

Pocket  
Guide to  
South  
Africa  
2004



**Pocket Guide to South Africa 2004**  
Second edition

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In this 10th anniversary year since we achieved democracy, we can, as South Africans, take pride in the progress that freedom has brought. We can be confident of our ability as a nation, working together, to meet the enormous challenges of fully achieving our goal of a better life for all.

The pages of this *Pocket Guide to South Africa* attest to the progress and the challenges, the difficulties and opportunities.

It has been the historic mission of this generation of South Africans to confront and overcome Apartheid's pervasive legacy. The transformation of our society, and the reconstruction and development of our country have been and remain our strategic goals. Central to the

realisation of these goals is the restoration of the dignity of all South Africans and the eradication of poverty.

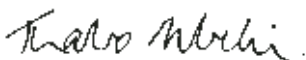
As we are celebrating the First Decade of Freedom, we can assert with confidence that social, political and economic stability prevails in our country, previously divided and torn by conflict; that many millions have gained access to basic services and benefits once denied them; and that the culture of human rights and democracy has taken root.

South Africa, once isolated from the international community by the inhumanity of Apartheid, now plays its part in Africa and the world, contributing to the collective effort to promote peace, development and human rights. The tide has turned.

Government's partnership with the people of South Africa, in a national effort to build a better life for all, has been critical to the progress made. The people's contract for a better tomorrow is taking shape.

While we take pride in the progress that has been made, we are acutely aware of the massive challenges that remain before the accumulated legacy of poverty and underdevelopment can be eradicated. We are learning the lessons of our experience, and resolve to build on what has been achieved.

The *Pocket Guide to South Africa 2004* reflects that experience and that determination. As we celebrate 10 Years of Freedom in South Africa, we do so as a people united for a better South Africa and a better world.



**President Thabo Mbeki**

# SOUTH AFRICA AT A GLANCE

Size	1,219 090 km <sup>2</sup>
Key economic sectors	Mining services and transport, energy, manufacturing, tourism, agriculture
Population	44,8 million
Official languages	English, isiZulu, isiXhosa, isiNdebele, Afrikaans, siSwati, Sepedi, Sesotho, Setswana, Tshivenda and Xitsonga
Government	Constitutional multi-party, three-tier (local, provincial, national) democracy. There are nine provinces
Current GDP growth	1,3% (2003)
Literacy	93%
Urban population	57%
Major cities	Johannesburg, Cape Town, Durban, Pretoria, Port Elizabeth, Bloemfontein, East London, Kimberley
Currency	100 cents equals one Rand
Time	GMT +2 hours
Distances	Cape Town to Johannesburg 1 400 km (880 miles) Johannesburg to Durban 600 km (380 miles) Port Elizabeth to Bloemfontein 700 km (440 miles)
Transportation	Excellent roads, rail and air facilities (both domestic and international)
Telecommunications	World-class infrastructure. South Africa is ranked 23rd in telecommunications development. Internet access is widely available. There are three mobile (cellular) networks.
VAT	Levied at 14%. Tourists may apply for tax refunds on purchases over R250 on departure
Health	Top quality care is available throughout the country, although basic in rural areas. Inoculations are only required for those travelling from yellow-fever areas. Malaria precautions are necessary in some areas.

For further information on South Africa, visit [www.southafrica.info](http://www.southafrica.info)



## South Africa today

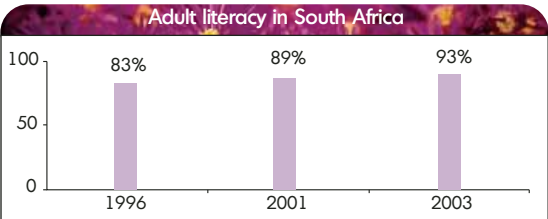
Just 10 short years ago a new democratic South African State was born with an inheritance which was anything but auspicious.

Black people had previously been denied the vote and meaningful access to the economy. From the sports fields to the factory floors, schoolrooms to neighbourhoods, South Africans were divided along racial lines, a divide enforced by repression and the denial of human rights.

The economy, isolated for years by the international community, was stagnating while debt was ballooning.

### Reconstruction and development

Since 1994, in line with the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), government has set out to dismantle Apartheid social relations and to create a democratic society based on equity, non-racialism and non-sexism.



Source: Towards a Ten Year Review

The core of all post-1994 policies, the RDP commits the Government to meet people's basic needs while building a robust economy and democratising the State and society.

## Ten-Year Review

A decade after the achievement of democracy, government has been assessing how far it has achieved its objectives. Other organisations have assisted this objective review process, an essential exercise for determining how to set and meet objectives over the next decade.

### Focusing on people

Since 1994, the Public Service has been transformed, with Africans today occupying 72% of senior positions. An increasing number of women and people with disabilities are being appointed in high-level posts. Budgeting and financial management have been transformed, while Multi-Purpose Community Centres (which are being expanded to every municipality) are bringing government to the people.

Government's *imbizo* outreach programme, including meetings with provincial executives, enables communities to interact directly with government to help speed up the implementation of programmes to improve their lives.

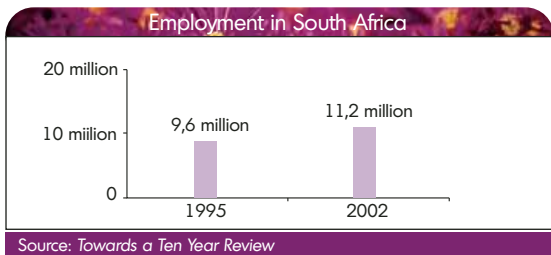
### Better service delivery

Policy and implementation are more integrated thanks to the Government's cluster approach, improved provincial and local government co-ordination and a national development framework. The fight against corruption has been given muscle with legislation, national campaigns, whistle-blowing mechanisms and special courts.

### Social Cluster

Social grants have been equalised between the races and the number of those benefiting has risen from 2,6 million in 1994 to over 7 million in May 2004.





Millions who previously had no access to electricity, water or sanitation now enjoy these services.

Other achievements:

- women and children under six enjoy free healthcare
- since 1994, over 2,3 million housing subsidies have been approved
- in the last decade, 1,56 million hectares (ha) of land has been distributed and 799 479 ha restored through land restitution.

Since 1993, government's social spending on the poorest 60% (especially the poorest 20%) has increased while decreasing for the better-off 40%, and has risen in rural areas.

## Economy Cluster

### Performance of the economy

- **Stability**

Resources have been freed up for social expenditure by slashing interest repayments. The budget deficit fell from 9,5% in 1993 to 1% in 2002/03, and public-sector debt fell from 60% to 50% during the same period. Negative per-capita growth in the decade before 1994 has since been transformed into 2,8%.

- **Economic reform**

Trade and industry have been restructured to make the country more competitive while labour reform has



Some major multilateral events hosted by South Africa since 1998:

- 1998 Non-Aligned Movement Summit
- 1999 Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting
- 2000 United Nations (UN) AIDS Conference
- 2001 UN World Conference Against Racism
- 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development and the African Union Summit.

created an environment in which both employers and workers have greater certainty and security. Many State enterprises have been restructured to promote competition, access to services and Black Economic Empowerment, while lowering costs and raising revenue which has been used to reduce public debt.

- **Employment**

Between 1995 and 2003, the number of people employed grew by two million from 9,6 million to 11,6 million. But the number of unemployed also grew because many more people (the economically active population) were either employed or looking for work – 16,8 million in 2003 compared with 11,4 million in 1995. At the same time, while many unskilled workers are unemployed, there is a shortage of skilled workers in many areas of the economy.

- **Empowerment**

Empowerment in the workplace is continuing, albeit slowly. By 2001, 13% of top management and 16% of senior management were black people. Black ownership of public companies was 9,4% in 2002 compared with



Some 30 bilateral agreements have been signed for science and technology (S&T) in the past nine years. There are several major S&T initiatives in South Africa with strong international participation, including the HIV/AIDS Vaccine Initiative.



FACT

From 1996 to 2001, the South African population grew by 11% from 40,4 million to 44,8 million. But the number of households grew by 30% from 9,7 million to 11,8 million. In other words, the average household became smaller; greater freedom and a better quality of life resulting in fewer extended families. The reduction of the average household size from 4,5 to 3,8 persons implies government has to provide housing and services for almost three million instead of one million houses.

virtually nothing in 1994. The Broad-Based Economic Empowerment Act of 2003 will further promote participation of black people and women in the economy.

### Justice, crime prevention and security

With political violence almost a thing of the past, South Africa's justice and police resources have, since 1994, concentrated on stabilising crime.

Except for robbery and malicious damage to property, most of the 20 categories of serious crime have either stabilised or decreased in the last 10 years. While widely reported, robberies, including vehicle hijacking and bank robberies have declined significantly, cellphone theft (including misplacement) has increased dramatically, today accounting for 50% of all robberies. Murder rates are down by 30,7% since 1994.

### International relations

South Africa's post-1994 success in defining its place in the world is remarkable given its size.

After being shunned by much of the world for decades, South Africa is now actively promoting its own interests and those of the South in all significant regional, continental and multilateral institutions.



Access to means of communication has grown rapidly. By 2001, 32% of households had access to cellphones, 42% to land lines, 73% to radio and 54% to television.

## Challenges of the next decade

The next decade's challenges arise from lessons learnt in the First Decade of Freedom and new challenges created by the first stage of transformation.

Key challenges will be creating jobs for the millions seeking work, and equipping them for a changing economy in which higher skills are required.

After a decade of freedom and transformation, the Government, elected in April 2004, has embarked on a Programme of Action to consolidate democracy in South Africa and to put the country on a faster growth and development path.