

URBAN STUDIES SHOPPER INDEX

FOR SUPER REGIONAL CENTRES

Q2 2024





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Cape Town CBD, Getty Images



Introduction

Urban Studies recognises the wealth of information contained within reviews and has developed the **Urban Studies Shopper Index (USSI)**: a quarterly publication that ranks the super-regional shopping centres in South Africa based on Google Review ratings.

Shoppers are increasingly turning to online reviews to guide their shopping choices in today's fast-paced retail environment.

By focusing on the consumer's voice, the USSI provides insights, and tracking of performance as well as service levels over time for retailers, property managers, and investors. The index is calculated on a rating out of five.

How does the Index work?

The Urban Studies Shopper Index is based on a consumer analytics product developed by Urban Studies. This tool aggregates Google Review ratings for shopping centres with a Google Page. Each centre is evaluated based on the average

rating and the number of reviews received, ensuring a comprehensive assessment of customer sentiment by utilising AI models to analyse the written comments.

The index is updated regularly to reflect the most recent feedback, which captures the dynamic nature of retail experiences. All of this can be used to enhance and improve service levels in the retail industry.

Why is this Index a new Benchmark?

Traditional measurements for evaluating shopping centres, such as foot traffic and sales figures, often overlook the qualitative aspects of the shopping experience.

This index fills this gap by incorporating direct customer feedback, offering a more nuanced view of what makes a shopping centre successful with a focus on the service and experiences in shopping centres.

The table below provides information on the super-regional shopping centres that are included in the index.

Shopping Centre	GLA	Metro	Province
Canal Walk Shopping Centre	149 744 m ²	City of Cape Town	Western Cape
Centurion Mall	120 000 m ²	City of Tshwane	Gauteng
Cresta Shopping Centre	114 545 m ²	City of Johannesburg	Gauteng
East Rand Mall*	68 300 m ²	Ekurhuleni MM	Gauteng
Eastgate Shopping Centre	134 110 m ²	Ekurhuleni MM	Gauteng
Fourways Mall	178 000 m ²	City of Johannesburg	Gauteng
Gateway Theatre Of Shopping	168 131 m ²	City of eThekweni	KwaZulu-Natal
Mall of Africa	131 000 m ²	City of Johannesburg	Gauteng
Menlyn Park Shopping Centre	166 301 m ²	City of Tshwane	Gauteng
Sandton City	137 323 m ²	City of Johannesburg	Gauteng
The Pavilion Shopping Centre	122 768 m ²	City of eThekweni	KwaZulu-Natal
Victoria Wharf Shopping Centre*	70 000 m ²	City of Cape Town	Western Cape
Westgate Shopping Centre	109 418 m ²	City of Johannesburg	Gauteng

* Part of Super Regional Nodes.

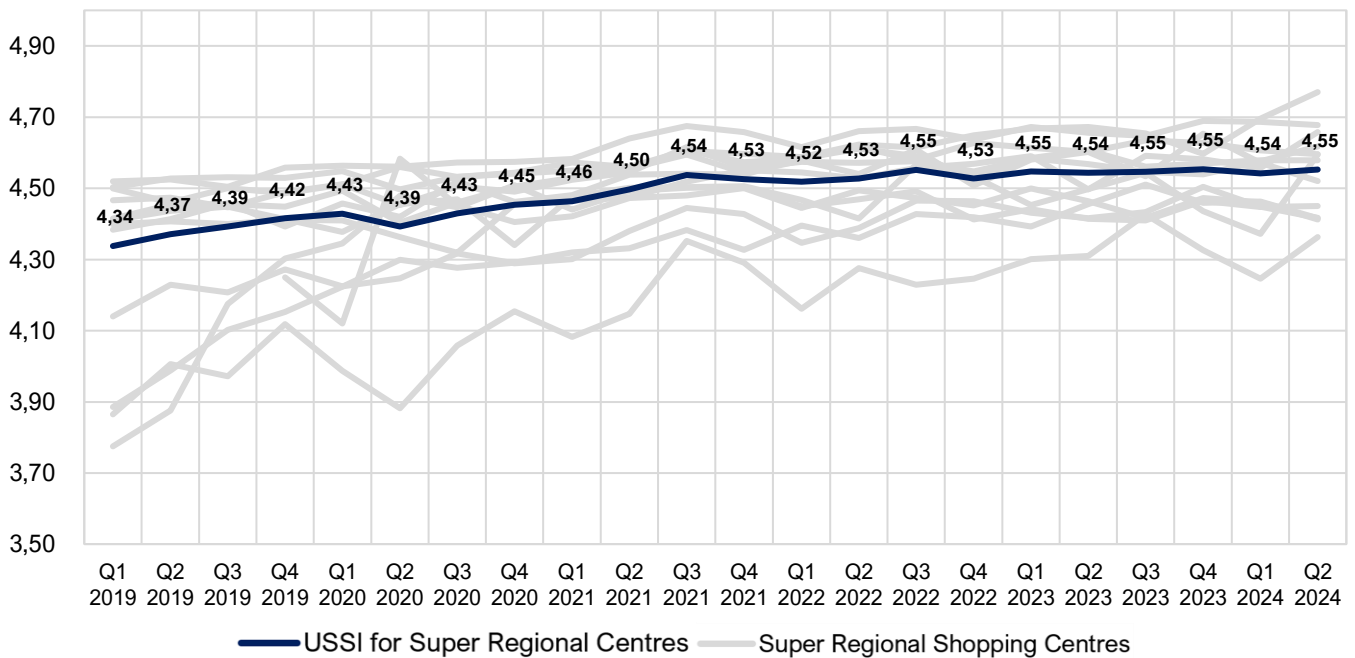


Urban Studies Shopper Index for Super Regional Centres

Key takeaways from the USSI for Super Regional Centres Index Q2 2024:

- The index has shown marginal growth from Q1 to Q2.
- Overall, the Index shows a gradual improvement over time, starting from a rating of 4.34 in Q1 2019 and reaching 4.55 by Q2 2024.
- The peak experienced in Q2 2024 was first achieved in Q3 2022.
- Two years of COVID-19 has had a negative impact (foot count) on super regionals more than any other shopping centre category.
- This indicates a general trend of increasing customer satisfaction across super regional shopping centres post the two years of Covid.

Urban Studies Shopper Index for Super Regional Centres - Q2 2024



Sandton City, Getty Images



Ranking and rating of the Super Regional Centres - Q2 2024

#	Super Regional Shopping Centres	Q2 2023	Q3 2023	Q4 2023	Q1 2024	Q2 2024		Movement
		Rank	Rank	Rank	Rank	Rank	Rating	
1	Victoria Wharf Shopping Centre	1	1	4	1	1	4,77	-
2	Sandton City	2	2	1	2	2	4,68	-
3	Eastgate Shopping Centre	8	4	5	7	3	4,66	▲
4	Mall of Africa	6	6	7	5	4	4,62	▲
5	Canal Walk Shopping Centre	5	3	3	3	5	4,60	▼
6	The Pavilion Shopping Centre	7	7	12	12	6	4,59	▲
7	Gateway Theatre Of Shopping	3	5	6	4	7	4,58	▼
8	Menlyn Park Shopping Centre	4	8	2	6	8	4,52	▼
9	Fourways Mall	12	13	10	11	9	4,45	▲
10	East Rand Mall	11	10	8	10	10	4,42	-
11	Centurion Mall	10	9	11	8	11	4,42	▼
12	Cresta Shopping Centre	9	12	9	9	12	4,41	-
13	Westgate Shopping Centre	13	11	13	13	13	4,36	-
USSI – Super Regional		4,54	4,55	4,55	4,54	4,55		

Key takeaways from the ratings and rank comparison for Q2 2024:

- Sandton City and Victoria Wharf Shopping Centre consistently remain at the top end of the index, showcasing their ability to maintain high customer satisfaction.
- Mall of Africa also shows a strong upward trend, indicating improvements in customer experience.
- Fourways Mall and Cresta Shopping Centre have notable dips and rises, suggesting variability in customer experiences.
- East Rand Mall and Westgate Shopping Centre tend to stay on the lower end of the ratings, indicating areas for potential improvement.
- There is also a clear divide in the index between older vs newer shopping centres.
- The Pavilion Shopping Centre has climbed the index from number 12 to number 6 and has also shown growth in the rating from Q1 to Q2 of 2024, an increase from 4.37 to 4.59 which is a 5.7% improvement.



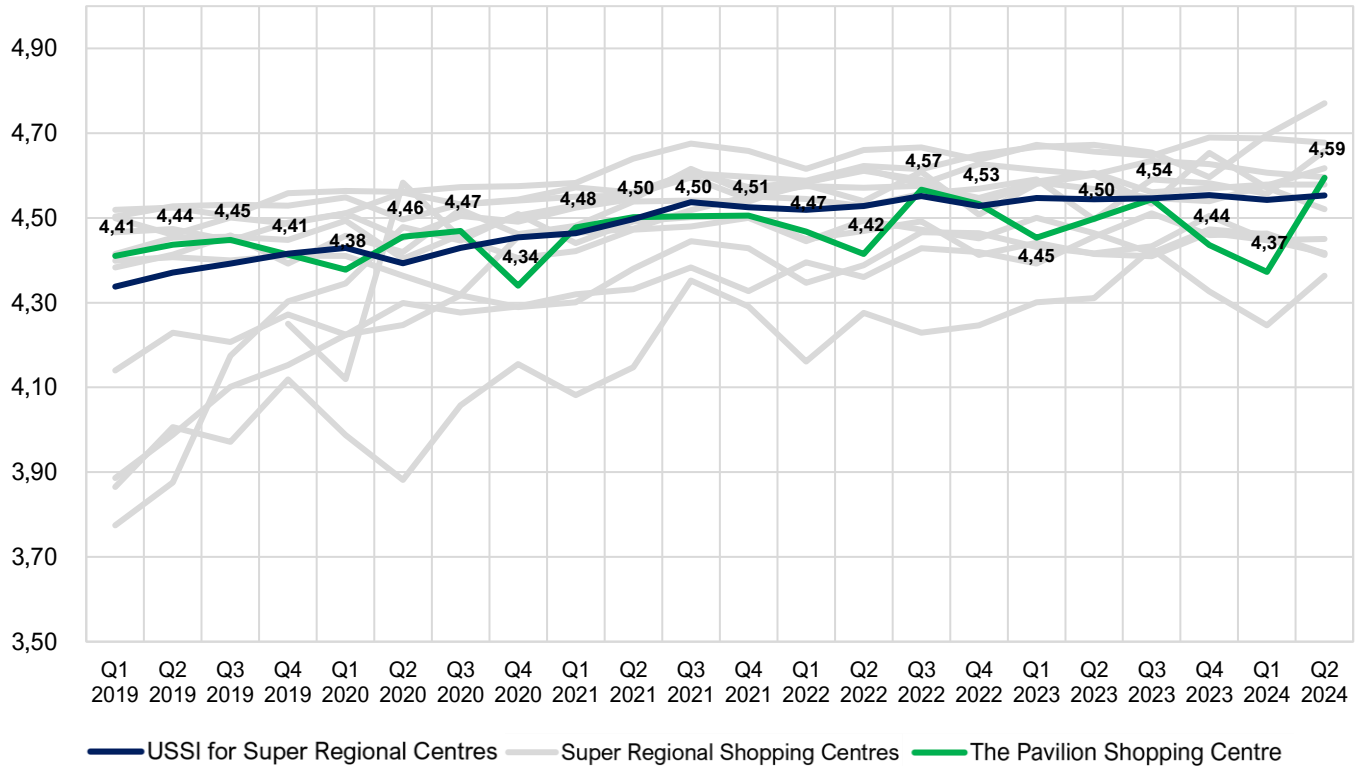
Victoria Wharf Shopping Centre, V&A Waterfront



Spotlight on The Pavilion Shopping Centre

In this edition, the improvement in the ranking and rating of The Pavilion Shopping Centre from number 12 to number 6 warrants a deeper analysis. By analysing the comments and reviews for this mall from Q1 and Q2 of 2024, the factors behind its rise in the rankings are uncovered.

The Pavilion Shopping Centre in the USSI for Super Regional Centres



Sentiment Analysis

The sentiment analysis focuses on written comments for The Pavilion Shopping Centre for Q1 and Q2 2024. The sentiment analysis is AI-driven by using large language models.

Theme	Keywords	Sentiment	Number of Instances		*
			Q1 2024	Q2 2024	
Convenience and Variety	convenient, variety, shopping, stores, everything	Positive	20%	26%	▲
Shopping Experience	experience, shopping, great, place, good	Positive	16%	17%	▲
Atmosphere and Cleanliness	atmosphere, clean, safe, beautiful, neat	Positive	12%	12%	-
Customer Service	service, staff, friendly, helpful, good	Positive	8%	10%	▲
Accessibility and Navigation	easy, navigate, accessible, parking, wheelchair	Positive	8%	9%	▲
Security Concerns	security, robbery, careful, beware, suspicious	Negative	6%	5%	▼
Maintenance Issues	aircon, escalator, toilets, noise, hygiene	Negative	10%	7%	▼
Parking Issues	parking, cash, machine, payment, fees	Negative	8%	6%	▼
Overcrowding	crowded, noisy, busy, full, hot	Negative	7%	5%	▼
Overall Negative Experience	disappointed, issue, problem, useless, hype	Negative	4%	3%	▼

* For improvement in the number of instances, for positive sentiment a ▲ indicates an improvement in the theme, while ▼ indicates a decline in the theme. For negative sentiment, a ▼ indicates an improvement, while a ▲ indicates a decline in the theme.



Spotlight on The Pavilion Shopping Centre (cont.)

The key reasons for the improvement in ranking and rating for The Pavilion Shopping Centre can be attributed to the following:

- Many reviews highlighted the variety of shops and restaurants available, making it a one-stop shopping destination. This convenience was frequently mentioned as a positive aspect. These are characteristics of a true super-regional mall.
- Shoppers appreciated the renovations, new shops, and the overall improved shopping experience. The excitement about these upgrades contributed to a better perception.
- Positive mentions of the mall's cleanliness,

safety, and pleasant atmosphere increased in Q2, indicating improvements in maintenance and security.

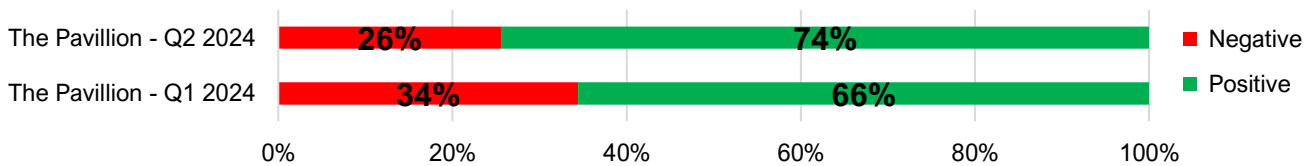
- There was positive feedback on the helpfulness and friendliness of the staff, which enhanced the overall shopping experience.
- There were still negative reviews about security, and maintenance issues, particularly air conditioning and escalators, the frequency of positive reviews and the variety of aspects appreciated by the shoppers outweighed the negative aspects in Q2 compared to Q1.

Net Promoter Score

Q2 2024	48
Q1 2024	32



Shopper Sentiment



Conclusion

The Urban Studies Shopper Index was primarily developed to measure and improve service levels in the retail landscape of South Africa.

Each shopping centre and retailer must focus on improving experience and service levels.

Using AI has increased productivity and made it possible to digest and analyse large volumes of data.

As we continue to monitor and report on these trends regularly, the Urban Studies Shopper Index product remains essential for those looking to stay ahead in the competitive retail market.



The Pavilion Shopping Centre, Pareto Limited

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About Urban Studies

Urban Studies specialises in property and urban market research. Since the inception of the company in 1990, more than 4 500 research projects have been completed. This also includes primary research in more than 350 shopping centres. Research has been conducted throughout South Africa, the rest of Africa and the Middle East. At Urban Studies, we pride ourselves on quality fieldwork, national benchmarking, tracking and an innovative approach.

For more information visit: <https://urbanstudies.co.za/>

