



# SOUTH AFRICA



## INTRODUCTION

By about A.D. 500, Bantu speaking groups settled into northeastern South Africa. Dutch traders landed at the southern tip of present-day South Africa in 1652. The British seized the Cape of Good Hope area in 1806. British and Afrikaners (Dutch descendants) ruled jointly from 1910 in the Union of South Africa. The African National Congress (ANC) led the opposition to apartheid. The first multi-racial elections in 1994 followed the end of apartheid.

## GOVERNMENT

### Chief of State

President Matamela Cyril RAMAPHOSA

### Head of Government

President Matamela Cyril RAMAPHOSA

### Government Type

parliamentary republic

### Capital

Pretoria (administrative capital); Cape Town (legislative capital); Bloemfontein (judicial capital)

### Legislature

bicameral Parliament consists of the National Council of Provinces (90 seats) and the National Assembly (400 seats)

## GEOGRAPHY

### Area

Total: 1,219,090 sq km  
Land: 1,214,470 sq km  
Water: 4,620 sq km

### Climate

mostly semiarid; subtropical along east coast; sunny days, cool nights

### Natural Resources

gold, chromium, antimony, coal, iron ore, manganese, nickel, phosphates, tin, rare earth elements, uranium, gem diamonds, platinum, copper, vanadium, salt, natural gas

## ECONOMY

### Economic Overview

upper middle-income South African economy; hard hit by COVID-19; poor utilities management; key rare earth goods exporter; high income inequality; hosts Africa's largest stock exchange; rising unemployment, especially youth; land rights changes

**GDP (Purchasing Power Parity)** \$680 billion (2020 est.)

**GDP per capita (Purchasing Power Parity)** \$11,500 (2020 est.)

**Industries** - mining, automobile assembly, metalworking, machinery, textiles, iron, steel, chemicals, fertilizer, foodstuffs

**Agricultural products** - sugarcane, maize, milk, potatoes, grapes, poultry, oranges, wheat, soybeans, beef

**Exports** \$93.01 billion (2020 est.)

gold, platinum, cars, iron products, coal, manganese, diamonds (2019)

**partners:** China 15%, UK 8%, Germany 7%, US 6%, India 6% (2019)

**Imports** \$77.86 billion (2020 est.)

crude and refined petroleum, cars/vehicle parts, gold, broadcasting equipment (2019)

**partners:** China 18%, Germany 11%, US 6%, India 5% (2019)

## PEOPLE & SOCIETY

### Population

57 million (July 2021 est.)

### Population Growth

0.95% (2021 est.)

### Ethnicity

Black African 80.9%, Colored 8.8%, White 7.8%, Indian/Asian 2.5% (2018 est.); **note:** colored is a term used in South Africa, including on the national census, for persons of mixed race ancestry

### Language

isiZulu (official) 25.3%, isiXhosa (official) 14.8%, Afrikaans (official) 12.2%, Sepedi (official) 10.1%, Setswana (official) 9.1%, English (official) 8.1%, Sesotho (official) 7.9%, Xitsonga (official) 3.6%, other 12.5% (2018 est.)

### Religion

Christian 86%, ancestral, tribal, animist, or other traditional African religions 5.4%, Muslim 1.9%, other 1.5%, nothing in particular 5.2% (2015 est.)

