



# South Africa



## KEY FACTS

Joined Commonwealth:	1931 (Statute of Westminster; left in 1961, rejoined in 1994)
Population:	50,460,000 (2011)
GDP p.c. growth:	1.3% p.a. 1990–2011
UN HDI 2012:	World ranking 121
Net primary enrolment:	90.3% (2009)
Adult literacy:	93.0% (2011)

## Geography

Area:	1,221,038 sq km
Coastline:	2,800 km
Capital:	Pretoria

The Republic of South Africa has land borders with: Namibia, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Mozambique and Swaziland. Its sea borders are with the South Atlantic and Indian Oceans. Lesotho is enclosed within its land area.

The country comprises nine provinces: Eastern Cape (provincial capital Bisho), Free State (Bloemfontein), Gauteng (Johannesburg), KwaZulu–Natal (Pietermaritzburg), Limpopo (Polokwane), Mpumalanga (Nelspruit), Northern Cape (Kimberley), North-West (Mafikeng) and Western Cape (Cape Town).

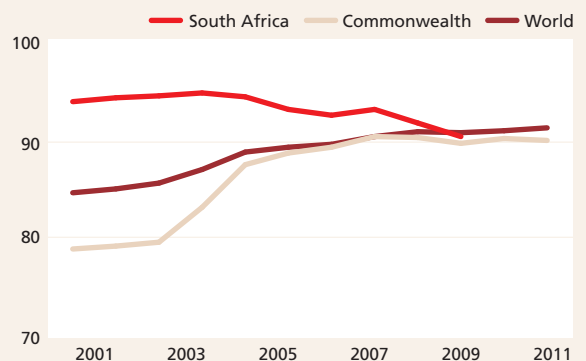
## Society

Population per sq km:	41
Life expectancy:	53 years
Official languages:	11 most widely spoken

**Population:** 50,460,000 (2011); 62 per cent live in urban areas and 34 per cent in urban agglomerations of more than a million people; growth 1.5 per cent p.a. 1990–2011; birth rate 21 per 1,000 people (38 in 1970); life expectancy 53 years (53 in 1970 and 61 in 1990).

People of African origin constitute 79.0 per cent of the population (2001 census), European origin 9.6 per cent, mixed descent 8.9 per cent ('coloureds') and Asian origin 2.5 per cent. The African linguistic groups comprise Zulu (23.8 per cent of the total population), Xhosa (17.6 per cent), Pedi (9.4 per cent), Tswana (8.2 per cent), Sotho (7.9 per cent), Tsonga (4.4 per cent), Swati (2.7 per cent), Venda (2.3 per cent) and several smaller groups. The

### Net primary enrolment (%)



'coloureds' include descendants of slaves brought from Malaya, Indonesia and Madagascar, and the Khoi-Khoi people of the Cape. There is also a substantial flow of inward migration of people seeking employment, most from neighbouring countries such as Lesotho, Mozambique and Zimbabwe.

**Language:** Official languages are Afrikaans, English, Ndebele, Sesotho sa Leboa (Northern Sotho), Sesotho, Setswana, siSwati, Tsonga, Venda, Xhosa and Zulu.

**Religion:** Christians 80 per cent (2001 census), with a wide range of denominations; and minorities of Muslims, Hindus and Jews. Traditional and Christian forms of worship are often blended.

**Health:** Public spending on health was three per cent of GDP in 2010. Durban Academic Hospital in KwaZulu-Natal, four new hospitals in Northern Province and many new health centres were built in the late 1990s. Ninety-one per cent of the population use an improved drinking water source and 79 per cent have adequate sanitation facilities (2010). Infant mortality was 35 per 1,000 live births in 2011 (89 in 1960).

AIDS is a dire problem. In 2011, 17.3 per cent of people aged 15–49 were HIV positive. For many years the government appeared unable to accept the severity of the looming problem and failed to take measures to contain it. By 2000, when it became involved in controversy over its claim that AIDS was not caused by HIV, there were – by some international estimates – more HIV-positive cases in South Africa than any other country. By April 2002, however, the government had committed itself to lead the battle against HIV/AIDS, making antiretroviral drugs available through the health service.

**Media:** Among the many dailies in English are *Business Day*, *Cape Argus*, *Cape Times*, *The Citizen* and *The Star*. Leading Afrikaans-language dailies are *Beeld* (Johannesburg) and *Die Burger* (Cape Town). The most influential national weeklies are *Financial Mail*, *Mail & Guardian*, *The Sunday Independent* and *Sunday Times*.

State-owned South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) provides a comprehensive range of national and regional radio stations covering 11 languages and an external service for a pan-African audience, Channel Africa. There are very many private radio stations. SABC also operates three national TV networks and two pay-TV services. Many private TV channels are available nationally; and private TV network M-Net targets a pan-African audience.

Some 72 per cent of households have TV sets (2009). There are 83 personal computers per 1,000 people (2005).

**Communications:** Country code 27; internet domain '.za'. Mobile phone coverage extends to most of the country. Internet cafes are located in most parts of the country.

There are 82 main telephone lines, 1,268 mobile phone subscriptions and 210 internet users per 1,000 people (2011).

## Education

### Governance

#### Department of Basic Education

Pretoria

Tel: +27 12 312 5911

Email: info@dbe.gov.za

Minister: Angie Motshekga

Director-general: P B Soobrayan

#### Department of Higher Education and Training

Pretoria

Tel: +27 12 312 0126

Minister: Dr Blade Nzimande

Director-general: Gwebinkundla Qonde

#### Council on Higher Education

Pretoria

Tel: +27 12 349 3840

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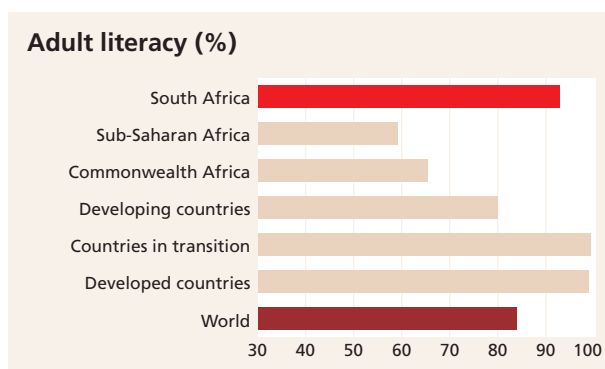
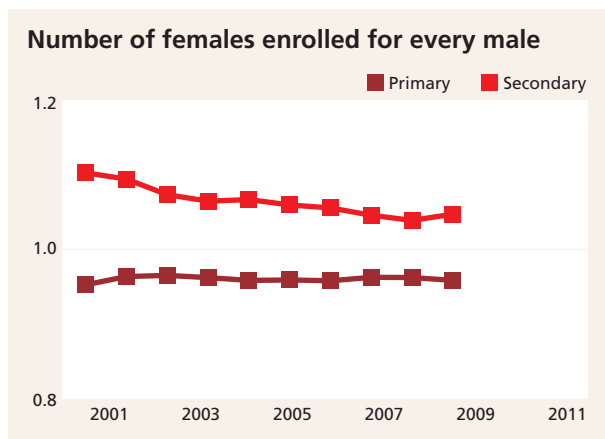
CEO: Ahmed Essop

### Policy and plans

Public spending on education was 6.0 per cent of GDP in 2010.

The National Planning Commission (NPC) was given a mandate in February 2011 to develop a long-term vision and strategic plan for South Africa. Among the first documents the NPC released, in June 2011, was a detailed 'diagnostic overview' which aimed to identify the main challenges confronting the country and to examine their underlying causes. The National Development Plan 2030 was launched in August 2012 'as a platform for united action by all South Africans to eradicate poverty, create full employment and reduce inequality ... towards a truly united, non-racial, non-sexist, democratic and prosperous society'. The NPC is currently involved in advising government on an implementation framework for the National Development Plan.

The Department of Education's strategic plan for 2011–14 embodied the government's commitment to make quality education available to all people. Strategies have been deployed to ensure that no child be excluded from schooling due to financial



constraints, by increasing the number of 'no-fee schools' and strengthening the fee-exemption regulations. At the same time, subsidies and bursaries are available for further education and teacher training.

Schooling 2025 is a long-term plan for the basic education sector, presenting a vision for each of the stakeholder groups – learners, teachers, principals and parents – and for learning and teaching materials, as well as buildings and facilities; the vision is to be realised by the year 2025. An action plan setting out 27 national goals towards realisation of the first stage of this long-term plan (2010–14) was launched in 2010. Of these goals, 13 are outputs dealing with better school results and better enrolment of learners in schools; the remaining 14 goals are concerned with things that must happen for the output goals to be realised.

The Department of Education launched a mass adult-literacy campaign in 2008, which was intended to reach 4.7 million adults above the age of 15 and enable them to become literate and numerate in one of the 11 official languages. Achieving this goal will enable South Africa to reach its United Nations' Education For All commitment to halving the country's illiteracy rates by 2015. By 2013, the campaign had reached 2.9 million people.

### Schools

Primary female–male ratio: 0.96:1 (2009)

Secondary female–male ratio: 1.05:1 (2009)

Primary pupil–teacher ratio: 31:1 (2009)

Secondary pupil–teacher ratio: 25:1 (2009)

There are nine years of compulsory education starting at the age of seven. Primary school comprises seven years and secondary five, with cycles of two and three years. The school year starts in January.

### Tertiary

In January 2012, the Council on Higher Education recognised 23 public universities, including two concentrating on distance education and six universities of technology. It had also registered 88 private higher education institutions and a further 27 were provisionally registered. There are some 892,940 students in public higher education institutions, some 138,610 of whom are postgraduate students (2010). Literacy among people aged 15–24 is 98 per cent (2007).

### Pan-Commonwealth

South Africa hosted the 16th Commonwealth Conference of Education Ministers (16CCEM) in Cape Town in December 2006. The conference was attended by delegations from 36 member countries and had the theme 'Access to Quality Education: for the Good of All'. Commonwealth education ministers meet every three years to discuss issues of mutual concern and interest.

The Generation of Leaders Discovered Peer Education Agency from South Africa was the overall winner in the 2006 Commonwealth Education Good Practice Awards. The agency's project sought to identify and train young leaders to work to influence the behaviour of their peers in order to combat the HIV/AIDS pandemic among young people.

The Centre for Early Childhood Development's Enrichment Centre Pilot Project was short-listed in the 2006 Commonwealth Education Good Practice Awards. The primary goal of the pilot project was to improve the quality of care and education of children aged 0–6 years in five disadvantaged areas around Cape Town.

## Further information

South Africa Government Online: [www.gov.za](http://www.gov.za)

Commonwealth Secretariat: [www.thecommonwealth.org](http://www.thecommonwealth.org)

Commonwealth Education Online: [www.cedol.org](http://www.cedol.org)

## Education institutions

Department of Basic Education: [www.education.gov.za](http://www.education.gov.za)

Department of Higher Education and Training: [www.dhet.gov.za](http://www.dhet.gov.za)

Council on Higher Education: [www.che.ac.za](http://www.che.ac.za)

Higher Education South Africa: [www.hesa.org.za](http://www.hesa.org.za)

South African Council for Educators: [www.sace.org.za](http://www.sace.org.za)

South African Qualifications Authority: [www.saqa.org.za](http://www.saqa.org.za)

Rhodes University: [www.ru.ac.za](http://www.ru.ac.za)

Stellenbosch University: [www.sun.ac.za](http://www.sun.ac.za)

University of Cape Town: [www.uct.ac.za](http://www.uct.ac.za)

University of Fort Hare: [www.ufh.ac.za](http://www.ufh.ac.za)

University of Johannesburg: [www.uj.ac.za](http://www.uj.ac.za)

University of Kwazulu–Natal: [www.ukzn.ac.za](http://www.ukzn.ac.za)

University of Pretoria: [web.up.ac.za](http://web.up.ac.za)

University of the Witwatersrand: [www.wits.ac.za](http://www.wits.ac.za)

PALAMA (Public Administration Leadership and Management Academy): [www.palama.gov.za](http://www.palama.gov.za)

South African Institute for Distance Education: [www.saide.org.za](http://www.saide.org.za)

University of South Africa: [www.unisa.ac.za](http://www.unisa.ac.za)

Human Sciences Research Council: [www.hsrc.ac.za](http://www.hsrc.ac.za)

Generation of Leaders Discovered Peer Education: [www.goldpe.org.za](http://www.goldpe.org.za)