



## STATEMENT

### SARS MEDIA RELEASE

*UNDER EMBARGO – 2pm Tuesday, 30 June 2026*

## **SARS releases the preliminary trade statistics for May 2026**

**Pretoria, 30 June 2026** – South Africa recorded a preliminary trade balance deficit of R1.8 billion in May 2026. This deficit was attributable to exports of R178.8 billion and imports of R180.6 billion, inclusive of trade with Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho and Namibia (BELN).

The year-to-date (01 January to 31 May 2026) preliminary trade balance surplus of R85.8 billion was higher than the R60.1 billion trade balance surplus for the comparable period in 2025. On a year-on-year basis, export flows for May 2026 (R178.8 billion) were 2.7% higher compared to R174.2 billion recorded in May 2025. Import flows were higher by 17.3%, having increased from R153.9 billion in May 2025 to R180.6 billion in the current period.

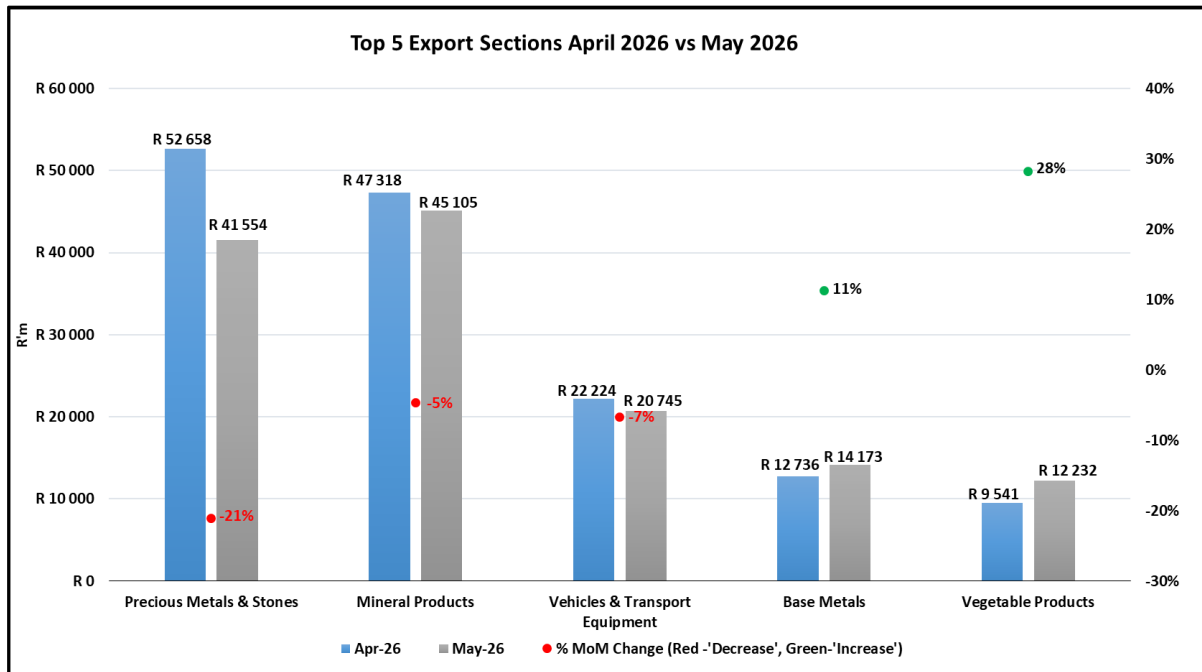
On a month-on-month basis, exports decreased by R10.8 billion (-5.7%) from R189.7 billion to R178.8 billion between April and May 2026, whilst imports increased by R5.4 billion (3.1%) from R175.2 billion to R180.6 billion over the same period. Export flows decreased in May 2026, driven by gold, platinum group metals (PGMs), and motor vehicles (passengers). Import flows increased on the back of higher importation of crude oil, original equipment components, and motor vehicles (passengers).

Due to ongoing Vouchers of Correction (VOCs), the preliminary trade balance surplus of R15.2 billion announced for April 2026 was revised downwards by R0.7 billion, with the final number at R14.4 billion.

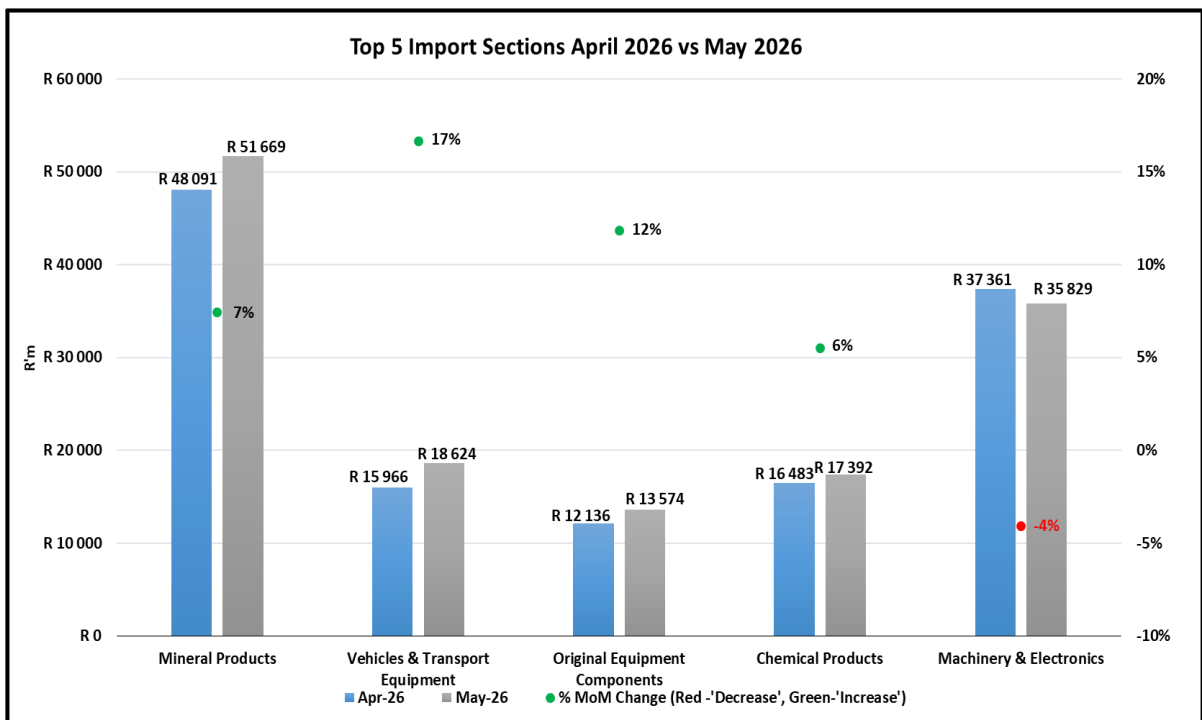
[Click here for Merchandise Trade Statistics May 2026](#)

## 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 April 2026 (revised) to May 2026 (preliminary) are given below:

World Zones (R' m)	The main month-on-month movements (R' m)				
	Trade Type	April 2026	May 2026	Variance	% M-o-M
Africa	Exports	44 215	45 468	1 253	↑ 2.8%
	Imports	23 230	27 283	4 054	↑ 17.4%
	Trade Balance	20 985	18 185	-	-
America	Exports	16 409	14 479	-1 931	↓ -11.8%
	Imports	23 893	23 296	-597	↓ -2.5%
	Trade Balance	-7 484	-8 818	-	-
Asia	Exports	59 299	58 129	-1 170	↓ -2.0%
	Imports	73 275	76 969	3 694	↑ 5.0%
	Trade Balance	-13 976	-18 840	-	-
Europe	Exports	47 197	45 545	-1 652	↓ -3.5%
	Imports	51 844	51 612	-232	↓ -0.4%
	Trade Balance	-4 647	-6 067	-	-
Oceania	Exports	2 116	1 578	-539	↓ -25.5%
	Imports	1 505	1 274	-231	↓ -15.4%
	Trade Balance	611	304	-	-
Other Unclassified	Exports	19 002	12 757	-6 245	↓ -32.9%
	Imports	1 476	187	-1 289	↓ -87.3%
	Trade Balance	17 525	12 570	-	-
Ship/Aircraft	Exports	1 418	876	-543	↓ -38.3%
	Imports	-	-	-	-
	Trade Balance	1 418	876	-	-

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

South Africa's trade with the rest of the world (excl. BELN) for May 2026 indicates a preliminary trade balance deficit of R11.9 billion.

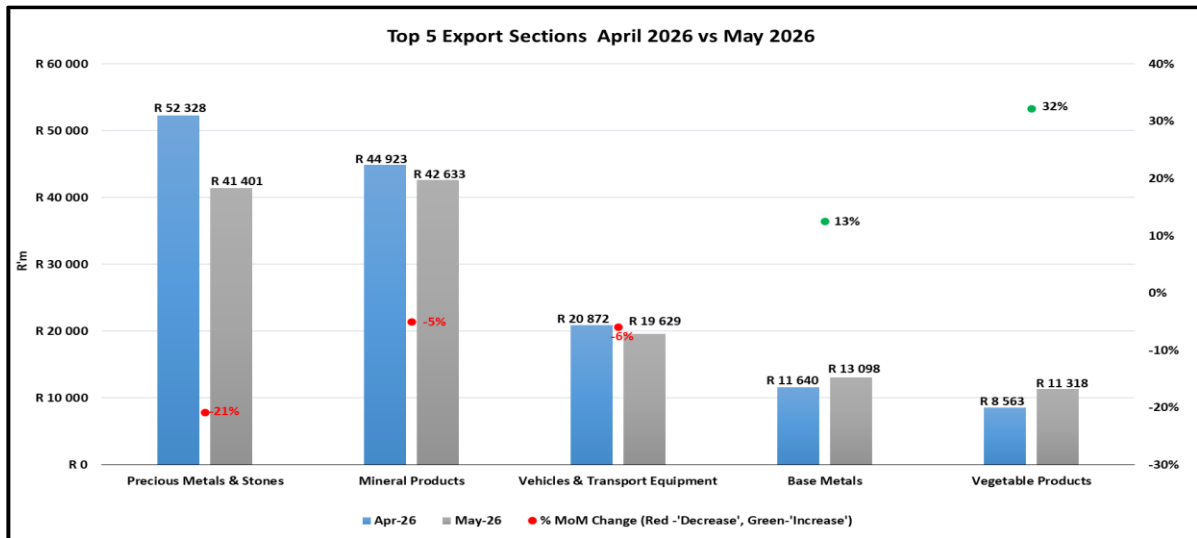
### Summary

The R11.9 billion preliminary trade balance deficit for May 2026 was as a result of exports of R163.1 billion and imports of R175.1 billion. Exports decreased by R10.5 billion (-6.1%) between April 2026 and May 2026 whilst imports increased by R5.6 billion (3.3%) over the same period.

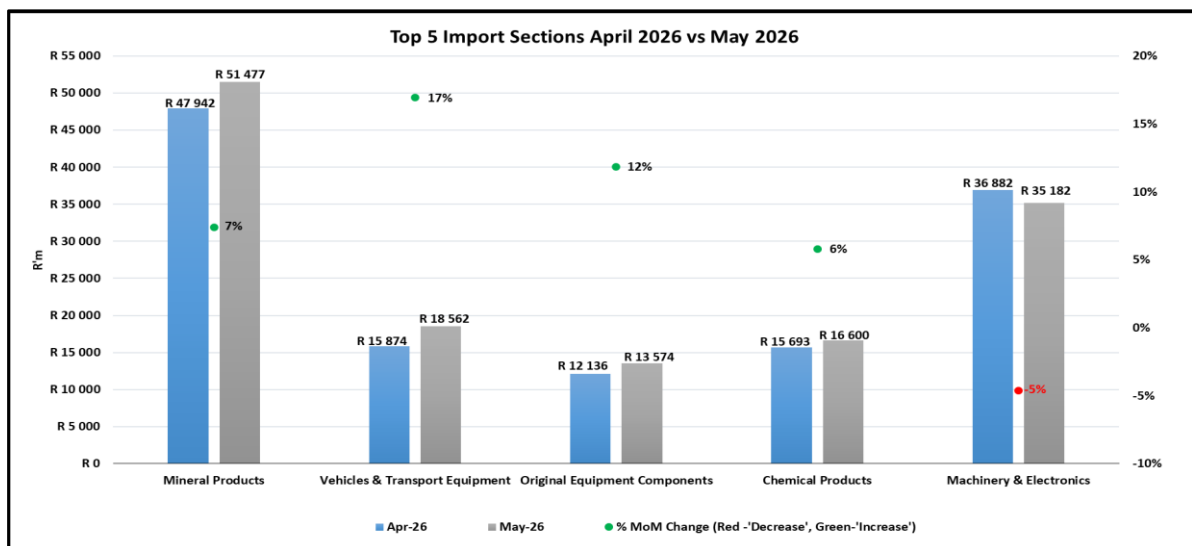
The preliminary cumulative trade balance for 2026 was a surplus of R37.7 billion, compared to R5.3 billion trade balance surplus for the corresponding period in 2025.

## 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 April 2026 (revised) and May 2026 (preliminary) are given below:

World Zones	The main month-on-month movements (R' m)				
	Trade Type	April 2026	May 2026	Variance	% M-o-M
Africa	Exports	28 223	29 754	1 531	↑ 5.4%
	Imports	17 461	21 713	4 252	↑ 24.4%
	Trade Balance	10 763	8 042	-	-

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

## SA Trade Release Table (Including BELN)

Harmonised Sections		Cumulative Trade		Monthly Trade		Exports				Imports			
Roman Section	Description	Trade Balance (R'm)	Ratio <sup>5)</sup> (Exports/Imports)	Trade Balance (R'm)	Ratio Exports/Imports	Month % of total	Cumulative 2025 <sup>3)</sup> (R'm)	Cumulative 2026 <sup>3)</sup> (R'm)	Month Total 2026 (R'm)	Month % of total	Cumulative 2025 <sup>3)</sup> (R'm)	Cumulative 2026 <sup>3)</sup> (R'm)	Month Total 2026 (R'm)
I, Ch 1-5	Animals/Animal Products	1 712 066 408	1.21	731 368 354	1.46	1.29	10 479 493 728	10 004 666 164	2 306 485 934	0.87	7 302 295 319	8 292 599 756	1 575 117 580
II, Ch 6-14	Vegetable Products	39 680 117 670	3.44	8 926 768 593	3.70	6.84	55 862 981 612	55 936 579 932	12 232 389 962	1.83	20 315 133 524	16 256 462 262	3 305 621 369
III, Ch 15	Fats and Oils	(2 801 735 209)	0.53	(653 801 312)	0.50	0.36	3 367 849 780	3 155 373 572	650 074 770	0.72	5 962 968 446	5 957 108 781	1 303 876 082
IV, Ch 16-24	Prepared Foods	10 777 123 361	1.46	2 808 851 596	1.64	4.04	34 632 848 762	34 331 443 688	7 221 613 665	2.44	25 031 840 172	23 554 320 327	4 412 762 069
V, Ch 25-27	Mineral Products	47 248 206 235	1.27	(6 563 752 658)	0.87	25.22	206 957 015 970	224 816 771 449	45 105 237 719	28.61	147 162 004 089	177 568 565 214	51 668 990 377
VI, Ch 28-38	Chemical Products	(32 300 904 625)	0.59	(7 438 371 260)	0.57	5.57	47 066 872 293	47 367 538 559	9 953 426 833	9.63	81 284 594 828	79 668 443 184	17 391 798 093
VII, Ch 39-40	Plastics and Rubber	(15 690 144 781)	0.47	(3 235 554 446)	0.48	1.65	14 176 309 606	13 788 018 946	2 949 731 335	3.42	31 000 912 614	29 478 163 727	6 185 285 781
VIII, Ch 41-43	Hides, Skins and Leather	(331 774 030)	0.82	(18 590 260)	0.95	0.18	1 711 282 152	1 564 029 533	325 268 198	0.19	1 979 460 525	1 895 803 563	343 858 458
IX, Ch 44-46	Wood and articles thereof	2 314 258 474	1.72	563 994 708	1.92	0.66	5 157 090 452	5 545 939 671	1 175 489 483	0.34	3 037 290 780	3 231 681 197	611 494 775
X, Ch 47-49	Pulp and Paper Products	1 509 707 960	1.16	411 391 806	1.22	1.29	12 477 950 001	11 070 553 812	2 305 073 105	1.05	9 551 023 870	9 560 845 852	1 893 681 299
XI, Ch 50-63	Textiles and Clothing	(14 984 308 800)	0.40	(2 626 958 040)	0.44	1.13	9 999 980 084	10 034 386 880	2 024 632 002	2.58	26 307 064 637	25 018 695 680	4 651 590 042
XII, Ch 64-67	Footwear and Accessories	(5 087 986 636)	0.23	(852 399 771)	0.28	0.19	1 978 570 469	1 559 579 767	332 723 444	0.66	7 272 143 462	6 647 566 403	1 185 123 215
XIII, Ch 68-70	Stone, Plaster, etc	(2 928 800 066)	0.52	(559 767 376)	0.54	0.37	3 483 901 584	3 125 072 155	670 474 985	0.68	6 525 038 521	6 053 872 221	1 230 242 361
XIV, Ch 71	Precious Stones	199 392 587 322	13.21	38 461 678 590	13.44	23.24	155 986 056 238	215 722 729 013	41 554 314 807	1.71	13 431 561 733	16 330 141 691	3 092 636 217
XV, Ch 72-83	Base Metals	28 699 208 535	1.73	6 376 174 080	1.82	7.93	76 603 898 046	67 866 742 579	14 173 483 994	4.32	39 703 398 980	39 167 534 044	7 797 309 914
XVI, Ch 84-85	Machinery and Appliances	(116 283 963 152)	0.34	(23 378 097 206)	0.35	6.96	57 721 346 689	58 767 272 590	12 451 399 010	19.84	174 820 978 335	175 051 235 742	35 829 496 216
XVII, Ch 86-89	Transport Equipment	19 788 155 453	1.25	2 120 907 085	1.11	11.60	112 358 244 754	99 361 125 838	20 744 755 379	10.31	69 242 386 870	79 572 970 385	18 623 848 294
XVIII, Ch 90-92	Precision Products, etc	(11 849 849 431)	0.38	(2 725 512 089)	0.26	0.54	4 595 318 699	7 198 579 853	966 865 753	2.04	19 096 387 247	19 048 429 284	3 692 377 842
XX, Ch 94-96	Misc Manufactured Articles	(4 940 499 362)	0.47	(903 398 132)	0.51	0.53	4 461 922 216	4 346 765 699	953 861 739	1.03	9 337 525 060	9 287 265 061	1 857 259 871
XXI, Ch 97	Works of Art/Antiques	83 132 798	1.11	(21 248 999)	0.90	0.11	603 837 293	843 021 948	194 078 945	0.12	393 736 190	759 889 150	215 327 944
XXII, Ch 99	Other Unclassified <sup>1)</sup>	1 385 795 977	2.73	359 340 765	2.99	0.30	3 087 619 601	2 188 086 266	539 633 954	0.10	895 300 759	802 290 289	180 293 189
XXIII, Ch 98	Special Provisions <sup>2)</sup>	(59 585 614 667)	0.00	(13 573 511 972)	0.00	0.00	9 600 994	102 232	77 191	7.51	63 055 154 038	59 585 716 899	13 573 589 163
<b>Total</b>	<b>Total SA Rand</b>	<b>85 804 779 434</b>	<b>1.11</b>	<b>(1 790 487 944)</b>	<b>0.99</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>822 779 991 023</b>	<b>878 594 380 146</b>	<b>178 831 092 207</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>762 708 199 999</b>	<b>792 789 600 712</b>	<b>180 621 580 151</b>

World Zones	Cumulative Trade		Monthly Trade		Exports				Imports			
	Trade Balance (R'm)	Ratio <sup>5)</sup> (Exports/Imports)	Trade Balance (R'm)	Ratio Exports/Imports	Month % of total	Cumulative 2025 <sup>3)</sup> (R'm)	Cumulative 2026 <sup>3)</sup> (R'm)	Month Total 2026 (R'm)	Month % of total	Cumulative 2025 <sup>3)</sup> (R'm)	Cumulative 2026 <sup>3)</sup> (R'm)	Month Total 2026 (R'm)
AFRICA	116 324 799 912	2.18	18 185 034 858	1.67	25.43	230 245 800 495	214 881 482 368	45 468 429 252	15.11	75 627 344 696	98 556 682 456	27 283 394 394
AMERICA	(14 098 660 502)	0.84	(8 817 596 809)	0.62	8.10	69 047 331 484	73 140 546 519	14 478 650 628	12.90	77 405 591 666	87 239 207 021	23 296 247 437
ASIA	(98 987 832 310)	0.74	(18 840 446 701)	0.76	32.50	235 272 767 336	280 589 117 610	58 128 761 521	42.61	395 800 972 878	379 576 949 920	76 969 208 222
EUROPE	8 540 472 864	1.04	(6 066 963 944)	0.88	25.47	201 688 765 501	226 479 508 430	45 544 981 648	28.57	199 263 642 139	217 939 035 566	51 611 945 592
OCEANIA	348 866 528	1.05	303 767 543	1.24	0.88	7 909 615 638	7 562 438 494	1 577 753 581	0.71	12 274 852 264	7 213 571 966	1 273 986 038
OTHER UNCLASSIFIED	68 926 032 849	31.44	12 569 826 138	68.29	7.13	73 329 899 469	71 190 186 632	12 756 624 606	0.10	2 335 796 356	2 264 153 783	186 798 468
SHIP/AIRCRAFT	4 751 100 093	-	875 890 971	-	0.49	5 285 811 100	4 751 100 093	875 890 971				
<b>Total</b>	<b>85 804 779 434</b>	<b>1.11</b>	<b>(1 790 487 944)</b>	<b>0.99</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>822 779 991 023</b>	<b>878 594 380 146</b>	<b>178 831 092 207</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>762 708 199 999</b>	<b>792 789 600 712</b>	<b>180 621 580 151</b>

Temporary Imports	January 2026	February 2026	March 2026	April 2026	May 2026
Gold Imports <sup>4)</sup>	26 815 288 642	22 477 363 994	31 554 655 648	22 842 067 521	28 712 587 781

- 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 <sup>5)</sup> (Exports/Imports)	Trade Balance (R'm)	Ratio Exports/Imports	Month % of total	Cumulative 2025 <sup>3)</sup> (R'm)	Cumulative 2026 <sup>3)</sup> (R'm)	Month Total 2026 (R'm)	Month % of total	Cumulative 2025 <sup>3)</sup> (R'm)	Cumulative 2026 <sup>3)</sup> (R'm)	Month Total 2026 (R'm)
I, Ch 1-5	Animals/Animal Products	1 247 135 892	1.18	622 380 403	1.48	1.18	8 569 876 753	8 197 952 935	1 929 276 475	0.75	6 159 343 240	6 950 817 043	1 306 896 072
II, Ch 6-14	Vegetable Products	35 376 490 592	3.26	8 156 473 710	3.58	6.94	50 153 870 931	51 038 834 989	11 317 692 756	1.81	19 790 492 492	15 662 344 397	3 161 219 046
III, Ch 15	Fats and Oils	(3 945 308 690)	0.34	(863 513 061)	0.34	0.27	2 301 655 879	1 992 917 123	437 890 005	0.74	5 920 559 198	5 938 225 813	1 301 403 066
IV, Ch 16-24	Prepared Foods	5 176 486 871	1.27	1 699 399 474	1.47	3.25	24 362 181 120	24 528 019 074	5 296 242 808	2.05	20 946 349 415	19 351 532 203	3 596 843 334
V, Ch 25-27	Mineral Products	37 137 317 471	1.21	(8 844 147 481)	0.83	26.14	194 035 335 375	213 589 509 090	42 632 993 230	29.41	146 242 702 857	176 452 191 619	51 477 140 711
VI, Ch 28-38	Chemical Products	(35 827 738 393)	0.52	(8 366 402 288)	0.50	5.05	38 791 370 562	39 289 702 450	8 233 993 084	9.48	76 768 734 269	75 117 440 843	16 600 395 372
VII, Ch 39-40	Plastics and Rubber	(18 782 330 668)	0.35	(3 898 290 841)	0.36	1.34	10 555 646 295	10 223 727 949	2 184 152 343	3.47	30 617 427 441	29 006 058 617	6 082 443 184
VIII, Ch 41-43	Hides, Skins and Leather	(508 211 476)	0.72	(49 416 639)	0.85	0.17	1 481 829 867	1 335 215 937	281 892 531	0.19	1 933 848 487	1 843 427 413	331 309 170
IX, Ch 44-46	Wood and articles thereof	2 353 701 568	2.18	564 810 627	2.64	0.56	3 963 380 550	4 352 293 848	909 580 344	0.20	1 875 581 994	1 998 592 280	344 769 717
X, Ch 47-49	Pulp and Paper Products	159 600 401	1.02	155 045 613	1.08	1.23	10 862 639 606	9 474 908 957	1 999 416 140	1.05	9 305 250 650	9 315 308 556	1 844 370 527
XI, Ch 50-63	Textiles and Clothing	(15 878 138 423)	0.27	(2 874 464 878)	0.29	0.71	5 740 461 470	5 829 859 146	1 157 553 581	2.30	22 859 406 083	21 707 997 569	4 032 018 459
XII, Ch 64-67	Footwear and Accessories	(5 935 985 498)	0.09	(1 029 378 743)	0.12	0.09	955 629 722	590 885 523	138 776 341	0.67	7 185 416 013	6 526 871 021	1 168 155 084
XIII, Ch 68-70	Stone, Plaster, etc	(3 864 362 308)	0.35	(755 294 706)	0.38	0.28	2 428 483 524	2 115 266 465	458 886 159	0.69	6 460 437 686	5 979 628 773	1 214 180 865
XIV, Ch 71	Precious Stones	207 346 320 095	30.27	39 685 785 433	24.14	25.38	154 606 806 595	214 429 240 256	41 401 175 213	0.98	4 526 282 832	7 082 920 161	1 715 389 780
XV, Ch 72-83	Base Metals	24 097 729 698	1.62	5 462 169 735	1.72	8.03	71 228 708 602	62 687 120 298	13 098 369 922	4.36	39 112 399 002	38 589 390 600	7 636 200 187
XVI, Ch 84-85	Machinery and Appliances	(125 934 808 205)	0.27	(25 138 822 266)	0.29	6.16	44 933 453 627	46 378 920 085	10 043 457 945	20.10	172 601 310 613	172 313 728 290	35 182 280 211
XVII, Ch 86-89	Transport Equipment	13 395 548 243	1.17	1 067 335 801	1.06	12.03	104 832 153 068	92 606 531 251	19 629 206 171	10.60	69 023 118 351	79 210 983 008	18 561 870 370
XVIII, Ch 90-92	Precision Products, etc	(13 032 698 073)	0.31	(2 986 522 426)	0.19	0.43	3 388 485 954	5 963 590 346	695 862 463	2.10	19 049 865 309	18 996 288 419	3 682 384 889
XX, Ch 94-96	Misc Manufactured Articles	(6 749 783 921)	0.27	(1 292 281 842)	0.30	0.34	2 418 143 393	2 482 853 368	551 414 649	1.05	9 278 750 130	9 232 637 289	1 843 696 491
XXI, Ch 97	Works of Art/Antiques	79 507 509	1.10	(21 257 265)	0.90	0.12	599 420 136	837 860 389	193 588 019	0.12	393 162 354	758 352 880	214 845 284
XXII, Ch 99	Other Unclassified <sup>1)</sup>	1 357 607 125	2.71	346 064 558	2.93	0.32	3 070 760 149	2 153 534 121	525 653 166	0.10	887 567 554	795 926 996	179 588 608
XXIII, Ch 98	Special Provisions <sup>2)</sup>	(59 585 617 699)	0.00	(13 573 512 144)	0.00	0.00	9 530 994	99 200	77 019	7.75	63 055 154 038	59 585 716 899	13 573 589 163
<b>Total</b>	<b>Total SA Rand</b>	<b>37 682 462 111</b>	<b>1.05</b>	<b>(11 933 839 226)</b>	<b>0.93</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>739 289 824 172</b>	<b>800 098 842 800</b>	<b>163 117 150 364</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>733 993 160 008</b>	<b>762 416 380 689</b>	<b>175 050 989 590</b>

World Zones	Cumulative Trade		Monthly Trade		Exports				Imports				
	Trade Balance (R'm)	Ratio <sup>5)</sup> (Exports/Imports)	Trade Balance (R'm)	Ratio Exports/Imports	Month % of total	Cumulative 2025 <sup>3)</sup> (R'm)	Cumulative 2026 <sup>3)</sup> (R'm)	Month Total 2026 (R'm)	Month % of total	Cumulative 2025 <sup>3)</sup> (R'm)	Cumulative 2026 <sup>3)</sup> (R'm)	Month Total 2026 (R'm)	
AFRICA	68 202 482 589	2.00	8 041 683 576	1.37	18.24	146 755 633 644	136 385 945 022	29 754 487 409	12.40	46 912 304 705	68 183 462 433	21 712 803 833	
AMERICA	(14 098 660 502)	0.84	(8 817 596 809)	0.62	8.88	69 047 331 484	73 140 546 519	14 478 650 628	13.31	77 405 591 666	87 239 207 021	23 296 247 437	
ASIA	(98 987 832 310)	0.74	(18 840 446 701)	0.76	35.64	235 272 767 336	280 589 117 610	58 128 761 521	43.97	395 800 972 878	379 576 949 920	76 969 208 222	
EUROPE	8 540 472 864	1.04	(6 066 963 944)	0.88	27.92	201 688 765 501	226 479 508 430	45 544 981 648	29.48	199 263 642 139	217 939 035 566	51 611 945 592	
OECEANIA	348 866 528	1.05	303 767 543	1.24	0.97	7 909 615 638	7 562 438 494	1 577 753 581	0.73	12 274 852 264	7 213 571 966	1 273 986 038	
OTHER UNCLASSIFIED	68 926 032 849	31.44	12 569 826 138	68.29	7.82	73 329 899 469	71 190 186 632	12 756 624 606	0.11	2 335 796 356	2 264 153 783	186 798 468	
SHIP/AIRCRAFT	4 751 100 093	-	875 890 971	-	0.54	5 285 811 100	4 751 100 093	875 890 971					
<b>Total</b>	<b>37 682 462 111</b>	<b>1.05</b>	<b>(11 933 839 226)</b>	<b>0.93</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>739 289 824 172</b>	<b>800 098 842 800</b>	<b>163 117 150 364</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>733 993 160 008</b>	<b>762 416 380 689</b>	<b>175 050 989 590</b>	

Temporary Imports	January 2026	February 2026	March 2026	April 2026	May 2026
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  - 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 May 2026 shows a preliminary trade balance surplus of R10.1 billion.

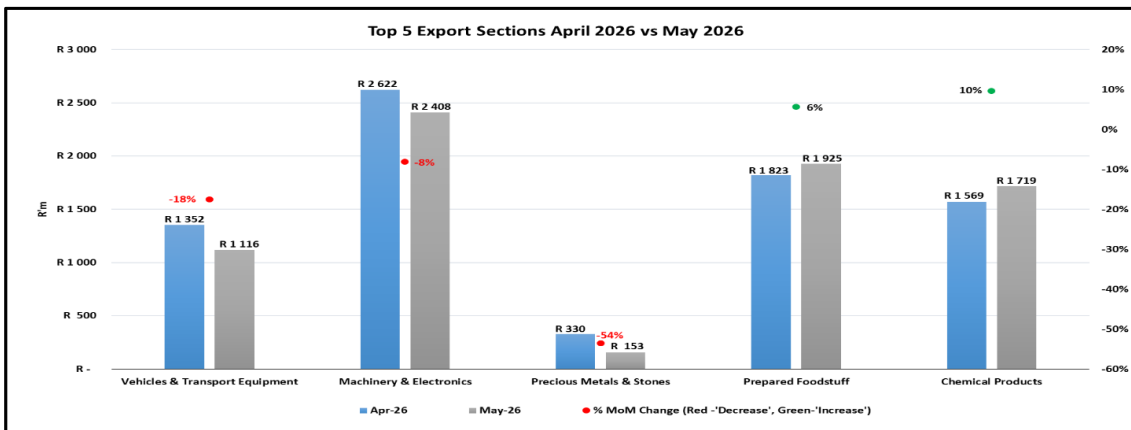
### Summary

The R10.1 billion preliminary trade balance surplus for May 2026 was as a result of exports of R15.7 billion and imports of R5.6 billion. Exports decreased by R0.3 billion (-1.7%) between April 2026 and May 2026, and imports also decreased by R0.2 billion (-3.4%) over the same period.

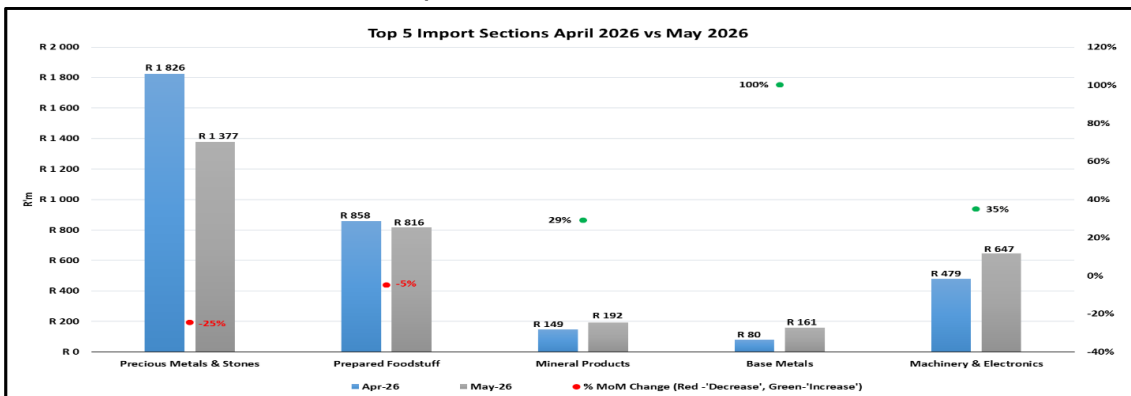
The preliminary cumulative trade balance for 2026 was a surplus of R48.1 billion, compared to R54.8 billion surplus in 2025.

### Trade Highlights by Category

The main month-on-month export movements:



The main month-on-month import movements:



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

ENDS.

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