

FREE WEEKLY REVIEW | NUMBER 47

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This report covers the key domestic and international data releases over the past week. The more comprehensive **BER Weekly Review (Enhanced Version)** includes a detailed discussion on the main economic events and developments over the past week, a summary of upcoming data (the week ahead), and the BER's forecast for key economic indicators. The full Weekly is only available to BER Essential Insights subscribers ([sign up here](#) – it's only R210/month and you get more benefits) and BER Premium Insights clients.

DOMESTIC SECTION

Katrien Smuts

STEADY AS SHE GOES: FOURTH STRAIGHT QUARTER OF GDP GROWTH IN 2025Q3

The 2025Q3 GDP print came out in line with expectations. Though real GDP growth eased to 0.5% q-o-q in 2025Q3, this marks the fourth consecutive quarter of positive growth (from 2024Q4 through 2025Q3). If GDP also increases in 2025Q4, it would be the longest uninterrupted run of quarterly expansions since before 2018. Also welcome was a slight upward revision to the Q2 print (to 0.9% q-o-q from 0.8% previously). Nine of the ten major industries in the economy increased during the quarter.

From the expenditure side, household consumption was once again the main driver of growth, with a 0.7% q-o-q expansion adding 0.5%pts to growth. Encouragingly, gross fixed capital formation turned positive with a 1.6% q-o-q expansion adding 0.2%pts, after a three-quarter streak of declining capex. A 2.2% rise in imports was a drag on expenditure on GDP, though it is important to remember that SA is an import-intensive economy.

Premium Insights clients can download a detailed note on the GDP data [here](#).

Meanwhile, SA's current account deficit narrowed from 1.0% to 0.7% of GDP. The narrower deficit was primarily driven by a smaller shortfall on the primary income account. This more than offset the impact of a smaller trade surplus in Q3, which, in line with the rise in imports reported in the GDP data, would have worsened the current account in isolation. Specifically, merchandise imports outpaced exports between the second and third quarters.

A WELCOME FIVE-POINT RISE IN BUSINESS CONFIDENCE IN Q4

The RMB/BER Business Confidence Index (BCI) rose by five points to 44 in 2025Q4, putting confidence three points above its long-term average. This means that 44% of respondents are satisfied with prevailing business conditions. The rebound is notable for its breadth as confidence improved in five of the six sectors surveyed, with only building contractors registering weaker sentiment. Taken together, the results suggest that the economy is regaining some momentum after remaining subdued in the middle of the year.

BOTH PMIs BELOW 50 IN NOVEMBER, BUT VEHICLE SALES REMAIN STRONG

The seasonally adjusted **Absa Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI)** dropped by a steep 7.2 index points to 42 in November 2025. Weaker new sales orders, weaker business activity, lower inventories and lower supplier delivery times underpin the sharp decline. On the positive side, purchasing prices edged lower.

Meanwhile, the S&P PMI registered a slight improvement from 48.8 to 49 in November. Although slightly better than October, the print below 50 signals a contraction or deteriorating business conditions, similar to the Absa PMI. Respondents attribute the weak business conditions to sustained declines in business volumes and output. There were mixed performances across the different sectors: the industry and construction sectors performed worse in November, while services, such as wholesale and retail trade, showed improvement.

More positively, new vehicle sales experienced another strong month. Total domestic sales increased by 12.5% y-o-y in November 2025, and year-to-date sales marked a 15.4% improvement from 2024. Easing inflation and a more accommodative interest rate environment all contributed to the improved vehicle sales throughout 2025.

INTERNATIONAL SECTION

Damian Maart

UK MANUFACTURING EXPANDS FOR THE FIRST TIME IN OVER A YEAR, WHILE OUTPUT GROWTH STALLS IN CHINA AND THE EUROZONE

The S&P Global UK manufacturing PMI rose to 50.2 in November from 49.7 in October, driven by stronger domestic demand despite weaker foreign orders. Selling prices fell for the first time in over two years, which will be welcomed by the Bank of England. The services PMI, however, declined from 52.3 to 51.3 in November. This slowdown follows softer demand and fewer new orders, while price inflation came in at its lowest level since 2021. Business activity, overall, slowed as the composite PMI dropped by one point to 51.2 in November.

The HCOB Eurozone manufacturing PMI reversed into contraction (49.6 from 50) as new orders and output growth slowed. While input prices rose from supply-chain issues,

consumer prices dropped for the sixth month. Conversely, the services PMI increased to 53.6 on higher new business and activity. The Composite PMI rose to 53.8 in November (from 53.5).

The RatingDog China general manufacturing PMI declined to 49.9 in November (from 50.6 in October), indicating weaker production and near-flat new orders as demand slowed. Rising input costs and discounts led to lower selling prices. However, China's services sector continued to expand in November, but at a somewhat slower pace (52.1 vs 52.6 in October) amid slower new business growth and a decline in staffing levels. Meanwhile, the official NBS manufacturing PMI contracted for the eighth straight month at 49.2, up slightly from October's 49.0.

The S&P Global US manufacturing PMI edged down to 52.2 in November (from 52.5). Weaker demand offset a rise in output and record-high inventories. Business confidence and employment hit their highest levels in three months. Input costs rose due to tariffs, but selling prices declined. The services PMI eased to 54.1 from 54.8, remaining solid amid increased new business and staffing. However, capacity constraints and rising input prices continued to drive inflation and work backlogs.

The ISM US manufacturing PMI fell to 48.2, marking nine months of contraction as new orders and employment dropped. Production recovered, but prices continued to rise due to higher import costs. Meanwhile, the ISM services PMI rose slightly in November to 52.6, its strongest expansion since April, driven by higher business activity and new orders. Despite overall prices reaching a seven-month low, input costs continued to rise.

EUROZONE FLASH INFLATION ESTIMATE SURPRISES TO THE UPSIDE, WHILE UNEMPLOYMENT REMAINS STABLE

Eurozone consumer inflation rose to 2.2% y-o-y in November, slightly above expectations. Services inflation edged up to 3.5%, with food, alcohol, tobacco, and non-energy goods remaining stable. Energy disinflation slowed to -0.5% (vs -0.9 in October). However, core inflation stayed at 2.4%. Conversely, producer price deflation persisted through October, recording a 0.5% y-o-y decline, down from -0.2% in September.

Retail sales remained unchanged in October, following a 0.1% m-o-m increase in September. Weaker non-food product sales (-0.2% vs 0.0% in September) offset higher sales growth of automotive fuels (0.3% vs 0.0%) and food, drinks, and tobacco products. On an annual basis, retail sales increased by 1.5% in October (vs 1.4% in September). Finally, the Eurozone unemployment rate was unchanged at 6.4% in October, reflecting a resilient labour market despite weak growth.

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