🇿🇦 South Africa: trade brief

Customs figures for 2025 and 2026 to date; products for 2024; long-run totals. Prepared 2026-11-15.

South Africa exported **$116B** of goods and imported **$111B** in 2025, a trade surplus of **$5.3B**. Its largest export market was China (10.7% of exports) and its largest supplier was China (22.5% of imports).

#37
largest exporter of 202 economies, and #41 importer
#1 #202

11%
of exports go to 🇨🇳 China, the largest market

26%
of exports go to just three markets, out of 201

+5.3B
trade surplus: exports pay for 105% of imports

+4.4%
change in exports on 2024: $111B then, $116B in 2025

23%
of imports come from 🇨🇳 China, the largest supplier

South Africa in 2025 and 2026: the latest figures

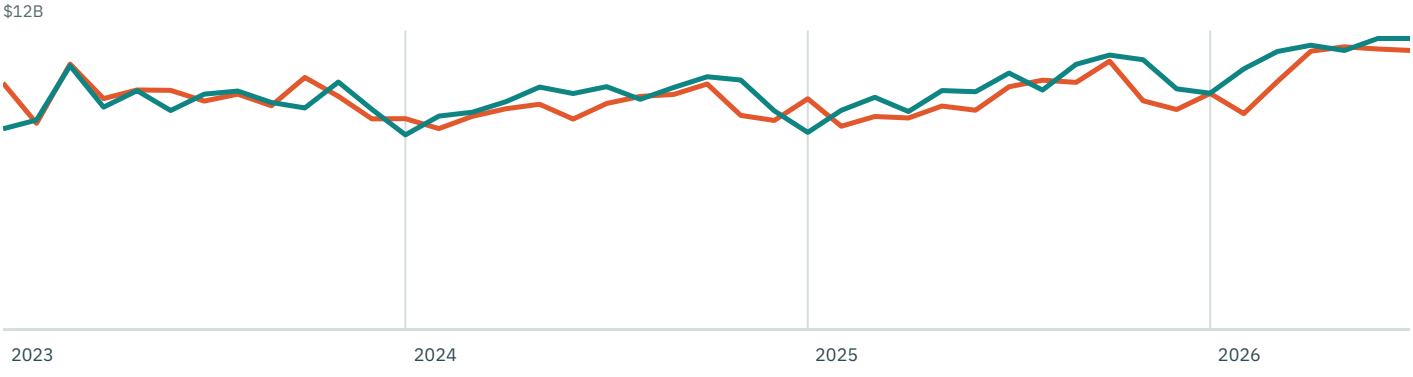
Monthly customs figures in US dollars from the IMF's trade-by-partner database. The newest month is Jul 2026.

$116B
Exports, 2025 **+4.4%** on 2024

$111B
Imports, 2025 **+4.3%** on 2024

$77B
Exports, Jan–Jul 2026 **+20.1%** on the same months of 2025

$73B
Imports, Jan–Jul 2026 **+18.0%** on the same months of 2025



Period	Exports	Imports	Balance
2026 (Jan–Jul)	$77B	$73B	+4.0B
2025	$116B	$111B	+5.3B
2024	$111B	$106B	+5.0B
2023	$111B	$113B	−2.7B
2022	$123B	$117B	+6.1B

Largest export markets in 2025 and 2026 so far

Export market	2025	Change on 2024	Share	Jan–Jul 2026	Change on Jan–Jul 2025
🇨🇳 China	$12B	+3.1%	11.8%	$8.9B	+33.1%
🇩🇪 Germany	$9.3B	+10.3%	8.8%	$6.4B	+33.1%
🇺🇸 United States	$8.3B	−3.1%	7.9%	$5.6B	+26.3%
🇯🇵 Japan	$5.5B	+10.9%	5.2%	$4.0B	+44.0%
🇬🇧 United Kingdom	$5.4B	−2.0%	5.1%	$4.1B	+39.3%
🇲🇿 Mozambique	$5.3B	−19.5%	5.0%	$2.3B	−33.1%
🇮🇳 India	$4.5B	−3.4%	4.2%	$3.0B	+17.1%
🇳🇱 Netherlands	$4.4B	+3.4%	4.1%	$2.9B	+11.2%
🇳🇦 Namibia	$4.2B	+7.7%	3.9%	$2.6B	+15.2%
🇧🇪 Belgium	$4.1B	+33.6%	3.9%	$2.2B	−1.7%

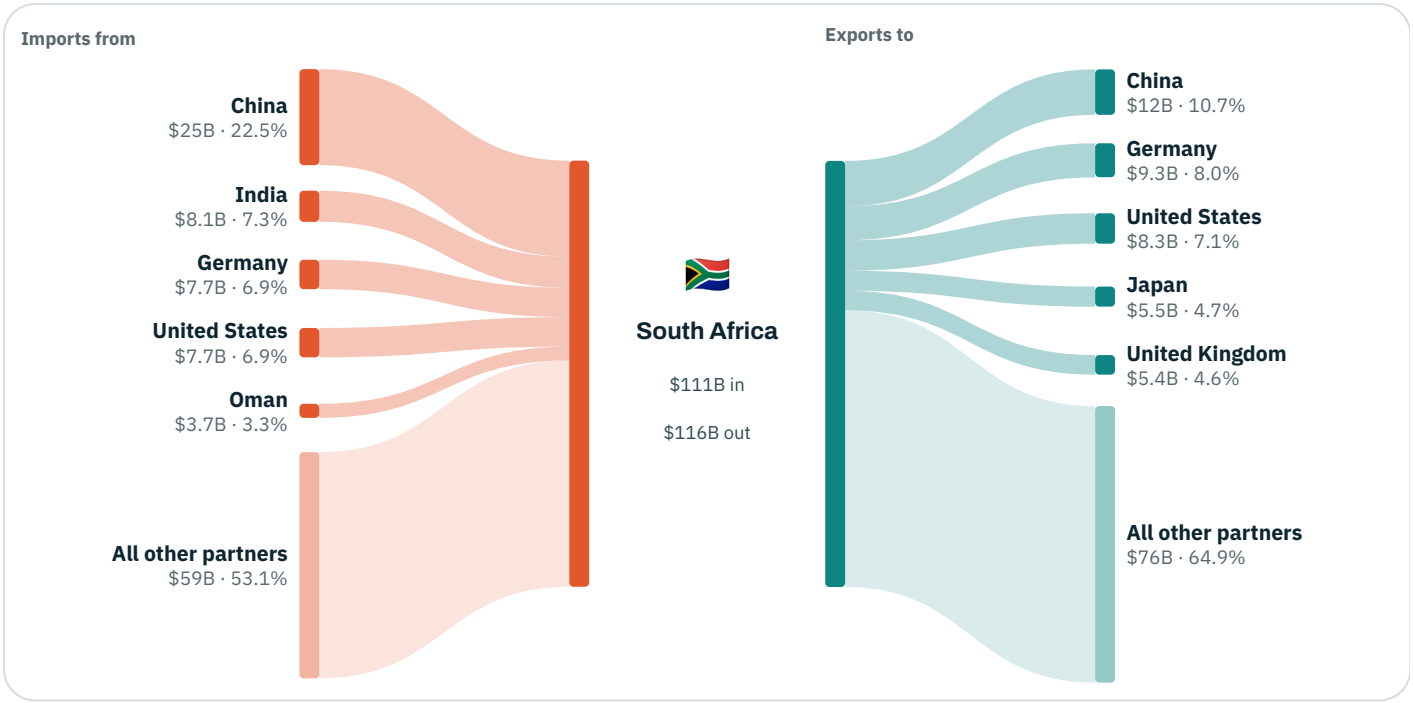
Largest suppliers in 2025 and 2026 so far

Supplier	2025	Change on 2024	Share	Jan–Jul 2026	Change on Jan–Jul 2025
🇨🇳 China	$25B	+8.3%	22.6%	$17B	+23.9%
🇮🇳 India	$8.1B	+4.4%	7.3%	$6.5B	+39.9%
🇩🇪 Germany	$7.7B	+2.3%	6.9%	$4.7B	+5.1%
🇺🇸 United States	$7.7B	+9.5%	6.9%	$5.4B	+23.6%
🇴🇲 Oman	$3.7B	+16.5%	3.3%	$2.0B	+4.5%
🇹🇭 Thailand	$3.6B	+6.6%	3.3%	$2.0B	−0.1%
🇸🇦 Saudi Arabia	$3.3B	+27.3%	3.0%	$1.2B	−44.4%
🇦🇪 United Arab Emirates	$2.7B	−12.6%	2.5%	$1.0B	−31.6%
🇯🇵 Japan	$2.6B	+4.8%	2.3%	$1.6B	+14.8%
🇮🇹 Italy	$2.6B	−2.1%	2.3%	$1.6B	+13.9%

Source: International Monetary Fund, International Trade in Goods by partner country, retrieved 2026-11-15. The IMF collects each economy's national customs figures and converts them to US dollars at the average exchange rate of the month the goods moved. Imports include freight and insurance; exports do not. The product and partner sections further down use BACI's reconciled figures for 2024, which can differ noticeably for the same year, so compare like with like.

Where South Africa's goods come from, and where they go

The five largest suppliers and the five largest markets in 2025. Ribbon width is in proportion to value within each side.



What South Africa exports, 2024

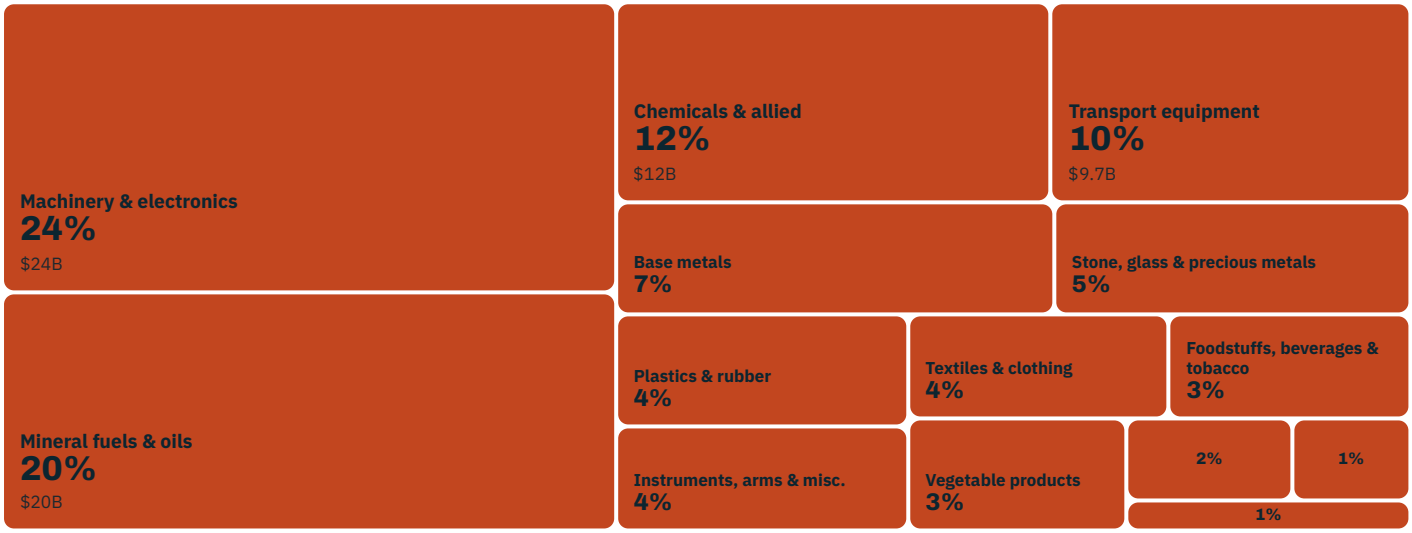


Reconciled figures (BACI): exports of $152B on that basis. 2024 is the newest year with product detail for every economy.

Largest export products

Product	2024	Share
Metals; gold, non-monetary, unwrought (but not powder) 7108.12	$21B	14.1%
Metals; gold, semi-manufactured 7108.13	$7.5B	5.0%
Chromium ores and concentrates 2610.00	$7.2B	4.7%
Iron ores and concentrates; non-agglomerated 2601.11	$6.6B	4.3%
Metals; platinum, unwrought or in powder form 7110.11	$5.3B	3.5%
Vehicles; with only compression-ignition internal... 8704.21	$5.2B	3.4%
Coal; bituminous, whether or not pulverised, but not... 2701.12	$5.1B	3.4%
Ferro-alloys; ferro-chromium, containing by weight more... 7202.41	$4.4B	2.9%

What South Africa imports, 2024



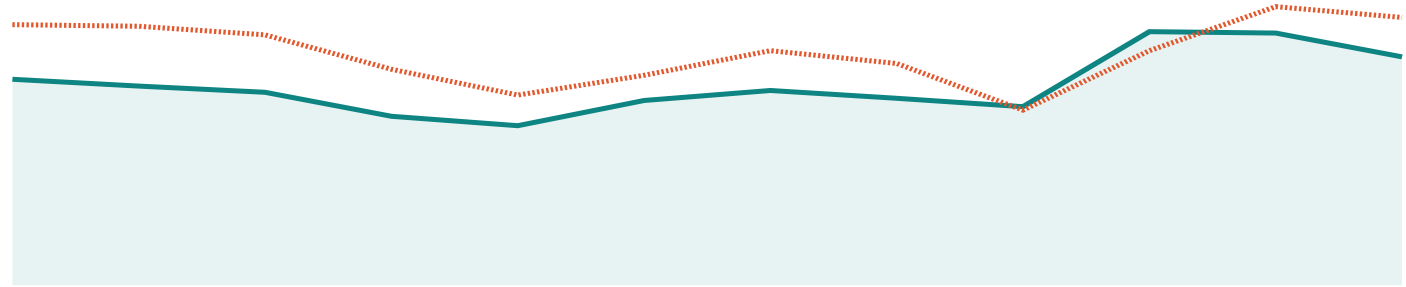
Reconciled figures (BACI): imports of $101B on that basis.

Largest import products

Product	2024	Share
Petroleum oils and oils from bituminous minerals, not... 2710.00	$12B	12.2%
Oils; petroleum oils and oils obtained from bituminous... 2709.00	$5.2B	5.1%
Metals; gold, non-monetary, unwrought (but not powder) 7108.12	$2.6B	2.6%
Telephone sets; smartphones for cellular or other... 8517.13	$1.9B	1.9%
Vehicles; with only spark-ignition internal combustion... 8703.22	$1.5B	1.5%
Metals; gold, semi-manufactured 7108.13	$1.4B	1.4%
Medicaments; consisting of mixed or unmixed products... 3004.90	$1.4B	1.4%
Communication apparatus (excluding telephone sets or base... 8517.62	$1.2B	1.2%

South Africa's trade over the long run

Merchandise exports and imports, World Bank series, current US dollars.



Exports Imports 2012–2023

Sources and method

- **2024 products:** BACI (CEPII), which reconciles what exporters and importers each reported to UN Comtrade, six-digit HS, current US dollars.
- **Totals and partners, latest year and current year:** International Monetary Fund, International Trade in Goods by partner country: each economy's own monthly customs figures, converted to US dollars at the average exchange rate of each month. Values marked † were derived by the IMF from partners' records because the economy had not yet reported.
- **Long-run totals:** World Bank, merchandise exports and imports, current US dollars.
- The two sources use different methods and can give different totals for the same year. Compare like with like.
- Product classification: Harmonized System, © World Customs Organization.

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