

Key data from the December 2024 Household Affordability Index

The December 2024 Household Affordability Index, which tracks the prices of 44 basic foods from 47 supermarkets and 32 butcheries, in Johannesburg (Soweto, Alexandra, Tembisa and Hillbrow), Durban (KwaMashu, Umlazi, Isipingo, Durban CBD, Hammarsdale and Pinetown), Cape Town (Khayelitsha, Gugulethu, Philippi, Langa, Delft and Dunoon), Pietermaritzburg, Mtubatuba (in Northern KwaZulu-Natal), and Springbok (in the Northern Cape), shows that:

- **In December 2024:** The average cost of the Household Food Basket is **R5 383,38**.
- **Month-on-month:** The average cost of the Household Food Basket **increased** by **R22,34 (0,4%)**, from R5 361,04 in November 2024 to R5 383,38 in December 2024.
- **Year-on-year:** The average cost of the Household Food Basket **increased** by **R145,18 (2,8%)**, from R5 238,20 in December 2023 to R5 383,38 in December 2024.

Food pricing trends in December 2024.

In December, of the 44 foods tracked: 21 foods increased in price, and 22 foods decreased in price. This month we used the November 2024 price as a proxy for oranges, hence price is unchanged. *See page 2 of December 2024, Household Affordability Index.*

Foods in the basket which increased in price in December 2024 by 5% or more, include: spinach (9%), bananas (7%), and apples (9%).

Foods in the basket which increased in price in December 2024 by 2% or more, include: samp (2%), curry powder (3%), chicken feet (3%), tomatoes (3%), carrots (2%), canned beans (2%), apricot jam (2%), and white bread (4%).

Foods in the basket which decreased in price in December 2024, by 5% or more, include: potatoes (-5%), and onions (-14%).

Foods in the basket which decreased in price in December 2024, by 2% or more, include: salt (-3%), soup (-4%), eggs (-2%), gizzards (-2%), *cremora* (-2%), and polony (-4%).

Inflation on the food baskets per area tracked.

In December 2024, food baskets increased in Durban, Springbok, Pietermaritzburg and Mtubatuba. The Joburg and Cape Town food baskets decreased marginally.

The Joburg basket **decreased** by R0,75 (-0,0%) month-on-month, and **increased** by R207,60 (3,9%) year-on-year, to **R5 555,68** in December 2024.

The Durban basket **increased** by R54,27 (1,0%) month-on-month, and **increased** by R147,44 (2,8%) year-on-year, to **R5 360,65** in December 2024.

The Cape Town basket **decreased** by R15,02 (-0,3%) month-on-month, and **increased** by R112,63 (2,2%) year-on-year, to **R5 245,41** in December 2024.

The Springbok basket **increased** by R46,07 (0,8%) month-on-month, and **increased** by R237,72 (4,2%) year-on-year, to **R5 835,45** in December 2024.

The Maritzburg basket **increased** by R32,14 (0,6%) month-on-month, and **increased** by R1,39 (0,0%) year-on-year, to **R5 036,41** in December 2024.

The Mtubatuba basket **increased** by R75,76 (1,4%) month-on-month, and **increased** by R222,28 (4,2%) year-on-year, to **R5 498,41** in December 2024.

(See pages 10-15 for area specific data, in the December 2024, Household Affordability Index).

Statistics South Africa's latest Consumer Price Index.

Statistics South Africa's latest *Consumer Price Index* for November 2024¹ shows that **Headline inflation was 2,9%**, and for the **lowest expenditure quintiles 1-3 it is 3,8%, 3,5%, and 3,2%** respectively. **CPI Food inflation was 1,6%** (for CPI Food & NAB it was 2,3%, we use the figure excluding non-alcoholic beverages). STATS SA's *Producer Price Index* for November 2024² shows **agriculture was 3,6%**.

Workers

The National Minimum Wage is **R27,58** an hour and **R220,64** for an 8-hour day. In December 2024, with 19- working days, the maximum National Minimum Wage for a General Worker is **R4 192,16**. Workers work to support their families. The wage workers earn is not just to sustain themselves alone, it is used to support the entire family. For Black South African workers, **one wage typically must support 4 people. Dispersed in a worker's family of 4 persons, the NMW, is R1 048,04 per person – this is below the upper-bound poverty line of R1 634 per person per month.**

The December 2024 average cost of a basic nutritional food basket for a family of four persons is **R3 799,59** (See page 6 of December 2024, *Household Affordability Index*).

On our calculations, using Pietermaritzburg-based figures for electricity and transport, and the average figure for a minimum nutritional basket of food for a family of four, puts electricity, and transport, taking up **61,1%** of a worker's wage (R2 562,97/R4 192,16). Food is bought after monies for transport and electricity have been paid for or set aside (leaving **R1 629,19** – for food and everything else), and so in December 2024, PMBEJD calculates that workers' families will **underspend on food by a minimum of 57,1% (having R1 629,19 left over after transport and electricity, and with food costing R3 799,59). In this scenario there is no possibility of a worker being able to afford enough nutritious food for her family. If the entire R1 629,19 all went to buy food, then for a family of 4 persons, it would provide R407,30 per person per month. This is below the food poverty line of R796** (See page 8 of December 2024, *Household Affordability Index*).

Women and children

In December 2024, the average cost to feed a child a basic nutritious diet was **R968,56**. Over the past month, the average cost to feed a child a basic nutritious diet **increased** by **R2,11** or **0,2%**. Year-on-year, the average cost to feed a child a basic nutritious diet **increased** by **R28,83** or **3,1%** (See page 6 of December 2024, *Household Affordability Index*).

In December 2024, the **Child Support Grant** of **R530** is **33%** below the **Food Poverty Line** of **R796**, and **45%** below the average **cost to feed a child a basic nutritious diet (R968,56)**.

Household domestic and personal hygiene products

The December 2024 *Household Domestic & Personal Hygiene Index* **increased** by **R13,21 (1,3%)** month-on-month. Year-on-year the household domestic and personal hygiene products index **increased** by **R33,72 (3,4%)** bringing the total average cost of basic household domestic and personal hygiene products to **R1 033,31** in December 2024 (See page 5 of December 2024, *Household Affordability Index*).

The cost of basic hygiene products is high. These products are part of the monthly groceries, and compete in the household purse with food. These products are essential for good health and hygiene; and dignity.

¹ STATSSA (2024). **Consumer Price Index November 2024**. Statistical release P0141. 11 December 2024. Statistics South Africa. Pretoria. P4, 7. See Link: <https://www.statssa.gov.za/publications/P0141/P0141November2024.pdf>

² STATSSA (2024). **Producer Price Index November 2024**. Statistical release P0142.1. 12 December 2024. Statistics South Africa. Pretoria. P12. See Link: <https://www.statssa.gov.za/publications/P01421/P01421November2024.pdf>