



STATEMENT

SARS MEDIA RELEASE

UNDER EMBARGO – 2pm Friday, 27 February 2026

SARS releases the preliminary trade statistics for January 2026

Pretoria, 27 February 2026 – South Africa recorded a preliminary trade balance surplus of R9.3 billion in January 2026. This surplus was attributable to exports of R155.8 billion and imports of R146.5 billion, inclusive of trade with Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho and Namibia (BELN).

The year-to-date (01 January to 31 January 2026) preliminary trade balance surplus of R9.3 billion was higher than the R16.7 billion trade balance deficit for the comparable period in 2025. On a year-on-year basis, export flows for January 2026 (R155.8 billion) were 4.9% higher compared to R148.5 billion recorded in January 2025. Import flows were lower by 11.4%, having decreased from R165.3 billion in January 2025 to R146.5 billion in the current period.

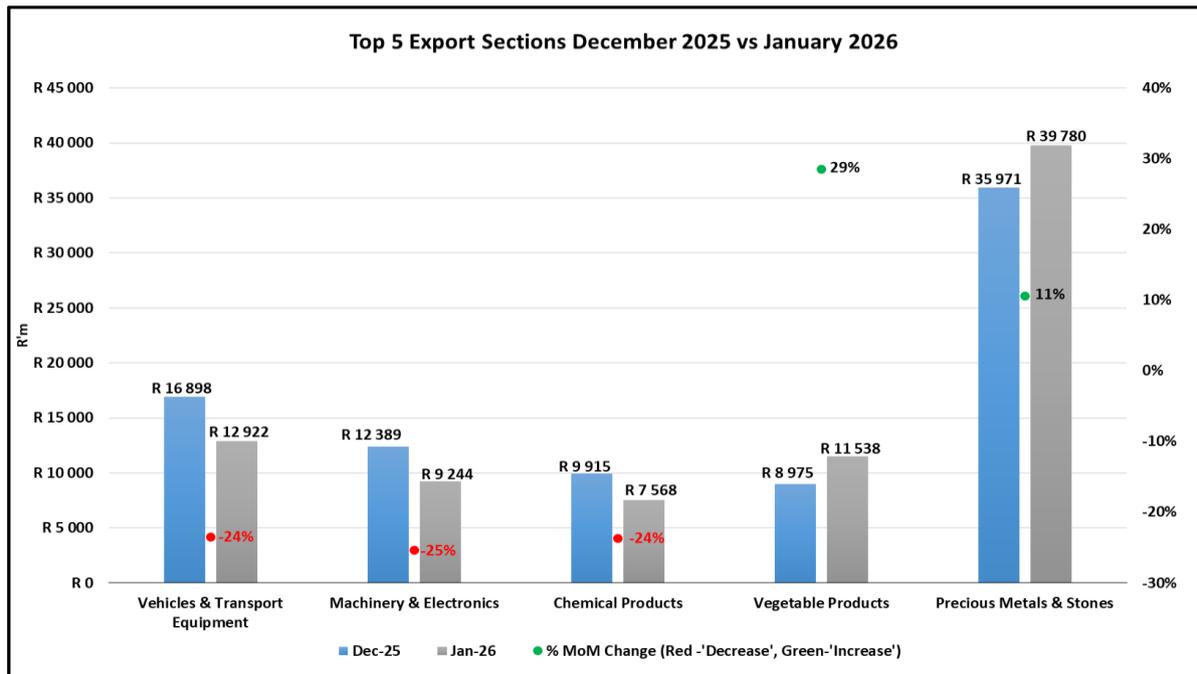
On a month-on-month basis, exports decreased by R7.6 billion (-4.7%) from R163.4 billion to R155.8 billion between December 2025 and January 2026, whilst imports increased by R5.4 billion (3.9%) from R141.0 billion to R146.5 billion over the same period. Export flows decreased in January 2026, driven by vehicles (goods), iron ores and concentrates, and chromium ores and concentrates. Import flows increased on the back of higher importation of crude oil, original equipment components, and aeroplanes.

Due to ongoing Vouchers of Correction (VOCs), the preliminary trade balance surplus of R23.2 billion announced for December 2025 was revised downwards by R0.8 billion, with the final number at R22.4 billion.

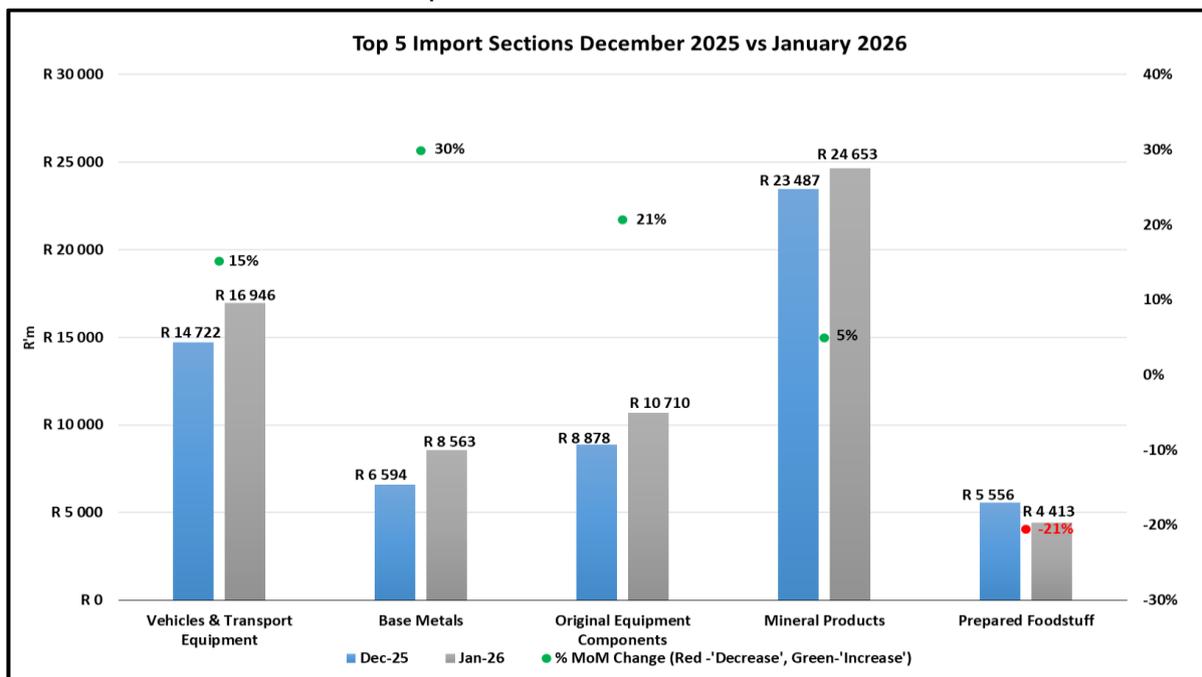
[Click here for Merchandise Trade Statistics January 2026](#)

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 December 2025 (revised) to January 2026 (preliminary) are given below:

World Zones (R' m)	The main month-on-month movements (R' m)				
	Trade Type	December 2025	January 2026	Variance	% M-o-M
Africa	Exports	42 430	34 684	-7 746	↓ -18.3%
	Imports	11 321	16 417	5 096	↑ 45.0%
	Trade Balance	31 109	18 268	-	-
America	Exports	13 665	12 177	-1 489	↓ -10.9%
	Imports	12 258	14 713	2 455	↑ 20.0%
	Trade Balance	1 408	-2 536	-	-
Asia	Exports	53 273	52 447	-825	↓ -1.5%
	Imports	81 667	75 370	-6 297	↓ -7.7%
	Trade Balance	-28 395	-22 923	-	-
Europe	Exports	42 434	41 045	-1 389	↓ -3.3%
	Imports	34 349	38 328	3 979	↑ 11.6%
	Trade Balance	8 085	2 717	-	-
Oceania	Exports	1 547	898	-649	↓ -42.0%
	Imports	1 360	1 522	162	↑ 11.9%
	Trade Balance	186	-625	-	-
Other Unclassified	Exports	9 228	13 692	4 464	↑ 48.4%
	Imports	79	125	47	↑ 59.2%
	Trade Balance	9 150	13 567	-	-
Ship/Aircraft	Exports	838	846	8	↑ 0.9%
	Imports	-	-	-	-
	Trade Balance	838	846	-	-

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

South Africa's trade with the rest of the world (excl. BELN) for January 2026 indicates a preliminary trade balance surplus of R1.5 billion.

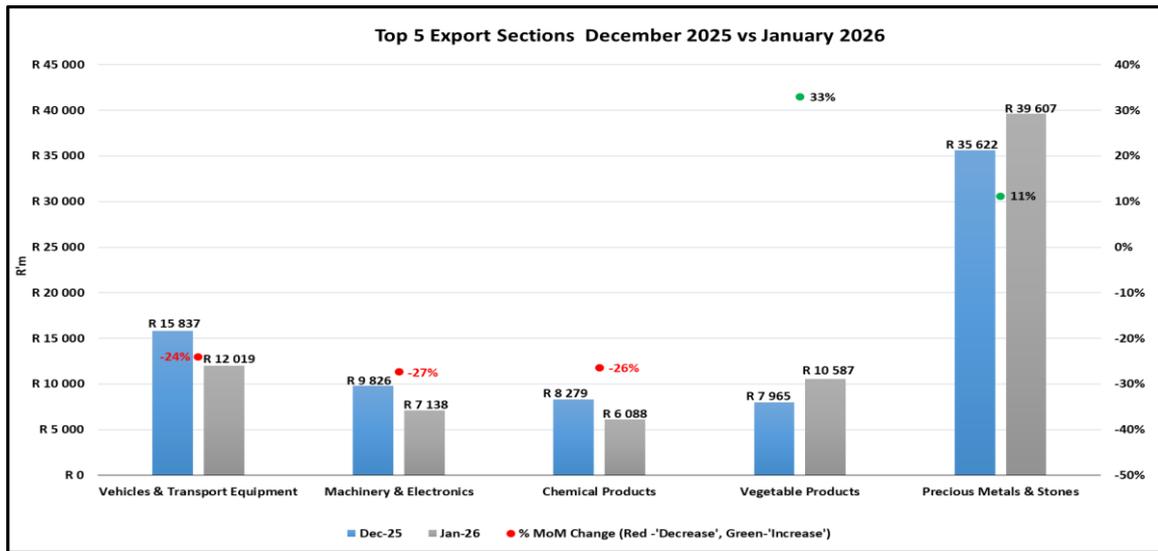
Summary

The R1.5 billion preliminary trade balance surplus for January 2026 was as a result of exports of R142.4 billion and imports of R141.0 billion. Exports decreased by R5.5 billion (-3.7%) between December 2025 and January 2026 whilst imports increased by R5.9 billion (4.3%) over the same period.

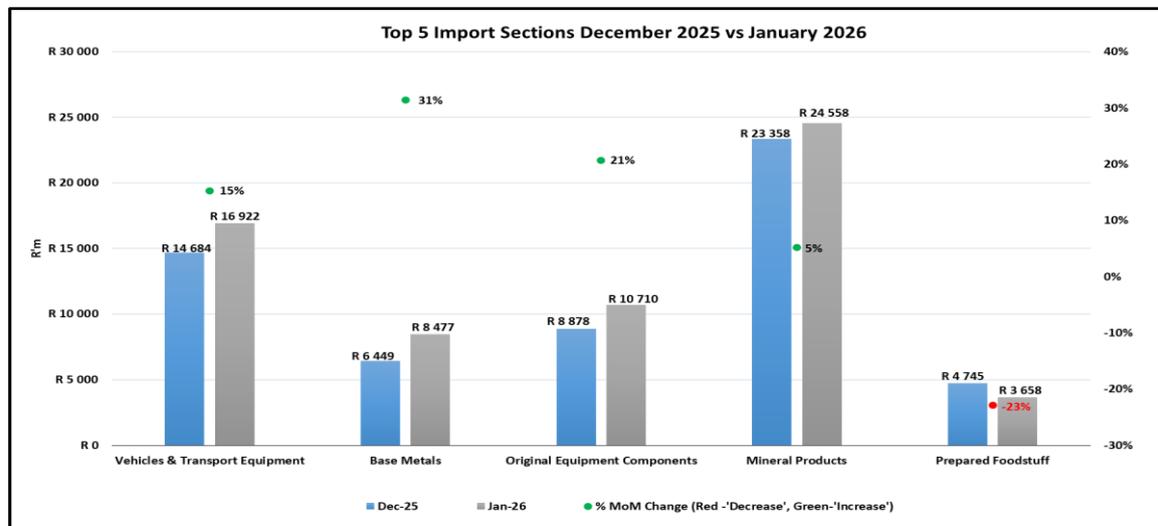
The preliminary cumulative trade balance for 2026 was a surplus of R1.5 billion, compared to R27.1 billion trade balance deficit for the corresponding period in 2025.

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 December 2025 (revised) and January 2026 (preliminary) are given below:

World Zones	The main month-on-month movements (R' m)				
	Trade Type	December 2025	January 2026	Variance	% M-o-M
Africa	Exports	26 925	21 341	-5 583	↓ -20.7%
	Imports	5 403	10 923	5 520	↑ 102.2%
	Trade Balance	21 522	10 418	-	-

[Click here for Merchandise Trade Statistics January 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	Month Total 2026 (R'm)	Cumulative 2025 ³⁾ (R'm)	Cumulative 2026 ³⁾ (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	(118 005 032)	0.93	(118 005 032)	0.93	1.02	1 588 868 424	1 913 339 140	1 588 868 424	1.17	1 656 134 643	1 706 873 456	1 706 873 456
II, Ch 6-14	Vegetable Products	8 601 031 912	3.93	8 601 031 912	3.93	7.41	11 537 623 430	10 599 265 390	11 537 623 430	2.00	4 633 134 625	2 936 591 518	2 936 591 518
III, Ch 15	Fats and Oils	(759 126 749)	0.38	(759 126 749)	0.38	0.29	456 599 075	554 233 248	456 599 075	0.83	1 164 148 320	1 215 725 824	1 215 725 824
IV, Ch 16-24	Prepared Foods	1 226 694 020	1.28	1 226 694 020	1.28	3.62	5 639 750 598	5 635 511 938	5 639 750 598	3.01	5 450 546 017	4 413 056 578	4 413 056 578
V, Ch 25-27	Mineral Products	17 630 242 182	1.72	17 630 242 182	1.72	27.14	42 283 048 205	42 132 947 236	42 283 048 205	16.83	28 836 963 130	24 652 806 023	24 652 806 023
VI, Ch 28-38	Chemical Products	(7 824 204 732)	0.49	(7 824 204 732)	0.49	4.86	7 568 389 170	8 851 267 120	7 568 389 170	10.51	17 356 410 988	15 392 593 902	15 392 593 902
VII, Ch 39-40	Plastics and Rubber	(3 253 722 058)	0.41	(3 253 722 058)	0.41	1.47	2 290 994 640	2 471 955 195	2 290 994 640	3.79	7 413 178 378	5 544 716 698	5 544 716 698
VIII, Ch 41-43	Hides, Skins and Leather	(154 670 766)	0.60	(154 670 766)	0.60	0.15	230 634 466	289 157 916	230 634 466	0.26	521 745 525	385 305 232	385 305 232
IX, Ch 44-46	Wood and articles thereof	386 054 800	1.51	386 054 800	1.51	0.74	1 149 163 087	853 374 330	1 149 163 087	0.52	696 183 865	763 108 287	763 108 287
X, Ch 47-49	Pulp and Paper Products	358 495 197	1.19	358 495 197	1.19	1.42	2 215 569 518	2 799 864 805	2 215 569 518	1.27	2 175 710 489	1 857 074 321	1 857 074 321
XI, Ch 50-63	Textiles and Clothing	(3 478 648 395)	0.27	(3 478 648 395)	0.27	0.84	1 315 547 506	1 334 304 847	1 315 547 506	3.27	6 245 620 339	4 794 195 901	4 794 195 901
XII, Ch 64-67	Footwear and Accessories	(1 202 481 132)	0.16	(1 202 481 132)	0.16	0.15	227 068 013	308 332 703	227 068 013	0.98	1 853 147 112	1 429 549 145	1 429 549 145
XIII, Ch 68-70	Stone, Plaster, etc	(718 407 621)	0.40	(718 407 621)	0.40	0.30	473 723 459	541 997 892	473 723 459	0.81	1 707 746 595	1 192 131 080	1 192 131 080
XIV, Ch 71	Precious Stones	36 999 787 047	14.31	36 999 787 047	14.31	25.53	39 779 634 736	25 978 051 203	39 779 634 736	1.90	2 266 757 300	2 779 847 689	2 779 847 689
XV, Ch 72-83	Base Metals	4 117 914 063	1.48	4 117 914 063	1.48	8.14	12 681 130 327	18 969 474 270	12 681 130 327	5.85	8 784 935 030	8 563 216 264	8 563 216 264
XVI, Ch 84-85	Machinery and Appliances	(26 401 929 773)	0.26	(26 401 929 773)	0.26	5.93	9 243 729 103	9 654 227 415	9 243 729 103	24.34	38 586 199 215	35 645 658 876	35 645 658 876
XVII, Ch 86-89	Transport Equipment	(4 023 766 977)	0.76	(4 023 766 977)	0.76	8.29	12 922 469 036	13 863 480 213	12 922 469 036	11.57	15 594 676 856	16 946 236 013	16 946 236 013
XVIII, Ch 90-92	Precision Products, etc	(241 444 496)	0.93	(241 444 496)	0.93	2.03	3 164 668 476	752 988 483	3 164 668 476	2.33	3 564 426 421	3 406 112 972	3 406 112 972
XX, Ch 94-96	Misc Manufactured Articles	(1 233 097 588)	0.36	(1 233 097 588)	0.36	0.45	698 760 008	643 423 785	698 760 008	1.32	2 267 889 445	1 931 857 596	1 931 857 596
XXI, Ch 97	Works of Art/Antiques	(7 010 235)	0.94	(7 010 235)	0.94	0.07	111 179 924	97 676 208	111 179 924	0.08	123 723 336	118 190 159	118 190 159
XXII, Ch 99	Other Unclassified ¹⁾	121 076 612	2.35	121 076 612	2.35	0.14	210 988 327	292 074 722	210 988 327	0.06	129 790 719	89 911 715	89 911 715
XXIII, Ch 98	Special Provisions ²⁾	(10 710 394 559)	0.00	(10 710 394 559)	0.00	0.00	1 239	22 400	1 239	7.31	14 229 854 620	10 710 395 798	10 710 395 798
Total	Total SA Rand	9 314 385 720	1.06	9 314 385 720	1.06	100.00	155 789 540 767	148 536 970 459	155 789 540 767	100.00	165 258 922 968	146 475 155 047	146 475 155 047

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	18 267 709 812	2.11	18 267 709 812	2.11	22.26	44 020 152 242	34 684 228 291	34 684 228 291	11.21	16 168 821 029	16 416 518 479	16 416 518 479
AMERICA	(2 536 302 583)	0.83	(2 536 302 583)	0.83	7.82	12 620 174 762	12 176 583 419	12 176 583 419	10.04	17 280 985 414	14 712 886 002	14 712 886 002
ASIA	(22 922 643 492)	0.70	(22 922 643 492)	0.70	33.67	46 405 723 380	52 447 410 555	52 447 410 555	51.46	84 761 447 895	75 370 054 047	75 370 054 047
EUROPE	2 717 182 091	1.07	2 717 182 091	1.07	26.35	32 983 827 938	41 045 096 522	41 045 096 522	26.17	44 515 997 768	38 327 914 431	38 327 914 431
OCEANIA	(624 785 418)	0.59	(624 785 418)	0.59	0.58	869 413 327	897 700 515	897 700 515	1.04	2 326 096 490	1 522 485 933	1 522 485 933
OTHER UNCLASSIFIED	13 567 113 955	109.28	13 567 113 955	109.28	8.79	10 632 482 539	13 692 410 110	13 692 410 110	0.09	205 574 372	125 296 155	125 296 155
SHIP/AIRCRAFT	846 111 355	-	846 111 355	-	0.54	1 005 196 271	846 111 355	846 111 355				
Total	9 314 385 720	1.06	9 314 385 720	1.06	100.00	148 536 970 459	155 789 540 767	155 789 540 767	100.00	165 258 922 968	146 475 155 047	146 475 155 047

Temporary Imports	January 2026
Gold Imports ⁴⁾	26 815 288 642

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	(221 856 098)	0.85	(221 856 098)	0.85	0.88	1 542 525 020	1 250 035 879	1 250 035 879	1.04	1 474 677 543	1 471 891 977	1 471 891 977
II, Ch 6-14	Vegetable Products	7 735 603 885	3.71	7 735 603 885	3.71	7.43	9 488 216 033	10 587 230 899	10 587 230 899	2.02	4 545 383 414	2 851 627 014	2 851 627 014
III, Ch 15	Fats and Oils	(951 487 109)	0.22	(951 487 109)	0.22	0.18	331 172 617	262 839 873	262 839 873	0.86	1 163 093 685	1 214 326 982	1 214 326 982
IV, Ch 16-24	Prepared Foods	12 344 969	1.00	12 344 969	1.00	2.58	3 600 908 251	3 670 137 244	3 670 137 244	2.59	4 738 916 433	3 657 792 275	3 657 792 275
V, Ch 25-27	Mineral Products	16 058 552 398	1.65	16 058 552 398	1.65	28.51	38 762 678 199	40 616 302 002	40 616 302 002	17.42	28 673 677 650	24 557 749 604	24 557 749 604
VI, Ch 28-38	Chemical Products	(8 468 690 311)	0.42	(8 468 690 311)	0.42	4.27	7 257 476 848	6 087 636 104	6 087 636 104	10.33	16 141 307 116	14 556 326 415	14 556 326 415
VII, Ch 39-40	Plastics and Rubber	(3 776 888 944)	0.31	(3 776 888 944)	0.31	1.18	1 833 672 922	1 680 874 013	1 680 874 013	3.87	7 342 696 654	5 457 762 957	5 457 762 957
VIII, Ch 41-43	Hides, Skins and Leather	(193 479 617)	0.49	(193 479 617)	0.49	0.13	236 790 685	185 069 883	185 069 883	0.27	517 018 720	378 549 500	378 549 500
IX, Ch 44-46	Wood and articles thereof	423 055 473	1.78	423 055 473	1.78	0.68	656 998 609	968 101 910	968 101 910	0.39	474 113 818	545 046 437	545 046 437
X, Ch 47-49	Pulp and Paper Products	65 677 551	1.04	65 677 551	1.04	1.31	2 448 068 850	1 861 854 398	1 861 854 398	1.27	2 118 744 213	1 796 176 847	1 796 176 847
XI, Ch 50-63	Textiles and Clothing	(3 566 311 648)	0.15	(3 566 311 648)	0.15	0.44	593 956 878	627 296 611	627 296 611	2.97	5 563 507 299	4 193 608 259	4 193 608 259
XII, Ch 64-67	Footwear and Accessories	(1 349 517 756)	0.04	(1 349 517 756)	0.04	0.04	114 655 803	62 347 645	62 347 645	1.00	1 833 959 903	1 411 865 401	1 411 865 401
XIII, Ch 68-70	Stone, Plaster, etc	(869 368 829)	0.26	(869 368 829)	0.26	0.22	350 479 880	309 428 627	309 428 627	0.84	1 697 099 909	1 178 797 456	1 178 797 456
XIV, Ch 71	Precious Stones	38 744 289 877	45.92	38 744 289 877	45.92	27.80	25 856 511 091	39 606 834 966	39 606 834 966	0.61	570 055 189	862 545 089	862 545 089
XV, Ch 72-83	Base Metals	3 377 579 013	1.40	3 377 579 013	1.40	8.32	18 096 314 688	11 854 643 675	11 854 643 675	6.01	8 644 715 507	8 477 064 662	8 477 064 662
XVI, Ch 84-85	Machinery and Appliances	(28 070 872 980)	0.20	(28 070 872 980)	0.20	5.01	7 349 217 351	7 138 216 469	7 138 216 469	24.97	38 179 376 690	35 209 089 449	35 209 089 449
XVII, Ch 86-89	Transport Equipment	(4 902 963 778)	0.71	(4 902 963 778)	0.71	8.44	12 718 821 300	12 019 288 319	12 019 288 319	12.00	15 573 397 019	16 922 252 097	16 922 252 097
XVIII, Ch 90-92	Precision Products, etc	(444 724 992)	0.87	(444 724 992)	0.87	2.08	528 300 561	2 956 398 490	2 956 398 490	2.41	3 552 324 711	3 401 123 482	3 401 123 482
XX, Ch 94-96	Misc Manufactured Articles	(1 536 628 147)	0.20	(1 536 628 147)	0.20	0.27	328 350 204	385 123 907	385 123 907	1.36	2 259 787 731	1 921 752 054	1 921 752 054
XXI, Ch 97	Works of Art/Antiques	(7 824 185)	0.93	(7 824 185)	0.93	0.08	97 275 825	109 789 891	109 789 891	0.08	123 631 106	117 614 076	117 614 076
XXII, Ch 99	Other Unclassified ¹⁾	119 059 590	2.36	119 059 590	2.36	0.15	287 467 745	206 921 392	206 921 392	0.06	127 773 119	87 861 802	87 861 802
XXIII, Ch 98	Special Provisions ²⁾	(10 710 395 798)	-	(10 710 395 798)	-	-	22 400	-	-	7.60	14 229 854 620	10 710 395 798	10 710 395 798
Total	Total SA Rand	1 465 152 564	1.01	1 465 152 564	1.01	100.00	132 479 881 760	142 446 372 197	142 446 372 197	100.00	159 545 112 049	140 981 219 633	140 981 219 633

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	10 418 476 656	1.95	10 418 476 656	1.95	14.98	27 963 063 543	21 341 059 721	21 341 059 721	7.75	10 455 010 110	10 922 583 065	10 922 583 065
AMERICA	(2 536 302 583)	0.83	(2 536 302 583)	0.83	8.55	12 620 174 762	12 176 583 419	12 176 583 419	10.44	17 280 985 414	14 712 886 002	14 712 886 002
ASIA	(22 922 643 492)	0.70	(22 922 643 492)	0.70	36.82	46 405 723 380	52 447 410 555	52 447 410 555	53.46	84 761 447 895	75 370 054 047	75 370 054 047
EUROPE	2 717 182 091	1.07	2 717 182 091	1.07	28.81	32 983 827 938	41 045 096 522	41 045 096 522	27.19	44 515 997 768	38 327 914 431	38 327 914 431
OCEANIA	(624 785 418)	0.59	(624 785 418)	0.59	0.63	869 413 327	897 700 515	897 700 515	1.08	2 326 096 490	1 522 485 933	1 522 485 933
OTHER UNCLASSIFIED	13 567 113 955	109.28	13 567 113 955	109.28	9.61	10 632 482 539	13 692 410 110	13 692 410 110	0.09	205 574 372	125 296 155	125 296 155
SHIP/AIRCRAFT	846 111 355	-	846 111 355	-	0.59	1 005 196 271	846 111 355	846 111 355				
Total	1 465 152 564	1.01	1 465 152 564	1.01	100.00	132 479 881 760	142 446 372 197	142 446 372 197	100.00	159 545 112 049	140 981 219 633	140 981 219 633

Temporary Imports	January 2026
Gold Imports ⁴⁾	26 815 288 642

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 January 2026 shows a preliminary trade balance surplus of R7.8 billion.

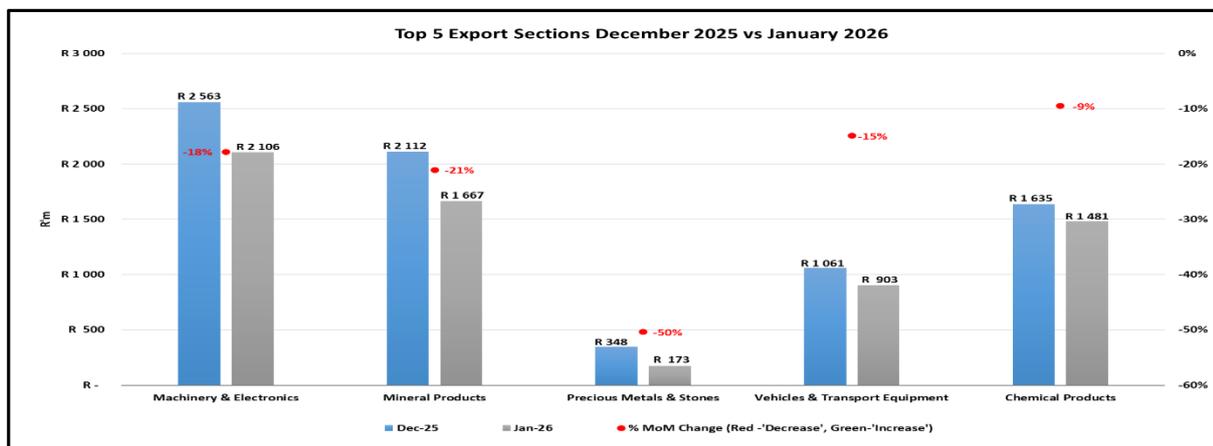
Summary

The R7.8 billion preliminary trade balance surplus for January 2026 was as a result of exports of R13.3 billion and imports of R5.5 billion. Exports decreased by R2.2 billion (-13.9%) between December 2025 and January 2026, and imports also decreased by R0.4 billion (-7.2%) over the same period.

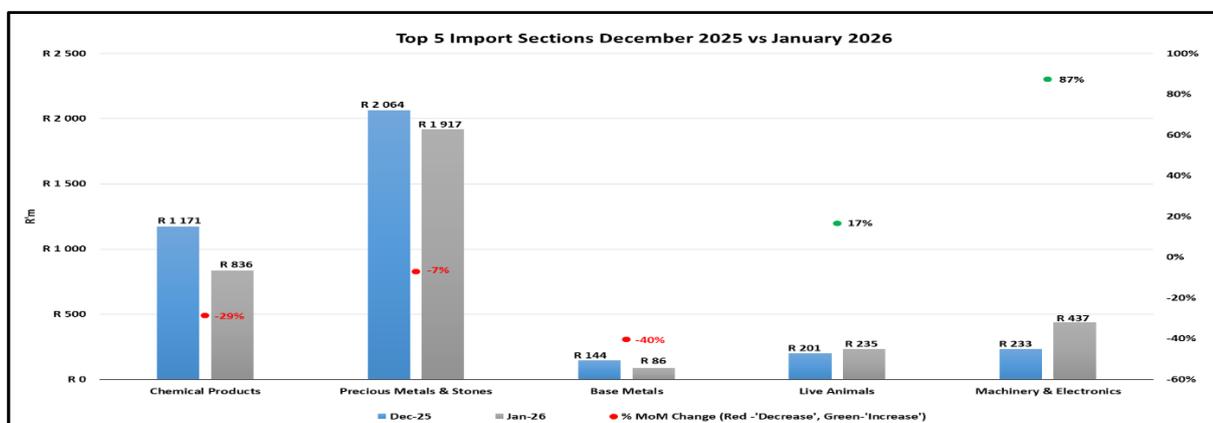
The preliminary cumulative trade balance for 2026 was a surplus of R7.8 billion, compared to R10.3 billion surplus in 2025.

Trade Highlights by Category

The main month-on-month export movements:



The main month-on-month import movements:



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

ENDS.

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