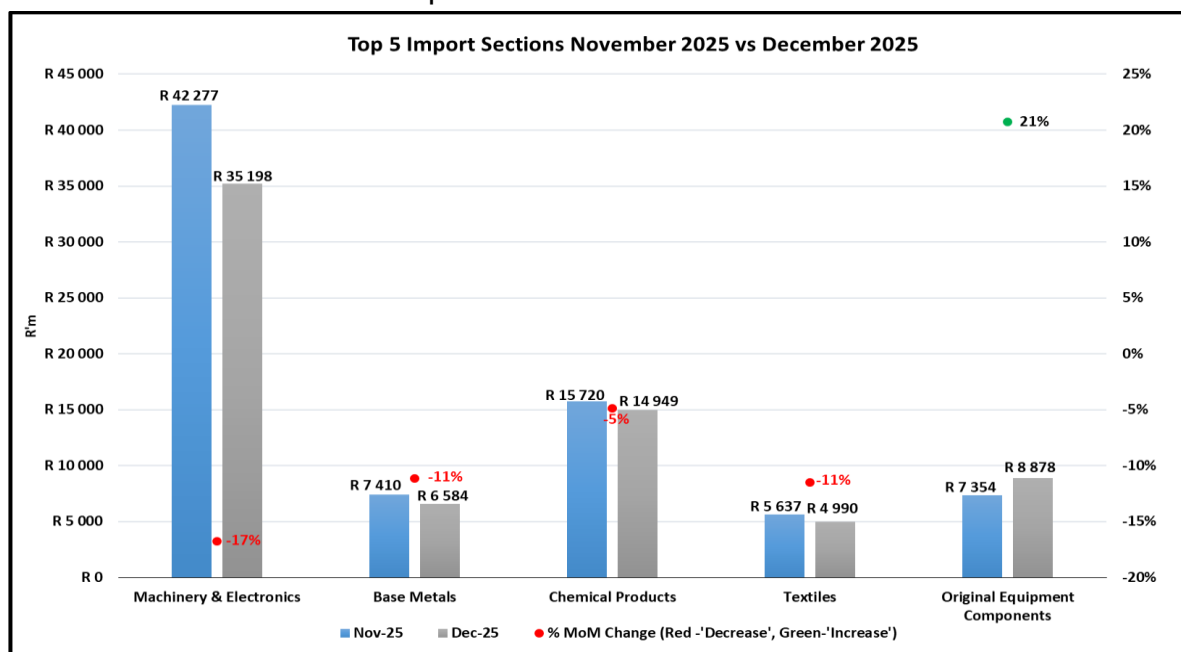
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Trade highlights by category

The main month-on-month export movements:



The main month-on-month import movements:



Trade highlights by world zone

The world zone results from November 2025 (revised) to December 2025 (preliminary) are given below:

World Zones (R' m)	The main month-on-month movements (R' m)				
	Trade Type	November 2025	December 2025	Variance	% M-o-M
Africa	Exports	47 767	42 655	-5 112	↓ -10.7%
	Imports	14 423	11 317	-3 106	↓ -21.5%
	Trade Balance	33 344	31 338	-	-
America	Exports	16 425	13 694	-2 731	↓ -16.6%
	Imports	17 372	12 236	-5 137	↓ -29.6%
	Trade Balance	-947	1 458	-	-
Asia	Exports	54 538	53 907	-631	↓ -1.2%
	Imports	81 984	82 036	52	↑ 0.1%
	Trade Balance	-27 446	-28 128	-	-
Europe	Exports	46 780	42 393	-4 387	↓ -9.4%
	Imports	34 173	34 075	-99	↓ -0.3%
	Trade Balance	12 606	8 318	-	-
Oceania	Exports	1 859	1 547	-313	↓ -16.8%
	Imports	1 385	1 345	-40	↓ -2.9%
	Trade Balance	474	202	-	-
Other Unclassified	Exports	19 271	9 229	-10 041	↓ -52.1%
	Imports	377	78	-298	↓ -79.2%
	Trade Balance	18 894	9 151	-	-
Ship/Aircraft	Exports	995	838	-157	↓ -15.8%
	Imports	-	-	-	-
	Trade Balance	995	838	-	-

Excluding trade data with Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho and Namibia (BELN)

South Africa's trade with the rest of the world (excl. BELN) for December 2025 indicates a preliminary trade balance surplus of R13.5 billion.

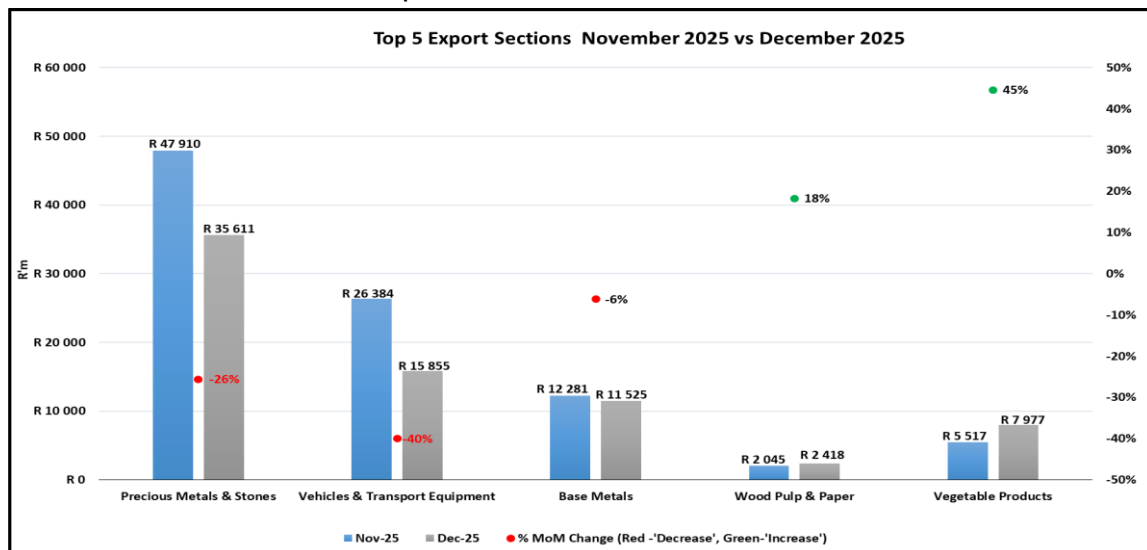
Summary

The R13.5 billion preliminary trade balance surplus for December 2025 was as a result of exports of R148.7 billion and imports of R135.2 billion. Exports decreased by R19.9 billion (-11.8%) between November and December 2025 whilst imports decreased by R7.5 billion (-5.3%) over the same period.

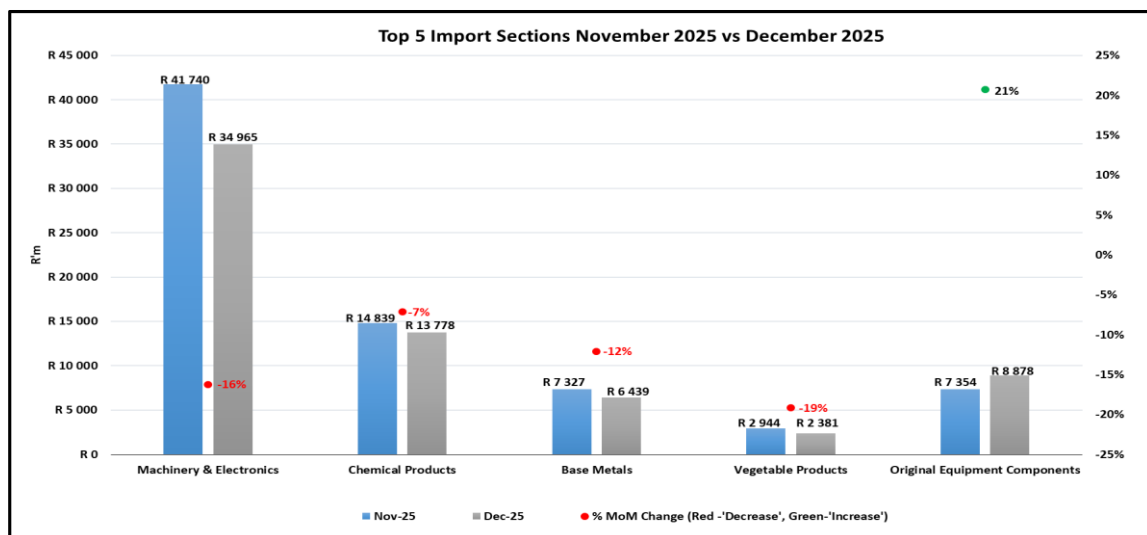
The preliminary cumulative trade balance for 2025 was a surplus of R69.1 billion, compared to R59.1 billion trade balance surplus for the corresponding period in 2024.

Trade highlights by category

The main month-on-month export movements:



The main month-on-month import movements:



Trade highlights by world zone

The world zone results for Africa, excluding BELN, between November 2025 (revised) and December 2025 (preliminary) are given below:

World Zones	The main month-on-month movements (R' m)				
	Trade Type	November 2025	December 2025	Variance	% M-o-M
Africa	Exports	28 697	27 092	-1 605	↓ -5.6%
	Imports	7 412	5 401	-2 011	↓ -27.1%
	Trade Balance	21 285	21 691	-	-

[Click here for Merchandise Trade Statistics December 2025](#)

SA Trade Release Table (Including BELN)

Harmonised Sections		Monthly Trade		Cumulative Trade		Exports				Imports			
Roman Section	Description	Trade Balance (R'm)	Ratio Exports/Imports	Trade Balance (R'm)	Ratio ⁵⁾ (Exports/Imports)	Month % of total	Cumulative 2024 ³⁾ (R'm)	Cumulative 2025 ³⁾ (R'm)	Month Total 2025 (R'm)	Month % of total	Month Total 2025 (R'm)	Cumulative 2024 ³⁾ (R'm)	Cumulative 2025 ³⁾ (R'm)
I, Ch 1-5	Animals/Animal Products	171 618 998	1.08	6 161 408 042	1.33	1.35	23 274 246 635	25 078 495 900	2 215 895 084	1.45	2 044 276 086	21 537 960 072	18 917 087 858
II, Ch 6-14	Vegetable Products	6 493 274 219	3.60	104 687 944 559	3.39	5.47	134 665 776 426	148 579 068 978	8 987 727 956	1.77	2 494 453 737	44 387 875 320	43 891 124 419
III, Ch 15	Fats and Oils	(1 061 781 905)	0.36	(9 049 716 283)	0.46	0.36	7 897 833 791	7 747 701 279	592 782 738	1.17	1 654 564 643	15 415 047 815	16 797 417 562
IV, Ch 16-24	Prepared Foods	1 887 301 687	1.36	28 053 565 208	1.45	4.38	86 517 401 691	90 077 803 593	7 190 697 564	3.76	5 303 395 877	58 006 888 682	62 024 238 385
V, Ch 25-27	Mineral Products	18 611 319 673	1.78	161 547 780 145	1.48	25.88	508 757 044 400	498 134 411 378	42 505 825 404	16.94	23 894 505 731	364 006 837 905	336 586 631 233
VI, Ch 28-38	Chemical Products	(5 062 542 364)	0.66	(87 029 928 373)	0.57	6.02	116 923 916 709	116 957 973 389	9 886 428 355	10.60	14 948 970 719	200 406 602 570	203 987 901 762
VII, Ch 39-40	Plastics and Rubber	(2 665 823 731)	0.53	(39 257 263 755)	0.48	1.82	35 124 120 544	36 250 884 555	2 982 439 489	4.00	5 648 263 220	78 028 428 807	75 508 148 310
VIII, Ch 41-43	Hides, Skins and Leather	147 808 635	1.31	(985 286 190)	0.82	0.38	4 422 917 348	4 578 920 488	628 849 072	0.34	481 040 437	5 470 597 179	5 564 206 678
IX, Ch 44-46	Wood and articles thereof	749 421 541	2.45	5 930 753 288	1.79	0.77	10 704 489 304	13 437 184 024	1 265 530 581	0.37	516 109 040	7 378 912 677	7 506 430 736
X, Ch 47-49	Pulp and Paper Products	1 056 006 098	1.61	7 679 902 303	1.32	1.70	33 738 397 702	31 337 802 395	2 793 910 040	1.23	1 737 903 942	24 756 885 293	23 657 900 092
XI, Ch 50-63	Textiles and Clothing	(2 724 658 723)	0.45	(41 411 779 887)	0.38	1.38	23 576 768 347	24 917 785 358	2 265 303 836	3.54	4 989 962 559	65 458 581 754	66 329 565 245
XII, Ch 64-67	Footwear and Accessories	(1 204 684 161)	0.27	(15 444 263 109)	0.24	0.27	4 406 994 484	4 929 477 350	438 878 281	1.16	1 643 562 442	20 969 524 126	20 373 740 459
XIII, Ch 68-70	Stone, Plaster, etc	(590 693 143)	0.50	(7 911 396 350)	0.51	0.37	7 820 771 645	8 234 969 213	600 548 152	0.84	1 191 241 295	16 115 915 143	16 146 365 563
XIV, Ch 71	Precious Stones	33 251 392 555	13.28	393 604 345 085	11.85	21.89	377 300 813 365	429 891 495 358	35 959 885 041	1.92	2 708 492 486	33 453 925 521	36 287 150 273
XV, Ch 72-83	Base Metals	5 855 394 976	1.89	73 484 638 916	1.77	7.57	212 248 919 200	168 464 631 455	12 439 114 028	4.67	6 583 719 052	99 581 620 817	94 979 992 539
XVI, Ch 84-85	Machinery and Appliances	(22 805 238 957)	0.35	(290 103 814 858)	0.34	7.54	145 578 252 727	146 480 290 975	12 392 283 429	24.95	35 197 522 386	416 798 997 464	436 584 105 833
XVII, Ch 86-89	Transport Equipment	2 189 768 607	1.15	105 030 361 978	1.58	10.30	276 341 068 224	287 292 201 811	16 915 104 242	10.44	14 725 335 635	149 383 047 431	182 261 839 833
XVIII, Ch 90-92	Precision Products, etc	(1 952 510 057)	0.51	(34 775 456 682)	0.28	1.24	11 026 059 989	13 414 425 421	2 037 767 032	2.83	3 990 277 089	46 454 835 944	48 189 882 103
XX, Ch 94-96	Misc Manufactured Articles	(1 150 259 097)	0.45	(14 118 653 521)	0.46	0.57	11 267 452 389	11 898 190 418	941 444 607	1.48	2 091 703 704	25 110 562 526	26 016 843 939
XXI, Ch 97	Works of Art/Antiques	(35 884 641)	0.73	(109 410 084)	0.94	0.06	1 736 297 354	1 620 346 365	95 289 117	0.09	131 173 758	955 010 822	1 729 756 449
XXII, Ch 99	Other Unclassified ¹⁾	894 859 541	4.85	6 637 652 128	4.17	0.69	6 795 790 558	8 733 270 466	1 127 357 206	0.16	232 497 665	2 130 754 442	2 095 618 338
XXIII, Ch 98	Special Provisions ²⁾	(8 877 516 767)	0.00	(151 005 720 830)	0.00	0.00	6 125 114	13 610 359	151 290	6.29	8 877 668 057	147 254 467 221	151 019 331 189
Total	Total SA Rand	23 176 572 984	1.16	201 615 661 730	1.11	100.00	2 040 131 457 946	2 078 070 940 528	164 263 212 544	100.00	141 086 639 560	1 843 063 279 531	1 876 455 278 798

World Zones	Cumulative Trade		Monthly Trade		Exports				Imports			
	Trade Balance (R'm)	Ratio ⁵⁾ (Exports/Imports)	Trade Balance (R'm)	Ratio Exports/Imports	Month % of total	Cumulative 2024 ³⁾ (R'm)	Cumulative 2025 ³⁾ (R'm)	Month Total 2025 (R'm)	Month % of total	Cumulative 2024 ³⁾ (R'm)	Cumulative 2025 ³⁾ (R'm)	Month Total 2025 (R'm)
AFRICA	380 644 314 819	3.13	31 337 682 171	3.77	25.97	571 440 378 709	559 360 937 565	42 654 532 026	8.02	198 606 567 596	178 716 622 746	11 316 849 855
AMERICA	(12 037 421 050)	0.94	1 458 326 885	1.12	8.34	189 002 435 799	178 753 522 985	13 694 269 176	8.67	182 442 687 632	190 790 944 035	12 235 942 291
ASIA	(382 379 814 862)	0.61	(28 128 411 322)	0.66	32.82	602 618 934 433	609 439 890 003	53 907 375 170	58.15	942 864 709 440	991 819 704 865	82 035 786 492
EUROPE	34 287 309 131	1.07	8 318 168 331	1.24	25.81	488 253 306 425	520 645 441 381	42 392 730 282	24.15	488 188 786 568	486 358 132 250	34 074 561 951
OCEANIA	(1 845 904 176)	0.92	201 756 092	1.15	0.94	22 453 957 984	22 339 597 288	1 546 843 446	0.95	23 984 286 872	24 185 501 464	1 345 087 354
OTHER UNCLASSIFIED	169 979 951 183	38.08	9 150 940 342	117.70	5.62	152 130 962 354	174 564 324 621	9 229 351 959	0.06	6 976 241 423	4 584 373 438	78 411 617
SHIP/AIRCRAFT	12 967 226 685	-	838 110 485	-	0.51	14 231 482 242	12 967 226 685	838 110 485				
Total	201 615 661 730	1.11	23 176 572 984	1.16	100.00	2 040 131 457 946	2 078 070 940 528	164 263 212 544	100.00	1 843 063 279 531	1 876 455 278 798	141 086 639 560

Temporary Imports	January 2025	February 2025	March 2025	April 2025	May 2025	June 2025	July 2025	August 2025	September 2025	October 2025	November 2025	December 2025
Gold Imports ⁴⁾	17 050 705 742	13 062 799 984	20 295 960 338	16 291 090 563	18 039 877 152	22 438 545 013	20 674 296 306	18 787 683 097	20 841 521 175	25 514 558 759	20 841 204 268	36 386 208 680

Notes:

1) Other Unclassified: Military equipment, unknown countries, ships & aircraft stores & films

2) Special Provisions: Automotive Production and Development Programme (APDP)

3) Current month data is preliminary and all other data is revised

4) Temporary gold imports are not included in imports or export numbers for the trade balance calculation

5) The ratio is the value of total exports divided by the value of total imports

SA Trade Release Table (Excluding BELN)

Harmonised Sections		Cumulative Trade		Monthly Trade		Exports				Imports			
Roman Section	Description	Trade Balance (R'm)	Ratio ⁵⁾ (Exports/Imports)	Trade Balance (R' m)	Ratio Exports/Imports	Month % of total	Cumulative 2024 ³⁾ (R'm)	Cumulative 2025 ³⁾ (R'm)	Month Total 2025 (R'm)	Month % of total	Cumulative 2024 ³⁾ (R'm)	Cumulative 2025 ³⁾ (R'm)	Month Total 2025 (R'm)
I, Ch 1-5	Animals/Animal Products	4 106 831 652	1.25	(39 454 559)	0.98	1.21	18 497 426 946	20 356 742 134	1 804 443 505	1.36	17 354 127 915	16 249 910 482	1 843 898 064
II, Ch 6-14	Vegetable Products	93 487 592 729	3.21	5 595 872 293	3.35	5.36	120 113 726 125	135 873 205 771	7 977 089 089	1.76	43 081 921 157	42 385 613 042	2 381 216 796
III, Ch 15	Fats and Oils	(11 892 710 761)	0.29	(1 306 994 491)	0.21	0.23	5 303 604 673	4 844 102 740	346 139 930	1.22	15 380 050 816	16 736 813 501	1 653 134 421
IV, Ch 16-24	Prepared Foods	12 475 241 461	1.24	611 124 702	1.14	3.43	60 416 203 724	64 001 424 802	5 103 583 629	3.32	48 611 771 810	51 526 183 341	4 492 458 927
V, Ch 25-27	Mineral Products	132 474 127 453	1.40	16 571 950 362	1.70	27.13	478 691 360 138	467 037 863 628	40 337 839 542	17.58	361 400 363 760	334 563 736 175	23 765 889 180
VI, Ch 28-38	Chemical Products	(96 139 160 794)	0.50	(5 526 135 317)	0.60	5.55	97 014 001 122	95 852 463 296	8 251 525 498	10.19	188 457 859 834	191 991 624 090	13 777 660 815
VII, Ch 39-40	Plastics and Rubber	(47 448 472 491)	0.36	(3 267 028 721)	0.41	1.55	25 830 513 172	27 046 197 185	2 299 121 446	4.12	77 047 708 797	74 494 669 676	5 566 150 167
VIII, Ch 41-43	Hides, Skins and Leather	(1 498 224 965)	0.72	84 876 908	1.18	0.38	3 784 570 706	3 941 133 890	559 324 147	0.35	5 344 124 285	5 439 358 855	474 447 239
IX, Ch 44-46	Wood and articles thereof	5 973 375 416	2.36	710 934 315	3.18	0.70	7 970 263 029	10 372 173 884	1 037 302 561	0.24	4 573 512 615	4 398 798 468	326 368 246
X, Ch 47-49	Pulp and Paper Products	3 979 522 460	1.17	742 207 145	1.44	1.63	29 336 802 786	27 006 726 445	2 418 453 366	1.24	24 179 837 862	23 027 203 985	1 676 246 221
XI, Ch 50-63	Textiles and Clothing	(42 423 370 733)	0.25	(2 830 707 127)	0.35	1.03	13 289 932 048	14 164 254 243	1 535 518 736	3.23	56 548 874 578	56 587 624 976	4 366 225 863
XII, Ch 64-67	Footwear and Accessories	(18 005 763 036)	0.11	(1 419 250 416)	0.13	0.14	1 645 921 337	2 118 460 688	207 868 552	1.20	20 731 853 861	20 124 223 724	1 627 118 968
XIII, Ch 68-70	Stone, Plaster, etc	(10 354 621 542)	0.35	(770 896 152)	0.35	0.28	5 391 288 256	5 626 339 398	409 348 882	0.87	15 990 878 930	15 980 960 940	1 180 245 034
XIV, Ch 71	Precious Stones	412 860 377 806	32.29	34 967 130 343	55.27	23.95	373 382 538 020	426 055 530 697	35 611 394 344	0.48	15 927 492 351	13 195 152 891	644 264 001
XV, Ch 72-83	Base Metals	61 417 175 942	1.66	5 085 473 867	1.79	7.75	198 582 660 631	154 960 603 930	11 524 891 097	4.76	98 554 190 647	93 543 427 988	6 439 417 230
XVI, Ch 84-85	Machinery and Appliances	(316 288 829 965)	0.27	(25 137 359 562)	0.28	6.61	114 197 150 684	114 702 430 555	9 827 180 696	25.87	411 091 945 055	430 991 260 520	34 964 540 258
XVII, Ch 86-89	Transport Equipment	87 907 198 227	1.48	1 166 999 507	1.08	10.66	257 589 711 359	269 526 786 916	15 854 781 448	10.87	148 843 430 124	181 619 588 689	14 687 781 941
XVIII, Ch 90-92	Precision Products, etc	(37 623 932 586)	0.22	(2 142 548 711)	0.46	1.23	8 210 764 005	10 434 436 526	1 835 985 697	2.94	46 341 279 841	48 058 369 112	3 978 534 408
XX, Ch 94-96	Misc Manufactured Articles	(19 325 864 976)	0.25	(1 535 868 719)	0.26	0.37	6 147 272 737	6 552 567 206	551 173 667	1.54	24 974 066 596	25 878 432 182	2 087 042 386
XXI, Ch 97	Works of Art/Antiques	(126 233 397)	0.93	(36 982 617)	0.72	0.06	1 691 020 098	1 602 009 762	94 154 779	0.10	953 852 577	1 728 243 159	131 137 396
XXII, Ch 99	Other Unclassified ¹⁾	6 581 680 969	4.17	883 813 928	4.85	0.75	6 741 725 885	8 655 607 589	1 113 611 816	0.17	2 109 900 142	2 073 926 620	229 797 888
XXIII, Ch 98	Special Provisions ²⁾	(151 005 808 621)	0.00	(8 877 516 963)	0.00	0.00	4 015 072	13 522 568	151 094	6.57	147 254 447 221	151 019 331 189	8 877 668 057
Total	Total SA Rand	69 130 130 248	1.04	13 529 640 015	1.10	100.00	1 833 832 472 553	1 870 744 583 853	148 700 883 521	100.00	1 774 753 490 774	1 801 614 453 605	135 171 243 506

World Zones	Cumulative Trade		Monthly Trade		Exports				Imports			
	Trade Balance (R'm)	Ratio ⁵⁾ (Exports/Imports)	Trade Balance (R' m)	Ratio Exports/Imports	Month % of total	Cumulative 2024 ³⁾ (R'm)	Cumulative 2025 ³⁾ (R'm)	Month Total 2025 (R'm)	Month % of total	Cumulative 2024 ³⁾ (R'm)	Cumulative 2025 ³⁾ (R'm)	Month Total 2025 (R'm)
AFRICA	248 158 783 337	3.39	21 690 749 202	5.02	18.22	365 141 393 316	352 034 580 890	27 092 203 003	4.00	130 296 778 839	103 875 797 553	5 401 453 801
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SHIP/AIRCRAFT	12 967 226 685	-	838 110 485	-	0.56	14 231 482 242	12 967 226 685	838 110 485				
Total	69 130 130 248	1.04	13 529 640 015	1.10	100.00	1 833 832 472 553	1 870 744 583 853	148 700 883 521	100.00	1 774 753 490 774	1 801 614 453 605	135 171 243 506
Temporary Imports	January 2025	February 2025	March 2025	April 2025	May 2025	June 2025	July 2025	August 2025	September 2025	October 2025	November 2025	December 2025
Gold Imports ⁴⁾	17 050 705 742	13 062 799 984	20 295 960 338	16 291 090 563	18 039 877 152	22 438 545 013	20 674 296 306	18 787 683 097	20 841 521 175	25 514 558 759	20 841 204 268	36 386 208 680

Notes:

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2) Special Provisions: Automotive Production and Development Programme (APDP)

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4) Temporary gold imports are not included in imports or export numbers for the trade balance calculation

5) The ratio is the value of total exports divided by the value of total imports

Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho and Namibia (Only)

South Africa's trade with the BELN countries for December 2025 shows a preliminary trade balance surplus of R9.6 billion.

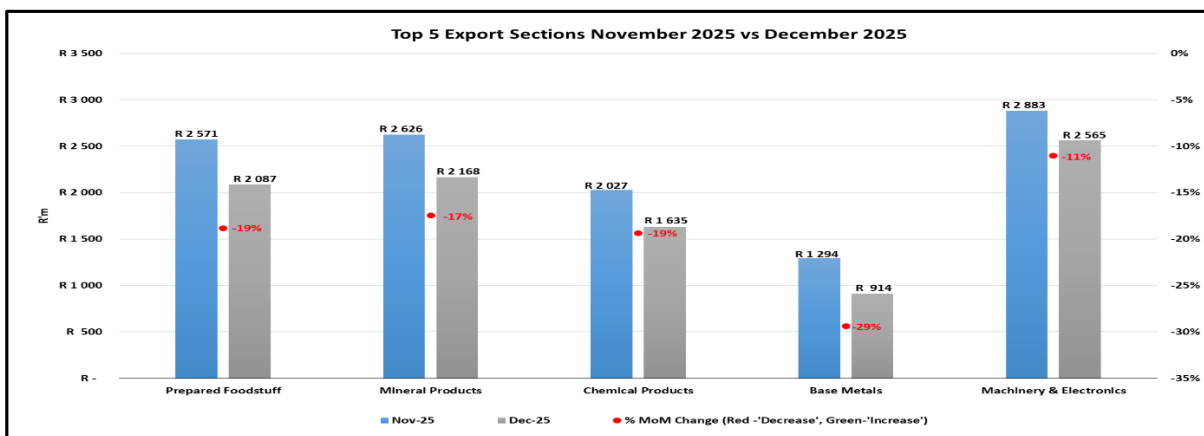
Summary

The R9.6 billion preliminary trade balance surplus for December 2025 was as a result of exports of R15.6 billion and imports of R5.9 billion. Exports decreased by R3.5 billion (-18.4%) between November and December 2025, and imports also decreased by R1.1 billion (-15.6%) over the same period.

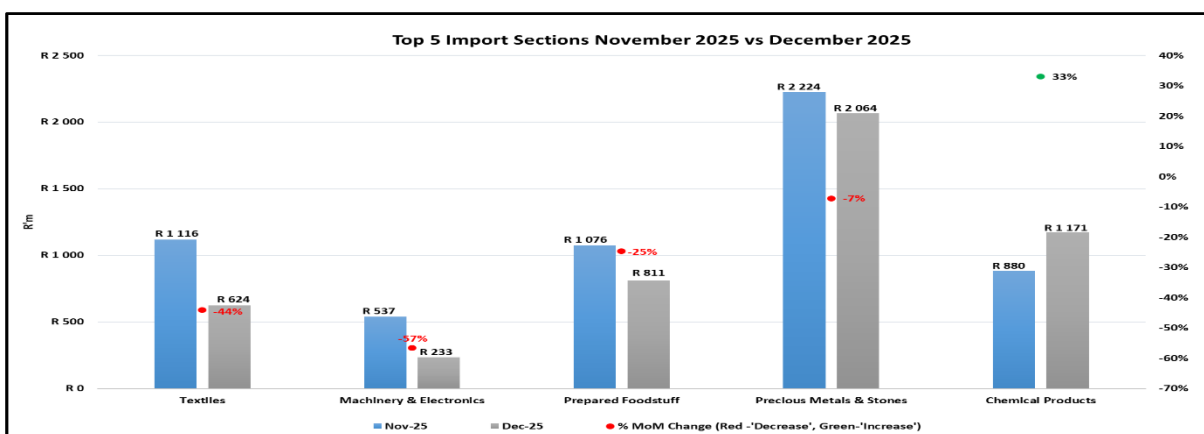
The preliminary cumulative trade balance for 2025 was a surplus of R132.5 billion, compared to R138.0 billion surplus in 2024.

Trade Highlights by Category

The main month-on-month export movements:



The main month-on-month import movements:



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ENDS.

For any enquiries, please send your queries to SARSMedia@sars.gov.za or TradeStatistics@sars.gov.za