

Key data from the January 2026 Household Affordability Index

The January 2026 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 January 2026:** The average cost of the Household Food Basket is **R5 401,44**.
- **Month-on-month:** The average cost of the Household Food Basket **increased** by **R67,99 (1,3%)**, from R5 333,45 in December 2025 to R5 401,44 in January 2026.
- **Year-on-year:** The average cost of the Household Food Basket **decreased** by **R32,26 (-0,6%)**, from R5 433,70 in January 2025 to R5 401,44 in January 2026.

Food pricing trends in January 2026.

In January, of the 44 foods tracked in the basket: 26 foods increased in price, and 17 foods decreased in price, and 1 food remained unchanged. *See page 2 of January 2026, Household Affordability Index.*

Below are the month-on-month price movements of individual foods in the average household food basket:

Foods in the basket which increased in price in January 2026 by 5% or more, include: potatoes (15%), onions (15%), frozen chicken portions (5%), soup (7%), carrots (8%), spinach (16%), cabbage (6%), and *cremora* (7%).

Foods in the basket which increased in price in January 2026 by 2% or more, include: rice (3%), salt (4%), Maas (2%), eggs (4%), chicken gizzards (4%), beef (2%), beef tripe (2%), apples (4%), margarine (2%), peanut butter (2%), and *polony* (4%).

Foods in the basket which decreased in price in January 2026, by 5% or more, include: chicken feet (-6%), and green pepper (-10%).

Foods in the basket which decreased in price in January 2026, by 2% or more, include: sugar beans (-3%), samp (-3%), wors (-4%), butternut (-4%), canned beans (-3%), and bananas (-4%),

Inflation on the food baskets per area tracked.

In January 2026, food baskets in Joburg, Durban, Springbok and Mthatha decreased in price. Food baskets in Cape Town, Pietermaritzburg and Mtubatuba increased in price.

The Joburg basket **decreased** by R22,73 (-0,4%) month-on-month, and **increased** by R8,31 (0,2%) year-on-year, to **R5 515,69** in January 2026.

The Durban basket **decreased** by R11,11 (-0,2%) month-on-month, and **decreased** by R155,71 (-2,9%) year-on-year, to **R5 295,36** in January 2026.

The Cape Town basket **increased** by R204,09 (3,9%) month-on-month, and **increased** by R20,77 (0,4%) year-on-year, to **R5 389,36** in January 2026.

The Springbok basket **decreased** by R181,29 (-3,2%) month-on-month, and **decreased** by R305,22 (-5,3%) year-on-year, to **R5 467,91** in January 2026.

The Pietermaritzburg basket **increased** by R191,63 (3,8%) month-on-month, and **increased** by R145,91 (2,9%) year-on-year, to **R5 221,36** in January 2026.

The Mtubatuba basket **increased** by R205,96 (3,9%) month-on-month, and **decreased** by R98,26 (-1,8%) year-on-year, to **R5 502,41** in January 2026.

The Mthatha basket **decreased** by R79,88 (-1,4%) month-on-month, and **decreased** by R62,88 (-1,1%) from February 2025 to **R5 509,68** in January 2026. *Note that Mthatha is not included in the overall Average Household Food Basket data. It will be included at a future date.*

(See pages 8-15 for area specific data, in the January 2026, Household Affordability Index).

Statistics South Africa's Consumer Price Index and Producer Price Index.

Statistics South Africa's latest *Consumer Price Index* for December 2025¹ shows that **Headline inflation was 3,6%**, and for the **lowest expenditure quintiles 1-3 it is 2,9%, 2,9%, and 3,1%** respectively. **CPI Food & non-alcoholic beverages inflation was 4,4%**. STATS SA's *Producer Price Index* for November 2025² shows **Agriculture was -3,7%**, of which, *Products of crops and horticulture was -16,9%*, and *Live animals and animal products was 18,3%*.

Workers

The National Minimum Wage is R28,79 per hour, R230,32 for an 8-hour day, and R4 836,72 for an average 21-day working month. In January 2026, with **21 working-days**, the maximum National Minimum Wage for a General Worker is **R4 836,72**. 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 3,9 people**. **Dispersed in a worker's family of 4 persons, the NMW, is R1 209,18 per person – this is below the 2023 rebased Lower-Bound Poverty line of R1300 per person per month; and the Upper-Bound Poverty Line of R2 635 per person per month.³**

The January 2026 average cost of a basic nutritional food basket for a family of four persons is **R3 720,25** (See page 5 of January 2026, 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 **59,2%** of a worker's wage (R2 861,85/R4 836,72). Food is bought after monies for transport and electricity have been paid for or set aside (leaving **R1 974,87** – for food and everything else), and so in January 2026, PMBEJD calculates that workers' families may **underspend on food by a minimum of 46,9%** (having R1 974,87 left over after transport and electricity have been paid, and with food for the month costing R3 720,25). **In this scenario there is no possibility of a worker being able to afford enough nutritious food for her family.**

If the entire R1 974,87 all went to buy food, then for a family of 4 persons, **it would provide R493,72 per person per month. This is below the 2023 rebased Food Poverty Line of R777 per person per month** (See page 7 of January 2026, Household Affordability Index). *Note that* the Food Poverty Line is a monetary-based threshold below which a person cannot consume enough food to meet the minimum daily energy requirement.⁴

Women and children

In January 2026, the average monthly cost to feed a child a basic nutritious diet was **R948,18**. Over the past month, the average cost to feed a child a basic nutritious diet **increased** by **R10,57 (1,1%)**. Year-on-year, the average cost to feed a child a basic nutritious diet **decreased** by **R28,21 (-2,9%)**. See page 5 of January 2026, Household Affordability Index.

In January 2026, the **Child Support Grant of R560 per month** is **28% below the 2023 rebased Food Poverty Line of R777 per month**, and **41% below the average monthly cost to feed a child a basic nutritious diet (R948,18)**.

¹ STATSSA (2026). **Consumer Price Index December 2025**. Statistical release P0141. 21 January 2026. Statistics South Africa. Pretoria. P3, 6. See Link: <https://www.statssa.gov.za/publications/P0141/P0141December2025.pdf>

² STATSSA (2025). **Producer Price Index November 2025**. Statistical release P0142.1. 18 December 2025. Statistics South Africa. Pretoria. P12. See Link: <https://www.statssa.gov.za/publications/P01421/P01421November2025.pdf>

³ STATSSA (2025). **Poverty Trends in South Africa: An examination of absolute poverty between 2006 and 2023**. Report No. 03-10-06. Statistics South Africa, Pretoria. P49, 102,109, 132 & 138. See link: <https://www.statssa.gov.za/publications/Report-03-10-06/Report-03-10-062023.pdf>

⁴ Same as above, P102 -.