



STATEMENT

SARS MEDIA RELEASE

UNDER EMBARGO – 2pm Wednesday, 30 September 2026

SARS releases the preliminary trade statistics for August 2026

Pretoria, 30 September 2026 – South Africa recorded a preliminary trade balance surplus of R20.5 billion in August 2026. This surplus was attributable to exports of R181.8 billion and imports of R161.3 billion, inclusive of trade with Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho and Namibia (BELN).

The year-to-date (01 January to 31 August 2026) preliminary trade balance surplus of R149.5 billion was higher than the R96.1 billion trade balance surplus for the comparable period in 2025. The year-to-date R149.5 trade balance surplus was driven by exports of R1.45trn and imports of R1.30trn. On a year-on-year basis, export flows for August 2026 of R181.8 billion were 6.4% higher compared to R170.8 billion recorded in August 2025. Import flows were lower by 4.2%, having decreased from R168.5 billion in August 2025 to R161.3 billion in the current period.

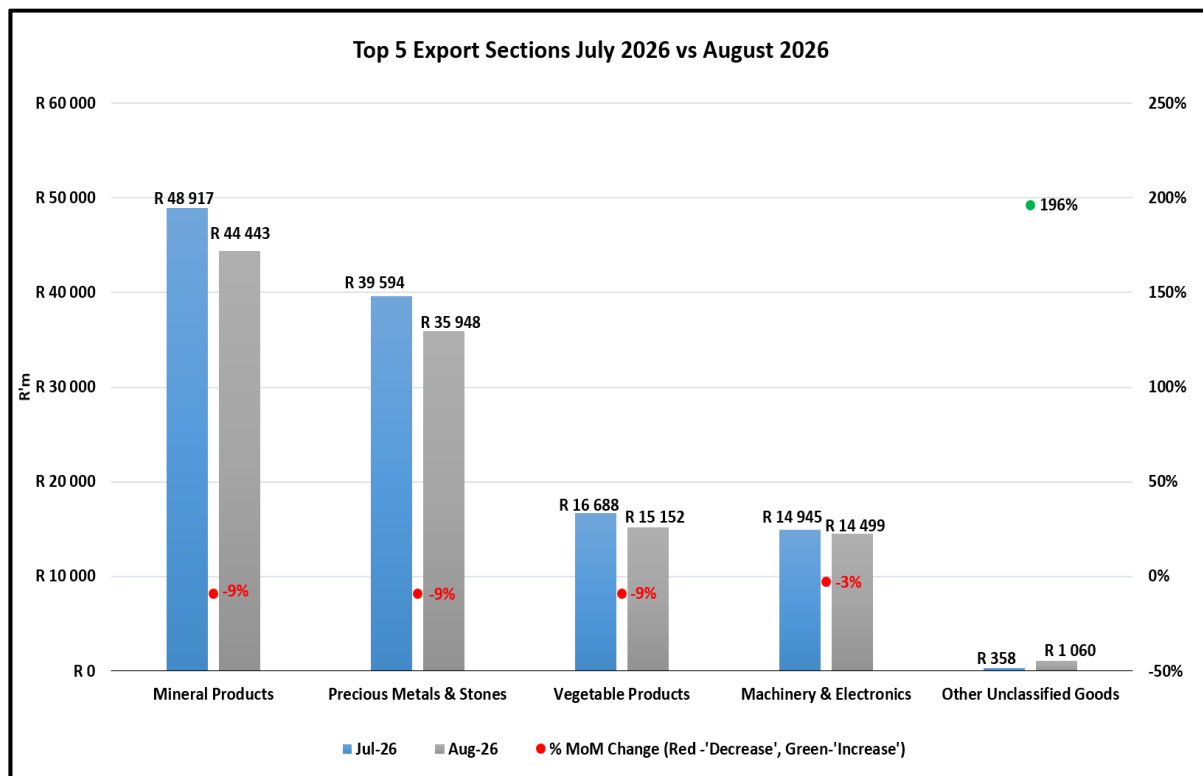
On a month-on-month basis, exports decreased by R11.3 billion (-5.8%) from R193.1 billion in July to R181.8 billion in August 2026, whilst imports decreased by R13.7 billion (-7.8%) from R175.0 billion to R161.3 billion over the same period. Export flows decreased in August 2026 driven by lower exports of platinum group metals (PGMs); gold; and zinc ores and concentrates. Import flows decreased on the back of lower importation of petroleum oils (excluding crude); original equipment components; and automatic data processing machines.

Due to ongoing Vouchers of Correction (VOCs), the preliminary trade balance surplus of R20.1 billion announced for July 2026 was revised downwards by R2.1 billion, with the final surplus at R18.0 billion.

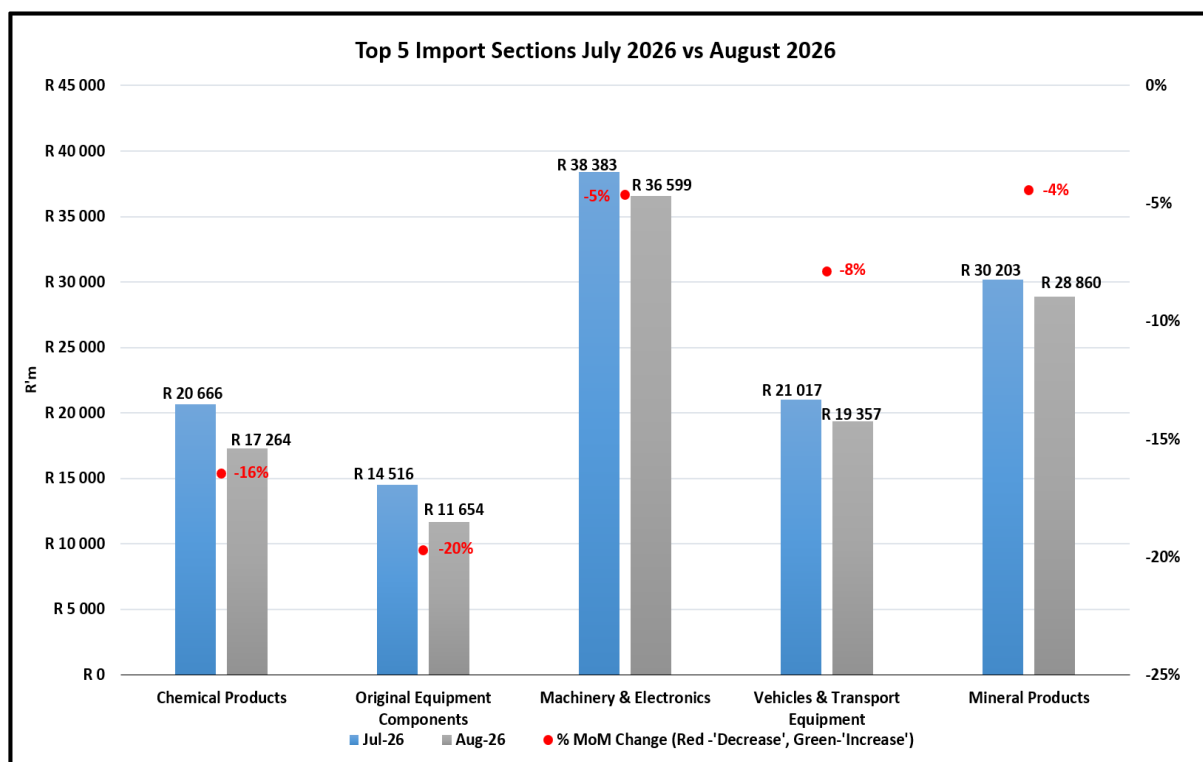
[Click here for Merchandise Trade Statistics August 2026](#)

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 July 2026 (revised) to August 2026 (preliminary) are given below:

World Zones (R' m)	The main month-on-month movements (R' m)				
	Trade Type	July 2026	August 2026	Variance	% M-o-M
Africa	Exports	49 163	47 930	-1 233	↓ -2.5%
	Imports	17 251	19 120	1 870	↑ 10.8%
	Trade Balance	31 912	28 809	-	-
America	Exports	15 892	17 858	1 967	↑ 12.4%
	Imports	20 902	15 602	-5 301	↓ -25.4%
	Trade Balance	-5 011	2 257	-	-
Asia	Exports	59 663	55 073	-4 590	↓ -7.7%
	Imports	91 168	80 420	-10 749	↓ -11.8%
	Trade Balance	-31 505	-25 346	-	-
Europe	Exports	47 820	41 960	-5 860	↓ -12.3%
	Imports	43 983	44 744	760	↑ 1.7%
	Trade Balance	3 837	-2 784	-	-
Oceania	Exports	2 065	2 364	299	↑ 14.5%
	Imports	1 509	858	-651	↓ -43.2%
	Trade Balance	556	1 506	-	-
Other Unclassified	Exports	17 224	15 411	-1 814	↓ -10.5%
	Imports	226	580	354	↑ 156.2%
	Trade Balance	16 998	14 830	-	-
Ship/Aircraft	Exports	1 257	1 201	-56	↓ -4.5%
	Imports	-	-	-	-
	Trade Balance	1 257	1 201	-	-

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

South Africa's trade with the rest of the world (excl. BELN) for August 2026 indicates a preliminary trade balance surplus of R10.2 billion.

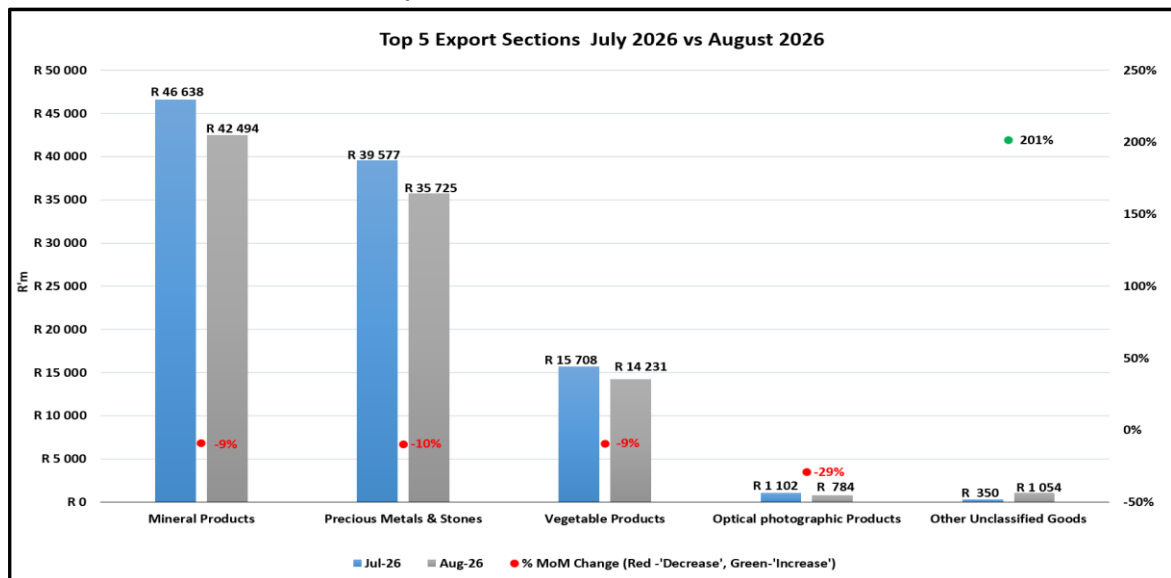
Summary

The R10.2 billion preliminary trade balance surplus for August 2026 was as a result of exports of R165.2 billion and imports of R155.0 billion. Exports decreased by R10.6 billion (-6.0%) between July 2026 and August 2026 whilst imports decreased by R13.8 billion (-8.2%) over the same period.

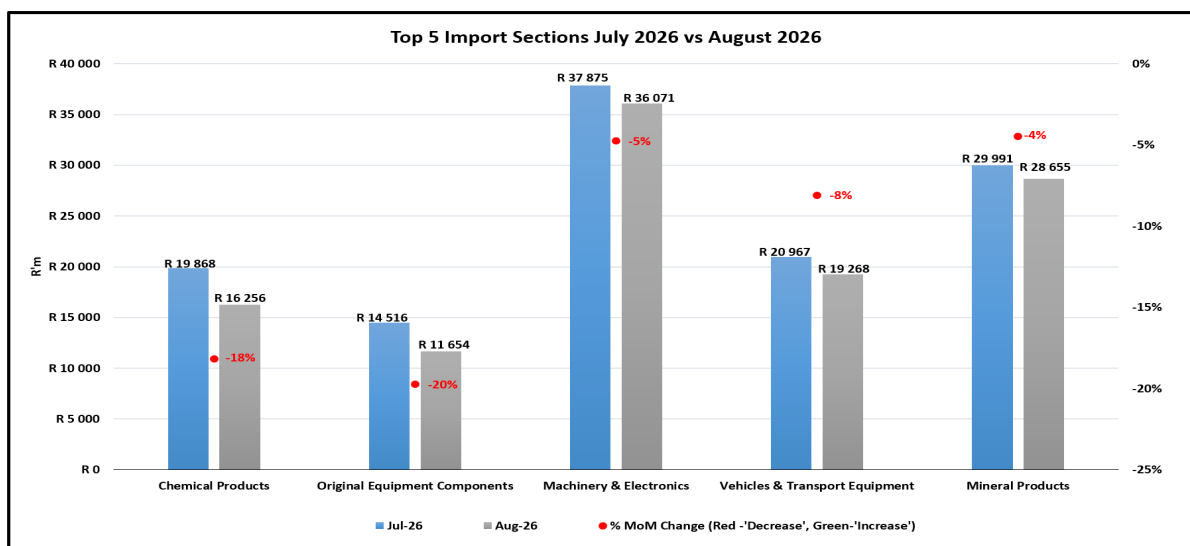
The preliminary cumulative trade balance for 2026 was a surplus of R69.5 billion, compared to R15.1 billion trade balance surplus for the corresponding period in 2025.

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 July 2026 (revised) and August 2026 (preliminary) are given below:

World Zones	The main month-on-month movements (R' m)				
	Trade Type	July 2026	August 2026	Variance	% M-o-M
Africa	Exports	31 870	31 306	-565	↓ -1.8%
	Imports	11 030	12 770	1 740	↑ 15.8%
	Trade Balance	20 840	18 536	-	-

[Click here for Merchandise Trade Statistics August 2026](#)

SA Trade Release Table (Including 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 2025 ³⁾ (R'm)	Cumulative 2026 ³⁾ (R'm)	Month Total 2026 (R'm)	Month % of total	Cumulative 2025 ³⁾ (R'm)	Cumulative 2026 ³⁾ (R'm)	Month Total 2026 (R'm)
I, Ch 1-5	Animals/Animal Products	3 202 610 091	1.24	505 019 465	1.34	1.10	16 574 628 975	16 470 081 922	2 000 494 070	0.93	11 204 221 432	13 267 471 831	1 495 474 605
II, Ch 6-14	Vegetable Products	75 776 765 342	3.82	12 036 161 532	4.86	8.33	106 377 099 899	102 670 025 585	15 151 804 403	1.93	31 388 678 978	26 893 260 243	3 115 642 871
III, Ch 15	Fats and Oils	(4 791 712 591)	0.53	(705 732 230)	0.49	0.38	5 297 140 535	5 419 672 615	682 726 357	0.86	9 927 846 192	10 211 385 206	1 388 458 587
IV, Ch 16-24	Prepared Foods	18 608 614 634	1.48	2 315 787 232	1.42	4.28	58 584 770 381	57 265 471 492	7 772 733 735	3.38	40 857 429 831	38 656 856 858	5 456 946 503
V, Ch 25-27	Mineral Products	82 704 686 641	1.30	15 582 576 902	1.54	24.45	327 544 977 434	360 681 469 717	44 442 745 286	17.89	229 634 229 510	277 976 783 076	28 860 168 384
VI, Ch 28-38	Chemical Products	(57 944 385 216)	0.57	(7 329 039 882)	0.58	5.46	76 227 347 873	77 914 741 396	9 934 644 918	10.70	135 059 621 459	135 859 126 612	17 263 684 800
VII, Ch 39-40	Plastics and Rubber	(27 127 580 825)	0.46	(3 533 410 541)	0.47	1.72	23 659 805 035	22 833 775 895	3 129 456 796	4.13	50 509 955 034	49 961 356 720	6 662 867 337
VIII, Ch 41-43	Hides, Skins and Leather	(566 335 443)	0.82	(137 403 353)	0.69	0.17	2 762 905 769	2 612 681 527	308 435 482	0.28	3 396 883 501	3 179 016 970	445 838 835
IX, Ch 44-46	Wood and articles thereof	3 782 235 124	1.73	507 035 251	1.81	0.62	8 660 416 016	8 962 304 200	1 134 070 945	0.39	5 007 611 418	5 180 069 076	627 035 694
X, Ch 47-49	Pulp and Paper Products	2 844 164 216	1.18	599 289 963	1.29	1.48	20 543 887 184	18 520 889 542	2 689 609 664	1.30	15 793 328 937	15 676 725 326	2 090 319 701
XI, Ch 50-63	Textiles and Clothing	(24 745 029 328)	0.39	(3 238 922 916)	0.34	0.94	15 788 367 814	15 820 093 771	1 701 529 826	3.06	42 908 697 384	40 565 123 099	4 940 452 742
XII, Ch 64-67	Footwear and Accessories	(9 334 075 271)	0.21	(1 501 885 685)	0.19	0.19	3 112 808 955	2 546 083 148	344 864 504	1.14	13 419 963 714	11 880 158 419	1 846 750 189
XIII, Ch 68-70	Stone, Plaster, etc	(5 049 981 723)	0.50	(723 304 396)	0.46	0.34	5 531 444 096	5 067 117 765	622 939 678	0.83	10 784 954 258	10 117 099 488	1 346 244 074
XIV, Ch 71	Precious Stones	324 021 855 362	14.10	33 114 017 461	12.68	19.77	257 063 755 311	348 760 899 757	35 948 013 517	1.76	29 877 500 957	24 739 044 395	2 833 996 056
XV, Ch 72-83	Base Metals	43 045 573 628	1.66	4 163 108 628	1.48	7.05	114 703 575 919	108 596 757 551	12 822 097 269	5.37	64 438 048 600	65 551 183 923	8 658 988 641
XVI, Ch 84-85	Machinery and Appliances	(187 540 791 251)	0.35	(22 100 137 083)	0.40	7.98	95 239 454 481	100 866 001 689	14 498 642 195	22.69	282 368 809 658	288 406 792 940	36 598 779 278
XVII, Ch 86-89	Transport Equipment	38 230 072 643	1.28	6 101 657 233	1.32	14.00	188 475 991 711	174 353 984 173	25 458 503 101	12.00	117 985 305 670	136 123 911 530	19 356 845 868
XVIII, Ch 90-92	Precision Products, etc	(20 914 223 682)	0.34	(2 945 473 488)	0.26	0.56	7 324 915 452	10 698 746 738	1 016 459 913	2.46	31 340 723 318	31 612 970 420	3 961 933 401
XX, Ch 94-96	Misc Manufactured Articles	(9 033 498 923)	0.44	(1 450 789 027)	0.40	0.52	7 701 234 979	7 229 431 954	950 757 328	1.49	16 544 005 771	16 262 930 877	2 401 546 355
XXI, Ch 97	Works of Art/Antiques	96 471 771	1.09	(40 315 124)	0.75	0.07	1 040 086 301	1 189 594 803	118 769 200	0.10	525 176 998	1 093 123 032	159 084 324
XXII, Ch 99	Other Unclassified ¹⁾	2 696 904 195	3.16	901 632 344	6.70	0.58	5 149 985 558	3 948 160 738	1 059 763 873	0.10	1 401 518 002	1 251 256 543	158 131 529
XXIII, Ch 98	Special Provisions ²⁾	(98 467 972 075)	0.00	(11 646 840 533)	0.00	0.00	11 417 741	7 290 975	7 112 587	7.22	106 907 289 160	98 475 263 050	11 653 953 120
Total	Total SA Rand	149 494 367 319	1.11	20 473 031 753	1.13	100.00	1 347 376 017 419	1 452 435 276 953	181 796 174 647	100.00	1 251 281 799 782	1 302 940 909 634	161 323 142 894

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 2025 ³⁾ (R'm)	Cumulative 2026 ³⁾ (R'm)	Month Total 2026 (R'm)	Month % of total	Cumulative 2025 ³⁾ (R'm)	Cumulative 2026 ³⁾ (R'm)	Month Total 2026 (R'm)
AFRICA	202 232 055 157	2.31	28 809 403 503	2.51	26.36	372 732 530 451	356 972 408 088	47 929 898 481	11.85	125 008 173 954	154 740 352 931	19 120 494 978
AMERICA	(15 968 675 546)	0.89	2 256 839 170	1.14	9.82	112 871 857 223	124 443 376 168	17 858 458 329	9.67	128 482 243 366	140 412 051 714	15 601 619 159
ASIA	(190 737 262 316)	0.71	(25 346 455 340)	0.68	30.29	385 370 906 342	456 149 747 486	55 073 231 792	49.85	643 652 605 207	646 887 009 802	80 419 687 132
EUROPE	13 236 579 221	1.04	(2 784 149 207)	0.94	23.08	340 891 803 785	360 615 020 412	41 959 579 543	27.74	332 773 042 085	347 378 441 191	44 743 728 750
OCEANIA	2 633 363 958	1.23	1 506 369 187	2.76	1.30	14 776 232 231	13 895 727 807	2 363 893 386	0.53	18 017 149 023	11 262 363 849	857 524 199
OTHER UNCLASSIFIED	129 795 599 828	58.41	14 830 464 654	26.57	8.48	111 406 790 258	132 056 289 975	15 410 553 330	0.36	3 348 586 147	2 260 690 147	580 088 676
SHIP/AIRCRAFT	8 302 707 017	-	1 200 559 786	-	0.66	9 325 897 129	8 302 707 017	1 200 559 786				
Total	149 494 367 319	1.11	20 473 031 753	1.13	100.00	1 347 376 017 419	1 452 435 276 953	181 796 174 647	100.00	1 251 281 799 782	1 302 940 909 634	161 323 142 894

Temporary Imports	January 2026	February 2026	March 2026	April 2026	May 2026	June 2026	July 2026	August 2026
Gold Imports ⁴⁾	26 815 288 642	22 477 363 994	31 554 655 648	22 833 074 333	28 701 418 116	23 149 989 052	24 103 995 947	79 012 334 587

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 2025 ³⁾ (R'm)	Cumulative 2026 ³⁾ (R'm)	Month Total 2026 (R'm)	Month % of total	Cumulative 2025 ³⁾ (R'm)	Cumulative 2026 ³⁾ (R'm)	Month Total 2026 (R'm)
I, Ch 1-5	Animals/Animal Products	2 568 136 251	1.24	456 046 554	1.39	0.98	13 524 989 252	13 468 859 171	1 611 163 195	0.75	9 326 035 361	10 900 722 920	1 155 116 641
II, Ch 6-14	Vegetable Products	69 333 718 012	3.70	11 353 936 678	4.95	8.62	97 776 008 694	94 984 410 100	14 230 516 692	1.86	30 376 733 463	25 650 692 088	2 876 580 014
III, Ch 15	Fats and Oils	(6 768 558 825)	0.34	(974 243 639)	0.30	0.25	3 434 883 519	3 412 287 994	408 848 343	0.89	9 874 717 003	10 180 846 819	1 383 091 982
IV, Ch 16-24	Prepared Foods	9 545 495 071	1.30	1 230 936 169	1.28	3.44	41 913 580 726	41 304 599 137	5 682 230 108	2.87	34 232 545 893	31 759 104 066	4 451 293 939
V, Ch 25-27	Mineral Products	67 037 194 749	1.24	13 839 074 812	1.48	25.73	306 779 493 842	343 311 048 395	42 494 395 582	18.49	228 193 180 777	276 273 853 646	28 655 320 770
VI, Ch 28-38	Chemical Products	(64 387 276 319)	0.50	(8 241 159 564)	0.49	4.85	62 774 524 180	64 252 481 268	8 014 964 264	10.49	127 817 075 720	128 639 757 587	16 256 123 828
VII, Ch 39-40	Plastics and Rubber	(32 221 999 729)	0.35	(4 231 434 955)	0.36	1.42	17 688 574 134	16 987 477 057	2 344 005 040	4.24	49 876 661 576	49 209 476 786	6 575 439 995
VIII, Ch 41-43	Hides, Skins and Leather	(850 966 652)	0.72	(179 628 718)	0.59	0.16	2 381 345 150	2 239 091 051	256 510 031	0.28	3 313 610 576	3 090 057 703	436 138 749
IX, Ch 44-46	Wood and articles thereof	3 809 415 457	2.23	495 776 296	2.40	0.51	6 686 389 941	6 917 113 515	849 115 699	0.23	2 971 811 510	3 107 698 058	353 339 403
X, Ch 47-49	Pulp and Paper Products	623 784 154	1.04	289 700 029	1.14	1.41	17 863 432 914	15 900 743 899	2 335 051 917	1.32	15 396 623 474	15 276 959 745	2 045 351 888
XI, Ch 50-63	Textiles and Clothing	(25 926 302 550)	0.26	(3 281 667 215)	0.20	0.50	8 849 112 703	9 006 879 961	828 239 161	2.65	36 990 541 092	34 933 182 511	4 109 906 376
XII, Ch 64-67	Footwear and Accessories	(10 710 509 809)	0.08	(1 702 131 272)	0.06	0.07	1 412 326 820	965 381 847	111 722 669	1.17	13 275 735 028	11 675 891 656	1 813 853 941
XIII, Ch 68-70	Stone, Plaster, etc	(6 602 690 848)	0.34	(916 262 192)	0.31	0.25	3 826 661 762	3 392 836 026	414 963 952	0.86	10 681 062 788	9 995 526 874	1 331 226 144
XIV, Ch 71	Precious Stones	335 923 320 398	32.14	34 409 465 344	27.15	21.63	254 791 684 050	346 711 824 967	35 725 496 232	0.85	8 395 365 712	10 788 504 569	1 316 030 888
XV, Ch 72-83	Base Metals	35 336 687 632	1.55	3 123 189 087	1.36	7.08	105 944 389 743	99 973 725 334	11 687 819 739	5.53	63 553 346 438	64 637 037 702	8 564 630 652
XVI, Ch 84-85	Machinery and Appliances	(203 966 616 038)	0.28	(24 311 306 150)	0.33	7.12	74 650 451 982	80 120 248 684	11 759 952 434	23.28	278 682 549 023	284 086 864 722	36 071 258 584
XVII, Ch 86-89	Transport Equipment	27 381 390 781	1.20	4 710 500 549	1.24	14.52	176 009 568 411	162 964 477 833	23 978 272 884	12.43	117 564 265 737	135 583 087 052	19 267 772 335
XVIII, Ch 90-92	Precision Products, etc	(22 813 647 090)	0.28	(3 168 291 810)	0.20	0.47	5 393 108 194	8 710 309 293	783 604 903	2.55	31 258 590 942	31 523 956 383	3 951 896 713
XX, Ch 94-96	Misc Manufactured Articles	(12 124 339 619)	0.25	(1 910 039 897)	0.20	0.29	4 275 310 195	4 046 302 935	479 613 358	1.54	16 448 119 881	16 170 642 554	2 389 653 255
XXI, Ch 97	Works of Art/Antiques	87 787 336	1.08	(44 467 408)	0.72	0.07	1 029 538 346	1 178 756 450	114 326 353	0.10	524 151 919	1 090 969 114	158 793 761
XXII, Ch 99	Other Unclassified ¹⁾	2 655 573 499	3.14	898 140 966	6.76	0.64	5 106 449 809	3 895 549 536	1 054 067 414	0.10	1 388 666 089	1 239 976 037	155 926 448
XXIII, Ch 98	Special Provisions ²⁾	(98 467 987 950)	0.00	(11 646 840 533)	0.00	0.00	11 337 201	7 275 100	7 112 587	7.52	106 907 289 160	98 475 263 050	11 653 953 120
Total	Total SA Rand	69 461 607 911	1.06	10 199 293 131	1.07	100.00	1 212 123 161 568	1 323 751 679 553	165 171 992 557	100.00	1 197 048 679 162	1 254 290 071 642	154 972 699 426

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 2025 ³⁾ (R'm)	Cumulative 2026 ³⁾ (R'm)	Month Total 2026 (R'm)	Month % of total	Cumulative 2025 ³⁾ (R'm)	Cumulative 2026 ³⁾ (R'm)	Month Total 2026 (R'm)
AFRICA	122 199 295 749	2.15	18 535 664 881	2.45	18.95	237 479 674 600	228 288 810 688	31 305 716 391	8.24	70 775 053 334	106 089 514 939	12 770 051 510
AMERICA	(15 968 675 546)	0.89	2 256 839 170	1.14	10.81	112 871 857 223	124 443 376 168	17 858 458 329	10.07	128 482 243 366	140 412 051 714	15 601 619 159
ASIA	(190 737 262 316)	0.71	(25 346 455 340)	0.68	33.34	385 370 906 342	456 149 747 486	55 073 231 792	51.89	643 652 605 207	646 887 009 802	80 419 687 132
EUROPE	13 236 579 221	1.04	(2 784 149 207)	0.94	25.40	340 891 803 785	360 615 020 412	41 959 579 543	28.87	332 773 042 085	347 378 441 191	44 743 728 750
OCEANIA	2 633 363 958	1.23	1 506 369 187	2.76	1.43	14 776 232 231	13 895 727 807	2 363 893 386	0.55	18 017 149 023	11 262 363 849	857 524 199
OTHER UNCLASSIFIED	129 795 599 828	58.41	14 830 464 654	26.57	9.33	111 406 790 258	132 056 289 975	15 410 553 330	0.37	3 348 586 147	2 260 690 147	580 088 676
SHIP/AIRCRAFT	8 302 707 017	-	1 200 559 786	-	0.73	9 325 897 129	8 302 707 017	1 200 559 786				
Total	69 461 607 911	1.06	10 199 293 131	1.07	100.00	1 212 123 161 568	1 323 751 679 553	165 171 992 557	100.00	1 197 048 679 162	1 254 290 071 642	154 972 699 426

Temporary Imports	January 2026	February 2026	March 2026	April 2026	May 2026	June 2026	July 2026	August 2026
Gold Imports ⁴⁾	26 815 288 642	22 477 363 994	31 554 655 648	22 833 074 333	28 701 418 116	23 149 989 052	24 103 995 947	79 012 334 587

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

Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho and Namibia (Only)

South Africa's trade with the BELN countries for August 2026 shows a preliminary trade balance surplus of R10.3 billion.

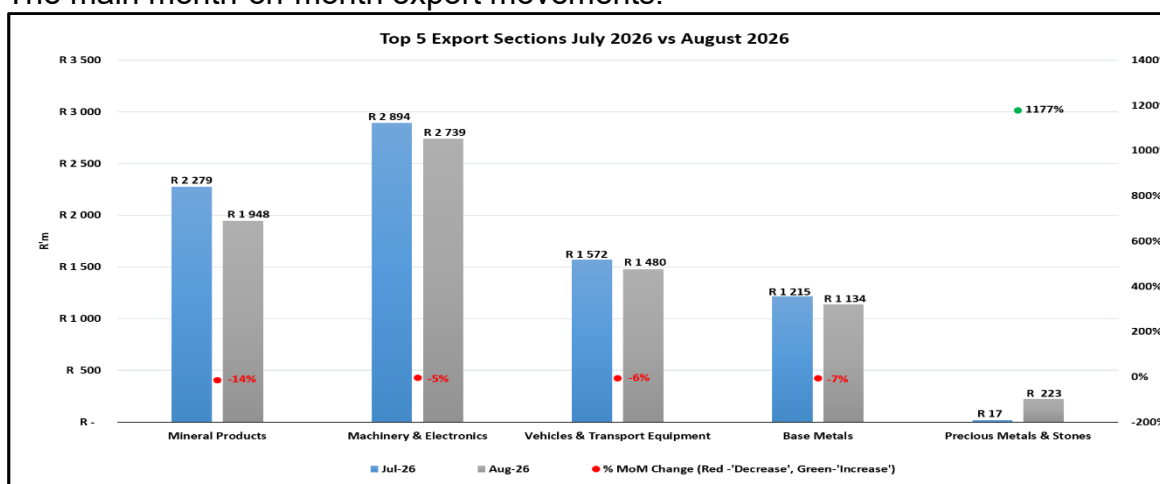
Summary

The R10.3 billion preliminary trade balance surplus for August 2026 was as a result of exports of R16.6 billion and imports of R6.4 billion. Exports decreased by R0.7 billion (-3.9%) between July 2026 and August 2026, and imports increased by R0.1 billion (2.1%) over the same period.

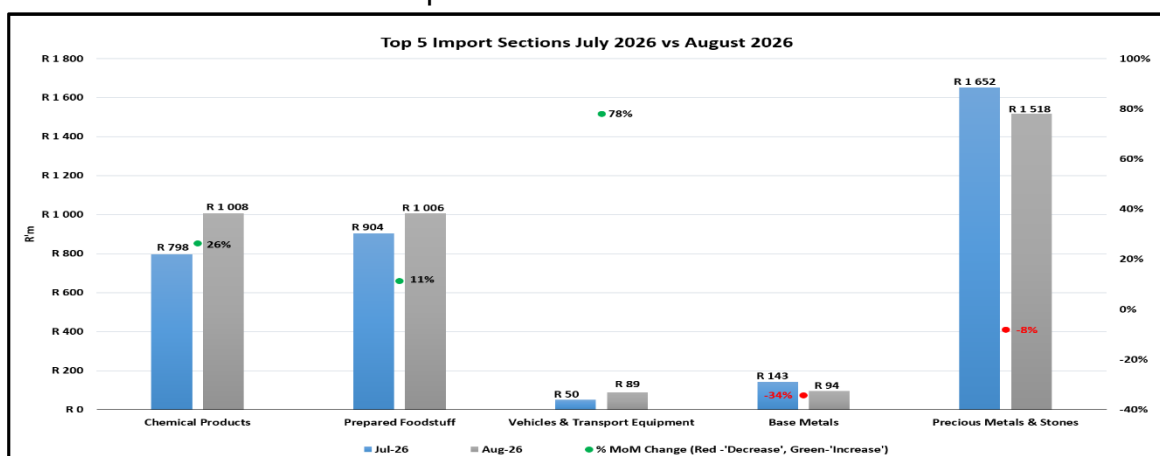
The preliminary cumulative trade balance for 2026 was a surplus of R80.0 billion, compared to R81.0 billion surplus in 2025.

Trade Highlights by Category

The main month-on-month export movements:



The main month-on-month import movements:



[Click here for Merchandise Trade Statistics August 2026](#)

ENDS.

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