G20
SOUTH AFRICA 2025

The year of the
South African Presidency



SOUTH AFRICA **YEARBOOK** 2024/25

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FOREWORD



The South Africa Yearbook (SAYB) tells the story of a nation united in diversity. This repository of information highlights our country's achievements and showcases various destinations across our beautiful land.

The formation of a Government of National Unity after the 2024 General Elections, comprising different political parties, gave expression to our ongoing commitment to democracy and the call of our people to work together to build a nation that serves all.

We have adopted a Medium-Term Development Plan for 2025 – 2030 to drive inclusive growth, create jobs, tackle poverty and build a capable developmental state.

Through the District Development Model, we are mobilising resources from business, labour and civil society to advance development and improved service delivery at local level. This level of government is the closest to the people and is responsible for ensuring that the delivery of water, electricity, sanitation and other vital municipal services reaches citizens.

A particular area of focus has been the empowerment of young people through the provision of quality education, support for entrepreneurship and youth initiatives that enable them to transform their lives in meaningful ways.

We are investing in the economic empowerment of women. This is vital to inclusive economic growth, poverty eradication and improved community well-being. We are working together across society to combat violence against women, improving the criminal justice system, protecting the vulnerable and working to change the attitudes and practices that enable such crimes.

While there is still much to be done within the country's borders, South Africa's international standing places us in a strong position to contribute meaningfully to resolving the many issues facing the African continent and beyond.

We have used our participation in the BRICS+ group of countries and our G20 Presidency in 2025 to advance our vision of a fair, peaceful and just global order; while also using the opportunity to showcase our country to the world. This edition of the SAYB includes a special chapter on the G20 and its meaning for South Africa and its people.

Our involvement in global affairs extends far beyond politics and diplomacy. South Africa has been granted the rights to host the 2027 Cricket World Cup, and work is underway. This is yet another affirmation of South Africa's international standing as a premier host nation and a home of sport and entertainment. Just like the Rugby World Cup of 1995, the African Cup of Nations of 1996 and the FIFA World Cup of 2010, the 2027 ICC Cricket World Cup will contribute to South Africa's economic development through infrastructure upgrades and tourism growth.

As a multi-cultural society, we pride ourselves in fostering social cohesion through cultural promotion programmes and entertainment. The adoption of South African Sign Language as an official language, is testament to a country in which everyone has a place. Our most vulnerable groups, including persons with disabilities, must be included in all our successes. This is a generational mission that we are all striving towards as we build a prosperous country.

The 2024/25 SAYB is the chronicle of a nation of great diversity, vibrancy and hope. It tells the story of a nation that works for all and in which no one is left behind.



Mr Matamela Cyril Ramaphosa
President of the Republic of South Africa
December 2025

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However, any person requiring formal confirmation of any data in the SAYB or more detailed specific information, should contact the responsible government institution. Additional information is also available on Government Online (*www.gov.za*).

Unless otherwise specified, the information contained in this book was the latest available by December 2025.





SOUTH AFRICA
YEARBOOK
2024/25

Land and its people

The Land

Stretching latitudinally from 22°S to 35°S and longitudinally from 17°E to 33°E, South Africa's surface area covers 1 219 602 square kilometres (km2). Physical features range from bushveld, grasslands, forests, deserts and majestic mountain peaks, to wide unspoilt beaches and coastal wetlands. The country shares common boundaries with Namibia, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Mozambique and Eswatini, while the Mountain Kingdom of Lesotho is landlocked by South African territory in the south-east. The Prince Edward and Marion islands, annexed by South Africa in 1947, lie some 1 920 km south-east of Cape Town.

South Africa's long coastline stretches more than more than 3 000 kilometres (km), from the desert border with Namibia on the Atlantic coast southwards around the tip of Africa and then north to the border of subtropical Mozambique on the Indian Ocean.

The country has more than 290 conservation parks. It is home to almost 300 mammal species, about 860 bird species, and 8 000 plant species. The annual sardine run is the biggest migration on the planet. South Africa comprises nine world heritage sites and is divided into eight biomes.

The heritage sites are:

- Fossil Hominid Sites of South Africa (i.e. Cradle of Humankind, Taung Skull Fossil Site and Makapan Valley)
- Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape
- Richtersveld Cultural and Botanical Landscape
- Robben Island
- Cape Floral Region Protected Areas
- iSimangaliso Wetland Park
- Vredefort Dome
- uKhahlamba/Drakensberg Park
- ǂKhomani Cultural Landscape.

The biomes are:

- Grassland
- Savanna
- Succulent Karoo
- Nama-Karoo
- Forest
- Fynbos
- Desert
- Thicket
- Indian Ocean Coastal Belt.

The country is considered to be the Cradle of Humankind and boasts 40% of all hominid finds on Earth.

The oceans and coastline

The warm Mozambique-Agulhas current skirts the east and south coasts as far as Cape Agulhas, while the cold Benguela current flows northwards along the west coast as far as southern Angola.

The contrast in temperature between these two currents partly accounts for significant differences in climate and vegetation, as well as differences in marine life. Owing to the cold waters of the west coast being much richer in oxygen, nitrates, phosphates and plankton than those of the east coast, the South African fishing industry is centred on the west coast. Saldanha Bay is the only ideal natural harbour.

Rivers and lakes

None of the country's rivers are commercially navigable and most river mouths are unsuitable as harbours as large sandbanks block entry for most of the year. South Africa has no significant natural lakes. Artificial lakes are used mostly for crop irrigation. The Orange River is South Africa's largest river. Rising in the Drakensberg Mountains, it traverses through the Lesotho Highlands and joins the Caledon River between the Eastern Cape and the Free State before it empties into the Atlantic Ocean forming the border with Namibia. Other major rivers include the Vaal, Breede, Komati, Lepelle (previously Olifants), Tugela, Umzimvubu, Limpopo and Molopo.

Relief features

South Africa's surface area falls into two major physiographic categories: the interior plateau and the land between the plateau and the coast. Forming the boundary between these two areas is the Great Escarpment, the most prominent and continuous relief feature of the country. Its height above sea level varies from about 1 500 metres (m) in the dolerite-capped Roggeveld scarp in the south-west, to 3 482 m in the KwaZulu-Natal Drakensberg.

Inland from the escarpment lies the interior plateau, which is the southern continuation of the great African plateau stretching north to the Sahara Desert. The plateau is characterised by wide plains with an average height of 1 200 m above sea level. The dissected Lesotho plateau, which is more than 3 000 m above sea level, is the most prominent.

Between the Great Escarpment and the coast lies an area which varies in width from 80 km to 240 km in the east and south, and 60 km to 80 km in the west. At least three major subdivisions are recognised – the eastern plateau slopes, the Cape folded belt and adjacent regions, and the western plateau slopes.

Climate

A subtropical location, moderated by ocean on three sides of the country and the altitude of the interior plateau, account for the warm temperate conditions. South Africa is a relatively dry country, with an average annual rainfall of about 500 millimetres (mm). While the Western Cape gets most of its rainfall in winter, the rest of the country is generally a summer-rainfall region.

Temperatures in South Africa tend to be lower than in other countries at similar latitudes, owing mainly to greater elevation above sea level. On the interior plateau, the altitude – Johannesburg lies at 1 694 m – keeps the average summer temperatures below 30°C. In winter, for the same reason, night-time temperatures can drop to freezing point or lower in some places. South Africa's coastal regions are therefore relatively warm in winter.

The hottest place in South Africa is Letaba in Limpopo, with a mean annual temperature of 23.7°C and an average annual maximum temperature of 30.7°C. The coldest place

is Buffelsfontein near Molteno in the Eastern Cape, with a mean annual temperature of 11.5°C and an average annual minimum temperature of 2.9°C.

The wettest place is Matiwa in Limpopo with an average annual rainfall of 2004 mm (calculated over a 60-year period). The driest place in the country is Alexander Bay in the Northern Cape, with an average annual rainfall of only 46 mm and the windiest place is Cape Point in the Western Cape, which experiences only 2% of all hours in the year with calm conditions. The average wind speed is 6.9 m/s with 42.1% of the wind speeds higher than 8 m/s.

The people

According to Statistics South Africa (StatsSA), the 2024 mid-year population is estimated at 63, 02 million. The female population accounts for 51,0% (approximately 32,13 million) of the population. Life expectancy at birth for 2024 is estimated at 63,6 years for males and 69,2 years for females. The infant mortality rate for 2024 is estimated at 22,9 per 1 000 live births.

The estimated overall HIV prevalence rate is approximately 12,7% among the South African population. The total number of people living with HIV (PLWHIV) is estimated at approximately 8,0 million in 2024. For adults aged 15–49 years, an estimated 16,68% of the population is HIV positive. There is a reduction in international migration, which is indicative of the COVID-19 travel restrictions and subsequent impact on migratory patterns since March 2020.

Migration is an important demographic process, as it shapes the age structure and distribution of the provincial population (and so the country's population structure). For the period 2021–2026, Gauteng and Western Cape are estimated to experience the largest inflow of migrants of approximately, 1 381 024 and 492 427 respectively.

Gauteng still comprises the largest share of the South African population, with approximately 15,93 million people (25,3%) living in this province. KwaZulu-Natal is the province with the second largest population, with an estimated 12,31 million people (19,5%). With a population of approximately 1,37 million people (2,2%), Northern Cape remains the province with the smallest share of the South African population.

About 27,50% of the population is aged younger than 15 years (17,33 million) and approximately 9,7% (6,13 million) is 60 years or older. The provinces reflecting the highest percentage of children younger than 15 within its structure are Limpopo (33,09%) and Eastern Cape (31,70%). The proportion of elderly persons aged 60 years and older in South Africa is increasing over time and as such policies and programmes to care for the needs of this growing population should be prioritised.

Languages

Besides the official languages, scores of others – African, European, Asian and more – are spoken in South Africa, as the country lies at the crossroads of southern Africa. Other languages spoken in the country and mentioned in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa of 1996 are the Khoi, Nama and San languages, South African Sign Language (SASL), Arabic, German, French, Greek, Gujarati, Hebrew, Hindi, Portuguese, Sanskrit, Tamil, Telegu and Urdu. There are also a few indigenous creoles and pidgins. English is generally understood across the country, being the language of business, politics, the media and the country's lingua franca.

South Africa is a multicultural society that is characterised by its rich linguistic diversity. Language is an indispensable tool that can be used to deepen democracy and also contribute to the social, cultural, intellectual, economic and political life of the South African society. The country is multilingual with 12 official languages (Afrikaans; English; Sepedi; Setswana; Sesotho; isiZulu; Siswati; isiNdebele; isiXhosa, Tshivenda, Xitsonga and SASL), each of which is guaranteed equal status. Most South Africans are multilingual and able to speak at least two or more of the official languages. In terms of the Use of Official Languages Act of 2012, and as part of promoting social cohesion and nation-building, every government department, public entity and enterprise is expected to establish a language unit and adopt a language policy.

Religion

South Africa is a secular democracy with freedom of religion. Many religions are represented in the ethnic and regional diversity of the population. They include Christianity; Islam; Traditional African religion; Hinduism; Buddhism; Bahaism; Judaism; Atheism, Agnosticism and Satanism.

The provinces

EASTERN CAPE

The Eastern Cape, at 168 966 km2, is South Africa's second-largest province after the Northern Cape, taking up 13.9% of the total land area. The province has a population of more than 6.6 million people, the majority of whom speak isiXhosa, followed by Afrikaans and English. It is a region of great natural beauty, particularly the rugged cliffs, rough seas and dense green bush of the Wild Coast.

The region has remarkable natural diversity, ranging from the dry, desolate Great Karoo to the lush forests of the Wild Coast and the Keiskamma Valley; the fertile Langkloof Valley, renowned for its rich apple harvests; and the mountainous southern Drakensberg region at Elliot. Various floral habitats meet in the province, ranging from tropical forests in the north to the more temperate woods of the south. The province is home to a number of higher education institutions including Rhodes University, the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, the University of Fort Hare and the Walter Sisulu University of Technology.

It has airports in Bhisho, East London, Mthatha and Gqeberha; with two major harbours in East London and Gqeberha respectively.

Agriculture, fisheries and forestry

The fertile Langkloof Valley in the south-west has enormous deciduous fruit orchards, while sheep farming predominates in the Karoo. The Alexandria-Makhanda area produces pineapples, chicory and dairy products, while coffee and tea are cultivated at Magwa.

An olive nursery developed in collaboration with the University of Fort Hare forms a nucleus of olive production in the Eastern Cape. The coastal areas receive good summer rainfall and have a moderate climate, becoming more subtropical to the north-west, which makes it particularly suitable for forestry. The basis of the province's fishing

industry is squid, some recreational and commercial fishing for line fish, the collection of marine resources, and access to line-catches of hake.

Industry

There are two industrial development zones: the West Bank in East London and Coega, near Gqeberha, which includes the deepwater Port of Ngqura. The metropolitan economies of Gqeberha and East London are based primarily on manufacturing, the most important being automotive manufacturing. The province is the hub of South Africa's motor industry.

With its ability to link throughout the economy, government has identified the automotive industry as a key growth sector. It already exhibited significant growth under the Motor Industry Development Programme. Other important sectors include renewables and green industries, forestry and timber processing, pharmaceuticals, plastics and chemicals, capital goods and tourism.

EASTERN CAPE

Capital: Bhisho
Principal languages:
IsiXhosa 81,8%
Afrikaans 9,6%
English 4,8%
Population: 7 176 230
Percentage share of the total population: 11.0%
Area: 168 966 km²





Source: Stats SA's *Mid-year population estimates of 2024.*

FREE STATE

The main languages spoken in the Free State are Sesotho, Afrikaans and isiXhosa. The province has wide horizons and blue skies, farmland, mountains, goldfields and widely dispersed towns. It lies in the heart of South Africa, with Lesotho nestling in the hollow of its bean-like shape.

Between the Vaal River in the north and the Orange River in the south, this immense rolling prairie stretches as far as the eye can see. Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality, comprising Bloemfontein, Botshabelo and Thaba Nchu, has an established institutional, educational and administrative infrastructure. With Bloemfontein being South Africa's judicial capital, the province houses the Supreme Court of Appeal. Important towns include:

Welkom, Sasolburg, Odendaalsrus, Kroonstad, Parys, Phuthaditjhaba, Bethlehem and the charming village of Clarens, situated in the rolling foothills of the Maluti Mountains. Some of South Africa's most valued San rock art can be found in the Free State.

Other tourist attractions include the Golden Gate National Park, the annual Air Show in Bethlehem, the Cherry Festival in Ficksburg and the Fauresmith International Endurance Ride equestrian event. The Vredefort Dome, 10 km in diameter, is South Africa's seventh World Heritage Site.

Agriculture

Agriculture dominates the Free State landscape, with cultivated land covering 32 000 km2 and natural veld and grazing 87 000 km2 of the province. Field crops yield almost two thirds of the gross agricultural income of the province. Animal products contribute a further 30%, with the balance generated by horticulture.

Mining

The National Development Plan (NDP): Vision 2030 has intensified the mining potential that still exists in the goldfields region of Matjhabeng in the Lejweleputswa District as a job intervention zone. The De Bron-Merriespruit Gold Project and the Bloemhoek Gold Project are included as potential development projects in the scope of work of the Presidential Infrastructure Coordinating Commission.

The province has 12 gold mines, producing 30% of South Africa's output and making it the fifth-largest producer of gold in the world. Gold mines in the Free State also supply a substantial portion of the total silver produced in the country. Uranium occurring in the goldbearing conglomerates of the goldfields is extracted as a by-product. The Free State's gold reef of more than 400 km stretches across the province from Gauteng.

South Africa's largest gold-mining complex is Free State Consolidated Goldfields, with an area of 330 km2. Bituminous coal is mined and converted to petrochemicals at Sasolburg. The province also produces high quality diamonds from its kimberlite pipes and fissures, and the country's largest deposit of bentonite is found in the Koppies District.

Manufacturing and industry

The Maluti-a-Phofung Special Economic Zone is the Free State's share of the logistics and industrial corridor. The Vehicle Distribution Centre was established in partnership with the German Bremen Logistics Group, which committed R60 million towards this project. The Harrismith Food Processing Park forms part of the broader development initiative.

The green economic solar zone in the Xhariep district was expected to result in the establishment of the Xhariep Solar Park, harnessing the solar radiation in the southern part of the Free State. The Ingula Pumped Storage Scheme forms part of Eskom's Capital Expansion Programme. This energy infrastructure project is located on the border of the Phumelela and Maluti-a-Phofung Local Municipalities in the Free State; and eMnambithi Local Municipality and the uThukela District Municipality in KwaZulu-Natal. Sasol South Africa, the largest producer of synthetic fuels on the sub-continent, remains a key role-player in the Free State economy.

Its investment in its Sasolburg operations is evident from the Wax Expansion Project, the Ethylene Purification Unit 5, the Gas Engine Power Plant and Clean Fuels 2. The Omnia Nitric Acid complex, located within the Sasol Industrial Complex, includes a nitric acid plant, an ammonium nitrate plant, a porous ammonium nitrate plant, a fleet of 145 specialised ammonia rail tankers and other ancillary facilities.

FREE STATE

Capital: Bloemfontein
Principal languages:
Sesotho 72,3%
Afrikaans 10,3%
IsiXhosa 5,5%
Population: 3 044 050
Percentage share of the total population: 4.8%
Area: 129 825 km²





Source: Stats SA's *Mid-year population estimates of 2024.*

GAUTENG

StatsSA Census 2022 shows that Gauteng has the highest population, with approximately 15 099 422 million people. Financial and business services, logistics, manufacturing, property, telecommunications and trade are some of the province's most important economic sectors.

It is the business heart of South Africa, but it is also the shopping mecca of Africa, with tourists from the rest of the continent citing shopping as their reason for visiting the province. The population of more than 15 million people has the highest per-capita income level in the country. The province blends cultures, colours and first- and third-world traditions in a spirited mix, flavoured by a number of foreign influences. Most overseas visitors enter South Africa via OR Tambo International Airport in Johannesburg. South of Johannesburg lies Soweto, the most populous urban residential area in the country, with a population of more than a million.

Some 50 km north of Johannesburg lies South Africa's administrative capital, Pretoria. The magnificent Union Buildings, which overlook the city from Meintjieskop, represent the official seat of the South African Government and house the offices of the country's President. The industrial area of Rosslyn and the townships of Soshanguve and Ga-Rankuwa are situated north of Pretoria. Cullinan, which is well known for its diamonds, and Mamelodi lie to the east.

To the west lies Atteridgeville. Other important Gauteng towns include Krugersdorp and Roodepoort on the West Rand; and Germiston, Springs, Boksburg, Benoni, Brakpan and Kempton Park on the East Rand. Vanderbijlpark and Vereeniging in the south of the province are major industrial centres, while Heidelberg, Nigel and Bronkhorstspruit, to the east, are of agricultural importance.

The University of Pretoria is the largest residential university in South Africa, while the University of South Africa is believed to be the largest long distance learning university in the world. Other universities include the University of the Witwatersrand and the University of Johannesburg.

The province also has several other tertiary education institutions such as universities of technology and further education and training colleges. Gauteng is also home to leading research institutions such as the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), the Agricultural Research Council, the Onderstepoort Veterinary Institute and the Human Sciences Research Council.

Mining and manufacturing

Manufacturing includes basic iron and steel, fabricated and metal products, food, machinery, electrical machinery, appliances and electrical supplies, vehicle parts and accessories, and chemical products. All major gold and diamond mining houses have their headquarters in Johannesburg, the biggest being Anglo American and De Beers.

Although gold-mining and ancillary industries provide thousands of jobs, the importance of mining is declining compared to the manufacturing and financial sectors. Gauteng dominates the South African economy in every major sector except agriculture, mining and quarrying. Mining produces only 6% of Gauteng's total income and 31% of export earnings.

Technology

More than 60% of South Africa's research and development takes place in Gauteng. The CSIR is one of South Africa's leading science and technology research, development and implementation centres. Located in Pretoria, the CSIR's research and development areas include Biosciences; The Built Environment; Information and Communication; Materials Science and Manufacturing; Natural Resources and the Environment; Mineral Resources; Space Technology; Nanotechnology and Synthetic Biology.

The Innovation Hub in Pretoria is Africa's first internationally accredited science park and a full member of the International Association of Science Parks. Its community has become a regional centre of innovation and knowledge creation, linked to the fast-moving world of global interconnectivity; and made up of small, medium and micro enterprises and multinational companies, employing over 1 000 people.

Industry and agriculture

The province is an integrated industrial complex with major areas of economic activity in three sub regional areas, namely the Vaal Triangle; East, West and Central Rand; and Pretoria. Johannesburg houses the Johannesburg Stock Exchange Limited, the largest securities exchange in Africa.

GAUTENG

Capital: Johannesburg
Principal languages:
IsiZulu 23,1%
Sesotho 13,1%
Sepedi 12,6%
Setswana 10,4%
Afrikaans 7,7%
English 9,2%
Population: 15 931 824
Percentage share of the total population: 26.6%
Area: 18 178 km^2





Source: Stats SA's *Mid-year population estimates of 2024.*

KWAZULU-NATAL

KwaZulu-Natal is one of the country's most popular holiday destinations. It includes South Africa's lush subtropical east coast, stretching from Port Edward in the south to Mozambique in the north. The Drakensberg mountain range stretches the entire length of KwaZulu-Natal's western boundary, and forms the boundary between South Africa and the mountain kingdom of Lesotho.

It provided the backdrop for the films Zulu (1964) and Yesterday (2004), and the setting for Alan Paton's novel Cry, the Beloved Country. KwaZulu-Natal is the inspiration behind a million picture postcards. Within the area is a vast 243 000-hectare sweep of basalt summits and buttresses; this section was formally granted World Heritage status in November 2000, and was renamed uKhahlamba-Drakensberg Park.

The summer-rainfall coastal regions are hot and humid, with a subtropical climate. The Midlands area is drier, with extremely cold conditions in winter and snow on the high-lying ground. In the north, the subtropical strip extends around Eswatini to the edge of the escarpment.

Visitors can enter the province through the King Shaka International Airport at La Mercy, north of Durban or use the extensive national road network. There are also two major harbours – the port of Durban, which is one the busiest in Africa, and Richards Bay, which is an important coal-export harbour. There are several nature reserves including the Royal Natal National Park, Giant's Castle and the Kamberg Nature Reserve.

Tertiary institutions of learning in the province include the University of KwaZulu-Natal and the Durban Institute of Technology. KwaZulu-Natal is the only province with a monarchy specifically provided for in the Constitution.

Industry and agriculture

KwaZulu-Natal has a diverse industrial sector, with major industries having developed around the port of Durban. Major industries in the province are agriculture, forestry, aluminium, petro-chemicals, automotive manufacturing, steel production, plastics and packaging, paper and board manufacturing, and a range of industries associated with imports and exports though the major ports of Durban and Richards Bay.

The coastal belt is also a large producer of subtropical fruit and sugar, while the farmers in the hinterland concentrate on vegetables, dairy and stock farming. Another major source of income is forestry in the areas around Vryheid, Eshowe, Richmond, Harding and Ngome, which is also known for its tea plantations.

KWAZULU-NATAL

Capital: Pietermaritzburg
Principal languages:
IsiZulu 80,0%
English 14,4%
IsiXhosa 3,1%
Afrikaans 1.0%
Population: 12 312 712
Percentage share of the total population: 19.0%
Area: 94 361 km²





Source: Stats SA's *Mid-year population estimates of 2024.*

LIMPOPO

South Africa's northernmost province shares borders with Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Botswana, making it the ideal gateway to Africa. Named after the Limpopo River that flows along its northern border, the province is rich in wildlife, natural beauty and historical and cultural treasures.

The province is linked to the Maputo Development Corridor through the Phalaborwa Spatial Development Initiative, which is a network of rail and road corridors connected to the major seaports, opening up Limpopo for trade and investment. This is complemented by the presence of smaller airports in centres such as Phalaborwa and Musina, as well as the Gateway International Airport in Polokwane, the capital city, which lies strategically in the centre of the province.

The Great North Road, running through the centre of the province, strings together a series of towns such as Bela-Bela, with its popular mineral spa; Modimolle, with its beautiful Waterberg mountain range; Mokopane; Polokwane; Makhado, at the foot of the Soutpansberg mountain range; and Musina, which is well-known for its majestic baobab trees. The crossing into Zimbabwe is at Beit Bridge.

Phalaborwa and Thabazimbi are Limpopo's major mining centres, while the town of Tzaneen in the picturesque Magoebaskloof is known for its tea plantations, forestry products and tropical fruit. The province is in the Savanna Biome, an area of mixed grassland and trees, generally known as bushveld. Natural resources include more than 50 provincial nature reserves and several private game reserves. The largest section of the Kruger National Park is along Limpopo's eastern boundary, which borders on Mozambique.

Several museums and national monuments bear testimony to the ancient people and fearless pioneers who braved the unknown. Living museums include the Bakone Malapa Museum near Polokwane and the Tsonga Open-Air Museum near Tzaneen. Mapungubwe (Place of the Jackal) Hill, some 75 km from Musina, is a World Heritage site. It served as a natural fortress for its inhabitants from about 950 AD to 1200 AD.



Agriculture

Limpopo produces a wide range of agricultural products. The area is a potato belt and known for its superior quality potatoes for high-end markets. It also produces 75% of the country's mangoes; 65% of its papayas; 36% of its tea; 25% of its citrus, bananas and litchis; 60% of its avocados and two thirds of its tomatoes. Other products include coffee, nuts, guavas, sisal, cotton, tobacco, sunflower, maize, wheat and grapes. In addition, more than 170 plantations produce timber. Most of the higher-lying areas are devoted to cattle and game ranching, earning a reputation for quality biltong (salted, dried meat) – a popular South African delicacy.

Industry and mining

Limpopo also has abundant mineral resources, making mining the critical sector of the province's economy by contributing 22% of the gross geographic product. Metals include platinum, chromium, nickel, cobalt, vanadium, tin, limestone and uranium clay.

Other reserves include antimony, phosphates, fluorspar, gold, diamonds, copper, emeralds, scheelites, magnetite, vermiculite, silicon, mica, black granite, corundum, feldspar and salt. The Medupi Power Station, a dry-cooled, coal-fired power station, is under construction near Lephalale. Medupi is a Sepedi word, which means "gentle rain". The station is expected to create around 40 000 job opportunities.

LIMPOPO

Capital: Polokwane
Principal languages:
Sepedi 55,5%
Tshivenda 17,4%
Xitsonga 17,3%
Afrikaans 2,3%
Population: 6 402 594
Percentage share of the total population: 9.8%
Area: 125 754 km2





Source: Stats SA's *Mid-year population estimates of 2024.*

MPUMALANGA

Spectacular scenic beauty and an abundance of wildlife make the province one of South Africa's major tourist destinations. Mpumalanga, which means "Land of the rising sun", is home to more than four million people. The principle languages are Siswati and isiZulu. With a surface area of only 76 495 km2, it is the second-smallest province after Gauteng, yet has the fourth-largest economy in South Africa.

Bordered by Mozambique and Eswatini in the east, and Gauteng in the west, the province is situated mainly on the high plateau grasslands of the Middleveld. In the north-east, it rises towards mountain peaks terminating in an immense escarpment. In some places, this escarpment plunges hundreds of metres down to the low-lying area known as the Lowveld.

The province has a network of excellent roads and railway connections, making it highly accessible. Owing to its popularity as a tourist destination, Mpumalanga is also served by a number of small airports, including the Kruger Mpumalanga International Airport. Mbombela is the capital of the province and the administrative and business centre of the Lowveld.

Other important towns are eMalahleni, Standerton, Piet Retief, Malalane, Ermelo, Barberton and Sabie, which lies in the centre of one of the largest man-made forests in the world. Mpumalanga lies mainly within the Grassland Biome. The escarpment and the Lowveld form a transitional zone between this grassland area and the Savanna Biome. The Maputo Corridor, which links the province with Gauteng, and Maputo in Mozambique, facilitates economic development and growth for the region.

Agriculture and forestry

Mpumalanga is a summer-rainfall area divided by the escarpment into the Highveld region with cold frosty winters and the Lowveld region with mild winters and a subtropical climate. The escarpment area sometimes experiences snow on the high ground. Thick mist is common during the hot, humid summers. Agriculture, as the backbone of the province's economy, employs 8.1% of its total workforce. An abundance of citrus fruit and many other subtropical fruit – mangoes, avocados, litchis, bananas, papayas, granadillas, guavas – as well as nuts and a variety of vegetables are produced in the province.

Mbombela is the second-largest citrus-producing area in South Africa and is responsible for one third of the country's orange exports. The Institute for Tropical and Subtropical Crops is situated in the city. Groblersdal is an important irrigation area, which yields a wide variety of products such as citrus, cotton, tobacco, wheat and vegetables. Carolina-Bethal-Ermelo is mainly a sheep-farming area; however, potatoes, sunflowers, maize and peanuts are also grown there.

Industry and manufacturing

Most of the manufacturing production in Mpumalanga occurs in the southern Highveld region; especially in Highveld Ridge, where large petrochemical plants such as Sasol 2 and Sasol 3 are located. Largescale manufacturing occurs especially in the northern Highveld area, particularly chrome-alloy and steel manufacturing. In the Lowveld sub region, industries concentrate on manufacturing products from agricultural and raw forestry material.

The growth in demand for goods and services for export via Maputo is expected to stimulate manufacturing in the province. Mpumalanga is rich in coal reserves with eMalahleni being the biggest coal producer in Africa. South Africa's major power stations are situated in this province. Kendal Power Station's cooling towers are the largest structures of their type in the world. The Kusile Power Station near Delmas is the country's biggest, contributing a massive 4 800 megawatts of electricity to the national grid.

One of the country's largest paper mills is situated at Ngodwana, close to its timber source. Middelburg, which produces steel and vanadium, is home to Columbus Stainless, South Africa's only producer of stainless-steel flat products.

MPUMALANGA

Capital: Nelspruit
Principal languages:
SiSwati 30,5%
IsiZulu 27,8%
IsiNdebele 9,9%
Afrikaans 3,2%
Population: 5 057 662
Percentage share of the total population: 7.8%
Area: 76 495 km^2





Source: Stats SA's *Mid-year population estimates of 2024.*

NORTHERN CAPE

The Northern Cape is South Africa's largest province, taking up almost a third of the country's total land area. However, the province is sparsely populated with only about 1.2 million people on 372 889 km2 of land. About 68% of the people speak Afrikaans while Setswana, isiXhosa and English are also widely spoken.



The last remaining true San people live in the Kalahari area, mainly along the Orange and Vaal rivers. Many fossils and San rock engravings have been found here, some of which are displayed at the McGregor Museum in Kimberley. The province lies to the south of its most important asset, the mighty Orange River, which provides the basis for a healthy agricultural industry.

The Northern Cape borders the Atlantic Ocean in the west with Namibia and Botswana to the north and north-west, respectively. It is fringed by the Swartberg mountain range on its southern border. With two major airports at Kimberley and Upington, and an excellent road network, the province's interior is easily accessible from South Africa's major cities, harbours and airports.

Sutherland hosts the southern hemisphere's largest astronomical observatory, the multinational-sponsored Southern African Large Telescope. The Northern Cape is one of two sites to host the Square Kilometre Array (SKA) radio-telescope. Developed by scientists from 17 countries, the SKA will be the largest and most advanced radio telescope in the world.

Among many other benefits, the province's tourism and hospitality industry is profiting from the project, as scientists and other interested parties are flooding into the town of Carnarvon. The province has several national parks and conservation areas, including the Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park, Ai-Ais/ Richtersveld Transfrontier Conservation Park and Augrabies Falls National Park.

The largest part of the province lies in the dry Nama-Karoo Biome, which contains a number of fascinating plants, including the elephant's trunk ("halfmens" or half-man) tree, aloe ("kokerboom" or quiver tree) and a variety of succulents. The area is well known for its spectacular annual spring flowers, which attract thousands of tourists.

Agriculture and industry

The economy of the province's Karoo region depends on sheep farming, while the karakul-pelt industry is one of the most important in the Gordonia district. The province has fertile agricultural land, especially in the Orange River Valley. A variety of fruit is cultivated at Upington, Kakamas and Keimoes. The Vaalharts Irrigation Scheme near Warrenton facilitates the production of wheat, fruit, peanuts, maize and cotton.

Wine is also produced in the Northern Cape's Orange River wine region, which accounts for 25.6% of South Africa's Colombard vines and 10% of its Chenin Blanc. The Niewoudtville Rooibos Tea processing initiative centres on the development and economic empowerment of smallholder farmers. It is aimed at unlocking economic potential, creating sustainable jobs and increasing the skills base. The installation of pasteurisation equipment has been completed and tea has been exported to countries such as Germany, Spain and Japan.

Mining

Mining contributes 27.6% to the gross regional domestic product. Iron-ore mining in the north-eastern corner of the province has been expanding despite the global recession, driven largely by China's demand for steel. Sishen is the biggest iron-ore mine in the country and its owner, Kumba Iron Ore, is engaging in a new project at Kolomela. New manganese projects are also underway.

Diamond mining, in contrast, has seen declining volumes and job losses. Diamond mining is increasingly moving away from the older mines to alluvial mining along the Orange River and its tributaries and in the Atlantic Ocean. The province also has copper, asbestos, fluorspar, semi-precious stones and marble.

NORTHERN CAPE

Capital: Kimberley
Principal languages:
Afrikaans 54,6%
Setswana 35.7%
IsiXhosa 4.5%
Population: 1 372 943
Percentage share of the total population: 2.2%
Area: 372 889 km^2

Source: Stats SA's *Mid-year population estimates of 2024.*

NORTH WEST

North West is bordered by Botswana in the north and fringed by the Kalahari Desert in the west, Gauteng to the east, and the Free State to the south. It is known as the "Platinum Province", owing to its wealth of this precious metal. The province has a population of more than four million people who mainly speak Setswana. Mahikeng is the capital city and well known for the Mafikeng Siege, which took place in October 1899 during the Anglo-Boer/South African War.

Most of the province's economic activity is concentrated between Potchefstroom and Klerksdorp, as well as in Rustenburg and the eastern region, where more than 83.3% of the province's economic activity takes place. The province has various tourist attractions, including Sun City, the Pilanesberg National Park, Madikwe Game Reserve, and the De Wildt Cheetah and Wildlife Trust. A portion of

one of South Africa's World Heritage Sites also falls within the borders of North West namely the Taung Hominid Fossil site, which has been incorporated into South Africa's Cradle of Humankind.

Mining and manufacturing

The Rustenburg and Brits districts produce 94% of the country's platinum, which is more than any other single area in the world. In addition to granite, marble, fluorspar and diamonds, the province also produces a quarter of South Africa's gold. Employment along the Platinum Corridor, from Pretoria to eastern Botswana, accounts for over a third of the province's total employment.

North West's manufacturing sector centres on the municipalities of Brits, Rustenburg, Potchefstroom, Klerksdorp and Mahikeng, which together account for more than 50% of the province's total manufacturing production. The industries in Brits concentrate on manufacturing and construction, while those in Klerksdorp are geared towards the mining industry. In the manufacturing arena, automotive parts, machinery, electronic, audio, and medical equipment are manufactured using local materials and resources.

Agriculture

Some of the largest cattle herds in the world are found at Stellaland near Vryburg, which explains why this area is often referred to as the Texas of South Africa. Marico is also cattle country. North West is South Africa's major producer of white maize. The areas around Rustenburg are fertile, mixed-crop farming land, with maize and sunflowers being the most important crops.

NORTH WEST





Capital: Mahikeng
Principal languages:
Setswana 72,8%
Afrikaans 5,2%
IsiXhosa 4,8%
Population: 4 155 303
Percentage share of the total population: 6.9%
Area: 140 882 km²

Source: Stats SA's *Mid-year population estimates of 2024.*

WESTERN CAPE

Situated on the south-western tip of the African continent, the Western Cape with its wide beaches and breathtaking scenery, complemented by a rich variety of cultures, historical landmarks, world-class restaurants and entertainment, is a world-famous tourist destination. Cape Town, often referred to as the "Mother City", is South Africa's legislative capital and houses Parliament. The province has a strong network of higher education institutions, including the universities of Cape Town, Stellenbosch and the Western Cape, and has the highest adult education level in the country.

Visitors to the province can disembark at one of the province's two main airports, Cape Town International or George Airport or at the seaports of Cape Town, Mossel Bay and Saldanha. Table Mountain, the Cape winelands, Robben Island and the Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens are among the province's most popular tourist attractions. The Western Cape is also known for its floral diversity. The Cape Floristic Region World Heritage Site, comprising eight separate protected areas, covers an area of more than 553 000 ha stretching from the Cape Peninsula to the Eastern Cape.

The Knysna-Tsitsikamma region has the country's biggest indigenous forests. The cold Atlantic Ocean along the West Coast is a rich fishing area, while the warmer Indian Ocean skirts the province's southern beaches.

Agriculture and fisheries

The Western Cape's sheltered valleys between mountains are ideal for the cultivation of export-grade fruit such as apples, table grapes, olives, peaches and oranges. A variety of vegetables is cultivated in the eastern part of the Western Cape, while the Swartland and Overberg districts are well-known as the country's prime wheat-growing areas. The agricultural sector is critical to the Western Cape economy, accounting for 60% of regional exports.

The Western Cape is also well known for its wine production. Some 75% of all South African fishing takes place along the Western Cape coastline. The rich fishing grounds on the west coast are protected from exploitation by a 200 km commercial fishing zone and a strict quota system.



Snoek, Cape lobster, abalone, calamari, octopus, oysters and mussels are among the delicacies found in these waters. Other exports are fruit, wine, wool and ostrich. The high quality of exports, combined with the relative weakness of the local currency, makes the products some of the most affordable high-quality exports in the world.

Industry

The Saldanha Bay Industrial Development Zone is drawing strong international interest. Saldanha Bay is strategically located to serve as a service, maintenance, fabrication and supply hub for the booming African oil and gas sector, due to the increasing number of oil rigs requiring maintenance, and their traffic flow passing from the west to the east coast of Africa.

WESTERN CAPE





Capital: Cape Town
Principal languages:
Afrikaans 41,2%
IsiXhosa 31,4%
English 22,0%
Population: 7 562 588
Percentage share of the total population: 11.8%
Area: 129 462 km²

Source: Stats SA's *Mid-year population estimates of 2024.*





SOUTH AFRICA
YEARBOOK
2024/25

History

Early inhabitants

The discovery of a skull belonging to a child from Taung in 1924; discoveries of hominid fossils at Sterkfontein Caves, a World Heritage Site; and the ground-breaking work done at Blombos Cave in the southern Cape, have all put South Africa at the forefront of palaeontological research into the origins of humanity. Modern humans have lived in the region for more than 100 000 years.

The small, mobile bands of Stone Age hunter-gatherers, who created a wealth of rock art, were the ancestors of the Khoikhoi and San of historical times. The Khoikhoi and San, although collectively known as the Khoisan, are often thought of as distinct peoples. The former were those who, some 2 000 years ago, adopted a pastoralist lifestyle, herding sheep and later, cattle.

Whereas the hunter-gatherers adapted to local environments and were scattered across the subcontinent, the herders sought out the pasture lands between modern-day Namibia and the Eastern Cape. At around the same time, Bantu-speaking agropastoralists began arriving in southern Africa, bringing with them an Iron Age culture and domesticated crops.

After establishing themselves in the well-watered eastern coastal region of southern Africa, these farmers spread out across the interior plateau, or "Highveld", where they adopted a more extensive cattle-farming culture. Chiefdoms arose, based on control over cattle, which gave rise to systems of patronage and, hence, hierarchies of authority within communities. Metallurgical skills, developed in the mining and processing of iron, copper, tin and gold, promoted regional trade and craft specialisation.

At several archaeological sites, such as Mapungubwe and Thulamela in the Limpopo Valley, there is evidence of sophisticated political and material cultures, based in part on contact with the East African trading economy. These cultures, which were part of a broader African civilisation, predate European encroachment by several centuries. Settlement patterns varied from the dispersed homesteads of the fertile coastal regions in the east, to the concentrated towns of the desert fringes in the west.

The farmers did not, however, extend their settlement into the western desert or the winter-rainfall region in the south-west. These regions remained the preserve of the Khoisan until Europeans put down roots at the Cape of Good Hope. Aided by modern science in uncovering the continent's history, which forms part of the African Renaissance, South Africa is gaining a greater understanding of its rich pre-colonial past.

The early colonial period

Portuguese seafarers, who pioneered the sea route to India in the late 15th century, were regular visitors to the South African coast during the early 1500s. Other Europeans followed from the late 16th century onwards. In 1652, the Dutch East India Company (*Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie* [VOC]) set up a station in Table Bay (Cape Town) to provision passing ships. Trade with the Khoikhoi for slaughter stock soon degenerated into raiding and warfare. Beginning in 1657, European settlers were allotted farms by the colonial authorities in the arable regions around Cape Town, where wine and wheat became the major products. In response to the colonists' demand for labour, the VOC imported slaves from East Africa, Madagascar and its possessions in the East Indies. By the early 1700s, the colonists had begun to spread into the hinterland beyond the nearest mountain ranges. These relatively independent and mobile farmers (trekboers), who lived as pastoralists and hunters, were largely free from supervision by the Dutch authorities.

As they intruded further upon the land and water sources, and stepped up their demands for livestock and labour, more and more of the indigenous inhabitants were dispossessed and incorporated into the colonial economy as servants. Diseases such as smallpox, which was introduced by the Europeans in 1713, decimated the Khoisan, contributing to the decline of their cultures. Unions across the colour line took place and a new multiracial social order evolved, based on the supremacy of European colonists.

The slave population steadily increased as more labour was needed. By the mid-1700s, there were more slaves in the Cape than there were "free burghers" (European colonists). The Asian slaves were concentrated in the towns, where they formed an artisan class. They brought with them the Islamic religion, which gained adherents and significantly shaped the working-class culture of the Western Cape. Slaves of African descent were found more often on the farms of outlying districts.

In the late 1700s, the Khoisan offered far more determined resistance to colonial encroachment across the length of the colonial frontier. From the 1770s, colonists also came into contact and conflict with Bantu-speaking chiefdoms. A century of intermittent warfare ensued, during which the colonists gained ascendancy, first over the Khoisan and then over the isiXhosa-speaking chiefdoms to the east. It was only in the late 1800s that the subjugation of these settled African societies became feasible. For some time, their relatively sophisticated social structure and economic systems fended off decisive disruption by incoming colonists, who lacked the necessary military superiority.

At the same time, a process of cultural change was set in motion, not least by commercial and missionary activity. In contrast to the Khoisan, the black farmers were, by and large, immune to European diseases. For this and other reasons, they greatly outnumbered the white people in the population of white-ruled South Africa, and were able to preserve important features of their culture. Perhaps because of population pressures, combined with the actions of slave traders in Portuguese territory on the east coast, the Zulu kingdom emerged as a highly centralised state. In the 1820s, the innovative leader Shaka established sway over a considerable area of south-east Africa and brought many chiefdoms under his dominion.

As splinter groups conquered and absorbed communities in their path, the disruption was felt as far north as central Africa. Substantial states such as Moshoeshoe's Lesotho and other Sotho-Tswana chiefdoms were established, partly for reasons of defence. The *Mfecane* or *Difaqane*, as this period of disruption and state formation became known, remains the subject of much speculative debate.

The British colonial era

In 1795, the British occupied the Cape as a strategic base against the French, thus controlling the sea route to the East. After a brief reversion to the Dutch in the course of the Napoleonic Wars, it was retaken in 1806 and kept by Britain in the post-war settlement of territorial claims. The closed and regulated economic system of the Dutch period was swept away as the Cape Colony was integrated into the dynamic international trading empire of industrialising Britain.

A crucial new element was evangelicalism, brought to the Cape by Protestant missionaries. The evangelicals believed in the liberating effect of "free" labour and in the "civilising mission" of British imperialism. They were convinced that indigenous peoples could be fully assimilated into European Christian culture once the shackles of oppression had been removed.

The most important representative of the mission movement in South Africa was Dr John Philip, who arrived as superintendent of the London Missionary Society in 1819. His campaign on behalf of the oppressed Khoisan coincided with a high point in official sympathy for philanthropic concerns. One result was Ordinance 50 of 1828, which guaranteed equal civil rights for "people of colour" within the colony and freed them from legal discrimination.

At the same time, a powerful anti-slavery movement in Britain promoted a series of ameliorative measures imposed on the colonies in the 1820s, and the proclamation of emancipation, which came into force in 1834. The slaves were subject to a four-year period of "apprenticeship" with their former owners, on the grounds that they must be prepared for freedom, which came on 1 December 1838. Although slavery had become less profitable because of a depression in the wine industry, Cape slave-owners rallied to oppose emancipation.

The compensation money, which the British treasury paid out to sweeten the pill, injected unprecedented liquidity into the stagnant local economy. This brought a spurt of company formation, such as banks and insurance companies, as well as a surge of investment in land and wool sheep in the drier regions of the colony in the late 1830s.

Wool became a staple export on which the Cape economy depended for its further development in the middle decades of the century. For the ex-slaves, as for the Khoisan servants, the reality of freedom was very different from the promise. As a wage-based economy developed, they remained dispossessed and exploited, with little opportunity to escape their servile lot.

Increasingly, they were lumped together as the "coloured" people, a group which included the descendants of unions between indigenous and European peoples, and a substantial Muslim minority who became known as the "Cape Malays" (misleadingly, as they mostly came from the Indonesian archipelago). The coloured people were discriminated against on account of their working-class status as well as their racial identity. Among the poor, especially in and around Cape Town, there continued to be a great deal of racial mixing and intermarriage throughout the 1800s.

In 1820, several thousand British settlers, who were swept up by a scheme to relieve Britain of its unemployed, were placed in the eastern Cape frontier zone as a buffer against the Xhosa chiefdoms.

The vision of a dense settlement of small farmers was, however, ill-conceived and many of the settlers became artisans and traders. The more successful became an entrepreneurial class of merchants, largescale sheep farmers and speculators with an insatiable demand for land. Some became fierce warmongers who pressed for the military dispossession of the chiefdoms.

They coveted Xhosa land and welcomed the prospect of war involving large-scale military expenditure by the imperial authorities. The Xhosa engaged in raiding as a means of asserting their prior claims to the land. Racial paranoia became integral to white frontier politics. The result was that frontier warfare became endemic through much of the 19th century, during which Xhosa war leaders such as Chief Maqoma became heroic figures to their people. By the mid-1800s, British settlers of similar persuasion were to be found in Natal. They, too, called for imperial expansion in support of their land claims and trading enterprises.

Meanwhile, large numbers of the original colonists, the Boers, were greatly extending white occupation beyond the Cape's borders to the north, in the movement that became known as the Great Trek, in the mid-1830s. Alienated by British liberalism, and with their economic enterprise usurped by British settlers, several thousand Boers from the interior districts, accompanied by a number of Khoisan servants, began a series of migrations northwards.

They moved to the Highveld and Natal, skirting the great concentrations of black farmers on the way by taking advantage of the areas disrupted during the Mfecane. When the British, who were concerned about controlling the traffic through Port Natal (Durban), annexed the territory of Natal in 1843, those emigrant Boers who had hoped to settle there returned inland.

These Voortrekkers (as they were later called) coalesced in two landlocked republics, the Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek (Transvaal) and the Orange Free State. With limited coercive power, the Boer communities had to establish relations and develop alliances with some black chiefdoms, neutralising those who obstructed their intrusion or who posed a threat to their security.

Only after the mineral discoveries of the late 1800s did the balance of power swing decisively towards the colonists. The Boer republics then took on the trappings of real statehood and imposed their authority within the territorial borders that they had notionally claimed for themselves. The Colony of Natal, situated to the south of the mighty Zulu State, developed along very different lines from the original colony of settlement, the Cape. The size of the black population left no room for the assimilationist vision of race domination embraced in the Cape.

Chiefdoms consisting mainly of refugee groups in the aftermath of the Mfecane were persuaded to accept colonial protection in return for reserved land and the freedom to govern themselves in accordance with their own customs. These chiefdoms were established in the heart of an expanding colonial territory.

Natal developed a system of political and legal dualism, whereby chiefly rule was en-trenched and customary law was codified. Although exemptions from customary law could be granted to the educated products of the missions, in practice

they were rare. Urban residence was strictly controlled and political rights outside the reserves were effectively limited to white people. This system is widely regarded as having provided a model for the segregationism that would prevail in the 20th century.

Natal's economy was boosted by the development of sugar plantations in the subtropical coastal lowlands. Indentured Indian labourers were imported from 1860 to work the plantations, and many Indian traders and market gardeners followed. These Indians, who were segregated and discriminated against from the start, became a further important element in South Africa's population.

It was in South Africa that Indian activist and leader Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, also known as Mahatma Gandhi, refined, from the mid-1890s, the techniques of passive resistance, which he later effectively practised in India. Although Indians gradually moved into the Transvaal and elsewhere, they remain concentrated in Natal.

In 1853, the Cape Colony was granted a representative legislature in keeping with British policy, followed in 1872 by self-government. The franchise was formally non-racial, but also based on income and property qualifications. The result was that black and coloured people formed a minority of voters – although in certain places a substantial one. What became known as the "liberal tradition" in the Cape depended on the fact that the great mass of Bantu-speaking farmers remained outside its colonial borders until late in the 19th century. Non-racialism could thus be embraced without posing a threat to white supremacy.

A number of black people within the Cape Colony had sufficient formal education or owned enough property to qualify for the franchise. Political alliances across racial lines were common in the eastern Cape constituencies. It is therefore not surprising that the eastern Cape became a seedbed of African nationalism, once the ideal and promise of inclusion in the common society had been so starkly violated by later racial policies.

The mineral revolution

By the late 19th century, the limitations of the Cape's liberal tradition were becoming apparent. The hardening of racial attitudes that accompanied the rise of a more militant imperialist spirit coincided with the watershed discovery of mineral riches in the interior of southern Africa. In a developing economy, cheap labour was at a premium, and the claims of educated blacks clamouring for equality met with increasingly fierce resistance. At the same time, the large numbers of Africans in the chiefdoms beyond the Kei River and north of the Gariep (Orange River), then being incorporated into the Cape Colony, posed new threats to racial supremacy and white security, increasing segregationist pressures.

Alluvial diamonds were discovered on the Vaal River in the late 1860s. The subsequent discovery of dry deposits at what became the city of Kimberley drew tens of thousands of people, black and white, to the first great industrial hub in Africa, and the largest diamond deposit in the world. In 1871, the British, who ousted several rival claimants, annexed the diamond fields. The Colony of Griqualand West thus created was incorporated into the Cape Colony in 1880.

By 1888, the consolidation of diamond claims had led to the creation of the huge De Beers monopoly under the control of Cecil John Rhodes. He used his power and wealth to become Prime Minister of the Cape Colony (from 1890 to 1896) and, through his chartered British South Africa Company, conqueror and ruler of modern-day Zambia and Zimbabwe.

The mineral discoveries had a major impact on the subcontinent as a whole. A railway network linking the interior to the coastal ports revolutionised transportation and energised agriculture. Coastal cities such as modern-day Cape Town, Gqeberha, East London and Durban experienced an economic boom as port facilities were upgraded. The fact that the mineral discoveries coincided with a new era of imperialism and the scramble for Africa brought imperial power and influence to bear in southern Africa as never before. Independent African chiefdoms were systematically subjugated and incorporated by their white-ruled neighbours. In 1897, Zululand was incorporated into Natal.

The Transvaal was annexed by Britain in 1877. Boer resistance led to British withdrawal in 1881, but not before the Pedi (northern Sotho) State, which fell within the Republic's borders, had been subjugated. The indications were that, having once been asserted, British hegemony was likely to be reasserted. The southern Sotho and Swazi territories were also brought under British rule but maintained their status as imperial dependencies, so that both the current Lesotho and Eswatini escaped the rule of local white regimes.

The discovery of the Witwatersrand goldfields in 1886 was a turning point in the history of South Africa. It presaged the emergence of the modern South African industrial state. Once the extent of the reefs had been established, and deep-level mining had proved to be a viable investment, it was only a matter of time before Britain and its local representatives again found a pretext for war against the Boer republics of Transvaal and the Orange Free State.

The demand for franchise rights for English-speaking immigrants on the goldfields (known as uitlanders) provided a lever for applying pressure on the government of President Paul Kruger. Egged on by the deep-level mining magnates, to whom the Boer government seemed obstructive and inefficient, and by the expectation of an uitlander uprising, Rhodes launched a raid into the Transvaal in late December 1895. The raid's failure saw the end of Rhodes' political career, but Sir Alfred Milner, British High Commissioner in South Africa from 1897, was determined to overthrow Kruger's government and establish British rule throughout the subcontinent. The Boer government was eventually forced into a declaration of war in October 1899.

The mineral discoveries had a radical impact on every sphere of society. Labour was required on a massive scale and could only be provided by Africans, who had to be drawn away from the land. Many Africans responded with alacrity to the opportunities presented by wage labour, travelling long distances to earn money to supplement rural enterprise in the homestead economy.

In response to the expansion of internal markets, blacks exploited their farming skills and family labour to good effect to increase production for sale. A substantial black peasantry arose, often by means of sharecropping or labour tenantry on white-owned farms. For the white authorities, however,

the chief consideration was ensuring a labour supply and undermining black competition on the land. Conquest, land dispossession, taxation and pass laws were designed to force black people off the land and channel them into labour markets, especially to meet the needs of the mines.

Gradually, the alternatives available to blacks were closed, and the decline of the homestead economy made wage labour increasingly essential for survival. The integration of blacks into the emerging urban and industrial society of South Africa should have followed these developments, but short-term, recurrent labour migrancy suited employers and the authorities, who sought to entrench the system. The closed compounds pioneered on the diamond fields, as a means of migrant labour control, were replicated at the gold mines.

The preservation of communal areas from which migrants could be drawn had the effect of lowering wages, by denying blacks rights within the urban areas and keeping their families and dependants on subsistence plots in the reserves. Blacks could be denied basic rights if the fiction could be maintained that they did not belong in "white South Africa," but to "tribal societies" from which they came to service the "white man's needs." Where black families secured a toehold in the urban areas, local authorities confined them to segregated "locations." This set of assumptions and policies informed the development of segregationist ideology and, later (from 1948), apartheid.

The Anglo-Boer/South African War (October 1899 – May 1902) and its aftermath

The war that followed the mineral revolution was mainly a white man's war. In its first phase, the Boer forces took the initiative, besieging the frontier towns of Mafeking (Mahikeng) and Kimberley in the Northern Cape, and Ladysmith in northern Natal.

Some colonial Boers rebelled, however, in sympathy with the republics. But, after a large expeditionary force under Lords Roberts and Kitchener arrived, the British advance was rapid. Kruger fled the Transvaal shortly before Pretoria fell in June 1900. The formal conquest of the two Boer republics was followed by a prolonged guerrilla campaign. Small, mobile groups of Boers denied the imperial forces their victory by disrupting rail links and supply lines. Commandos swept deep into colonial territory, rousing rebellion wherever they went. The British were at a disadvantage, owing to their lack of familiarity with the terrain and the Boers' superior skills as horsemen and sharpshooters. The British responded with a scorched-earth policy, which included farm burnings, looting and the setting-up of concentration camps for non-combatants, in which some 26 000 Boer women and children died from disease. The incarceration of black (including coloured) people in the path of the war in racially segregated camps has been absent from conventional accounts of the war and has only recently been acknowledged.

They, too, suffered appalling conditions and some 14 000 (perhaps many more) are estimated to have died. At the same time, many black farmers were in a position to meet the demand for produce created by the military, or to avail themselves of employment opportunities at good wages. Some 10 000 black servants accompanied the Boer commandos, and the British used blacks as labourers, scouts, dispatch riders, drivers and guards.

The war also taught many Africans that the forces of dispossession could be rolled back if the circumstances were right. It gave black communities the opportunity to recolonise land lost in conquest, which enabled them to withhold their labour after the war. Most blacks supported the British in the belief that Britain was committed to extending civil and political rights to black people. In this they were to be disappointed. In the Treaty of Vereeniging that ended the war, the British agreed to leave the issue of rights for blacks to be decided by a future self-governing (white) authority. All in all, the Anglo-Boer/South African War was a radicalising experience for blacks.

Britain's reconstruction regime set about creating a white-ruled dominion by uniting the former Boer republics (both by then British colonies) with Natal and the Cape. The priority was to re-establish white control over the land and force the black people back to wage labour. The labour-recruiting system was improved, both internally and externally. Recruiting agreements were reached with the Portuguese authorities in Mozambique, from where much mine labour came.

When, by 1904, black resources still proved inadequate to get the mines working at pre-war levels, more than 60 000 indentured Chinese were brought in. This precipitated a vociferous outcry from proponents of white supremacy in South Africa and liberals in Britain. By 1910, all had been repatriated, a step made easier when a surge of blacks came forward from areas such as the Transkeian territories and the northern Transvaal, which had not previously been large-scale suppliers of migrants. This was the heyday of the private recruiters, who exploited families' indebtedness to procure young men to labour in the mines.

The blacks' post-war ability to withhold their labour was undercut by government action, abetted by drought and stock disease. The impact of the Anglo-Boer/South African War as a seminal influence on the development of Afrikaner nationalist politics became apparent in subsequent years. The Boer leaders – most notably Louis Botha, Jan Smuts and James Barry Munnik Hertzog – played a dominant role in the country's politics for the next half century. After initial plans for anglicisation of the defeated Afrikaners were abandoned as impractical, the British looked to the Afrikaners as collaborators in securing imperial political and economic interests.

During 1907 and 1908, the two former Boer republics were granted self-government but, crucially, with a whites-only franchise. Despite promises to the contrary, black interests were sacrificed in the interest of white nation-building across the white language divide. The National Convention drew up a Constitution and the four colonies became an independent dominion called the Union of South Africa on 31 May 1910.

The 19th century's formally non-racial franchise was retained in the Cape but was not extended elsewhere, where rights of citizenship were confined to whites alone. It was clear from the start that segregation was the conventional wisdom of the new rulers. Black people were defined as outsiders, without rights or claims on the common society that their labour had helped to create.

Segregation

Government policy in the Union of South Africa did not develop in isolation, but against the backdrop of black political initiatives. Segregation and apartheid assumed their shape, in part, as a white response to blacks' increasing participation in the country's economic life and their assertion of political rights.

Despite the government's efforts to shore up traditionalism and retribalise them, black people became more fully integrated into the urban and industrial society of 20th-century South Africa than elsewhere on the continent. An educated élite of clerics, teachers, business people, journalists and professionals grew to be a major force in black politics. Mission Christianity and its associated educational institutions exerted a profound influence on black political life, and separatist churches were early vehicles for African political assertion.

The experiences of studying abroad and, in particular, interaction with black people struggling for their rights elsewhere in Africa, the United States of America and the Caribbean, played an important part. A vigorous black press arose, associated in its early years with such pioneer editors as John Tengo Jabavu, Pixley ka Isaka Seme, Dr Abdullah Abdurahman, Sol Plaatje and John Dube, serving the black reading public. At the same time, African communal struggles to maintain access to the land in rural areas posed a powerful challenge to the white state.

Traditional authorities often led popular struggles against intrusive and manipulative policies. Government attempts to control and co-opt the chiefs often failed.

Steps towards the formation of a national political organisation of coloured people began around the turn of the century, with the formation of the African Political Organisation in 1902 by Dr Abdurahman, mainly in the Cape Province. The African National Congress (ANC), founded in 1912, became the most important black organisation, drawing together traditional authorities and the educated African élite in common causes. In its early years, the ANC was concerned mainly with constitutional protest. Worker militancy emerged in the wake of World War I and continued through the 1920s. It included strikes and an anti-pass campaign, given impetus by women, particularly in the Free State, resisting the extension of the pass laws to them. The Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union, under the leadership of Clements Kadalie, was (despite its name) the first populist, nationwide organisation representing black people in rural as well as urban areas. But it was short-lived.

The Communist Party, formed in 1921 and since then a force for both non-racialism and worker organisations, was to prove far longer lasting. In other sections of the black population too, the turn of the century saw organised opposition emerging. Gandhi's leadership of protest against discriminatory laws gave impetus to the formation of provincial Indian congresses, including the Natal Indian Congress formed by him in 1894. The principles of segregationist thinking were laid down in a 1905 report by the South African Native Affairs Commission and continued to evolve in response to these economic, social and political pressures.

In keeping with its recommendations, the first union government enacted the seminal Natives Land Act, 1913 (Act 27 of 1913). This defined the remnants of their ancestral lands after conquest for African occupation, and declared illegal all land purchases or rent tenancy outside these reserves. The centenary of this Act was commemorated in 2013. The reserves ("homelands" as they were subsequently called) eventually comprised about 13% of South Africa's land surface. Administrative and legal dualism reinforced the division between white citizens and black non-citizens, a dispensation personified by the Governor-General who, as "supreme chief" over the country's African majority, was empowered to rule them by administrative fiat and decree.

The government also reserved skilled work for white people and denied black workers the right to organise. Legislation, which was consolidated in the Natives (Urban Areas) Act, 1923 (Act 21 of 1923), entrenched urban segregation and controlled black mobility by means of pass laws. The pass laws were designed to force blacks into labour and to keep them there under conditions and at wage levels that suited white employers, and to deny them any bargaining power. In these and other ways, the foundations of apartheid were laid by successive governments representing the compromises hammered out by the National Convention of 1908 to 1909 to effect the union of English-and Afrikaans-speaking white people.

However, divisions within the white community remained significant. Afrikaner nationalism grew as a factor in the years after the union. It was given impetus in 1914, both by the formation of the National Party (NP), in a breakaway from the ruling South African Party, and by a rebellion of Afrikaners who could not reconcile themselves with the decision to join the First World War against Germany. In part, the NP spoke for Afrikaners impoverished by the Anglo-Boer/South African War and dislodged from the land by the development of capitalist farming. An Afrikaner underclass was emerging in the towns, which found itself uncompetitive in the labour market, as white workers demanded higher wages than those paid to black people. Soon, labour issues came to the fore.

In 1920, some 71 000 black mineworkers went on strike in protest against the spiralling cost of living, but the strike was quickly put down by isolating the compounds where the migrant workers were housed. Another threat to government came from white workers. Immigrant white workers with mining experience abroad performed much of the skilled and semi-skilled work on the mines. As mine owners tried to cut costs by using lower-wage black labour in semi-skilled jobs, white labour became increasingly militant.

These tensions culminated in a bloody and dramatic rebellion on the goldfields in 1922, which the Smuts government put down with military force. In 1924, a pact government under Hertzog, comprising Afrikaner nationalists and representatives of immigrant labour, ousted the Smuts regime. The pact was based on a common suspicion of the dominance of mining capital, and a determination to protect the interests of white labour by intensifying discrimination against black people. The commitment to white labour policies in government employment, such as the railways and postal service, was intensified, and the job colour bar was reinforced, with a key objective being to address what was known as the "poor-white problem".

In 1934, the main white parties fused to combat the local effects of a worldwide depression. This was followed

by a new Afrikaner nationalist breakaway under Dr Daniel François Malan. In 1936, white supremacy was further entrenched by the United Party with the removal of the qualifying Africans of the Cape Province from the common voters' roll. Meanwhile, Malan's breakaway NP was greatly augmented by an Afrikaner cultural revival spearheaded by the secret white male Afrikaner Broederbond and other cultural organisations during the year of the Voortrekker centenary celebrations (1938), as well as by anti-war sentiment from 1939.

Apartheid

In 1948, the NP, with its ideology of apartheid that brought an even more rigorous and authoritarian approach than the segregationist policies of previous governments, won the general election. It did so against the background of a revival of mass militancy during the 1940s, after a period of relative quiescence in the 1930s when black groups attempted to foster unity among themselves. The change was marked by the formation of the ANC Youth League in 1943, fostering the leadership of figures such as Anton Lembede, Ashby Solomzi Peter Mda, Nelson Mandela, Oliver Tambo and Walter Sisulu, who were to inspire the struggle for decades to come.

In the 1940s, squatter movements in peri-urban areas brought mass politics back to the urban centres. The 1946 Mineworkers' Strike was a turning point in the emergence of the politics of mass mobilisation. As was the case with the First World War, the experience of the Second World War and post-war economic difficulties enhanced discontent. For those who supported the NP, its primary appeal lay in its determination to maintain white domination in the face of rising mass resistance; uplift poor Afrikaners; challenge the pre-eminence of English-speaking white people in public life, the professions and business; and abolish the remaining imperial ties. The State became an engine of patronage for Afrikaner employment.

The Afrikaner Broederbond coordinated the party's programme, ensuring that Afrikaner nationalist interests and policies attained ascendancy throughout civil society. In 1961, the NP government under Prime Minister Hendrik Frensch Verwoerd declared South Africa a republic, after winning a whites-only referendum on the issue. A new currency, the rand, and a new flag, anthem and coat of arms were formally introduced. South Africa, having become a republic, had to apply for continued membership of the Commonwealth. In the face of demands for an end to apartheid, South Africa withdrew its application and a figurehead president replaced the British Queen (represented locally by the Governor-General) as Head of State.

In most respects, apartheid was a continuation, in more systematic and brutal form, of the segregationist policies of previous governments. A new concern with racial purity was apparent in laws prohibiting interracial sexual activities and provisions for population registration requiring that every South African be assigned to one discrete racial category or another. For the first time, the coloured people, who had always been subjected to informal discrimination, were brought within the ambit of discriminatory laws.

In the mid-1950s, government took the drastic step of overriding an entrenched clause in the 1910 Constitution of the Union so as to be able to remove coloured voters from the common voters' roll. It also enforced residential segregation, expropriating homes where necessary and policing massive forced removals into coloured "group areas." Until the 1940s, South Africa's racial policies had not been entirely out of step with those to be found in the colonial world.

But by the 1950s, which saw decolonisation and a global backlash against racism gathering pace, the country was dramatically opposed to world opinion on questions of human rights. The architects of apartheid, among whom Dr Verwoerd was pre-eminent, responded by elaborating a theory of multinationalism. Their policy, which they termed "separate development," divided the African population into artificial ethnic "nations," each with its own "homeland" and the prospect of "independence," supposedly in keeping with trends elsewhere on the continent.

This divide-and-rule strategy was designed to disguise the racial basis of official policy-making by the substitution of the language of ethnicity. This was accompanied by much ethnographic engineering, as efforts were made to resurrect tribal structures. In the process, the government sought to create a significant collaborating class. The truth was that the rural reserves were by this time thoroughly degraded by overpopulation and soil erosion.

This did not prevent four of the "homeland" structures (Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda and Ciskei) from being declared "independent", a status which the vast majority of South Africans, and therefore also the international community, declined to recognise. In each case, the process involved the repression of opposition and the use by the government of the power to nominate and thereby pad elected assemblies with a quota of compliant figures. Forced removals from "white" areas affected some 3.5 million people and vast rural slums were created in the homelands, which were used as dumping grounds. The pass laws and influx control were extended and harshly enforced, and labour bureaux were set up to channel labour to where it was needed. Hundreds of thousands of people were arrested or prosecuted under the pass laws each year, reaching over half a million a year from the mid-1960s to the mid- 1970s. Industrial decentralisation to growth points on the borders of (but not inside) the homelands was promoted as a means of keeping blacks out of "white" South Africa.

In virtually every sphere, from housing to education and healthcare, central government took control over black people's lives with a view to reinforcing their allotted role as "temporary sojourners", welcome in "white" South Africa solely to serve the needs of the employers of labour. However, these same programmes of control became the focus of resistance. In particular, the campaign against the pass laws formed a cornerstone of the Struggle.

The end of apartheid

The introduction of apartheid heralded the ANC's adoption in 1949 of its programme of action, expressing the renewed militancy of the 1940s. The programme embodied the rejection of white domination and a call for action in the form of protests, strikes and demonstrations. There followed a decade of turbulent mass action in resistance to the imposition of still harsher forms of segregation and oppression.

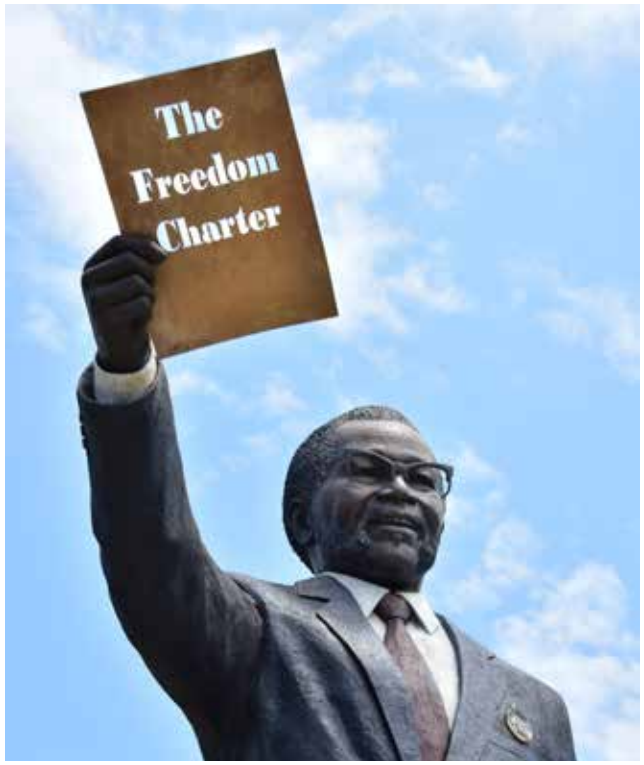
The Defiance Campaign of 1952 carried mass mobilisation to new heights under the banner of non-violent resistance to the pass laws. These actions were influenced in part by the philosophy of Gandhi. A critical step in the emergence of non-racialism was the formation of the Congress Alliance, including the ANC, South African Indian Congress, the Coloured People's Congress, the Congress of Democrats (a small white congress organisation) and the South African Congress of Trade Unions.

The alliance gave formal expression to an emerging unity across racial and class lines that was manifested in the Defiance Campaign and other mass protests, including against the Bantu Education Act of this period, which also saw women's resistance take a more organised character with the formation of the Federation of South African Women. In 1955, the Freedom Charter was drawn up at the Congress of the People in Soweto. The charter enunciated the principles of the struggle, binding the movement to a culture of human rights and non-racialism.

Over the next few decades, the Freedom Charter was elevated to an important symbol of the freedom struggle. The Pan Africanist Congress (PAC), founded by Robert Sobukwe and based on the philosophies of "Africanism" and anti-communism, broke away from the Congress Alliance in 1959. The State's initial response, harsh as it was, was not yet as draconian as it was to become. Its attempt to prosecute more than 150 anti-apartheid leaders for treason, in a trial that began in 1956, ended in acquittals in 1961. But by that time, mass organised opposition had been banned.

The year 2012, marked the 60th anniversary of the 1952 Women's March. You strike a woman, you strike a rock! *Wathint' abafazi, wathint' imbokodo!* In 1956, with these words, thousands of women advanced the cause to liberate South Africa from apartheid rule. The phrase has come to symbolise women's courage and strength in South Africa.

During the early 1950s, Lilian Ngoyi, Helen Joseph, Albertina Sisulu, Sophia Williams-De Bruyn, and many others formed the Federation of South African Women. With the Blacks (Abolition of Passes and Coordination of Documents) Act, 1952 (Act 67 of 1952), the South African government amended the pass laws, requiring all black



people over the age of 16 to carry a "reference book" at all times.

On 9 August 1956, more than 20 000 women of all races marched through the streets of Pretoria to the Union Buildings to hand over a petition to Johannes Gerhardus Strijdom, South Africa's Prime Minister, protesting the introduction of the new pass laws and the Group Areas Act, 1950 (Act 41 of 1950). The latter enforced different residential areas for different races and led to forced removals of people living in "wrong" areas. On the day of the march, Strijdom had arranged to be elsewhere, and the petition was eventually accepted by his secretary.

However, the first attempt to make black women carry passes was in 1913 when the then Orange Free State introduced a new requirement that women, in addition to existing regulations for black men, had to carry reference documents. The resulting protests, by a multiracial group of women, many of whom were professionals, took the form of passive resistance through refusing to carry the new passes. Matters came to a head at Sharpeville in March 1960, when 69 anti-pass demonstrators were killed when police fired on a demonstration called by the PAC. A State of Emergency was imposed and detention without trial was introduced.

The black political organisations were banned and their leaders went into exile or were arrested. In this climate, the ANC and PAC abandoned their long-standing commitment to non-violent resistance and turned to armed struggle, combined with underground organisation and mobilisation as well as the mobilisation of international solidarity. Top leaders, including members of the newly formed military wing Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK) ("Spear of the Nation"), were arrested in 1963. In the Rivonia Trial, eight ANC leaders, including Nelson Mandela, were convicted of sabotage (instead of treason, the original charge) and sentenced to life imprisonment.

In this period, leaders of other organisations, including the PAC and the New Unity Movement, were also sentenced to long terms of imprisonment and/or banned. The 1960s was a decade of overwhelming repression and relative political disarray among black people in the country. Armed action was contained by the State. State repression played a central role in containing internal resistance, and the leadership of the struggle shifted increasingly to the missions in exile. At the same time, the ANC leadership embarked on a campaign to infiltrate the country through what was then Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe).

In August 1967, a joint force of MK and the Zimbabwean People's Revolutionary Army (ZIPRA) of the Zimbabwe African People's Union entered Zimbabwe, and over a two-month period engaged the joint Rhodesian and South African security forces. Although the joint MK-ZIPRA force failed to reach South Africa, this was the first military confrontation between the military forces of the ANC-led alliance and white security forces. The resurgence of resistance politics in the early 1970s was dramatic. The Black Consciousness Movement, led by Steve Biko (who was killed in detention in 1977), re-awakened a sense of pride and self-esteem in black people.

News of the brutal death of Biko reverberated around the globe and led to unprecedented outrage. White capitalist economies sputtered with the oil crisis of 1973 and black trade unions were revived. A wave of strikes reflected a new militancy that involved better organisation and new sectors, in particular intellectuals and the student movement, being drawn into mass struggle and debate over the principles informing it. Rallies at black universities in support of Frelimo, the Mozambican liberation movement, also gave expression to the growing militancy.

The year 1976 marked the beginning of a sustained anti-apartheid revolt. In June, school pupils of Soweto rose up against apartheid education, followed by youth uprisings all around the country. Despite the harsh repression that followed, students continued to organise, with the formation in 1979 of organisations for school students – the Congress of South African Students, and college and university students – the Azanian Students Organisation. By the 1980s, the different forms of struggle – armed struggle, mass mobilisation and international solidarity – were beginning to integrate and coalesce. The United Democratic Front and the informal umbrella, the Mass Democratic Movement, emerged as legal vehicles of democratic forces struggling for liberation.

Clerics played a prominent public role in these movements. The involvement of workers in resistance took on a new dimension with the formation of the Congress of South African Trade Unions and the National Council of Trade Unions. Popular anger was directed against all those who were deemed to be collaborating with the government in the pursuit of its objectives, and the black townships became virtually ungovernable. From the mid- 1980s, regional and national states of emergency were enforced.

Developments in neighbouring states, where mass resistance to white minority and colonial rule led to Portuguese decolonisation in the mid-1970s and the abdication of Zimbabwe's minority regime in 1980, left South Africa exposed as the last bastion of white supremacy. Under growing pressure and increasingly isolated internationally, the government embarked on a dual strategy, introducing limited reform coupled with intensifying repression and militarisation of society, with the objective of containing the pressures and increasing its support base while crushing organised resistance. An early example of reform was the recognition of black trade unions to try to stabilise labour relations. In 1983, the Constitution was reformed to allow the coloured and Indian minorities limited participation in separate and subordinate houses of Parliament.

The vast majority of these groups demonstrated their rejection of the tricameral dispensation through massive boycotts of elections, but it was kept in place by the apartheid regime despite its visible lack of legitimacy. Attempts to legitimise community councils as vehicles for the participation of blacks outside the Bantustans in local government met a similar fate. Militarisation included the ascendancy of the State Security Council, which usurped the role of the Executive in crucial respects, and a succession of states of emergency as part of the implementation of a comprehensive counter-insurgency strategy to combat what, by the mid-1980s, was an endemic insurrectionary spirit in the land.

However, by the late 1980s, popular resistance was taking the form of mass defiance campaigns, while struggles over more localised issues saw broad sections of communities mobilised in united action. Popular support for released political prisoners and for the armed struggle was being openly expressed. In response to the rising tide of resistance, the international community strengthened its support for the anti-apartheid cause. Sanctions and boycotts were instituted, both unilaterally by countries across the world and through the United Nations (UN). These sanctions were called for in a coordinated strategy by the internal and external anti-apartheid movement in South Africa.

Mr Frederik Willem de Klerk, who replaced Mr Pieter Willem "PW" Botha as State President in 1989, announced at the opening of Parliament in February 1990, the unbanning of the liberation movements and release of political prisoners, among them Mandela. A number of factors led to this step. International financial, trade, sport and cultural sanctions were clearly biting. Above all, even if South Africa was nowhere near collapse, either militarily or economically, several years of emergency rule and ruthless repression had clearly neither destroyed the structures of organised resistance, nor helped establish legitimacy for the apartheid regime or its collaborators.

Instead, popular resistance, including mass and armed action, was intensifying. The ANC, enjoying popular recognition and legitimacy as the foremost liberation organisation, was increasingly regarded as a government-in-waiting. International support for the liberation movement came from various countries around the globe, particularly from former socialist countries and Nordic countries as well as the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). The other liberation organisations increasingly experienced various internal and external pressures and did not enjoy much popular support. To outside observers, and also in the eyes of growing numbers of white South Africans, apartheid stood exposed as morally bankrupt, indefensible and impervious to reforms.

The collapse of global communism, the negotiated withdrawal of Cuban forces from Angola, and the culmination of the South-West African People's Organisation's liberation struggle in the negotiated independence of Namibia – formerly South-West Africa, administered by South Africa as a League of Nations mandate since 1919 – did much to change the mindset of white people. No longer could they demonise the ANC and the PAC as fronts for international communism.

White South Africa had also changed in deeper ways. Afrikaner nationalism had lost much of its raison d'être. Many Afrikaners had become urban, middle class and relatively prosperous. Their ethnic grievances and attachment to ethnic causes and symbols had diminished. A large part of the NP's core constituency was ready to explore larger national identities, even across racial divides, and yearned for international respectability.

In 1982, disenchanted hardliners split from the NP to form the Conservative Party, leaving the NP open to more flexible and modernising influences. After this split, factions within the Afrikaner elite openly started to pronounce in favour of a more inclusive society, causing more friction with the NP government, which became increasingly militaristic and authoritarian. A number of business, student and academic Afrikaners held meetings publicly and privately

with the ANC in exile. Secret talks were held between the imprisoned Mandela and government ministers about a new dispensation for South Africa, with black people forming a major part of it.

Inside the country, mass action became the order of the day. Petty apartheid laws and symbols were openly challenged and removed. Together with a sliding economy and increasing international pressure, these developments made historic changes inevitable.

The first decade of freedom

After a long negotiation process, sustained despite much opportunistic violence from the right wing and its surrogates, and in some instances sanctioned by elements of the State, South Africa's first democratic election was held in April 1994 under an interim Constitution. The interim Constitution divided South Africa into nine new provinces in place of the previous four provinces and 10 "homelands", and provided for the Government of National Unity (GNU) to be constituted by all parties with at least 20 seats in the National Assembly.

The NP and the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) formed part of the GNU until 1996, when the NP withdrew. The ANC-led government embarked on a programme to promote the reconstruction and development of the country and its institutions. This called for the simultaneous pursuit of democratisation and socio-economic change, as well as reconciliation and the building of consensus founded on the commitment to improve the lives of all South Africans, in particular the poor. It required the integration of South Africa into a rapidly changing global environment.

Pursuit of these objectives was a consistent focus of government during the first decade of freedom, seeking the unity of a previously divided society in working together to overcome the legacy of a history of division, exclusion and neglect. Converting democratic ideals into practice required, among other things, initiating a radical overhaul of the machinery of government at every level, working towards service delivery, openness and a culture of human rights. It required a more integrated approach to planning and implementation to ensure that the many different aspects of transformation and socio-economic upliftment cohered with maximum impact.

A significant milestone in the democratisation of South Africa was the exemplary Constitution-making process, which in 1996 delivered a document that has evoked worldwide admiration. So, too, have been the national and local government elections subsequent to 1994 – all conducted peacefully, with high levels of participation compared with the norm in most democracies, and accepted by all as free and fair in their conduct and results. Since 2001, participatory democracy and interactive governance have been strengthened through the practice of public participation, the roving Executive Council and mayoral meetings, in which members of the Executive, in all three spheres of government, including The Presidency, regularly communicate directly with the public about the implementation of programmes of reconstruction and development.

The second democratic national election in 1999 saw the ANC majority increase to just short of two-thirds and the election of Thabo Mbeki as President and successor to Mandela. It saw a sharp decline in the popularity of the NP (then the New National Party [NNP]) and its replacement by the Democratic Party as the official opposition in Parliament. These two parties formed the Democratic Alliance (DA), which the NNP left in 2001.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), under the leadership of Archbishop Desmond Tutu, helped inculcate a commitment to accountability and transparency in South Africa's public life, at the same time helping to heal wounds inflicted by the inhumanities of the apartheid era. During 2003, Parliament accepted government's response to the final report of the TRC. Out of 22 000 individuals or surviving families appearing before the commission, 19 000 were identified as needing urgent reparation assistance – virtually all, where the necessary information was available, received interim reparations.

As final reparations, government provided a once-off grant of R30 000 to individuals or survivors who appeared before and were designated by the TRC, over and above the programmes for material assistance. There are continuing programmes to project the symbolism of the struggle and the ideal of freedom. These include the Freedom Park and other symbols and monuments, and such matters as records of history, remaking of cultural and art forms and changing geographical and place names. The ethos of partnership informed the establishment of the National Economic Development and Labour Council.

It brings together government, business, organised labour and development organisations to confront the challenges of growth and development for South Africa in a turbulent and globalising international economy. The Presidential Jobs Summit in 1998 and the Growth and Development Summit in 2003 brought these sectors together to take advantage of the conditions in South Africa for faster growth and development. At the summit, a comprehensive set of agreements was concluded to address urgent challenges in a practical way and to speed up job-creating growth and development. Partnership between government and civil society was further strengthened by the creation of a number of working groups through which sectors of society – business, organised labour, higher education, religious leaders, youth and women – engage regularly with the President.

In the first decade of freedom, government placed emphasis on meeting basic needs through programmes for socio-economic development such as the provision of housing, piped water, electricity, education and healthcare, as well as social grants for those in need. The integration of South Africa into the global political, economic and social system has been a priority for democratic South Africa.

As a country isolated during the apartheid period, an African country, a developing country, and a country whose liberation was achieved with the support of the international community, it remains of critical importance to build political and economic links with the countries and regions of the world, and to work with others for an international environment that is more favourable to development across the world, and in Africa and South Africa in particular.

The South African government is committed to the African Renaissance, which is based on the consolidation of democracy, economic development and a cooperative approach to resolving the challenges the continent faces. South Africa hosted the launch in 2002 of the African Union

(AU), a step towards further unification of Africa in pursuit of socio-economic development, the Organisation of African Unity having fulfilled its mandate to liberate Africa. The then President, Thabo Mbeki, chaired the AU for its founding year, handing over the chair to the former President of Mozambique, Joaquim Chissano, in July 2003. In 2004, the AU decided that South Africa should host the Pan-African Parliament and it met for its second session in South Africa, the first time on South African soil, in September that year.

By participating in UN and AU initiatives to resolve conflict and promote peace and security on the continent – in countries such as the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Burundi and Sudan – South Africa has contributed to the achievement of conditions conducive to the entrenchment of stability, democracy and faster development. During the first decade of freedom, it acted at various times as chair of the Southern African Development Community, NAM, AU and the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meetings. It hosted several international conferences, including the UN Conference on Trade and Development in 1996, the 2000 World AIDS Congress, the World Conference Against Racism in 2001, the World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002 and the World Parks Congress in 2003. The country has also been represented in international forums such as the International Monetary Fund's Development Committee and Interpol.

The second decade of freedom

When South Africa celebrated 10 years of freedom in 2004, there were celebrations across the world in countries whose peoples had helped to bring freedom to South Africa through their solidarity, and who were then partners in reconstruction and development of the country. As government took stock of the first decade of freedom in the "Towards a Ten Year Review", it was able to document great progress by South Africans in pursuit of their goals, as well as the challenges that faced the nation as it traversed the second decade of its freedom towards 2014.

In its third democratic elections, in April 2004, the country gave an increased mandate to government's programme for reconstruction and development and for the entrenchment of the rights in the Constitution. It mandated government specifically to create the conditions for halving unemployment and poverty by 2014. Following these elections, Thabo Mbeki was appointed to a second term of office – a position he relinquished in September 2008, following the decision of the National Executive Committee of the ANC to recall him.

Parliament elected Kgalema Motlanthe as President of South Africa on 25 September 2008. Local Government Elections in 2006, following a long period of civic unrest as communities protested against a mixed record of service delivery, saw increased participation compared with the previous local elections, as well as increased support for the ruling party based on a manifesto for a concerted effort, in partnership with communities, to make local government work better.

South Africa held national and provincial elections to elect a new National Assembly as well as the provincial legislature in each province on 22 April 2009. Some 23 million people were registered for the 2009 general election, which was about 2.5 million more than in 2004. About 77% of registered voters took part in the election. The results for thevtop five parties were as follows: the ANC achieved 65.9%; the DA 16.6%; the newly-formed Congress of the People (Cope) 7.4%; the IFP 4.5%; and the Independent Democrats 0.9% of the votes cast.

Mr Jacob Zuma was inaugurated as President of South Africa on 9 May 2009. Government adopted 14 outcomes as its focus areas. These included: improving the quality of basic education and health services, strengthening the fight against crime, creating decent employment through inclusive growth, and boosting skills development. Also included in the focus areas were the need of ensuring food security for all, building sustainable human settlements and an improved quality of household life, improving local government structures and creating an efficient and development-orientated public service.

A significant milestone for South Africa in the second decade of freedom was the successful hosting of the 2010 FIFA World Cup. The tournament, which was the first on African soil, demonstrated that South Africa has the infrastructure and capability to warrant serious investment consideration. It also showcased South Africa and its people to the world. The local government elections held on 18 May 2011 were characterised by lively and respectful campaigning with all political parties free to engage with voters in all areas. The Independent Electoral Commission highlighted decreased voter apathy and achieved an impressive 57.6% registered voter turnout, an improvement from the previous local government elections, which scored below the 50% mark.

The ANC won the highest number of seats and councils – 198 councils and 5 633 seats, constituting 62% of the vote. The DA came second with 18 councils, 1 555 seats and 23.9% support. The ANC and DA were followed by the IFP and Cope. To secure a better quality of life for all, government finalised the National Development Plan (NDP): Vision for 2030 in 2011. The plan was a step in the process of charting a new path for South Africa. By 2030, government seeks to eliminate poverty and reduce inequality.

The plan was the product of not just the National Planning Commission but also tens of thousands of ordinary South Africans who shared their dreams, hopes and ideas for the future. The revised NDP 2030 document titled, "Our future – make it work", is a policy blueprint for eliminating poverty and reducing inequality in South Africa by 2030. Implementation of the plan will be broken up into five-year chunks, in line with the electoral cycle, with the 2014 to 2019 Medium-Term Strategic Framework forming the first five-year building block of the plan. The 2019 to 2024 and 2024 to 2029 planning cycles will be used to initiate the remaining activities and will be informed by a performance review of the previous cycle.

On 8 January 2012, Africa's oldest liberation movement, the ANC, celebrated 100 years of existence. This was a historic achievement, not only for the movement, but also for South Africa, the continent and the world. Thousands of ordinary South Africans, political and religious leaders attended the centenary celebrations, which were held in Mangaung, Free State, the birthplace of the ANC. On 30 October 2012, StatsSA released the Census 2011 results. In 2011, the country held its third national population and housing census in post-apartheid South Africa.



The census analysed the country's demographics, population distribution and access to services, average household size, income, migration and mortality. Results showed that the country's population grew to 51.8 million people from 44.8 million in 2001, representing a 15.5% increase. In December 2012, Zuma was re-elected as the President of the ANC during the ruling party's congress in Mangaung. Cyril Ramaphosa was elected as the party's Deputy President. While receiving intensive medical care at home for a lung infection after spending three months in hospital, South Africa's first democratically elected President and anti-apartheid icon, Mandela, died at the age of 95, on 5 December 2013. Mandela led South Africa's transition from white-minority rule in the 1990s, after serving 27 years in prison for his political activities.

He was buried in his hometown of Qunu in the Eastern Cape on 15 December 2013. South Africa celebrated 20 years of freedom in 2014, which was a historic milestone for the country. The Twenty Year Review, and the National Planning Commission's 2011 Diagnostic Report, highlighted that poverty, inequality and unemployment continued to negatively affect the lives of many people. As stated in the NDP, by 2030, South Africa's rural communities must have better opportunities to participate fully in the economic, social and political life of the country.

Government's programme of radical economic transformation is about placing the economy on a qualitatively different path that ensures more rapid, sustainable growth, higher investment, increased employment, reduced inequality and deracialisation of the economy. The NDP sets a growth target of at least 5% a year, and emphasises measures to ensure that the benefits of growth are equitably shared. On 7 May 2014, the country elected a new National Assembly and new provincial legislatures. It was the fifth election held in South Africa under conditions of universal adult suffrage since the end of the apartheid era in 1994, and the first held since the death of Mandela. It was also the first time that South African expatriates were allowed to vote in a South African national election.

The National Assembly election was won by the ANC (62.1%). The official opposition, DA, won 22.2% of the votes, while the newly formed Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) obtained 6.4% of the vote. Eight of the nine provincial legislatures were won by the ANC. The EFF obtained over 10% of the votes in Gauteng, Limpopo and North West, and beat the DA to second place in Limpopo and North West. In the other six provinces won by the ANC, the DA obtained second place. In the Western Cape, the only province not won by the ANC, the DA increased its majority from 51.5% to 59.4%.

The third decade of freedom

In 2015, South Africa celebrated the 60th anniversary of the Freedom Charter, which advocated for a non-racial South Africa. The 40th anniversary of the 16 June 1976 Soweto Student Uprising was celebrated in 2016, along with the 20th anniversary of the signing of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa in 1996. The 2016 Local Government Elections were held on 3 August. The ANC won 53.9% of the total votes, followed by the official opposition, the DA, with 26.9% and the EFF with 8.2%.

The discovery of Homo naledi, an extinct species of hominin, in September 2015 became worldwide news. In 2017, South Africa commemorated the centenary of the birth of OR Tambo, the late former President of the ANC and one of the key founding fathers of South Africa's liberation and constitutional democracy. The centenary celebrations were held under the theme: "Life and Legacy of OR Tambo". The year 2018 marked the centenary of the birth of South Africa's first democratically elected President Mandela and struggle stalwart Albertina Sisulu respectively. Centenary celebrations for the two icons were marked with a year-long series of awareness, educational, celebratory and legacy commemoration events.

Mandela's centenary celebrations were held under the theme: "Be the legacy" while the Albertina Sisulu commemorations were held under the theme: "A woman of fortitude". On 8 May 2019, the country held its sixth national and provincial elections. On 25 May 2019, Ramaphosa was inaugurated as the fifth democratically elected President of South Africa. In a departure from the tradition of holding the inauguration at the Union Buildings, the event took place at the Loftus Versfeld Stadium in Pretoria. On 1 November 2021, the country held its sixth local government elections. The ANC won the majority of seats in 161 municipal councils, followed by the DA in 13 municipalities and the IFP in 10 municipalities.

A total of 66 municipal councils were hung – meaning that no party gained an outright majority in those councils. From 9 to 18 July 2021, South Africa experienced civil unrest mainly in some parts of KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng, which left in its wake over 354 people dead. The Judicial Commission

of Inquiry into Allegations of State Capture, Corruption and Fraud in the Public Sector, led by then Deputy Chief Justice Raymond Zondo, handed its full report to The Presidency in 2022. On 2 January 2022, a major fire broke out at the parliamentary complex housing the Parliament of South Africa in Cape Town. A suspect, Mr Zandile Christmas Mafe, was arrested and charged with arson.

In April 2022, government lifted the National State of Disaster but retained "transitionary measures" for the following thirty days, which included the wearing of masks, limitations on gatherings and international travel. In June 2022, the Ministry of Health repealed the transitionary COVID-19 measures, including the wearing of masks, limitations on gatherings and international travel. In July 2022, Justice Mandisa Maya – the first woman to lead the Supreme Court of Appeal as Deputy President and President respectively – became the first woman to be appointed Deputy Chief Justice of the Constitutional Court of South Africa. President Ramaphosa appointed Maya in terms of Section 174(3) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa of 1996. On 20 August 2022, King Misuzulu ka Zwelithini was crowned as the new Zulu King at a ceremony held at the Moses Mabhida Stadium in Durban. This was the first Zulu coronation since South Africa became a democracy in 1994. It followed the death of his father, King Goodwill Zwelithini, on 12 March 2021, aged 72.

In November 2022, the Constitutional Court ordered the release of a Polish national, Mr Janusz Walus, on parole. In April 1993, Mr Walus assassinated Mr Chris Hani, the then General Secretary of the South African Communist Party and Chief of Staff of MK, the armed wing of the ANC. Stats SA's Census 2022 results showed that the population of South Africa was 62 million in 2022, increasing from 51,7 million in 2011. This represented an average annual growth rate of 1,8% between the two periods, which is the largest since 1996. Gauteng remained the province with the highest population (15 million), while Northern Cape had the smallest population at 1,3 million.

About 56% of the country's population lives in three provinces namely Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal and the Western Cape. The Western Cape has moved from being the fifth-largest province in terms of population size in 1996 to being the third-largest in 2022. Census 2022 was the fourth census after the advent of democracy, with the other three being conducted in 1996, 2001 and 2011 respectively. This was the first-ever digital census in South Africa.

On 7 March 2023, Mr Paul Mashatile was sworn in as South Africa's new Deputy President, following the resignation of former Deputy President David Mabuza, who was first sworn in as Deputy President of the Republic of South Africa on 27 February 2018 and again on 30 May 2019 for the 6th Administration.

Mr Mashatile was elected Deputy President of the ANC in December 2022 during the ANC's 55th National Conference held at the Johannesburg Expo Centre in Nasrec. At the 5th South Africa Investment Conference held at the Sandton Convention Centre in Sandton, Johannesburg, on 13 April 2023, the initial target to raise R1.2 trillion in new investment to boost the economy of South Africa was surpassed when over R1.5 trillion was raised through investment commitments.

On 28 October 2023, South Africa won a record fourth Webb Ellis Cup after defeating New Zealand 12–11 in the final of the 2023 Rugby World Cup tournament held at the Stade de France in Saint-Denis, France.

On 29 December 2023, South Africa filed a case against Israel's actions in Gaza at the International Court of Justice (ICJ).





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South Africa's G20 Presidency


G20 SOUTH AFRICA 2025
Leaders' Summit
Solidarity
Equality
Sustainability


G20 SOUTH AFRICA 2025
G20
G20

In 2025, the Group of Twenty (G20) completed its first full cycle of presidencies since its elevation to a leaders' level forum in 2008. At the 2024 Rio de Janeiro Summit in Brazil, leaders requested Sherpas to evaluate the G20 since 2008 and provide recommendations for its second cycle, beginning under the leadership of the United States of America in 2026. In response, South Africa's 2025 G20 Presidency undertook a G20@20 Review, drawing on an electronic survey, Sherpa-level discussions, a written contributions and input from the Advisory Panel to capture the diverse perspectives of participating members and guest countries.

First established in 1999 as a meeting of Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors, the G20 was upgraded to leaders' level in response to the global financial crisis, creating a one-of-a-kind forum for political leaders of the world's major economies – advanced and emerging alike. Annual leaders' summits have been the G20's cornerstone, providing the political foundation for coordinated action. Nine in 10 members consider leaders' summits an effective format for generating consensus and driving progress on shared priorities.



The G20 will begin its second cycle in an increasingly challenging and fragmented global context. Global growth remains below pre-2008 levels, public debt has reached historic highs and geopolitical tensions have deepened – narrowing the space for consensus and ambitious joint action. In this environment, a well-functioning G20 may be needed more than ever. The G20@20 Review aims to support members in ensuring that the G20's second cycle of presidencies is fit-for-purpose and calibrated to deliver effective and coordinated action on shared priorities.

Across all components of the review, members underscored the G20's role in strengthening multilateralism and international cooperation. By bringing together leaders of the world's major economies, the G20 has facilitated joint action on issues of shared concern – in times of crises, longer-term global challenges and in strengthening resilience to emerging threats. The G20 must remain the world's premier forum for international economic cooperation.

Members agreed that the leaders' vision from the 2009 Pittsburgh Summit remained relevant, including the mandate to provide a foundation for strong, sustainable, balanced and inclusive growth; and should continue guiding the group's work going forward.

The G20's leader-led character lies at the heart of its agility and credibility. The Rio de Janeiro Declaration reiterated this; while the review confirms that members are committed to a leader-led approach, coupled with the G20's informality – defined as the absence of a charter, treaty or permanent secretariat – and consensus-based decision-making on an equal footing. Members also agreed that leaders' summits were the most valuable elements of the G20 process, providing a unique forum for informal exchanges among leaders that foster trust and enable frank discussion.

The G20 has been most effective in times of crises. Swift action by the group prevented the 2008/09 global financial crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic from becoming deeper global downturns. Milestones such as coordinated fiscal stimulus packages, establishment of the Financial Stability Board (FSB), launch of the Pandemic Fund, creation of the Debt Service Suspension Initiative and Common Framework for Debt Treatments provided timely support, helping to stabilise the global economy and mitigate the immediate impact of these crises.

The G20's broader agenda has helped drive progress on shared global challenges. From financial stability, international tax cooperation and debt relief to Multilateral Development Bank (MDB) reform, global health, food security, sustainable development, energy, environment and climate, the G20 has spearheaded joint approaches and coordinated action that have reinforced and – where needed – bridged gaps in the existing multilateral system. G20-launched initiatives such as the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD/G20) Inclusive Framework on Base Erosion and Profit Shifting, Global Partnership




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for Financial Inclusion and the Agricultural Market Information System, are widely regarded as having turned G20 commitments into tangible progress.

However, as the G20 enters its second cycle of presidencies, members agree that its effectiveness has declined and has not been equal across the board. Heightened geopolitical tensions, an increasingly broad agenda and insufficient year-to-year continuity, are mentioned by a majority of members as factors undermining the G20's effectiveness in recent years.

The group is widely regarded as highly effective on core economic issues such as international financial and macroeconomic policy, and tax cooperation, areas in which it has consistently delivered outcomes with global impact throughout the first cycle. Its track record on development, health, agriculture, women's empowerment, anti-corruption, digitisation and employment is also broadly seen as effective. By contrast, the G20's impact in areas more recently added to the agenda including culture, tourism, and disaster risk reduction, is generally considered more limited. As a result, members agree that the scope of the G20's agenda should focus more strongly on its core mandate of promoting strong, sustainable, balanced and inclusive growth. While views differ on the exact issues that should feature on the agenda, there is broad agreement that they should be directly related to its mandate of delivering broad-based and balanced global economic growth. Macro-economic and financial policy, tax, development, food security, health, trade and investment, digital economy, energy and climate, employment and anti-corruption are among the most frequently cited areas where the G20's collective engagement would continue to add value.

To enhance the G20's effectiveness, members strongly support streamlining the number of workstreams. With more than 20 working groups and several task forces currently active, there are widely shared concerns about overlapping discussions and the growing administrative burden placed on members and invited guest countries. As a result, most members suggest consolidating, pausing or shelving selected working groups to focus efforts where the G20 can deliver the greatest impact. Equally, some members stress the importance of ensuring continuity on globally relevant agendas and initiatives, and caution that overly narrowing the G20's scope may negatively impact its legitimacy and ability to respond to emerging issues.

The review also highlights widely-shared concerns over continuity between presidencies. In this context, majority of members support reducing the number of priorities and initiatives per presidency, while strengthening efforts to ensure consistency and follow-through on multi-year workstreams. To this end, some members proposed the enhancement of the role of the troika of past, current and incoming presidencies, including through jointly agreed high-level objectives that span all troika members. Additionally, many members cautioned that any expansion of the troika's function should respect the prerogative of each presidency to set its own agenda. This tension was also highlighted in the Advisory Panel's workshops.

Members agreed that the G20's presidency rotation system, as informed by the principles agreed at the 2011 Cannes Summit, should continue to guide the selection of future presidencies. However, several members suggested that rotation between the five regional groupings should be further refined or clarified to enhance predictability and balance in the order of presidencies. As a result, most members suggest complementing the Cannes principles by alternating, as far as possible, between advanced and emerging economies. However, a few expressly cautioned against introducing formal distinctions between members based on their level of economic development.

The review finds strong support for continued close engagement with international organisations (IOs). Members widely recognise the key role of IOs in the G20 process, including underpinning discussions with evidence-based analysis, supporting the operationalisation and monitoring of commitments, and ensuring coherence with broader multilateral efforts. There is broad agreement that a core group of IOs – including the UN, World Trade Organisation, World Bank, International Monetary Fund, FSB, OECD and the International Labour Organisation, must remain part of the G20 process going forward, with the possibility of presidencies inviting additional specialised IOs and regional development banks to support specific priorities and responses to global crises. Additionally, several members suggested further leveraging IOs to support the monitoring of progress towards high-level G20 commitments.

Members continue to recognise the value of the G20's engagement with both invited guest countries and engagement groups. At the same time, there are widely shared concerns about the growing number of participants at G20 Leaders' Summits and Ministerial meetings, with some members calling for more consistent adherence to previously agreed limits on non-member participation. While many regard the independent input of engagement groups as important for shaping credible and substantive G20 outcomes, several members lament insufficient alignment on priorities. Some also suggest streamlining the number of engagement groups.

Certain tensions that are intrinsic to the G20 such as balancing breadth versus depth, informality versus continuity, agility versus inclusiveness are highlighted in the review. Given its informal and leader-led character, the G20 has the flexibility to navigate these axes as circumstances require; adapting its agenda, working methods or composition of participants to respond to evolving priorities. As suggested by some members, periodic reviews of the G20's agenda and working methods could help ensure that future re-calibrations are purposeful, evidence-based and informed by the perspectives of all members.





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Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development

The Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD) is mandated to regulate agricultural production while creating opportunities for comprehensive farmer development. The department furthers the development of agricultural value chains, and monitors the impact of legislation and policies on the sector's performance of the entire sector. It's legislative mandate is derived through the following key pieces of legislation, which broadly deal with regulating production development and support services:

- Conservation of Agricultural Resources Act, 1983 (Act 43 of 1983), which provides for control over the use of the country's natural agricultural resources to conserve soil, water sources and vegetation.
- Agricultural Product Standards Act, 1990 (Act 119 of 1990, which provides for control over the sale and export of certain agricultural products, and the sale of some imported agricultural products.
- Provision of Land and Assistance Act, 1993 (Act 126 of 1993, which provides for the designation of certain land, the regulation of the subdivision of such land and the settlement of people on it. It also provides for the acquisition, maintenance, planning, development, improvement and disposal of property, and the provision of financial assistance for land reform purposes.
- Restitution of Land Rights Act, 1994 (Act 22 of 1994), which provides for the restitution of land rights to people or communities dispossessed of such rights after 19 June 1913 because of racially discriminatory laws or practices. To administer this task, the Act established a Commission on the Restitution of Land Rights and a Land Claims Court.
- Land Reform (Labour Tenants) Act, 1996 (Act 3 of 1996), which provides for security of tenure for labour tenants and people occupying or using land as a result of their association with labour tenants. It also provides for labour tenants to acquire land and land rights.
- Spatial Planning and Land Use Management Act, 2013 (Act 16 of 2013), which seeks to enable the transformation of South Africa's settlement patterns by adopting an innovative approach to spatial planning and land use management.

Over the medium term, the department will continue to focus on improving agricultural production and revitalising infrastructure, accelerating land reform and finalising land restitution claims, and increasing research and development capacity to improve agricultural outputs. Transfers and subsidies account for an estimated 47,7% (R24.9 billion) of total expenditure over the MTEF period.

These include transfers to provinces for conditional grants (the comprehensive agricultural support programme grant, the LandCare programme grant and the Ilima/Letsema projects grant), transfers to public entities, and land reform and restitution grants. Compensation of employees accounts for an estimated 24,8% (R12.9 billion) of total spending, increasing at an average annual rate of 2,1%, from R4.2 billion in 2023/24 to R4.5 billion in 2026/27. Total expenditure is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 2,6%, from 16.8 billion in 2023/24 to 18.1 billion in 2026/27.

An amount of R750 million over the medium term is reprioritised from the Administration programme, the Agricultural Production, Biosecurity and Natural Resources Management programme, the Food Security, Land Reform and Restitution programme, and the Rural Development programme to the presidential employment stimulus, which broadly aims to support livelihoods and employment, including in the agricultural sector. Cabinet has approved reductions to the department's budget amounting to R4.3 billion over the MTEF period.

This includes a R1.8 billion reduction in funding for the restitution discretionary grant and a R387.5 million reduction in transfers to the agricultural land holding account. As a result, the number of land claims to be settled is expected to decrease from 459 in 2023/24 to 446 in 2026/27, while the number of farmers supported through the land development support programme is expected to decrease from 66 in 2023/24 to 27 in 2026/27.

To mitigate the impact of these reductions on the department's performance, it will seek to contain costs on non-essential line items and reprioritise funds where necessary to meet contractual commitments.

Improving agricultural production and revitalising infrastructure

The department continues to work on implementing the agro-processing master plan over the MTEF period. The plan has received buy-in from various constituents across the agricultural value chain, including the South African Grain Farmers Association, the Grain Farmer Development Association, the South African Sugar Association, the South African Pork Producers' Organisation, the South African Poultry Association, the National Emergent Red Meat Producers' Organisation, and the South African Mohair Growers' Association.

The operationalisation of the plan is expected to create an investment-friendly environment for small, medium and micro enterprises, mainly those owned by black women, in agro-processing value chains. In its efforts to improve rural employment, support industrialisation efforts by smallholder farmers and support economic development in rural areas, the department will continue to implement the agri-parks model, which includes creating farmer production support units, agri-hubs, irrigation schemes and other similar socioeconomic infrastructure.

In line with the master plan, the model seeks to create capacity in agro-processing and industrialisation value chains for broad-based job creation and market access opportunities. As part of the agri-parks model, the department plans to coordinate 212 infrastructure projects at an estimated cost of R2 billion over the period ahead. This allocation is in the Rural Infrastructure Development subprogramme in the Rural Development programme.

An estimated R5.3 billion over the medium term is made available through the comprehensive agricultural support programme grant to fund activities aimed at improving agricultural production. The grant is funded through allocations to the Food Security and Agrarian Reform and National Extension Support Services and Sector Capacity Development subprogrammes in the Food Security, Land Reform and Restitution programme.

Accelerating land reform and finalising land restitution claims

Land reform programmes play a critical role in government's response to the triple challenges of inequality, poverty and unemployment. To support farmers and fast-track land reform, the department uses a blended finance model comprising grants and loans. The department funds the grant component and prospective applicants are expected to source funding for the loan component. To fulfil this responsibility, an amount of R1.3 billion is allocated over the MTEF period in the Food Security and Agrarian Reform subprogramme in the Food Security, Land Reform and Restitution programme.

This programme is also allocated R2.8 billion over the MTEF period in the Agricultural Land Holding Account subprogramme to procure 102 025 ha of strategic land for redistribution. This forms part of the department's efforts to change land ownership patterns in the country through its land acquisition strategy. The department also plans to settle 1 234 land claims at a projected cost of R11 billion over the MTEF period. These funds are made available in the Restitution subprogramme in the Food Security, Land Reform and Restitution programme.

Increasing research and development capacity to improve agricultural outputs

Over the period ahead, the department plans to enhance capacity in research and development to improve market access and the safety and quality of agricultural products. This entails streamlining the policy and legislative framework to improve sanitary and phytosanitary activities related to biosecurity and associated animal diseases, plant pests and disease surveillance.

These activities are, in turn, expected to improve market access through export certification and thereby foster agricultural economic growth. For this, R1 billion is allocated over the MTEF period in the Inspection and Quarantine Services subprogramme, Plant Production and Health subprogramme and Animal Production and Health subprogramme, all of which are in the Agricultural Production, Biosecurity and Natural Resources Management programme.

Agriculture's role in creating employment

According to the Quarterly Employment Statistics (QES, Q2:2024) survey released by Statistics South Africa (Stats SA), total employment in the formal non-agricultural sector increased by 42 000 in the second quarter of 2024, bringing the level of employment to 10.7 million.

According to the survey, 144 000 jobs were lost between June 2023 and June 2024. The total number of employees grew by 42 000 (0,4%), with employment rising from 10.67 million in March 2024 to 10.72 million by June 2024.

Volume of agricultural production

Agricultural production in South Africa is valued at R408 463 million for the period ended June 2023, compared to R387 275 million in the previous corresponding period, representing an increase of 5,5%. The nominal growth in primary agriculture increased by 8,9% per annum since 2010, while the entire South African economy increased by 6,3% over the same period, resulting in an increase in agriculture's share of the GDP from 2,0% in 2010 to 2,7% in 2022.

Despite its relatively small share of total GDP, primary agriculture is an important sector in the South African economy. Agriculture remains a significant provider of employment, especially in rural areas, and a major earner of foreign exchange.

Gross farming income from all agricultural products increased by 17,3% to R445 450 million for the period ended 30 June 2023, compared to R379 864 million in the previous period, mainly due to the increase in income from field crops, animal and horticultural products by 39,0%, 9,4% and 8,8%, respectively.

The average prices received by farmers for their agricultural products increased by 10,7%. This was the result of an increase in prices of field crops by 15,6% and animal and horticultural products by 9,2% each. The increase of 15,6% in the average price of field crops was the result of increases in prices of summer grains by 21,9%, winter grains (17,9%), dry beans (14,5%), sugar cane (11,3%) and cotton (2,5%). The price of oilseeds decreased by 13,1%.

The increase of 9,2% in the average price of animal products was driven by the increase in prices of poultry meat by 16,0%; dairy products by 15,1% and slaughtered stock by 2,5%. The price of pastoral products decreased by 8,9%. The weighted average price of horticultural products increased by 9,2% as a result of the increase in prices of vegetables by 19,2%, viticulture (4,5%), and fruit (2,7%).

The prices paid for farming requisites, including machinery and implements, material for fixed improvements as well as intermediate goods and services, increased by 7,9% for the period ended June 2023. This was mainly due increases in prices of feeds by 18,5%, fuel (10,9%), building material (8,3%), animal health and crop protection (8,2%), fencing material (7,8%), trucks (7,4%), irrigation equipment (7,3%), seeds (6,9%), maintenance and repairs of machinery and implements (6,4%), packaging material (4,7%), tractors (4,5%) and fertilisers (1,9%).

The domestic terms of trade increased by 3,0% from 1,00 to 1,03 due to improved prices received by farmers for their products. The net farming income increased substantially by 33,8% to R122 732 million for the period ended June 2023, from R91 752 million in the previous corresponding period.

The estimated volume of agricultural production in 2022/23 was 2,0% more than in 2021/22. Field crop production volume for 2022/23 increased by 5,0%, mainly as a result of increases in the production of summer crops (maize) and oilseed crops (soya beans and groundnuts), as well as other food crops (sugar cane) and hay.

Maize production increased by 881 000 tons (5,5%), soya beans by 525 300 tons (23,6%) and groundnuts by 3 756 tons (7,0%) from 2021/22. Sugar cane production increased by 712 230 tons (4,1%) as compared to the previous season. Furthermore, the production of hay (lucerne, teff and other hay) also increased by 327 000 tons (6,0%) as compared to 2021/22.

Horticultural production for 2022/23 increased by 2,8% from the previous season, which can mainly be attributed to increases in the production of citrus and subtropical

fruit. The production of oranges increased by 172 820 tons (10,7%), lemons by 122 808 tons (18,7%) and grapefruit by 71 073 tons (20,2%), all contributing to an increase in citrus production from the previous season. Furthermore, increases in the production of bananas by 137 777 tons (34,6%) and avocados by 26 450 tons (30,3%) contributed to an increase in the production of subtropical fruit as compared to the previous season.

Animal production decreased by 0,6%, mainly as a result of decreases in the production of eggs, pastoral animal products (wool) and slaughtered stocks in 2022/23. The production of eggs decreased by 2 534 tons (0,4%) and the production of wool decreased by 5 166 tons (20,2%) as compared to 2021/22. Furthermore, the production of cattle and calves slaughtered decreased by 11 541 tons (1,4%), as well as sheep and lambs by 5 479 tons (5,5%) as compared to 2021/22.

Producer prices of agricultural products

The average prices received by farmers for their agricultural products increased by 10,7%. This was the result of an increase in prices of field crops by 15,6% and animal and horticultural products by 9,2% each. The increase of 15,6% in the average price of field crops was the result of increases in prices of summer grains by 21,9%, winter grains (17,9%), dry beans (14,5%), sugar cane (11,3%) and cotton (2,5%). The price of oilseeds decreased by 13,1%.

The increase of 9,2% in the average price of animal products was driven by an increase in prices of poultry meat by 16,0%, dairy products by 15,1% and slaughtered stock by 2,5%. The price of pastoral products decreased by 8,9%. The weighted average price of horticultural products increased by 9,2% as a result of the increase in prices of vegetables by 19,2%, viticulture (4,5%) and fruit (2,7%).

Gross value of agricultural production

The total gross value of agricultural production (total production during the production season valued at the average basic prices received by producers) for 2022/23 is estimated at R426 440 million, compared to R404 062 million the previous year – an increase of 5,5%. This increase can mainly be attributed to an increase in the value of animal products and horticulture.

The gross value of animal products, field crops and horticultural products contributed 42,8%, 29,3% and 27,9%, respectively, to the total gross value of agricultural production. The poultry meat industry and maize made the largest contributions with 14,7% and 14,0%, respectively, followed by cattle and calves slaughtered with 11,2%.

Farming income

The gross income of producers (the value of sales and production for other uses, plus the value of changes in inventories) increased by 17,3% to R445 450 million for the year ended 30 June 2023, compared to R379 864 million the previous year. This was influenced by the increase in income from field crops, animal and horticultural products by 39,0%, 9,4% and 8,8%, respectively.

The gross income from field crops increased significantly by 39,0% to R143 455 million for the year ended June 2023, compared to R103 208 million in the previous period. This was mainly due to the increase in income from maize (105,8%), sugar cane (65,4%), canola (26,6%), groundnuts (21,2%), soya beans (10,4%) and wheat (10,2%). Income from dry beans and sunflower seed decreased substantially by 84,4% and 16,6%, respectively.

The gross income from horticultural products increased by 8,8% to R119 432 million for the year ended June 2023, compared to R109 820 million in the previous period. This can be attributed to the increase in income from vegetables by 15,9%, subtropical fruits by 14,3%, deciduous and other fruits by 5,0% and citrus fruit by 5,5%. The income derived from viticulture decreased slightly by 2,3%.

The gross income from animal products increased by 9,4% and amounted to R182 563 million for the year ended June 2023, compared to R166 836 million in the previous period. This was due to the increase in income from milk by R3 798 million (17,2%), poultry meat by R8 697 million (16,1%), eggs by R1 540 million (13,4%), pigs slaughtered by R898 million (9,5%), and cattle and calves slaughtered by R1 331 million (2,9%). The income derived from sheep slaughtered decreased by R305 million (3,4%).

The net farm income (after the deduction of all production expenditure, excluding expenditure on fixed assets and capital goods) increased significantly by 33,8% and amounted to R122 732 million for the period ended on 30 June 2023. Payments for salaries and wages, which represented 16,0% of the total farming costs, amounted to R52 850 million. Interest paid by farmers to banks and other financiers during the 12 months up to 30 June 2023 is estimated at R14 763 million, or 4,0% of the total farming costs.

Expenditure on intermediate goods and services

Intermediate expenditure refers to the value of goods and services purchased for consumption as inputs during the production process. Expenditure on intermediate goods and services increased by 13,5% to R248 726 million. This was due to the increases in expenditure on fertilisers by 22,0%, farm feeds by 20,0%, seeds, plants, and building and fencing material by 10,0% each, animal health and crop protection by 8,8%, maintenance and repairs of machinery and implements by 8,0%, packing material by 7,8%, fuel by 7,0% and farm services by 6,0%.

Farm feeds were the largest expenditure item and accounted for 38,8% of the total expenditure, followed by fertilisers (11,6%), farm services (9,6%), fuel (8,1%), maintenance and repairs of machinery and implements (6,5%), seeds and plants (6,4%), animal health and crop protection, and building and fencing material (3,9%) each, and packing material (3,8%).

Prices of farming requisites

The prices paid for farming requisites, including machinery and implements, material for fixed improvements, as well as intermediate goods and services increased by 7,9% for the period ended June 2023. This was mainly caused by the increase in prices of feeds (18,5%), fuel (10,9%), building material (8,3%), animal health and crop protection (8,2%), fencing material (7,8%), trucks (7,4%), seeds (6,9%), maintenance and repairs of machinery and implements (6,4%), packaging material (4,7%), tractors (4,5%) and

fertilisers (1,9%). The combined price index of materials for fixed improvements increased by 8,2%, intermediate goods and services increased by 7,9% and machinery and implements by 7,0%.

Domestic terms of trade in agriculture (2015 = 1)

The terms of trade indicate the extent to which producer prices received by farmers kept pace with the prices paid for farming requisites. The domestic terms of trade increased by 3,0%, from 1,00 to 1,03, as a result of improved prices received by farmers for their products. The terms of trade for field crops increased by 8% (from 1.03 to 1,11) and horticultural and animal products by 1,0% each, from 0,94 to 0,95 and 1,03 to 1,04, respectively.

Contribution of agriculture to value added at basic prices

Value added is the value of total output less the value of intermediate consumption during the production period. The contribution of agriculture to value added for the year ended 31 December 2022 is estimated at R159 465 million, which represents 2,7% of the total value added to the economy, the highest since 2002.

Capital assets and investment in agriculture

The value of capital assets in agriculture showed an increase of R53 250 million (8,7%) to R662 336 million for the period ended June 2023, compared to R609 087 million in the previous corresponding period. The proportion of land and fixed improvements to the total value of capital assets was R407 603 (61,5%), livestock (R137 623 million or 20,8%) and machinery and implements (R117 111 million or 17,7%).

The gross investment in machinery, implements and vehicles increased by 19,2% (R19 336 million) for the period ended June 2023. Implements increased by 20,6% (R17 205 million) and transport vehicles by 8,9% (R2 131 million). Fixed improvements increased by 5,8% (R9 967 million). The livestock inventory was estimated at 22% (R101 million) more than in the previous period.

Farming debt

The total farming debt increased by 6,1% and is estimated at R200 931 million for the year ended June 2023, compared to R189 331 million at the end of June 2022.

Cash flow of farmers

The farmers' cash flow also increased significantly by 34,3% to R119 737 million for the period ended June 2023, from R89 187 million in the previous corresponding period due to better prices received by farmers for their products.

Consumer prices

The consumer prices of all agricultural products showed a slight increase of 0,8% for the period ended June 2023. The consumer prices of milk, eggs and cheese increased by 6,7%, non-food (6,4%), grain products (4,6%), food (2,0%) and meat (1,2%). The consumer prices of fats and oils increased by 17,4%, coffee and tea (11,8%), fish (10,5%), sugar (10,2%) and fruit (1,3%).

Products

Crop estimates

According to the sixth production forecast for summer crops by the Crop Estimates Committee (CEC) for the 2023 production season, the expected South African maize crop was 16,354 million tons, which was 5,7% more than the 15,470 million tons of the 2022 season and 15,4% or 2,180 million tons more than the five-year average of 14,174 million tons up to 2022.

The estimated area that South African commercial producers planted to maize during the 2023 season was 2,586 million ha. This was 1,4% or 36 900 ha less than the 2,623 million ha planted in the previous season. Of this area, 1,181 million ha (45,7%) was in the Free State, 556 000 ha (21,5%) in the North West and 508 500 ha (19,7%) in Mpumalanga. Maize plantings in the Free State decreased by an estimated 3,6%, from 1,224 million ha in 2022 to 1,181 million ha in 2023, and in the North West, they increased by 2,2%, from 544 000 ha to 556 000 ha.

Plantings in Mpumalanga decreased by an estimated 1,3%, from 515 000 ha in 2022 to 508 500 ha in 2023. The ratio of white to yellow maize plantings for 2023 was 59:41, compared to 60:40 the previous season. The estimated white maize plantings were 1,521 million ha, which were 3,4% less than the previous season's 1,575 million ha, while the yellow maize plantings were estimated to be 1,065 million ha–1,6% more than the 1,048 million ha for 2022. Most of the country's maize crop was produced in the Free State (44,2%), Mpumalanga (21,8%) and the North West (16,9%).

The production forecast for white maize was 8,638 million tons, which was 10,0% or 787 950 tons more than the 7,850 million tons of 2022 and 1,221 million tons more than the average of the five years up to 2022. The expected yield for white maize was 5,68 t/ha, compared to 4,98 t/ha the previous season. In the case of yellow maize, the production forecast was 7,716 million tons, which was 1,3% or 96 150 tons more than the 7,620 million tons of the previous season and 958 650 tons more than the five-year average up to 2022. The yield for yellow maize was expected to be 7,25 t/ha, compared to 7,27 t/ha in 2022.

The expected sunflower seed crop was 758 610 tons, which was 10,3% less than the 845 550 tons of the previous season and 1,5% less than the average of 770 410 tons for the five years up to 2022. The area planted to sunflower seed was estimated at 555 700 ha, which was 17,2% less than the 670 700 ha planted in 2022. The expected yield was 1,37 t/ha, compared to 1,26 t/ha the previous season. The production forecast for soya beans was 2,755 million tons, which was 23,6% more than the 2,230 million tons of the previous season.

The estimated area planted was 1,148 million ha, which was 24,1% or 223 000 ha more than the 925 300 ha planted in 2022. The expected yield was 2,40 t/ha, compared to 2,41 t/ha in 2022. The expected groundnut crop was 51 910 tons, which was 7,0% or 3 410 tons more than the 48 500 tons of the 2022 season and 4 054 tons less than the five-year average of 47 856 tons per annum up to 2022. The area planted to groundnuts was an estimated 31 300 ha, which was 27,9% or 12 100 ha less than the 43 400 ha planted the previous season. The expected yield was 1,66 t/ha, compared to 1,12 t/ ha in 2022.

The production forecast for sorghum was 100 525 tons—2,5% less than the 103 140 tons of the previous season. The

area planted to sorghum was estimated to be 34 000 ha, which was 8,6% or 3 200 ha less than the 37 200 ha planted in 2022. The expected yield was 2,96 t/ha, as against 2,77 t/ha the previous season.

The production of dry beans was expected to be 48 560 tons, which was 7,7% or 4 030 tons less than the 52 590 tons of the previous season and 13 595 tons less than the five-year average of 62 155 tons per annum up to 2022. The estimated area planted was 36 650 ha, which was 14,6% less than the 42 900 ha planted the previous season. The expected yield was 1,32 t/ha, as against 1,23 t/ha for 2022.

Grains

South Africa will continue to export agricultural commodities and products, including grains, which are crucial for generating foreign exchange.

Maize

Maize is the most important grain crop in South Africa, being both the major feed grain and the staple food of the majority of the country's population. The maize sector comprises both commercial and non-commercial farmers, the latter mostly in the Eastern Cape, Limpopo, Mpumalanga and northern KwaZulu-Natal. According to the sixth production forecast for summer crops by the Crop Estimates Committee (CEC) for the 2023 production season, the expected South African maize crop was 16,354 million tons, which was 5,7% more than the 15,470 million tons of the 2022 season and 15,4% or 2,180 million tons more than the five-year average of 14,174 million tons up to 2022.

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Sorghum

Sorghum is an indigenous crop in Africa and is regarded as the fifth most important cereal in the world. There are two types of sorghum, namely bitter and sweet sorghum cultivars. Preference is given to the sweet cultivars. Bitter sorghum is planted in areas where birds are a problem because it contains tannin, which gives a bitter taste and consequently birds tend to avoid feeding on it.

Sorghum for commercial purposes is mainly produced in the western Free State, Mpumalanga, the drier parts of the North West and Limpopo provinces. Sorghum, like other grains, serves two basic markets – the human consumption market and the animal feed. It is consumed mainly in the human food market and, as in the case of maize, consumers tend to replace sorghum-based products with preferred products as household income increases.

Wheat

In terms of value of production, wheat is the fourth most important field crop produced in South Africa and plays an important role in national food security. Most of the wheat produced in the country is bread wheat. Small quantities of durum wheat, used to make pasta, are produced in certain areas. In South Africa, wheat is mainly used for human consumption (including bread, biscuits, breakfast cereals and rusks), and the remainder as seed and animal feed. Other non-food uses include the production of alcohol for ethanol, absorbing agents for disposable nappies, adhesives and industrial uses, such as starch in coatings.

Wheat is mainly planted between mid-April and mid-June in the winter rainfall area, and between mid-May and the end of July in the summer rainfall area. The crop is harvested from November to January. Wheat is generally classed as hard or soft. Hard wheat tends to have higher protein content than softer wheat and is used mainly for bread. Soft wheat, on the other hand, is more suitable for confectionery.

Barley

Barley is one of the most important grain crops in South Africa, surpassed only by wheat and maize, and is following wheat, the most important small grain type. The cultivation area for malting barley under dryland conditions is at present restricted to a very specific region, namely in the southern Cape, which stretches from Bot River in the west to Heidelberg in the east.

It would not be economically viable to cultivate malting barley on dryland in an area that does not receive 350 millimetres of well-distributed rainfall during the growing season (April to October). Currently, five varieties are recommended for malting barley production in the southern Cape, namely SabbiErica, SabbiNemesia, Disa, Agulhas and Hessekwa. The concentration of the production of a relatively minor commodity, such as malting barley, in a specific area has various advantages. For example, it facilitates transport, storage, control, extension and research, which also implies cost advantages.

However, because of the risk of unpredictable weather conditions in the southern Cape, barley production has also been introduced to the cooler central irrigation areas in the Northern Cape. There are also farmers in other areas of South Africa, such as North West, Limpopo and the Free State, who plant small quantities of malting barley under

irrigation. Malting barley under irrigation has a higher yield and is more stable than in the southern Cape, where the crop is dependent on rainfall. Barley is mainly used for the production of malt (for brewing beer), animal feed and pearl barley.

Dry beans

Dry beans are warm-season annual legumes. Gross returns from dry beans can easily be higher than for soya beans. While yields are typically lower, dry beans fetch a relatively higher price. South Africa has a dry bean deficit and relies on imports. This provides an opportunity for the whole of southern Africa to increase production. The crop is mainly produced in the Free State, KwaZulu- Natal, Limpopo, North West and the Northern Cape. Producers sell directly to the trade or to wholesalers and cooperatives.

Oilseeds

Groundnuts

The normal planting time for groundnuts is mid-October to mid-November. Groundnuts are a high-value crop produced mainly in the north-western regions of South Africa, particularly the western and north-western parts of the Free State, in North West and in the Northern Cape. Groundnuts are also produced in Limpopo, KwaZulu- Natal and Mpumalanga, but to a lesser extent.

Oil made from groundnuts can be used for cooking and to make peanut butter. It can also be used to manufacture soap, massage oil, and shaving and hair creams. In South Africa, groundnuts are mainly consumed in two forms – as edible nuts and processed peanut butter.

Sunflower seeds

Sunflower seeds can be planted from the beginning of November to the end of December in the eastern parts of the production areas, and up to the middle of January in the western parts. Sunflowers grow best when planted in midsummer, to ensure that less moisture is lost from the soil during the crucial growing phases. The Free State and North West are the major producers of sunflower seeds, followed by Limpopo, Mpumalanga and Gauteng. The seed is used for the manufacture of sunflower oil and oilcake. The oil is marketed in the form of refined oil for domestic and industrial cooking and baking purposes and is also processed into margarine and other consumer products.

Compared to other crops, sunflower performs well under dry conditions. This is probably the main reason for the crop's popularity in marginal production areas in South Africa. A close link exists between the area planted to maize and the area planted to sunflower seed because farmers can easily switch to sunflower if the normal period for maize planting has passed.

Major exporters of sunflower seeds to South Africa are Romania, Botswana, Bulgaria and Argentina. Importing from the Southern African Development Community (SADC) countries uses the SADC Free Trade Agreement, which facilitates the flow of commodities among countries in the region at no tariff charges. The sale of sunflower seeds is mostly to the domestic market, with very small quantities destined for the export market. Overall, South Africa remains a net importer of sunflower seeds.

Soya beans

Soya beans are produced mainly in Mpumalanga, the Free State and KwaZulu-Natal. Small quantities are also produced in Limpopo, Gauteng and North West. Various soya bean cultivars have adapted quite well to South African conditions. Depending on prevailing local conditions, soya beans are usually planted in November and December. In South Africa, soya beans are mainly used for animal feed. The local demand for soya bean meal, as the preferred source of protein for animal feed, has increased in correlation with the increase in poultry production in South Africa and has more than doubled over the past decade.

The plantings of soya beans ranged between 100 130 ha and 827 100 ha over the past 20 years. From being one of the most dynamic sectors in the South African agricultural sector over the past decade, the soya bean industry is now maturing and further expansion is expected to occur at a much slower rate. Total soya bean processing capacity in South Africa (crush and full fat) is derived from a combination of dedicated soya bean processing facilities, as well as plants with the ability to switch between soya beans and sunflower seeds.

Canola

Almost the entire canola crop in South Africa is produced in the Western Cape. Over time, farmers in areas such as the Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal, Limpopo and North West have also started to plant small quantities of canola. Canola competes on the local market with other oilseeds, such as sunflower seeds and soya beans. Local and international investors in the oilseed crushing sector are boosting South Africa's capacity to process oilseed crops, such as soya beans, canola and sunflower seeds. This forms part of efforts to meet growing domestic demand for proteins and to be less dependent on imports of these crops.

Canola is primarily used for the manufacture of canola oil and oilcake. It is the healthiest commodity oil available to consumers, the food service industry and food processors. Canola meal is used as an animal feed for dairy cows, pigs and poultry. Its unique characteristics are especially valuable in the dairy industry, where it has been shown that including 20% canola meal in a feed ration improves milk production by one litre per cow per day.

Cotton

In South Africa, cotton is grown in the warm regions of Limpopo, Mpumalanga, Northern Cape, North West and KwaZulu-Natal, where minimum night temperatures are at least 15 °C during the growing season. The cotton industry is labour-intensive and provides work for roughly one worker per hectare of cotton planted. Oil extracted from cotton seed can be used for cooking and salad dressings. Extracted seed can also be used as a fertiliser or as feed for livestock, poultry and fish.

As part of the cotton industry's objective to broaden participation by emerging farmers, a training programme has been established by Cotton South Africa and other stakeholders, including the private sector and government. Lack of knowledge and expertise among smallholder cotton farmers is among the major constraints that impede success in the emerging cotton farming sector.

Tobacco

Tobacco is tropical in origin, but is grown successfully under tropical, subtropical and temperate climates. Normally, it requires about 100 to 120 days, in a frost-free climate, with an average temperature of 20 °C to 30 °C between transplanting and harvesting. In South Africa, tobacco is grown in five provinces – Limpopo (Lephalale, Mokopane,

Mookgophong and Sterkrivier); North West (Brits, Groot Marico and Rustenburg); Mpumalanga (Loskop, Groblersdal and the Lowveld: Mbombela and Barberton); the Eastern Cape (Gamtoos Valley); and the Western Cape (Oudtshoorn). The areas are classified according to the production of different types of tobacco. Flue-cured tobacco is produced mainly in Limpopo, Mpumalanga and North West, while air-cured tobacco is produced in the Eastern Cape, Western Cape, Limpopo and North West.

Sugar

Sugar cane is a ratoon crop, which means that after cropping, new shoots emerge from the roots. It yields up to 10 crops from the original rootstock, after which it is uprooted and the field is replanted. This is done on a rotational basis, with approximately 10% of the area under cane being replanted each season. Planting usually coincides with the first spring rains.

South Africa produces cost-competitive, high-quality sugar. The sugar sector is a diverse industry, combining the agricultural activities of sugar cane cultivation with the industrial factory production of raw and refined sugar, syrups and specialised sugars, as well as a range of by-products. The R14 billion South African sugar industry is cost-competitive, consistently ranking in the top 15 out of approximately 120 sugar-producing countries worldwide.

The industry makes a positive difference to the lives of more than one million people and is a catalyst for economic growth and development. Sugar cane is a strategic crop for KwaZulu-Natal and Mpumalanga, where sugar cane production is located, comprising nearly 50% of field crop gross farming income across the two provinces.

Sugar cane is grown by approximately 21 926 registered growers, farming predominantly in KwaZulu-Natal, with substantial operations in Mpumalanga, and some sugar cane production in the Eastern Cape. Employment within the industry is estimated at 435 000 people (direct and indirect) and the industry produces an average of approximately 2.2 million tons of sugar per season.

Government and stakeholders in the sugar industry have signed the Sugar Industry Master Plan, which seeks to take urgent action to protect thousands of jobs, rural livelihoods and businesses. The plan also aims to create a bold new ambition for the future, seeking to create diversified revenue streams for sugar producers and to create new job opportunities.

As part of the master plan, industrial users and retailers agreed to a minimum offtake of sugar for a period of three years, with at least 80% of sugar consumption to come from South African farms and millers during the first year, increasing to 95% by 2023. During this period, the sugar industry has agreed to price restraint, and to begin a process of managed restructuring for the industry to help diversify revenue sources.

Deciduous fruit

The deciduous fruit industry in South Africa, including fresh, dried and canned fruit for local consumption and export, is a multimillion-rand industry. The exporting of deciduous fruit is a major earner of foreign exchange for South Africa. Deciduous fruits grown in South Africa include apples, pears, apricots, nectarines, peaches, plums, grapes, olives, figs and cherries.

Although some producers grow fruit both for processing (canning, juice and drying) as well as fresh consumption, it is estimated that in South Africa there are about 1 152 producers of fruit for fresh consumption, 1 066 producers of dry and table grapes, 887 producers of stone fruit and 624 producers of pome fruit. The main deciduous fruit-producing areas in South Africa are situated in the Western Cape and Eastern Cape, mostly in areas where warm, dry summers and cold winters prevail.

Dried fruit

Dried fruit is produced mainly in the western and southern parts of the Western Cape and the Lower and Upper Orange River areas in the Northern Cape. Tree fruit, as opposed to vine fruit, is dried mainly in the Western Cape. The most important dried fruit products in terms of volume are Thompson seedless raisins, golden sultanas, unbleached sultanas, currants, peaches, pears, apricots and prunes.

Apricots are grown mainly in the Little Karoo and prunes are produced almost exclusively in the Tulbagh District in the Western Cape. Most raisins are produced in the area along the Lower Orange River and currants are mainly from the Vredendal District in the Western Cape.

Honeybush and Rooibos tea

Honeybush production is a young, growing industry that is unique to South Africa. Honeybush is part of the fynbos that grows wild in the Western Cape and is not produced anywhere else in the world. The plant grows naturally on the wetter and cooler southern slopes of mountains. Some species are mostly harvested in the wild, while others are cultivated commercially.

The cultivated tea comes from a few farmers who have established successful honeybush plantations, as well as a handful of community-based projects. Rooibos tea is exclusively farmed in the Cederberg and Sandveld areas of the Western Cape. On average, South Africa produces about 15 000 tons of rooibos tea a year. According to the South African Rooibos Council, out of the 15 000 tons of rooibos tea produced a year, 50% of it is consumed in South Africa.

In June 2021, rooibos became the first African food to be registered by the European Commission as having a protected designation of origin and protected geographical indications. This means South Africa is acknowledged as the designation of origin for rooibos. For tea to be labelled as rooibos, it has to be made using leaves that were cultivated or wild-harvested in designated local municipalities of the Western and Northern Cape provinces. The registration will also allow South Africa's rooibos industry to use the EU logo that is well recognised by consumers in Europe, which will indicate its value as a unique and exclusive product.

Wine

South Africa is the eighth-largest wine producer in the world, with a contribution of 4,0% to the world's wine production. The wine industry is labour-intensive and provides employment to approximately 300 000 people directly and indirectly. The number of primary wine grape producers in South Africa is estimated at more than 3 000. Wine is produced mainly in the Western Cape and along parts of the Orange River in the Northern Cape.

The traditional wine-growing areas along the coastal zone benefit from their cooling breezes that moderate the summer temperatures. The Cape mountain ranges form a backdrop to what is internationally recognised as one of the most beautiful wine-producing areas in the world. The vineyards lie in valleys and mountain foothills in some areas, and in flatter plains in others. One of the potential competitive advantages of the Cape winelands is a great variety of soils.

Nietvoorbij, the internationally acclaimed research farm of the ARC, is synonymous with quality research in oenology and viticulture. Annually, 1 000 different wines (10-20 litres) are made for research purposes in the modern experimental cellar. Next door, in the old, thatched-roof cellar, traditional and modern winemaking methods are combined to create unique wines for enjoyment.

Citrus and subtropical fruit

Citrus is one of South Africa's most important subsectors in the agricultural sector. It provides a significant contribution to job creation and economic activity in South Africa's rural communities. Government is committed to working with the industry and other stakeholders to expand market access to destinations such as the United States of America, China and India, and the EU and other countries that already enjoy South African citrus.

The growth projections for soft citrus, lemons and Valencia oranges alone indicate an expected additional R6.8 billion in foreign exchange earnings and the creation of 22 250 sustainable jobs over the next three years. Citrus fruit is grown in Limpopo, the Eastern Cape, Mpumalanga, the Western Cape and KwaZulu-Natal, in areas where subtropical conditions (warm to hot summers and mild winters) prevail.

The area under citrus production is estimated at 81 638ha. The Western Cape and Eastern Cape are considered cooler citrus-growing areas and production is focused on Navel oranges and lemons. The cooler climate enables farmers to respond to consumer demand for easy peelers like clementines and satsumas. Farm sizes are also smaller and most citrus in the Western and Eastern Cape is packed by privatised cooperatives in facilities that are amongst the largest in the world.

In Mpumalanga, Limpopo and KwaZulu-Natal, the climate is warmer and better suited to the cultivation of grapefruit and Valencia oranges. Farms in these regions are larger and many farmers pack in smaller privately-owned facilities. Pineapples are grown mainly in the Eastern Cape and northern KwaZulu-Natal. Subtropical crops, such as avocados, mangoes, bananas, litchis, guavas, papayas, granadillas and macadamia and pecan nuts, are produced mainly in Mpumalanga and Limpopo, as well as in the subtropical coastal areas of KwaZulu- Natal and the Eastern Cape.

The largest contributors to the sales of subtropical fruit on the major fresh produce markets are bananas, pineapples and avocados, followed by mangoes and papayas. The cultivation of some types of subtropical fruit is only possible in specific areas of the country because of particular climatic requirements. In general, subtropical fruit types need warmer conditions and are sensitive to large temperature fluctuations and frost. Fruit types such as granadillas and guavas are also grown in the Western Cape, while pineapples are cultivated in the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal.

Vegetables (excluding potatoes)

Vegetables are produced in most parts of the country. However, in certain areas farmers tend to concentrate on specific crops, such as green beans that are grown mainly in Kaapmuiden, Marble Hall and Tzaneen; green peas, grown in George and Vaalharts; and asparagus, grown mainly in Krugersdorp and Ficksburg. Tomatoes are produced countrywide, but on the largest scale in Limpopo, the Mpumalanga Lowveld and Middleveld, the Pongola area of KwaZulu-Natal, the southern parts of the Eastern Cape and the Western Cape. In Limpopo, South Africa's main tomato-growing area, most of the crops are found in Letaba, Mooketsi and Musina.

Onions are grown mainly in Mpumalanga, certain areas of the Western Cape and the southern Free State, and in all areas of Limpopo, with the main production areas being Polokwane and Mokopane. Cabbages are grown countrywide, but the largest crops are in Mpumalanga and the Camperdown and Greytown districts of KwaZulu-Natal.

Potatoes

There are 16 distinct potato-production regions in South Africa, which are spread throughout the country. The main regions are situated in the Free State, Western Cape, Limpopo and Mpumalanga. Potatoes are planted at different times because of climate differences in the production areas, resulting in fresh potatoes being available throughout the year. In the early 1990s, there was a major shift in production from dryland to irrigation and, currently, almost 80% of plantings are under irrigation.

Livestock

Extensive livestock farming is vast in the country, occupying four-fifths of the agricultural land in South Africa. However, livestock is also found in areas where there is a combination with other farming enterprises. Below normal rainfall over recent years has meant that the area involved in cattle, sheep and goat farming, which is approximately 590 000 square kilometres, has been negatively affected.

Representing 53% of all agricultural land in the country, this badly affected grazing area has not recovered in the past year as near normal to normal rainfall has not been recorded in most provinces. Livestock conditions recorded were reasonable to good in most provinces over the same period. Commercial sheep farming also takes place in other areas, such as the Kgalagadi, the winter rainfall area and the grasslands of Mpumalanga, as well as the eastern Free State and KwaZulu-Natal, with challenges such as wild animals and stock theft threatening the successful farming.

Foot-and-mouth disease is still prevalent in some parts

of KwaZulu-Natal, as of October 2021, with movement restrictions in place for identified locations. As such, practices for biosecurity are encouraged in order to curb further spread of the disease. Other diseases that continue to affect the industry are African swine fever and brucellosis.

Cattle

Cattle are found throughout the country, but mainly in the Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal, the Free State and North West. Herd sizes vary according to type of cattle, ranging between less than 50 and 300 for dairy cattle, while beef cattle herds range from fairly small (less than 20 head of cattle) to large farms and feedlots (more than 4 000).

Some farms in North West and Gauteng have been found to have some of the largest cattle herds in in the country. The production of weaners for the feedlot industry is the main form of cattle farming – feedlots account for approximately 75% of all beef produced in the country. Cattle in South Africa comprise various international dairy and beef cattle breeds, in addition to indigenous breeds such as the Afrikaner and the Nguni.

Beef cattle contribute approximately 80% to the total number of cattle in the country, while dairy cattle make up the remaining 20%. Holstein-Friesian, Jersey, Guernsey and Ayrshire are the four major dairy breeds found in South Africa. Although milk is produced in all areas of South Africa, the coastal areas are the most suitable because of their mild temperatures and good rainfall conditions, which lead to improvements in animal and pasture conditions.

The industry comprises various economic activities, with significant differences in farming methods, and the processing of dairy products, including the production and marketing of raw milk, pasteurised milk and cream, fermented milk, long-life milk and cream, yoghurt, and cheese and its by-products.

Sheep

Although sheep farms are found in all provinces, these are concentrated in the more arid parts of the country. Flock sizes vary between less than 50 and 1 800 animals. Sheep flocks in the Eastern, Western and Northern Cape provinces tend to be much larger than those in other provinces. The animals are kept mainly for wool and mutton production and the industry is therefore represented by organisations from the mutton and wool industries.

The sheep breed with the highest wool production per head is the South African Merino, followed by other dual-purpose Merino breeds, such as the Dohne Merino, South African Mutton Merino, Afrino and Letelle breeds. Dual-purpose breeds are bred with the specific aim of maximising wool and mutton production. Limited numbers of indigenous fat-tailed and Karakul sheep are still found in the more arid areas.

Goats

Goats are found mainly in the Eastern Cape, Limpopo, KwaZulu-Natal and North West. The indigenous meat-producing Boer goat accounts for about 40% of all goats in South Africa. Herds of goats intended for meat production are usually smaller than sheep flocks, averaging approximately 300 goats per farm.

Angora goats are kept primarily for mohair production, while Boer goats are kept mainly for meat production. According to the SA Milch Goat Breeders' Society, there are also farmers who have adopted a market-differentiating strategy by producing goat milk, and these are increasing in numbers.

Through selective breeding and farming techniques, the Angora goat farmer plays a crucial role in promoting the constant availability of quality natural fibres. Most of the world mohair production is imported to South Africa for further processing, after which it is exported together with locally (including Lesotho) produced mohair. China remains the leader in mohair imports from South Africa, followed by Italy and Taiwan.

Pigs

The South African pork industry is small in terms of the overall South African agricultural sector. It contributes 2.2% to the primary agricultural sector. Pigs are found predominantly in Limpopo, North West, Gauteng and the Western Cape. There are approximately 400 commercial pork producers and 19 stud breeders in South Africa.

The gross value of pork production is dependent on the quantity produced and the price farmers receive. The trend in gross value follows a pattern of prices, because the industry is characterised by volatile prices. Pork is produced throughout South Africa, with Gauteng and the Western Cape being the largest producers, contributing to 40% and 21%, respectively, to total production. There are about 132 commercial, four stud and about 400 smallholder pig farmers.

They own about 120 000 sows (100 000 commercial and 10 000 smallholder sows) and employ about 3 005 workers, comprising about 2 200 farm workers and 805 workers in the abattoir sector. The 145 registered pig abattoirs use modern technology to ensure a streamlined slaughtering process. The total number of employees in the formal pork production industry in South Africa is estimated to be approximately 10 000, comprising about 4 000 farm workers and 6 000 workers in the processing and abattoir sectors.

Poultry farming

The poultry industry consists of the day-old chick, broiler and egg supply. The broiler industry continues to dominate the agricultural sector in South Africa as the main supplier of animal protein.

Poultry Master Plan

For the past decade, poultry production in South Africa has been static despite the fact that consumption has continued to grow. This was due to the fact that imported poultry has come into the economy in large quantities, displacing South African meat, especially at the lower end. In an effort to address threats to the local production of poultry, government, together with a number of stakeholders in the industry, including poultry producers, farmers, processors, exporters, importers and organised labour, developed the Poultry Master Plan.

The plan provides a framework for a determined effort to grow jobs in the industry through a number of measures that will be implemented over a number of years. Signed during the second South African Investment Conference in November 2019, the plan is also expected to ensure that

locally produced products make up an increasingly larger proportion of consumption over time.

Information for international travellers

Pests and invasive species are not only introduced through formal trade, but are also brought into South Africa by tourists. Once a pest has entered South Africa, climate change may influence its establishment and spread, as well as the damage it causes. When travelling to South Africa, tourists should make sure that they do not bring in prohibited agricultural products.

These products may harbour pests that occur in other countries and their introduction may endanger South Africa's competitiveness in trade and agricultural productivity. Animals and animal products such as meat and dairy products, plants and plant products, honey and honey products as well as other regulated goods, are all potentially high-risk materials. These materials may only be imported into South Africa by means of an import permit, unless exempted, and must be declared to the DALRRD inspectors for inspection at ports of entry before entering South Africa.

Inspectors from the department conduct luggage and consignment inspections at the ports of entry, with the help of sniffer dogs to ensure compliance with the import permit requirements. Prohibited products will either be confiscated, destroyed or returned to the country of export, and those found carrying them may face a fine of up to R20 000 or imprisonment.

Food import and export standards

Internationally, standards for food imports and exports are harmonised through various international standard-setting bodies subscribed to under the World Trade Organisation, to which South Africa is a signatory. This includes the Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures Agreement, the World Organisation for Animal Health, Codex Alimentarius Commission and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. These requirements aim to protect consumer rights, the environment, animal life and public health.

The DALRRD collates information regarding the standards for sanitary and phytosanitary measures applicable to trade in animal and plant products. The department also coordinates promotion and awareness programmes addressing cross-cutting standards and legislative requirements for food safety, quality, and plant and animal health. The DALRRD and the Perishable Products Export Control Board (PPECB) work closely to assist South Africans to export their products successfully in a highly competitive global arena.

National Analytical Services (NAS)

There are two in-house laboratories within NAS – one situated in Stellenbosch and the other in Pretoria. The laboratories provide and coordinate the analysis of certain agricultural products (fresh fruit and vegetables, grains, wines and spirits, dairy products and processed food) in support of the enforcement of the food safety and quality standards and requirements as laid down in the Agricultural Product Standards Act of 1990 and the Liquor Products Act, 1989 (Act 60 of 1989).

Disaster and risk management

The National Agricultural Disaster Risk Management Committee provides strategic guidance on policy and advises government on issues relating to agricultural disaster risk management. The committee comprises members from provincial departments of agriculture, organised agriculture, such as the National African Farmers' Union of South Africa (NAFU SA), Agri SA, Transvaal Agricultural Union of South Africa (TAU SA) and the ARC, and relevant directorates within the DALRRD.

The National Drought Task Team, chaired by the DALRRD, advises the National Disaster Management Advisory Forum on drought management. The task team comprises provincial disaster management centres, organised agriculture and relevant directorates within the department. The DALRRD frequently responds to hazards such as droughts, veld fires, floods and outbreaks of pests and disease, which include the control of migratory pests such as locusts and quelea. It is also responsible for the control of blackfly.

Weather and climate

Climate change

The agricultural sector in South Africa faces considerable impact from climate change, which affects the livelihoods of most people, especially those who are vulnerable to food insecurity. South Africa responds to international obligations regarding climate through various government departments.

The Climate Change Programme implemented by the DALRRD includes programmes on raising awareness, policy development, the development of sector mitigation and adaptation plans, conducting vulnerability assessments countrywide, and identifying and coordinating climate-related research projects. The Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Plan outlines useful mitigation and adaptation options promoting soil, water and nutrient conservation for agricultural production.

The DALRRD's Crop Suitability Programme is aimed at promoting best adaptation management practices and enhancing adaptive capacity and resilience of the agricultural systems to minimise the risk of the negative impacts of climate change as drastic increases in temperature have a negative impact on crop growth and crop yields.

South Africa is a full member of the Global Research Alliance which, among other objectives, aims to enhance collaborative research into reducing agricultural emissions and increasing support and resourcing for agricultural emissions research. South Africa has already been involved in stock-takes and regional workshops run by the Livestock Research Group.

Early warning unit

The increasing risk of disaster is reduced by strengthening early warning systems and disseminating early warnings, as well as raising awareness through campaigns. This helps to build resilient farming communities. The DALRRD has, therefore, developed and implemented an Early Warning System (EWS) that disseminates extreme weather warnings to farming communities.

The EWS communicates monthly advisories and daily extreme weather warnings, in support of reducing disaster risk. The implementation of the EWS is continuously

monitored and evaluated to identify and address gaps in the system. National Agro- meteorological Committee meetings are held quarterly. Other risk reduction activities include continuous research to identify areas and measures for addressing and improving disaster risk management, including awareness campaigns and education and training to strengthen disaster risk management.

In addition, the DALRRD continues to encourage integration of disaster risk management into all departmental programmes and projects. The DALRRD also encourages the strengthening of EWS by all relevant role players to be prioritised, including the creation of disaster units in provinces.

Sustainable resource management and use

The DALRRD and the ARC's Institute for Soil, Climate and Water have developed an inventory of soils, terrain forms and climate (land types). The National Land Type Survey, available for use at a 1:250 000 scale, aims to assist and guide land-use planning and decision-making at national level. All available natural resource spatial information and other required data sets, including the latest Spot-5 satellite imagery and agricultural information, are found on the internet-based Agricultural Geo- referenced Information System (Agis). Using interactive web-based applications, Agis provides access to spatial information, industry-specific information and decision-support tools.

The Advanced Fire Information System tracks all fire outbreaks in the SADC region through the use of Moderate-Resolution Imaging Spectroradiometer satellite imagery. The information may be viewed at afis.meraka.org.za.

Soil degradation

Soil degradation is largely related to the decline in organic soil matter. Monoculture cereal production, intensive tillage, short-term fallow periods and limited crop rotation have contributed to this in the commercial sector. Excessive fuel-wood collection, inappropriate land use, population density and overgrazing are the main causes of soil degradation in communal areas.

South African soils are extremely prone to serious soil compaction, particularly under intensive mechanised cultivation agriculture, in both dryland and irrigated land. It is a problem throughout the country and much more widespread and serious than the global norm. Human-induced soil acidification is a major problem. Its effect is severe since it impacts on the country's scarce, arable land, especially the limited high-potential agricultural land. In commercial agriculture, there has been capital-building of some nutrients, especially phosphorus and zinc. In some cases, phosphorus has built up to excessive levels, where it starts to reduce crop yields.

Genetically modified organisms (GMOs)

GMOs provide a way to meet the growing demand for food without placing greater pressure on scarce resources. South Africa has commercialised three different genetically modified crops, namely maize, cotton and soya beans. The country is also the ninth-largest producer of genetically modified crops in the world and remains the pioneer for the adoption of genetically modified crops. This is aligned with Section 24 of the Constitution, which advocates for sustainable use of biodiversity.

National LandCare Programme

This is a government-supported community-based initiative, which is active throughout the country. Driven by both the public and private sectors through partnerships and cooperation, it seeks to:

- conserve natural resources;
- use them in a sustainable way;
- create a conservation ethic through education and awareness; and
- create jobs and address poverty by launching various natural resource rehabilitation, improvement and conservation projects.

Serious concerns about land and water degradation are identified in each province and specific projects address these issues. Projects have been implemented in all nine provinces through the LandCare Conditional Grant, whereby ring-fenced funding is transferred to provinces.

The National LandCare Programme is aligned with government's broader objective of job creation. The temporary jobs created under the programme are funded through the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP). The programme adheres to the target of 55% women, 40% youth and 2% people with disabilities as specified by the EPWP.

Funding for these projects is transferred quarterly to the respective provincial departments as implementing agents, as conditional grants under the Division of Revenue Act, 2013 (Act 2 of 2013). Assessment and reporting requirements are specified in the Act, as well as by the EPWP.

The provincial departments use the reporting tools provided by the EPWP to report on the number of jobs created. Provincial departments forward additional quarterly and annual reports to the DALRRD to monitor performance and the impact of the programme on the state of the natural agricultural resources.

Extension and advisory services

The National Policy on Extension and Advisory Services for the agricultural sector recognises and calls for the involvement of a wide array of stakeholders involved in the delivery of extension and advisory services through a pluralistic and integrated approach.

The implementation process of the National Policy on Extension and Advisory Services commenced with the establishment of the Provincial Extension Coordinating Forum (PECF). The PECF is operational in all provinces and meetings are held on a quarterly basis. The DALRRD provides support to the PECF to ensure provincial integrated service delivery.

Training

The agricultural sector boasts state-of-the-art training and research facilities. South Africa has a number of regular schools offering a range of agricultural subjects as well as specialised agricultural high schools, such as Bekker High School in North West, Harry Oppenheimer Agricultural High School in Limpopo and Boland Agricultural High School in the Western Cape.

Prospective farmers and technicians are trained at the country's colleges of agriculture, such as Grootfontein Agricultural Development Institute in the Eastern Cape, Cedara College of Agriculture in KwaZulu-Natal and Madzivhandila College of Agriculture in Limpopo. In September 2020, Cabinet approved the establishment of agricultural colleges as the competence of higher education colleges in terms of the Higher Education Act, 1997 (Act 101 of 1997), as amended.

The relocation of these colleges to the Department of Higher Education and Training will align them with the prescribed Higher Education Act of 1997 and improve their governance and management. Universities, some with designated faculties of agriculture, offer degree courses. Veterinary surgeons are trained at the University of Pretoria's Faculty of Veterinary Sciences at Onderstepoort.

Animal identification

Any owner of cattle, sheep, goats or pigs is compelled by law to mark their livestock. The registered mark is put on the National Register of Animal Identification System. This register is available to the South African Police Service (SAPS) to help it trace individual animals in cases of stock theft. However, this can only be implemented successfully if all cattle, goats, pigs and sheep are marked in accordance with the Animal Identification Act, 2002 (Act 6 of 2002).

Pest control

The South African Pest Control Association (SAPCA) is the official representative of the pest, termite and woodborer-control industries. All SAPCA-qualified inspectors have to register with the DALRRD. South Africa regularly liaises with other countries and international organisations to ensure the transfer of pest-control technology. To respond comprehensively to the management of regulated plant pests and diseases, the DALRRD, in close collaboration with the South African fruit industries, has developed an early warning surveillance programme for the quarantine of fruit flies. The technical forum continues to identify, prioritise and manage quarantine pest risks, such as the African invader fruit fly.

Rural Development

Rural development creates and maintains an equitable and sustainable land dispensation, and acts as a catalyst in the development of rural areas, to ensure sustainable rural livelihoods, decent work and continued social and economic advancement for all South Africans. Approximately 33.7% of the South African population lives in rural areas. This figure is below the global average of 44.7%, and has been declining gradually over the past 10 years, owing to rapid urbanisation.

While rural areas were a key development priority in the early 2000s, an increasing global focus on cities through the development of the New Urban Agenda and Sustainable Development Goal 11 focusing on sustainable cities has meant that rural areas have been deprioritised to a certain extent. This has been a contributing factor to the state of rural poverty and underdevelopment. In South Africa, rural areas have the highest poverty concentration.

It is estimated that 59.7% of the population living below the poverty line is found in rural areas. This is illuminated when the provincial distribution of poverty is analysed. There is a correlation between low poverty levels and highly urbanised provinces, such as Gauteng and the Western Cape – and conversely, between high poverty levels in provinces where the majority live in rural areas, such as the Eastern Cape and Limpopo.

This illustrates that there are spatial patterns of economic development in South Africa, which result in acute poverty in rural areas. While the disconnected nature of rural areas may be an explanatory factor of this phenomenon, the spatial configuration of national value chains and the broader economic climate are also key factors. The characteristically poverty-stricken nature of rural South Africa is both a cause and effect of poorly performing socio-economic indicators, including education, healthcare and employment. The majority of rural South Africa fell under the homelands system during colonialism and apartheid, emphasising their historic exclusion from service delivery.

Limited access to quality education and healthcare is an acute challenge in rural areas because of undeveloped infrastructure and limited economic activity. There are 11 252 schools in rural areas across South Africa, many of which face infrastructural challenges, teacher shortages and other critical challenges. While there are a number of factors affecting this disparity, the rural- urban divide is chief among them. A contributing factor to rural poverty and underdevelopment is the rapid rate of rural-urban migration that is taking place in South Africa.

The rate of rural-urban migration has almost doubled over the past two decades, increasing from 15 people per 1 000 to 28 people per 1 000.23. Both economic and non-economic reasons cause citizens to move from rural areas to urban areas, including hopes of employment and higher wages, better access to social services, such as healthcare and education, and to reunite with family living in cities. While the promise of the city may seem appealing to rural residents, prosperity in urban areas is not necessarily guaranteed, as the rapid influx of people into the cities has put pressure on social services and housing requirements.

In rural areas, the outflow of citizens who constitute the majority of the economically active population exacerbates underdevelopment. This results in decreased economic activity and investment in rural areas. It is within this context that the DALRRD is mandated to serve residents in rural areas by providing economic stimulation in a three-pronged manner by stimulating the agricultural sector, coordinating rural development and promoting access to and productivity of land.

In the face of rapid rural-urban migration, the DALRRD plans to focus specifically on stimulating economic activity and uplifting social conditions in rural areas through its mechanisms of agricultural support, land administration and tenure, and rural development coordination.

Economic structure of rural South Africa

Agriculture and mining are traditionally thought to be the foundations of rural economies, as these sectors tend to be the key drivers of external investment into rural areas. While this chiefly refers to commercial agriculture, it is worth noting that subsistence agriculture plays an important role in meeting the needs of residents in rural areas.

Beyond agriculture and mining, there are also a number

of other components of the rural economy, which can be leveraged for rural development. While secondary sector activities such as manufacturing, processing and construction are most often developed in urban or peri-urban settings, they also form an important economic driver in rural and semi- rural areas. In terms of the tertiary sector, there are critical activities that support rural communities, in the form of both local businesses and chain stores.

Overall, all of these components of the rural economy are interconnected and connected to industrial activity and the urban economy. There are two key inflows of support for social infrastructure aside from external investment – international or local aid and government programmes. In terms of aid, there are a myriad of multilateral, bilateral and local non-governmental organisations, such as the United Nations Development Programme, the Belgian Development Agency and the Rural Development Support Programme, which have programmes that contribute to rural development.

Government has various schemes and programmes that support the rural economy.

One of government's largest contributors to the social infrastructure of rural areas is the Social Grant Scheme, which includes financial stipends for old-age pensions, child support, care dependency, war veterans, foster child support and disabilities. A total of 44.3% of households in South Africa are receiving at least one grant, the majority of which reside in rural areas.

Provinces with a higher rural population such as the Eastern Cape, Northern Cape and Limpopo have a higher proportion of households receiving social grants. This illustrates that social grants play an important role in supporting the social infrastructure of rural economies. Rural development remains a strategic and important element of national economic development. As outlined in the NDP, the country is working towards achieving an inclusive and integrated rural economy.

The DALRRD plays a fundamental role in coordinating national efforts in order to reduce rural poverty and create gainful socio-economic development in rural South Africa. However, as the face of rural South Africa is rapidly changing, there are certain considerations that need to be taken into account, specific to challenges and trends emerging in the sector.

Key considerations for the DALRRD are: the decreased profitability of the mining sector may result in less investment in rural communities and potential job losses; agricultural productivity challenges threaten existing and new farmers; resulting from climate change, increased water scarcity and a lack of training available for new farmers; a decreased economically active population in rural areas further limits economic activity; and decreased funding and social programmes for South Africa and rural areas – while South Africa experienced a boom in foreign aid post-1994, this has declined as there is currently increasing competition for aid globally. This, coupled with decreasing contributions from donors and more rigorous regulations, will have adverse effects on funding for rural areas in South Africa.

The commercialisation of the retail sector in rural areas has increased competition for previously owner-run businesses. The department is uniquely positioned to tackle these challenges strategically through the coordination of rural development efforts in the private and public sectors. Over the medium term, the department will prioritise the inclusion of rural areas in the economic activities of this country by providing social and economic opportunities to overcome the triple challenges associated with poverty, unemployment and inequality. This requires better planning and coordination in the provision of basic services, food security and rural town development.

The land reform landscape

One of the most critical areas of redress in South Africa is the issue of land. Throughout South Africa's history, dispossession of land has been systemic, embodied in policies such as the Native Land Act, 1913 (Act 27 of 1913), and the Group Areas Act, 1950 (Act 41 of 1950), during the apartheid era.

In 1994, it was estimated that 83% of agricultural land was owned by white capital. Therefore, from the onset of democracy, land reform as a mechanism for redress has been a focus of the South African government, historically carried out by what is currently the DALRRD. Over the past 25 years, there have been a number of policies and legislation put in place in order to implement land reform in South Africa. Predominantly, the national position on land reform has been a willing buyer-willing seller model mediated by government, coupled with a legal restitution process.

Despite headway made by both the restitution and redistribution programmes, it is estimated that only 9% of South African agricultural land has been redistributed, well below the initial target set of 30%. While this target was adjusted down to 16.5 million ha (approximately 20%) in the NDP, there is still substantial work to be done by government to acquire land and redistribute it. To accelerate the land reform process, there has been a political shift to allow land expropriation without compensation.

Programmes and projects

Agricultural Production, Biosecurity and Natural Resources Management

The programme oversees livestock production, game farming, animal and plant health, natural resources and disaster management. Its objectives include managing biosecurity and related sector risks. Over the medium term, this will be achieved by conducting nine countrywide surveys of plant pests and diseases, in particular the exotic fruit fly, citrus greening disease and banana bunchy top virus, to manage their spread and incursion, and eradicate them, as well as conducting nine planned animal risk surveillance exercises on foot-and-mouth disease, ovine rinderpest and Newcastle disease.

In addition, the programme plans to ensure access to primary animal healthcare services through the implementation of compulsory community services by deploying 100% of veterinary graduates to rural areas by 2023/24. It will enforce an animal disease regulatory framework to reduce the level of disease outbreaks and reduce interception at export channels in production areas to a minimum level by conducting three planned animal risk surveillance exercises on foot-and-mouth disease and goat plague in each year over the medium term.

Furthermore, the DALRRD will implement regulatory

compliance and monitoring interventions to prevent plant and animal pest and disease outbreaks through quarantine inspections, surveillance, and testing and registration of products used in agriculture by 2023/24.

Food Security, Land Reform and Restitution

Under the programme, the DALRRD aims to acquire and redistribute land, and promote food security and agrarian reform. The programme's objectives include:

- redressing equitable access to land by conducting research and finalising land claims;
- coordinating the implementation of the National Policy on Food and Nutrition Security by providing production inputs such as seeds and fertilisers, and cultivating underused land in communal areas over the medium term.
- improving delivery capacity in support of sustainable growth in the sector by implementing policies to develop capacity in agricultural sectors, such as the National Policy on Extension and Advisory Services, facilitating collaborations with commodity organisations to build the capacity of extension officers by the end of 2023/24 and providing strategic leadership and support, such as research, training and extension services, to targeted subsistence and smallholder producers by transforming all agricultural colleges into agricultural training institutions by the end of 2023/24; and
- coordinating comprehensive support systems and programmes provided to producers by supporting subsistence and smallholder producers, supporting the commercialisation of smallholder producers through the blended finance model, placing unemployed agricultural graduates on farms and further supporting access to resources for agribusiness development.

Rural Development

The purpose of the programme is to facilitate rural development strategies for socio-economic growth. Its objectives include promoting an integrated and inclusive rural economy through the coordination and implementation of rural development strategies over the medium term.

Economic Development, Trade and Marketing

The purpose of the programme is to promote economic development, trade and market access for agricultural products and foster international relations for the sector. The programme's objectives, over the medium term, include:

- upskilling 600 agro-processing entrepreneurs by training them on food manufacturing norms and standards;
- increasing market access and maintaining existing markets by certifying and accrediting producers of fresh produce for exports through good agricultural practice certification and an accreditation programme;
- building national skills capabilities in international market research by providing for the transfer of marketing skills to small and medium agro-processing entrepreneurs;
- providing technical sector leadership in trade negotiations and implementing trade agreements to improve market access by linking producers to high-value markets; and
- ensuring shared growth by developing the agricultural value chain and improving market access.

Land Administration

The purpose of the programme is to provide and maintain an inclusive, effective and comprehensive system of planning, geospatial information and cadastral surveys; legally secure land tenure; and to conduct land administration that promotes social, economic and environmental sustainability.

Over the medium term, the programme aims to ensure spatial transformation and efficient land administration by rolling out and implementing the electronic deeds registration system and reducing the number of days taken to process general plans, sectional plans and diagrams to 14 working days.

Deeds registration

The core responsibilities of South Africa's deeds registries are to:

- register real rights in land;
- maintain a public land register;
- provide registration information; and
- maintain an archive of registration records.

There are deeds registries in Bloemfontein, Cape Town, Johannesburg, Kimberley, King William's Town, Mthatha, Nelspruit, Pietermaritzburg, Pretoria and Vryburg. These offices register deeds and documents relating to real rights in more than eight million registered land parcels consisting of township erven, farms, agricultural holdings, sectional title units and sectional title exclusive-use areas in terms of the Deeds Registries Act, 1937 (Act 47 of 1937), and the Sectional Titles Act, 1986 (Act 95 of 1986).

The Deeds Registry is open to any member of the public to access information regarding:

- the registered owner of a property;
- the conditions affecting such property;
- interdicts and contracts in respect of the property;
- the purchase price of the property;
- rules of a sectional title scheme;
- a copy of an antenuptial contract, deeds of servitude and mortgage bonds;
- a copy of a sectional title plan;
- township-establishment conditions; and
- information relating to a property or deed.

Entities

Agricultural Land Holding Account

The agricultural land holding account was established in 2009 in terms of the Provision of Land and Assistance Act (1993). The Act authorises the Minister of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development to purchase land to enable the department to accelerate land redistribution, acquire land in nodal areas and other areas of high agricultural potential, improve the identification and selection of beneficiaries, improve the planning of land on which people could be settled, and ensure the most productive use of acquired land. Over the medium term, the entity will focus on promoting equitable land redistribution and agricultural development by acquiring a targeted 102 025 hectares for redistribution, of which 50% is set to be allocated to women, 40% to youth and 10% to people with disabilities.

The entity will also prioritise the land development support programme, which focuses on redistributed farms that have

received limited or no agricultural support but have growth potential. The programme plans to support 108 farms with equipment through an allocation of R846.2 million over the MTEF period.

Expenditure is set to increase at an average annual rate of 1.4 per cent, from R942.4 million in 2023/24 to R983.5 million in 2026/27. Total expenditure over the MTEF period is set to amount to R3.1 billion. The entity expects to derive 77,9% (R2.8 billion) of its revenue over the period ahead through transfers from the department, 11,4% (R404 million) through lease revenue and 10,7% (R353 million) through other sources.

Agricultural Research Council (ARC)

The ARC was established by the Agricultural Research Act of 1990 and is the main agricultural research institution in South Africa. The entity's primary mandate in terms of the Act is to conduct research and development and effect the transfer of technology to promote agriculture and industry, contribute to a better quality of life, and facilitate and ensure the conservation of natural resources.

Over the medium term, the council will focus on: generating knowledge and technologies that enhance efficiencies of crop production, animal production and health, the management of natural resources, and research and development; developing a foot-and-mouth disease facility at Onderstepoort to reduce reliance on imports; maintaining national assets such as irrigation and mechanisation laboratories; and providing diagnostic and analytical services on behalf of the department and industry stakeholders.

Expenditure is expected to increase at an average of annual rate of 3,8%, from R1.6 billion in 2023/24 to R1.7 billion in 2026/27. Spending on compensation of employees accounts for an estimated 50.6% (R2.5 billion) of total spending, and goods and services accounts for 44,9%. Transfers from the department constitute an estimated 66.7% (R3.4 billion) of the council's total revenue over the medium term. The remainder is set to be generated through providing analytical and research services, selling farm products and rental income.

KwaZulu-Natal Ingonyama Trust Board

The KwaZulu-Natal Ingonyama Trust Act of 1994 makes provision for 2.8 million hectares of land across KwaZulu-Natal to be held in trust and managed on behalf of communities. The trust is administered for the benefit, material welfare and social wellbeing of the members of the tribe, communities and residents. The affairs of the trust are administered by the KwaZulu-Natal Ingonyama Trust Board, which was established in terms of the Act.

Over the medium term, the board will focus on systematically aligning its organisational processes with the resources it has available. This initiative is pivotal for the new board, as it underpins its ongoing commitment to enhancing the administration of its land and fostering integrated socioeconomic development.

Expenditure is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 5.6 per cent, from R23.1 million in 2023/24 to R27.2 million in 2026/27. Transfers from the department amount to R77.8 million over the MTEF period, comprising 99.7% of total revenue, mainly to fund salaries and operational expenses. The remaining revenue is expected to be sourced from the KwaZulu-Natal Ingonyama Trust from the sale of goods and other capital assets.

Office of the Valuer-General

As a new schedule 3A public entity established in terms of the Property Valuation Act of 2014, the Office of the Valuer-General continually aims to be a leader in the property valuations sector and be recognised as a centre of excellence and innovation for property valuations, with a primary focus on land reform. To do this, the office seeks to build a strong corporate identity to increase visibility and improve stakeholder engagement. Over the medium term, the office plans to help speed up land reform by providing independent and credible property valuation services to ensure that land claim values are settled with greater efficiency and decisiveness.

Compensation of employees accounts for an estimated 43.8% (R196.4 million) of total expenditure over the MTEF period, increasing at an average annual rate of 3%, from R60.9 million in 2023/24 to R66.5 million in 2026/27. Expenditure is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 3.6%, from R140.3 million in 2023/24 to R156 million in 2026/27. The entity is set to derive all of its revenue, amounting to a projected R448 million over the medium term, through transfers from the department.

Onderstepoort Biological Products (OBP)

OBP was established as a public entity in terms of the Onderstepoort Biological Products Incorporation Act of 1999, with the government as its sole shareholder. Its mandate is to prevent and control animal diseases that affect food security, human health and livelihoods by developing, manufacturing and commercialising animal vaccines and ensuring food security through the promotion of animal health. These activities will comprise the entity's primary focus over the period ahead. It will also maintain a reserve stock of vaccines to be used in the event of an outbreak of animal diseases.

Compensation of employees accounts for an estimated 40,4% (R349.8 million) of total spending, increasing at an average annual rate of 4,3%, from R106.4 million in 2023/24 to R120.8 million in 2026/27. Expenditure is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 5.4%, from R260.5 million in 2023/24 to R305 million in 2026/27. The organisation generates revenue mainly through the sale and supply of livestock vaccines and uses it to fund the operations of its business.

Revenue is projected to increase at an average annual rate of 5.7%, from R270.4 million in 2023/24 to R319.6 million in 2026/27, as the entity anticipates an increase in the sale of vaccines in the export market due to improved production and marketing, and greater access to vaccines by smallholder farmers.

National Agricultural Marketing Council (NAMC)

The NAMC derives its mandate from the Marketing of Agricultural Products Act of 1996, which provides for the authorisation, establishment and enforcement of regulatory measures to intervene in the marketing of agricultural products, including the introduction of statutory measures on agricultural products. Over the period ahead, the council

will continue to play an active role in coordinating the work of industry trusts, conducting research aimed at advising the minister and directly affected groups on marketing matters and working directly with farmers to address their marketing needs.

As the council primarily conducts research and development, it relies on highly skilled personnel such as agricultural economists, scientists and researchers to fulfil its mandate. Accordingly, compensation of employees accounts for an estimated 70.1% (R111.2 million) of total spending over the medium term. Expenditure is expected to increase at average annual rate of 0.9%, from R53 million in 2023/24 to R54.4 million in 2026/27.

The council derives most its revenue from the department, estimated at R143.6 million over the medium term and increasing at an average rate of 0.2 %, from R49.8 million in 2023/24 to R50 million in 2026/27.

Perishable Products Export Control Board

The Perishable Products Export Control Board is an independent service provider of quality assurance, food safety and cold chain management services for producers and exporters of perishable food products, as mandated by the Perishable Products Export Control Act (1983). The board also derives its mandate from the Agricultural Products Standards Act (1990), which broadly requires it to monitor the minimum quality standards of perishable exports as required by government and bilateral agreements with importing countries.

The board aims to improve client experience over the medium term through the seamless integration of its systems with those of its clients. This is expected to ensure the provision of relevant and timeous export and shipping information and market trends to enhance the competitiveness of the industry. Spending on compensation of employees accounts for an estimated 65,9% (R1.5 billion) of total expenditure over the MTEF period, increasing at an average annual rate of 6.2%, from R454.9 million in 2023/24 to R544.4 million in 2026/27. Expenditure is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 6%, from R689.9 million in 2023/24 to R822.8 million in 2026/27. The board generates revenue by charging levies and tariffs on the export of perishable products, and fees for inspection, laboratory and export certification services. Revenue is projected to amount to R2.3 billion over the MTEF period.

Registration of Deeds Trading Entity

The Deeds Registries Act of 1937 makes provision for the administration of the land registration system and the registration of rights in land. It requires that deeds and documents are prepared and lodged in the deeds registry by a conveyancer or public notary, and scrutinised for accuracy and compliance with common law, case law and
statutory law. The main goal of the trading account is to contribute to effective land planning, administration and property registration.

The entity plans to develop and implement an electronic deeds registration system over the MTEF period, driven by the Electronic Deeds Registration Systems Act (2019). This is expected to result in a more secure, accessible, integrated, innovative, scalable, cost-effective and self-sustainable deeds registration system that enables and provides accurate and reliable land administration and information. The system is also expected to have the capacity to register and record insecure land tenure rights. Its development and implementation is expected to lead to enhanced confidence in the country's land registration process.

Expenditure and revenue are expected to increase at an average annual rate of 4,4%, from R1 billion in 2023/24 to R1.2 billion in 2026/27. Compensation of employees accounts for an estimated 69% (R2.3 billion) of spending over this period, driven by the filling of 86 critical vacant posts. The entity generates revenue by selling deeds information and registering properties.

Role players

Commission on the Restitution of Land Rights

The Restitution of Land Rights Act of 1994 created the Commission on the Restitution of Land Rights under a chief land claims commissioner and seven regional commissioners. In addition, the Act established the Land Claims Court to address land claims and other land-related issues though later amendments enabled an administrative process of settling claims with court referrals only in cases of dispute.

The DALRRD is authorised to administer the Act, including by negotiating on behalf of the State, acting as a respondent before the court, and managing the implementation and finances of the restitution process. Legally, all land claims are against the State and not against past or current landowners. Consultants are extensively used as part of the pre-settlement of claims, and are a major cost driver in the restitution programme.

Agri-parks

The agri-parks initiative supports rural enterprises, develops rural industries and facilitates the efficient movement of rural produce to markets. The initiative develops networked systems of agro-production, processing, logistics, marketing, training and extension services in district municipalities and developments on underused land.

Each agri-park supports smallholder farmers by providing capacity-building, mentorship, farm infrastructure, extension services, and production and mechanisation inputs. Smallholder farmers own 70% of an agri-park, while the remainder is owned by government and commercial farmers. Agri-parks are expected to contribute to government's targets of creating one million new jobs in rural economies by 2030.

Communal Property Associations (CPAs)

The CPAs Act of 1996 is aimed at enabling communities to form juristic persons, to be known as CPAs – to acquire, hold and manage property on a basis agreed upon by members of a community in terms of a written constitution and to provide for matters connected therewith. The DALRRD has facilitated the establishment of CPA district forums to assist in the provision of support to the associations and serve as a platform for them to share experiences, approaches and lessons on how to ha
ndle matters.

Credit and assistance

Land and Agricultural Development Bank of South Africa (Land Bank) Established in 1912, the Land Bank is a government-owned development finance institution with the mandate of financing agricultural development to achieve food security, and to drive economic growth and development in South African agricultural sector. The bank is a specialist agricultural bank guided by a government mandate to provide financial services, including crop insurance, to established commercial farmers, developing farmers and agri-enterprises.

The bank provided support to farmers impacted by the drought, disbursing more than R240 million in loans under its drought relief programme, administered in conjunction with the Industrial Development Corporation. As part of its transformation objective, the

Land Bank Insurance

Company subsidiary launched and implemented the Agricultural Insurance Assessors Development Programme to train agricultural economist graduates (or equivalent) in crop insurance assessment protocols to service the agricultural sector. It is charged with promoting agricultural and rural development, as well as providing a range of financial products and services, including crop insurance to farmers and agribusinesses.

Micro Agricultural Financial Institutions of South Africa (MAFISA)

The MAFISA provides production loans to smallholder operators within the agriculture sector. The scheme's operations are guided by the MAFISA Credit Policy. Loans are provided at a low interest rate and accessed through a network of institutions accredited by the DALRRD as retail intermediaries. Intermediaries submit monthly and quarterly reports to the DALRRD as part of its monitoring process.

Regular workshops and inspection visits to intermediaries are also conducted as part of monitoring. The scheme offers production loans of up to R500 000 per person, with the repayment terms structured according to the income cycle of the enterprise. The loans are limited to South African citizens who meet the eligibility criteria set in the MAFISA Credit Policy.

The MAFISA loans are available for the entire value chain of agriculture though most of the loans are still in respect of primary production and largely in agriculture. To date, most of the loans are in respect of livestock, sugar cane, vegetables and grain crops.

Currently, the MAFISA is accessed through the following intermediaries:

- National Emergent Red Meat Producer Organisation – livestock in all provinces.
- South African Sugar Association – sugar cane in KwaZulu-Natal and Mpumalanga.
- Peulwana Agricultural Financial Services – grains, vegetables, sugar cane and fruits in KwaZulu-Natal.
- Mpumalanga Economic Growth Agency – various agricultural commodities in Mpumalanga.
- Eastern Cape Rural Development Agency – various agricultural commodities in the Eastern Cape.

Farmers' organisations

Agri SA

Agri SA was established in 1904 as the South African Agricultural Union. Its mission is to promote the development, profitability, stability and sustainability of agriculture in South Africa by means of its involvement and input on national and international policy and the implementation thereof. Agri SA, through its affiliated membership, represents a diverse group of individual farmers.

Agri SA's policy advocacy includes work on trade negotiations, industrial policy, taxation, financing, land reform, labour laws, training, farmer development, environmental affairs, water rights and water pricing, other input-related issues, farm safety, law and order, infrastructure, technology development and transfer, statistical information and local government.

Furthermore, the organisation maintains an extensive communication network with its members and other affected communities, organisations and individuals. Agri SA is a member of high-level business, trade and agricultural entities that includes Business Unity South Africa, the International Chamber of Commerce, the World Farmers' Organisation, the Southern African Confederation of Agricultural Unions and the Cairns Group Farm Leaders.

Agri SA is committed to ensuring a safe environment for all people involved in the agricultural sector. A sound working relationship has been established with the SAPS at both policy and operational level, with a view of addressing the relevant rural safety problems.

Agricultural Business Chamber (Agbiz)

The Agbiz is a voluntary, dynamic and influential association of agribusinesses operating in South Africa and southern Africa. The function of Agbiz is to ensure that agribusiness plays a constructive role in the country's economic growth, development and transformation, and to create an environment in which agribusinesses of all sizes and in all sectors can thrive, expand and be competitive.

The Agbiz is the only organisation that serves the broader and common overarching business interests of agribusinesses in South Africa. It addresses the legislative and policy environment on the many fronts that it impacts on the agribusiness environment.

The Agbiz facilitates considerable networking opportunities so that South African agribusinesses can play an active and creative role within the local and international organised business environment.

The strategic intent of the Agbiz is to advocate for and facilitate a favourable agribusiness environment in order for its members to perform competitively and sustainably.

Transvaal Agricultural Union of South Africa

The TAU SA was established in 1897 as the Transvaal Agricultural Union. In 2002, the union reorganised to become a national agricultural union serving commercial farmers. It also renders services to its members in terms of property rights, economic issues, and safety and security. The TAU SA conducts various projects to enhance the concept of successful agriculture.

National African Farmers' Union of South Africa

The NAFU SA is an independent, autonomous farmers

organisation governed by and representing farmers in South Africa, united for the purpose of analysing their problems and formulating action to achieve economic emancipation and development through production efficiencies, access to market opportunities and education.

It was formed in 1991 as part of the broader process of economic liberation and empowerment of, mainly, black farmers who were excluded from mainstream economic landscape of South Africa. Its predecessor, the National African Chamber of Commerce and Industry, for many years had fought against economic oppression and marginalisation of African people in this country.

Over many years, the union has acted as an advocacy and pressure group calling for policy reforms and the support and development of farmers. Through its interventions and contribution to policy formulation, the NAFU SA has contributed to the following:

- Access to productive land being made available to farmers;
- Access to finance and other support for farmers;
- Access to markets and information for farmers; and
- Skills development and technical support.

The NAFU SA pursues these items by implementing the following broad programmes:

- Advocacy, lobbying and policy research,
- Cooperatives and commodity group development, and
- Farm enterprise development.

African Farmers' Association of South Africa (AFASA)

The objectives of AFASA are to create a sustainable united body of African farmers with capacity to influence policies through lobbying and advocacy, to facilitate development of competencies of African farmers in order for them to participate meaningfully in formal and informal markets, and to mobilise resources for the benefit of African farmers.

Grain SA

Grain SA was established in June 1999. Its mission is to provide commodity strategic support and services to South African grain producers, as well as to support sustainability. Grain SA is a voluntary association of grain farmers established to represent the interests of its members. It aims to be recognised as an autonomous and independent grain producers' organisation.

The organisation also aims to be involved in all matters bearing on the well-being of the industry and to be consulted about policy issues relating to the industry. The association is controlled by farmers and structured to ensure members' democratic control over their elected office bearers.

Female Entrepreneur Awards

The Female Entrepreneur Awards are a joint venture between the provincial departments of agriculture and key partners in the sector. They honour female farmers and recognise their role in the sector and their entrepreneurial skills in mainstream agriculture, forestry and fisheries. The major thrust of the awards is to underline the fact that women play a significant role in food security, job creation, economic growth and poverty alleviation.

World Food Day

World Food Day provides an occasion to highlight the plight of undernourished people in the world. Most of them live in rural areas where their main source of income is agriculture. Global warming and the biofuel boom are now threatening to push the number of hungry even higher.

South Africa joins the world in marking World Food Day on 16 October every year, to highlight the plight of millions of undernourished people in the world. World Food Day is commemorated annually around the world in remembrance of the founding of the Food and Agriculture Organisation in 1945. In South Africa, October has been declared Food Security Month.

The objective of Food Security Month is to create a platform for heightening public awareness on issues pertaining to food security in the country. World Food Day 2023 was celebrated under the theme; "Water is life, water is food. Leave no one behind". Regional and international cooperation and trade.

Regional cooperation

South Africa has strong and mutually dependent economic links with countries in southern Africa through the SADC and the Southern African Customs Union (SACU) regions. As a contribution to the African regional development, the DALRRD continues to implement South Africa's foreign policy objectives, through the facilitation of the SADC and African Union engagements and implementation of the South-South Cooperation.

The International Relations Strategy is an instrument put into place to interact with various sector stakeholders at regional and international level in support of producers to access international markets.

Regional trade

South Africa, as a member of the SACU and a signatory of the SADC Treaty, is committed to sharing its objectives with other nations in the region. The SACU opened its markets to the countries of the SADC region by implementing its tariff reduction commitments under the SADC Trade Protocol.

The signatories to the SADC Trade Protocol are Botswana, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, the Seychelles, Eswatini, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Angola and the Democratic Republic of Congo are still in the process of acceding to the protocol.

The first objective of the trade protocol is to remove both tariff and non-tariff barriers to trade between SADC countries The SADC has set up an electronic reporting system for non-tariff barriers, in which the DALRRD is involved as a contact point to receive traders' complaints.

South African agriculture products continue to benefit from the Tripartite Free Trade Area Agreement of the SADC, Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa and the East African Community.





SOUTH AFRICA
YEARBOOK
2024/25

Communications and Digital Technologies

Communication plays an important role in the fundamental operation of any society. It links people and businesses, enabling the flow of ideas and information, and coordinating economic activities and development.

The Department of Communications and Digital Technologies (DCDT) is mandated to enable South Africa's digital transformation to achieve digital inclusion and economic growth by creating an enabling policy and regulatory environment. This is done through the implementation of the 2016 National Integrated Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Policy White Paper, which provides for the participation of multiple stakeholders for inclusive digital transformation; interventions to reinforce competition and facilitate innovation across the value chain; measures to address issues raised by ICT and convergence; and the establishment of a new national postal policy framework.

It also provides for policies to address the digital divide and affordable access, supply-side issues and infrastructure rollout, and demand-side issues to facilitate inclusivity.

Legislation

The DCDT derives its mandate from several Acts and policies. Key among these are the:

- Film and Publications Act, 1996 (Act 65 of 1996), as amended, which provides for the classification of certain films and publications, and establishes the Film and Publications Board (FPB) and Appeals Tribunal;
- Postal Services Act, 1998 (Act 124 of 1998), as amended, which provides for the regulation of postal services;
- Broadcasting Act, 1999 (Act 4 of 1999), as amended, which establishes a broadcasting policy in South Africa;
- Independent Communications Authority of South Africa (ICASA) Act, 2000 (Act 13 of 2000), which establishes the regulator in the sector;
- Electronic Communications Act (ECA), 2005 (Act 36 of 2005), as amended, which provides the legal framework for convergence in the broadcasting, broadcasting signal distribution, and telecommunications sectors. It also allows for the granting of new licences and social obligations; the control of the radio frequency spectrum; and the regulation of electronic communication network services, electronic communication services and broadcasting services; and
- South African Postbank SOC Limited Act, 2010 (Act 9 of 2010), as amended, which provides for the corporatisation of Postbank and its shareholding arrangements as well as the existence of the Post Office and its subsidiaries.

Over the medium term, the department will focus on coordinating the rollout of broadband internet into underserviced areas through the South Africa Connect project, and on enabling digital transformation and inclusion through legislative and regulatory interventions. Cabinet-approved reductions to the department's budget amount to R727.9 million over the MTEF period (R415 million in 2024/25, R153.7 million in 2025/26 and R159.2 million in 2026/27), mainly on transfers and subsidies, capital assets, and goods and services.

The department plans to absorb this by reducing travel and hosting more meetings online, conducting more work in-house rather than using consultants, and reducing the number of non-core personnel, which will see a decrease in its number of personnel from 357 in 2024/25 to 346 in 2026/27. As a result, and following the one-off funding for phase 2 of the South Africa Connect project in 2024/25 and 2025/26, total expenditure is expected to decrease at an average annual rate of 8.3%, from R3.3 billion in 2023/24 to R2.6 billion in 2026/27.

An estimated 53% (R4.9 billion) of the department's budget over the MTEF period is allocated to transfers to entities for their operations and for project-specific funding. Of this amount, R1.7 billion is allocated to the South African Post Office for its universal service obligations to provide postal services in underserviced areas, R1.5 billion is allocated to the Independent Communications Authority of South Africa for regulating the ICT and postal sectors, and R672.4 million is allocated to the South African Broadcasting Corporation for various activities.

The department was finalising its revised organisational structure and is filling critical positions. As a result, expenditure on compensation of employees is set to increase at an average annual rate of 4,4%, from R302 million in 2023/24 to R344.2 million in 2026/27. Projected spending on goods and services amounts to R2.9 billion over the MTEF period, representing 34.8% of the total budget. This is mostly for computer services for the implementation of the South Africa Connect project, and, to a lesser extent, travel and subsistence, consultants and operating leases for office accommodation.

Rolling out broadband in underserviced areas

The department will continue to roll out the South Africa Connect project, supported by relevant state-owned entities such as Broadband Infraco, Sentech and the State Information Technology Agency. As a result, 970 government facilities will continue to be provided with connectivity over the MTEF period through Phase 1 of the South Africa Connect project, and 5.1 million households will be connected through Phase 2.

An amount of R2.4 billion is allocated for implementing the project over the medium term, with one-off allocations for Phase 2 made in 2024/25 (R1.9 billion) and 2025/26 (R267.4 million). This spending is in the Broadband subprogramme in the ICT Infrastructure Development and Support programme.

Enabling digital transformation and inclusion

The department will continue to provide a supporting and enabling legislative environment through the development of relevant policies, strategies and legislation. Over the MTEF period, this will include submitting the Audio and Audiovisual Content Services and Online Safety Bill to the Minister for approval, and monitoring the implementation of the national data and cloud policy. As a result, expenditure in the ICT Policy Development and Research programme is set to amount to R134 million over the medium term.

Mail

The volume of mail handled by the South African Post Office has declined precipitously over the past few decades as demand for physical post declined and electronic alternatives such as email became more common. Despite

this undeniable decrease in the volume of post, the percentage of households that mainly received their mail at home increased from 37,3% in 2002 to 46% in 2019.

This increase is, however, more than offset by a decline in the percentage of households that still used a post box or private bag (declining from 23,5% to 8,5% over the corresponding period), and households that received their mail through other means (declining from 30,2% in 2002 to 12,9% in 2019). During this period, the percentage of households that did not receive any mail increased from 9,0% to almost one-third (32,7%) of all households. The percentage of households that did not receive any mail increased from 32,7% in 2019 to 47,3% in 2022 and 56,6% in 2023.

Households in rural areas have poorer access to mail services than their counterparts in urban and metropolitan areas. While 54,2% of households in metros, and 51,6% of households in urban areas could access mail services, less than one-fifth (18,4%) of rural households enjoyed the same access. Only 3,8% of rural households had access to mail delivery at home compared to 42,5% of households in urban, and 46,7% of households in metro areas.

Notably, a larger percentage of rural household used post boxes or private bags (8%) than households in urban areas (6,8%). The use of other arrangement to get post (that is, getting it through a school, community leader or at work) was also more common in rural areas (8,9%) than in metro (5,8%) or urban (3,2%) areas.

Entities

Broadband Infraco (BBI)

BBI's legislative mandate, as set out in the BBI Act, 2007 (Act 33 of 2007), is to provide ICT infrastructure and broadband capacity in South Africa. Its main objectives are to expand the availability and affordability of access to electronic communications, including in underdeveloped and underserviced areas; ensure that bandwidth requirements for specific projects of national interests are met; and enable the state to provide affordable access to electronic communications networks and services.

Over the medium term, the entity aims to focus on implementing Phase 2 of the South Africa Connect project, maintaining broadband connectivity to the 713 government sites it is responsible for and keeping the time taken to restore faults on the core network at 7.5 hours. Expenditure is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 27.4%, from R437.6 million in 2023/24 to R904.3 million in 2026/27.

This is mainly due to an increase in payments to access network providers as South Africa Connect Phase 2 is rolled out using one-off allocations in 2024/25 and 2025/26, and an increase in expenditure on capital investments. BBI planned to spend a total of R2.6 billion over the MTEF period on capital expenditure, particularly fibre networks and points presence.

The entity plans to maintain its approved number of personnel at 117 over the medium term. Compensation of employees is set to increase at an average annual rate of 4.9%, from R135.9 million in 2023/24 to R156.7 million in 2026/27. Revenue is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 7.9%, from R870.6 million in 2023/24 to R1.1 billion in 2026/27, mostly due to the receipt of funding for the implementation of the South Africa Connect project, which accounts for a projected R1.3 billion in revenue over the MTEF period.

Film and Publication Board (FPB)

The FPB was established in terms of the Films and Publications Act, 1996 (Act 65 of 1996), as amended. Its mandate is to regulate the creation, production, possession and distribution of certain publications and films by classifying them; imposing age restrictions on content; and making the exploitative use of children in pornographic publications, films or online material punishable.

Since the operationalisation of the Films and Publications Amendment Act, 2019 (Act 11 of 2019) in 2022, the board is also mandated to issue, renew and revoke licences; impose fines and make recommendations for criminal prosecution to the National Director of Public Prosecutions; search and inspect premises; and stop illegal online activities.

Over the MTEF period, the board aims to focus on implementing its digital roadmap strategy and enforcing industry compliance by continuing to monitor online platforms. To ensure appropriate content regulation and research and development in the film, gaming and other publication industries, R50.3 million is allocated over the medium term. An amount of R273.3 million over the period ahead is earmarked for improving and maintaining organisational governance, risk management and internal control to create a high-performing, digitised organisation.

Compensation of employees accounts for an estimated 50,4% of total expenditure, increasing at an average annual rate of 7,3%, from R73.2 million in 2023/24 to R90.4 million in 2026/27. This is due to inflationary increases as well as the reskilling of staff who will enter higher salary bands in priority positions as the board builds capacity for its expanded mandate. Accordingly, expenditure is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 12,6%, from R132.7 million in 2023/24 to R189.7 million in 2026/27.

This increase is in line with projected revenue and will be supported through the revenue enhancement unit that was operationalised on 1 May 2023. As the amended act has increased the scope of material to be licensed, self-generated revenue is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 41,3% over the medium term. The board expects to derive 66,1% (R323.5 million) of its revenue over the period ahead through transfers from the department and the remainder through fees charged for classification and registration.

Independent Communications Authority of South Africa (ICASA)

The ICASA was established by the ICASA Act of 2000 to regulate the South African communications, broadcasting and postal services sectors. The regulator's mandate is defined in the ECA of 2005 as licensing and regulating electronic communications and broadcasting services, and in the Postal Services Act of 1998 as regulating the postal services sector. Enabling legislation also empowers the regulator to monitor licensee compliance with licence terms and conditions, develop regulations for the three sectors, plan and manage the radio frequency spectrum, and protect consumers in relation to these services.

Over the medium term, the regulator will continue to focus on its regulatory activities in the communications,

broadcasting and postal services sectors. It will proceed with the next phase of licensing high-demand spectrum in 2024/25, and monitor 255 broadcast licences and produce six tariff analysis reports over the medium term. Spending on compensation of employees accounts for an estimated 75,8% (R1.2 billion) of total expenditure, increasing at an average annual rate of 4,7%, from R359.2 million in 2023/24 to R412.3 million in 2026/27.

The authority receives almost all of its revenue over the medium term (R1.5 billion) through transfers from the department. Revenue is expected to increase in line with expenditure.

National Electronic Media Institute of South Africa (NEMISA)

The NEMISA was established as a non-profit institute for education in terms of the Companies Act, 1973 (Act 61 of 1973) and is listed as a schedule 3A public entity in terms of the Public Finance Management Act, 1999 (Act 1 of 1999). The institute's programmes are structured to enhance the market readiness of students in a wide range of broadcasting disciplines. The institute is responsible for the implementation of digital programmes, including the development of South Africans' digital skills capacity.

The entity's expanded mandate includes providing digital skills and training through identified partnerships with government, education, business and civil society. Identified digital skills priority areas include government e-enablement, creative new media industries, e-inclusion and social innovation. As such, the institute aims to train a total of 310 000 learners in digital literacy and 42 000 small, medium and micro enterprises in digital entrepreneurship between 2024/25 and 2026/27.

In line with its expanded mandate, the entity's organisational structure was revised from 48 positions in 2022/23 to 98 in 2024/25. Spending on compensation of employees is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 4,5%, from R46.4 million in 2023/24 to R53 million in 2026/27. Transfers and subsidies to higher education institutions to fund e-skills projects account for an estimated 15,9% (R41.2 million) of spending over the period ahead.

The institute is set to derive 96,3% (R304.2 million) of its revenue over the medium term through transfers from the department and the balance through fees for training and development. Revenue is expected to decrease at an average annual rate of 0,6%, from R109.6 million in 2023/24 to R107.6 million in 2026/27 due to higher spending in 2023/24 as a result of National Treasury-approved retention of surplus funds from the previous financial year.

Sentech

Sentech was established in terms of the Sentech Act, 1996 (Act 63 of 1996) is listed as a schedule 3B public entity in the PFMA of 1999 and derives its mandate from the ECA of 2005. It is responsible for providing broadcasting signal distribution services to licensed television and radio broadcasters. In 2002, following the deregulation of the telecommunications sector, Sentech was licensed to provide international voice-based telecommunications and multimedia services.

Over the MTEF period, the entity will focus on achieving the objectives of its public service mandate while ensuring its financial sustainability. It will continue to operate an estimated 330 terrestrial distribution sites and satellite platforms to provide customers with content, multimedia and connectivity services. However, these operations will cease as all analogue transmitters are shut down in the migration to digital terrestrial television, which is expected to be completed in 2023/24.

The entity plans to ensure that it provides digital television coverage to 99% of households each year over the medium term. To ensure a high-quality, stable network and replace obsolete equipment, the entity plans to spend R923.6 million on the acquisition of property, plant and equipment over the MTEF period. Spending on goods and services accounts for an estimated 34,3% (R1.6 billion) of expenditure over the period ahead, mostly for service expenses such as satellite costs, which have increased in recent years due to exchange rate fluctuations. This trend is expected to persist.

Compensation of employees accounts for an estimated 29,4% (R1.4 billion) of the entity's budget, spending on which is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 4,2%, from R433.6 million in 2022/23 to R490.9 million in 2025/26. The entity expects to derive 95,7% (R4.8 billion) of its revenue over the MTEF period through fees for television, radio and streaming services, and the remainder through other sources such as rental income. Revenue is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 3,2%, from R1.6 billion in 2022/23 to R1.7 billion in 2025/26.

South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC)

The SABC derives its mandate from the Broadcasting Act of 1999 and is listed as a Schedule 2 public entity in the PFMA of 1999. The corporation is mandated to provide broadcasting and information services through a wide range of programming that displays South African talent in educational and entertainment programmes; offer diverse views through a variety of news, information and analysis; and advance national and public interests through popular sports.

Over the medium term, the corporation will continue to transform its programming, operations and management. It will also explore other revenue opportunities through the introduction of its own streaming and satellite services and seek to increase revenue generated from advertising. The corporation will work with the department on legislative and regulatory interventions to assist with its long-term sustainability and will continue to focus on implementing its turnaround plan to ensure financial sustainability.

Expenditure is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 6,4%, from R7 billion in 2021/22 to R8.5 billion in 2024/25, driven by increased investment in content, audience research and broadcasting costs. Compensation of the corporation's estimated 2 699 employees accounts for 33% (R7.7 billion) of its projected spending over the medium term.

As the corporation is mostly self-funding, transfers from the department account for an estimated 2,9% (R663.2 million) of revenue over the medium term, while proceeds from television licence fees account for an estimated 15,9% (R3.8 billion). The remaining 81,2% (R20.2 billion) is expected to be generated by advertising and other commercial activities. Total revenue is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 10,9%, from R6.4 billion in 2021/22 to R8.8 billion in 2024/25.

South African Post Office (SAPO)

The SAPO is a government business enterprise established to provide postal and related services to the public. It is a schedule 2 public entity in terms of the Public Finance Management Act of 1999 and derives its mandate from the Postal Services Act of 1998 and the South African Post Office SOC Ltd Act of 2011.

The Postal Services Act of 1998 provides for the regulation of postal services and the operational functions of the post office, including universal service obligations, and grants it an exclusive mandate to conduct postal services in the reserved sector for items such as letters, postcards and parcels weighing less than 1 kilogram. Over the medium term, the post office will focus on providing universal access to postal and related services, and implementing the Post Office of Tomorrow strategy to improve its financial position.

The strategy focuses on improving the company's logistics business through partnering with various service and technology providers; modernising postal services through digital postal services and new payment channels; relaunching the post office trust centre; providing government authentication services such as secure digital certificates, secure digital signature apps, and a digital commissioner of oaths; establishing digital business hubs; and modernising the post office through new equipment, processes and capabilities.

These interventions are expected to increase revenue while reducing costs due to improved efficiencies. An amount of R1.6 billion is allocated over the MTEF period for the company to maintain 1 919 points of presence, including post offices and retail postal agencies, and provide postal services in areas that have been historically neglected. The main cost drivers are compensation of employees, accounting for an estimated 54,1% (R8 billion) of total spending.

Expenditure is expected to decrease at an average annual rate of 14,4%, from R6.8 billion in 2022/23 to R4.3 billion in 2025/26, driven mainly by reduced spending on compensation of employees and goods and services as a result of the staff optimisation project and other restructuring. This is expected to result in a decrease in personnel from 14 155 in 2022/23 to a projected 8 383 in 2025/26.

The company generates revenue through postal and courier services, and fees for financial transactions. The post office has projected a net loss of R2.1 billion in 2023/24, improving to a profit of R206.7 million in 2025/26 due to the implementation of the Post Office of Tomorrow strategy.

Accordingly, revenue is expected to decrease at an average annual rate of 6,2% over the medium term. The company will continue to pursue potential revenue-generating opportunities in the government, courier and financial services sectors over the period ahead as it seeks to improve its financial position.

State Information Technology Agency (SITA)

The SITA was established through the SITA Act, 1998 (Act 88 of 1998). The agency is mandated to provide IT, information systems and related services to and on behalf of government departments and organs of state. This includes the provision and maintenance of transversal information, data-processing systems and their associated services, the maintenance of secure information systems, and the execution of its functions according to approved policies and standards.

Over the medium term, the agency will continue to focus on strategic projects related to digitisation, digitalisation and modernisation. This will include projects such as creating a collaborative and shared digital services platform for government departments, modernising legacy systems in government departments, the South Africa Connect project and the provision of cloud services for government. Spending on goods and services accounts for an estimated 62,2% (R13.7 billion) of the agency's expenditure over the medium term, mainly for the provision of IT services.

Compensation of employees accounts for an estimated 33% (R7.6 billion) of total expenditure over this period as the agency requires highly skilled personnel to fulfil its mandate. As the implementation of strategic projects such as South Africa Connect and cloud infrastructure requires substantial capital investment, R3.2 billion over the medium term is earmarked for the acquisition of assets. Total expenditure is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 8,9%, from R6.3 billion in 2023/24 to R8.1 billion in 2026/27, due to a general increase in the cost of products and services, as well as maintenance costs for facilities and computer equipment.

The agency generates revenue by providing ICT infrastructure and services to government departments and organs of state. Revenue is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 10%, from R6.7 billion in 2023/24 to R8.9 billion in 2026/27, due to the agency adding new customers and revenue streams such as providing cybersecurity and cloud services.

Universal Service and Access Agency of South Africa (USAASA)

The USAASA was established in terms of Section 80 of the ECA of 2005 as a statutory body and is listed as a Schedule 3A public entity in terms of the PFMA of 1999. Its sole mandate is to promote universal service and access to electronic communications services, electronic communications network services and broadcasting services. The agency is allocated a total budget of R263.7 million over the Its sole mandate is to promote universal service and access to electronic communications and broadcasting services.

Over the MTEF period, the agency will continue to manage the Universal Service and Access Fund to ensure that it reaches intended qualifying beneficiaries in line with its legislative mandate. To ensure that the fund is managed effectively and efficiently, the agency plans to set up tools and mechanisms to improve internal control systems and processes. The entity is set to be disestablished towards the end of the MTEF period, in line with the ECA of 2005 and directives from the department.

Expenditure is expected to decrease at an average annual rate of 4,2%, from R101.5 million in 2023/24 to R89.3 million in 2026/27, due to higher expenditure in 2023/24 on items such as legal services as a result of National Treasury's approval to retain surplus funds from 2022/23. The agency expects to derive its entire budget over the medium term through transfers from the department.

Universal Service and Access Fund (USAF)

The USAF was established in terms of Section 89 (1) of the ECA of 2005, and is listed as a Schedule 3A public entity in the PFMA of 1999. The fund's sole mandate is to subsidise ICT equipment and services, and electronic communications and broadcasting networks for needy people in underserviced areas. It is managed by the Universal Service and Access Agency of South Africa.

The fund has two priority projects over the MTEF period: broadcasting digital migration, and broadband infrastructure and connectivity in identified districts in line with its approved funding model. These projects aim to subsidise qualifying beneficiaries with universal access to digital audio-visual broadcasting and internet connectivity. The fund plans to conclude the broadcasting digital migration project over the medium term and thereby enable the release of much-needed radio spectrum, and provide aftermarket support to all qualifying beneficiaries who encounter problems with their set-top boxes.

Expenditure is set to decrease at an average annual rate of 67,2%, from R1.6 billion in 2023/24 to R57.5 million in 2026/27, due to the conclusion of the broadcasting digital migration project. The projected deficit of R1.1 billion in 2024/25 is due to the spending of funds retained from previous financial years with the approval of National Treasury in terms of section 53(3) of the Public Finance Management Act (1999), which is
expected to be mostly used in 2024/25 for activities related to broadcasting digital migration.

The fund is set to derive all of its revenue, amounting to an estimated R165.1 million over the medium, through transfers from the department

Programmes and projects

National e-Government Strategy and Roadmap

The e-government or digital government concept is the innovative use of communications technologies (including mobile devices), websites, apps and other ICT services and platforms to link citizens and the public sector, and facilitate collaborative and efficient governance. ICT is perceived as a key enabler to governments globally, in efforts to deliver better services and efficiency while enhancing their relationship with citizens and business.

The NDP stipulates that by 2030, government will make extensive use of ICT to engage with and provide services to citizens. This will be achieved through an enabling, coordinated and integrated e-Strategy that cuts across government departments and sectors. The purpose of the National e-Government Strategy and Roadmap is to guide the digital transformation of South Africa into an inclusive digital society where all citizens can benefit from the opportunities offered by digital technologies to improve their quality of life. This strategy defines a renewed approach and programme of action that will radically improve the electronic government situation in South Africa.

Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR)

The 4IR has necessitated that countries develop new policies, strategies and innovation plans to enable an inclusive developmental approach that will comprise of the representatives of a cross-section of stakeholders, including the public sector, business, academia and research institutions, experts, labour, SMMEs, youth, women and non-governmental organisations. In essence, South African policies, strategies and plans should seek to advance the goals of inclusivity and shared growth. A core short-term focus of South Africa's national response will be on the impact of the changing technological landscape on the economy and employment.

The country needs a more broad-based approach that looks at the threats and opportunities that technological change and convergence will have on South Africa's other development imperatives. This includes economic infrastructure, environmental sustainability and transitioning to a low-carbon economy, an integrated and inclusive rural economy, human settlements, education, training and innovation, health, social protection, safer communities, and building a capable and developmental state.

The DCDT's priorities are anchored in an endeavour to prepare South Africa for the 4IR. Key initiatives in this regard include coordinating the establishment of the Presidential Advisory Commission on the 4IR to ensure that the country is in a position to seize opportunities and manage the challenges of rapid advances in ICT. The commission acts as an advisory body that ensures that South Africa leverages on the benefits of the latest technology by coordinating and planning across the industries and sectors that will underpin the drive towards the 4IR.

Its work is centred on eight work streams dealing with the impact of technological advancement on human capital and the future of work as well as social and economic development. The 30-member commission, chaired by President Cyril Ramaphosa, comprises eminent persons from different sectors of society and reflects a balance in gender, youth, labour and business, including digital startups as well as digital entrepreneurships.

The commission's objectives are to:

- develop an Integrated Country Strategy and plan to respond to the 4IR, including detailed interventions to be carried out to achieve global competitiveness of the key economic sectors (agriculture, finance, mining, manufacturing, ICT, and science, technology and innovation);
- advise on a technology research and development programme to advance the 4IR;
- advise on strategies for skills development and the future of work;
- make recommendations on enabling relevant infrastructure for the country to participate in the digital economy; and
- make recommendations on an institutional framework and mechanism to coordinate 4IR programmes.

The commission also serves as a platform to address challenges identified through research and consultation, and ensures that ICTs are regarded as drivers in creating jobs, through innovations and development of ICT SMMEs. The 4IR Commission Report, published in 2020, has identified eight key priorities that are important for the country to focus on, both for government and the private sector, as well as civil society.

Among the areas of focus highlighted in the report is investment in human capital, establishing an AI institute and the establishment of a platform for advanced manufacturing. The report also highlighted the importance of government to secure data for it to be used commercially for, among others, innovation by small businesses. The commission recommended that government incentivise future industries, platforms and application technologies.

4IR ICT Skills Programme

The DCDT, through the Media, Information and Communication Technology Sector Education and Training Authority, has launched the 4IR Skills Programme as part of its efforts to create one million new jobs by 2030. The programme, which provides skills in key 4IR domains, namely data science, 3D printing, cloud computing, drone piloting, software development, cyber security and digital content production, is in partnership with Deviare, Microsoft, Cisco and Leaders in Motion Academy.

Deviare has developed an online platform, 4IRSkills.Africa, to initiate recruitment of learners for the programme. 4IRSkills.Africa is an active platform for building the capability and capacity for future digital skills that can be applied across sectors in Africa. The learning methodology promotes blended, high touch and outcome-orientated learning, giving learners the opportunity to access training anywhere, anytime, through virtual classrooms, access to global teaching assistants and mentorship programmes.

National Digital and Future Skills Strategy

The combined impact of digital technology trends, such as the Internet of Things (IoT), big data, robotics, and AI, is changing the ways in which people, economies and societies operate. The ability of countries, organisations and individuals to participate in the growing social and economic revolution, to benefit from and to be enriched by it, increasingly depends on the acquisition and deployment of digital skills.

Globally and locally, the mining, manufacturing and services sectors are in the process of being transformed by digital automation, AI and a range of other digital technologies. Furthermore, government entities, private sector firms and development institutions increasingly rely on digital technologies to drive economic growth, promote social development and provide cultural enrichment. Legacy skills, and even existing ICT skills, are becoming obsolete, while new digital skills are in short supply.

This means that countries seeking to advance the competitiveness of their key economic sectors and public services need to adopt a continual skills upgrade approach, where both ordinary citizens and research specialists acquire and advance their digital skills as part of a broad spectrum of 21st century skills. The whole of society must become digitally adoptive and digitally adaptive to ensure digital inclusivity for future generations.

The challenges implied by these ongoing developments, therefore, require that South Africa adopts a clear and comprehensive digital and future skills strategy in order to foster the country's ability to engage with, compete within, and benefit from the emergent digital revolution, also referred to as the 4IR. The National Digital and Future Skills Strategy envisages a society of digitally skilled South Africans.

It sets out a structured series of initiatives intended to contribute to the capacities of South Africans to meet the challenges arising from the increasing deployment and adoption of digital technologies in the economy and society, understanding that the digital revolution (using cloud technologies that enable big data; bringing virtual and augmented reality into a real world environment; introducing autonomous vehicles and drones; making IoT, AI, robotics and 3D printing part of everyday life) occurs within the context of the broader 4IR (working with advanced materials, biotechnology innovations, and the wider landscape of scientific innovation).

The combined impact of these technology trends is having a substantial impact on the world of work, on schooling, education and research, and on individuals and communities. The strategy presents a vision of a South Africa in which all its people are able to benefit from enhanced digital skills, thereby contributing to a significantly enhanced quality of life, improved education and higher economic growth. Digital skills are one of the key skills sets required for the creation of new kinds of 21st century jobs. Originality, agility, critical thinking and problem-solving are important 21st century skills that must be interwoven with digital skills.

The strategy elements needed to realise that the digital skills vision will need to be undertaken by a range of stakeholders, including government, the private sector, and educational institutions. All these stakeholders need to engage in continuous, structured consultation, collaboration and coordination. The strategy is underpinned by current research and its implementation will be assessed through ongoing monitoring and evaluation.

Positioning South Africa as a global ICT leader

The DCDT's international programme is focused on positioning South Africa as a global ICT leader; influencing the debates and decisions of multilateral organisations in favour of the national interest and development agenda; increasing investment in the economy; and promoting South African business and technological capabilities. South Africa was elected to the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) Council for the period 2019 – 2022.

The ICASA Radio Communications Manager, Mandla Mchunu, representing South Africa, was elected to the Radio Regulations Board of the ITU for the period 2019 – 2022. South Africa was also elected to the African Telecommunications Union Council for the same period.

As a legacy of the ITU Telecom World, the DCDT has launched a Digital Transformation Centre whose objective is to incubate enterprise talent and harness innovation. With the support from the ITU, the World Economic Forum and other partners, the centre will assist the entry and growth of SMMEs in various aspects of these future communication systems and networks, focusing on management of intellectual property rights, standardisation, conformance testing, and SMME innovation. It will further support the production and usage of ICT technologies and break the current monopolies in the electronic manufacturing industry.

The international branch of the DCDT continues to be the primary vehicle through which the department pursues



government's priority of contributing to a better South Africa and a safer Africa in a better world. The country also served as a member of the Universal Postal Union (UPU) Council of Administration for a second term, 2017 – 2020. It was also responsible for chairing a new committee dealing with strategy. South Africa has contributed significantly to the UPU's work in developing national address systems. The country's use of global positioning systems to allocate addresses to people in rural and undeveloped areas has proved critical.

Internet

The internet is a vital resource to access information and to communicate with others. Having access to the Internet has become so ubiquitous that it is difficult to imagine how access has expanded over the years.

According to Statistics South Africa's (Stats SA) General Household Survey (GHS) of 2023, the percentage of households who could access the internet through a fixed connection (be it dial-up, ADSL or, more recently, fibre) has remained relatively stable between 2010 and 2021, before increasing slightly to 14,5% in 2023. By contrast, mobile broadband – connecting to the internet through a cell phone – increased by 50,6 percentage points over the same period, growing from 28,0% in 2010 to 78,6% in 2023.

More than three-quarters (78,6%) of South African households had at least one member who had access to or used the Internet at one or more locations such as their homes, work, place of study, internet cafés, or at public hot spots. Internet access using all available means was highest in the Western Cape (88,1%) and Gauteng (81,9%), and lowest in Limpopo (69,7%) and the Eastern Cape (70,2%).

About 14,5% of South African households had access to fixed internet at home. Access to the internet at home was highest among households in Western Cape (40,1%) and Gauteng (21,5%), and lowest in Mpumalanga (3,1%) and Limpopo (4,5%). Just over seven-tenths (72,6%) of households could access the internet using mobile technology. Access to public Wi-Fi spots was highest in the Western Cape (14,9%) and Gauteng (11,3%) and lowest in the Eastern Cape (1,6%) and Limpopo (1,9%).

A larger percentage of households in metropolitan areas (84,7%) could access the internet than South African households in general (78,6%). Almost three-quarters (74,6%) of metro residents had access to mobile internet (compared to 72,6% of South African households in general), while 23,8% of metropolitan households had a fixed internet connection at home (compared to 14,5% of South African households in general). It is notable that 44,2% of households had fixed internet at home in Cape Town, compared to 25,8% in Nelson Mandela Bay, 23,5% in Tshwane and 22,9% in Johannesburg.

Household access to the internet at home was highest in the Western Cape (40,1%) and Gauteng (21,5%) and lowest in Mpumalanga (3,1%) and Limpopo (4,5%). While 23,8% of households in metropolitan areas had access to the internet at home, this was true for only 1,7% of rural households in general and less than 1% of rural households in KwaZulu-Natal (0,4%), the Eastern Cape (0,5%) and the North West (0,7%). A large percentage of households accessed the internet at work (14%) and at internet cafés or at educational institutions(11,6%).

Households in the Western Cape (22,3%) and Gauteng (18,3%) were most likely to access the internet at work, while only 5,4% of households in Limpopo and the North West accessed the internet at work.

Using mobile devices to access the Internet includes access on cellular telephones or using mobile access devices such as 3G cards. It is clear from Table 14.3 that mobile access to the Internet has made it much more accessible to households in rural areas. Nationally, Internet access using mobile devices (72,6%) was the most common form of access to the Internet. Although the use of mobile Internet devices in rural areas (66,3%) still lags behind its use in urban (76,1%) and metro areas (74,6%), it is much more common in rural areas than any of the alternative methods.

Social media

South Africa has 43.5 million internet users; of these, 35.15 million are social media users.

According to World Wide Worx, South Africa's leading independent technology research and strategy organisation, with a focus on technology in business strategy, in comparing the top five social media platforms used in 2022 and 2023, several trends become apparent. Facebook remains the most popular platform among respondents, with usage increasing from 56.7% in 2022 to 59.6% in 2023. This slight growth indicates that Facebook continues to maintain a strong user base.

TikTok follows as the second most popular platform, showing a significant rise in usage from 30.6% in 2022 to 34.0% in 2023. This growth reflects TikTok's increasing popularity, likely due to its engaging short-form video content that continues to attract a wide audience. Instagram, although still among the top three, experienced a slight decline in usage, dropping from 27.6% in 2022 to 26.9% in 2023.

This suggests that while Instagram remains a key player in the social media landscape, its growth may be plateauing as it faces competition from other platforms.

Twitter also saw a noticeable decline in its user base, with usage decreasing from 22.5% in 2022 to 18.8% in 2023.

This drop could be attributed to various factors, including changes in user preferences and possibly the impact of new features or policies on the platform.

LinkedIn rounds out the top five, with its usage declining from 14.7% in 2022 to 12.2% in 2023. The decrease in LinkedIn usage might indicate a shift in how respondents are utilising professional networking sites or the emergence of alternative platforms for professional connections. Overall, the data highlights the dynamic nature of social media usage, with some platforms gaining traction while others experience a decline in popularity.

Online retail

According to World Wide Worx, online retail in South Africa more than doubled in just two years, due to the explosion in demand for home deliveries brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. Online Retail in South Africa 2021, a study conducted by World Wide Worx with the support of Mastercard, Standard Bank and Platinum Seed, shows that the total growth for online retail in South Africa in 2020 came to 66%, bringing the total of online retail in the country to R30.2 billion. According to the study, the categories experiencing the highest growth, aside from data and airtime top-up, were clothing, at 56%, and groceries, at 54%.

Cybercrime and cybersecurity

Cyberspace comes with new types of challenges to governments of the world and it, therefore, introduces a further dimension to national security. The cyberworld is a borderless platform that enables more sophisticated threats such as cybercrime, cyberterrorism, cyberwar and cyber-espionage. For this reason, cyberthreats need to be addressed at both the global and national levels.

The National Cybersecurity Hub is South Africa's National Computer Security Incident Response Team, and strives to make cyberspace an environment where all South Africans can safely communicate, socialise, and transact in confidence. It offers alerts and warnings, announcements, security-related information dissemination, incident-handling and incident response support as services to its constituents.

These services can be categorised as proactive, reactive and social services. Incidents are logged via the National



Cybersecurity Hub website and depending on their evaluation, they are timeously resolved or escalated to other agencies for further investigation.

Mobile communications

South Africa has one of the largest telecommunications markets on the continent. It has four mobile operators, namely Cell C, MTN, Vodacom and Telkom Mobile. Mobile phones are the dominant technology for voice and data communication among base of pyramid (BoP) users and for informal businesses. People in this group access the Internet mostly via their mobile phones and smartphones because they have taken over functions that used to be performed by computers. Users are also finding innovative ways to bypass expensive cellphone SMS rates by using Facebook Zero or other instant message services such as WhatsApp.

Although half of the South African population lives below the poverty line, more than 75% of those in low-income groups, who are 15 years or older, own a mobile phone. In terms of mobile ownership at the BoP, households with an income of less than R432 per month, per household member, is relatively high, compared to other African countries. This is according to research commissioned by infoDev, a global partnership programme within the World Bank Group, about the use of mobile phones amongst BoP users.

According to Statistics South Africa's General Household Survey of 2023, nationally, only 3,8% of households did not have access to either landlines or cellular phones while only 0,1% of South African households exclusively used landlines. By comparison, 91,2% of South African households exclusively use cellular phones.

The exclusive use of cellular phones was most common in Mpumalanga (95,1%) and Limpopo (94,1%), and least common in the Northern Cape (86,3%). Households that used both cellular phones and landlines were most common in the Western Cape (6,9%).

PostNet

PostNet is South Africa's largest privately-owned counter network in the document and parcel industry, trading across more than 400 owner-managed retail stores. It serves in excess of 70 000 walk-in customers per day, countrywide. There are five product types within PostNet: courier, copy and print, digital, stationery and mailboxes.

The media

South Africa has vibrant and independent media. According to the Bill of Rights, everyone has the right to freedom of expression, which includes:

- freedom of the press and other media;
- freedom to receive or impart information or ideas;
- freedom of artistic creativity; and
- academic freedom and freedom of scientific research.

Several laws, policies and organisations act to protect and promote press freedom in South Africa.

Radio

Radio is a great communications medium and still enjoys the broadest reach of any media category in South Africa. The diversity of stations, formats, voices and offerings ensures that most of the public's needs are catered for. It also fulfils a vital need for information and entertainment, with relatively low costs to the distributors and the listeners. As a communication medium, radio has very few barriers to access. SABC radio has more than 25 million listeners weekly in South Africa.

The fact that radio cuts across boundaries of illiteracy strengthens the importance of the medium to the consumer and the advertiser. The SABC's national radio network comprises 18 radio stations, of which 15 are dedicated specifically to public service broadcasting.

These include 11 full-spectrum stations, one in each of the official languages of South Africa: a cultural service for the Indian community broadcasting in English; a regional community station broadcasting in isiXhosa and English; and a community station broadcasting in the !Xu and Khwe languages of the Khoisan people of the Northern Cape.

The SABC has three stations in its commercial portfolio. These are 5FM, Metro FM and Good Hope FM. Channel Africa broadcasts live on three platforms: shortwave, satellite and the Internet. Its broadcasts are in Chinyanja, Silozi, Kiswahili, English, French and Portuguese.

Commercial radio stations

Commercial radio stations in South Africa include:

- YFM
- 702 Talk Radio
- Metro FM
- 5FM
- Channel Africa
- Good Hope FM
- 567 Cape Talk
- Radio 2000
- Capricorn FM
- Radio KFM
- Lotus FM
- X-K FM
- TruFM
- RSG
- Power 98.7

Radio platforms such as 94.2 Jacaranda FM, 94.7 Highveld Stereo, OFM, Algoa FM, Classic FM, Kaya FM and East Coast Radio were initially SABC stations, but were sold to private owners to diversify radio ownership in South Africa as part of the transformation of the public broadcaster. Many of South Africa's radio stations are also available online.

Community radio

Community broadcasting remains an important project for the South African Government. From the early days of Cape Town's Bush Radio, Africa's oldest community radio station project, to today's broadcasting landscape which boasts more than 200 stations across the country's nine provinces, community radio has provided communities with an indispensable platform from which to raise awareness of their grassroots issues, irrespective of race, gender, disability or economic class.

Still a relatively youthful sector, community radio can trace its origins back to Bush Radio, the idea for which started in the 1980s when community activists and alternative media producers explored ways in which media could be used for social upliftment.

The radio was officially formed in 1992, broadcasting illegally, following numerous attempts to apply for a broadcast licence from the apartheid government. It was, however, only after the first democratic elections of 1994 that South Africa saw the liberalisation of the airwaves with the establishment of an independent regulator, the Independent Broadcasting Authority, now the ICASA.

Television

The SABC's TV network comprises of three free-to-air channels and two other channels carried on a subscription digital satellite network. South African TV is broadcast in all 11 official languages and in sign language. According to the GHS of 2021, about 27,3% of households owned one or more computers, while 87,7% owned televisions and 87,3% owned refrigerators. Households in urban and metropolitan areas were much more likely to own any of these assets than households in rural areas.

Community TV

Soweto TV was the first community TV station to obtain a seven-year broadcasting licence from ICASA in 2007. Since then, more seven-year licences have been issued to stations operating in Soweto, Cape Town, Tshwane, Empangeni and Nelson Mandela Bay. The issuing of new community TV licences is on hold until the migration from analogue to digital broadcasting is complete.

Free-to-Air TV

eMedia Holdings owns e.tv – South Africa's first private, free-to-air TV channel, launched in 1998. It is the largest English-medium channel in the country and third-largest overall. e.tv also has a pan-African presence through e.tv Africa, which is distributed on the DStv Africa bouquet and by local affiliates in African countries. The company launched a 24-hour news channel on the DStv platform, eNews Channel Africa (eNCA) in 2008.

Satellite broadcasting

MultiChoice started as the subscriber management arm of M-Net. It is the leading multichannel digital satellite TV operator across the African continent. MultiChoice provides its DStv services to different market segments. The DStv bouquets cater for different lifestyles and pockets, from entry level to premium.

StarSat offers three main packages and multiple add-on packages that viewers can use to customise their experience. eSat.tv (branded eNCA) supplies TV, mobile and online news to various channels in South Africa, including the 24-hour eNCA (Channel 403). The company provides live news bulletins to viewers each night on e.tv in English, on eKasi+ in IsiZulu (available on OpenView HD) and on kykNET through eNuus in Afrikaans (available on DStv). Newzroom Afrika is a premier South African 24-hour TV news channel on the DStv Platform (Channel 405).

Print

Technical handling of the print media in South Africa rates among the best in the world. This is one reason why newspapers and magazines have held their own in a volatile information era, characterised by the vast development of various new forms of media-delivery platforms via the Internet.

Newspapers

Most South African newspapers and magazines are organised into
several major publishing houses. These include:

- Media24 (part of Naspers, the largest media group in Africa);
- Independent News & Media (Pty) Ltd Group;
- Caxton Publishers & Printers Ltd; and
- Arena Holdings.

Other important media players include:

- M&G Media Ltd;
- The Natal Witness Printing & Publishing Company (Pty) Ltd;
- Primedia Publishing Ltd;
- Ramsay Media; and
- Kagiso Media.

Some of the prominent daily and weekly newspapers in South Africa include *The Sunday Times; Citizen; Sowetan; The Daily Sun; The Witness; Sunday World; City Press; The Weekly Mail and Guardian; Beeld; Pretoria News; The Star; Die Burger; The Cape Argus; Cape Times; Son; Daily Dispatch; The Herald; The Daily News; The Mercury; The Witness; Business Day; Die Volksblad; Diamond Fields Advertiser; Isolezwe; Rapport; Sunday Tribune; Ilanga; The Post, and Soccer Laduma*.

Magazines

Some of the prominent magazines in South Africa are: *The Financial Mail; Finweek; Entrepreneur; Forbes Africa; Noseweek; BusinessBrief, Leadership; Farmer's Weekly; Landbouweekblad; Plaastoe; Veeplaas; Personal Finance; TV Plus; Drum; Huisgenoot; YOU; The Big Issue; Taalgenoot; Leisure; EasyDIY; Sarie Kos; Elle, Decoration; SA Home Owner; Tuis Home; VISI; Woolworths' Taste; Fresh Living /Kook en Kuier; Braintainment; Destiny Man; Blaque Magazine; GQ; Men's Health; Popular Mechanics; Stuff; Tjop & Dop; Amakhosi; Kick Off; Golf Digest; Compleat Golfer; Magnum's Game; Hunt / Wild; Jag; SA Hunter; Zigzag; Modern Athlete; CAR; Leisure Wheels; Drive Out / WegRy; Auto Trader; Bike SA; SA 4×4; Speed and Sound; Getaway; Weg / Go; Glamour; Elle; Fair Lady; Finesse; Destiny Magazine; Ideas/ Idees; Leef; Move!; True Love; Fitness Magazine; Kuier; Marie Claire; Sarie; Women's Health and Longevity*.

Media organisations and role players

The Publishers Support Services (PSS) is an umbrella body incorporating print and digital media. It is a natural progression from the long-established Print Media South Africa and illustrates its commitment as an interactive organisation to keeping pace with the fast-changing media world of the 21st century.

An evolving and vibrant association, its express purpose is to represent and promote all aspects concerning the industry and its members. PSS is a non-profit, voluntary association. Its membership includes more than 500 newspapers and magazine titles that cater for four different language groups. The South African National Editors' Forum promotes excellence in journalism through fighting for media freedom, writing policy submissions, research, education and training programmes.

The Forum of Journalists for Transformation addresses issues that directly affect its members. The Press Council, the Press Ombud and the Appeals Panel are independent co-regulatory mechanisms set up by the print and online media to provide impartial, expeditious and cost-effective adjudication to settle disputes between newspapers, magazines and online publications, on the one hand, and members of the public, on the other, over the editorial content of publications.

The Freedom of Expression Institute (FXI) was formed to defend freedom of expression, to oppose censorship, to promote access to information and knowledge, and to promote media diversity. The FXI is the leading organisation on issues of freedom of expression and access to information as enshrined in the Bill of Rights in Section 16 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa of 1996.

The Forum of Community Journalists (FCJ) is an independent, non-profit, non-racial and voluntary organisation that strives to promote and express the interests of all journalists. Membership is open to journalists employed on a permanent or freelance basis at regional community newspapers, magazines and online community publications in South Africa.

The Broadcasting Complaints Commission of South Africa (BCCSA) serves as a voluntary watchdog to adjudicate complaints from the public about programmes flighted by members who subscribe to its code of conduct. The National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) was established in 1993 as a membership-based voluntary association to foster and promote the development of a sustainable and robust broadcasting system in South Africa. It is the only industry association in the country that represents all three tiers of the regulated broadcasting industry.

Its members include the public broadcaster (SABC), commercial broadcasters (Multichoice, e.tv, StarSat, Primedia, Kagiso Media, AME, amongst others) and community broadcasters (Bush Radio, Jozi FM, Radio Pulpit, Voice of Wits, Radio Tygerberg, Tshwane FM and others). The NAB's mission is to engage with policymakers and regulators to advocate for a level playing field and an industry that is grounded in the principles of democracy, diversity and freedom of expression.

The NAB established the BCCSA, which has been recognised by the ICASA since 1995. The commercial members of the NAB are funders of the Media Development and Diversity Agency and the NAB collaborates with NEMISA on training for the sector. Media Monitoring Africa is a non-profit organisation that acts in a watchdog role to promote ethical and fair journalism that supports human rights. The National Community Radio Forum lobbies for the airwaves in South Africa to be diversified, and for a dynamic broadcasting environment through the establishment of community radio stations.

Other press organisations operating in the country include the:

- Foreign Correspondents' Association of Southern Africa;
- Printing Industries Federation of South Africa;
- South African Typographical Union;
- South African Guild of Motoring Journalists;
- Professional Photographers of South Africa;
- Media Institute of Southern Africa; and
- Publishers' Association of South Africa.

News agencies

Local and international news agencies based in South Africa include:

- African News Agency;
- Reuters;
- Agence France-Presse;
- Associated Press;
- Deutsche Presse Agentur; and
- United Press International.

Journalism and Media Awards

Some of South Africa's Media Awards include the:

- Vodacom Journalist of the Year Awards;
- South African Breweries Environmental Media and Environmentalist of the Year Awards;
- Sanlam Group Awards for Excellence in Financial Journalism;
- CNN MultiChoice African Journalist Awards;
- Discovery Health Journalism Awards;
- Nat Nakasa Award;
- FCJ Excellence Awards;
- Isu Elihle Awards;
- Sikuvile Journalism Awards;
- South African Social Media Awards;
- SADC Media Awards; and
- New Generation (Social & Digital Media) Awards.

Marketing and Advertising Awards

South Africa has a vibrant and dynamic marketing and advertising industry. Some of the awards include: Loeries; Assegai Awards; Creative Circle Annual Awards; Effie Awards; FM AdFocus Awards and Marketing Achievement Awards.

Advertising

South Africa has a vibrant and dynamic advertising industry. Local advertising agencies are often recognised internationally for their excellence. The Marketing, Advertising and Communications SA (MAC SA) Charter Sector Council was launched by government in March 2022 to redress economic imbalances. The council has been tasked with broadening the meaningful participation of blacks, women, youth and people with disabilities in the marketing, advertising and communications (MAC) sector – not just as consumers but also as entrepreneurs.

It will monitor transformation of the sector by facilitating the implementation of the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (B-BBEE) Sector Code. The council is also tasked with building progressive partnerships that will unleash the creative abilities of professionals and technically skilled people in this sector and change MAC and society for the better.

The council has representatives from academia, government, the regulator, marketers, women, youth, and people with disability, public relations institutes, organised labour, outdoor media, industry associations and interactive marketers. The council will ensure that transformation in the sector is promoted, monitored and reported on annually in line with the provisions of the B-BBEE Act of 2003, as amended.

The council is responsible for, amongst others:

- Oversight over the implementation of the MAC Charter Sector Code;]
- Monitoring compliance with the MAC Charter Sector Code;
- Providing guidance on matters relating to B-BBEE in the MAC sector; and
- Engaging and advising the sector Minister, the Government Communication and Information System and other relevant regulatory entities regarding the MAC Charter Sector Code.

Advertising Standards Authority (ASA)

The ASA is the protector of the ethical standards of advertising in South Africa, and protects consumers against manipulative advertising and unfair claims. It is an independent body established and funded by the marketing communication industry to manage advertising in the public interest by means of self-regulation. The ASA cooperates with government, statutory bodies, consumer organisations and industry to ensure that advertising content complies with the Code of Advertising Practice.

The code is the ASA's guiding document, based on the International Code of Advertising Practice, prepared by the International Chamber of Commerce. Drawn up by the ASA with the participation of representatives of the marketing communication industry, the code is amended from time to time to meet the changing needs of the industry and the South African society.

Public relations

Public Relations Institute of Southern Africa (PRISA)

Established in 1957, the PRISA represents professionals in public relations and communication management throughout the southern African region and has registered practitioners in Botswana, Namibia, Lesotho, Eswatini and South Africa.

It is a founding member of the Global Alliance for Public Relations and Communication Management, and initiated the formation of the Council for Communication Management in South Africa. The council is the coordinating body representing various groupings of professionals in South Africa. PRISA plays a leading role in uniting professionals and driving transformation. As the recognised leader of the public relations and communication management profession in southern Africa and beyond, PRISA provides the southern African industry with the local professional advantage.





SOUTH AFRICA
YEARBOOK
2024/25

Education, Science and Innovation

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa of 1996, declares basic education as an inalienable basic human right for all South Africans. In 2015, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) adopted the global education agenda, Education 2030, which is part of the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that make up the Agenda 2030 for sustainable development. SDG 4 calls for an "inclusive, quality and equitable education and lifelong opportunities for all".

The National Development Plan (NDP) states that by 2030, South Africans should have access to education and training of the highest quality, leading to significantly improved learning outcomes. The education system will play a greater role in building an inclusive society, providing equal opportunities and helping all South Africans to realise their full potential. Education is governed by two national departments, namely the Department of Basic Education (DBE), which is responsible for primary and secondary schools, and the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET), which is responsible for tertiary education and vocational training.

Department of Basic Education (DBE)

The mandate of the DBE is to monitor the standards of the provision, delivery and performance of education annually or at other specified intervals across South Africa, with the objective of assessing compliance with the provisions of the Constitution and national education policy.

The department derives its mandate from the:

- National Education Policy Act, 1996 (Act 27 of 1996), which inscribes into law the policies and legislative and monitoring responsibilities of the Minister of Basic Education, and formal relations between national and provincial authorities;
- South African Schools Act, 1996 (Act 84 of 1996), which promotes access to education, supports quality and democratic governance in the schooling system, and makes schooling compulsory for children aged seven to 15 to ensure that all learners have access to quality education without discrimination; and
- Employment of Educators Act, 1998 (Act 76 of 1998), which regulates the professional, moral and ethical responsibilities of educators, and the competency requirements for teachers.

Over the medium term, the department aimed to continue focusing on: accelerating the delivery of and improving school infrastructure; providing educational opportunities to learners with severe to profound intellectual disabilities; enhancing teaching and learning by ensuring access to high-quality learner and teacher support materials; increasing the supply of quality teachers and preparing teachers to teach new subjects that will prepare learners for a changing world; improving the quality and reach of early childhood development (ECD) services; and providing nutritious meals for learners through the national school nutrition programme.

Transfers and subsidies, mostly for conditional grants to provinces, account for 85.3% (R86.8 billion) of the department's allocation over the MTEF period, increasing at an average annual rate of 5,9%, from R25.3 billion in 2023/24 to R30 billion in 2026/27.

Cabinet-approved reductions of R2.8 billion over the medium term are effected on various programmes, including the school infrastructure backlogs grant (R1.2 billion), the education infrastructure grant (R611 million), the Funza Lushaka bursary scheme (R397.9 million) and workbooks (R97 million). Total expenditure is set to increase at an average annual rate of 5,3%, from R30 billion in 2023/24 to R35.1 billion in 2026/27.

Improving school infrastructure

The department is committed to ensuring that all schools have safe and appropriate infrastructure. This is delivered through the education infrastructure grant and the school infrastructure backlogs grant, which account for 95,8% (R47.6 billion) of spending over the MTEF period in the Planning, Information and Assessment programme.

The education infrastructure grant's allocation of R42.3 billion over the period ahead will be transferred to provinces as supplementary funding to accelerate the construction, maintenance, upgrading and rehabilitation of new and existing infrastructure in the basic education sector. The school infrastructure backlogs grant addresses infrastructure backlogs at schools that do not meet the norms and standards for basic school infrastructure.

This grant is allocated R5.3 billion over the MTEF period, which will be used to replace a targeted 100 inappropriate and unsafe schools with newly built schools, and to provide water to 350 schools, sanitation to 320 schools and 220 additional classrooms to address overcrowding.

Cabinet-approved reductions of R1.2 billion to the school infrastructure backlogs grant and R611 million to the education infrastructure grant will result in projects that are still in the planning phase being delayed so that those currently being implemented can be completed.

Supporting learners with intellectual disabilities

The Learners with Profound Intellectual Disabilities Grant aims to improve the provision of quality education to learners with severe to profound intellectual disabilities. The grant is expected to provide access to quality publicly funded education to more than 13 000 such learners over the MTEF period through an allocation of R874.7 million in the Curriculum Policy, Support and Monitoring programme.

Providing high quality learning materials

Recognising that quality learning materials enhance the effectiveness of teaching and learning, the department plans to print and deliver grades R to 9 life skills, languages and mathematics workbooks to all public schools that request them. An estimated 60 million workbooks will be provided to about 9 million learners in each year of the MTEF period.

To fund this, R3.9 billion is allocated over the period ahead in the Curriculum and Quality Enhancement subprogramme in the Curriculum Policy, Support and Monitoring programme. Despite Cabinet-approved reductions of R97 million to the programme's budget over the MTEF period, the department still expects to print and distribute all workbooks requested by schools by maximising cost-saving measures, particularly on printing.

Increasing employment of quality teachers

The Funza Lushaka bursary scheme provides bursaries to prospective teachers to address critical educator shortages in priority subject areas such as inclusive education, mathematics, coding, robotics, and science and technology. Despite Cabinet-approved reductions to the programme's funding, which amount to R397.9 million over the MTEF period, the department plans to increase the number of bursaries awarded from 9 700 in 2024/25 to 10 300 in 2026/27.

This will be done by funding more students completing the one-year postgraduate certificate in education and increasing the number of bursaries awarded to institutions with lower fee structures. The bursary scheme is allocated R4 billion over the MTEF period in the Teachers, Education Human Resources and Institutional Development programme.

Improving Early Childhood Development (ECD) services

The provision of ECD services in provinces is supported by the early childhood development grant. The grant is allocated R5.6 billion over the MTEF period to provide subsidies for children accessing ECD services, infrastructure support to ECD providers and pre-registration support packages; and to pilot the construction of low-cost ECD centres. An additional R197 million in 2024/25 is earmarked for piloting a nutrition support programme that targets low-cost ECD centres.

Providing nutritious meals for learners

The department plans to continue providing nutritious meals to more than 10 million learners on each school day at 19 950 schools each year over the period ahead, in line with the National Development Plan's priority of eliminating poverty and supporting food security. The programme is funded by the national school nutrition programme grant, which is allocated R30.9 billion over the MTEF period in the Educational Enrichment Services programme.

School attendance

According to the Statistics South Africa's General Household Survey of 2023, there were approximately 15,4 million learners at school in 2023. Participation in education institutions was virtually universal (97,3%) by the age of 15 years (the last compulsory school age). Approximately two-thirds (63,6%) of learners were still in school by the age of 18, which usually represents the age at which learners exit Grade 12. A notable percentage of learners, however, remained in primary and secondary schools long after they should have exited those institutions.

Less than one-fifth (18,3%) of twenty-year-olds were, for instance, still attending school. While the percentage of learners who have achieved Grade 12 has been increasing, the survey shows that the percentage of individuals who attended post-school education has remained relatively low for youth aged 19 to 22 years of age. Although almost two-thirds (66,1%) of learners attended no-fee schools (up from 21,4% in 2007), the percentage varies from 87,3% in Limpopo to 51,0% in the Western Cape.

Learners who dropped out of school before the age of 18 years cited reasons such as poor performance (29,1%) and a lack of money (19,5%) as the main reasons. Although 7,2% named family commitments as the main reason, it was more common for females (14,1%) than for males (0,1%). The percentage of individuals aged 20 years and older who did not have any education decreased from 11,4% in 2002 to 3,1% in 2023, while those with at least a Grade 12 qualification increased from 30,5% to 50,8% over the same period.

Intergenerational functional illiteracy (where individuals have not attained Grade 7) has also decreased markedly. Although 34,4% of South Africans over the age of 60 years were still functionally illiterate, this figure dropped to only 3,2% for those aged 20-39 years of age.

Entities

South African Council for Educators (SACE)

The SACE is mandated by the South African Council for Educators Act, 2000 (Act 31 of 2000), to enhance the status of the teaching profession by providing for the professional registration of all educators, promoting the continuing professional development of educators, and maintaining ethical and professional standards in the teaching profession.

Expenditure and revenue are expected to decrease at an average annual rate of 0,9%, from R121.3 million in 2023/24 to R118.1 million in 2026/27. The decrease in revenue is mainly due to the expected decrease in the number of educators registered and reinstated.

The council expects to generate 81,2% (R285.3 million) of its revenue over the MTEF period through membership and registration fees, and the remainder through interest on investments, reprints of certificates and transfers from the department for continuing professional teacher development programmes.

Umalusi Council for Quality Assurance in General and Further Education and Training (FET)

The Umalusi Council for Quality Assurance in General and FET derives its mandate from the General and FET Quality Assurance Act (2001) and the National Qualifications Framework Act (2008). As an external and independent quality assurance body, the council is mandated to set and maintain standards in general and FET by developing and managing the general and FET qualifications sub-framework.

To fulfil this mandate, the council's expenditure is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 5.3%, from R197.4 million in 2023/24 to R230.4 million in 2026/27. The council is set to derive 80.4% (R686.4 million) of its revenue over the period ahead through departmental transfers, which increase at an average annual rate of 3.8%, from R162.9 million in 2023/24 to R182.4 million in 2026/27.

Role players

Provincial Departments of Education

The role of the DBE is to translate government's education and training policies and the provisions of the Constitution into a national education policy and legislative framework. The DBE works closely with provincial education departments to ensure that provincial budgets and strategies are in line with and support national policies.

The national department shares a concurrent role with the provincial education departments for basic schooling and ECD, but it is the responsibility of each provincial education department to finance and manage its schools directly.

District offices are the provincial education departments' main interface with schools. Not only are they central to the process of gathering information and diagnosing problems in schools, but they also perform a vital support and intervention function. This includes organising training for personnel, dealing with funding, resourcing bottlenecks and solving labour-relations disputes. District offices are key to ensuring that school principals remain accountable to provincial education departments and that accountability lines within the school, to the principal and school governing body, are maintained.

Council of Education Ministers

The council, comprising of the Ministers of Basic Education, and Higher Education and Training, as well as the nine provincial members of the executive councils for education, meets regularly to discuss the promotion of the national education policy, share information and views on all aspects of education in South Africa and coordinate action on matters of mutual interest.

Heads of Education Departments Committee

The committee comprises the Director-General (DG) of the DBE, deputy DGs of the national department and the heads of provincial departments of education. The purpose of the committee is to facilitate the development of a national education system, share information and views on national education, coordinate administrative action on matters of mutual interest and advise the DBE on a range of specified matters related to the proper functioning of the national education system.

National Education Evaluation and Development Unit (NEEDU)

The NEEDU facilitates school improvement through systematic evaluation. This unit evaluates how district offices, provincial departments and the national department monitor and support schools, school governing bodies and teachers. This entails identifying critical factors that inhibit or advance the attainment of sector goals and school improvement, and making focused recommendations for addressing problem areas that undermine school improvement and the attainment of sector goals.

Education Labour Relations Council (ELRC)

The ELRC serves the public education sector nationally. It is a statutory council, initially established by the Education Labour Relations Act, 1993 (Act 146 of 1993), but draws authority from the Education Labour Relations Act, 1995 (Act 66 of 1995).

The establishment of the ELRC in 1994 at its founding meeting in Pretoria was a significant milestone for labour relations and education in South Africa. The main purpose of the council is to maintain labour peace within public education through processes of dispute prevention and resolution. These include collective bargaining between the educator unions and the DBE as the employer. The ELRC also conducts various workshops to increase the level of awareness and understanding of sound labour-relations procedures.

The ELRC has over the years succeeded in signing collective agreements that directly benefit educators in classrooms. The council serves educators in the public education sector, specifically those employed in terms of the Employment of Educators Act 76 of 1998. The council also serves the learners of this country by effectively resolving disputes in public education that involve the child as victim or witness and therefore complies with Section 28 of the Constitution of South Africa of 1996, which provides that the child's rights are of paramount importance in every matter concerning a child.

Educator unions

Educators are organised into six educator unions:

- National Professional Teachers' Organisation of South Africa;
- National Teachers' Union;
- South African Teachers' Union;
- Professional Educators' Union;
- Cape Professional Teachers' Association; and
- South African Democratic Teachers' Union.

There is an existing labour relations framework agreement between the DBE and unions. It encompasses both traditional areas of negotiation and issues of professional concern, including pedagogy and quality improvement strategies. An agreement was reached on the Framework for the Establishment of an Occupation-Specific Dispensation (OSD) for educators in public education. The OSD provides for dual career paths, where educators and specialists in classrooms can progress to levels where they earn salaries that are equal to, or higher than, those of managers without moving into management/supervisory posts.

It also provides for a new category of posts for teaching and learning specialists and senior learning and teaching specialists, as well as the creation of a cadre of education managers at school and office level.

Higher Education, Science and Innovation

The Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) and the Department of Science, Technology and Innovation (DSTI) report to the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Innovation but exist as separate votes.

Higher education and training

The NDP envisages that by 2030, South Africans should have greater access to Post-School Education and Training (PSET) opportunities through a system that is responsive to their needs. The DHET's vision is to have an integrated, coordinated and articulated PSET system for improved economic participation and the social development of youth and adults. The 2014 White Paper for Post-School Education and Training points out that the PSET system is an important institutional mechanism that must be responsive to the needs of society.

The system should be inclusive and cut across state boundaries, ethnic, gender, disability, class and socio-economic status, and national and religious identities,

to achieve a united human race based on human dignity. This is supported by Priority 2 (education, skills and health) of government's 2019-2024 Medium-Term Strategic Framework (MTSF).

The mandate of the DHET is to develop a skilled and capable workforce while broadening the skills base of the country to support an inclusive growth path. The department derives its mandate from the:

- Higher Education Act, 1997 (Act 101 of 1997), which provides for a unified national system of higher education;
- Skills Development Act (1998), which enables the creation of the National Skills Authority, sector education and training authorities (SETAs), the establishment of the Quality Council for Trades and Occupations, and the regulation of apprenticeships, learnerships and other matters relating to skills development;
- National Student Financial Aid Scheme Act of 1999, which provides for the granting of loans and bursaries to eligible students attending public higher education and training institutions, and the subsequent administration of such loans and bursaries;
- Skills Development Levies Act of 1999, which provides for the imposition of skills development levies;
- Continuing Education and Training Act of 2006, which provides for the regulation of continuing education and training, the establishment of governance structures for and the funding of public Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges and Community Education and Training (CET) colleges, the registration of private colleges, and the promotion of quality in continuing education and training; and
- National Qualifications Framework Act of 2008, which provides for the National Qualifications Framework (NQF), the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) and quality councils for the issuing and quality assurance of qualifications required by the sub-frameworks of the national qualifications framework.

As part of implementing its mandate, the Department oversees universities, TVET colleges, CET colleges, SETAs, quality councils and private education providers. Its goals include expanding access to higher education and training opportunities, and improving the quality of the provisioning, responsiveness and efficiency of the post-school education and training system. It aims to give effect to these goals over the medium term by focusing on upgrading ailing infrastructure at higher education institutions, and providing bursaries and loans to students from poor and working-class backgrounds.

The Department's expenditure is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 4,8%, from R130.5 billion in 2023/24 to R150.2 billion in 2026/27, driven mainly by transfers and subsidies to departmental agencies and accounts and higher education institutions. These account for an estimated 90,6% (R389.8 billion) of total spending over the period ahead.

Spending on compensation of employees accounts for an estimated 8,6% (R37.3 billion) of the total budget over the same period, mainly in the Technical and Vocational Education and Training programme for TVET college lecturers (R26.6 billion) and the Community Education and Training programme for CET college lecturers (R8.6 billion). Cabinet-approved reductions amounting to R27 billion over the medium term are mainly on transfer payments to the university infrastructure and efficiency grant and TVET infrastructure and efficiency grant, university subsidies, and the National Student Financial Aid Scheme.

Of these reductions, an estimated R4.9 billion over the MTEF period is on university subsidies. Although these subsidies are set to be reduced over the period ahead, the main funding source for universities is set to increase at an average annual rate of 3,7%, from R44 billion in 2023/24 to R49 billion in 2026/27.

Universities will need to implement cost-containment measures – including revisiting contracts, and reducing travel and subsistence costs – to accommodate the reduction. This takes into account the expected increase in university enrolments from 1.1 million in 2023 to 1.2 million in 2027.

Upgrading ailing infrastructure at higher education institutions

Although reductions of R6 billion to infrastructure grants over the MTEF period are expected to lead to delays in the start of new capital projects, they will also ensure closer alignment with the sector's capacity to spend infrastructure allocations as these grants have been underspent in recent years.

The Department plans to ensure that institutions have appropriate infrastructure to accommodate students accessing higher education. The university infrastructure and efficiency grant is allocated R4.5 billion over the medium term, decreasing at an average annual rate of 24,3%, from R2.2 billion in 2024/25 to R1.2 billion in 2026/27.

The TVET infrastructure and efficiency grant is allocated R539.4 million over the same period, decreasing at an average annual rate of 41,7%, from R491.9 million in 2023/24 to R97.6 million in 2026/27. Despite these decreases, these allocations will enable infrastructure repairs and maintenance in priority areas such as bulk services, sanitation, teaching and learning facilities, and student accommodation. Allocations amounting to R989.4 million will be used to construct basic skills centres, teaching and learning facilities, workshops and ICT laboratories at CET colleges.

Providing bursaries and loans to students from poor and working-class backgrounds

The department will endeavour to ensure that all students who are offered a place to study at a university or TVET college based on academic merit will be afforded that opportunity. The National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) provides bursaries that cover tuition at these institutions and living expenses to students from families earning below R350 000 per year.

Despite reductions of R16 billion over the MTEF period, transfers to NSFAS to provide a projected 2.9 million students with loans and bursaries are expected to increase at an average annual rate of 3,6%, from R45.6 billion in

2023/24 to R50.8 billion in 2026/27. The reductions will, however, affect the number of bursaries the scheme is able to award over the medium term.

Historically Disadvantaged Institutions Development Programme

The programme is fully described in the draft HDI-DP Framework that has been fully consulted with historically disadvantaged institutions in the university sector. The HDI-DP Framework seeks to address challenges that threaten the viability and sustainability of historically disadvantaged institutions and will draw on the Historically Disadvantaged Institutions Development Grant as a resource.

It will also draw on a range of other institutional, departmental and partner resources.

The framework sets the following strategic priority areas for development focus:

- Strengthen institutional management and governance systems;
- Improve institutional infrastructure and facilities;
- Enhance effective staff recruitment, development and retention;
- Strengthen the academic enterprise; and
- Leverage locality and community.

The notion of universities as anchor institutions will be a key feature of the programme. Once it is presented and approved, the DHET plans to roll out its full implementation in the next five years.

Funding for the missing middle

Addressing the dearth of funding for the missing middle students was a priority for the 2020/21 financial year. In working towards a financial aid system that is inclusive of missing middle students, it would be necessary to explore the possibility of a loan scheme for the higher education sector, within the funding constraints, and working with private sector partners and other government departments, taking into account work already done. Ensuring the sustainability and effective administration of the NSFAS would also be key to the success of the financial aid system.

Student accommodation

Plans are underway to develop and finalise a multi-faceted and comprehensive strategy for student housing. The strategy will include a range of possibilities for increasing the availability of student housing on and off university and TVET campuses.

This will include accelerating the Student Housing Infrastructure Programme, which is already underway, through which university- and college-owned housing will be developed, leveraging private sector investments and development potential, as well as developing a policy framework on the accreditation of private student accommodation.

The norms and standards for student housing for the PSET system are also expected to be developed and implemented.

Establishing universities

Over the next five years, the system is expected to expand to provide additional spaces in higher education. In order to enhance the planned expansion in terms of the current enrolment plans of institutions, two new institutions will be established – a university for crime detection in Hammanskraal and a university for science and innovation in Ekurhuleni.

The Higher Education Act of 1997 allows for new institutions to be established as either higher education colleges or university colleges. This decision will be dependent on the outcome of a feasibility study, followed by a development plan for each new institution. Once funding is secured, the new institutions can be established as either a university college or a higher education college. Over a period of time, a university college may be established as a fully-fledged university once it has met requirements to be established as such.

Expanding access to TVET colleges and improving their performance

Expanding access to skills programmes that address the labour market's need for intermediate skills that include practical components is one of the DHET's key mandates. Over the medium term, the department will work towards improving the quality of the PSET system by establishing more entrepreneurship hubs to enable TVET college students to realise their potential and become actively engaged in the economy, either through employment in the labour market or self-employment.

While the enrolment projections in TVET colleges are held constant over the next five years in order to eliminate funding gaps, the DHET is committed to expanding provision in the TVET college system through the development of comprehensive proposals involving a diversity of stakeholders and modalities of delivery, and to growing the number of students who can access vocational education and training. However, growth in the TVET college core programmes must take cognisance of the number of opportunities available to students for work-integrated learning.

Among these proposals will be the provision of open learning opportunities, primarily in the form of e-learning, as a key strategy towards reaching out and expanding access to students in remote locations, as well as to those already in employment. Furthermore, it is becoming evident that highly responsive and quality short skills programmes will grow in demand as organisations seek to reskill and upskill employees to meet rapidly changing workplace practices and standards.

Colleges will, therefore, partner with a diversity of stakeholders to deliver fit-for-purpose training in order to meet these localised needs. Programme diversification will constitute the cornerstone of expansion of the TVET system. The DHET will work collaboratively with the DSTI to leverage the innovation service points already in existence nationally, for the enhancement of skills development in TVET colleges.

Initial engagements will focus on augmenting and modernising current provision in TVET colleges through innovation and creativity to prepare students for the world of real work in a 21st century context. To facilitate this, teaching and learning support plans will be implemented in TVET colleges.

Establishing and operationalising Centres of Specialisation

Establishment and operationalising centres of specialisation in TVET colleges is a critical project for which the DHET continues to engage employers to work with young people as apprentices. The project aims to provide fully qualified artisans for a range of sectors in the economy, including high-technology manufacturing, the creative industries, computer software and aerospace engineering.

The department has also expanded its Centres of Specialisation from 26 to 34 centres at 20 TVET colleges with a further investment of R68 million, and 16 colleges now have 35 trade test centres. These trade test centres have trade tested more than 600 artisans, of which more than 500 have qualified as artisans.

Developing artisans



Over the medium term, the DHET aims to improve the public skills development system by managing the performance of service-level agreements with Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) more effectively, and by providing funding to trade and quality assurance institutions for occupational qualifications. These institutions play a pivotal role in increasing the number of qualified artisans by rolling out skills programmes, learnerships, internships and apprenticeships, and by establishing partnerships with TVET colleges, universities and the labour market to provide opportunities for workplace experience. Through the SETAs, over the medium term, 93 000 new artisans are expected to be registered for training and 75 000 artisan learners are expected to qualify. For this purpose, R347.8 million over the medium term is allocated.

Through the Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan, the DHET has targeted 30 000 artisans per annum over the medium-term period to address the shortage of artisanal skills in the country. Income generated through the skills development levy, which is collected from employers by the South African Revenue Service (SARS) and transferred to SETAs and the NSF as a direct charge against the National Revenue Fund, contributes significantly to key performance areas of the public skills development system, including artisan development.

Strengthening governance of the CET sector

The DHET recognises that improving the CET sector is key for development as it has the potential to provide students with access to a comprehensive range of programmes that lead to part and full qualifications and employment opportunities, including entrepreneurial opportunities. To ensure that the sector rises to its potential, the DHET will continue to prioritise the development and training of lecturers in CET colleges and learning centres by enabling them to upgrade their qualifications, with a particular focus on mathematics and science. The DHET has also strengthened its recruitment policies so that only qualified lecturers are employed in the sector.

Establishing the Imbali Education Precinct

The Imbali Education Precinct will be made up of an interconnected network of education and support institutions that will work together in a locality for the mutual benefit of all involved – to create seamless, enhanced, quality education pathways from early childhood education to higher education for the community it serves.

Some progress has been made in implementing the Imbali Education Precinct Development Plan, mostly on the Indumiso Campus of the Durban University of Technology (DUT) through the allocation of existing resources, including significant infrastructure developments, and the development of a range of new teacher education programmes for TVET and CET college lecturers. However, there has been slow progress for a range of reasons, including changed leadership at DUT and a lack of on-the-ground champions.

A project team and project office will be established to take the work forward over the next five years. The idea and model of the development of education precincts will be tested in terms of the Imbali Project. It is envisaged that, over the next 10-year period, at least three such precincts will be developed across the country.

This approach will support the District Development Model. The South African Institute for Vocational and Continuing Education and Training Colleges must evolve into institutions that are highly responsive to the mid-level skills demands in the labour market. This requires expert and accurate planning in identifying much-needed skills sets, identifying appropriate modalities of skills training and delivery, efficient turnaround times in the development and delivery of occupational curricula, and vastly expanding the opportunities for work-based experience and learning through stakeholder engagements and partnerships.

The DHET will, in partnership with the German government, seek to strengthen the TVET system through:

- sectoral coordination and cooperation to implement governance and policy through the facilitation of cooperation agreements between the public and private sectors that build on existing initiatives and take forward new initiatives.
- private-sector engagement by assisting partner organisations to increase the level of private sector representation in decision-making bodies and to promote systematic stakeholder dialogue.
- the implementation of reformed vocational and technical skills development to support the provision of demand-oriented skills development to youth by promoting on-

the-job or work-based training approaches, the training of vocational teaching personnel, and strengthening the quality of artisan training in centres of specialisation.

Reviewing the National Skills Fund

The 2014 White Paper for Post-School Education and Training enunciates that the NSF will be responsible for skills development aligned to national development strategies and priorities, including building linkages within the skills system and providing funds for government strategies such as youth programmes, building small businesses and cooperatives, and rural development. It will also fund research and innovation that is not confined to a particular sector.

Coupled with the White Paper and other government strategic policy instruments, is the establishment of the new Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Innovation, which necessitates a review of policy and systems. On the other hand, the DSTI has introduced the White Paper on Science, Technology and Innovation, which is critical in ensuring that science, technology and innovation enable inclusive and sustainable South African development in a changing world.

With the rising unemployment rate, especially among the youth, and sluggish economic growth, prioritisation and focused skills development interventions that support national policies need urgent attention and resourcing. To this end, the Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation intends to undertake a review of the NSF – to evaluate the general operations of the NSF, including, but not limited to, its efficiency and relevance regarding the country's national priorities.

Legislation

Key policies and legislation relating to higher education and training in South Africa include the:

- Continuing Education and Training Act, 2006 (Act 16 of 2006), which provides for the regulation of continuing education and training, the establishment of governance structures for, and the funding of, public TVET colleges and CET colleges, the registration of private colleges, and the promotion of quality in continuing education and training;
- Higher Education Act, 1997 (Act 101 of 1997), which provides for a unified national system of higher education;
- NQF Act, 2008 (Act 67 of 2008), which provides for the NQF, the SAQA and quality councils for the issuing and quality assurance of qualifications required by the sub-frameworks of the NQF;
- NSFAS Act, 1999 (Act 56 of 1999), which provides for the granting of loans and bursaries to eligible students attending public higher education and training institutions, and the subsequent administration of such loans and bursaries;
- Skills Development Amendment Act, 2008 (Act 37 of 2008), which enables the creation of the National Skills Authority, SETAs, the establishment of the Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO), and the regulation of apprenticeships, learnerships and other matters relating to skills development; and
- Skills Development Levies Act, 1999 (Act 9 of 1999), which provides for the imposition of skills development levies.

Entities

Council on Higher Education (CHE)

The CHE is a statutory body established in terms of the Higher Education Act of 1997, as amended. The council's mandate is to advise the minister responsible for higher education on all matters pertaining to higher education; develop and manage the higher education qualifications sub-framework; develop and implement a suite of policies and criteria; and facilitate the implementation of the higher education qualifications sub-framework and the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) and protect their integrity.

Over the medium term, the council will continue to focus on becoming a recognised centre for information and policy analysis on higher education, and on conducting sector research and monitoring to advise the minister on all higher education matters. As these activities require skilled personnel, spending on the compensation of 52 employees accounts for a projected 40,6% (R115.4 million) of the council's total budget, decreasing at an average annual rate of 4%, from R45.6 million in 2022/23 to R40.2 million in 2025/26, due to one-off payments for back pay and allowances for the previous three years made in 2022/23.

The council expects to derive 91,5% (R263.1 million) of its revenue through transfers from the department. Revenue is projected to increase at an average annual rate of 4,7%, from R87.2 million in 2022/23 to R100.1 million in 2025/26.

National Skills Fund (NSF)

The NSF was established in terms of the Skills Development Act of 1998. It funds projects identified in the national skills development strategy as national priorities; projects related to the achievement of the purposes of the Act, as determined by the Director-General; and any activity undertaken by the Minister to achieve a national standard of good practice in skills development.

Over the medium term, the fund aims to: contribute to the development of skills for 5 100 small, medium and micro enterprises and cooperatives; fund 17 000 learners; facilitate the acquisition of various skills for 36 000 learners through community-based skills development initiatives; fund education and training for occupations in high demand for 120 000 learners; fund education and training programmes for 108 200 learners from rural areas; fund innovation and digital technology education and training programmes for 3 000 learners from rural areas; fund education and training programmes for 2 120 learners for worker education; and fund workplace experience for 1 780 learners.

The fund will pursue priority projects such as the development of infrastructure at TVET and community colleges; and research and innovation aimed at expanding, integrating and improving the effectiveness of the post-school education and training system. An estimated R12.4 billion over the MTEF period is allocated for these projects. The fund is set to derive 88% (R15 billion) of its revenue over the medium term through the skills development levy and 12% (R2.1 billion) from interest earned on investments held at the Public Investment Corporation.

The skills development levy is collected from employers by the SARS and transferred to the fund as a direct charge against the National Revenue Fund. Transfers from the

levy are projected to increase at an average annual rate of 7.1%, from R4.3 billion in 2022/23 to R5.3 billion in 2025/26. A sum of R1,7 billion was disbursed by the NSF towards its bursaries programme in 2021/22, benefitting students enrolled in undergraduate and postgraduate programmes in scarce and critical skills.

National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS)

The NSFAS was established in terms of the NSFAS Act of 1999. The scheme is responsible for providing bursaries and loans to students; developing criteria and conditions for the granting of loans and bursaries to eligible students in consultation with the Minister; raising funds; recovering loans from debtors; maintaining and analysing a database of funded students; undertaking research for the better use of financial resources; advising the minister on matters relating to student financial aid; and undertaking other functions assigned to it by the Act or by the minister.

The scheme aims to provide bursaries to 1.4 million university students and 1.7 million TVET students from poor and working-class backgrounds at 76 public higher education institutions at a projected cost of R159.8 billion over the MTEF period. It will also look to improve the bursary application process so that applicants can get immediate confirmation of funding and resolve issues with the disbursement of tuition and student allowances.

Transfers from the department constitute an estimated 94% (R154.2 billion) of the scheme's total revenue over the medium term. Allocations are set to increase at an average annual rate of 5.7%, from R46 billion in 2022/23 to R54.3 billion in 2025/26.

By mid-2023, NSFAS was funding 1.1 million students with a budget allocation of R47.6 billion in the 2023 academic year. In 2023, SASSA beneficiaries accounted for 49% of the funded students in 2023.

Quality Council for Trades and Occupations

The QCTO was established in terms of the Skills Development Act of 1998. The council's mandate is to develop and quality assure occupational qualifications and part qualifications (including trades and skills programmes), manage the occupational qualifications sub-framework, and advise the minister on all matters of policy concerning occupational standards and qualifications. Over the medium term, the QCTO aimed to continue focusing on overseeing the conversion of national accredited technical education diploma qualifications into occupational qualifications that have greater industry relevance, and developing and submitting new occupational qualifications to the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) for registration.

The occupational qualifications management programme will carry out these activities at a cost of R80.2 million over the next three years. Total expenditure is set to increase at an average annual rate of 7,2%, from R129.3 million in 2022/23 to R161.2 million in 2025/26. The QCTO derives 76,4% (R351.9 million) of its revenue over the MTEF period from SETA grant funding. Transfers from the department constitute an estimated 20,2% (R93.1 million) of total revenue, increasing at an average annual rate of 7,6%. Revenue is expected to increase in line with expenditure.

Sector Education and Training Authorities

The Skills Development Act of 1998 mandates SETAs to fund skills development; implement national, sector and workplace strategies to develop and improve skills in the South African workforce; and provide learnerships that lead to recognised occupational qualifications. Over the medium term, the authorities will focus on strengthening and delivering relevant priority skills to South Africa's labour market, with particular emphasis on partnering with TVET colleges, universities and the market.

The authorities will continue to establish partnerships with industry to scale up the placement of graduates, work-integrated learning, research, and the facilitation of industry exposure for TVET college lecturers in line with industry needs. These partnerships also allow authorities to garner labour market intelligence that informs sector skills plans and curriculum development, which improves the quality of programmes offered and the employability of graduates. These activities are expected to cost R61.5 billion over the medium term. Expenditure is set to increase at an average annual rate of 1,4%, from R20.8 billion in 2022/23 to R21.7 billion in 2025/26.The authorities derive the bulk of their revenue through the skills development levy, which is collected from employers by the SARS and transferred as a direct charge against the National Revenue Fund.

Revenue from the levy is set to constitute 89,2% (R54.7 billion) of total revenue over the medium term. It is projected to increase at an average annual rate of 4,9%, from R16.5 billion in 2022/23 to R19.1 billion in 2025/26. The remainder is expected to be generated through interest on investments. Through its SETAs combined, the department opened up 52 701 learnership opportunities to the value of R1.6 billion in the last financial year. It opened up 14 4 75 internships opportunities to the value of R758 million. It opened up 14 954 TVET placement opportunities to the value of R726 million and also committed to achieve a target of 20 000 placements of TVET graduates work placements.

The department's SETAs combined opened up 7 095 university students work placements to the value of R311 million and we also awarded 13 169 bursaries in various fields on skills in high demand to the value of R970 million. The department opened up 34 514 skills programmes opportunities for the unemployed to the value of R278 million. It also reskilled and upskilled 36 502 individuals in various sectors of the economy to the value of R494 million.

South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA)

The SAQA is a statutory body established in terms of the SAQA Act of 1995. It exists under the NQF Act of 2008, as amended, with the role of providing decisive and coherent leadership to coordinate, simplify, monitor and evaluate the implementation of an effectively articulated NQF.

The authority will focus on enhancing its ICT infrastructure over the medium term to automate the national learner records database and verify qualifications. It will also continue to refurbish, repair and maintain its headquarters while continuing its efforts to sell the building. As the authority is service delivery orientated, compensation of employees accounts for a projected 62,3% (R238.3 million) of total expenditure, increasing at an average annual rate of 1,2%,

from R78.8 million in 2022/23 to R81.7 million in 2025/26.

Transfers from the department account for an estimated 71,1% (R282.3 million) of total revenue over the MTEF period, while revenue generated from operations accounts for 27,6% (R107.8 million). Total revenue is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 6%, from R115.7 million in 2022/23 to R137.6 million in 2025/26.

South Africa's higher education landscape comprises the following institutions:

- Cape Peninsula University of Technology
- Central University of Technology, Free State
- Durban University of Technology
- Mangosuthu University of Technology
- National Institute for Higher Education, Northern Cape
- National Institute for Higher Education, Mpumalanga
- Nelson Mandela University
- North-West University
- Rhodes University
- Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University
- Sol Plaatje University, Northern Cape
- Tshwane University of Technology
- University of Cape Town
- University of Fort Hare
- University of the Free State
- University of Johannesburg
- University of KwaZulu-Natal
- University of Limpopo
- University of Mpumalanga
- University of Pretoria
- University of South Africa
- University of Stellenbosch
- University of Venda
- University of the Western Cape
- University of the Witwatersrand
- University of Zululand
- Vaal University of Technology
- Walter Sisulu University, Eastern Cape.

Science, Technology and Innovation

The Department of Science, Technology and Innovation (DSTI) derives its mandate from the 1996 White Paper on Science and Technology, which introduced the concept of the national system of innovation – a set of interacting organisations and policies through which South Africa creates, acquires, diffuses and puts into practice new knowledge to help achieve individual and collective goals. A coordinated and efficient national system of innovation will help the country achieve its national development priorities by promoting change through innovation, and enable all South Africans to enjoy the economic, socio-political and intellectual benefits of science, technology and innovation.

Over the medium term, the department planned to focus on providing funding for research infrastructure to strengthen South Africa's research and innovation capabilities, including implementing the national space strategy; developing human capital; and advancing innovation to improve South Africa's competitiveness in the global market through measures such as supporting emerging farmers.

The department's expenditure is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 3,4%, from R9.1 billion in 2022/23 to R10.1 billion in 2025/26. Transfers and subsidies account for an estimated 94% (R29.7 billion) of total expenditure over the MTEF period. The second largest cost driver is compensation of employees, spending on which increases from R357.7 million in 2022/23 to R403.8 million in 2025/26 at an average annual rate of 4,1%.

Strengthening research infrastructure and innovation capabilities

In recognising that the availability of adequate research infrastructure is vital for the development of a robust and competitive national system of innovation, the department will continue to fund projects that are in line with the South African research infrastructure roadmap. These include constructing large national infrastructure platforms and facilities; acquiring scientific equipment; and developing pilot plants, technology demonstrators and specialised facilities such as drug development and aerospace platforms.

In support of this, the department is allocated R3.9 billion over the period ahead in the Basic Science and Infrastructure subprogramme in the Research Development and Support programme. The department's work is also geared towards strengthening research capabilities. Key among these are the South African National Space Agency's (SANSA) space infrastructure hub project, a multi-year infrastructure development project that involves the development of space infrastructure such as satellite imagery to map geographical information, satellite-based augmentation systems and earth observation satellites; and the Square Kilometre Array (SKA), which is a global endeavour to construct the world's largest and most sensitive wavelength radio telescope.

These initiatives are supported by additional allocations over the MTEF period of R1.2 billion to the SANSA for the space infrastructure hub project and R1.3 billion to the South African Radio Astronomy Observatory for the expansion of the SKA in the Space Science subprogramme in the Technology Innovation programme.

Developing human capital

Human capital is key to the development of a national system of innovation that is globally competitive and responsive to South Africa's developmental needs. In recognition of this, the department provides support through granting postgraduate bursaries and scholarships; sponsoring internships; and funding emerging and established researchers, including for strategic instruments such as the South African research chairs initiative and centres of excellence projects.

To date, the department has awarded 257 research chairs, 240 of which are operational. Centres of excellence serve as hubs that draw a range of universities and science councils together to tackle challenges in areas such as health, food security, human development, energy and biodiversity. In support of these efforts, R8.7 billion is allocated over the MTEF period to the Human Capital and Science Promotions subprogramme in the Research, Development and Support programme.

Advancing innovation to improve South Africa's competitiveness in the global market

Over the medium term, the department planned to advance innovation and address key competitiveness challenges,

including market sustainability and facilitating access to new export markets. To achieve this, it intends to support 15 commercial outputs in designated areas such as healthcare and 85 technology demonstrations, prototypes, products and services each year over the period ahead.

These include locally developed fermentation-based skin care products and cotton baling machines for small-scale farmers. The department also planned to financially support black emerging farmers; train artisans in the space, energy and bioeconomy sectors; train graduates through experiential learning opportunities in the energy sector; and support learnership initiatives in publicly financed research and development institutions. Spending for these initiatives is expected to amount to R6.8 billion over the MTEF period in the Technology Innovation programme.

Legislation

Legislation governing the DSTI include the:

- Intellectual Property (IP) Rights from Publicly Financed Research and Development Act, 2008 (Act 51 of 2008), which provides for the more effective use of IP emanating from publicly financed R&D, through the establishment of the National Intellectual Property Management Office (NIPMO), the IP Fund, and offices of technology transfer at institutions;
- Technology Innovation Act, 2008 (Act 26 of 2008), which intends to promote the development and exploitation in the public interest of discoveries, inventions, innovations and improvements, and for that purpose establishes the Technology Innovation Agency (TIA);
- SANSA Act, 2008 (Act 36 of 2008), which establishes the SANSA to promote space science research, cooperation in space-related activities and the creation of an environment conducive for the development of space technologies by industry;
- Natural Scientific Professions Act, 2003 (Act 27 of 2003), establishes the South African Council for Natural Scientific Professions, and legislates the registration of professional natural scientists, natural scientists-in-training, natural science technologists and natural science technologists-in-training;
- National Research Foundation (NRF) Act, 1998 (Act 23 of 1998), which establishes the NRF to promote basic and applied research, as well as the extension and transfer of knowledge in the various fields of science and technology;
- National Advisory Council on Innovation (NACI) Act, 1997 (Act 55 of 1997), which establishes the NACI to advise the Minister responsible for science and innovation on the role and contribution of science, mathematics, innovation and technology in promoting and achieving national objectives;
- Africa Institute of South Africa (AISA) Act, 2001 (Act 68 of 2001), which establishes the AISA to promote knowledge and understanding of African affairs by encouraging leading social scientists;
- Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) Act, 2008 (Act 17 of 2008), which provides for the HSRC, which carries out research that generates critical and independent knowledge relative to all aspects of human and social development;
- Scientific Research Council Act, 1988 (Act 46 of 1988), which refers to the activities of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), one of the leading scientific and technological research, development and implementation organisations in Africa, which undertakes directed R&D for socio-economic growth in areas including the built environment, defence, the environmental sciences, as well as biological, chemical and laser technologies;
- Astronomy Geographic Advantage Act, 2007 (Act 21 of 2007), which provides for the preservation and protection of areas in South Africa that are uniquely suited to optical and radio astronomy, and for intergovernmental cooperation and public consultation on matters concerning nationally significant astronomy advantage areas;
- Geoscience Amendment Act, 2010 (Act 12 of 2010), which amends the Geoscience Act, 1993 (Act 100 of 1993), to mandate the Council for Geoscience to be the custodian of geotechnical information; to act as a national advisory authority in respect of geohazards related to infrastructure and development, and to undertake exploration and prospecting research in the mineral and petroleum sectors;
- The South African National Research Network (SANReN), which is responsible for the roll-out of a high-speed broadband network to all academic and research institutions in the country, was awarded a private electronic communications network licence exemption under the Electronic Communications Act, 2005 (Act 36 of 2005); and
- Science and Technology Laws Amendment Act, 2014 (Act 7 of 2014), which seeks to, among other things, streamline the process for the nomination and appointment of members of the boards or councils of such entities as well as the filling of vacancies on the boards.

Entities

Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSAf)

The ASSAf was established in terms of the Academy of Science of South Africa Act of 2001, as amended, to promote outstanding achievements in all fields of scientific inquiry, recognise excellence, and provide evidence-based scientific advice to government and other stakeholders.

Over the medium term, the academy aimed to enhance South Africa's capacity to produce and publish research, provide evidence-based policy advice to government, and increase the quality and visibility of South African research publications. This entails undertaking various consensus studies in the categories of health, education, climate change, energy, the science-policy nexus, biosafety and biosecurity, poverty reduction, gender- responsive issues, young people and people with disabilities.

To complement this work, the academy aims to host 15 lectures on scientific topics, form 12 strategic partnerships with players in the science community and publish 6 journal titles on the Scientific Electronic Library Online open-access platform over the MTEF period. Expenditure is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 3%, from R35.5 million in 2022/23 to R38.8 million in 2025/26. Transfers from the department account for an estimated 95,4% (R106.6 million)

of total revenue over the period ahead, increasing from R33.8 million in 2022/23 to R37.1 million in 2025/26 at an average annual rate of 3,1%.

Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR)

The CSIR was established in 1945 and is governed in terms of the Scientific Research Council Act of 1988. The council fosters industrial and scientific development in the national interest through multidisciplinary research and technological innovation to improve the ability of the state to efficiently deliver basic services in fields such as health, education, social security, energy and shelter to all South Africans, and, in doing so, reduce inequality.

Over the medium term, the council will focus on conducting high-quality and relevant research, pursuing technological innovation to foster industrial and scientific development, and building on industrial development opportunities in fields such as pharmaceutical innovation and agro-processing. To achieve this, the council aims to support 56 registered patents and publish 960 journal articles over the medium term. The CSIR also planned to implement a range of research, development and innovation programmes in areas such as health, energy, defence and security. Spending on these activities amounts to an estimated R8.4 billion over the MTEF period.

As the council's work requires highly specialised skills and is labour intensive, spending on compensation of employees accounts for 55.6% (R5.6 billion) of planned expenditure over the medium term, increasing at an average annual rate of 9,1%, from R1.7 billion in 2022/23 to R2.1 billion in 2025/26. Transfers from the department account for an estimated 22.2% (R2.3 billion) of the council's total revenue over the period ahead.

The remainder is set to be generated from services rendered, such as contract research and development, income from intellectual property, proceeds from technology transfers, and royalties. Total revenue over the period ahead is projected to be R10.8 billion.

Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC)

The HSRC was established in 1968 to undertake, promote and coordinate research in the human and social sciences. The council is mandated to initiate, undertake and foster strategic, basic and applied research in human sciences; and address developmental challenges by gathering, analysing and publishing relevant data, especially through projects linked to collaborative programmes geared towards the public sector.

The council's research outputs are widely disseminated to support policy development at all levels of government. Over the medium term, the HSRC aimed to continue focusing on producing research that serves the public; contributing to good governance and public service delivery; helping to address the challenges of poverty, inequality and unemployment; and building the capacity of scholars and researchers.

Human capital is essential for the council to produce research outputs, for fundraising and to implement contract research projects. As such, spending on compensation of employees accounts for an estimated 47.3% (R932.9 million) of the council's total expenditure over the medium term, increasing at an average annual rate of 4,6%, from R283.6 million in 2022/23 to R324.7 million in 2025/26.

The HSRC was set to receive 50,4% (R1 billion) of its revenue through transfers from the department, increasing at an average annual rate of 8%, from R279.2 million in 2022/23 to R351.5 million in 2025/26. It plans to generate the remainder of its projected revenue through research contracts and grants from national and international agencies, government departments and private-sector foundations.

National Research Foundation (NRF)

The NRF was established in terms of the NRF Act of 1998, as amended. In terms of this legislation, the foundation is mandated to fund research, develop human resources and provide research facilities to enable knowledge creation, innovation and development in all fields of science and technology. It is also mandated to promote indigenous knowledge.

Over the MTEF period, the foundation aimed to focus on implementing its 10-year strategy, Vision 2030. This involves interventions to catalyse transformation in the science and technology system through measures such as creating grant funding instruments that focus on women and black researchers; scaling up the development of a research and innovation workforce for renewing, regenerating and replenishing the cohort of South African researchers; establishing a transformed knowledge workforce with a greater diversity of people and ideas to lead the knowledge enterprise; and advancing the international competitiveness of the scientific workforce.

An estimated R5.4 billion over the MTEF period is allocated for capital expenditure. Included in this amount is R1.3 billion in new funding for major infrastructure investments for the SKA, which includes the science processing and regional centres, the science operations centre building, the engineering operations centre building, and fencing for the MeerKAT national park. Expenditure is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 5.3%, from R4.3 billion in 2022/23 to R5 billion in 2025/26.

The foundation receives funding primarily through transfers from the department, which accounts for an estimated 88,6% (R14.4 billion) of projected revenue over the MTEF period. These are expected to increase at an average annual rate of 1.5%, from R4.3 billion in 2022/23 to R4.5 billion in 2025/26, due to the additional funding for infrastructure investments in the SKA. The remainder of the foundation's revenue is set to be derived through contract funding from other government departments and entities for specific projects and programmes, and income from sales and interest.

South African National Space Agency (SANSA)

The SANSA was established in terms of the SANSA Act of 2008. The agency became operational in 2010 and is broadly required to promote the peaceful use of space, foster international cooperation in space-related activities, and facilitate the creation of an environment conducive to space technology and industrial development.

Space services provide an indispensable tool for the formulation of government decisions and policies by helping to provide knowledge on and address challenges in industries such as agriculture, water, energy, health, safety and security. Over the medium term, the agency will continue to focus on activities that ensure that these services are integrated into service delivery. Key among these is the space infrastructure hub project, where the agency plans to develop spacecraft and ground segment infrastructure to support deep space operations, earth observation and space science operations.

The build phase to develop satellites is expected to begin in 2023/24 and operations in 2024/25. The agency is allocated an additional R775 million in 2023/24 and R434 million in 2024/25 for this purpose. The agency's expenditure is expected to decrease at an average annual rate of 16,5%, from R563.4 million in 2022/23 to R327.5 million in 2025/26, due to one-off allocations of R774 million in 2023/24 and R434 million in 2024/25 for the space infrastructure hub project.

As the agency relies on highly skilled professionals to fulfil its mandate, compensation of employees comprises an estimated 34.6% (R651.4 million) of total spending over the period ahead. Transfers from the department account for an estimated 75,2% (R1.9 billion) of the agency's revenue over the period ahead, decreasing at an average annual rate of 11,9% , from R343.8 million in 2022/23 to R235.4 million in 2025/26, as a result of the additional allocation for the space infrastructure hub project.

Technology Innovation Agency (TIA)

The TIA draws its mandate from the TIA Act of 2008, as amended. The agency serves as the key institutional intervention to bridge the innovation gap between research and development outcomes from higher education institutions, science councils, public entities and private companies to maximise the potential of technological innovation for stimulating the economy.

Over the medium term, the agency aimed to continue focusing on bridging the innovation gap between research and development; supporting technologies within the national system of innovation; scaling up all strategic programmes by increasing the pace at which applications and internal processes occur; creating a conducive environment for engaging with innovators, stakeholders and suppliers; adopting measures to support small, medium and micro-enterprises in the sector; and increasing the participation of marginalised segments of society.

To give effect to this focus, over the next three years, the agency aims to license 70 technological innovations, launch 101 products into the market and ensure that 24 technology innovations are operational and functional. Transfers, mainly for supporting small, medium and micro-enterprises with the commercialisation of innovative technologies, account for an estimated 72,7% (R1.4 billion) of the agency's planned expenditure over the period ahead. Expenditure is set to increase at an average annual rate of 0,2%, from R649.8 million in 2022/23 to R653.4 million in 2025/26.

As human resources are central to the agency's operations, spending on compensation of employees accounts for an estimated 19,2% (R367.5 million) of expenditure, increasing from R120.2 million in 2022/23 to R126.1 million in 2025/26 at an average annual rate of 1,6%. The agency receives most of its revenue through transfers from the department. These are set to increase at an average annual rate of 0,1%, from R634.8 million in 2022/23 to R632.5 million in 2025/26.

Role player

South African Council for Natural Scientific Professions (SACNASP)

The SACNASP's mandate is to provide a credible professional registration and regulatory body that allows natural scientists to establish, direct, sustain and ensure a high level of professionalism and ethical conscience in the natural scientific professions sector. Their conduct should be internationally acceptable and in the broad interest of the community as outlined in the SACNASP Code of Conduct.

Policy Mandate and Programmes

Technology Innovation

The programme aims to enable research and development (R&D) in space science and technology, energy security and the bioeconomy, and in the emerging and converging areas of nanotechnology, robotics, photonics and indigenous knowledge systems (IKS), to promote the realisation of commercial products, processes and services. It also promotes the protection and utilisation of IP, technology transfer and technology commercialisation through the implementation of enabling policies and interventions along the entire innovation value chain.

Its subprogrammes include the:

- **Space Science,** which supports the creation of an environment conducive to the implementation of the national space strategy and South African earth observation strategy, and that addresses the development of innovative applications and human capital to respond to national priorities and support socio-economic development.
- **Hydrogen and Energy**, which provides policy leadership in research, development and innovation initiatives in the energy sector. This subprogramme plays a key role in developing a sustainable and globally competitive South African energy knowledge base and industry.
- **Bio-innovation**, which leads the implementation of the national bioeconomy strategy.
- **Innovation Priorities and Instruments**, which supports and strengthens the innovation policy package aimed at creating and sustaining an enabling environment for innovation, technology and development, and the commercialisation of publicly funded R&D initiatives.
- **NIPMO** – the implementing agency established to provide for the more effective use of IP emanating from publicly financed R&D.

International Cooperation and Resources

The programme strategically develops, promotes and manages international partnerships that strengthen the National System of Innovation. It enables an exchange of knowledge, capacity and resources between South Africa and its international partners, with a focus on building capacity to support science, technology and innovation in Africa.

It also supports South African foreign policy through science diplomacy. Its subprogrammes include:

- Multilateral Cooperation and Africa, which advances and facilitates South Africa's participation in bilateral science, technology and innovation cooperation initiatives with other African partners; in African multilateral programmes, especially those of the Southern African Development Community and African Union; and in broader multilateral science, technology and innovation, and innovation partnerships, with a strategic focus on South-South cooperation.
- International Resources, which works to increase the flow of international funding into South African science, technology and innovation initiatives, as well as African regional and continental programmes, through concerted efforts to promote foreign investment and the fostering of strategic relations with partners such as the EU, as well as foundations and philanthropic organisations and the multinational private sector.
- Overseas Bilateral Cooperation, which promotes and facilitates South Africa's cooperation in bilateral science, technology and innovation agreements with partners in Europe, the Americas, Asia and Australasia, especially for human capital development and collaborative research and innovation; and secures support for joint cooperation with other African partners.

South Africa is regarded by many countries and private sector partners as a preferred and privileged partner for international cooperation. On average, approximately 15% of annual R&D funding in South Africa comes from international investors.

Research, Development and Support

The programme provides an enabling environment for research and knowledge production that promotes the strategic development of basic sciences and priority science areas through the promotion of science human capital development, and the provision of research infrastructure and relevant research support, in pursuit of South Africa's transition to a knowledge economy.

Its subprogrammes include:

- **Human Capital and Science Promotions**, which formulates and implements policies and strategies that address the availability of human capital for science, technology and innovation; provide fundamental support for research activities; and contribute to the development of a society that is knowledgeable about science, critically engaged and scientifically literate.
- **Science Missions**, which promotes the development of research, the production of scientific knowledge, and the development of human capital in fields of science in which South Africa enjoys a geographic advantage.
- **Basic Science and Infrastructure**, which facilitates the strategic implementation of research and innovation equipment and facilities to promote knowledge production in areas of national priority, and sustain innovation led by research and development.
- **Astronomy**, which supports the development of astronomical sciences around a new multiwavelength astronomy strategy, and provides strategic guidance and support to relevant astronomy institutions in the implementation of strategic astronomy programmes.

Socio-Economic Innovation Partnerships

The programme enhances government's growth and development priority areas through targeted science and technology-based innovation interventions, and the development of strategic partnerships with other government departments, industry, research institutions and communities. Its subprogrammes include:

- **Sector Innovation and Green Economy**, which provides policy, strategy and direction for research and the development-led growth of strategic sectors of the economy; and supports the transition to a green economy.
- **Innovation for Inclusive Development**, which supports the development of science and technology-based innovations for tackling poverty, including the creation of sustainable jobs and human settlements, and the enhanced delivery of basic services.
- **Science and Technology Investment**, which leads and supports the development of indicators and instruments for monitoring investments in science and technology, the performance of the National System of Innovation, and ways of strengthening policy.
- **Technology Localisation, Beneficiation and Advanced Manufacturing**, which funds technology and innovation development programmes to advance strategic, sustainable economic growth for the medium and long term; sector development priorities; and service delivery.

National research facilities

The national research facilities managed by the NRF are clustered on the basis of their areas of specialisation aligned to the science missions of the National Research and Development Strategy.

South African Astronomical Observatory (SAAO)

The SAAO is the national centre for optical and infrared astronomy in South Africa. Its prime function is to conduct fundamental research in astronomy and astrophysics by providing a world-class facility and by promoting astronomy and astrophysics in southern Africa. The SAAO contributes to South Africa's future development by creating and disseminating scientific knowledge, providing research infrastructure and providing an interface between science and society. It is also responsible for managing the operations of the South African largest Telescope.

Hartebeesthoek Radio Astronomy Observatory (HartRAO)

The HartRAO is a national facility of the NRF. Its radio astronomy research focuses on stellar evolution, pulsars and masers; and its space geodesy research uses space-based techniques to study the Earth. The facility is also used by university students for carrying out research. It also undertakes science awareness programmes for schools and the general public.

South African Institute for Aquatic Biodiversity (SAIAB)

A national facility of the NRF, the SAIAB is famous for its association with the discovery of the enigmatic coelacanth and is internationally recognised for ichthyological research, dynamic research staff and an active postgraduate school. The SAIAB provides unique skills and infrastructure support in marine, estuarine and freshwater ecosystems research, molecular research, collections and bioinformatics.

South African Environmental Observation Network (SAEON)

The SAEON is a business unit of the NRF and serves as a national platform for detecting, translating and predicting environmental change through scientifically designed observation systems and research. The SAEON also captures and makes long-term datasets freely accessible, and runs an education outreach programme. The SAEON has six nodes dispersed geographically across the country.

National Zoological Gardens (NZG)

The NZG is a rapidly transforming facility reporting to the NRF. It owns an impressive animal collection, conservation centres, the Centre for Conservation Science and the NZG Academy. The NZG is well placed as an education and awareness platform for visitors comprising educators, learners, students, special interest groups and the general public.

iThemba LABS

iThemba LABS is the continent's largest facility for particle and nuclear research as well as one of only a handful of facilities in the world producing radionuclides for commercial, research and medical applications. In addition, its facilities include a full radiotherapy clinic for the treatment of certain cancers using both proton and neutron therapy.

The facility has secured government support to finance its strategic flagship project, the South Africa Isotope Facility (SAIF), an initiative that seeks to secure future sustainability of the facility by procuring a dedicated 70 Mega Electron-volt cyclotron accelerator to boost the production rate of a range of accelerator-based radioisotopes.

The strategic vision of the facility is to configure its radioisotope production division and establish the SAIF in a flagship project geared to triple the current radioisotope income.

The move is set to establish the facility as a formidable international entity with a secure market niche in the accelerator-based radiopharmaceutical sector. An annual average of more than 155 000 patients worldwide benefit from cancer diagnostic radioisotopes produced using the separated sector cyclotron particle at iThemba LABS.

Infrastructure projects

Square Kilometre Array (SKA)

The multi-billion-rand SKA, which is hosted in South Africa and Australia, aims to eventually extend into eight African countries and will be the world's biggest telescope. It is also one of the biggest-ever scientific projects and multinational collaborations in the name of science. The SKA organisation is progressing well, and South Africa continues to play an active role in the project. It was one of seven countries (with Australia, China, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal and the United Kingdom (UK) that signed a treaty establishing the SKA Observatory in March 2019.

South Africa is also working on getting the SKA Observatory treaty ratified by Parliament. The SKA Observatory is an intergovernmental organisation tasked with the construction and operations of the SKA radio telescope. The quality of astronomy infrastructure will facilitate world-class research. With thousands of linked radio wave receptors in Australia and in southern Africa, the SKA radio telescope will constantly scan space and feed the data to astronomers around the world.

The amounts of data being collected and transmitted by the SKA in a single day would take nearly two million years to play back on an iPod. This means the project requires supercomputing power and Big Data management and analytics capabilities on an unprecedented scale. The SKA is working with the world's most significant ICT powerhouses on the project. One aspect of the project will see the Netherlands Institute for Radio Astronomy and the International Business Machines Corporation collaborating to research extremely fast, but low-power exascale computer systems, data transport and storage processes, and streaming analytics that will be required to read, store and analyse all the raw data that will be collected daily.

The SKA project will also have unprecedented data-connectivity needs. Meeting the advanced technological and engineering needs of this project will result in significant local skills development, revolutionise science and technology research and enable innovative new businesses and employment in the science, technology and engineering fields. Aside from the benefits to African science, Big Data Management and analytics capabilities could be the biggest spin-off from the SKA project. The innovations, skills development and commercial potential emerging as a result of the project are huge. The potential is not just academic; the taxpayer-funded IP is developed to a point where it is ready to become commercialised and benefit the economy.

Human capital development is already taking place as a result of the SKA project, with bursaries and scholarships being granted to allow students to learn the necessary cutting-edge science, technology, mathematics and engineering skills to support the project. Because the SKA is a long-term project, over decades its effect will increase. The Centre for High Performance Computing (CHPC) is a member of the international SKA Science Data Processing Consortium. With funding from the DSTI, it is also supporting eight African SKA partner countries through an initiative where they have installed a new supercomputer to provide 1 000 teraflops (one petaflop) of computing power to researchers.

The facility was upgraded to meet the growing demand for use by university and industrial researchers. The SKA remains a major platform for cutting-edge innovation in domains such as supercomputing and the high-speed transmission and processing of massive data sets. Going forward, there will be a strong drive to leverage the SKA as a spearhead for other programmes – including next generation high performance computing challenges and Big Data challenges.

Two engineering consortia have been hard at work at their sites in Murchison, Western Australia, and the Northern Cape, South Africa, respectively, designing all the essential infrastructure required for the construction of this complex global project to get under way. This includes access roads, power, water and sanitation, buildings, antenna foundations, and the communication, security and site monitoring equipment required to support the SKA telescope.

The South African consortium, Infrastructure South Africa, was led by the South African Radio Astronomy Observatory, which designed, built and operates the 64-dish SKA precursor telescope, the MeerKAT. Following the successful review of the key infrastructure components of the SKA – considered a major engineering victory – the project will now move on to the bridging phase.

National Integrated Cyberinfrastructure System (NICIS)

The NICIS promotes scientific and industrial development through the provision of high-performance computing capability, high-speed network capacity and a national research data infrastructure integrated hierarchically into globally connected systems and into local systems, providing seamless access for the research and education communities of South Africa. It is a national initiative of the DSTI and is implemented by the CSIR.

The CHPC is one of three pillars of the NICIS. It provides massive parallel processing capabilities and services to researchers in industry and academia. The other main pillars are the South African National Research Network, which provides high-speed connectivity and advanced networking services, and the Data Intensive Research Initiative of South Africa, which implements services that enable sound data management practices and support efficient data-driven scientific and engineering discoveries.

The NICIS is the national or Tier 1 platform to provide e-infrastructure, tools and services to enable sustainable e-research, human capital and research capacity and skills development; and effective delivery of e-learning.

South African Research Infrastructure Roadmap (SARIR)

Through a joint agreement between South Africa and the EU, the SARIR Framework was developed as the basis for prioritising the development of national research infrastructure needs. The SARIR is a high-level strategic and systemic intervention to provide research infrastructure across the entire public research system, building on existing capabilities and strengths, and drawing on future needs.

This roadmap will provide guidance to the DSTI on the strategic development, acquisition and deployment of research infrastructure as a necessary enabler for research, development and innovation. The SARIR is intended to provide a strategic, rational, medium to long-term framework for planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating the provision of research infrastructure necessary for a competitive and sustainable national system of innovation.

It also provides a basis for discussion concerning financing future infrastructure for research in South Africa, and for participating in joint international research infrastructure. The roadmap was developed through a bottom-up process driven from within the national research community, moderated at a technical level by an expert steering committee and aligned with national research priorities through strategic moderation by the DSTI. The implementation of the SARIR will continue over the MTSF period, with all 13 research infrastructures approved in the first phase of the roadmap being implemented.

Information and Communications Technology

The DSTI is leading the implementation of the national ICT Research, Development and Innovation Strategy. The strategy's main purpose is to create an enabling environment for innovation and manufacturing facilities and resources in South Africa. The CHPC, SANReN and the Very Large Databases are the three pillars of cyberinfrastructure that the DSTI supports. Hosted by the UCT and managed by the CSIR's Meraka Institute, the CHPC was the first of its kind in South Africa and is making scientific supercomputing a reality for the country.

A major project for SANReN is the national backbone network, which aimed to connect all major metros in the country with a 10 gigabyte per second link. SANReN, linking 215 research sites, consists of 1 500 kilometres (km) of dark fibre and 5 000 km of managed bandwidth. This network is complimented by significant international broadband capacity on the West Africa Cable System and the east coast SEACOM system, ensuring that the DSTI's projects support competitive research and innovation as it prepares the national innovation system for the future. SANReN connects more than 200 sites from Thohoyandou to Cape Town, including all the main campuses of all South African universities and most public research institutions, as well as global projects such as the SKA and the MeerKAT.

Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS)

The IKS Policy serves as a guide for the recognition, understanding, integration and promotion of South Africa's wealth of indigenous knowledge resources. One of the areas of action identified by the policy is the protection of indigenous knowledge and the holders of such knowledge against exploitation. This includes ensuring that communities receive fair and sustained recognition and, where appropriate, financial remuneration for the use of this knowledge. The indigenous knowledge of many communities embodies a deeply spiritualised and ancient



relationship with the Earth's systems and cycles. Traditional songs and languages, clothing, architecture, foods, motifs, daily rituals and mythological epics contain local survival information. Moreover, the diversity of indigenous cultures provides unique insights into how to live harmoniously within nature.

By sharing indigenous stories of vulnerability and adaptation, people learn how communities share ideas on how ancestral wisdom is being incorporated into climatic adaptation strategies. By cherishing the value of indigenous knowledge, people can discover how best to adapt to a changing climate.

The DSTI has three IKS priorities:

- The development of a regulatory environment for the protection of IKS.
- The development of the National Recordal System for the collection, recording, documenting, storage and management and dissemination of IKS in communities in the nine provinces of the country. Until orally transmitted and rapidly disappearing indigenous knowledge is recorded, it will be difficult to protect. The National Recordal System is the largest fingerprint initiative of the region to document and record indigenous knowledge.
- Applied research, specifically bio-prospecting activities. An example would be the Moritela Tshwene Tea Project near Zeerust in the North West.

A major achievement was to put in place an information infrastructure that would hold IKS in oral format. In addition, two UK-South Africa bilateral research chairs have been awarded for research into food security – one co-hosted by the universities of the Western Cape and Pretoria, and the other based at the NMU. The DSTI has also established indigenous knowledge studies centres of excellence at some of the country's universities. The centres will play a defining role in generating highly qualified human resource capacity in IKS.

Natural Resource Development

To reinvigorate the South African mining sector and to harness the vast amounts of existing and potential opportunities for industrial and manufacturing growth, it is crucial for the country to create the technologies and mining methods to push mining deeper in a commercially viable manner. South Africa needs a competitive mining industry. This will only be possible if science and innovation play the quintessential role of changing the cost and exploitation horizons of the sector.

None of the existing mining stakeholders (publicly funded research institutions, private sector companies, universities, unions or government) have the scale to impact the situation alone in the long run. To achieve this, a critical mass of science and knowledge to push the frontiers of mining will require a national effort consisting of deep partnerships and collaborations across institutions and industries.

Women in Science Awards

Every year since 2003, the DSTI has held the South African Women in Science Awards (SAWiSA) to recognise the achievements of prominent women scientists and encourage the participation of women in research. The awards are held in August as part of National Women's Month celebrations, which take place to honour the women who marched to the Union Buildings in 1956 to protest the apartheid system's pass laws.







SOUTH AFRICA
YEARBOOK
2024/25

Finance and Economy

Economic activity in South Africa increased in the first quarter of 2025 as real gross domestic product (GDP) expanded by 0,1% following a revised expansion of 0,4% in the fourth quarter of 2024. The real gross value added (GVA) by the primary and tertiary sectors expanded, while that by the secondary sector contracted further. The level of real GDP was 0,8% higher in the first quarter of 2025 compared to a year earlier. The expansion in the real GVA by the primary sector in the first quarter of 2025 resulted from higher agricultural output outweighing a contraction in mining output.

The expansion in the agricultural sector was driven by the horticulture and animal products subsections. Mining output decreased anew as production volumes decreased in seven of the 12 subsectors, with platinum group metals (PGMs), gold, coal and chrome contributing the most to the contraction. The real output of the secondary sector contracted by 2,4% in the first quarter of 2025 following a decline of 0,7% in the fourth quarter of 2024. All three sub-sectors – manufacturing, electricity, gas and water, and construction sectors – recorded contractions.

Production volumes declined in seven of the 10 manufacturing divisions, driven mainly by motor vehicles, parts and accessories and other transport equipment divisions. Real economic activity in the construction sector weakened further, reflecting lower levels of civil construction as well as residential activity. The real output of the electricity, gas and water sector contracted, as both the volume of electricity produced and consumed declined, reflecting subdued economic activity and the growing role of private sector generation.

The real output of the tertiary sector increased by 0,4% following a similar expansion in the fourth quarter of 2024, with three of the five sub-sectors registering an expansion, led by the transport, trade, catering and accommodation and finance sectors. The 0,2% expansion in the real GVA by the finance, insurance, real estate and business services sector resulted from increased activity in insurance, pension funding, and auxiliary services, with insurers maintaining strong capital positions amid regulatory changes and pension funds focusing on long-term investments to support sustainable growth.

The real output of the transport, storage and communication sector reverted to an increase of 2,4% following four consecutive quarters of contraction. Activity in land, air transportation, and transport support services increased. The real output of the commerce sector reported a marginal expansion of 0,5% in the first quarter with increases driven by retail trade, motor trade, accommodation, and food and beverages, while wholesale trade sales reported a contraction. Real output of the general government and personal services sectors reported contractions – driven respectively by lower employment in provincial government and health and education.

Real gross domestic expenditure (GDE)

GDE grew by 0,4% in the first quarter of 2025, up from 0,2% in the previous quarter. On a year-on-year basis, the level of GDE was 1,5% higher than in the first quarter of 2024. The main drivers of this outcome were stronger household consumption and a slower pace of inventory drawdowns, while contractions in government consumption and fixed capital investment continued to weigh on overall expenditure growth.

Real final consumption expenditure by households grew by 0,4% in the first quarter of 2025, a slower pace than the 1,1% recorded previously, reflecting weaker disposable income and falling consumer confidence. Spending on durables (0,8%) and non-durables (0,3%) lost momentum, while semi-durables showed no growth.

By contrast, real final consumption expenditure by general government declined further by 0,1% from a decline of 0,8% in Q4 2024, reflecting lower outlays on both employee compensation and non-wage goods and services. Gross fixed capital formation also contracted by 1,7%, as reduced investment by private business enterprises more than offset increases by public corporations and general government.

Inventory de-accumulation persisted for a fifth successive quarter, subtracting less from growth than before, as real inventory holdings decreased by R9.0 billion (at seasonally adjusted and annualised 2015 prices) compared with R24.4 billion in Q4 2024. Net exports, meanwhile, detracted 0,3 percentage points from overall GDP growth, led by weaker mining and manufacturing exports.

Household debt and wealth

Household debt as a percentage of nominal disposable income increased to 62,7% in the first quarter of 2025 from 62,2% in the fourth quarter of 2024, as the increase in nominal disposable income was exceeded by that of household debt. Households' cost of servicing debt as a percentage of disposable income edged lower to 8.9% in the first quarter of 2025 from 9% in the fourth quarter of 2024, consistent with cuts in interest rates beginning in late 2024.

Households' net wealth increased in the first quarter of 2025 as total assets increased faster than the increase in total liabilities. The increase in total assets was supported by increases in the market value of equities as the FTSE/JSE All-share Index (Alsi) increased by more than 5% in the first quarter, while the value of housing stock also increased.

Gross fixed capital formation (GFCF)

Gross fixed capital formation contracted by 1,7% in the first quarter of 2025, following a 0,5% decline in the previous quarter. The fall reflected a sharp reduction of 4,5% in private sector investment, particularly in residential buildings, construction works, machinery and equipment, and transport equipment.

By contrast, investment by public corporations increased by 13,8%, supported by higher outlays on machinery, research and development, and transport equipment, while general government spending edged up by 0,3% on the back of non-residential buildings and computer equipment.

These increases lifted the public sector's share of total gross fixed capital formation to nearly 29%, up from 27,7% in the 4Q 2024, although they were not sufficient to offset private sector weakness. On an annual basis, overall GFCF was 3,2% lower than in the first quarter of 2024, with private business enterprises contributing most to the contraction.

Labour force

The total labour force increased by 0,6% to 25.1 million in the second quarter of 2025, supported by an increase in employment. South Africa's unemployment rate rose further to 33,2% in the second quarter of 2025, from 32,9% in the first quarter of 2025, as the number of unemployed

individuals increased by 140 000 to a one-year high of 8.4 million, while employed individuals rose by 19 000 to 16.8 million.

The not economically active population decreased by 28 000 (0.2%) persons in the second quarter of 2025, with the expanded unemployment rate, which includes discouraged work seekers, easing to 42,9% in the second quarter of 2025 from 43,1% in first quarter of 2025. The year-on-year pace of increase in formal non-agricultural nominal remuneration per worker decelerated further from 5,6% in the third quarter of 2024 to 4,5% in the fourth quarter due to a moderation in public sector remuneration growth per worker, while private sector remuneration growth per worker remained relatively unchanged.

The average wage settlement rate in collective bargaining agreements receded to 5,7% in the first three months of 2025, from 6,2% in the corresponding period of 2024. Growth in labour productivity in the formal non-agricultural sector slowed from 3,4% in the third quarter of 2024 to 1,3% in the fourth quarter as the year-on-year decline in employment moderated notably while the year-on-year growth in non-agricultural output slowed. Conversely, growth in nominal unit labour cost in the formal non-agricultural sector accelerated from 2,1% in the third quarter of 2024 to 3,1% in the fourth quarter as year-on-year growth in total remuneration accelerated, while that in non-agricultural output slowed.

Growth in economy-wide nominal unit labour cost decelerated from 3.9% in the fourth quarter of 2024 to 3,4% in the first quarter of 2025 as year-on-year growth in the compensation of employees moderated, while that in total output remained unchanged.

Headline consumer and producer price inflation

Domestic inflation pressures have eased significantly, with the recent inflation data prints undershooting their target, driven by subdued domestic demand and relatively stable food and fuel prices. Both headline consumer and producer price inflation accelerated in June 2025, driven by easing base effects and rising food prices, which were partly impacted by a widespread outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease, combined with higher feed costs, which contributed to higher meat prices.

Producer price inflation of final manufactured goods accelerated from 0,1% in May 2025 to 0,6% in June 2025, which was the highest in four months, largely due to the higher price inflation of food, beverages, and tobacco products. Despite the recent uptick, the headline consumer price inflation has averaged 3,0% year to date, remaining below the central bank's midpoint target of 4,5%, supported by a stronger currency and lower international oil prices, which eased transportation costs. The annual headline inflation rate rose to 3% in June 2025, the highest in four months, from 2,8% in each of the previous two months. This was driven by higher prices for food and non-alcoholic beverages alcoholic beverages and tobacco.

Primary inflationary pressures continued to moderate, with core inflation slowing to 2,9% in June 2025, edging below the lower inflation target band of 3.0%. This marks the lowest annual core inflation rate since April 2021. South Africa's trade surplus widened to R22 billion in the second quarter of 2025, up from R6 billion in the first quarter, as the value of merchandise imports fell more sharply than exports. Imports dropped 3,5% to R148.6 billion, led by lower purchases of mineral products, chemical products, and machinery & electronics. Exports decreased by 1,9% to R171 billion, due to reduced shipments of base metals, precious metals & stones, and mineral products.

Value of exports

The trade surplus remained broadly unchanged at a downwardly revised 3% of GDP in the fourth quarter of 2024 (previous: 3,1%) to the first quarter of 2025 as the value of merchandise imports increased, outpacing that of goods exports.

The value of goods and services exports increased by 2,5% quarter-on-quarter in the first quarter of 2025 due to higher volumes and prices. The value of merchandise exports increased by 5,1% in the quarter (in line with the increase in manufacturing, agricultural, and mining exports). Net gold exports decreased by 17,1%, while service receipts decreased by 0,5% in the quarter.

The value of goods and services imports increased by 2,8% quarter-on-quarter in the first quarter of 2025 due to higher volumes and prices. The value of merchandise imports surged by 3,6% in the quarter (as an increase in manufacturing imports outweighed decreases in mining and agricultural imports), while service payments decreased by 1,1%.

South Africa's terms of trade increased in the first quarter of 2025 as the rand price of exported goods and services increased more than that of imports.

Merchandise exports rose in the first quarter of 2025, supported by stronger performance in mining, manufacturing, and agriculture. Mining exports benefitted from higher shipments of mineral products and precious and semi-precious stones, which outweighed lower exports of platinum group metals (PGMs), base metals, and related articles. Manufacturing exports were lifted mainly by vehicles and transport equipment, machinery and electrical equipment, along with prepared foodstuffs, beverages, and tobacco. These gains offset weaker exports of wood pulp, paper products, artificial resins, and plastics. Agricultural exports recorded a third straight quarterly increase, with fruit – particularly grapes – leading the growth.

Merchandise imports also rose in the first quarter of 2025, driven by higher manufacturing imports, while imports of agricultural and mining products declined. The increase in manufactured imports reflected greater demand for machinery and electrical equipment, chemical products, and vehicles and transport equipment. In contrast, mining imports were weighed down by reduced purchases of base metals and related articles – especially iron, steel and copper wire – as well as pearls, precious and semi-precious stones.

The deficit on the services, income, and current transfer account narrowed in the first quarter of 2025, as smaller shortfalls on the services and income accounts offset a larger deficit on current transfers. The improvement in the income account was largely due to higher gross dividend receipts alongside a marked reduction in gross dividend payments. Because the decline in the services, income, and current transfer deficit exceeded the fall in the trade surplus, the overall current account deficit contracted slightly in the

first quarter of 2025. As a share of GDP, the current account deficit was virtually unchanged at 0,5%.

Although the trade surplus declined, this was offset by a smaller deficit on the services, income, and current transfer account, leading to a reduction in the overall current account deficit – from R39.3 billion in the fourth quarter of 2024 to R35.6 billion in the first quarter of 2025.

South Africa's financial account of the balance of payments (excluding unrecorded transactions) shifted from a net outflow of R9.5 billion in the fourth quarter of 2024 to a net inflow of R36.9 billion in the first quarter of 2025. Net inflows were recorded in direct investment, other investment, and reserve assets, while portfolio investment and financial derivatives registered outflows. As a share of GDP, the financial account moved from a net outflow of 0,5% in the previous quarter to a net inflow of 2% in the first quarter of 2025.

South Africa's total external debt declined from $176.3 billion at the end of September 2024 to $168.4 billion at the end of December, mainly due to a sharp reduction in rand-denominated external debt. However, when measured in rand terms, total external debt rose, reflecting an 8,5% depreciation of the rand against the US dollar over the fourth quarter of 2024. South Africa's positive net international investment position (IIP) increased from the end of September 2024 to the end of December as the market value of foreign assets increased more than that of foreign liabilities.

Nominal Effective Exchange Rate (NEER)

The exchange value of the rand had a notable impact on foreign assets and, to a lesser extent, on foreign liabilities as the NEER of the rand declined, on balance, by 0,6% in the second quarter of 2025. Despite market volatility driven by trade uncertainties, both the US Standard & Poor's (S&P) 500 Index and the ALSI delivered strong performance in the first half of 2025, supporting an increase in the positive net IIP.

Year to date, the NEER increased by 1,8% buoyed by stronger commodity export earnings, improved risk sentiment toward emerging markets, and relatively tighter domestic monetary policy. The Government of National Unity (GNU) has helped bolster political stability, which, in turn, has contributed to strengthening the rand alongside improved investor sentiment. However, concerns about global and domestic economic growth and the trade policy uncertainties partly countered the positive impact of these developments.

The NEER traded at 84.6 in the second quarter of 2025 from 83.2 at the beginning of the year. The yield on 10-year South African rand-denominated government bonds eased below 10% to 9,72% in July 2025, easing from 10.40% at the beginning of the year, and was supported by a more favourable inflation outlook and gradual monetary policy easing.

The total nominal value of outstanding listed and unlisted rand-denominated debt securities issued by residents and non-residents in the domestic primary debt market increased by 9,4% year-on-year to R6.3 trillion at the end of October 2023. General government accounted for 72,4% (R4.6 trillion) of the total amount of debt securities in issuance in the domestic primary debt market at the end of October 2023, with funding activity reflecting government's larger borrowing requirement.

The nominal net issuance of rand-denominated debt securities in the domestic primary debt market by financial corporations in the first 10 months of 2023 was 28,2% lower than in the corresponding period of 2022, mainly reflecting much smaller net issuance of unlisted debt securities by banks. Year-on-year growth in the broadly defined money supply (M3) increased by 7,27% year-on-year to an all-time high of R5 567 271 million in June 2025, following a 6,86% rise in the previous month.

The recent slowdown in M3 growth reflected a notable deceleration in the growth in deposit holdings of companies and, to a lesser extent, that of households as it was supported by higher interest rates. Although growth in all three maturity categories slowed over this period, growth in long-term deposits and in short- and medium-term deposits still outpaced that in the more liquid cash, current account and other demand deposits.

Private sector credit extension (PSCE) growth was unchanged at 5% year-on-year in June 2025, as a marginal decline in corporate credit was offset by a slight increase in household credit. Credit to corporates eased slightly to 6,6%, weighed down by a sharper contraction in investment credit, although mortgage advances and instalment sale credit showed moderate gains. Growth in general loans and advances remained steady, while overdrafts, bills, and leasing finance recorded notable increases, and credit card advances slowed.

Year-on-year, the household credit growth edged up to 3,1%, largely supported by instalment sale credit, while mortgage advances remained unchanged, and growth in general loans and overdrafts was flat or slightly contracting. Despite subdued headline inflation, households continue to face financial strain due to high living costs, elevated food prices, rising medical aid contributions, and higher municipal and electricity tariffs. The preliminary non-financial public sector borrowing requirement increased significantly by R168.7 billion year-on-year to R219.3 billion in the first six months (April - September 2023) of the 2023/24 fiscal year.

This reflected the significantly higher cash deficit of the consolidated general government, in particular national government, largely due to lower cash receipts from operating activities related to lower revenue collections in most tax categories. In addition, all other levels of general government recorded smaller cash surpluses, while the non-financial public enterprises and corporations, or state-owned companies, recorded a cash deficit in the first six months of fiscal 2023/24 compared to a surplus in the first six months of the previous fiscal year.

National government's cash book deficit of R253 billion in the first half of fiscal 2023/24 was R89 billion more than in the first half of fiscal 2022/23 as expenditure growth outpaced that in revenue. The primary deficit was also substantially larger relative to the corresponding period of the previous fiscal year. National government's total gross loan debt increased by 9,2% year on year to R5 080 billion as of 30 September 2023. The increase could be attributed to a rise in the outstanding stock of both domestic and foreign debt, owing to net issuances as well as the exchange rate revaluation effects brought about by the depreciation in the exchange value of the rand against other major currencies.

National Treasury

National Treasury's legislative mandate is derived from Section 216(1) of the Constitution, which calls for the establishment of a national treasury to ensure transparency, accountability and sound financial controls in the management of South Africa's public finances. This role is further elaborated on in the Public Finance Management Act (1999) as well as the Municipal Finance Management Act (2003).

The Treasury is mandated to:

- promote national government's fiscal policy and the coordination of macroeconomic policy;
- ensure the stability and soundness of the financial system and financial services;
- coordinate intergovernmental financial and fiscal relations;
- manage the budget preparation process;
- enforce transparency and effective management in respect of revenue and expenditure, assets and liabilities, public entities, and constitutional institutions;
- oversee the implementation of the provincial and local government infrastructure portfolio; and
- ensure financial management governance and compliance with the Public Finance Management Act (1999) and the Municipal Finance Management Act (2003) across all spheres and entities in government.

Section 5(2) of the Municipal Finance Management Act (2003) further mandates the department to monitor municipal budgets and promote good budgeting and fiscal management by municipalities. The mandate extends to the issuance of regulations on all aspects of the Act, including investments, borrowing, budgeting, accounting, assets, reporting, competencies, expenditure, cost containment, supply chain, public-private partnerships, financial misconduct and criminal procedures.

Over the next three years, the Treasury has adopted an ambitious plan to enforce a responsive tax system; support infrastructure development and economically integrated cities and communities; manage future spending growth, fiscal risk and government's assets and liabilities; automate and streamline government procurement; strengthen financial management in government; and enhance international and regional economic advocacy.

The Treasury's budget over the medium term is R3 trillion, of which 59,2% (R1.8 trillion) is for transfers to provincial governments for the provincial equitable share. Cabinet has approved budget increases amounting to R76.9 billion over the MTEF period to the provincial equitable share for adjustments related to compensation of employees. Debt-service costs account for 35,6% (R1.1 trillion) of direct charges against the National Revenue Fund over the medium term. However, Cabinet has approved an increase on debt-service costs of R18.6 billion over the period.

The Treasury's budget over the medium term is R3.5 trillion, of which 97,4% (R3.4 trillion) constitutes direct charges against the National Revenue Fund. Transfers to provincial governments for the provincial equitable share amount to an estimated 56,8% (R2 trillion) of direct charges; debt-service costs account for an estimated 38,3% (R1.4 trillion) over the medium term, while public sector-related pension, post-retirement medical and other benefits in terms of statutory and collective agreements account for an estimated 0,7% (R26 billion). Cabinet has approved additional allocations over the MTEF period of: R15.7 billion to the provincial equitable share for cost-of-living adjustments; R23.1 billion for debt-service costs; R2.7 billion to the post-retirement medical scheme for premium increases and expected membership growth; and R349 million for the payment of pension benefits to government employees discharged because of injuries sustained on duty.

The number of personnel in the Treasury is expected to increase from 1 115 in 2024/25 to 1 172 in 2027/28. As such, spending on compensation of employees is set to increase at an average annual rate of 7,4%, from R969.7 million to R1.2 billion over the same period. This includes a reprioritisation of R313 million over the medium term, derived through containing costs in other mostly non-essential spending areas, to fill identified critical posts.

Enforce a responsive tax system

To meet government's revenue requirements and improve fairness in the tax system, over the medium term, the department will continue to develop tax policy proposals, and draft tax legislation such as the Rates and Monetary Amounts Amendment Bill and Taxation Laws Amendment Bill, and draft tax regulations for implementation. Expenditure related to these activities is within the Tax Policy subprogramme, which is allocated R110.2 million over the medium term, in the Economic Policy, Tax, Financial Regulation and Research programme.

Supporting sustainable employment

Established by the National Treasury in 2011, the Jobs Fund is a R9 billion initiative designed to stimulate innovative, sustainable job creation through a challenge fund model. The Fund provides matched funding grants to projects that address specific labour market barriers to employment. It supports projects across four funding windows: Enterprise Development, Infrastructure Development, Support for Work Seekers and Institutional Capacity Building. Funding is allocated against pre-defined criteria through a transparent competitive process, targeting initiatives with scalable impact. Since inception, the Fund has disbursed R7.5 billion and leveraged R15.3 billion in matched funding from private and non-government partners. The Fund provides catalytic finance and is willing to share risks with its partners with the objective of enhancing social return and impact and encouraging market adoption of successful job creation models and challenge fund principles.

Over the medium term, the Jobs Fund is allocated R1 billion under the Government Technical Advisory Centre (GTAC) within the Public Finance and Budget Management programme.

Supporting infrastructure development and economically integrated cities and communities

The department will continue to enhance the capacity of cities and metropolitan areas to sustainably contribute to economic development and generate tax revenue. As such, over the MTEF period, it will support and monitor the implementation of township economic development strategies in five targeted metros (City of Cape Town, City of Ekurhuleni, eThekwini, Nelson Mandela Bay and City of Tshwane) through the cities support programme, which is

allocated R96.7 million over the medium term in the Catalytic Infrastructure and Development Support subprogramme in the Public Finance and Budget Management programme.

Several reforms will be implemented to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of conditional grants, as well as their alignment with government priorities. A new urban development financing grant will be introduced in 2025/26 to address declining service delivery in metropolitan municipalities caused by underinvestment in infrastructure and a lack of technical expertise. This grant, amounting to R3.7 billion over the MTEF period within the Facilitation of Conditional Grants subprogramme in the Public Finance and Budget Management programme, will consolidate the metro components of the direct neighbourhood development partnership grant and the larger share of the programme and project preparation support grant. The new grant will be augmented by the World Bank's performance for results incentive. National Treasury will incubate the new grant for up to six years before transferring its management to the Department of Cooperative Governance.

The urban development financing grant also includes R450 million for the cities' public employment programme. This funding will be disbursed to city-led projects such as upgrading informal settlements; maintaining, developing and managing public spaces and assets within human settlements and economic hubs; promoting greening and cleanliness initiatives; enhancing community safety measures; providing environmental services and management; and promoting community tourism.

The budget facility for infrastructure plays a pivotal role in mobilising private sector resources and expertise that enable the implementation of transformative projects aimed at addressing critical infrastructure needs. To this end, through the urban development financing grant, the City of Johannesburg will receive R578 million in 2026/27 and R533 million in 2027/28 for an innovative wastewater project, and the eThekwini Metropolitan Municipality will receive R56 million in 2025/26, R109 million in 2026/27 and R101 million in 2027/28 to fix leaking water infrastructure.

The programme and project preparation support grant will fall away, and its remaining portion will be integrated into the neighbourhood development partnership grant, which will focus on non-metropolitan municipalities. Its aim will be to facilitate spatial transformation by identifying, planning and investing in targeted locations to attract and sustain third-party capital investments. This includes developing a pipeline of investment-ready capital programmes and projects by institutionalising an efficient system for programme and project preparation. No funding through this grant is allocated for new projects as 40 ongoing catalytic projects at various stages of development will remain prioritised over the medium term in strategic areas to advance urban resilience and drive socioeconomic transformation. These well-coordinated, high-impact infrastructural investments include installing bulk water reticulation pipes, building public transportation facilities, and rehabilitating existing road and stormwater drainage systems. For this purpose, the Facilitation of Conditional Grants subprogramme in the Public Finance and Budget Management programme has allocated R1,4 billion.

The smart meters indirect grant was introduced in 2024/25 to help municipalities improve their efficiency, billing accuracy and overall service delivery through smart meter technology. This is expected to enhance revenue generation and cost recovery and underscores the department's commitment to sustainable development and prioritising investment in energy infrastructure at the local government level. The installation of smart, bidirectional meters in municipalities is expected to result in a reduction in distribution losses of electricity and water, and therefore improved revenue collection. The grant is allocated R2.3 billion over the next three years in the Facilitation of Conditional Grants subprogramme in the Budget Management and Public Finance programme.

Managing future spending growth, fiscal risk and government's assets and liabilities

The department will monitor public service expenditure over the medium term and maintain discipline to steer the country towards fiscal stability and ensure sustainable growth. To carry out these activities, R1.6 billion over the medium term is allocated in the Public Finance, Budget Office and Coordination and Intergovernmental Relations subprogrammes in the Public Finance and Budget Management programme.

The department will also continue to manage government's borrowing requirements to ensure that government can meet its funding needs. This entails monitoring budget deficits and redemption, reviewing funding strategies, and monitoring market conditions and investor demands to optimise borrowing costs. Additionally, the department will continue to enforce measures that require prudent financial management in all state-owned entities through financial analysis and oversight, which includes reviewing their corporate plans, annual reports and guarantee applications. To carry out these activities, R493.2 million is allocated over the next three years in the Asset and Liability Management programme.

Automating and streamlining government procurement

The Office of the Chief Procurement Officer aims to position the public procurement system as a pivotal mechanism for driving economic growth and facilitating job creation by integrating advanced technologies and streamlined processes. Four focus areas have been identified to automate the procurement process: enhancing transparency in public procurement across government by improving access to data; developing an electronic government marketplace, which is planned to go live in 2025/26; automating the request for quotations process in 2026/27; and implementing a fully automated end-to-end open tendering solution in 2027/28. The office will also continue efforts aimed at professionalising supply chain management across government, monitoring compliance with the procurement regime, and improving the reporting of procurement expenditure. This work will be carried out in the Office of the Chief Procurement Officer subprogramme, which is allocated R282 million over the MTEF period in the Financial Accounting and Supply Chain Management Systems programme.

Strengthening financial management in government

The Office of the Accountant-General will continue to advocate for robust financial governance and the

enhancement of capacity and competency across the three spheres of government and within public entities. This will be achieved by consolidating the compliance reporting framework to help institutions with the processes, principles and reporting of unauthorised, irregular and fruitless and wasteful expenditure. Part of this drive includes reviewing the municipal public financial management competency framework to ensure that personnel have the necessary knowledge, skills and behaviours to manage public funds responsibly and efficiently. This includes leveraging partnerships with capacity-building institutions to ensure that only those with the required skills and expertise are appointed.

The office will also prioritise completing the review of the legislative framework, which includes amending the Public Finance Management Act (1999) and the Municipal Finance Management Act (2003) in 2026/27. Proposed amendments to the Public Finance Management Act (1999) involve reviewing definitions of irregular and fruitless and wasteful expenditure to address how this expenditure is disclosed in annual financial statements and annual reports. Proposed amendments to the Municipal Finance Management Act (2003) will address how municipalities and municipal entities should detect and address irregular expenditure, including through implementing consequence management. To this end, R436.9 million is allocated over the next three years in the Financial Management Policy and Compliance Improvement subprogramme in the Financial Accounting and Supply Chain Management Systems programme. Allocations to the subprogramme will also fund the implementation of a comprehensive set of reforms to the local government system to improve governance and municipal finance management.

Further support to local government will be provided through the local government financial management grant, which is aimed at promoting and supporting financial management reforms and building capacity in municipalities. The grant is allocated R1.9 billion over the medium term in the Facilitation of Conditional Grants subprogramme in the Public Finance and Budget Management programme.

Enhancing international and regional economic advocacy

Activities carried out through the International Financial Relations programme over the period ahead are aimed at influencing global economic policies and practices to promote fair trade, sustainable development and economic justice. This involves advocating for South Africa's economic interests in international organisations such as the World Trade Organisation, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, and regional institutions such as the African Development Bank, the Common Monetary Area and the Southern African Development Community. The department has allocated R2.8 billion over the medium term for equity in the African Development Bank as part of its recapitalisation, constituting 30,4% of the International Financial Relations programme's allocation of R9.1 billion. A further R5.2 billion in the programme is earmarked to facilitate regional cooperation within the Common Monetary Area, particularly for compensation payments to Eswatini, Lesotho and Namibia for the use of the rand.

Allocations amounting to R106.1 million over the MTEF period in the African Integration and Support and International Projects subprogrammes, in the same programme, are intended to manage commitments for technical support for regional capacity building institutions such as the Collaborative Africa Budget Reform Initiative, the International Finance Facility for Immunisation, the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Cooperation, the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning, and the International Monetary Fund's Regional Technical Assistance Centre for Southern Africa.

As part of South Africa's presidency of the G20, R78.8 million in 2025/26 was allocated for G20 meetings, with National Treasury leading the finance track meetings involving finance ministries and central banks. Under the theme "solidarity, equality and sustainability", these discussions under South Africa's presidency focussed on the challenges facing emerging markets and developing countries, especially in Africa; the state of the global economy; international financial system stability; and trade, investment and development financing.

The sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) region was granted a third chair at the International Monetary Fund (IMF) Executive Board. On 16 July 2024, the IMF Board of Governors issued a resolution to increase the number of Executive Directors from 24 to 25 with the 25th chair allocated to sub-Saharan Africa. The National Treasury was at the forefront in advocating for the institutional reform at the IMF Executive Board that provided the region with a greater voice in the governance of the institution. The expansion was implemented with the 2024 Regular Election of Executive Directors when the 45 Sub-Saharan Africa member countries, previously organised into two constituencies, were re-organised into three new constituencies: Central and Eastern Africa, Southern Africa, and West Africa. South Africa's Minister of Finance played a pivotal role in negotiating the new constituency for Southern Africa. The completion of the Fund's 2024 Regular Election of Executive Directors on 25 October 2024 was the final step in the creation of an additional chair dedicated to Sub-Saharan Africa.

Operation Vulindlela (OV)

Operation Vulindlela (OV) was established in 2020 as a joint initiative of The Presidency and National Treasury to accelerate implementation of the Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan (ERRP). The reform priorities sought to address binding constraints to South Africa's growth. Under its first phase, OV focused on unlocking progress in five priority areas: electricity, freight logistics, water, telecommunications, and the visa system. Network industries were prioritised as they are the bedrock of economic growth and are essential to creating a globally competitive economy. On the other hand, reforms to the visa regime were prioritised to attract skills and promote growth in tourism.

Phase II of OV represents a second wave of structural reform aimed at unlocking more rapid, inclusive, and sustained economic growth. While continuing to drive implementation of reforms initiated during Phase I, the second phase introduces new focus areas that respond to evolving challenges in the economy. Adopted by Cabinet in March 2025, the second phase priorities introduce new

areas of reform aimed at (i) strengthening local government and improving the delivery of basic services; (ii) harnessing digital public infrastructure as a driver of growth and inclusion; and (iii) creating dynamic and integrated cities to enable economic activity.

The implementation of structural reforms is crucial to sustain our economic recovery and to address the underlying causes of low economic growth and high unemployment. Many of these reforms have been delayed for several reasons, but their urgency is increased by the need to support a swift economic recovery. OV monitors progress and actively supports implementation. Its aim is to fast-track the implementation of high-impact reforms, addressing obstacles or delays to ensure execution on policy commitments.

South Africa Investment Conference (SAIC)

In 2018, President Cyril Ramaphosa committed to raising more than R1.2 trillion worth of investments over a five-year period to boost the economy of South Africa. The country has, so far, hosted five annual investment conferences, at which the President set out the policy context and reforms, and the private sector provided feedback and made pledges to invest.

The conferences have drawn delegates from South Africa and the rest of the world with the objective of showcasing the investment opportunities available in the country. At the 5th South Africa Investment Conference (SAIC) held at the Sandton Convention Centre in Sandton, Johannesburg, on 13 April 2023, the initial target was surpassed when more than R1.5 trillion was raised through investment commitments. The SAIC successfully showcased South Africa as an ideal investment destination for local and international investors looking for a foothold into the rest of Africa.

Economic indicators

Domestic outlook

In the 2025 Budget Overview, National Treasury's forecast a 1,4% real growth in domestic GDP in 2025, a modest improvement from 0,5% in 2024. Growth is projected to average 1,7% from 2026 to 2027. These growth rates are not sufficient to achieve the country's desired levels of development.

In the first quarter of 2025, the economy grew by 0,1% on a quarter-on-quarter and seasonally adjusted basis (q/q sa). Agriculture contributed the most, grew by 15,8% q/q sa largely due to the horticulture and animal products subsectors. The transport and communications sector increased by 2,4% q/q sa, while the financial and business services sector increased by 0,2% q/q sa.

However, the domestic outlook is constrained by persistent logistics bottlenecks, elevated borrowing cost and a subdued global environment. Although inflation has eased and power supply has stabilised, weak revenue performance and higher expenditure pressures have weighed on the fiscal position.

The main budget deficit increased by R14.7 billion compared with the 2024 Budget estimates. This reflected weaker revenue performance and higher non-interest expenditure from rollovers, the Democratic Republic of the Congo troop deployment, repayment of Gauteng Freeway debt and the extension of the COVID-19 Social Relief of Distress grant.

The result of the shortfall was a substantial worsening in the main budget deficit in the current financial year. National Treasury projects a deficit of 4,6% of GDP compared to the 2024 Budget estimate of 3,9%. Under these circumstances, measures to stabilise public finances and reform the economy to generate higher growth are essential. National Treasury recognises that alongside these measures, its most effective way of funding government is through an efficient tax administration and by broadening the tax base.

South African Revenue Service (SARS) is expected to continue its focus on enforcing compliance in areas such as debt collection, fraud prevention, curbing illicit trade, voluntary disclosures and encouraging honest taxpayers to comply voluntarily. To further strengthen SARS, it will receive an additional R7.5 billion over the medium term to strengthen capacity. Every additional rand of revenue collected is one rand less which we must borrow.

Global outlook

In its July World Economic Outlook, the International Monetary Fund forecasts global growth to slow from 3,3% in 2024 to 3% in 2025, before increasing to 3,1% in 2026. The global economic environment has become less supportive of South Africa's growth prospects, reflecting new tariff measures by the United States and the resulting policy uncertainty. Growth projections have been downgraded for some of South Africa's largest trading partners, including China and the United States, while weaker-than-expected world trade volumes suggest reduced demand for South African exports.

Credit ratings

- On 16 May 2025, S&P Global Ratings reaffirmed South Africa's long-term foreign and local currency ratings at BB- and BB and maintained the positive outlook. The agency noted that recent improvements in external and fiscal metrics had strengthened buffers but emphasised that faster economic growth and continued fiscal consolidation are needed to secure an upgrade. It also highlighted that the government's reform agenda, together with deep domestic capital markets and a flexible currency, provide resilience against shifts in external financing.
- On 13 September 2024, Fitch Ratings affirmed South Africa's long-term foreign currency rating at BB- with a stable outlook. The decision reflected Fitch's view that government's efforts to contain expenditure and stabilise debt had prevented further deterioration in the debt trajectory. However, Fitch warned that weak growth prospects, rising spending pressures (particularly wages) and the ongoing financial risks posed by state-owned enterprises continue to constrain the rating. No revisions have been made since.
- As of mid-2025, Moody's maintains South Africa's rating at Ba2 with a stable outlook. The agency considers South Africa's credit profile to remain speculative grade but stable, underpinned by a relatively large domestic investor base, flexible exchange rate, and improved fiscal performance. At the same time, Moody's cites structural constraints – such as low potential growth, infrastructure bottlenecks, and high inequality – as limiting prospects for upward momentum.

Producer price inflation

Producer price inflation for electricity and water slowed somewhat to 10,7% in June 2025 from a recent high of 11,2% in April, reflecting the switch from winter to summer tariffs for Eskom's direct customers. Despite seasonal moderation, electricity prices remain elevated, with Eskom direct customer tariffs rising 12,74% from 1 April 2025 and municipal bulk purchase tariffs increasing 11,32%, sustaining upward pressure on producer price inflation in the electricity and water sector.

Producer price inflation for agriculture, forestry, and fishing products eased from a low of 2,39% in March 2025 to 4,97% in June 2025 due to a notable quickening in agricultural producer prices. Following a period of deflation in 2024, producer price inflation for mining products rebounded to an average of 3,5% in the first half of 2025, compared with 7,25% in the same period last year. The increase was largely driven by higher producer prices in gold and other metal ores, stone quarrying, clay, and diamonds, reflecting a combination of stronger global demand, rising input costs, and local supply constraints.

Headline inflation has remained well-contained relative to peer economies, supported by a firm rand and subdued oil prices. Although it edged up to 3,5% in July 2025, inflation has consistently stayed below the South African Reserve Bank's 4,5% midpoint target over the past year. Furthermore, easing trade uncertainty and expectations of a dovish US Fed could continue to bolster emerging market currencies such as the rand. However, risks from animal disease outbreaks and higher feed costs could add upward pressure.

Department of Trade, Industry and Competition (the dtic)

The dtic leads economic development policy formulation and planning. It also facilitates access to sustainable economic activity and employment for all South Africans through an understanding of the economy, knowledge of economic opportunities and potential, and anticipation of future economic trends.

The department catalyses economic transformation and development, and provides a predictable, competitive, equitable and socially responsible environment for investment, enterprise and trade for economic citizens. In addition, it contributes to achieving government's vision of an adaptive and restructured economy characterised by accelerated economic growth, employment creation and greater equity.

The National Development Plan presents a broad vision for sustainable industrialisation and economic development and transformation in South Africa and, by extension, Africa. This vision is expressed specifically in terms of Priority 1 (economic transformation and job creation) and Priority 7 (A better Africa and a better world) of government's 2019-2024 Medium-Term Strategic Framework (MTSF).

The dtic will continue to develop and implement various sectoral master plans over the MTEF period. These are key components of the reimagined industrial strategy, which presents a multipronged approach to industrial development, with an emphasis on building partnerships with the private sector to secure investment that creates jobs. Over the period ahead, this entails focusing on supporting the implementation of key interventions of South Africa's economic reconstruction and recovery plan, particularly by providing industrial finance, developing industrial infrastructure and enhancing competitiveness and localisation.

The Department's total expenditure is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 0,5%, from R10.9 billion in 2022/23 to R11.1 billion in 2025/26. Spending in the Incentives programme, mainly to disburse funds for industrial financial assistance, is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 3,2%, from R5.3 billion in 2022/23 to R5.8 billion in 2025/26. Allocations to the programme account for an estimated 51,1% (R16.9 billion) of the Department's expenditure over the MTEF period.

The Transformation and Competition programme's baseline is expected to decrease at an annual average rate of 17,3% due to the Social Employment Fund for the presidential employment initiative not being extended beyond 2023/24.

Providing industrial finance

In support of the economic reconstruction and recovery plan, initiatives in the Incentives programme are aimed at growing sustainable and competitive enterprises through providing direct or indirect industrial financing. Over the next three years, the dtic aimed to continue providing financial support to the Automotive Incentive Scheme, the Black Industrialist Programme, the Agro-processing Support Scheme, the strategic partnership programme, and the aquaculture development and enhancement programme.

Allocations to the Manufacturing Incentives subprogramme account for an estimated 51% (R8.8 billion) of the Incentives programme's budget over the medium term. The department also planned to provide financial support to 300 clothing and textile firms through the clothing and textiles competitiveness programme, which has a budget of R1.8 billion over the period ahead in the Sectors programme. Through these incentive programmes, the department expects to leverage R83 billion in private sector investment.

A further R728.8 million over the medium term was reprioritised, mainly from the department's operational budget, as it implements the new energy vehicle roadmap. The roadmap is intended to enhance the transitioning of the automotive industry in South Africa from internal combustion engines to electric motors, in line with global trends.

Developing industrial infrastructure

A critical part of the economic reconstruction and recovery plan includes interventions to catalyse investment through infrastructure development. This includes subsidising bulk infrastructure and top structures (factories) in special economic zones and rolling out infrastructure to revitalise a targeted 16 industrial parks over the medium term.

These subsidies are provided mainly through the Infrastructure Investment Support subprogramme in the Incentives programme, with R4.5 billion over the MTEF period allocated for special economic zones, R443.4 million for industrial parks and R372.7 million for critical bulk infrastructure such as water, electricity and sewerage connections.

Enhancing industrial competitiveness and localisation

The dtic aimed to enhance industrial competitiveness at firm and sector level through conditions on financial incentives and local procurement policies that encourage industry to use local products. This entails disbursing funds to technical institutions such as the Proudly South African campaign to support sectoral work on master plans and projects that aim to improve industrialisation and competitiveness and increase localisation.

Through collaboration between government, business and labour, these policy interventions are aimed at building local industrial capacity for the domestic and export markets. Expenditure for this work is within allocations amounting to R2.5 billion over the medium term in the Industrial Competitiveness subprogramme in the Sectors programme. A further R30 million over the period ahead is allocated to the South African Bureau of Standards (SABS) for local content verifications.

Legislation

The mandate of the dtic is derived from a broad legislative framework, which includes the:

- Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (B-BBEE) Act, 2003 (Act 53 of 2003);
- Companies Act, 2008 (Act 71 of 2008);
- Competition Act, 1998 (Act 89 of 1998), as amended;
- Consumer Protection Act, 2008 (Act 68 of 2008);
- Industrial Development Act, 1940 (Act 22 of 1940);
- International Trade Administration Act, 2002 (Act 71 of 2002);
- Manufacturing Development Act, 1993 (Act 187 of 1993); and
- SEZs Act, 2014 (Act 16 of 2014).

Entities

Companies and Intellectual Property Commission (CIPC)

The CIPC was established in terms of Section 185 of the Companies Act of 2008 to register companies, close corporations, cooperatives, trademarks, patents, designs and copyright, and enforce rules and regulations. Over the medium term, the commission aims to provide its services globally – 24 hours a day, seven days a week – and modernise its ICT systems to strengthen and expand the use of virtual channels such as the BizPortal website and mobile app.

An estimated R240 million over the medium term is earmarked for ICT modernisation, of which R192 million is to provide for maintaining secure, accurate and accessible registration services for companies and intellectual property. About R9.8 million of this amount is for training and mentoring personnel to use the system more effectively to handle queries and develop their capabilities in intellectual property services. The number of education and awareness workshops on company and intellectual property law is set to increase from 30 in 2022/23 to 40 in 2025/26.

These activities are expected to drive an increase in projected spending on goods and services from R245.6 million in 2022/23 to R263 million in 2025/26 at an average annual rate of 2,3%. Expenditure on compensation of employees is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 4,4%, from R424.2 million in 2022/23 to R483.2 million in 2025/26, in line with inflationary adjustments.

Companies Tribunal

The Companies Tribunal was established in 2011 as a juristic person in terms of the Companies Act of 2008 and became operational in 2012. It is mandated to mediate and adjudicate disputes between companies and make orders in a manner that is simple, ethical, efficient, equitable, transparent, accountable and impartial, without fear, favour or prejudice.

Over the medium term, the tribunal planned to continue facilitating the resolution of company disputes through mediation, conciliation and arbitration, thereby contributing to the creation of a just, fair and ethical regulatory business environment. Through its work, the tribunal aims to support sustainable enterprise development and create a business environment that attracts investment. To enable better interaction between tribunal members and clients while allowing for cases to be managed more efficiently, the tribunal will aim to increase applicants' uptake of the case management system from 60 in 2022/23 to 70 in 2025/26.

Total expenditure is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 8,6%, from R24.8 million in 2022/23 to R31.8 million in 2025/26, driven by an increase in transfers from the department to build capacity to reverse the trend of the decreasing caseload, improve marketing and communications to improve the public's awareness of the tribunal, and improve hearing facilities. The tribunal expects to derive more than 98,1% (R88.4 million) of its revenue over the MTEF period through transfers from the department.

Revenue is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 7,8%, from R24.5 million in 2022/23 to R30.7 million in 2025/26.

Competition Commission

The Competition Commission is a statutory body constituted in terms of the Competition Act of 1998, as amended. It is empowered to investigate, control and evaluate restrictive business practices, including the abuse of dominant positions and mergers, and to promote the advocacy of competition issues to achieve equity and efficiency in the South African economy.

Over the medium term, the commission planned to continue focusing on strengthening its internal capacity to enable the execution of its expanded mandate, which includes the prosecution and criminalisation of certain offences, such as the abuse of dominance, in terms of the Competition Amendment Act of 2018.

This has led the commission to review its organisational structure, which is expected to result in an increase in the number of personnel from 261 in 2022/23 to 279 in 2025/26. Expenditure on compensation of employees is projected to increase at an average annual rate of 3,2%, from R315 million in 2022/23 to R346.5 million in 2025/26.

This low rate of increase is the result of a high baseline in 2022/23 due to the receipt of additional allocations to build capacity. Compensation of employees accounts for an estimated 60,9% (R996.6 million) of spending over the medium term. Total expenditure is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 2,2%, from R529 million in

2022/23 to R564.7 million in 2025/26. The commission expects to derive 85% (R1.5 billion) of its revenue over the medium term through transfers from the dtic and the remainder through fees paid by external parties, mainly for transactions for filing for mergers and acquisitions. Revenue is anticipated to increase in line with expenditure.

Competition Tribunal

The Competition Tribunal was established in terms of the Competition Act of 1998 to promote and maintain competition in South Africa by adjudicating matters pertaining to restrictive practices, the abuse of dominant positions, and mergers. The tribunal's work supports national and departmental priorities aligned with economic transformation, job creation and the facilitation of a capable, ethical and developmental state.

Over the medium term, the tribunal will focus on adjudicating cases in a timeous, responsive and reliable manner. Expenditure on this core function is expected to comprise 47,1% (R99.3 million) of total spending over the medium term. As the tribunal relies on its personnel to carry out its work, spending on compensation of employees' is expected to account for 61,5% (R130.8 million) of total spending, increasing at an average annual rate of 5,8%, from R39 million in 2022/23 to R46.2 million in 2025/26.

The tribunal expects to derive 67,8% (R133.9 million) of its revenue over the medium term through transfers from the department and the remainder through fees for merger applications. Revenue is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 5,8%, from R59.7 million in 2022/23 to R70.8 million in 2025/26.

Export Credit Insurance Corporation (ECIC)

The Export Credit Insurance Corporation (ECIC) was established in terms of the Export Credit and Foreign Investments Insurance Act of 1957, as amended, to provide political and commercial risk insurance on behalf of government for the facilitation of export trade and cross-border investments. By providing comprehensive export credit and investment insurance solutions to South African exporters doing business in risky sectors or countries, the corporation contributes to the expansion of exports, economic growth and the creation of jobs.

Over the medium term, the ECIC aimed to focus on attracting business from new and existing customers to facilitate more exports and cross-border investments. It expects to do this by absorbing political and commercial risks and protecting financial institutions and exporters through its insurance products. Accordingly, over the period ahead, the corporation planned to approve 12 projects worth a total of $1.7 billion, and a targeted 21 export companies are set to benefit from the Export Passport training programme.

The entity has earmarked R88.6 million over the medium term for its contribution to trade facilitation programmes. Total expenditure is expected to decrease at an average annual rate of 29,8%, from R1.6 billion in 2022/23 to R564.4 million in 2025/26, mainly due to the significant increase in the revised spending estimate in 2022/23 attributable to a claim of R753.8 million for a project in distress. Payments for the interest make-up scheme, which is winding down, are expected to amount to R398.5 million over the medium term. As a result, spending on liability is expected to decrease from R537.9 million in 2022/23 to R194.4 million in 2025/26.

Revenue is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 13.1%, from R1.1 billion in 2022/23 to R1.6 billion in 2025/26. This is mainly driven by the transition in accounting standards from international financial reporting standard 4 to 17, which increases the value of the premium in the suspense account. The increase is further attributed to the anticipated increase in projects underwritten over the medium term, and income earned on invested insurance premiums.

Industrial Development Corporation (IDC)

The Industrial Development Corporation (IDC) is a development finance institution established in terms of the Industrial Development Act of 1940 to lead the development of industrial capacity by investing in individual business enterprises, and by acting as a catalyst for the creation or revitalisation of industries.

The corporation planned to facilitate investment of more than R160 billion over the medium term to contribute to the creation of employment and an inclusive economy. Of this amount, R22.4 billion will be provided to black industrialists and R36.6 billion will be earmarked for companies owned by historically disadvantaged groups, including women and young entrepreneurs.

This funding is aimed at supporting businesses operating in targeted industries such as manufacturing, agriculture and agro-processing, mining and minerals beneficiation, and special economic zones that promote localisation. The corporation expects to bring in a strategic equity partner to take over some of the equity in its major subsidiaries, resulting in a significant decrease in expenditure and revenue as the operational activities of subsidiaries shift to the partner. Accordingly, expenditure is expected to decrease at an average annual rate of 22,2%, from R20.9 billion in 2022/23 to R9.8 billion in 2025/26.

Similarly, revenue is expected to decrease at an average annual rate of 12,2%, from R23.6 billion in 2022/23 to R16 billion in 2025/26. The corporation expects to generate 87,6% (R50.6 billion) of its revenue over the medium term through interest income from loans and other revenue streams, such as dividends from equity investments. The sale of goods and services by the corporation's subsidiaries accounts for the remaining 12,4% (R2 billion).

Small Enterprise Finance Agency (sefa)

The sefa was established in 2012 and is a wholly-owned subsidiary of the IDC that derives its mandate from the Industrial Development Act of 1940, particularly the objectives related to the development of SMMEs. The agency contributes to the sustainability and development of SMMEs and cooperatives in both the formal and informal sectors by providing access to finance through innovative solutions.

Over the medium term, the agency aimed to focus on implementing economic recovery programmes and offering loans to promote financial inclusion, focusing particularly on enterprises owned by young people, women, people with disabilities and people based in townships. The agency expects to disburse R5.3 billion in finance for SMMEs and cooperatives over the period ahead.

To improve operational efficiency in this regard, the agency

plans to digitise systems for core lending processes such as originating loans, conducting due diligence, and processing approvals and disbursements; and back-office business processes such as finance and procurement, human capital and facilities, governance, risk and compliance. The digitisation drive is expected to cost R48 million over the MTEF period. Expenditure is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 4,1%, from R1.1 billion in 2022/23 to R1.2 billion in 2025/26.

To meet the agency's medium-term objectives, spending on goods and services is expected to account for an estimated 71,8% (R2.6 billion) of total expenditure. Revenue is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 11,4%, from R826 million in 2022/23 to R1.1 billion in 2025/26, due to the realisation of deferred grants income as part of the implementation of the economic recovery programmes.

Transfers from the department are estimated to account for 56,8% (R1.8 billion) of the agency's revenue over the medium term. The rest of its revenue is generated by interest on loans and advances to clients, fees on loans, and rental income.

International Trade Administration Commission (ITAC)

The International Trade Administration Commission (ITAC) was established in terms of Section 7 of the International Trade Administration Act of 2002. It is mandated to foster economic growth and development, raise income levels, and promote investment and employment in South Africa and the common customs area by establishing an efficient and effective administration system for international trade.

The commission's core functions are to conduct customs tariff investigations, institute trade remedies, and provide import and export controls. Its ongoing strategic focus is contributing to the growth and development of local industries and providing continued support to the department and government.

Over the medium term, it planned to achieve this by regulating the movement of specific goods across the borders of South Africa; conducting trade remedy investigations in accordance with policy and domestic and international law; and setting tariffs to promote domestic manufacturing activity, employment retention and creation, and international competitiveness. In carrying out its duties over the medium term, the ITAC planned to issue 16 000 import and 12 000 export permits, conduct 120 scheduled container inspections and 1 800 unscheduled container inspections, and initiate investigations on 80% of new anti-dumping cases.

The commission will focus on strengthening its internal capacity over the medium term to enable the execution of its expanded mandate, which includes the development, establishment and management of the metal trade licence regime. This includes implementing the scrap metal trade strategy to curb damage to critical economic infrastructure because of the higher demand for scrap metal locally and internationally. Compensation of employees is the commission's main cost driver, constituting an estimated 82,5% (R304.8 million) of total spending over the period ahead.

Total expenditure is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 4,7%, from R110 million in 2022/23 to R126.1 million in 2025/26. Transfers from the department account for an estimated 98,6% (R363.6 million) of the commission's revenue over the period ahead. Revenue is set to increase in line with expenditure.

National Consumer Commission (NCC)

The National Consumer Commission (NCC) was established in terms of Section 85 of the Consumer Protection Act of 2008, with jurisdiction across South Africa. The commission conducts investigations against suppliers allegedly engaging in prohibited conduct; promotes the resolution of disputes between consumers and suppliers; and promotes compliance with the Act through advocacy, education and awareness.

Over the medium term, the commission will continue to focus on conducting investigations into suspected suppliers and enforcing their compliance with the Act, conducting education and awareness campaigns to ensure greater compliance, and reforming legislation or practices that are inconsistent with the Act. In doing this, it seeks to facilitate the resolution of disputes between consumers and suppliers in a speedy, cost-effective, fair and transparent manner by finalising 80% of investigations and finalising 90% of investigations in which further enforcement action was taken within prescribed timelines.

As this work is labour intensive, compensation of employees' accounts for an estimated 68,4% (R152.7 million) of the commission's projected spending over the medium term. Total expenditure is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 9,8%, from R61.6 million in 2022/23 to R81.5 million in 2025/26, mainly driven by an additional allocation of R9 million over the medium term to implement cost-of-living adjustments. The commission expects to derive 97,9% (R221.6 million) of its revenue over the medium term through transfers from the department and the remainder through interest on investments.

National Consumer Tribunal

The National Consumer Tribunal was established in terms of the National Credit Act of 2005 as an independent adjudicative entity. It is mandated to review decisions made by the National Credit Regulator (NCR) and the NCC and adjudicates on applications and referrals in terms of the National Credit Act of 2005 and the Consumer Protection Act of 2008. Various parties bring cases before the tribunal, including the NCR, the NCC, consumers, credit providers, debt counsellors and credit bureaus. The tribunal may impose remedies and/or administrative penalties, as provided for in the Acts.

The tribunal will continue to focus on the adjudication of cases and manage the expected increase in its caseload from 26 000 in 2022/23 to 27 000 in 2025/26 owing to the implementation of regulations pertaining to the National Credit Amendment Act of 2014. Despite this increase, the tribunal intends to reduce the average number of days to issue orders to filing parties from 60 in 2022/23 to 50 in 2025/26.

Due to the nature of the tribunal's work, compensation of employees' accounts for an estimated 67,4% (R152.9 million) of total spending, increasing at an average annual rate of 5,8%, from R45.3 million in 2022/23 to R53.6 million

in 2025/26. Total expenditure is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 3,4%, from R70.6 million in 2022/23 to R78.2 million in 2025/26. The tribunal expects to derive 77,7% (R173.5 million) of its revenue over the medium term through transfers from the department. Revenue is set to increase in line with expenditure.

National Credit Regulator (NCR)

The NCR was established in terms of Section 12 of the National Credit Amendment Act, 2019 (Act 7 of 2019) and is responsible for regulating the South African credit industry. The regulator is mandated to promote the development of an accessible credit market, particularly to address the needs of historically disadvantaged people, low-income individuals, and remote, isolated or low-density communities. Over the medium term, the regulator will focus on carrying out education, research and policy development, registering industry participants, investigating complaints and enforcing the National Credit Act of 2005.

To achieve this, the regulator plans to conduct 1 440 investigations into the cost of credit and take enforcement action in 86% of cases where noncompliance is detected; conduct 1 260 investigations into reckless lending and/or collection of prescribed debt and take enforcement action in 85% of cases where non-compliance is detected; and conduct 15 investigations on the removal of debt records and take enforcement action in 86% of cases where noncompliance is detected.

It also seeks to evaluate all annual compliance reports submitted by credit bureaus and certified by an independent auditor and take enforcement action in 86% of cases where noncompliance is detected. The regulator also plans to conduct 534 consumer education and awareness activities over the period ahead, with 60 of these focusing on responsible credit borrowing, 24 on financial literacy and 450 on credit marketing practices.

To enable the regulator to meet these targets, total expenditure is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 4,2%, from R138.8 million in 2022/23 to R157.1 million in 2025/26. Spending on compensation of employees' accounts for an estimated 60% (R270.3 million) of total expenditure, increasing at an average annual rate of 4,1%. Spending on goods and services is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 7,4%, from R47.1 million in 2022/23 to R58.5 million in 2025/26, mainly because of quarterly workshops to encourage the unregistered credit lenders to register in terms of the National Credit Act of 2005.

This is expected to lead to an increase in registration fee revenue at an average annual rate of 5,6%, from R49.8 million in 2022/23 to R58.7 million in 2025/26. The regulator expects to derive 59,3% (R263.7 million) of its revenue over the MTEF period through transfers from the department and the remainder through registration fees.

National Empowerment Fund (NEF)

The National Empowerment Fund (NEF) was established in terms of the NEF Act, 1998 (Act 105 of 1998) to promote and facilitate black economic empowerment (BEE) and economic transformation. In providing financial and non-financial support to black businesses and structuring accessible retail savings products for black people, the fund is mandated to implement the codes of good practice for black economic empowerment.

Funding is disbursed to beneficiaries through five core divisions:

- Small, medium and micro enterprises (SMMEs);
- Rural development;
- Venture capital;
- Corporate finance; and
- Women empowerment.

Funding approvals are projected to increase from R1 billion in 2022/23 to R2 billion in 2025/26, driven by high demand for funding mainly from the uMnotho Fund, the iMbewu Fund, the Rural and Community Development Fund, the Strategic Projects Fund and the Women Empowerment Fund as most businesses recover from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. By supporting businesses in priority sectors such as manufacturing, agro-processing, minerals beneficiation, infrastructure and tourism, these funds are expected to sustain and create 15 854 job opportunities over the period ahead.

Expenditure was expected to increase at an average annual rate of 11,1%, from R351.2 million in 2022/23 to R481.8 million in 2025/26, mainly due to an increase in spending on goods and services driven by the increase in demand for funding. Spending on compensation of employees constitutes an estimated 58% (R779.4 billion) of total expenditure. The entity derives its revenue mainly through interest and dividends.

Revenue is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 10,1%, from R360.9 million in 2022/23 to R482 million in 2025/26, also driven by the expected increase in lending activities.

National Gambling Board (NGB)

The National Gambling Board (NGB) was established in terms of the National Gambling Act of 2004. It is mandated to maintain a legal, safe and crime-free gambling environment, and protect gamblers from exploitation. The board's ongoing focus is on monitoring the socioeconomic patterns of gambling activities; conducting research on the impact of addictive and compulsive gambling; maintaining a national central electronic monitoring system, a national registry of gambling machines and devices, and other prescribed national registers; and conducting public education and awareness campaigns about the dangers of gambling.

Over the medium term, the board will focus on establishing uniform norms and standards for the gambling industry by coordinating activities such as the development of policy and regulations between the national and provincial spheres of government. To promote responsible gambling, the board plans to conduct 30 broad-based public educational interventions about the risks and socio-economic impact of gambling across the country over the period ahead. Expenditure is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 2,6%, from R259.7 million in 2022/23 to R280.1 million in 2025/26. Goods and services accounts for 80,1% (R647.9 million) of expenditure, mainly driven by management fees for the national central electronic monitoring system.

The board expects to generate 84,6% (R696.5 million) of its revenue over the medium term from the national central electronic monitoring system and the remainder through transfers from the department. Revenue is expected to

increase at an average annual rate of 2,7%, from R259.7 million in 2022/23 to R281.3 million in 2025/26.

National Lotteries Commission (NLC)

The NLC has a dual mandate to regulate and prohibit lotteries and sports pools, provide for matters connected therewith, and to ensure that funds are distributed equitably and expeditiously to advance the socio-economic well-being of communities in need. Over the MTEF period, the commission will continue to ensure that the national lottery maintains its integrity, that players are protected through the regulation of lotteries and sports pools, and that charitable disbursements have positive effects on communities.

The commission plans to disburse R4.5 billion to beneficiaries over the medium term. Total expenditure is expected to decrease at an average annual rate of 0,6%, from R643.8 million in 2022/23 to R632.2 million in 2025/26. Compensation of employees' accounts for an estimated 53,4% (R953.8 million) of total spending, decreasing at an average annual rate of 2,4%, from R358.9 million in 2022/23 to R333.6 million in 2025/26. Revenue is expected to decrease in line with expenditure, mainly due to the expiration of the national lottery operator's licence, which results in operations being temporarily halted.

The commission expects to derive 99,2% (R1.8 billion) of its revenue over the medium term from the national lottery operator.

National Metrology Institute of South Africa

The National Metrology Institute of South Africa is mandated by the Measurement Units and Measurement Standards Act, 2006 (Act 18 of 2006) to ensure that South Africa has a scientifically valid and internationally comparable and accepted measurement system, and that the international system of units is correctly applied. Without this measurement infrastructure, it is difficult to manufacture to international specifications and ensure the integrity of export and import commodities. The entity's work is, therefore, important for health, safety and law enforcement.

Over the medium term, the institution will continue to invest in the development of new and improved national measurement standards, reference materials and reference methods in line with industrial requirements.

The National Regulator for Compulsory Specifications (NRCS) was established in terms of the NRCS Act of 2008, as amended, to administer compulsory specifications, otherwise known as technical regulations. The regulator aimed to protect public health, safety and the environment and promote fair trade by ensuring that businesses produce, import or sell products or provide services that comply with minimum safety and environmental requirements. Accordingly, it planned to perform 67 290 inspections over the medium term and remove or destroy noncompliant products. The regulator is in an advanced stage of implementing enterprise resource planning software.

Full implementation of the software, which will take place over the MTEF period, is expected to improve operational efficiency by improving turnaround times, data quality and reporting that informs decision-making. Expenditure is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 4,6%, from R571.1 million in 2022/23 to R653.2 million in 2025/26.

Spending on compensation of employees constitutes an estimated 76,9% (R1.4 billion) of total spending over the medium term. The regulator expects to derive 71,8% (R1.3 billion) of its revenue over the medium term through levies charged to manufacturers and the remainder through transfers from the department. Revenue is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 4,6%, from R571.1 million in 2022/23 to R653.6 million in 2025/26.

South African Bureau of Standards (SABS)

The South African Bureau of Standards (SABS) was established as a statutory body in terms of the Standards Act, 2008 (Act 8 of 2008) and is part of South Africa's standardisation, quality assurance, accreditation and metrology technical infrastructure institutions. The bureau is mandated to develop, promote and maintain South African national standards; render conformity assessment services; and promote the quality of commodities, products and services. The bureau's overarching objective is to protect the integrity of the South African market, protect consumers, create a competitive advantage and facilitate access by South Africans to local and international markets.

Over the medium term, the SABS aimed to continue revitalising testing operations and facilities in targeted sectors such as cement, radiation protection services and the automotive industry. The bureau also intends to improve its standard development processes to enable industrialisation and faster turnaround times. It expects to do this by enhancing digital collaborative tools to effectively engage with stakeholders that participate in its technical committees.

Expenditure is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 3,1%, from R851.6 million in 2022/23 to R934.1 million in 2025/26. Spending on compensation of employees' accounts for an estimated 52,3% (R1.4 billion) of total medium-term spending. The SABS expects to generate 63,6% (R1.7 billion) of its revenue over the MTEF period from fees for certification, testing, the sale of publications, and consulting and training services, and the remainder through transfers from the department. Revenue is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 3,6%, from R843.9 million in 2022/23 to R939.1 million in 2025/26.

South African National Accreditation System (SANAS)

The South African National Accreditation System (SANAS) was established in terms of the Accreditation for Conformity Assessment, Calibration and Good Laboratory Practice Act, 2006 (Act 19 of 2006). It is mandated to accredit or monitor for good laboratory practice and compliance; promote accreditation as a means of facilitating international trade to enhance South Africa's economic performance and transformation; promote the competence and equivalence of accredited bodies; and promote the competence and equivalence of good laboratory practice facilities compliant with the Act. Over the medium term, the SANAS aimed to focus on strengthening the effectiveness of accreditation to support local manufacturing and improve access to export markets for South African firms.

This involves regulating and monitoring compliance with conformity requirements so that South African products are not rejected, and encouraging and promoting

the accreditation of calibration, testing and verification laboratories, certification and inspection bodies, rating agencies, and any other type of body that may be added to its scope of activities. Expenditure is set to increase at an average annual rate of 4,5%, from R133.9 million in 2022/23 to R152.6 million in 2025/26.

Spending on compensation of employees constitutes an estimated 51,7% (R226 million) of total expenditure over the period ahead. The SANAS expects to generate 75,2% (R328.2 million) of its own revenue over the medium term through fees collected from accredited facilities, new applications, commercial training and interest income; and the remainder through transfers from the department. Revenue is expected to increase in line with expenditure.

Industrial parks/Special Economic Zones (SEZs)

SEZs are geographically designated areas of a country set aside for specifically targeted economic activities, supported through special arrangements (that may include laws) and systems that are often different from those that apply in the rest of the country.

The purpose of the SEZ Programme is to:

- expand the strategic industrialisation focus to cover diverse regional development needs and context;
- provide a clear, predictable and systemic planning framework for the development of a wider array of SEZs to support industrial policy objectives, the Industrial Policy Action Plan (IPAP) and the New Growth Plan;
- clarify and strengthen governance arrangements, expand the range and quality of support measures beyond provision of infrastructure; and
- provide a framework for a predictable financing framework to enable long-term planning.

There are five operating Industrial Development Zones (IDZs) in South Africa:

- The Coega is the largest IDZ in southern Africa. Designated in 2001, it became South Africa's first IDZ. It lies in the Nelson Mandela Bay Metropolitan Municipality in the Eastern Cape, which is strategically located on the east-west trade route to service both world and African markets. The Coega IDZ leverages public sector investment to attract foreign and domestic direct investment in the manufacturing sector with an export orientation. It has attracted investment in the agro-processing, automotive, aquaculture, energy, metals logistics and Business Process Services (BPS) sectors. This has advanced socio-economic development in the Eastern Cape region through skills development, technology transfer and job creation.
- The Richards Bay IDZ is a purpose-built and secure industrial estate on the north-eastern South African coast. The N2 business corridor links the province's two major ports, Durban and Richards Bay, and connects with Maputo in Mozambique and, ultimately, areas in East Africa. It is linked to an international seaport of Richards Bay, tailored for manufacturing and storage of minerals and products to boost beneficiation, investment, economic growth and, most importantly, the development of skills and employment. First-world infrastructure allows for the full exploitation of the area's natural and strategic advantages. Through the superb industrial infrastructure, well-established network of shipments, tax and duty-free incentives, the IDZ aims to encourage international competitiveness and the attraction of export-orientated manufacturing investment.
- The East London IDZ has become a prime industrial park in South Africa, renowned for its customised solutions for various industries, including automotive, agro-processing and aqua-culture. The IDZ offers growth-orientated companies a specialised manufacturing platform, innovative industrial and business solutions access to new markets and strategic industry networks. The IDZ, one of the country's leading specialised industrial parks, is in Buffalo City, the municipal area which also incorporates Bisho, the province's capital, and King William's Town. It was one of the first IDZs in South Africa to become operational and represents an ideal choice for the location of exported manufacturing and processing. Its location provides investors with connections to major markets, locally and across the globe.
- The Saldanha Bay IDZ in the Western Cape is expected to serve as the primary oil, gas and marine repair engineering and logistics services complex in Africa, servicing the needs of the upstream oil exploration industry and production service companies operating in the oil and gas fields off sub-Saharan Africa. Situated approximately two hours north of Cape Town, the IDZ will include logistics, repairs and maintenance, as well as fabrication activities.
- The Dube TradePort is a catalyst for global trade and a portal between KwaZulu-Natal and the world. It is the only facility in Africa that brings together an international airport, a cargo terminal, warehousing, offices, a retail sector, hotels and an agricultural area. Located 30km north of Durban, the Dube TradePort is positioned between the two biggest seaports in southern Africa and linked to the rest of Africa by road and rail. The following two areas have been designated as comprising the IDZ: the Dube TradeZone and the Dube AgriZone.

The Dube TradeZone aims to focus on manufacturing and value addition primarily for automotive, electronics and fashion garments. The facility involves warehousing, manufacturing, assembling real estate resources, complete with a single facility in which all freight forwarders and shippers are located (Dube Trade House), which enjoys a direct link to the adjacent Dube Cargo Terminal via an elevated cargo conveyor system.

The Dube AgriZone – a high-tech, future farming facility and host to the continent's largest climate controlled growing area under glass – will focus on high-value, niche agricultural and horticultural products. The AgriLab will investigate specialised tissue culture, greenhouses, flowers and plants, all of which require swift air transportation.

Several incentives are available to ensure SEZs growth, revenue generation, creation of jobs, attraction of foreign direct investment and international competitiveness.

These SEZ incentives include:

- Preferential 15% Corporate Tax: Businesses (prescribed in Section 24 (4) of the SEZ Act of 2014 that are in a SEZ may be eligible for tax relief, including the reduced rate of corporate income taxation. In addition to satisfying the requirements of the Act, further criteria for some of the available tax incentives are stipulated in the Income Tax Act, 1962 (Act 58 of 1962).

- Building Allowance: Businesses and operators (prescribed in Section 1 of the SEZ Act of 2014) operating within a SEZ may be eligible for tax relief, including the building allowance, subject to requirements contained in the Income Tax Act of 1962.
- Employment Incentive: Businesses and operators operating within a SEZ may be eligible for tax relief, including the employment tax incentive, subject to requirements contained in the Employment Tax Incentive Act, 2013 (Act 26 of 2013).
- Customs Controlled Area: Businesses and operators located within a customs-controlled area of a SEZ will be eligible for tax relief as per the Value-Added Tax (VAT) Act, 1991 (Act 89 of 1991), the Customs and Excise Act, 1964 (Act 91 of 1964), the Customs
- Customs Duty Act, 2014 (Act 30 of 2014), and the Customs Control Act, 2014 (Act 31 of 2014).
- 12i Tax Allowance: The 12i Tax Incentive is designed to support Greenfield investments (new industrial projects that utilise only new and unused manufacturing assets), as well as Brownfield investments (expansions or upgrades of existing industrial projects). The new incentive offers support for both capital investment and training.

Black industrialists

The Black Industrialists Policy aims to leverage government's capacity to unlock the industrial potential that exists within black-owned and managed businesses that operate within the South African economy through deliberate, targeted and well-defined financial and non-financial interventions as described in the IPAP and other government policies. This policy targets entities that should have extensive experience, operations and track record in their respective or envisaged industrial sectors and value chains.

It is expected that the entities supported will:

- expand their current operations or businesses to become major players in the domestic and/or global markets within 10 years of being in the programme;
- start a new operation or business that can enable them to become major players in the domestic and/or global markets within 10 years of being in the programme; and
- acquire an existing or new business that can enable them to become major players in the domestic and/or global markets within a specified period.

Such entities should be operating in the manufacturing sectors of the economy in line with the industrialisation path as articulated in the IPAP.

Black Business Supplier Development Programme (BBSDP)

The Black Business Supplier Development Programme (BBSDP) is a cost-sharing grant offered to black-owned small enterprises to help them improve their competitiveness and sustainability, to become part of the mainstream economy and create employment.

The BBSDP provides grants to a maximum of R1 million: R800 000 for tools, machinery and equipment on a 50:50 cost-sharing basis; and R200 000 for business development and training interventions per eligible enterprise to improve their corporate governance, management, marketing, productivity and use of modern technology.

The objectives of the incentive scheme are to:

- draw existing SMMEs exhibiting potential for growth into the mainstream economy;
- grow black-owned enterprises by fostering linkages between black SMMEs and corporate and public-sector enterprises;
- complement current affirmative procurement and outsourcing initiatives of corporate and public-sector enterprises; and
- enhance the capacity of grant-recipient enterprises to successfully compete for corporate and public-sector tenders.

Role players

Presidential Infrastructure Coordinating Commission (PICC)

The Presidential Infrastructure Coordinating Commission (PICC) has the following 18 strategic integrated projects:

- Durban-Free State-Gauteng Logistics and Industrial Corridor;
- South Eastern node and corridor development;
- Unlocking economic opportunities in the North West;
- Saldanha-Northern Cape Development Corridor;
- Integrated Municipal Infrastructure Project;
- Integrated Urban Space and Public Transport Programme;
- Green Energy in Support of the South African Economy;
- Electricity Generation to Support Socio-economic Development;
- Electricity Transmission and Distribution for All;
- Agri-Logistics and Rural Infrastructure;
- Revitalisation of Public Hospitals and Other Health Facilities;
- Rational School-build Programme;
- Higher Education Infrastructure;
- Expanding Access to Communication Technology;
- Square Kilometre Array and MeerKat;
- Regional Integration for African Cooperation and Development; and
- Water and Sanitation Infrastructure Master Plan.

The main objective of the PICC Awareness Campaign is to promote infrastructure development initiatives across the country, whilst showcasing the tangible benefits in terms of job creation and mainstreaming access to social services.

Business Partners Limited

Business Partners Limited is a specialist risk-finance company that provides customised financial solutions, technical assistance, mentorship, business premises and other added-value services for formal small and medium enterprises in South Africa and selected African countries.

The company considers financing applications up to R50 million in all sectors of the economy – with the exception of on-lending activities, direct farming operations, underground mining and nonprofit organisations – to those formal small and medium businesses whose gross assets are under R100 million, where annual turnover does not exceed R200 million and/or employees are less than 500. Applications for financing below R500 000 are usually not considered; and the company does not operate in the informal or micro enterprise sectors.

South African Women Entrepreneurs' Network (SAWEN)

The South African Women Entrepreneurs' Network (SAWEN) is a South African national network that facilitates and monitors the socio-economic advancement of women entrepreneurs and their positive impact on the country's economy.

The objectives of SAWEN are to:

- provide a national vehicle that brings women and women's groups together to address the challenges they face;
- lobby government, public and private institutions on such issues, but not limited to policy, legislation and/or proposed legislation affecting either directly and indirectly the trade and commerce activities of women entrepreneurs;
- align itself with other bodies or organisations with similar business interests at both national and international level, and to leverage the relationships arising out of these alignments for the benefit of its members;
- facilitate access to business resources, information and opportunities for South African women entrepreneurs in a way that promotes their effective participation in the global economy; and
- profile and affirm women in business leadership positions in both public and private sectors.

Isivande Women's Fund (IWF)

The Isivande Women's Fund (IWF) is an exclusive fund that aims to accelerate women's economic empowerment by providing more affordable, usable and responsive finance than is currently available. The IWF assists with support services to enhance the success of businesses. It pursues deals involving start-up funding, business expansion, business rehabilitation, franchising and bridging finance. The fund is managed by the IDC on behalf of the dtic through a development fund manager.

The Identity Development Fund (IDF) Managers

This is a small to medium enterprise financier aimed at supporting the creation of self-sustaining black-owned and women-owned businesses in South Africa by providing primarily financial and nonfinancial support to its investee companies. The Identity Development Fund (IDF) Managers are responsible for reviewing eligible business plans requiring funding of R30 000 to R2 million.

The enterprises must meet the following criteria:

- At least six months in operation;
- Requires early stage, expansions and growth capital;
- 50% plus one share owned and managed by women;
- Have potential for growth and commercial sustainability; and
- Improved social impact in the form of job creation.

Programmes and projects

Industrial Policy Action Plan

The adoption of the National Industrial Policy Framework in 2007 introduced a very significant reorientation of South Africa's industrial policy landscape. Its main thrusts have been captured, developed and refined in successive annual iterations of the IPAP. This has become the "laboratory" for government's broad approach to industrialisation.

The focus areas of the IPAP 2018/19 – 2020/2 were:

- public procurement and local content;
- industrial financing and incentives;
- developmental trade policy;
- African integration and industrial development;
- SEZs; and
- innovation and technology.

Furniture Industry Master Plan (FIMP)

The Furniture Industry Master Plan (FIMP) sets clear guidelines and targets for the furniture manufacturing industry and guides public sector procurement as part of government's efforts to support and stimulate the industry. It has the potential to reposition the country in the sector. The industry in South Africa sits firmly within the manufacturing sector of the national economy. While its contribution was at less than 1% to the GDP when compared to other manufacturing industries, it is a relatively low capital investment requiring job. It is one of the most labour-intensive industries, with a potential to contribute to the reduction of unemployment and increase the export and development of SMMEs.

It contributes to the geographical spread of economic activity, since the products can be developed in rural areas with minimal investment. The established resources and manufacturing base make it an attractive sector to capitalise on the available opportunities. It has the potential to grow its contribution to both employment and economic growth, as prescribed by the National Industry Policy Framework and the Industrial Policy Action Tool. Designs can also play a significant role in industry development and beneficiation of raw material.

It is possible to position the local industry as a producer of high value products that are based on quality and on differentiated designs.

Sectoral focus areas

Automotives

The automotive industry remains an important pillar of South Africa's industrial landscape. Government has established a team of technical experts to develop a post-2020 Automotives Master Plan. The mandate of the team is to examine the entire automotive sector and not just the existing Automotive Policy Development Plan. The purpose is to ensure that in the context of long-term policy certainty, a post-2020 master plan will create a framework to secure even higher levels of investment and production, higher exports, deepening localisation and expanding employment.

The dtic initiated the Medium and Heavy Commercial Vehicles Automotive Investment Scheme (MHCV-AIS), a subcomponent of the Automotive Investment Scheme (AIS), an incentive designed to grow and develop the automotive sector through investment in new and/or replacement models and components that will increase plant production volumes, sustain employment and/or strengthen the automotive value chain.

The MHCV-AIS provides for a non-taxable cash grant of 20% of the value of qualifying investment in productive assets by medium and heavy commercial vehicle manufactures and 25% of the value of qualifying investment in productive assets by component manufactures and tooling companies for MHCVs as approved by the dtic.

Some of the conditions are that the applicant must:

- be a registered legal entity in South Africa and must undertake manufacturing in South Africa;
- be a taxpayer in good standing and must, in this regard, provide a valid tax clearance certificate before the MHCV-AIS Grant is disbursed; the grant will only be applicable to investment in assets that will be used in the entity's South African operations; and
- submit a business plan with a detailed marketing and sales plan, a production plan, budget and projected financial income statement, cash-flow statement and balance sheet; for a period of at least three years for the project, submit a B-BBEE certificate, ITAC registration certificate, projected financial income statement, cash-flow statement and balance sheet; for a period of at least three years of the relevant division, cost centre or branch where the project is located, if applicable, submit a cost benefit analysis for the project in cases where it cannot provide information in respect of a cost centre.

Clothing and textiles

After government set a 100% local content requirement, the clothing, textiles, leather and footwear sector saw the reintroduction of products where local production had been discontinued. These include technical fabrics, protective footwear, protective fabrics and chambray fabrics. This intervention, supported also by the Clothing and Textile Competitiveness Improvement Programme, has contributed to turning the sector around. In response to the flood of cheap clothing imports, government has increased the Import Duty on clothing to 45% in line with World Trade Organisation regulations.

Business Process Services

South Africa's BPS sector continued to maintain its status as a leading global outsourcing destination, while steadily moving up the value chain in terms of service offerings. BPS already accounts for 200 000 jobs nationally and is one of the country's fastest-growing sectors, with double digit growth over the past five years.

South African Emerging Black Filmmakers Incentive Scheme

The South African Emerging Black Filmmakers Incentive Scheme is available to South African black-owned qualifying productions. It aims to nurture and capacitate emerging black filmmakers to take up big productions and contribute towards employment opportunities.

World Economic Forum (WEF)

The 2023 Annual Meeting of the World Economic Forum (WEF) was held from 16 to 20 January under the theme "Cooperation in a fragmented world". South Africa delivered a bold and assured message at the 2023 Annual Meeting, that the country is open to investment and is ready to partner with the local and global community to lift the country's economy on to a higher, jobs-rich and more sustainable growth path.

The worldwide energy, food and cost of living crises, driven by the conflict between Russia and the Ukraine and fast-rising consumer inflation, were among the key issues that policy makers and businesspeople grappled with. The climate crisis and its related socioeconomic and ecological impact were also high-up on the agenda.



Leader of the South African delegation, Minister of Finance Enoch Godongwana, along with his colleagues, the Minister of International Relations and Cooperation Naledi Pandor, Minister of Trade, Industry and Competition Ebrahim Patel, and Minister of Human Settlements Mmamoloko Kubayi, took the unique opportunity of the annual meeting to engage world leaders in business, government, academia and civil society on these and other South Africa specific issues.

The delegation was accompanied by a group of local business leaders and executives from the country's top companies and banks, and together "Team South Africa" put forward the message of a country with vast potential for investment. The South African delegation acknowledged that addressing the electricity shortage in the country is the first and most important step to unlocking faster economic growth, creating employment, and attracting investment.

South African Premier Business Awards

The South African Premier Business Awards is an annual event hosted by the dtic in partnership with Proudly South Africa and Brand South Africa. The awards recognise business excellence and honour enterprises that promote the spirit of success and innovation as well as job creation, good business ethics and quality. These awards bring together all single sectored awards, among others technology, manufacturing and women in business.

International cooperation

The Investment and Trade Initiative (ITI) is part of the dtic's objective to create market penetration for South African value-added products and services, and to promote South Africa as a trade and investment destination. The ITI focuses on showcasing South Africa's diverse range of capabilities to produce world-class products and services in the targeted sectors, which include agro-processing (rooibos tea, dried fruits, spices, sauces, frozen fish and sparkling 100% fruit juice), industrial chemicals and automotive components.

South African companies have developed highly specialised skills and products and there are various opportunities for them to market their expertise and collaborate on projects with their Brazilian counterparts. The programme of the ITI includes trade and investment

seminars, business-to-business meetings and sector-specific business site visits to companies in São Paulo and Porto Alegre.

Alexkor

Alexkor was established in terms of the Alexkor Limited Act (1992) to mine marine and land diamonds in Alexander Bay, Northern Cape. The outcome of the land and restitution award to the Richtersveld Community resulted in the formation of the Alexkor Richtersveld Mining Company Pooling and Sharing Joint Venture, wherein Alexkor holds a 51% share interest on behalf of government, and the Richtersveld Community holds 49%. Alexkor does not have any other mining operations outside the joint venture.

Over the medium term, Alexkor aimed to focus on implementing the turnaround strategy for its diamond mining operations, which have significantly declined in the past three years. Symptomatic of this was production averaging below 30 000 carats over the period and the company not being able to reach the benchmark of more than 45 000 carats that had been achieved previously.

Some challenges to underproduction include a lack of funds to undertake exploration activities and maintenance of old infrastructure. An immediate intervention is to seek mining contractors with the financial and technical capabilities to undertake large-scale mining operations. In the long term, Alexkor's role should be determined in accordance with the challenges it faces.

To achieve this, the DPE conducted a study, which was scheduled to be completed in 2023/24, to determine the optimal shareholding structure for Alexkor. This study will consider the current market characteristics of the diamond mining industry in relation to government's developmental agenda. The company could not submit detailed performance, expenditure, revenue and personnel data at the time of publication; hence no tables are included.

Denel

Denel was incorporated as a private company in 1992 in terms of the Companies Act of 1973, with the South African government as its sole shareholder. It operates in the military aerospace and landward defence environment and provides strategic defence equipment. The company's broad focus over the medium term will be on implementing its turnaround plan, which entails rolling out its new operating model, restructuring and optimising its cost structure. The new operating model reduces Denel's structure from six core business units to three: engineering, manufacturing, and maintenance and overhaul.

This change will not only result in decreased expenditure, but in the improved allocation of critical resources. It will also require that the company accelerate its disposal of non-core assets and businesses, improve supply chain policies and align its IT infrastructure with its new organisational structure. The company's revenue decreased from R2.8 billion in 2020/21 to R1.5 billion in 2021/22 due to persistent liquidity challenges. This was exacerbated by fixed costs and under-recoveries across the group, resulting in the company continuing to be loss making, thereby eroding its solvency. This, among other things, is related to the company having lost experienced personnel with critical skills over the years, which threatens its sustainability.

To fund the turnaround plan's response to these challenges, the company expects to access funds through proceeds from the sale of non-core disposals and shareholder recapitalisation. To improve the company's 2021/22 and 2022/23 balance sheets, government allocated R3.2 billion over that period to settle guaranteed debt. To augment this, government allocated an additional R3.4 billion in 2022/23 through the Special Appropriation Act of 2022. The cash injection will be used to implement the turnaround plan, settle legacy obligations and address the company's liquidity requirements to support operations and execute its order pipeline.

Eskom

Eskom is mandated to generate, transmit and distribute electricity to industrial, mining, commercial, agricultural and residential customers and redistributors. Significant progress has been made on the company's legal separation into three subsidiaries: transmission, generation and distribution. In this regard, the National Transmission Company of South Africa was corporatised in December 2021 and will be operationalised once the National Energy Regulator of South Africa (NERSA) issues its licence. The National Electricity Distribution Company of South Africa is expected to be corporatised during 2023/24.

The company's new board has been tasked with ensuring a performance turnaround for operations. This was expected to result in improving energy availability from 58% as of 30 September 2022 to 66,5% by 2025/26. The low availability of energy was due to high unplanned breakdowns and unit trips, which account for 30,8% of the company's non-availability of generation capacity. To improve operational performance, the board is working with the national energy crisis committee, which was established by the President in July 2022. The committee's purpose is to oversee the implementation of an action plan to end load shedding and achieve energy security in the country.

As part of the company's build programme, the Kusile Power Station was expected to be completed in May 2024. Interventions and modifications to repair construction defects at the Medupi and Kusile power stations were expected to be completed by the end of 2023. This includes the recent failure of the flue-gas ducting that has impacted units 1 to 3 of the Kusile Power Station. To support the transition from coal to renewable energy, in line with government's energy policy, Komati power station was shut down on 31 October 2022 and is being repurposed with renewable energy technologies that will supply clean electricity to the economy and the public.

Based on the company's 2022/23 to 2026/27 financial plan, expenditure is projected to increase at an average annual rate of 5,4%, from R299.6 billion in 2022/23 to R351.1 billion in 2025/26. Generation is Eskom's main cost driver, constituting 59,7% (R570.6 billion) of its total budget over the medium term. Spending on goods and services across divisions constitutes 61,5% (R604.1 billion) of the company's budget.

Revenue is expected to increase at an annual average rate of 8,9%, from R279.5 billion in 2022/23 to R361.3 billion in 2025/26. Revenue is mainly derived from the sale

of electricity, which increased by 2,1%, from R204.5 billion in 2020/21 to R247 billion in 2021/22, due to a regulatory tariff increase of 15,1% imposed on customers supplied directly by Eskom. Revenue in 2022/23 is projected to increase to R279.5 billion, driven by a 9,61% tariff increase.

The company's net loss is projected to increase to R20 billion in 2022/23, worsening from the R12.3 billion reported in 2021/22. Net debt decreased by R11.7 billion to R389.1 billion in 2021/22, while municipal arrears amounted to R44.89 billion in 2021/22 and are expected to increase to R57.7 billion in 2022/23. As such, Eskom's financial position remains weak, and the company cannot generate enough cash from operations to cover debt obligations. Given this weak financial position, government committed an additional R21.9 billion in 2022/23 to assist with the company's debt-service obligations.

South African Airways

The South African Airways (SAA) operates a full-service network in the international, regional and domestic markets. The airline is responsible for promoting air links with South Africa's key business, trading and tourism markets across the world, and contributing to key domestic air linkages. The company was placed under business rescue in December 2019 and exited the process in April 2021.

It resumed operations in September 2021, operating domestically and regionally, and has since been operating six aircraft. Over the MTEF period, the airline plans to increase its operations and improve its service offering, for example, by expanding its route network. Government is in the process of concluding the sale of its majority shareholding in the company to a strategic equity partner. This is expected to attract the funding and skills required to strengthen the airline's balance sheet and improve its operations.

The partnership was expected to be finalised by the end of 2022/23, but due to outstanding matters such as regulatory approvals from the Competition Commission and the Air Services Licensing Councils, it is expected to be concluded in 2023/24. Expenditure is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 50,8%, from R4.6 billion in 2022/23 to R15.9 billion in 2025/26. This significant increase is attributed to an increase in operations with the lifting of COVID-19 restrictions. Spending on goods and services constitutes 87,2% (R32 billion) of total expenditure, mainly driven by fuel, leases and maintenance costs.

Revenue is expected to increase at an annual average rate of 62,8%, from R3.9 billion in 2022/23 to R16.6 billion in 2025/26. It is mainly derived from the sale of air tickets, which constitutes 99,7% of total revenue. This significant increase is attributed to the airline's anticipated increase in operations.

South African Express

South African Express Airways has experienced severe operational and financial challenges for several years, and despite financial support from government, has been unable to recover. The airline was placed under business rescue in February 2020 but was unable to restructure, leading to it being placed under provisional liquidation in April 2020. By October 2020, the process of receiving expressions of interest had commenced. It was expected that the airline would be sold in the fourth quarter of 2021/22.

South African Forestry Company

The South African Forestry Company SOC Limited (SAFCOL) was established in 1992 in terms of the Management of State Forests Act 1992 (Act 128 of 1992). It is mandated to ensure the sustainable management of plantation forests, increase downstream timber processing, and play a catalytic role in rural economic development and transformation. The company contributes to approximately 1 772 direct jobs and more than 1 000 employment positions in small to medium companies through community projects and other services. Over the medium term, the company plans to improve its performance by implementing its 50:50 revenue strategy, which entails plantation, processing and other businesses contributing equally.

The company will also focus on increasing its processing capacity through upgrading the Timbadola processing plant in Limpopo. This will reduce operating costs at the plant, particularly for repairs and maintenance. Expenditure is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 8,4%, from R1.4 billion in 2022/23 to R1.8 billion in 2025/26. The operations of Komatiland Forests, the company's main revenue-generating division, constitutes 80,7% of total expenditure over the MTEF period. Overall, spending on goods and services constitutes 72,6% (R3.7 billion) of the company's budget, while compensation of employees' accounts for 22,8% (R1.3 billion) over the next three years.

The company derives most of its revenue from the sale of sawlogs and lumber. Revenue is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 10,1%, from R1.5 billion in 2022/23 to R2 billion in 2025/26, due to an anticipated higher demand for the company's products over the medium term. In 2021/22, the company reported R1.2 billion in revenue, a 33% increase from the R920.8 million realised in 2020/21. The increase was due to a favourable log and lumber market. Following years of losses, the company reported a profit of R83.6 million and declared a R1 million dividend at its 2022 annual general meeting.

The company's fixed costs remain high, something it plans to monitor over the period ahead to remain profitable. Liquidity and solvency positions remain strong, and the company is not highly indebted. As such, it is able to raise funds on the strength of its balance sheet without government support.

Transnet

Transnet provides and operates freight transportation services and infrastructure. The company's key strategic objectives include improving logistics competitiveness, promoting a modal shift from road to rail, increasing logistics connectivity, attracting private investment, developing skills and promoting reindustrialisation.

To sustain and expand its capacity, over the five-year period ending in 2026/27, Transnet planned to invest R99 billion, 44,5% (R44 billion) of which was earmarked to be invested in the rail sector, another 44,5% (R44 billion) at ports and 6% (R6 billion) on pipeline infrastructure. However, these investments were hindered due to the company having to reduce capital expenditure in 2022/23 by 9,2%, from R18 billion to R16.4 billion, because of liquidity constraints associated with limited profitability.

Significant turnaround in operations, and as such the company's financial position, in the short term have been

impacted by events such as severe damages at the port of Durban and along the KwaZulu-Natal rail corridor due to flooding in the province in April 2022. To assist the company with repairs, government allocated R2.9 billion in 2022/23 through the Special Appropriation Act of 2022. To assist with clearing the backlog in its infrastructure build,



maintenance and modernisation programme, Transnet is actively seeking private sector participation in its operations.

Investment from the private sector is also expected to contribute to the migration from road to rail, with the aim of reducing the total national cost of logistics. The DPE was working with Transnet to develop a turnaround plan that will address various operational and infrastructure funding challenges. Expenditure is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 2,5%, from R81.3 billion in 2022/23 to R87.6 billion in 2025/26. Over the period ahead, Transnet Freight Rail operations constitute 59% (R152.7 billion) of total expenditure.

Overall, spending on compensation of employees constitutes 34,4% (R86.5 billion), while goods and services constitute 29,3% (R75.9 billion) and provision for depreciation accounts for 18,5% (R46.7 billion). Transnet derives most of its revenue from freight, port and pipeline operations, amounting to 97,6% (R261.7 billion) of total revenue. Revenue is expected to increase at an annual average rate of 4,2%, from R83.9 billion in 2022/23 to R95.1 billion in 2025/26.

The relatively low revenue growth was offset by cost savings and significant fair value adjustments. The latter was linked to the reversal of previous downward valuations during the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, the entity reported a net profit of R5 billion in 2021/22 compared to a loss of R8.4 billion in 2020/21.

Department of Small Business Development (DSBD)

The Department of Small Business Development (DSBD) is tasked with the responsibility of leading and coordinating an integrated approach to the promotion and development of entrepreneurship, small businesses and cooperatives; and ensuring an enabling legislative and policy environment to support their growth and sustainability. The realisation of this mandate is expected to lead to a transformed and inclusive economy driven by sustainable, innovative small, medium and micro enterprises (SMMEs) and cooperatives.

Over the medium term, the DSBD will focus on providing support to SMMEs, including by establishing infrastructure to expose SMMEs and cooperatives to new markets; providing greater access to finance for start-ups; providing greater access to finance for start-ups; finalising amendments to the National Small Enterprise Act, 1996 (Act 102 of 1996) and developing master plans for the meaningful integration of small businesses into the mainstream economy.

The department supports SMMEs primarily through its entity, the Small Enterprise Development Agency (SEDA), through an allocation of R2.8 billion over the medium term. Additional support amounting to R509 million over the MTEF period will be provided to SMMEs through internally administered incentives such as the Craft Customised Sector Programme and the Cooperatives Development Support Programme in the Development Finance programme, and the Product Markets Programme in the Sector and Market Development programme.

Over the period ahead, the DSBD aimed to intensify its establishment of affordable, safe and modernised spaces where SMMEs and cooperatives can meet potential buyers. Through this exposure to new product markets, small enterprises, particularly those in townships and rural areas, which have more opportunity to test, certify and improve their products. The department aims to link 750 SMMEs and cooperatives to international market opportunities, with particular emphasis on enterprises run by women, young people and people with disabilities. Expenditure for these activities is within an allocation of R254.6 million over the MTEF period in the Sector and Market Development programme.

Access to finance, particularly for the first three stages of a business's life cycle (ideation, proof of concept and market entry), is crucial for sustainability. To this end, the DSBD will continue to roll out the Township and Rural Entrepreneurship Fund with the aim of supporting 100 000 township and rural enterprises by 2024. This initiative will be implemented through the SEDA at an estimated cost of R2.9 billion over the medium term.

In addition, the department has introduced a blended finance model to provide financing amounting to R827.3 million over the medium term to enterprises traditionally not supported by commercial banks and existing development finance institutions. The department has allocated R218.7 million over the same period to the Cooperatives Development Support Programme to continue supporting cooperatives to ensure their meaningful contribution to job creation and economic growth.

In an effort to establish a small enterprise ombud service, regulate and license businesses owned by foreign nationals, regulate unfair business practices, and review the definition of SMMEs to arrive at an inclusive understanding, the department aims to finalise amendments to the National Small Enterprise Act, 1996 (Act 102 of 1996) over the medium term.

To ensure small businesses can access opportunities and dedicated support measures, the department plans to develop a national small enterprise master plan and contribute to the development of a creative industries master plan. Spending for these initiatives is within an allocation of R416 million over the MTEF period in the Sector and Market Development programme.

Legislation and policies

The DSBD's mandate is guided by a legislative framework that includes the:

- IIDC Act, 1940 (Act 22 of 1940);
- National Small Business Act, 1996 (Act 102 of 1996);
- National Small Business Amendment Act, 2004 (Act 29 of 2004);
- Small Business Development Act, 1981 (Act 112 of 1981);
- Cooperatives Act, 2005 (Act 14 of 2005); and
- Cooperatives Amendment Act, 2013 (Act 6 of 2013).

Entity

Small Enterprise Development Agency (SEDA)

The SEDA was established in 2004 in terms of the National Small Business Amendment Act, 2004 (Act 29 of 2004). It is mandated to implement the government's small business strategy, design and implement a standard and common national delivery network for the development of small enterprises, and integrate government-funded small enterprise support agencies across all spheres of government.

Over the medium term, the agency will continue to promote business competitiveness, viability and localisation, with a particular focus on the development of township, rural and informal businesses and start-ups by facilitating the establishment of a targeted 250 business incubators over the period ahead. This will be funded by allocations amounting to R503.3 million over the medium term and complemented by private-sector funding. Over the MTEF period, the agency plans to help 9 000 SMMEs and cooperatives become competitive in local markets and create 15 000 jobs within the SMME ecosystem.

To achieve these targets, expenditure is expected to decrease at an average annual rate of 2,2%, from R1 billion in 2022/23 to R943.7 million in 2025/26, mainly because of the high baseline in 2022/23 due to the receipt of relief funding for the floods in KwaZulu-Natal. The agency expects to derive 97,3% (R2.7 billion) of its revenue over the medium term through transfers from the department. Revenue is expected to decrease in line with expenditure.

Department of Public Works and Infrastructure (DPWI)

As set out in the Government Immovable Asset Management Act of 2007, the DPWI is mandated to be the custodian and portfolio manager of government's immovable assets. Since the establishment of the Property Management Trading Entity in 2015/16, the department's role includes policy formulation, coordination, regulation and oversight relating to the provision of accommodation and expert built environment services to client departments at the national level; and, through the entity, the planning, acquisition, management and disposal of immovable assets in the department's custody.

The department is also mandated to coordinate and provide strategic leadership in initiatives for the creation of jobs through the implementation of the EPWP. Public works is constitutionally designated as a concurrent function exercised by the national and provincial levels of government. Over the medium term, the department will continue to focus on creating work opportunities by leading and coordinating the EPWP; providing policy and sector oversight; building state capacity to facilitate skills development and strengthen the skills pipeline; and providing direct support to sponsors of priority public infrastructure projects.

Expenditure was expected to increase at an average annual rate of 5,5%, from R8.2 billion in 2022/23 to R9.6 billion in 2025/26. An estimated 85,6% (R23.5 billion) of the department's total budget over the next three years is allocated to transfers and subsidies for the operations of its entities, and for conditional grants to provinces and municipalities to implement the EPWP.

Coordinating the EPWP

The department aimed to continue its efforts to coordinate the EPWP, which aims to create work opportunities using labour-intensive methods across the three spheres of government. An estimated R8.5 billion is allocated over the medium term for transfers and subsidies, mainly to public bodies such as provinces and municipalities across government, as well as non-profit organisations, to carry out activities as part of the programme.

In its efforts to continually improve the programme, the department plans to monitor and evaluate reports and impact studies on the programme's implementation over the period ahead and provide 269 public bodies with technical support in the infrastructure, social, environment and culture sectors. To enhance the budgets of public bodies implementing and reporting on EPWP projects, R1.3 billion over the medium term is allocated through incentive grants to support the programme's coordination function. All departmental activities related to the EPWP are carried out through the EPWP programme, which is allocated R9.7 billion over the next three years.

Providing policy and legislative oversight

The department plays an oversight role in the implementation of key legislation and policy frameworks in the public works sector. These include the Intergovernmental Relations Framework Act of 2005 and the district development model, which guide the implementation of the public works function at the provincial and municipal levels. The department gives effect to these frameworks by supporting joint programmes across all three spheres of government through its provision of coordination and intervention services, which are aimed at improving the coherence and impact of government's service delivery across the country.

The department's work in this regard involves regular meetings with sector governance structures such as the committee of the Public Works and Infrastructure Minister and members of the executive council. For the department to carry out its oversight role, R80.5 million is allocated over the period ahead in the Intergovernmental Relations and Coordination subprogramme in the Intergovernmental Coordination programme.

Building state capacity to strengthen the skills pipeline

Building state capacity in the property management and built environment sectors is central to the department's work. This entails either restoring or replacing the skills pipeline, through which a variety of skills required within the built environment sector emerge. The department aims to increase the number of beneficiaries participating in skills pipeline intervention programmes, such as the economic reconstruction and recovery programme, from 1 100 in 2022/23 to 1 300 in 2025/26. For this purpose, R90.1 million is allocated over the period ahead in the Professional Services subprogramme in the Intergovernmental Coordination programme.

Providing support to public infrastructure projects

The department's Infrastructure South Africa division has identified the need to provide direct support through the allocation of project preparation resources to sponsors of priority public infrastructure projects, with the aim of expediting investor-friendly projects. The department will support sponsors with business planning packaging, prefeasibility and feasibility studies, technical designs, and legal and regulatory approvals in alignment with the Infrastructure Development Act of 2014, as amended. To prepare these projects, R600 million over the period ahead is allocated in the Infrastructure Development Coordination subprogramme in the Property and Construction Industry Policy and Research programme.

Legislation and policies

The DPWI's mandate is guided by a legislative framework that includes the:

- Government Immovable Asset Management Act, 2007 (Act 19 of 2007);
- Infrastructure Development Act, 2014 (Act 23 of 2014);
- Land Affairs Board Act, 1987 (Act 101 of 1987;
- Construction Industry Development Board Act (CIDB), 2000 (Act 38 of 2000);
- Council for the Built Environment (CBE) Act, 2000 (Act 43 of 2000);
- State Land Disposal Act, 1961 (Act 48 of 1961);
- Municipal Property Rates Act, 2004 (Act 6 of 2004);
- Spatial Planning and Land Use Management, 2013 (Act 16 of 2013);
- National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act 107 of 1998);
- Integrated Coastal Management Act, 2008 (Act 24 of 2008);
- Occupational Health and Safety Act, 1993 (Act 181 of 1993);
- National Building Regulations and Building Standards Amended Act, 1984 (Act 36 of 1984);
- Water Services Act, 1997 (Act 108 of 1997);
- Critical Infrastructure Protection Act, 2019 (Act 8 of 2019);
- Public Finance Management Act (PFMA), 1999 (Act 1 of 1999);
- Preferential Procurement Policy Framework Act, 2000 (Act 5 of 2000);
- Public Service Act,1994 (Act 30 of 2007) as amended;
- Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act, 2000 (Act 4 of 2000);
- Employment Equity Act, 1998 (Act 55 of 1998);
- Public Administration Management Act, 2014 (Act 11 of 2014);
- Basic Conditions of Employment Act, 1997 (Act 75 of 1997);
- B-BBEE Act of 2003;
- Labour Relations Act, 1995 (Act 66 of 1995) as amended;
- Protected Disclosure Act, 2000 (Act 26 of 2000);
- Promotion of Access to Information Act, 2000 (Act 2 of 2000); and
- Promotion of Administrative Justice Act, 2000 (Act 3 of 2000).

Entities

Agrément South Africa

Agrément South Africa was established by the Agrément South Africa Act of 2015 to evaluate the fitness of purpose of non-standardised products or systems used in the construction industry for which a national standard does not exist. The implementation of the entity's mandate is dependent on the synchronisation of its work plan with government's national priorities and other national plans. The entity has indirect links with strategic national planning documents in this regard. The functioning and operations of the entity are guided by the department, and legislation and mandates governing the built environment.

Over the medium term, the entity planned to focus on the implementation of programmes that promote social cohesion and safer communities. So that consumers are assured that manufacturers conform to recognised environmental standards, the entity plans to issue 45 eco-labelling schemes over the medium term and conduct annual quality and compliance inspections. Through collaborations with various entities, Agrément South Africa plans to certify 82 products and systems over the period ahead and conduct a market usage analysis of the certified products and systems.

These activities are expected to cost R41.6 million over the next three years. Total expenditure was expected to increase at an average annual rate of 4,3%, from R36.8 million in 2022/23 to R41.7 million in 2025/26. Spending on compensation of employees' accounts for an estimated 69,4% (R83.4 million) of the entity's budget over the MTEF period. The entity expects to generate 90,2% (R106.8 million) of its revenue through departmental transfers. Revenue is set to increase at an average annual rate of 4,3%, from R36.8 million in 2022/23 to R41.7 million in 2025/26.

Construction Industry Development Board

The Construction Industry Development Board (CIDB) is a schedule 3A public entity established in terms of the CIDB Act of 2000. The board is mandated to provide strategic leadership to stakeholders in the construction industry to stimulate sustainable growth in the sector, oversee transformation in construction by encouraging and facilitating the participation of historically disadvantaged groups in the industry, and establish and promote best practice among public and private sector role players in the construction delivery process.

It also ensures the uniform application of policy across all spheres of government, sets and upholds ethical standards across the industry, ensures improved procurement

and delivery management and equitable procurement practices, and develops systematic methods for monitoring and regulating the performance of the industry and its stakeholders, including the registration of projects and contractors. Over the medium term, the board plans to introduce the best practice project assessment scheme in the provincial and local spheres of government.

The scheme will continue to focus on developing small and emerging contractors in the sector. Accordingly, the board plans to develop at least four guidelines and instruction notes. Expenditure was expected to increase at an average annual rate of 4,4%, from R195.6 million in 2022/23 to R222.5 million in 2025/26. Spending on compensation of employees' accounts for an estimated 62% (R396.5 million) of the entity's budget over the MTEF period. Transfers from the department account for 39,9% (R251.9 million) of the board's revenue over the period ahead, and 44% is set to be generated through registrations and interest on investments. Revenue is set to increase at an average annual rate of 4,4%, from R195.6 million in 2022/23 to R222.5 million in 2025/26.

Council for the Built Environment (CBE)

The Council for the Built Environment (CBE) is a statutory entity established by the CBE Act of 2000. The Act mandates the council to: promote and protect the interests of the public regarding built environment issues; promote and maintain a sustainable built and natural environment; promote the ongoing development of human resources in the built environment and the sound governance of built environment professions; facilitate participation by built environment professionals in integrated development in the context of national goals; ensure the uniform application of norms and guidelines set by councils for professions throughout the built environment; and promote appropriate standards of health, safety and environmental protection within the built environment and cooperation between the councils and government on training issues that affect the sector and the standards of such training.

In addition, the CBE serves as a forum where built environment professionals can discuss relevant issues. The council is an overarching body that coordinates the six councils for built environment professions (architecture, engineering, landscape architecture, project and construction management, property valuation and quantity surveying). One of the CBE's key interventions over the medium term was to transform the built environment sector and build partnerships and collaborations with an emphasis on including women and young graduates in the skills pipeline.

This was planned to be achieved by implementing the structured candidacy programme in workplaces, which involves establishing a functional database of built environment mentors to guide candidates employed by the State. Another key intervention is to rebuild the built environment sector to drive demand and increase productivity. An estimated R16.7 million is set aside to carry out these activities.

Expenditure was expected to increase at an average annual rate of 3,1%, from R58.4 million in 2022/23 to R64.1 million in 2025/26. The council expected to derive 93,2% (R171.6 million) of its projected revenue over the medium term through transfers from the department. Revenue increases in line with expenditure.

Independent Development Trust (IDT)

The Independent Development Trust (IDT) was established in 1990 as a grant-making institution for the development of disadvantaged communities in South Africa, particularly in rural areas. It is listed as a schedule 2 public entity in terms of the Public Finance Management Act (1999). In terms of the Act, the trust is expected to operate on a full cost-recovery basis. Since the decline in interest rates brought on by the global financial crisis in 2008, the trust has experienced a notable decrease in income from its investment accounts, prompting it to repeatedly turn to the fiscus for bailouts.

It is against this background that the trust was working with the department to develop a sustainable business and funding model to ensure its continued operation. The entity was uncertain about its future operations and was awaiting direction from the board and Minister of Public Works and Infrastructure. If it continues to exist, it aimed to focus on empowering poor communities by providing project management services for delivering and refurbishing social infrastructure such as schools, clinics and community centres, mainly in rural areas.

Should this be the case, the IDT expects to create an estimated 240 000 work opportunities through the EPWP over the medium term, and an additional 14 335 work opportunities through other programmes. To carry out these activities, the trust is dependent on an estimated allocation of R19.4 billion over the MTEF period from the DPWI and other client departments.

Expenditure was expected to increase at an average annual rate of 10,8%, from R358.7 million in 2022/23 to R487.6 million in 2025/26. Spending on compensation of employees' accounts for an estimated 51,5% (R710.9 million) of the entity's total expenditure. The trust derives its revenue mainly from project management fees and government grants. If the trust continues to exist, total revenue is expected to increase

at an average annual rate of 23,2%, from R267.5 million in 2022/23 to R499.7 million in 2025/26, mainly driven by an increase in management fees charged to client departments.

Property Management Trading Entity

The Property Management Trading Entity (PMTE) was established following a decision in 2006 to devolve accommodation costs from the DPWI to client departments. The entity manages immovable assets on behalf of the department, including the provision of residential and office accommodation for user departments at the national government level; and acquires, manages, operates, maintains and disposes of immovable assets in the department's custody. The entity was established to apply professional business approaches in managing and optimising the state's immovable asset portfolio to ensure that returns cover expenditure.

On a cost-recovery basis, the entity finances the purchase, construction, refurbishment and maintenance of state-owned government properties, and manages the leases of privately owned properties accommodating national departments. Over the medium term, the entity

planned to focus on developing precincts to support efficient and integrated government planning by grouping departments that provide similar services and refurbishing and maintaining government buildings in its portfolio.

To achieve these objectives, the entity plans to spend R68.8 billion over the medium term, which includes R4.5 billion for ad hoc building maintenance. A key component of the entity's funds will be channelled towards improving access for people with disabilities, which will include completing 26 infrastructure projects to retrofit buildings to ensure that they are accessible. The entity also plans to carry out refurbishment, repair and capital projects for 24 departments, including correctional centres, police stations, courts and office buildings.

These projects are expected to cost R17.1 billion over the medium term. In line with the entity's mandate, expenditure is expected to decrease at an average annual rate of 7,5%, from R18.8 billion in 2022/23 to R14.9 billion in 2025/26, as the entity's clients gradually begin to take over payment for their own municipal services. Spending on goods and services, the department's main cost driver, accounts for an estimated 77,1% (R42.8 billion) of its total budget over the medium term. Revenue, which is mainly generated from charging management fees to client departments for accommodation, is expected to decrease at an average annual rate of 4,2%, from R22.4 billion in 2022/23 to R19.7 billion in 2025/26. This is because of a projected decrease in the collection of management fees because of the municipal payment function being devolved to client departments.

Department of Employment and Labour (DEL)

The Department of Employment and Labour (DEL) was created in recognition of the need to respond to increasing levels of unemployment, inequality and poverty in South Africa. It plays a significant role in reducing unemployment, poverty and inequality by pursuing the objectives of decent work through employment creation and enterprise development; setting of standards and the protection of rights at work, including the facilitation of equal opportunities and social dialogue; and the provision of social protection. The mandate of the department is to regulate the labour market through policies and programmes developed in consultation with social partners.

These aim to:

- improve economic efficiency and productivity;
- facilitate the creation of decent employment;
- promote labour standards and fundamental rights at work;
- provide adequate social safety nets to protect vulnerable workers;
- promote and enforce sound labour relations;
- promote equity in the workplace;
- eliminate inequality and unfair discrimination in the workplace;
- enhance occupational health and safety awareness and compliance in the workplace; and
- give value to social dialogue in the formulation of sound and responsive legislation and policies to attain labour market flexibility for the competitiveness of enterprises, balanced with the promotion of decent employment.

In working towards the vision of eliminating poverty and reducing inequality over the medium term, the department will focus on increasing safety and fairness in the workplace, providing support to work seekers, regulating the workplace and engaging in multinational platforms, such as the Brazil-Russia-India-China-South Africa (BRICS) group of countries, to shape the future of work and protect workers' rights.

The department has a budget of R12.1 billion over the period ahead after increases of R96.9 million for cost-of-living adjustments; R140 million for regional office accommodation; R90 million for capital works at supported employment enterprise factories; and R67.5 million for the National Economic Development and Labour Council for the operations of the Presidential Climate Commission, which it temporarily houses.

Increasing safety and fairness in the workplace

Through its advocacy programmes, which include 12 seminars and six conferences over the medium term, the department plans to increase its national footprint by ensuring compliance with employment law. This was expected to improve fairness in the workplace, especially for young people, people with disabilities and women, and transition workers from the informal to the formal economy.

To ensure compliance with the law and occupational health and safety standards, the department plans to conduct 894 312 employer inspections over the period ahead. The implementation of the case management system in 2022/23 is expected to ensure that the department's business processes are fully modernised, which will lead to, among other things, more focused inspections.

Over the medium term, the department planned to improve and strengthen its enforcement function. This entails ensuring that 65% of employers who fail to comply with served notices are issued with fines and/or penalties and are referred for prosecution within 30 calendar days, and that 95% of noncompliant employers are served with legal notices within 14 calendar days.

Spending for these activities is within the Inspection and Enforcement Services programme, which is allocated 16,4% (R2 billion) of the department's budget over the medium term. Spending in the programme increases at an average annual rate of 4,9%, from R614.9 million in 2022/23 to R709.2 million in 2025/26.

Providing support to work seekers

Facilitating access to decent employment is central to the department's work and is primarily funded through the Public Employment Services programme. Over the medium term, it plans to register 2.9 million work seekers, provide counselling to 780 000 work seekers and place 195 000 work seekers in registered employment opportunities.

In 2022/23, the department drafted the South African National Employment Policy in partnership with the International Labour Organisation. The purpose of the policy is to determine a sustainable approach to employment growth. In line with the policy, the department plans to establish an employment war room over the medium term. The purpose of this intervention is to bring together government departments, business experts, and labour and community organisations.

The department also aimed to focus on implementing an accessible framework for active labour market policies that supports work seekers by, among other things, digitising applications for vacancies and providing employment counselling through the Employment Services of South Africa system. This is expected to be done in collaboration with private employment agencies with the aim of facilitating viable pathways to employment. The Employment Services of South Africa online app has been developed and will go live on 1 April 2023. Limited data and internet access are still hindrances to work seekers. In addition, all youth employment centres that were built in 2022/23 will have free Wi-Fi.

Internet connectivity will also enable work seekers to access other tools that assist youth to better understand their career aspirations and build capacity. In 2022/23, the department drafted the new national migration policy and proposed amendments to the Employment Services Act of 2014. A strong focus over the MTEF period will be on the rapid implementation of these amendments, which is expected to provide more employment opportunities for young South Africans, particularly in the hospitality, tourism and agriculture sectors.

The department will receive R372.2 million in 2023/24 to continue the pathway management network, which is a Presidential Employment Initiative. The network is expected to create opportunities for employment, support increased access to relevant education and training interventions, assist young people in making choices about learning and/or earning, and identify barriers to entry in the labour market. More than one million young people are expected to be actively involved in the network over the next two years, with the aim of creating 255 000 job opportunities by 2024/25. Different components of the network will be scaled up over the medium term, such as the Innovation Fund, with the introduction of new partners.

Spending for these activities is within the Public Employment Services programme, which is allocated 21,3% (R2.4 billion) of the department's budget over the medium term. Spending in the programme is set to decrease at an average annual rate of 10,6%, from R1 billion in 2022/23 to R725.6 million in 2025/26, because of allocations for the presidential employment initiative not continuing over the MTEF period.

Regulating the workplace

The department plans to conduct an annual review of the national minimum wage over the medium term. This will include the development of monitoring mechanisms to measure its impact on the economy, collective bargaining, the reduction of income differentials, and proposed adjustments. The Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA) spearheads the department's efforts in this regard and is set to receive an estimated 77,6% (R3.3 billion) of the Labour Policy and Industrial Relations programme's allocation over the medium term.

Shaping the future of work and protecting workers' rights

Over the period ahead, South Africa's key engagement in multinational platforms includes assuming The Presidency of the BRICS group of countries for 2023. The department hopes to use this platform, as well as the ministerial meeting on labour and employment in September 2023, to shape the future of work and protect the rights of workers in new forms of employment.

The following priorities are expected to be deliberated on in the BRICS forum: building sustainable enterprises, including new forms of employment; increasing productivity; promoting labour rights and decreasing decent work deficits in the context of economic recovery after the COVID-19 pandemic; ensuring universal social protection and minimum basic income; and promoting decent work by closing skills gaps in the informal economy. For this purpose, the department has budgeted R15 million in the Labour Policy and Industrial Relations programme.

Employment

Total household-surveyed employment increased sharply by 399 000 (2,4%) in the third quarter of 2023, surpassing its pre-COVID-19 peak for the first time as job gains were broad-based, according to Statistics South Africa's Quarterly Labour Force Survey (QLFS). Formal sector employment increased significantly by 287 000 (2,5%) in the third quarter followed by an increase of 61 000 (6,8%) in the agricultural sector, a 29 000 (0.9%) increase in the informal sector and 22 000 (2%) more jobs recorded in the private household sector.

Formal sector employment was largely driven by job gains of 236 900 (9.1%) in the finance, insurance, real estate and business services sector as well as 118 800 (3%) in the community, social and personal services sector, which likely reflected increased temporary public sector employment. The year-on-year pace of increase in total household-surveyed employment accelerated to 979 000 (6,2%) in the third quarter of 2023 but was still lower than the recent peak of 1.5 million (10,4%) in the third quarter of 2022. The total number of new and renewed job postings on the PNet web platform increased by 3,4% in the third quarter of 2023, with total job postings 10% higher in October 2023 compared with October 2019, before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.

However, the employment outlook remains sensitive to the weak economic growth environment, associated with electricity loadshedding, elevated production costs, low business confidence and higher interest rates. Despite the gloomy outlook, investment in renewable energy development is expected to contribute to job creation in the coming years while also supporting economic growth, according to a report on renewable energy and jobs.

About 13.7 million such jobs had been created globally in 2022 along with 12.7 million in 2021, consistent with the mission of the Global Accelerator on Jobs and Social Protection. Employment contracts of a limited duration increased by 5,8% on a quarter-to-quarter and seasonally adjusted basis in the third quarter of 2023, partly reflecting the continued uptake in employment related to the Presidential Youth Employment Initiative (PYEI) as well as the EPWP. Employment contracts of a permanent nature increased by 3,5%, while those of an unspecified duration increased by 4,8% in the third quarter of 2023.

South Africa's total labour force increased by 1,3% to 24.6 million in the third quarter of 2023, supported by the significant increase in the total number of employed persons alongside a decrease in the number of officially unemployed

persons. Consequently, South Africa's official unemployment rate decreased further from 32,6% in the second quarter of 2023 to 31,9% in the third quarter. Similarly, the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate decreased marginally from 32,3% to 32% over the same period.

Encouragingly, the International Labour Organization (ILO) reported that the unemployment rate in the BRICS7 countries had decreased to 4,8% in 2022 and was expected to decrease further to 4,7% in 2023.

Legislation and policy

The DEL derives its legislative mandate from the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, particularly the Bill of Rights, which is given effect through several Acts that regulate labour matters in South Africa.

The most important of these are the:

- Labour Relations Act of 1995;
- Basic Conditions of Employment Act of 1997;
- Employment Equity Act of 1998;
- Occupational Health and Safety Act of 1993; and
- Employment Services Act of 2014.

Entities

Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA)

The CCMA derives its legislative mandate primarily from the Labour Relations Act of 1995, as amended. The provisions of the act mandate the commission to advance and foster, among other things, economic development, social justice, labour peace and the democratisation of the workplace. Over the medium term, the commission aimed to focus on implementing its five-year strategy, which prioritises, among other things, an improved dispute resolution and enforcement model complemented by the implementation of a dispute prevention and management strategy in response to an anticipated increase in cases, and an ICT modernisation programme to support its priority areas.

The commission anticipates an increase in its caseload from 185 929 in 2022/23 to 213 513 in 2025/26, mostly because of slow economic growth. To accommodate this projected increase, it has allocated an estimated 72,7% (R2.4 billion) of its budget over the MTEF period to dispute prevention, resolution and enforcement; and mediation to support collective bargaining and capacity building processes to ensure fairness in the workplace. An estimated 9,1% (R303.8 million) of total expenditure is allocated to ICT initiatives such as enhancing the case management system, upgrading hardware and consolidating systems to provide business intelligence and improve ICT connectivity and compliance with legislative imperatives.

Expenditure is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 3%, from R1.1 billion in 2022/23 to R1.2 billion in 2025/26. Spending on compensation of employees' accounts for an estimated 57,4% (R1.9 billion) of the commission's budget over the MTEF period, increasing at an average annual rate of 2,9%, from R608.9 million in 2022/23 to R664.2 million in 2025/26. Revenue is almost entirely derived from transfers from the department. The commission is set to derive 98,8% (R3.3 billion) of its revenue over the period ahead through transfers from the department.

Compensation Fund

The mandate of the Compensation Fund is to administer the Compensation for Occupational Injuries and Diseases Act (COIDA) of 1993, which makes provision for the compensation of employees who are disabled because of occupational injuries and diseases sustained or contracted at work, and the compensation of the nominated beneficiaries of employees who die from such injuries or diseases.

Over the medium term, the fund will focus on improving the services it provides to its beneficiaries and other stakeholders. It plans to achieve this through its new CompEasy system, which, over the medium term, is expected to improve turnaround times for adjudicating and processing all accepted and approved claims from 85% within 10 working days in 2022/23 to 95% within the same period in 2025/26. Expenditure is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 4,1%, from R9.4 billion in 2022/23 to R10.7 billion in 2025/26, mainly driven by the payment of claims and pension benefits, which comprise an estimated 70,9% (R21.8 billion) of total projected spending over the period ahead.

The fund derives 62,1% (R33.2 billion) of its revenue over the MTEF period through assessment levies on active registered employers. Total revenue is expected to decrease at an average annual rate of 4,7%, from R20.2 billion in 2022/23 to R17.5 billion in 2025/26, due to accounting for fair value adjustments in 2022/23.

National Economic Development and Labour Council (Nedlac)

The Nedlac is a statutory body established by the Nedlac Act of 1994. It is mandated to promote economic growth, participation in economic decision-making and social equity, and seeks to create impact by enabling its social partners to contribute meaningfully to these processes by seeking consensus and concluding agreements on matters pertaining to social and economic policy.

Over the medium term, the Nedlac aimed to focus on addressing the high cost of living, particularly the prices of fuel and food; engaging in social dialogue on key socioeconomic issues; providing input on labour legislation and policy, including as they pertain to migration; resolving disputes; extending labour protection to non-standard forms of work; improving public procurement, including engaging on regulations to support the proposed new Public Procurement Bill; providing support to the Presidential Climate Commission; and implementing a revised constitution and protocols to contribute to making the council more effective, efficient and representative.

Following Cabinet's decision in 2022, the Presidential Climate Commission and its budget were shifted from the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment to the DEL to be temporarily housed at the council. As a result, the council is set to receive an estimated R252.9 million over the medium term, of which R67.5 million is earmarked for the operations of the climate commission.

This arrangement will cease once the Climate Change Bill is passed and the commission is established as a standalone public entity. Expenditure is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 10,9%, from R72.3 million in 2022/23 to R98.8 million in 2025/26, mainly driven by the shift of the Presidential Climate Commission to the council. The council expects to derive 98,8% (R276.8 million) of its revenue over the MTEF period through transfers from the department.

Productivity South Africa

Productivity South Africa was established in terms of section 31 of the Employment Services Act of 2014 as a juristic person and entity of the DEL. In terms of the act, it is mandated to promote employment growth and productivity and thereby contribute to South Africa's socio-economic development and competitiveness. Over the medium term, the entity planned to support the improvement of South Africa's competitiveness and the sustainability of its enterprises – specifically small, medium and micro enterprises – through its competitiveness improvement services, and business turnaround and recovery programme.

Expenditure is expected to decrease at an average annual rate of 2,5%, from R173.4 million in 2022/23 to R160.7 million in 2025/26. This is due to the medium-term funding for the business turnaround and recovery programme being aligned with the previous three years' actual performance. Costs for the turnaround programme are covered by the Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF). Over the past three years, the actual costs have been much less than what was agreed on due to Productivity South Africa not meeting some of the requirements, and because of capacity constraints.

As a result, the agreed funding has been reduced to what the fund has actually paid in the past. However, these funds do not affect Productivity South Africa's performance as the turnaround programme is run on behalf of the UIF. The entity expects to derive 86,9% (R396.9 million) of its revenue over the period ahead through transfers from the DEL; the dtic and the UIF. The balance of revenue is expected to be generated mainly through services rendered to companies in economic distress. Revenue is expected to decrease in line with expenditure.

Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF)

The UIF is mandated to alleviate poverty by providing effective short-term unemployment insurance to all workers who qualify for unemployment and related benefits, as legislated in the Unemployment Insurance Act of 2001. Over the medium term, the fund aimed to focus on providing social insurance benefits and improving coverage to vulnerable groups and contributors. Through its flagship labour activation programme, the fund assists the department to realise its expanded mandate of coordinating job creation. It intends to enhance the employability of 240 000 programme participants by placing them in training and/or job opportunities, with 75 000 of these planned to be recruited in 2023/24.

Funding agreements have also been concluded with 48 institutions to provide training, ranging from specialised short-term skills programmes to three-year artisan training programmes, to a targeted 36 198 learners. The fund will review the training interventions offered by these partners over the MTEF period to ensure that their exit strategies result in gainful employment for beneficiaries who can then become contributors to the fund. The fund has budgeted R10.6 billion over the medium term to carry out these activities.

In ensuring that contributors remain employed, the fund, through its Temporary Employer/Employee Relief Scheme, provides support to distressed businesses seeking to retain their employees. The CCMA administers this scheme on behalf of the fund and considers applications.

Under the scheme, 75% of an employee's basic salary is funded up to a maximum amount of R17 119.44 per month for a maximum of 12 months. The fund has budgeted R4.3 billion over the next three years for this programme. The department's 126 labour centres have traditionally been a key channel through which the fund's clients access its services. To respond to the widespread use of digital platforms and technologies, the fund plans to build on its existing technological capabilities to enhance functionality and alleviate queues at labour centres.

The fund has budgeted R18 million over the medium term for this purpose. To augment the capability of labour centres, the fund plans to deploy kiosks in strategic places and deploy mobile buses in each province for outreach initiatives in remote and densely populated areas. The fund has budgeted R94 million for the deployment of 21 buses, 11 in 2023/24 and 10 in 2024/25. Total expenditure over the medium term is expected to amount to R102.4 billion, increasing at an average annual rate of 4,4%, from R31.2 billion in 2022/23 to R35.5 billion in 2025/26.

The fund expects to derive 67,4% (R74.6 billion) of its revenue over the period ahead through contributions from employees and employers, as legislated by the Unemployment Contributions Act of 2002. Remaining income is received through interest earned on investments. Total revenue is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 3,4%, from R34.3 billion in 2021/22 to R37.9 billion in 2024/25.

Central Supplier Database (CSD)

The CSD maintains a database of organisations, institutions and individuals who can provide goods and services to government. It serves as the only source of key supplier information for organs of state, providing consolidated, accurate, up-to-date, complete and verified supplier information to procuring organs of state. This is expected to reduce the administrative and cost burden of procurement, as the requisite documents will only need to be submitted once for a predetermined period.

Access to procurement processes and procurement information makes provision for the Public Procurement Office to determine requirements for the disclosing of information by institutions. Measures for the public, civil society and media can access, scrutinize and monitor public procurement.

This is expected to reduce the administrative and cost burden of procurement, as the requisite documents will only need to be submitted once for a predetermined period. eTender Publication Portal The portal provides a single point of entry to identify business opportunities with government. Utilisation of the eTenders Publication Portal has improved. The portal contributes to reducing duplication, fragmentation and inefficiency in government tender publications.

Making the information readily available and ensuring that bids are advertised in a competitive process supports government institutions to secure the best suppliers to provide goods or services.

Vulekamali Portal

To ensure that its services are accessible to the broader South African society, National Treasury launched an online

portal that makes information on the country's budget more accessible to ordinary South Africans. The Vulekamali Portal presents information in a simplified format and shows citizens how public resources are generated and used.

The portal enables the public to make their inputs, not only in influencing government policy directive as articulated through the budget but also having access to the budget process and the information contained in the budget. The portal is a private-public partnership between Imaliyethu and National Treasury. It is a good platform for young South Africans, especially the academia, to access budgeting information to help them gain critical insights.

GoMuni Database for Local Government

The introduction of the MFMA in 2003 laid the foundation for the municipal financial management reforms. One of the reforms was to develop a comprehensive reporting system for local government which included:

- creation of a Local Government Database and Reporting System (GoMuni) to facilitate the collection and storage of financial and non-financial data; establishment of a culture of monthly reporting in terms of Section 71 of the MFMA by all 278 municipalities; and
- The routine publication of budget and in-year financial performance information for local government, escalating the performance of local government into the public domain.

A sound reporting system facilitates transparency, better in-year management and oversight of budgets and better policy decisions on funding allocations at a national and provincial level. The reports available on GoMuni are management tools and early warning mechanisms for municipal management and councils to improve municipal performance. The aim of an early warning system is to provide government with timely information on the state of municipalities' finances that highlights possible areas of risk so that such risks can be investigated and mitigated before they give rise to serious problems.

There is a need for information on municipal performance by various stakeholders such as South African Reserve Bank (SARB), StatsSA, Department of Water Affairs (DWA), NERSA, CoGTA, AGSA and universities. A central reporting system eliminates duplication of effort where various department request the same information from the same municipality. GoMuni also provides information on municipal performance to the public.

The Municipal Money portal on GoMuni "demystification" information about municipal spending, thereby promoting transparency and enabling citizens to hold their municipalities accountable. Municipal Money is designed to present key municipal financial information to a general audience, who do not necessarily have any financial background or knowledge.

In addition, a range of municipal documentation is available for downloading on GoMuni, such as the Integrated Development Plans, budgets, in-year performance reports, annual financial statements and annual reports. Information on municipalities that are placed under intervention; the socio-economic profiles of municipalities are also available on GoMuni.

GoMuni also offers a host of training materials, tool kits and training session recordings on municipal finance, urban reforms and the municipal standard chart of accounts (mSCOA).

Entities

Accounting Standards Board (ASB)

The ASB was established to develop uniform standards of generally recognised accounting practice for all spheres of government in terms of Section 216(1)(a) of the Constitution and the Public Finance Management Act of 1999. The board also promotes transparency and the effective management of the revenue, expenditure, assets and liabilities of the entities to which the standards apply. In line with its mandate, the board will implement its Taking Stock programme, which involves a mix of projects to ensure that stakeholders are not overburdened with too many new or revised reporting requirements.

Over the next three years, a major focus of the board will be on developing and implementing standards of generally recognised accounting practices using the information contained in the annual financial statements of its stakeholders and ensuring these are in line with best practice. Expenditure is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 3,1%, from R14.7 million in 2022/23 to R16.1 million in 2025/26.

Compensation of employees of the board's seven employees account for an estimated 72,6% (R33.3 million) of its expenditure over the period ahead, increasing from R10.9 million in 2022/23 to R11.7 million in 2025/26 at an average annual rate of 2,4%. Expenditure on goods and services, the second-largest spending item, is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 5,5%, from R3.7 million in 2022/23 to R4.3 million in 2025/26, due to the anticipated appointment of a consultant to assist with standard-setting activities for the Taking Stock programme. Revenue, which is derived mainly through transfers from the department, is expected to increase in line with expenditure.

Cooperative Banks Development Agency (CBDA)

The CBDA was established in terms of the Cooperative Banks Act 2007. The agency is mandated to facilitate, support and develop cooperative banking with the strategic focus of driving growth and sustainability in the cooperative banking sector, and contributing to a transformed financial services sector in terms of ownership and meaningful participation in the mainstream banking sector.

The CBDA also promotes access to finance for SMMEs and the financial inclusion of underserved communities through the provision of retail banking services. Over the medium term, the agency will focus on expanding the footprint of sustainable, professionalised, modernised and technology□enabled cooperative banking institutions, thereby increasing the sector's membership base, member deposits and assets. This plan includes collaboration and partnerships with stakeholders to assist in developing institutions, strengthening organisations, enhancing operational efficiency through innovative technology interventions and solutions, and expanding the footprint of sustainable cooperative banking institutions through a holistic support programme.

The agency will also work towards merging with the SEDA and the Sefa over the MTEF period. The aim of the merger is to address the fragmentation and poor coordination of support provided to SMMEs and cooperatives at the local and provincial levels of government. Expenditure is expected to decrease at an average annual rate of 0,5%, from R27.1 million in 2022/23 to R26.7 million in 2025/26. This is due to a projected decrease in spending on goods and services owing to a reduction in operational activities in anticipation of the merger. Spending on the compensation of 18 employees is the agency's main cost driver, increasing at an average rate of 3,2%, from R13.9 million in 2022/23 to R15.3 million in 2025/26. Revenue, which is expected to decrease in line with expenditure, is derived mainly through transfers from the department.

Development Bank of Southern Africa

The Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA) was reconstituted in terms of the DBSA Act of 1997 as a development finance institution with the primary purpose of promoting economic development and growth. The DBSA's primary mandate is rooted in stimulating socioeconomic growth, given its infrastructure and capacity development role. This includes infrastructure finance and development, human resource development, and institutional capacity building. The DBSA mandate further focuses on mobilising financial and other resources from the national and international private and public sectors for sustainable development projects and programmes in South Africa, the South African Development Community (SADC), and the African continent..

Over the medium term, the DBSA is focused towards ensuring financial sustainability and strong governance, while moving onto a trajectory of accelerated and enhanced development impact. It builds on the four strategic goals of the current DBSA strategy, namely:

- Financial sustainability: The DBSA aims to achieve financial sustainability through income growth, balance sheet growth, and cost optimisation;
- Accelerating development impact: This includes stimulating infrastructure development through a programmatic approach for a secure and scaled development trajectory, while contributing to creating inclusive and sustainable socioeconomic growth. The DBSA aims to drive quality transactions while ensuring greater development impact of its investments;
- Future-fit-DBSA: This requires a cultural reform and mindset shift towards growth and innovation. The DBSA will need to make a decisive shift towards digitalisation and review how it operates and is structured but also changing the perspectives of the people within the DBSA; and
- Smart partnerships: These partnerships are purpose-driven collaborations that co-create development solutions and enhance private sector participation in infrastructure projects that promote inclusive growth.

The DBSA's strategy seeks to leverage its competitive advantages as far as possible and its mandate requires the DBSA to maximise development impact in infrastructure development, financing, and capacity development, both in South Africa and across the African continent. The DBSA has a comprehensive offering across all segments of the infrastructure delivery value chain, and clients may interact with multiple DBSA business units and their needs and requirements may vary substantially depending on what stage in the infrastructure value chain their prioritised projects are.

Development impact

The salient features of the DBSA's 2025/26 to 2027/28 plan is that the DBSA targets an annual infrastructure disbursement of R15.5 billion in 2025/26 financial year, R19.4 billion and R20.6 billion for 2026/27 and 2027/28 financial years, respectively, which aggregates to R55.5 billion over the three-year period.

The DBSA profitability is set to improve, driven by a slowdown in impairments, while developmental loans continue to expand steadily. Although funding liabilities are projected to decline, the DBSA plans to raise new debt, maintaining a stable debt-to-equity ratio within target levels. However, liquidity metrics such as the current ratio are expected to decline, due to increased disbursements over the forecast period. Overall, the DBSA is positioned for sustainable growth, balancing its financial health with its developmental mandate, ensuring long-term stability and impact.

Financial and Fiscal Commission (FFC)

The Financial and Fiscal Commission (FFC) is established in terms of section 220 of the Constitution and its functions are further expatiated in the Financial and Fiscal Commission Act, 1997. The FFC's primary mandate is to make recommendation envisaged in Chapter 13 of the Constitution or the FFC Act to Parliament, provincial legislatures and any other authorities.

Over the medium term, the commission will focus on providing stakeholders, including Parliament, with recommendations to improve the credibility of the South African fiscal framework and the effectiveness of public spending. The commission's contribution will include other policy research papers and briefings on a wide range of fiscal and financial topics.

It will also focus on its organisational redesign and the relocation of its Johannesburg office to its office in Cape Town. After the organisational redesign, the commission is set to increase its number of personnel from 42 in 2022/23 to 60 in 2025/26. Accordingly, spending on compensation of employees, the commission's main cost driver, is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 9,3%, from R37.4 million in 2022/23 to R48.8 million in 2025/26.

Spending on goods and services is expected to decrease at an average annual rate of 5,2%, from R26.4 million in 2022/23 to R22.5 million in 2025/26, due to an expected decrease in spending on consultants and travel because of the relocation. The commission derives its revenue mainly through transfers from the department. These are set to increase in line with expenditure over the period ahead.

Financial Intelligence Centre (FIC)

The FIC was established by the FIC Act of 2001 to combat money laundering activities and the financing of terrorist and related activities, identify the proceeds of unlawful activities,

exchange information with law enforcement and other local and international agencies, supervise and enforce compliance with the Act, and facilitate effective supervision and enforcement by supervisory bodies in terms of the Act.

To deliver on this mandate and protect the integrity of South Africa's financial system, the Act works in conjunction with other legislation, which includes the Prevention of Organised Crime Act of 1998, the Protection of Constitutional Democracy Against Terrorist and Related Activities Act of 2004, and the South African Police Service Act of 1995.

To address concerns identified in the Financial Action Task Force action plan, as well as in response to the recommendations from the state capture commission, over the medium term, the centre will focus on augmenting its human resource capacity and enhancing and maintaining its ICT network and systems. This is expected to enable it to improve its oversight responsibility and combating of financial crimes and terror financing by enhancing analytical software to reinforce the integrity of South Africa's financial system and improving access to information for clients. As a result, expenditure is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 7,2%, from R371.1 million in 2022/23 to R457.5 million in 2025/26.

An additional R265.3 million over the period ahead is allocated to augment human resource capacity. The centre plans to add 107 permanent personnel to its establishment over the medium term with interdisciplinary skills in supervision and monitoring, forensic accounting, enforcement, compliance and strategic analysis to combat money laundering and counter terror financing and related activities. This is expected to drive an increase over the MTEF period in the number of high-priority financial intelligence reports issued to stakeholders from 65 to 80, the number of medium-priority to lower-priority reports from 600 to 750, and the number of elevated financial intelligence reports on illicit financial flows from 20 to 45.

Spending on compensation of employees is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 13%, from R203.9 million in 2022/23 to R294.5 million in 2025/26. Spending on goods and services is expected to decrease at an average annual rate of 0,8%, from R150.1 million in 2022/23 to R146.7 million in 2025/26 as contract staff are made permanent.

Financial Sector Conduct Authority (FSCA)

The Financial Sector Conduct Authority (FSCA) was established in 2018 by the FSR Act of 2017 as one of the two pillars of the twin peaks model for regulating the financial sector. As such, the authority assumes the role of the market conduct regulator of financial institutions that provide financial products and services, and financial institutions licensed in terms of financial sector legislation.

The authority assumed the business operations of the Financial Services Board (FSB) in 2018/19. The authority's ongoing objective is to play a meaningful role in promoting growth and employment and reducing poverty through regulating the financial services sector and protecting consumers, and promoting an integrated approach to financial inclusion and employment.

Over the medium term, the authority will focus on implementing its revised strategy, which is aimed at enabling it to be more responsive and forward-looking, and includes an expanded mandate to supervise banks. These objectives are intended to improve industry practices to achieve fair outcomes for financial customers; act against misconduct to support confidence and integrity in the financial sector; promote the development of an innovate, inclusive and sustainable financial sector; empower households and small businesses to be financially resilient; and accelerate the transformation of the authority into a socially responsible, efficient and responsive conduct regulator.

This will be done by conducting environmental assessments to identify and understand trends; attracting specialist expertise to deal with emerging issues such as climate change; and proactively monitoring pricing and selling practices, new business models and financial products. The authority's expenditure estimates include an amount of R13 million per year to establish the Ombud Council, which is a distinct regulatory body over the financial sector and statutory ombud schemes over the period ahead.

Compensation of employees' accounts for an estimated 64,1% (R1.9 billion) of the authority's expenditure, increasing from R587.3 million in 2022/23 to R672 million in 2025/26 at an average annual rate of 4,6%. Total spending is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 4,9%, from R905.9 million in 2022/23 to R1 billion in 2025/26.

The authority generates revenue mainly through levies raised from financial institutions and fees for their licensing. Revenue is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 6,9%, from R887.4 million in 2022/23 to R1.1 billion in 2025/26. This includes additional allocations of R13 million per year over the medium term to establish the Ombud Council and appoint its personnel.

Government Pensions Administration Agency (GPAA)

The Government Pensions Administration Agency (GPAA) provides pension administration services to the Government Employees Pension Fund in terms of the Government Employees Pension Law of 1996 and the Associated Institutions Pension Fund Act of 1963. Post-retirement medical subsidies are administered as provided for and regulated by resolutions of the Public Service Coordinating Bargaining Council, military pensions are administered in terms of the Military Pensions Act of 1976, injury-on-duty payments are administered in terms of the Compensation for Occupational Injuries and Diseases Act of 1993, and special pensions are administered in terms of the Special Pensions Act of 1996.

The agency aims to optimise its performance over the medium term through its modernisation programme. This will entail procuring new pension administration, client relationship management and financial management solutions. These interventions are expected to lead to a reduction in turnaround times for processing and paying benefits from 45 days to less than 25 days, improve the management and accuracy of client data, and enable the agency to reach 65% of clients through digital platforms.

These investments are expected to drive an increase in spending on goods and services at an average annual rate of 11%, from R479.9 million in 2022/23 to R656.6 million in 2025/26, and an increase in total expenditure at an average annual rate of 6,4%, from R1.2 billion in 2022/23 to R1.5 billion in 2025/26. Spending on compensation of employees, which accounts for 47,7% of the agency's planned spending, is expected to increase at an average

annual rate of 3,2%, from R620.8 million in 2022/23 to R683.2 million in 2025/26.

The agency derives its revenue mainly through administration fees charged to its major clients – the Government Employees Pension Fund (GEPF) and National Treasury. Revenue is expected to increase in line with expenditure.

Government Employees Medical Scheme (GEMS)

Government Employees Medical Scheme (GEMS) is South Africa's largest restricted membership medical scheme, with 805 544 principal members and more than 2.1 million beneficiaries. GEMS was created specifically to provide healthcare cover for public service employees beginning of GEMS was a historic moment when in 2002, the Cabinet approved a framework policy on a restricted (closed) medical scheme for further development by an interdepartmental working group.

The approved framework policy centred on the principles of equity, efficiency and differentiation:

- Equity where employees have equal access to the most extensive set of equal basic benefits under equitable remuneration structures, subject to affordability.
- Efficiency regarding the costs and delivery of benefits.
- Differentiation, where employees choosing more extensive cover have equal access to higher benefits subject to their needs.
- Government's commitment to an equitable and affordable medical scheme.

GEMS was registered on 1 January 2005, in terms of the Medical Schemes Act, 1998 (Act No. 131 of 1998), specifically to meet the healthcare needs of government employees. The implementation of GEMS is a positive step that positions government as an employer of choice that truly cares for the health and wellbeing of its employees.

Government Employees Pension Fund

The Government Employees Pension Fund (GEPF) is a defined benefit fund that manages pensions and related benefits on behalf of government employees in South Africa.

Established in 1996, it is the largest pension fund in South Africa and one of the largest pension funds in Africa and the world with approximately more than 1.265 million active members and about 473 312 pensioners and other beneficiaries.

Its current benefit structure offers members:

- Withdrawal benefits;
- Retirement benefits;
- Ill-health or Disability benefits; and
- Death benefits.

The GEPF is governed by the Government Employees Pension (GEP) Law (1996). The executive authority of the GEPF is the Board of Trustees ("Board"). The GEPF has outsourced its administration and investment activities to the GPAA and the PIC respectively.

Government Technical Advisory Centre (GTAC)

The Government Technical Advisory Centre (GTAC) is a government component of the National Treasury, established in terms of the Public Service Act. It is established to support the government in making better choices, spending public funds more efficiently, and delivering development impact. This is achieved through providing a strategic, rapid-response capability within government, retaining critical skills in-house, ensuring policy alignment, and delivering services faster and more cost-effectively than traditional structures.

Since its creation in 2012, GTAC has become a trusted partner to departments, municipalities and state-owned entities. It provides technical advice, project support and capacity development that strengthen South Africa's ability to deliver on its priorities.

At its core, GTAC exists to bridge the gap between policy intent and implementation, ensuring that decisions are grounded in evidence, fiscal realism, and developmental value. This role has never been more vital than in today's constrained financial environment, where every rand must achieve maximum impact.

Strategic role and services

GTAC supports the government in four main areas:

- Spending Reviews and Public Finance Analysis: Examining how money is spent, identifying duplication, and improving value-for-money;
- Institutional Development Support: Helping departments redesign systems, structures, and strategies to strengthen governance and performance;
- Knowledge and capacity development: Capturing lessons, publishing tools and case studies, and training officials to embed reform skills across the state;
- Infrastructure planning and Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs): Assessing and structuring large-scale projects that expand access to services and unlock private sector investment;
- Programme Management: Managing specialised programmes and projects on behalf of other organs of state.

GTAC will deliver these services from 2025 onward through the establishment of four Hubs, which will consolidate abovementioned and streamline services to clients.

These functions place GTAC at the centre of efforts to build a capable and ethical state as envisaged in the National Development Plan (NDP) and the Medium-Term Development Plan (MTDP).

Delivering impact in 2024/25

Despite tight financial headwinds, GTAC achieved 100% of its approved performance targets. Notable achievements include:

- Conducting 109 spending reviews over five years, analysing more than R711 billion of public expenditure. These reviews are now a cornerstone of budget and policy cycles, providing insights on compensation, sectoral efficiency, and programme alignment.
- Maintaining a clean audit outcome for the third year in a row and processing 99,97% of invoices within 30 days, underscoring GTAC's culture of accountability.
- Achieving a 100% on-time completion rate for institutional development projects and for all capital project appraisals submitted under the Budget Facility for Infrastructure (BFI).

- GTAC conducted an in-depth Lifestyle Audit of all management and obtained a clean lifestyle audit.
- GTAC's Knowledge Hub now hosts over 900 practical resources (toolkits, reports, case studies) and attracts more than 40 500 visits annually from both local and international users.
- Independent studies confirming that 91% of clients rated GTAC as a high-quality provider, with more than 70% of engagements coming from returning clients.

These results demonstrate not just technical delivery, but GTAC's wider role in building public confidence in the state's ability to spend responsibly, deliver projects on time, and adapt to citizen needs.

GTAC is committed to keep evolving to meet South Africa's changing needs. A new hub-based operating model – spanning Consulting, Business Support, Programme Management, and Infrastructure – will consolidate expertise, reduce duplication, and strengthen the link between analysis and implementation. This model directly responds to client requests for more integrated and agile support.

As South Africa enters a new planning cycle, GTAC will continue to focus on enabling fiscal sustainability, unlocking infrastructure investment and strengthening institutional capacity. Its long-term vision is to equip the government with credible analysis, innovative solutions, and practical tools that advance public value for every citizen.

Financial outlook

As demand grows for GTAC's expertise, especially in infrastructure and advisory services, its budget is projected to increase accordingly. Expenditure is set to grow from R215.2 million in 2022/23 to R257.9 million in 2025/26, driven largely by the increased demand from client departments and a broader national footprint.

Spending on goods and services remains within the established baseline, with a planned increase in advisory service project support. This careful balancing of costs reflects GTAC's commitment to value-for-money and operational efficiency.

Revenue streams include departmental allocations, cost recovery from other state entities, donor funds, administration fees, and interest earned. Total revenue is projected to rise in line with expenditure, growing at an average annual rate of 4% – from R229.9 million in 2022/23 to R257.9 million in 2025/26.

GTAC's value lies not only in numbers, but in the assurance it brings: that government decisions are informed by evidence, that public funds are managed responsibly, and that citizens ultimately benefit from smarter, more sustainable delivery. In doing so, GTAC continues to uphold its mandate as a key enabler of South Africa's developmental state.

Independent Regulatory Board for Auditors (IRBA)

The Independent Regulatory Board for Auditors (IRBA) was established in terms of the Auditing Profession Act, 2005 (Act 26 of 2005), and became operational in April 2006. The board is mandated to: protect the public by regulating audits performed by registered auditors; improve the development and maintenance of internationally comparable ethical and auditing standards for auditors that promote investment and, as a consequence, employment in South Africa; set out measures to advance the implementation of appropriate standards of competence and good ethics in the auditing profession; and provide for procedures for disciplinary action in instances of improper conduct.

Over the medium term, the IRBA is focussed on ensuring that it is sustainable and relevant; ensuring the quality of industry audits; facilitating comprehensive stakeholder engagements; and conducting disciplinary hearings and investigations, which will require the appointment of consultants. Expenditure is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 7,5%, from R182.5 million in 2022/23 to R226.6 million in 2025/26. Spending on compensation of employees, the board's main cost driver, is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 6,9%, from R122 million in 2022/23 to R149.2 million in 2025/26.

The IRBA is set to receive 23,6% (R147.9 million) of its revenue over the period ahead through transfers from the department and the remainder through the registration of auditors and trainees, annual renewal charges, and fees for the inspection of registered auditors. Revenue is expected to increase in line with expenditure.

Land and Agricultural Development Bank of South Africa

As a development finance institution (DFI), the mandate of the Land and Agricultural Development Bank of South Africa is to address agricultural and rural development. The bank operates in the primary agriculture and agribusiness sectors and is regulated by the Land and Agricultural Development Bank Act of 2002 and the Public Finance Management Act of 1999. The mandate of the Land Bank is incorporated into the Land and Agricultural Development Bank Act No 15 of 2002.

The Land Bank is committed to promoting development and transformation in South Africa's agriculture sector. The Bank's development objectives are aligned with the fulfilment of strategic emphasis areas inscribed in the NDP 2030, which seeks to use land reform to drive transformation in the sector, the Agriculture and Agro-Processing Master Plan (AAMP), the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), as well as the principles for responsible banking.

In the medium term, the Land Bank strategic direction covers the Land Bank Insurance Company SOC Ltd (the LBIC), as well as the Land Bank Life Insurance Company SOC Ltd (the LBLIC) as the wholly owned subsidiaries of the Land Bank mandated to provide insurance and risk management solutions to the agricultural sector.

To begin a successful recovery journey, after curing the default, the Land Bank implemented a three-phased approach. The first phase was the stabilisation phase that commenced in 2023, (financial year 2023 to financial year 2025), and focused on the bank's immediate priorities required to achieve sustainability, that is, the conclusion of the Liability Solution .

The second phase is the consolidation phase, from financial year 2026 to financial year 2028. This phase will focus on consolidating the gains obtained during the stabilisation phase and begin the process of repositioning the Land Bank for the growth phase. The main priority areas in this phase are modifying the bank's operational model, implementing key enablers to reposition the bank as a sustainable DFI, and adherence to the agreements of the Liability Solution.

The third phase, known as the growth phase, which will run from financial year 2029 onwards, is built on the assumption that the main goals set forth in the first two phases would have been met, that the Bank has been able to repay back its restructured debt, and that the funding model has been accepted and endorsed by the shareholder. This phase focuses on contributing towards the development and resilience of the sector through strategic funding programmes, eco system co-ordination and expanding the bank's reach through expanded partnerships, and diversified revenue streams.

Development impact

The transformation of agriculture is a critical component of the Land Bank's mandate and one of its primary functions. The bank's contribution to the accomplishment of its development mandate will be evaluated based on loan disbursements and the number of development enterprises supported.

Net profit of the bank is projected to decrease at a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 19% from R633 million in 2025/26 to R337 million in 2027/28, compared to a historical CAGR of -20%. Land Bank is projected to remain profitable over the forecast period.

The Ombud for Financial Services Providers (FIAS Ombud)

The legislative mandate of the Office of the Ombud for Financial Services Providers (FIAS Ombud) is stated in the Financial Advisory and Intermediary Services Act of 2002, in terms of which the organisation is established. The Act gives the ombud statutory powers to consider and dispose of complaints against financial services providers, primarily intermediaries selling investment products.

The ombud will focus on the needs and requirements of its stakeholders over the medium term by ensuring that cases are properly assessed and appropriately handled until finalisation, informing stakeholders on the role and functions of the ombud, acquiring and retaining appropriate skills to fulfil its mandate, ensuring that risk is adequately managed across the enterprise, and ensuring that appeals or reviews of its decisions are appropriately dealt with.

Expenditure is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 3,7%, from R69.9 million in 2022/23 to R77.9 million in 2025/26. Spending on compensation of employees' accounts for 62,1% (R151.1 million) of the ombud's total planned expenditure, increasing at an average annual rate of 4,2%, from R43.3 million in 2022/23 to R49 million in 2025/26. The ombud derives revenue mainly through levies collected by the Financial Sector Conduct Authority from financial services providers.

This is set to increase at an average annual rate of 7,8%, from R62.2 million in 2022/23 to R77.9 million in 2025/26, in line with the introduction of the special levy on banks. Office of the Pension Funds Adjudicator the Office of the Pension Funds Adjudicator is mandated to investigate and determine complaints lodged in terms of the Pension Funds Act of 1956. The office's mandate became effective in January 1998.

The adjudicator is required to ensure the procedurally fair, economical and expeditious resolution of complaints in terms of the Act by: ensuring that its services are accessible to all; investigating complaints in a procedurally fair manner; justly and expeditiously resolving complaints in accordance with the law; incorporating innovation and proactive thought and action in its activities; and providing opportunities for individual growth. The adjudicator has jurisdiction only over funds that are registered under the Pension Funds Act of 1956.

Over the MTEF period, the adjudicator plans to develop the capability of its staff, restructure internal processes and continue to modernise its ICT systems to resolve 85% of pension fund complaints within six months. It will also aim to intensify its engagements with relevant stakeholders such as regulators and pension funds and continue to conduct outreach programmes to create awareness about its existence and mandate.

Expenditure is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 6,2%, from R87.4 million in 2022/23 to R104.7 million in 2025/26, mainly due to planned capital investments in ICT infrastructure and the automation of key processes, as well as increased legal and professional fees related to complaints management.

Spending on compensation of employees, the main cost driver, is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 3,1%, from R54.7 million in 2022/23 to R60 million in 2025/26. The adjudicator derives its revenue mainly through levies collected from pension funds. Revenue is projected to increase at an average annual rate of 5,9%, from R83.1 million in 2022/23 to R98.6 million in 2025/26.

Public Investment Corporation (PIC)

The PIC was established by the PIC Act of 2004 as a registered financial services provider wholly owned by government, with the Minister of Finance as its shareholder representative. The corporation is mandated to invest funds on behalf of its clients, as agreed upon with each client and approved by the Financial Sector Conduct Authority.

The corporation's clients are public sector entities, most of which are pension, provident, social security, development and guardian funds. Over the medium term, the corporation will focus on implementing client mandates through its highly skilled investment team, maintaining a robust communication technology platform, applying risk management practices, and ensuring that its investment decisions are based on sound principles.

The PIC anticipates a solid financial performance in 2025/26 and throughout the mid-term. As of 31 March 2024, total Assets under Management (AuM) grew by 3,6% to R2.69 trillion compared to R2.59 trillion in the previous financial year. The growth in assets is influenced by pension related cash flows, including contributions and withdrawals. Management fees are expected to grow at a compounded annual growth rate (CAGR) of 14% over the mid-term from a historical CAGR of 7% as a result of the new mandates signed with clients, plans to penetrate new sectors and clients as well as increasing management fees. Investment income is set to grow at an average of 8% over the mid-term period, in line with listed investment projections.

The entity's total costs are anticipated to mirror historical trends, growing at a CAGR of 8% over the Corporate Plan period (H-CAGR: 8%), driven by the growth in personnel costs and Information Technology (IT) related costs. Net profit is expected to increase by a CAGR of 2% (H-CAGR:

17%) over the mid-term, whilst the EBIT ratio is estimated to average 36% (H-CAGR: 30%). The slowed growth is attributed to forecasted fair value gains and losses on financial assets held. The 2025 net profit is estimated at R484 million, growing to R508 million by 2028.

The PIC anticipates maintaining its strong liquidity and solvency, signifying the significant liquid asset holdings the entity has accumulated over the years and the continued ability to fund operations and honour financial obligations.

With respect to its developmental economic contribution, internally, the PIC focuses on development through its "PICeeds graduate programme", aiming to produce competent investment professionals for the PIC and the country to also transform the asset management space. In addition to youth development, the entity prioritises the participation of women in senior positions. Externally, the PIC also aims to support the objectives of economic growth, social transformation and job creation through its investments. Through its listed investments, the PIC facilitates transformation by investing in sectors that drive inclusive growth and socio-economic development, where unlisted investments seek to invest directly into the economy to generate financial and social returns for clients, the country and the continent.

South African Revenue Service (SARS)

In terms of the SARS Act of 1997, the SARS is mandated to collect all revenue due to the state and administer trade to support government in meeting its key developmental objectives for growth. This involves facilitating legitimate trade, protecting South Africa's ports of entry, and eliminating illegal trade and tax evasion.

As its principal contribution to South Africa's economic and social development, the revenue service's focus over the medium term will continue to be on providing government with more than 90% of the revenue it requires to meet its policy and delivery priorities by collecting all of the revenue target set by the Minister of Finance. As the achievement of this goal is contingent on how easy it is for taxpayers and traders to comply with their tax obligations, by 2025/26, the entity plans to ensure that 85% of taxpayers and traders are satisfied with the clarity of guidance it provides, and to conduct auto-assessments on 95% of standard taxpayers.

It aims to do this effectively through modernising its ICT systems to encourage eFiling, improve the experience of taxpayers, monitor compliance and make tax collection more efficient, develop and administer a tax and customs system of voluntary compliance, and, where appropriate, enforce tax directives responsibly and decisively. The entity plans to collaborate with law enforcement agencies such as the South African Police Service, the National Prosecuting Authority, the Financial Intelligence Centre and the Special Investigating Unit to enforce tax compliance by taxpayers and traders and address illicit financial flows.

The entity has established a syndicated tax and customs crime division responsible for investigating criminal and illicit organised crime and syndicated evasion schemes across all taxes. The division is mandated to investigate suspected tax-related crimes specifically identified by the state capture commission reports, and to support the entity's investigating directorate in cases relating to other unlawful activities where tax fraud or evasion are implied, given the strong link between tax crimes and other financial crimes such as money laundering and illicit financial flows.

Accordingly, the entity has used additional funding of R1 billion per year allocated for the 2022 MTEF period to recruit critical skills and ICT capacity to improve tax compliance and contribute towards countering money laundering and terror financing. The entity has filled 187 of the targeted 337 posts to be filled through this allocation and will continue its recruitment drive into the MTEF period.

A further R1.5 billion is added to the entity's baseline over the medium term to fund its capital projects. Expenditure is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 1%, from R12.2 billion in 2022/23 to R12.6 billion in 2025/26. The entity is set to derive 95,8% (R35.9 billion) of its revenue through transfers from the department. These allocations are set to increase at an average annual rate of 1,4%, from R11.6 billion in 2022/23 to R12.1 billion in 2025/26.

South African Special Risks Insurance Association (SASRIA)

The South African Special Risks Insurance Association (SASRIA) was established in 1979 and registered in terms of section 21 of the Companies Act of 1973. In line with the amendments of the SASRIA Act of 1998 and the Companies Act of 2008, government became the company's sole shareholder. The association is mandated to support the insurance industry by providing cover for special risks such as riots, strikes, political unrest, terrorist attacks, civil commotion, public disorder and labour disturbances.

In line with its mandate, SASRIA's role in identifying potential high-risk scenarios early and protecting the assets of the South African people remains imperative. SASRIA also contributes to industry transformation by enhancing skills development, fostering innovation and driving initiatives that promote financial inclusivity and resilience. In addition, SASRIA's corporate social investment (CSI) initiatives includes bursary schemes, development programmes and social relief funds.

SASRIA continues implementing its five-year strategic plan for the period 2025 to 2029 period. This strategic plan focuses on recovering from the July 2021 riots and safeguarding the organisation's position in the market. In executing this strategic plan, the entity will be pursuing the following strategic objectives for this period:

- Securing capital to run the business: Ensuring the entity maintains access to adequate capital through effective financial management and partnerships to sustain operations and handle future risks.
- Providing desired solutions for customers: Delivering tailored insurance products and services that meet and exceed customer needs.
- Create capabilities to optimise performance: Building internal systems and capabilities to enhance operational efficiency and data management for better decision making and customer service.
- Deliver sustainable growth: Growth through strong financial performance and management, thereby ensuring sustainability.

- Transform the financial service industry: Contributing to industry transformation by enhancing skills development, fostering innovation and driving initiatives that promote financial inclusivity and resilience.

Over the medium-term, SASRIA's growth in Gross Written Premium (GWP) is expected to slow down, forecasted to increase by a compounded average growth rate (CAGR) of 8% over the next three years when compared to a historic CAGR of 27%, from R5 828 million in 2025 to R7 342 million by 2028. A constant growth rate of 8% per annum is assumed.

SASRIA has a budgeted profit before tax of R3.7 billion in 2025, lower at R2.2 billion in 2026 and improving again to R2.8 billion in 2028, translating to a CAGR of -9% over the during the medium-term period. This is compared to the -148% average over the last three (3) years, with the volatility attributed to the financial impact of the July 2021 unrest, claims estimate reversals and adjustments, as well as re-insurance pricing and placement arrangements. Overall SASRIA anticipates stabilisation as these effects somewhat normalise.

SASRIA maintains a sound balance sheet, meets all regulatory requirements and maintains a good liquidity position to ensure that all claims and invoices are paid on time. The Solvency Capital Requirement (SCR) ratio is expected to remain above the Prudential Authority requirement of 100% over the medium-term.

Compliance levels

Tax register

The SARS continues to broaden the tax base and expand its taxpayer and trader register. Contributing positively to the ease of registration are bulk registrations at places of employment and an online facility to register staff when submitting their monthly PAYE returns. The SARS registration policy stipulates that everyone formally employed, regardless of their tax liability, must be registered for Personal Income Tax. If employees are not registered, it is the duty of the employer to register them with the SARS.

Tax compliance

Tax compliance is mirrored in the tax collected from the various types of tax. It is the duty of every taxpayer to ensure that they are registered for the necessary taxes, that all tax returns are submitted by the relevant due dates and that all taxes are paid as and when is required.

SARS
South African Revenue Service

Payment channels

Most taxpayers are now using electronic payment platforms which significantly improve turnaround times. Cash collections at branches have been reduced because of the risks associated with them. From 1 May 2020, cheque payments in South Africa may not be more than R50 000. Payment methods other than branch payments are:

- eFiling: this requires a taxpayer to register as an eFiling client to make electronic payments using this channel; and
- payments at banks: taxpayers can make either an internet banking transfer or an over-the-counter deposit.

Voluntary Disclosure Programme

A permanent Voluntary Disclosure Programme was introduced in terms of the Tax Administration Act of 2011, in October 2012. The programme is part of a package of compliance measures aimed at encouraging non-compliant taxpayers to regularise their tax affairs.

International tax treaties

South Africa has several double taxation agreements and tax information exchange agreements. In 2014, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), working with the Group of Twenty countries and other stakeholders, developed the Standard for Automatic Exchange of Financial Account Information – the Common Reporting Standard (CRS).

The CRS requires the reporting to tax authorities by certain financial institutions of information in relation to financial accounts they hold for non-resident taxpayers. This information is then automatically exchanged between tax authorities each year to tackle cross-border tax evasion. South Africa is an early adopter of the CRS. The USA Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act Intergovernmental Agreement is also in force between the governments of the USA and South Africa to exchange information automatically under the provisions of the double taxation agreements between the two countries.

Role players

Auditor-General of South Africa (AGSA)

The AGSA strengthens South Africa's democracy by enabling oversight, accountability and governance in the public sector through auditing, thereby building public confidence. The AGSA is one of the Chapter 9 institutions mandated by the Constitution to fulfil certain functions. These institutions are not part of government and do not have a duty to be part of the mechanisms of cooperative government. The independence of the AGSA is, therefore, respected and strengthened.

As mandated by the Constitution and the Public Audit Act, 2004 (Act 25 of 2004), the AGSA is responsible for auditing national and provincial departments and administrations, all municipalities and any other institution or accounting entity required by national and provincial legislation to be audited by the AGSA. Various business units provide auditing services, corporate services and specialised audit work, such as performance audits, information system audits and audit research and development. The AGSA also has an international auditing complement.

Financial sector

South African Reserve Bank (SARB)

The primary purpose of the SARB is to achieve and maintain price stability in the interest of balanced and sustainable economic growth in South Africa. Together with other institutions, it also plays a pivotal role in ensuring financial stability. The SARB is the central bank of South Africa. It was

established in 1921, in terms of a special Act of Parliament and the Currency and Banking Act, 1920 (Act 10 of 1920), which was the direct result of abnormal monetary and financial conditions that had arisen during and immediately after World War I.

The SARB is governed by the SARB Act of 1989, as amended. In terms of the Constitution, it has been given an important degree of autonomy in the execution of its duties. Since its establishment, the SARB has always had private shareholders with limited rights. It has more than 700 shareholders. Its shares are traded on the over-the counter share-trading facility managed by the SARB. Its operations are not motivated by a drive to return profits, but to serve the best interests of all South Africans.

The SARB's head office is in Pretoria, and it has cash centres in Cape Town, Durban and Johannesburg. The SARB must submit a monthly statement of its assets and liabilities to the National Treasury and an annual report to Parliament.

The Governor of the SARB holds regular discussions with the Minister of Finance and appears before the Parliamentary Portfolio and other select committees on finance, from time to time. The SARB has a unique position in the economy, as it performs various functions and duties not normally carried out by commercial banks. Although the functions of the SARB have changed and expanded over time, the formulation and implementation of monetary policy have remained one of the cornerstones of its activities.

The SARB publishes monetary policy reviews, and regular regional monetary-policy forums are held to provide a platform for discussions on monetary policy with broader stakeholders from the community.

Functions

The primary function of the SARB is to protect the value of South Africa's currency. In discharging this role, its responsibility includes:

- ensuring that the South African money, banking and financial system is sound, meets the requirements of the community and keeps abreast of international developments;
- assisting the South African government, as well as other members of the economic community of southern Africa, with data relevant to the formulation and implementation of macroeconomic policy; and
- informing the South African community and all stakeholders abroad about monetary policy and the South African economic situation.

System of accommodation

The SARB's refinancing system is the main mechanism used to implement its monetary policy. Through its refinancing system, the SARB provides liquidity to banks, enabling them to meet their daily liquidity requirements. Specifically, banks are required to hold balances at the SARB worth 2,5% of their liabilities, which ensures they have adequate liquidity to settle interbank transactions. The main instrument for providing liquidity is repo transactions, whereby the SARB lends against high-quality collateral at an interest rate – the repo rate – that is set by the Monetary Policy Committee.

The repo rate is the key operational variable in the monetary-policy implementation process, affecting short-term rates throughout the financial system and transmitting from there to the economy at large. The refinancing system also provides for supplementary and automated standing facilities to meet the banking sector's overnight liquidity needs.

Creating a liquidity requirement

The SARB creates a liquidity requirement – also known as a money market shortage – to ensure that banks seek financing at the SARB and thereby pay the repo rate. To affect this shortage, the SARB uses a variety of tools to drain surplus liquidity. It can remove liquidity from the market by issuing debentures or by engaging in reverse repos or FX swaps. It can also shift government's deposits from the market to the SARB.

Promoting the efficient functioning of domestic financial markets

To promote price discovery in the domestic money market, the SARB calculates the South African Benchmark Overnight Rate, which includes the overnight foreign exchange rate. The SARB also conducts surveillance on the calculation of the Johannesburg Interbank Average Rate (Jibar), which is widely used as reference rate. Following the review of the rate setting of the Jibar and the subsequent code of conduct, additional initiatives involve the improvement and broadening of existing money-market benchmark and reference rates according to global guidelines.

The SARB, together with market participants, designed alternative interest rate benchmarks based on international best practice to broaden the set of available benchmarks and provide an alternative risk-free rate that will replace Jibar. Using historical bona fide transactions data, the benchmarks were tested and published in a feedback report. One of the benchmarks, namely ZARONIA, has been designated as the preferred successor rate for Jibar.

However, there is a significant amount of work that needs to be done before a transition to the successor rate can be initiated. The SARB also engages with other stakeholders to promote the efficient functioning of markets. Special liquidity assistance and stability in the financial sector in terms of its 'lender-of-last-resort', the SARB may, in certain circumstances, provide liquidity assistance to banks experiencing liquidity problems, for example to provide liquidity against a broader range of collateral as was the case in 2007.

The type and conditions of emergency assistance will vary according to specific conditions and will be provided in terms of the SARB's Emergency Liquidity Assistance Policy. Also, as part of the broader mandate of the SARB and the upcoming FSR Bill, resolution planning, crisis preparedness and monitoring systemic risks in the financial sector are priority, all aimed at protecting and enhancing financial stability, as well as to deepen South Africa's resilience to external shocks. In view of the interrelationship between price and financial system stability, the bank monitors the macroprudential aspects of the domestic financial system. The objective of financial stability is to prevent costly disruptions in the country's financial system.

Service to government

The SARB manages the country's official gold and foreign exchange reserves. In addition, the SARB provides portfolio management, debt issuance, and custody and settlement services to government and other clients/counterparties, while also managing the inherent market and operational risks associated with these services.

Banker and adviser to government as well as funding agent

As the funding agent for government, the main services provided are administering the auctions of government bonds and Treasury bills, participating in the joint standing committees between the SARB and the National Treasury, and managing the flow of funds between the exchequer account and tax and loan accounts. The SARB also acts as banker to government and as such, manages the Exchequer and Paymaster General Accounts in the books of the SARB.

Administration of exchange control

The SARB is responsible, on behalf of the Minister of Finance, for the day-to-day administration of exchange controls in South Africa.

Provision of economic and statistical services

The bank collects data and compiles economic statistics, which are then interpreted and published in its Quarterly Bulletin and other statistical releases on the SARB's website to inform the public and policy formulation.

Prudential Authority (PA)

The passing of the Financial Sector Regulation Act, 2017 (Act 9 of 2017) marked an important milestone on the journey towards a safer and fairer financial system that can serve all citizens. The Act gave effect to three important changes to the regulation of the financial sector by:

- giving the SARB an explicit mandate to maintain and enhance financial stability.
- creating a prudential regulator, the PA. The authority is responsible for regulating banks, insurers, cooperative financial institutions, financial conglomerates and certain market infrastructures.
- establishing a market conduct regulator, which is located outside of the SARB.

The PA is a juristic person operating within the administration of the SARB and consists of four sections: Financial Conglomerate Supervision; Banking, Insurance and Financial Market Infrastructure Supervision; Risk Support; and Policy, Statistics and Industry Support.

The National Payment System

The bank is responsible for overseeing the safety and soundness of the national payment system. The main aim is to reduce interbank settlement risk, with the objective of reducing the potential of a systemic risk crisis emanating from settlement default by one or more of the settlement banks. Of utmost importance to payments, is the safety, efficiency, integrity and stability of the system. Following the initial vision for the national payment system, a high-value real-time gross settlement system was implemented in 1998.

This system lies at the heart of the payments ecosystem and ensures that all economic transactions in the economy reach finality through settlement in central bank money. Further the system is important in managing the liquidity positions of banks, and in practically enabling monetary policy transmission. Each day, more than R350 billion is settled safely in the core system. In value terms, the significance of the system is gauged through its turning of value equivalent to the country's GDP, every 12 to 15 days.

The bank is in the process of modernising the system, to align it with the emerging needs and technologies, including, over time, the likely use of other forms of settlement assets, including tokenization of the rand. Other efforts that are in place in relation to tokenisation include Project Khokha 2, which will look at understanding the regulatory and policy implications of tokenized debentures within a decentralised financial market architecture. The SARB is also catalysing the development and implementation of a faster retail payment system, to enhance an efficient and inclusive national payment system.

It is further recognised that the payment services landscape continues to be shaped by emerging exponential technologies, such as bigtech, fintech, Artificial Intelligence, big data analytics, cloud computing, distributed ledgers, mobile technologies, and new form factors, such as QR codes. These enable new technology-savvy firms to enter the payment services domain.

Propelled by COVID-19 lockdown conditions and technological advancements, a gradual shift to more online digital payment services was observed, necessitating a focused and comprehensive strategy on digital payments, and a robust cyber resilience framework to promote the overall safety of the national payment system.

Further, the National Payment System Act 78 of 1998 will be amended to support access, innovation, competition and financial inclusion by introducing activity-based licensing and regulation thus allowing non-banks to offer payment services without the need to partner with a bank. Information gathered through a Fintech landscaping survey, indicate that more than 220 Fintech firms were identified in South Africa, spanning across eight categories of financial services, including digital savings and deposits, alternative lending, capital raising and, most significantly, digital payments. This has seen new innovations that leverage crypto assets, crowdfunding, robo-advice for investments, and open banking efforts by the market using granular financial data enter the system.

Crypto assets activities remain under the spotlight, with the SARB monitoring the adoption and use of these assets for payment purposes, assessing the potential impact on the existing national payment system and determining the required/appropriate regulatory intervention. Additionally, efforts are underway to develop solutions to regularise the practice of screen scraping, paving the way for the enablement and regulation of open banking in the jurisdiction.

Banker to other banks

The bank acts as the custodian of the cash reserves that banks are legally required to hold or prefer to hold voluntarily, with the bank.



Bank notes and coins

The SARB has the sole authority to produce, issue and destroy South African currency, and is entrusted to ensure the availability and integrity of the South African rand. The Currency Management Department (CMD) is responsible for managing and overseeing the cash supply chain, from planning, distribution and issuance to destruction of cash; as well as the integrity of our currency, ensuring it is used with confidence and pride by regularly improving security features and mitigating counterfeiting. This mandate is embedded within sections 10 and 14 of the SARB Act 90 of 1989.

The CMD operates in conjunction with two subsidiaries of the SARB; the South African Mint Company (RF) Proprietary Limited mints coins on behalf of the SARB while the South African Bank Note Company (RF) Proprietary Limited prints banknotes on behalf of the SARB. The legal tender status of South African banknotes and coins is derived from section 17 of the SARB Act 90 of 1989. The SARB also ensures the availability and adequacy of banknotes and coins throughout the country, in line with section 10(1)(a)(i)–(v) of the SARB Act 90 of 1989. It is responsible for the bulk issuance and distribution of banknotes and coins, and for meeting public demand for cash.

Banknotes are distributed from the SARB's three cash centres into the cash supply chain, while coin distribution has been outsourced to SBV Services. The CMD is responsible for ensuring an adequate supply of banknotes to meet seasonal demand and for the quality of banknotes in circulation.

Monetary Policy

The SARB is responsible for monetary policy in South Africa. Its constitutional mandate in this regard is to protect the value of the currency in the interest of balanced and sustainable economic growth. To give effect to this mandate, the SARB uses a flexible inflation targeting framework, which aims to maintain consumer price inflation between 3% and 6%.

The SARB has expressed its preference for inflation expectations to converge towards the mid-point of the target range, to minimise the risk of prolonged deviations from target in the event of unexpected price shocks.

Financial market infrastructure

The PA is also responsible for the prudential supervision of market infrastructures which includes exchanges, central securities depositories, clearings houses, central counterparties and trade repositories. In 2021, licensed PA-regulated market infrastructures included five exchanges, two central securities depositories and two clearing houses. The FSCA and the PA are working together with the National Treasury of South Africa to review the existing Financial Markets Act 19 of 2012. The Financial Markets Act 19 of 2012 is one of the primary legislations governing licensed financial market infrastructures in South Africa (excluding payment systems).

Foreign debt

South Africa's total external debt decreased from $162.2 billion at the end of March 2023 to $155.5 billion at the end of June. However, expressed in rand terms, South Africa's total external debt increased from R2 889 billion to R2 944 billion over the same period as the exchange value of the rand depreciated against the US dollar. Foreign currency-denominated external debt decreased from $90.1 billion at the end of March 2023 to $89.1 billion at the end of June due to a repayment of loans by the private non-banking sector as well as a $500 million international bond redemption by the domestic banking sector.

The decrease was partially countered by a $500 million South African National Roads Agency Sustainability Loan extended to national government. Rand-denominated external debt, expressed in US dollars, decreased from $72.1 billion at the end of March 2023 to $66.4 billion at the end of June. The decrease can mainly be attributed to the decrease in the US dollar value of rand-denominated external debt due to the depreciation in the exchange value of the rand and a decline in the loan liabilities of the domestic banking and private non-banking sectors.

These factors were partially countered by non-residents' net purchases of bonds in the domestic capital market. South Africa's total external debt as a ratio of annual GDP16 decreased from 41% at the end of March 2023 to 40,7% at the end of June. The ratio of external debt to export earnings decreased from 112,3% to 111,4% over the same period.

Turnover in the South African foreign exchange market

The net average daily turnover in the South African FX market decreased by 9,7% from $15.3 billion in the second quarter of 2023 to US$13.8 billion in the third quarter, following an increase of 4% in the previous quarter. The decrease in net turnover in the third quarter could mainly be attributed to fluctuations in the exchange value of the rand. FX transactions against the rand declined from $11.7 billion in the second quarter to $10.2 billion in the third quarter. Transactions in third currencies decreased from $3.7 billion in the second quarter to $3.6 billion in the third quarter.

Net average daily counterparty participation by non-residents in the rand market decreased from $7.3 billion in the second quarter of 2023 to $6.3 billion in the third quarter. Monetary sector participation in the rand market decreased for a third consecutive quarter from $1.8 billion in the second quarter of 2023 to $1.6 billion in the third quarter, while resident participation declined from $2.6 billion to $2.4 billion over the same period.

Net average daily swap transactions in the rand market decreased from $8 billion in the second quarter of 2023 to $6.7 billion in the third quarter – the second consecutive quarterly decrease. Forward transactions remained unchanged from the second to the third quarter of 2023 at an average of $1 billion, while spot transactions declined from $2.7 billion to $2.6 billion over the same period. The decrease in net average daily turnover in third currencies could be attributed to reduced participation by non-residents from $3.1 billion in the second quarter of 2023 to $3 billion in the third quarter, while that of the monetary sector and residents averaged $0.2 billion and $0.4 billion respectively.

In the market for third currencies, US dollar against the euro transactions remained unchanged from the second to the third quarter of 2023 at $1.8 billion. Similarly, US dollar against the yen transactions have remained unchanged at an average of $0.2 billion since the fourth quarter of 2022. Transactions of the US dollar against the Swiss franc averaged $0.2 billion from the second to the third quarter of 2023, while transactions of the US dollar against the British pound declined from $0.8 billion to $0.7 billion. US dollar transactions against other currencies increased marginally from $0.3 billion to $0.4 billion over the same period.

The microlending industry

The National Credit Act 34 of 2005 allows the credit market to function in a robust and effective manner. The Act replaced the Usury Act, 1968 (Act 73 of 1968), and the Credit Agreements Act, 1980 (Act 75 of 1980). It regulates the granting of consumer credit by all credit providers, including micro lenders, banks and retailers. The NCR and the National Consumer Tribunal play a vital role in ensuring enforcement, promoting access to redress and adjudicating contraventions of the Act. In a population of more than 54 million citizens, South Africa has over 18 million credit-active consumers.

The NCR is responsible for regulating the South African credit industry. Its mandate includes:

- carrying out education, research and policy development;
- registering industry participants;
- investigating complaints; and
- ensuring that the Act is enforced.

In terms of the Act, the NCR must promote the development of an accessible credit market to meet the needs of people who were previously disadvantaged, earn a low income or live in remote, isolated or low-density communities. The National Consumer Tribunal adjudicates various applications and hears cases against those who contravene the Act. The Act provides for the registration of debt counsellors to assist overindebted consumers. Debt counsellors are required to undergo training approved by the NCR through approved training service providers appointed by the regulator.







SOUTH AFRICA
YEARBOOK
2024/25

Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment

The Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE) is mandated to give effect to the right of citizens to an environment that is not harmful to their health or well-being, and to have the environment protected for the benefit of present and future generations. The department provides leadership towards sustainability in environmental management, conservation and protection for the benefit of South Africans and the global community.

The National Development Plan (NDP) sets out a vision for promoting environmental sustainability in South Africa by making an equitable transition to a low□carbon economy and transforming human settlements for improved local governance and spatial integration. Broadly, the NDP envisions environmental sustainability and transformation within the context of an integrated and inclusive economy that is supported by a capable and developmental state.

This vision is given expression by Priority 1 (Economic transformation and job creation), Priority 4 (Spatial integration, human settlements and local government) and Priority 6 (A capable, ethical and developmental state) of government's 2019 – 2024 Medium Term Strategic Framework, with which the work of the DFFE is closely aligned. Accordingly, the department's ongoing objective is to develop strategies and policies aimed at regulating and promoting the sustainable use of inland and coastal natural resources; and at reducing carbon emissions, atmospheric pollutants and the effects of climate change.

The DFFE was not spared from the government-wide cost containment measures, which resulted in budget cuts amounting to R2.5 billion over the Medium-Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF). The economic complexities faced by our country have led to National Treasury significantly reducing the departments' budget allocation over the past years and the MTEF, with no increase expected in the coming years.

Over the medium-term, the department planned to continue focusing on supporting an equitable transition to a low□carbon economy and a climate□resilient society; creating jobs and work opportunities through the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP); and creating an enabling environment for South Africa's transition to a circular economy.

Expenditure is set to increase at an average annual rate of 8.5%, from R9 billion in 2023/24 to R9.8 billion in 2025/26. An estimated 49.4% (R14.4 billion) of the department's allocation over the MTEF period is earmarked for spending on goods and services, mostly to provide funding for projects in the EPWP that are aimed at creating jobs and work opportunities. The second largest cost driver are transfers and subsidies to the department's entities, accounting for an estimated 24% (R7.1 billion) of expenditure over the period ahead.

Over the medium-term, the responsibility for enforcement at ports of entry will shift to the Border Management Authority. Accordingly, amounts of R14 million in 2023/24, R14.7 million in 2024/25 and R15 million in 2025/26 are shifted to the Department of Home Affairs.

Supporting an equitable transition to environmental stability

The department plays a pivotal role in ensuring that South Africa is equipped to manage and mitigate the effects of climate change. President Cyril Ramaphosa signed the Climate Change Bill into law on 26 July 2024, which sets out a national and global climate change response, including mitigation and adaptation actions. The Act is not yet operational, and will only come into effect when the President issues a proclamation. This legislation provides a comprehensive framework for climate action across all sectors of our society and economy.

The law also sets out to enhance South Africa's ability and capacity over time to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, build climate resilience while reducing the risk of job losses, and promote new job opportunities in the emerging green economy. The Act will also strengthen coordination between national sector departments and provide policy setting and decision-making to enable South Africa to meet the commitments in Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) under the Paris Agreement.

Some of the key provisions of the Act include:

- Mitigation: Establishing a national greenhouse gas (GHG) emission trajectory, requiring several Ministers to develop and implement measures to address climate change through sectoral emission targets, and mandating major emitting companies to comply with mandatory carbon budgets.
- Adaptation: Involving cooperation with provincial and local governments and communities to address climate adaptation challenges.

Creating work opportunities and jobs

Through a range of EPWP projects implemented by the department, the DFFE exceeded its 2023/24 EPWP target of 42 302 work opportunities by creating a total of 80 918 work opportunities.

The work opportunities created benefited 60% women and 58% youth, with 1% being persons with disabilities. Youth employment included the employment of graduates, enabling them to gain critical experience in line with section 24 of the Constitution. It is encouraging that some of these graduates were absorbed into the municipalities and other host organisations. Furthermore, the department met its target for full-time equivalents (FTEs), meaning that it was able to improve the duration of employment noting that EPWP participants are paid in accordance with the number of days worked.

For the 2024/25 financial year, DFFE has prioritised the creation of 31 075 EPWP work opportunities and 22 538 full-time equivalents through the implementation of the Working for Water, Working on Fire, Working for Wetlands and the Municipal Greening and Cleaning programmes.

Transitioning to a circular economy

Over the medium-term, the department will focus on creating an enabling environment to support South Africa's transition to a circular economy, which entails shifting away from the current wasteful economy to an economy that is more regenerative, inclusive and equitable. Accordingly, over the MTEF period, the department plans to review and strengthen the extended producer responsibility policy framework and regulations.

The aim of this is to ensure that priority waste streams – such as plastics, paper and packaging, lighting, and electrical and electronics – are minimised, and that a culture

of reusing and recycling is widely adopted by industry. It will also implement the national waste management strategy, which is aimed at minimising waste and diverting 30% of waste from landfills to be recycled, repurposed and reintroduced into the economy over the medium-term.

An example of the department's facilitation of this shift is in the tyre industry, for which the department has published the Section 29 Tyre Industrial Waste Management Plan for implementation in March 2024. The plan was developed in partnership with the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research and the Department of Trade, Industry and Competition, and includes the establishment of sustainable markets for recycled tyre products and the development of processing capacity to support the sustainable recycling of old tyres.

By providing training to municipal councillors and officials on waste management over the medium term, the department will seek to strengthen capacity and improve waste management in municipalities. This involves supporting the development of the integrated waste management plan, collection and diversion from landfills, and the implementation of clean□up campaigns and public awareness programmes such as War on Waste.

Activities related to transitioning to a circular economy are expected to result in expenditure of R2 billion over the MTEF period in the Chemicals and Waste Management programme, allocations to which increase at an average annual rate of 7%, from R634 million in 2023/24 to R678.8 million in 2025/26.

Legislation and policies

The DFFE's mandate is derived from the following legislation:

The National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act 108 of 1998), as amended by the National Environmental Management Amendment Act, 2004 (Act 8 of 2004), provides for specific legislation on biodiversity and heritage resources, oceans and coasts, climate change and air quality management, and waste and chemicals management, and streamlines the process of regulating and administering the Environmental Impact Assessment process;

- The National Environmental Management: Air Quality Act, 2004 (Act 39 of 2004), which reforms the law regulating air quality in order to protect the environment by providing reasonable measures for preventing pollution and ecological degradation, and securing ecologically sustainable development, provides for national norms and standards that regulate the monitoring of air quality;
- The National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act (NEMBA), 2004 (Act 10 of 2004), which significantly reforms South Africa's laws regulating biodiversity;
- The National Environmental Management: Integrated Coastal Management Act, 2008 (Act 24 of 2008), which promotes the conservation of the coastal environment, and ensures sustainable development practices and the use of natural resources;
- National Environmental Management: Waste Act, 2008 (Act 59 of 2008), which reforms the law regulating waste management in order to protect health and the environment by providing reasonable measures for the prevention of pollution;
- National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Amendment, Act, 2009 (Act 15 of 2009), which provides for the assignment of national parks, special parks and heritage sites to South Africa in terms of the World Heritage Convention Act, 1999 (Act 49 of 1999);
- National Forests Act, 1998 (Act 84 of 1998), which promotes sustainable management and development of forests for the benefits of all; creates the conditions necessary to restructure forestry in state forests; provides special measures for the protection of certain forests and trees; promotes the sustainable use of forests for environmental, economic, educational, recreational, cultural, health and spiritual purposes; promotes community forestry; promotes greater participation in all aspects of forestry and forest products industry by person disadvantaged by unfair discrimination;
- On 1 July 2022, the National Forests Act (NFA) was amended. The President assented the Act on 26 June 2022, and subsequently published in the Government Gazette on the 01 July 2022. The Act was Proclaimed by the President on the 25 November 2024 and published for implementation in the Government Gazette on the 4 December 2024. In addition, amendment to the Regulations under the National Forest Act, 1998 was promulgated on 6 January 2025. The Public Notice was published on 30 January 2025 in the Citizen newspaper;
- National Veld and Forest Fire Act, 1998 (Act 101 of 1998), which provides for the prevention and combating of veld, forest and mountain fires across South Africa; and
- Marine Living Resources Act, 1998 (Act 8 of 1998), which deals with the long-term sustainable utilisation of marine living resources.

Forestry

The DFFE is the custodian of South Africa's forest resources, which cover over 38 million hectares (ha) – about 31.1% of the country's land surface area. Forest products contribute about R36.34 billion to the economy. Export value decreased by 5%, from R26 to R24.7 billion. This is underpinned by 1.2 million ha of well-developed plantation forestry. The forestry sector is responsible for 147 400 direct jobs.

A forest sector review conducted in preparation for the Forestry Sector Master Plan revealed that forestry products contribute at least 4.5% to the total manufacturing in the country, putting it among the top five sectors within the manufacturing industry. It also revealed that export earnings had increased almost threefold, providing a positive trade balance of up to R10 billion in less than a decade.

Much of forestry operations are rurally based, making it a significant contributor to rural economies and social wellbeing. Forestry provides livelihood support to 648 000 people in the country's rural areas. The pulp and paper industry provides about 16 000 direct and 10 000 indirect employment opportunities. Some 18 100 direct workers are employed and 6 000 indirect in sawmilling, 3 600 in the timber board, 2 000 in the mining timber industries, while a further 7 500 workers are employed in miscellaneous jobs in forestry.

Forestry is one of the sectors that have huge potential in job creation whilst ensuring the sustainable use of natural resources. Through the Plantation Forestry and the Forestry Stewardship Council, the DFFE will be able to enhance on the existing natural forests and woodlands. Of the 1.2 million

ha of plantations, some are leased by government to private companies, and 3.7% of these are owned by small growers. There are three categories of forests in South Africa, namely indigenous forests, woodlands and plantation forests. Natural forests cover approximately half a million ha of land in total, plantation forestry covers about 1.2 million ha and the woodlands collectively cover between 36 and 38 million ha, depending on the classification used.

Forestry activities in indigenous forests and woodlands are not limited to the protection of the resource as a natural heritage, but include its development, use and management, as well as the management and processing of non-timber forest products. Plantation forestry practices include, among other things, the establishment of vast areas of land with exotic tree species that are harvested and processed into pulp for the paper and packaging industries; sawn timber to produce structural and industrial timber used in the construction industry; poles for telephone and electricity supply; mining timber for use as underground support structures in primarily the gold and platinum mining sectors. The balance of other timber produced is used for a variety of other products, such as charcoal and match manufacture.

Although large forestry companies do not own all the certified forests, having their own specialist environmental departments has helped the rapid expansion of certification, as they ensure that land is managed according to their own stringent environmental codes of practice. To promote transparency, members of the public are invited to join company staff when regular audits are conducted. There has been an increase in the number of non-corporate growers who have become certified. This may be attributed to factors such as the Forest Stewardship Council's (FSC) acceptance of group certification schemes and the availability of local FSC auditors, both of which have reduced the cost of certification considerably. The introduction of small, low-intensity managed forest audits enables small and community forestry schemes to be FSC-certified.

To date, 27 plantations covering approximately 6 213 ha have been transferred to communities through the Community Forestry Agreement Model. To reduce Temporary Unplanted areas in State plantations, the department planted 1 848.56 ha in Limpopo, KwaZulu-Natal and in the Eastern Cape during the 2023/24 financial year. In addition to this, 7 049.43 ha has been tendered through different silvicultural regimes like weeding, pruning and thinning.

A significant legislative milestone was achieved with the President's signing of the National Veld and Forest Fire Amendment Act into law. The amendment strengthens provisions for the formation and functioning of Fire Protection Associations, which play a critical role in the effective management of veld and forest fires.

The DFFE is the custodian of the National Veld and Forest Fire Act, 1998 (Act No. 101 of 1998) (NVFFA), henceforth referred to as the Act. The main purpose of this Act is to prevent and combat veld, forest and mountain fires throughout the Republic. A significant legislative milestone included the President's signing of the amended National Veld and Forest Fire Bill into law in the year 2023.

In terms of Chapter 2, section 4, the act states that "any group of landowners who wish to co-operate, to predict, prevent, manage and extinguish veldfires may form a Fire Protection Association (FPA) to perform duties and functions as described in section 5(1) of the NVFFA. FPAs are important institutions that play a vital role in ensuring the implementation of Integrated Fire Management (IFM), thereby keeping veldfire risks and vulnerabilities at an acceptable level. By 2024 South Africa had 208 registered FPAs and 9 Provincial FPAs.

The department signed a contract with the service provider on 30 December 2022, to assist with planning, executing, controlling, and managing the Working on Fire (WoF) Programme, for a period of five (5) years, commencing on 6 January 2023 and terminating on 5 January 2028. Through the Working on Fire Programme, the Minister supports FPAs as per the NVFFA. Additionally, the department provide support for aerial firefighting for communities and DFFE plantations fires. This programme provided an important opportunity to advance the understanding of the risk of veld fire that can cause disasters, and has negative impacts on the socio-economic and environmental impacts.

In order to assess the functionality of the FPAs, the department had developed a questionnaire-guiding template tool to assess the whether FPAs were functional or non-functional. During financial year 2023/24, DFFE assessed 40 FPAs. All FPAs are expected to submit their annual reports by the end of June of each year. By 2024, 179 FPAs submitted their annual reports which makes more 86% annual reports expected.

The department continues to raise public awareness about wildland fires and the impact of climate change, for example, the frequency and intensity of fires. Mitigation and reduction measures on uncontrolled veldfires in South Africa has been a collaborative effort by DFFE in conjunction with WoF by providing various workshops and training to multisectoral stakeholders which include amongst others FPAs, Law Enforcement Agencies, Institutions of Higher Learning and rural communities.

National symposium and international conferences

In 2024, DFFE had a collaborative 14th Fire Management Symposium in Howick, KwaZulu-Natal, with the Forestry Programme of the Nelson Mandela University (NMU). The Symposium aimed to integrate the efforts of natural resource managers, engineers, fire managers, educators/trainers and scientists. Through an integrated approach, different role-players were sensitised about each other's realities, successes and failures. Understanding the needs and gaps within organisations involved in wildfire management opened new avenues that will support the fire management efforts.

The DFFE was also represented at the two international conferences held in 2023 in Portugal and 2024 in Australia. DFFE under the Forestry Management Branch was represented at the 8th International Wildland Fire Conference (IWFC) under the theme "Governance Principles: Towards an International Framework" which took place in Porto, Portugal, between 16 and 19 May 2023. The conference discussed governance principles and guidelines, necessary to further develop institutional arrangements and public policies to address the consequences of environmental and socio-economic changes and climate change on fire regimes, systemic wildfire risk and fire management in

the natural and cultural and urban-industrial landscapes at global scale.

In 2024, the 7th International Fire Behaviour and Fuels Conference under the theme: "Fuel, Fire and Smoke: Evolving to Meet Our Climate Challenge." The conference offered a forum where past Fire Management experience and lessons learned were documented, showcased current work and emerging research, and shared innovation and techniques on fire management towards developing integrated solutions to these challenges.

Indigenous forests

Only about 0,5% of South Africa's total land area is covered by natural forests. About half of the more than 1 700 indigenous tree and shrub species, representing some

530 000 ha of dense growth, grow along the south and east coasts and on the southern and south-eastern slopes of inland mountains. The other half is spread over the interior plateaux in isolated valleys and ravines. A number of these natural forest regions, such as the Tsitsikamma National Park, are important tourist attractions. The large Afrotemperate forests of the southern Cape, although distributed close to the coast, are aligned with the inland forest types of the Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal, Mpumalanga and Limpopo. This is because the southerly temperate latitudes compensate for the altitude of inland forests.

Almost half of all natural forests in South Africa are found on private property or land under communal tenure. A detailed inventory of natural forests helps government to monitor changes in forest areas. Although the country's low natural forest coverage has led to the development of the commercial forestry sector over the past century, natural forests have continued playing a major role in the livelihoods and well-being of many rural communities. The use of natural forests as sources of building material, fuel wood, food and medicine is increasing, with an estimated 80% of South Africa's population still using medicinal plants, most of which are sourced from natural forests.

The forest-type classification for natural forests represents 24 broad forest types. The Natural Forests Protected Areas System guides the setting aside and demarcation of natural forests as protected areas. Systematic timber harvesting occurs in certain areas of southern Cape forests and on a smaller scale, in the Amathole forests in the Eastern Cape. This sustainable harvesting system concentrates on the removal of small quantities of senile trees dying off within the forest.

On average, 3 750 cubic metres (m^3) of round logs are harvested annually (150m^3 of stinkwood, 750m^3 of yellowwood, 2 500 m^3 of Australian blackwood and 350m^3 of other species). The seven-week fern (Rumohra adiantiformis), harvested in the Knysna and Tsitsikamma forests, is another valuable product of indigenous forests. The South African market for this fern is considerable and reaches its peak in September, when sales have been known to exceed 420 000 bunches.

Woodlands

The woodlands, also known as savannahs, constitute a forest resource of major importance in South Africa. It is the most accessible forest resource for poor communities and contributes in the region of R2 000 to R5 000 to poor households annually. Natural forests cover less than one million ha of land in total, plantation forestry covers less than 1.3 million ha and the woodlands collectively cover between 29 million and 46 million ha.

The cover includes extensive areas in the low-lying, drier areas of Limpopo, KwaZulu-Natal and Mpumalanga. Rich biodiversity is found in savannah woodland comprising 5 900 plants, 540 bird species and 175 mammals. These include iconic species such as the Big Five group of mammals that are important to the tourism industry. Several protected tree species of the savannah, such as camel thorn and leadwood, contribute substantially to the lucrative braai wood market, and guidelines have been set for licensing processes to assist with the control of their use.

Kathu Forest in the Northern Cape is the first woodland area to be declared protected woodland under the National Forests Act of 1998. In the past, this resource was not really recognised as a forestry responsibility, except where woodland occurred on state-forest land in conservation areas. However, the National Forestry Action Programme of 1997 identified woodland management as a key area of operation for forestry. The National Forests Act of 1998 also includes woodland in its definition of forests and mandates monitoring and reporting on the state of the woodlands.

This legislation protects woodlands on private and communal land, as well as in state forests, while promoting sustainable use. Savannah woodlands are the most extensive vegetation type in southern Africa and dominate Africa as a whole. Globally, woodlands cover between an eighth and a sixth of the Earth's land surface. The woodlands are a valuable source of fuel, building material, craft timber and a variety of non-timber products. These include fruit, fodder, medicinal compounds, honey, meat and mushrooms. They form the backbone of the livelihoods of millions of people. The annual marula fruit (Sclerocarya birrea) harvest, for example, is worth some R1.1 billion a year to rural communities.

There are 87 savannah woodland types, and although the biome is fairly well protected in formal and private reserves, many under protected savannah types have been identified. Another woodland type is the Albany Thicket Biome, characterised by dense growth of woody and succulent plant species. There are 13 thicket types, which together cover about three million ha.

Protected tree species

In accordance with the National Forests Act of 1998 (Act No. 84 of 1998), as amended, a substantial update on the protection of tree species has recently been enacted. The latest declaration, which was gazetted on 13 March 2024, identifies 51 tree species deemed protected under Section 12 of the Act. Section 15 of the NFAA was amended as follows: "The Minister must, by notice in the Gazette and in two newspapers circulating nationally publish—"; and (b) by the substitution in subsection (3) for paragraph (b) of the following paragraph: "(b) an appropriate warning of the prohibition referred to in subsection (1) and the consequences of an infringement at least every five years or publish a change that has been effected to the list contemplated in paragraph (a) in the Gazette and in two newspapers circulating nationally."

Commercial forests

Commercial forest plantations predominantly meet South Africa's demand for wood. During the 1930s, the country started extensive commercial plantations to make South Africa self-sufficient in its timber requirements, and to provide more job opportunities. Commercial plantations of exotic species proved to be a sound investment, and the private sector established large plantations of pine, eucalyptus and wattle. South Africa's plantation forests cover about 1% of the combined cultivated (arable) and grazing land.

The commercial forestry industry in South Africa is committed to practising sustainable forest management and is a world leader in forest certification. Stringent environmental codes of practice are implemented in all plantation and processing activities. The Institute for Commercial Forestry Research completed its role in developing the National Forest Protection Strategy for the department, a project funded by the Food and Agriculture Organisation.

Another development which will assist in enhancing forest protection is the memorandum of understanding, formalising Forestry South Africa's support and funding for these activities at the Forestry and Agriculture Biotechnical Institute, which has been entered into with the University of Pretoria.

South Africa's intensively managed commercial forestry plantations are recognised as some of the most productive in the world. Consequently, from a limited geographic footprint of 1.2 million ha, the industry can produce, on a sustainable and annual basis, between 15 and 18 million t of timber a year.

Community forestry

Community forestry is designed and applied to meet the local social household and environmental needs to benefit local economic development. Community forestry is implemented by communities or with the participation of communities; and includes tree-centred projects in urban and rural areas, woodlots and woodland being managed by communities and individuals. Community forestry has gained impetus through more focused core functions, particularly in urban greening and forest enterprise development.

Participatory forest management of the DFFE is an integrated approach that contributes to achieving the sustainable management of South African forests. Elements of participatory forest management were initially developed for indigenous state forests. However, the aim is to use participatory forest management as an approach to managing all forest types, where feasible (indigenous forests, plantations, woodlots and woodlands) and where different types of ownership and management (state, provincial, communal, private and community) exist.

Forestry Master Plan

The Forestry Sector Masterplan, approved by Cabinet in 2020, is now in its fifth and final year of implementation and continues to be a flagship vehicle for inclusive growth, transformation and job creation in the forestry sector. To date, the sector has attracted over R33.2 billion in private investment, reflecting strong confidence in the Masterplan's direction and potential.

Significant progress has been made in transforming the sector, including the transfer of 27 state-managed plantations covering more than 6 200 ha to communities in the Eastern Cape, Limpopo, and KwaZulu-Natal under Community Forestry Agreements. These transfers empower communities to participate directly in forestry value chains, in line with government's policy shift from direct management to a policy, development, and regulatory role. If coupled with an accelerated and effective land reform programme, the Masterplan could enable up to 50% black and community ownership of plantation land. With a target of creating over 100 000 additional jobs, particularly through new afforestation projects, the Masterplan is proving to be a powerful driver of inclusive growth and transformation in the forestry sector.

National Arbor Month

National Arbor Month is a national campaign aimed to celebrate South Africa's trees and to raise awareness about their importance. The theme for Arbor Month 2024 is "Celebrating 30 Years of Freedom: Promoting environmental conservation and sustainable forest management."



The 2024 theme also aims to highlight key areas of forestry and tree planting in terms of their role in creating heritage wealth and sustaining healthy and resilient communities, through health benefits that are derived in forests including nutritious foods, medicine and rituals, fresh air, clean water and a place for recreation. One of the most important roles of forests is mitigation of climate change.

Freedom Park is the custodian of South Africa's cultural and historic information. It has a wide variety of South African woodland tree species and because of its location and infrastructure it has become a home of many cultural events. The infrastructure builds together with the cultural and historical essence that Freedom Park symbolises makes it most suitable venue to host the Launch of the 2024 Arbor Month Campaign.

The history of the Arbor Month Campaign

The Arbor Month Campaign has its origins from the motivational force behind the work of John Sterling Morton of Nebraska in the United States of America, who proposed in 1872 that a public holiday called Arbor Day be celebrated

by the State of Nebraska. In 1874, Arbor Day was celebrated for the first time in the United States of America, and officially adopted by South Africa in 1983 when the first celebration of the day took place. The importance of trees in our country has seen the campaign grow to where it is now where we celebrate the Arbor Month.

September is also Heritage Month. As we celebrate Arbor Month, we would like to highlight our champion trees which include some of the oldest, largest, and culturally significant trees.

The oldest tree in South Africa is the Sagole Baobab, also known as "Big tree", located in Limpopo, Musina Local Municipality. Carbon dating has assisted to determine the age of the tree to around 1 200-year-old. This is the largest of all recorded five baobabs listed on the champion tree list in the country and is the largest indigenous tree in South Africa. It has the second thickest trunk in the world (a Mexican Cypress called the Tule Tree in Mexico holds the record). The tallest tree in South Africa is the Sydney Blue Gums (Eucalyptus saligna) known as "Magoebaskloof giant"

National Greening Forum

The department, working with key greening stakeholders, has established the National Greening Forum. The objective is to provide a platform where stakeholders can plan and account for greening interventions towards the achievement of the Ten Million Trees Programme. The forum meetings are attended by Municipalities and other greening stakeholders. I know for a fact that the number of trees reported are far less than what was actually planted. I therefore intend to participate in one of the forum meetings to find ways on how the reporting can be improved. The department has finalised the e-tool system which will be used to monitor and account for the trees planted.

National Arbor City Awards

Despite our efforts in the past few years, our township and rural areas have not enjoyed the benefits of tree planting. In 2002, the department introduced the National Arbor City Awards which were formed as a partnership initiative between the Department, TotalEnergies, the Institute for Environment and Recreation Management (IERM), the South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI) and the South African Local Government Association (SALGA), with a purpose to encourage Municipalities to green their areas of jurisdiction.

Socio-economic reform and growth

The forestry vision states that forests are managed for people and that there is a need to create an enabling environment for economic and social development through sustainable forestry, especially at local level. Strategies to achieve this vision include forestry enterprise development, aimed at creating opportunities for people to use forests, including indigenous forests, woodlands and plantations, and forest-based resources for economic growth, income-generation and job creation.

The forestry enterprise development concept is central to government's pro-poor agenda and is a key component of broad-based black economic empowerment in the forestry sector.

World Soil Day

World Soil Day (WSD) is observed and celebrated every year on 5 December by all UN member states, organisations of the UN system and other international and regional organisations, civil society, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and individuals to emphasise the importance of soil.

The 2023 theme for WSD was "Soil and Water: A Source of Life". WSD 2023 and its campaign aimed to raise awareness of the importance and relationship between soil and water in achieving sustainable and resilient agrifood systems. WSD is a unique global platform that not only celebrates soils but also empowers and engages citizens around the world to improve soil health.

The planet's survival depends on the precious link between soil and water. More than 95% of food originates from these two fundamental resources. Soil water, vital for nutrient absorption by plants, binds our ecosystems together. This symbiotic relationship is the foundation of agricultural systems.

Role players

National Forest Advisory Council

The function of the National Forest Advisory Council (NFAC) is to advise the Minister of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment on matters related to forestry in South Africa. The Council has two permanent committees – the Committee for Sustainable Forests Management (CSFM) and the Committee on Forest Access (CFA). The CSFM's role includes advising the:

- NFAC, the DFFE and the Minister of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment on all aspects of sustainable forest management in the country;
- DFFE and the Minister of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment on the administration of criteria, indicators and standards for sustainable forest management; and
- DFFE on convening forum for interested persons to participate in the formulation of criteria, indicators and standards.

The CFA advises the Minister of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment on promoting the granting and exercise of access to forests; promoting education on the sustainable management and use of forests, and the use of the National Forest Recreation and Access Trust funds.

South African Forestry Company Limited

The South African Forestry Company Limited (SAFCOL) conducts timber harvesting, processing and related activities, both domestically and internationally. It subscribes to the Forest Sector Charter and plays a leading role in transformation within the industry. With the focus on communities adjacent to its plantations and specifically the youth in those communities, it makes a difference in the physical circumstances and networking in communities.

The structured approach of community partnerships was strengthened, with the focus on implementing needs-driven development and making a positive impact in community members' lives. Of special note was the launch of the SAFCOL-sponsored Forestry Chair at the University of Pretoria, which creates an opportunity for students who wish to further their studies in forestry-related fields.

Forestry South Africa (FSA)

The organisation was formed in 2002 through the amalgamation of the erstwhile Forestry Owners Association and the South African Timber Growers Association. It represents the interests of its members and the promotion and well-being of the South African commercial forestry industry. Although voluntary in its nature, FSA's membership includes all 13 corporate timber companies and their subsidiaries, operating in South Africa, 1 100 commercial timber farmers and over 20 000 small-scale black timber growers.

This membership represents over 98% of the industry as a whole and virtually all the private sector companies involved in the industry. Due to this representivity, the organisation is viewed by both government and the private sector as the body which represents the South African forestry industry. FSA is involved in a host of areas such as research, education and training, water and environmental affairs, forest protection, bioenergy, business development and transport and are represented on a number of national forums and structures.

Food and Trees for Africa (FTFA)

The FTFA is the sub-Saharan African partner of Global Relief, an international greening organisation. The FTFA's mission is to contribute to healthier living, especially in disadvantaged communities, through environmental awareness and greening programmes. It also addresses sustainable development through greening, climate change action, sustainable natural resource management and food security programmes.

The FTFA works in partnership with government, the private and public sectors and civil society. Its goal is to provide trees to as many underserved communities as possible, with the help of sponsors and certificate programmes. It manages the Urban Greening Fund in conjunction with the Department of Water and Sanitation, Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment; and the Institute of Environment and Recreation Management.

The fund supports partnerships aimed at sustainable development through tree planting, parks, food gardening projects and environmental education. Organisations, companies and individuals can contribute to the fund to help disadvantaged South Africans create a greener, healthier and more secure life.

Research and training

South Africa has world-class forestry research infrastructure and personnel, with almost 2% of the forestry industry's turnover (private and public sectors) devoted to research. The forest research function within the DFFE has been co-ordinating a number of research projects focusing on sustainable management of forest resources. These include the monitoring and evaluation of bark-harvesting techniques used for two indigenous tree species in Letaba, the forest sustainable harvesting of plants used for medicinal purposes, the sustainable use of monkey rope (Secamone alpini) by local subsistence farmers both ex situ and in situ, conservation of the critically endangered Protea roupelliae subsp. Hamiltonii, and conservation of the co-occurring endangered Leucospermum gerrardii within the Dr Hamilton Nature Reserve.



Major institutes servicing the research needs of the industry are the Institute of Commercial Forestry Research in Pietermaritzburg, the Forestry and Agriculture Biotechnology Institute and the CSIR in Pretoria. SANBI also plays an important role in terms of species protection. The faculties of agricultural and forestry sciences at the universities of Stellenbosch, KwaZulu-Natal and Venda offer forestry degrees.

The Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (George Saasveld Campus) offers diplomas and limited degree courses in forestry disciplines. The Durban University of Technology offers a diploma in Pulp and Paper Technology, and the Fort Cox College of Agriculture and Forestry offers a diploma in Social Forestry. Skills training is provided by a number of industry-sponsored and in-house training centres.

The Fibre Processing and Manufacturing (FPM) Sector Education and Training Authority (SETA) is responsible for ensuring that the training undertaken by the industry meets certain quality standards. The DFFE, together with the FPM SETA, offers study bursaries in forestry-related fields.

Fisheries

The South African fishing sector remains a significant contributor to food security and the economy. Stabilising the sub-sector through the allocation of longer-term fishing rights is critical to attracting investment into the industry. The fisheries sector is worth around R8 billion a year, and the commercial sector directly employs approximately 28 000 people with many thousands more depending on fisheries resources to meet basic needs in the small-scale and recreational sectors.

The South African coastline covers more than 3 000km, linking the east and west coasts of Africa. These shores are particularly rich in biodiversity, with some 10 000 species of marine plants and animals recorded. South Africa is among the global fishing nations that have identified the challenges

within their fishing industry. With 22 commercial fisheries sectors and new fisheries being explored and experimented with, South Africa has two fisheries sector components: wild capture fisheries include three distinct components, namely commercial, recreational and subsistence fisheries, each of which requires specific research and management interventions. The aquaculture (fish farming) sector is considered underdeveloped and, as a result, has been prioritised, owing to declining wild stocks.

The productive waters of the West Coast support a variety of commercially exploited marine life, including hake, anchovy, sardine, horse mackerel, tuna, snoek, rock lobster and abalone. On the East Coast, squid, linefish and a wide range of intertidal resources provide an important source of food and livelihood for coastal communities. Marine life that is not harvested, such as whales, dolphins and seabirds, is increasingly recognised as a valuable resource for nature-based tourism.

The main challenge in fisheries is to create a balance between maximising the social and economic potential of the fisheries industry, protecting the integrity and quality of the country's marine and coastal ecosystems, and addressing transformation in the sector. In line with international trends, the DFFE recognises fisheries as an economic activity rather than a purely environmental or biodiversity matter. Government has expanded the mandate for fisheries management by adding fresh water and inland fisheries, as well as aquaculture, to the department's existing responsibilities.

The fisheries sector contributes roughly 0,1% to the GDP. It is more important for economic development in the Western Cape, where 11 of the 13 proclaimed fishing harbours are situated. These contribute more than 5% to provincial GDP. The total output is estimated at 600 000 tons worth about R6 billion, depending on the pelagic catch of pilchards and anchovy, which could be as much as 600 000 tons.

It is estimated that direct employment in the industry constitutes approximately 27 000 jobs (16 000 in the primary sector and 11 000 in the secondary and tertiary sectors), while an additional 81 000 people are indirectly (net building and bait preparing, among others) employed in industries that are at least partially dependent on the fishing sector (figures based on industry estimates and the total allowable catch and total allowable effort, calculated as a function of tonnage).

Fisheries output is determined by catch volumes, which, in turn, depend on the health and management of fish stocks, varying according to ecological changes and subject to overexploitation through illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing activities. The DFFE seeks to prevent overexploitation by means of assigning total allowable catch and total allowable effort per species, which are adjusted regularly depending on the estimated state of the resource.

The department has also sought to promote transformation in the sector through the inclusion of small-scale fishing communities. The Marine Living Resources Amendment Act, 2014 (Act 5 of 2014), grants small-scale fishing communities' better access to fishing rights and resources. The small-scale fishing sector is designed to address food security needs within the local community and allow fishers to derive maximum benefit through value-adding of products and accessing markets.

The effective management of the existing harbours and the proclamation of additional new harbours support resource management. Although wild catch fisheries appear unlikely to expand beyond their present levels, aquaculture is becoming more important as a substitute for wild capture fisheries. Securing sustainable markets for aquaculture products remains of crucial importance at this time, when Asian markets have been disrupted by the Covid-19 pandemic and South African producers face competition from cheap imports.

Securing the safety of domestic fish stocks is a central requirement for a sustainable fishing industry. High-quality scientific information to inform management decisions is the cornerstone of sound fisheries management. Under tight resource constraints, the DFFE plans to rebuild this capacity in partnership with other branches, the industry and tertiary institutions. Under the auspices of Phakisa Initiative 5, the DFFE, together with other law enforcement authorities, focused on preventing illegal harvesting of marine resources.

To ensure more permanent deployment of security personnel, the department planned to undertake a marine and coastal sectoral threat, risk and opportunity analysis to inform where the country should focus on at a strategic and operational level. South Africa has acceded to the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission and the Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna, thereby allowing the country greater influence in negotiating for increased tuna quota allocations and access.

The Working for Fisheries Programme has supported eight significant, job-generating projects, and anti-poaching measures continue to be a priority for the Fisheries Management branch and the Marine Living Resources Fund (MLRF) to ensure the sustainable management of South Africa's marine resources.

Small-scale fisheries sector

The Small-scale Fisheries Policy seeks to address imbalances of the past and ensure that small-scale fishers are accommodated and properly managed. For the first time, fishing rights can be allocated on a group, rather than an individual, basis. The policy further aims to support investment in community entities to take joint responsibility for sustainably managing fisheries resources and to address the depletion of critical fisheries stocks.

The sector is aimed at redressing the inequality suffered by coastal fishing communities which, as a result of unintended consequences, have remained marginalised through previous rights allocation systems. Furthermore, the establishment of the small-scale sector seeks to empower small-scale fishers to contribute meaningfully to the national GDP and to play a meaningful role in food security and job creation.

This process is informed by the Marine Living Resources Act of 1998, and the regulations thereof, which were amended to legally recognise small-scale fishers who have been living in coastal communities and depending on fishing and its related activities as a source of livelihood. The small-scale fisheries regulations, along with the Marine Living Resources Amendment Act of 2014, provide the legal mechanism for the implementation of the small-scale

fisheries policy. These reforms give legal recognition to small-scale fishers and will promote the transformation of the subsector to assist fishing communities living along the coastal areas in creating sustainable livelihoods, generating income and creating jobs.

Central to the success of small fishing co-operatives is an increase in the basket of species available to them. In 2021, the DFFE published, for public comment, an apportionment split for the squid, linefish and abalone sectors to enhance the high value species available for allocation to the small-scale sector. The DFFE received and finalised 1 213 appeals against the decisions taken by the Delegated Authority in the Fishing Rights Allocation Process (FRAP) across nine sectors.

The allocation of small-scale fishing rights in the Western Cape has been finalised, and all 62 recognised small-scale fisheries co-operatives with a total membership of

3 850 declared fishers were granted 15-year fishing rights. The finalisation was a milestone as it marked the final province where these rights have been granted for the first time in South Africa's history.

The department remains committed to ensuring compliance with international fisheries obligations, which aim to promote the sustainable management of fisheries and marine resources and, most importantly, preserve our rich marine biodiversity.

Recreational fishing

While the illegal harvesting of abalone poses the greatest threat to management objectives, the DFFE will continue to work with all stakeholders in the abalone sector and continue to strengthen partnerships with other law enforcement agencies and communities to ensure that the country grows and protects its resources. South Africa's extensive coastline, spanning two oceans, and its numerous dams, lakes, rivers and streams, make the country a recreational fisher's paradise. However, recreational fishing may only be undertaken with a valid permit and is limited to certain times of the fishing season.

To reduce user conflicts between commercial and recreational fishing and to protect stocks during breeding periods, certain areas have been declared closed to fishing. Recreational fishers are also subject to bag limits of fish on a per-day basis. Annual recreational fishing licences in all industries total about 300 000, with income generated from these licences amounting to R18 million. The actual annual catch is about 17 000 tons of high-value species.

World Fisheries Day

South Africa celebrates World Fisheries Day on 21 November, alongside fishing communities throughout the world. World Fisheries Day helps to highlight the critical importance of water to human lives and the lives it sustains, both in and out of water. Water forms a continuum, whether contained in rivers, lakes or the ocean.

A United Nations study reported that more than two-thirds of the world's fisheries have been overfished or are fully harvested and more than one-third are in a state of decline because of factors such as the loss of essential fish habitats, pollution, and global warming. Fish form an important part of the diets of people around the world, particularly those who live near rivers, coasts and other water bodies.

A number of traditional societies and communities are rallied around the occupation of fishing, hence a majority of human settlements, whether small villages or mega cities, are situated in close proximity to water bodies. Beyond the importance of water for survival and as a means of transportation, it is also an important source of fish and aquatic protein. However, this proximity has also led to severe ocean and coastal pollution from run-off and from domestic and industrial activities carried out nearby. This has led to depletion of fish stocks in the immediate vicinity, requiring fishermen to fish farther and farther away from their traditional grounds.

Furthermore, overfishing and mechanisation have also resulted in a crisis – fish stocks are being depleted through "factory" vessels, bottom trawling, and other means of unsustainable fishing methods. Unless we address these issues collectively, the crisis will deepen. World Fisheries Day helps to highlight these complexities and move towards finding solutions to the increasingly inter-connected problems we are facing, and in the longer term, to sustainable means of maintaining fish stocks.

Facts on fisheries:

- Small-scale fisheries (marine and inland) employ about 90% of those involved in fisheries.
- 65% of the reported catch from inland fisheries is from low-income food-deficit countries.
- Estimates vary, but from around 30 million to over 60 million people in the developing world are involved in inland fisheries and about 50% are thought to be women.
- More than 25% of the world's dietary protein is provided by fish.
- The human population consumes over 100 million t of fish annually.
- More than 200 million of Africa's 1 billion people regularly consume fish and nearly half of this comes from inland fisheries.

National Environmental Impact Assessment and Management Strategy

The strategy consists of voluntary and regulated instruments where:

- Regulated environmental impact assessments are used only when it is the most appropriate tool;
- Environmental impact assessment and management occur within the strategic context of environmentally informed spatial instruments, sector strategies and policies;
- Authorities have enough capacity with skilled and experienced officials; other stakeholders have the capacity and skills to ensure maximum impact on the effectiveness and efficiency of the strategy; government regulatory processes have been integrated and aligned; and government, environmental assessment practitioners, developers and the community are equally committed to making it work.

4x4 regulations

The Strategy Towards Co-regulation of the Off-road Sector in South Africa is aimed at minimising the impact of off-road driving on the environment, by giving direction to off-road users and owners to develop and use inland routes in sensitive areas responsibly. The strategy applies to the inland recreational use of off-road vehicles, including two-

wheel, three-wheel and four-wheel vehicles, which include 2x4 and 4x4 motor vehicles, quad bikes and motorbikes.

A key outcome of the strategy was the development, drafting and implementation of national norms and/or standards, with a supportive enabling legislative framework, to facilitate environmental compliance, responsible tourism and the long-term sustainability of the off-road industry.

The banning of off-road vehicles in coastal zones has enabled several shore-breeding birds, especially the Damara Tern and the African Black Oystercatcher, to breed successfully on beaches again. The number of loggerhead and leatherback turtles hatching successfully on KwaZulu-Natal's northern beaches has also increased since the ban was enforced.

Coastal management

The ocean covers three-quarters of the Earth, highlighting the importance of its protection. The DFFE recognises the challenges regarding the management of ocean spaces in South Africa's adjacent ocean areas. Of the 200 estuaries found along the South African coast, 25% are in a degraded state. This is due to inappropriate developments along the banks of estuaries and in their catchment areas.

The department is proactively its attention proactively on these degraded systems and prioritising the development of management plans to improve the functioning of estuaries and associated hinterlands. The Buoy Oceans Monitoring System, which provides information on the state of the oceans at Storms River in the Tsitsikamma National Park, is the first in a series of observation and monitoring platforms, which will form the basis of the South African National Oceans and Coastal Monitoring System.

The DFFE reviewed the Recreational Water Quality Guidelines for Coastal Waters to develop effective early warning systems to pre-empt the catastrophic impacts of possible hazards.

Environment

Nature positive future

Throughout the world, countries and formations as diverse as the European Union, India, Canada, Rwanda, Gabon, China and Japan are recognising that what the World Economic Forum terms a "nature positive future", can unlock enormous potential and investment opportunities for both developed and developing countries. A nature positive future can enable economies to recover and grow, successfully service their national debts and carry out their governmental responsibilities to citizens. This can be done in a way that sustains both the natural environment, human health and wellbeing.

For South Africa, embracing a nature positive future as part of the overall economic recovery would have the following advantages – a positive impact on job creation in new industries, which offer potential for the creation of new enterprises using new technologies; dedicated international "green funds", which offer an investment source for these new industries; green bonds, which have been shown to be cheaper than traditional vanilla bonds; and investment in green and sustainable solutions, which offers the country opportunities to promote long-term economic competitiveness and climate resilience.

International environment days

South Africa has adopted the entire month of June to heighten awareness of environmental issues through various pertinent activities. It is during June that the country celebrates World Environment Day, World Oceans Day and World Day to Combat Desertification.

World Environment Day

World Environment Day is the biggest, most globally celebrated day for positive environmental action. Every year, participants organise clean-up campaigns, art exhibits, tree-planting drives, concerts, dance recitals, recycling drives, social media campaigns and different contests themed around caring for the planet. World Environment Day is the UN's principal vehicle for encouraging worldwide awareness and action for the environment.

Over the years, it has grown to be a broad, global platform for public outreach that is widely celebrated by stakeholders in over 100 countries. It also serves as the 'people's day' for doing something positive for the environment, galvanising individual actions into a collective power that generates an exponentially positive impact on the planet.

The day is marked annually on 5 June as per the declaration of the UN in 1972. Each World Environment Day is organised around a theme that focuses attention on a particularly pressing environmental concern. The theme for World Environment Day 2023 was "#BeatPlasticPollution", which highlighted the need to take concrete action to achieve transformative change to tackle the climate crisis.

Minister Barbara Creecy led the World Environment Day Beach Clean-Up in partnership with the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) on 5 June 2023 in Cape Town, Western Cape. A Beach Clean-up at Macassar Resort Beach was a community activity campaign in taking responsibility to take care of the environment. World Environment Day is the UN's most important day for encouraging worldwide awareness and action for the protection of our environment. Through Environment Month, the youth are encouraged to get closer to nature and harness the promise it holds as they commit to building a climate-resilient and healthier world for tomorrow. World Environment Day (WED) is the biggest, most globally celebrated day for positive environmental action. Through WED, the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) flagship programme enables everyone to realise their responsibility to care for the Earth and reminds individuals and everyone of their power to become agents of change.

The commemoration of 2023 World Environment Day and Youth Month was hosted by the Deputy Minister of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment, Makhotso Sotyu, at Mmamethlake Village, Mpumalanga, on 13 June 2024. Deputy Minister Sotyu, on behalf of the department, donated school supplies to Dipere Primary School, Mamoka Secondary School, Mmamatli Combined School, Tabane Primary School and Mmametlhake Primary School in the Dr JS Moroka Local Municipality, Mpumalanga, as part of the department's Youth Month activities. World Environment Day raises awareness of environmental issues such as marine pollution, overpopulation, global warming, sustainable development and wildlife crime. This year's campaign was celebrated under the theme #BeatPlasticPollution.

It highlights the need to take concrete action to achieve transformative change to tackle the climate crisis. The human mobility implications of the climate and environmental crisis are profound.

World Oceans Day

World Oceans Day is aimed at appreciating, protecting, restoring and honouring ecosystem services and resources provided by oceans. The international theme for World Oceans Day 2021 was "The Ocean: Life and Livelihoods". The theme shed light on the wonder of the ocean and how it is a life source – supporting humanity and every other organism on Earth.

World Oceans Day 2023 was celebrated and hosted by Minister Barbara Creecy on 8 June 2023 in Cape Town on the SA Agulhas II during the vessel's Open Day in the Western Cape. The SA Agulhas II is South Africa's state-of-the-art polar research and supply vessel. It plays a crucial role in supporting the country's involvement in Antarctica and the sub-Antarctic Islands, and in researching national interests in the Southern Ocean. Moreover, the Open Day offered a dynamic, hands-on experience for learners and members of the public to meet the following objectives of educating and inspiring high school learners about marine science, ocean conservation, and the vital work of the DFFE. The Open Day encouraged the promotion of careers in environmental fields and showcased diverse pathways within marine sciences. Further awareness activities were demonstrated to the public and learners, highlighting the unique capabilities of the SA Agulhas II research vessel and its vital role in critical research.

World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought

World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought is commemorated on 17 June. It aims to promote community and ecosystem resilience while improving the human condition, particularly in dry lands. According to the UN, droughts are among the greatest threats to sustainable development, especially in developing countries, but increasingly so in developed nations too.

World Wildlife Day

World Wildlife Day is celebrated annually on 3 March. The event brings together representatives of UN member states, UN System organisations and multilateral environmental agreements, civil society, and the private sector for a series of discussions along the theme.

Implementation of the Year 1 targets of the Implementation Plan of the National Integrated Strategy to Combat Wildlife Trafficking (NISCWT) is well under way and cooperation between all stakeholders including government and the private sector is being promoted.

To strengthen the enforcement capabilities of environmental legislation, the National Environmental Management Laws Amendment Bill (Admin Penalties Bill) will provide an Administrative Penalty System as an additional enforcement tool for environmental contraventions.

Marine Week

Each year, the DFFE observes National Marine Week to highlight the importance of oceans and the role they play in the lives of all citizens. It seeks to promote the appreciation of the role of the oceans, and the importance of science, technology, engineering and mathematics support for ocean and coastal management. National Marine Week is celebrated every year during the second week of October. Its purpose is to create awareness of the marine and coastal environment, and the promotion of sustainable use and conservation of these resources, for the benefit of both present and future generations.

Projects, programmes and initiatives

Low carbon and climate resilient economy

South Africa is a board member of three significant funding bodies – the Green Climate Fund (GCF), World Bank's Climate Investment Fund and the Global Environment Facility. These memberships enable the country to shape the policies, programming and governance of these respective institutions. The country is also a member of the Partnership for Action on Green Economy.

SANBI and the Development Bank of Southern Africa are accredited as South African Direct Access Entities of the GCF. The increasing frequency and intensity of extreme weather events around South Africa – from flash flooding in some parts of the country to devastating drought in other parts, has prompted government to sign the Paris Agreement to Combat Climate Change as an acknowledgement that the problem requires a global effort. The country continues to play an active role on the international stage through participation in a number of key multilateral environmental agreements and their associated negotiations.

South Africa's Green Economy Strategy

There is increasing global recognition that today's economic growth and development trajectory is driven by the worldwide shift towards sustainable green economies. South Africa views the green economy as a sustainable development path based on addressing the interdependence between economic growth, social protection and natural ecosystems.

The South African approach ensures that green economy programmes are supported by practical and implementable action plans, emphasising the importance of building on existing best practices, programmes, initiatives and indigenous knowledge, in key sectors, towards a resource-efficient, low-carbon and pro-employment growth path and that government alone cannot manage and fund a just transition to a green economy – the private sector and civil society must play a fundamental role.

Through the DFFE's Green Economy Strategy, the department continues to work towards promoting equitable, inclusive, sustained and environmentally sound economic growth and social development to the benefit of all.

The Green Economy Strategy has eight key pillars, namely:

- Green buildings and the built environment;
- Sustainable transport and infrastructure;
- Clean energy and energy efficiency;
- Natural resource conservation and management;
- Sustainable waste management;
- Water management;
- Sustainable consumption and production; and
- Agriculture food production and forestry.

As outlined in the Integrated Resource Plan, by 2030 the

DFFE aims to have significantly reduced the country's energy demand through technological innovation, good behavioural practices and public commitment to more efficient, sustainable and equitable energy use.

Green Fund

Government set up the Green Fund to support the transition to a low carbon, resource-efficient and climate-resilient development path, delivering high impact economic, environmental and social benefits. The DFFE appointed the Development Bank of Southern Africa as the implementing agent of the Green Fund. The Green Fund aims to provide catalytic finance to facilitate investment in green initiatives that will support poverty reduction and job creation.

The Green Fund is additional and complementary to existing fiscal allocations supporting the transitioning of the South African economy to a low-carbon, resource-efficient and climate resilient growth path. The Green Fund responds to market weaknesses currently hampering South Africa's transition to a green economy by:

- Promoting innovative and high impact green programmes and projects;
- Reinforcing climate policy objectives through green interventions;
- Building an evidence base for the expansion of the green economy; and
- Attracting additional resources to support South Africa's green economic development.

Sustainable development and the green economy

South Africa continues to play an instrumental role within other global co-ordination mechanisms. The final adoption of the Paris Agreement to Combat Climate Change in December 2015 represented a major step forward in international co-operation towards sustainable green, low-carbon and climate-resilient economies globally. During the Paris negotiating process, South Africa played a key role as Chair of the Group of 77 plus China, representing 134 developing countries, and as lead negotiator for the Africa group.

In April 2016, South Africa joined 174 other countries in New York as a signatory to the Paris Agreement. The DFFE started domestic ratification processes that would enable the entry into force of the agreement in 2020. This new legal framework will guide international efforts to limit greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and enable the transition to climate resilient societies and economies, particularly through the commitment by developed countries to provide financial, technology and capacity building support to developing countries in their effort to address the climate change challenge.

In the lead-up to the Paris climate change negotiations, South Africa submitted its Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (INDC) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). South Africa's INDC is guided by the National Climate Change Response Policy and outlines national goals for the country's adaptation effort; and it clearly outlines that South Africa will peak and plateau its GHG emissions by 2030.

Good Green Deeds

The programme is led by the DFFE and aims to promote environmental actions that take into consideration sustainable living practices. At the centre of this campaign are principles of environmental justice, an understanding that becoming environmentally conscious starts with one small action that can go on to inspire global change. South African citizens must strive to work together to restore and maintain mother nature's majesty.

Minister Barbara Creecy launched the Good Green Deeds Awareness: Cleaning and Greening Programme in Gqeberha, Nelson Mandela Bay (NMB) Municipality in the Eastern Cape on 10 November 2023, which saw approximately 3 000 participants being employed within the Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality. This programme was launched as an intervention to assist in managing efforts to protect the environment from pollution and conceptualised a national Municipal Cleaning and Greening Programme which was implemented across the NMB Municipality. This programme aims to fight environmental degradation and ensure that our country is free from litter and illegal dumps. This is done through mass public employment of the unemployed with a special prioritisation of women, youth, and persons with disabilities.

Climate Change Response Policy

The National Climate Change Response Policy is guided by the vision of the NDP of a transition to an inclusive, equitable, low-carbon and climate-resilient economy and society by 2030. By 2030, South Africa plans to have an efficient, lower-carbon public transport system that makes everyday use of private vehicles an unnecessary extravagance. The development of the first phase of desired emission reduction objectives and carbon budgets is well under way. The Carbon Budget System is being introduced in five-year phases – an initial phase from 2016 to 2020, and subsequent phases from 2021 onwards.

Priority focus areas are communities most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, namely the indigent, rural dwellers and women. Given its demonstrated capacity, SANBI has been appointed the national implementing entity of the Global Adaptation Area. Pilot projects include the Greater uMngeni Catchment area in KwaZulu-Natal, the Mopani District in Limpopo and the Namaqua District in the Northern Cape. These projects, to the value of US$10 million, include the enhancement of early warning systems, protecting local communities from extreme weather events, and promoting climate smart agriculture practices.

The South African Weather Service (SAWS) continues to host the Global Atmospheric Watch Station at Cape Point, which is one of only three in Africa. This network arose from the need to understand and control the increasing influence of human activity on the global atmosphere and provide climate change information and services.

Presidential Climate Change Coordinating Commission

In December 2020, President Cyril Ramaphosa announced the appointment of members of the inaugural Presidential Climate Change Coordinating Commission (PCCCC). The establishment of the commission emanated from the Presidential Jobs Summit held in October 2018, when social partners agreed that a statutory body be formed to coordinate and oversee the just transition towards a low carbon, inclusive, climate change resilient economy and society.

The PCCCC is tasked with advising on South Africa's climate change response. This includes mitigation and adaptation to climate change and its associated impacts. It will furthermore provide independent monitoring and review of South Africa's progress in meeting its emissions reduction and adaptation goals. Under the commission's terms of reference, it will advise on and facilitate a common understanding of a just transition, cognisant of the socio-economic, environmental and technological implications of climate change. This covers adaptation, mitigation as well as means of implementation.

It also provides a platform for the engagement of key stakeholders on the National Employment Vulnerability Assessment and Sector Job Resilient Plans and ensures reporting of progress towards the implementation of these plans. Chaired by President Ramaphosa, the PCCCC comprises representatives from government departments and state entities, business organisations, labour, academia, civil society, research institutions and traditional leadership. The National Climate Risk and Vulnerability Assessment Framework, aimed at all actors including local governments, was finalised for seven Human Settlement Priority Areas. During the 2023/24 financial year, the DFFE managed to mobilise $319 456 727.21 for various environmental projects and programmes.

People and parks

South Africa is home to more than nine million ha of protected areas network, which includes national parks, nature reserves and world heritage sites, equating to about 8% of the country's land. These protected areas, among other things, serve as sites for conserving South Africa's ecosystems, protecting high biodiversity value and providing ecosystem services. Most of these protected areas are geographically located in rural areas, forming an integral system with rural communities whose livelihoods and cultures are closely dependent on these protected areas.

Wildlife economy

South Africa is the third most biologically diverse country in the world, and therefore has one of the largest natural capital assets. This biodiversity is not only vital to the economic well-being of the country but can also be used as a vehicle for social upliftment. The country's biodiversity comes with a number of challenges, ranging from poaching to overexploitation.

The Wildlife Economy in South Africa is centred on the sustainable use of indigenous biological resources, including biodiversity-derived products for trade and bioprospecting, the hunting industry, agriculture and agro-processing of indigenous crops, vegetables and livestock breeds, and indigenous marine resources and fisheries.

The focus of the Wildlife Economy is centred on the socio-economic benefits of eco-tourism, co-managed conservation areas and ancillary services to protected areas. Harvesting indigenous biological resources is a significant source of income for communities. In many cases, one harvester supports an entire household, but the overdependence on these resources has led to the depletion and, at the extreme, the extinction of some of the biodiversity.

For example, the existing commercial market for trade in South African bitter aloe, or aloe ferox, is well established, as is the trade in pelargonium sidoides, buchu, rooibos, honeybush, devil's claw and crocodile fat/oil. These indigenous biological resources are predominantly used in the manufacturing of herbal medicines, cosmetics, food flavours and fragrances.

Additional products with commercial potential for industrial or pharmaceutical application are microorganisms, marine organisms, gums and resins, and venoms. Other significant drivers of the biodiversity economy include trophy hunting and the associated industry of taxidermy, the sale of live game and game meat. Further opportunities exist in the sale of game meat and skins for leather, bones and horns. Another example of a biodiversity-based industry is silk production. Other biodiversity-based products include bee-keeping products (honey, wax, propolis and royal jelly), mopane worms, and ostrich eggshells and feathers.

Managing oceans and coastal conservation

The DFFE continues to support annual research voyages to Antarctica, Marion Island and Gough Island. Servicing the contract with African Marine Solutions for the manning and operation of two research vessels, SA Agulhas II and SA Algoa, is one of the major cost drivers in the Oceans and Coasts programme, amounting to a projected R557 million over the medium term. Implementing the Oceans Economy Strategy forms part of Operation Phakisa, a fast results delivery programme launched by government in 2014.

An estimated R544.7 million is provided over the Medium-Term Expenditure Framework period in the Oceans and Coasts programme for implementing the Oceans Economy Strategy, which includes activities in marine transport and manufacturing, offshore oil and gas exploration, aquaculture, marine protection services, ocean governance, small harbours, and coastal and marine tourism.

Annually, on the third Saturday of September, volunteers around the world take part in the world's biggest coastal clean-up to celebrate International Coastal Clean-up Day (ICCD) in four coastal provinces. The ICCD initiative remains the largest global volunteer environmental data-gathering effort and clean-up event of coastal areas to date. This year, South Africa has identified the second week of September as Recycle Week and National Clean-up Day with activities scheduled to take place for the week prior to the International Coastal Clean-up/World Clean-up Day, with specific focus on neighbourhoods, water sources and beaches around the country.

The DFFE Expanded Public Works Programmes (EPWP), such as the Cleaning and Greening In-House Model Project, Working for the Coast, Working for Water and Working for Wetlands and the post-flood mop-up team, played a crucial role in ensuring that rivers, wetlands, and beaches are kept clean and in good health. Clean-up and Recycle Week provided a good opportunity to also showcase the department's job creation programs by inviting some of the participants to take part in the clean-up.

In 2023, the plastics industry, private sector entities, NGOs, and local and metropolitan municipalities working in the areas prioritised for the activities in partnership with the and demonstrated their commitment to cleaning up the environment and removing plastics litter from rivers, streams, oceans, neighbourhoods. The department partnered with

CCBSA, PlasticsSA, POLYCO, and other key private companies in this year's Recycle Week, World Clean-up Day, and International Coastal Clean-up Day activities.

Antarctic and Southern Ocean Strategy

South Africa's Antarctic and Southern Ocean Strategy (ASOS) provides for the co-ordination and implementation of the Antarctic Treaties Act, 1996 (Act 60 of 1996), relating to research, conservation, sustainable resource use and environmental management in support of the African agenda. This strategy was approved the day after the world commemorated Antarctica Day, which marked the 61st anniversary of the signing of the Antarctic Treaty. The treaty set aside almost 10% of the Earth forever to be used exclusively for peaceful purposes and in the interests of all humanity.

Antarctica Day is not only a celebration of this important event, but also serves to highlight how diverse nations continue to work together peacefully using science as a common language for co-operation and stewardship of this global commons. The ASOS outlines national interests for the continued participation in the Antarctic Treaty and sets out the vision that Antarctica and the Southern Ocean are understood, valued, and protected in the interest of South Africa, Africa and the world, which is in line with the founding principles of protecting Antarctica as set out by the original signatories to the treaty.

The strategy is the product of extensive engagement with key stakeholders, including the key government departments (and their entities) that are partners in South Africa's National Antarctic Programme – the departments of Science, Technology and Innovation, International Relations and Co-ordination, Public Works and Infrastructure, and Transport. The DFFE also engaged newly identified role players in the space – the Agricultural Research Council, Medical Research Council, Human Science Research Council and others. The strategy outlines an extensive implementation plan over the next five-year period (2021 – 2025).

Entities

iSimangaliso Wetland Park Authority

The iSimangaliso was established in 2000 in terms of the World Heritage Convention Act, 1999 (Act 49 of 1999). It is mandated to ensure that active and effective measures are taken to protect and conserve the park; promote the empowerment of historically disadvantaged communities living adjacent to the park; promote, manage, oversee, market and facilitate optimal tourism and related development in the park; and encourage sustained investment and job creation.

The authority's ongoing aim is to support and maintain biodiversity conservation and uphold the park's status as a world heritage site. Over the medium term, the entity will focus on: conserving the environment in the park to mitigate the impact of deforestation and illegal developments on flora and animal habitats, especially those of critically endangered and threatened species; monitoring compliance with governing legislation such as the World Heritage Properties Conservation Act of 1983; removing invasive alien plants from 90 000 hectares of protected wetland areas; and ensuring that at least 9 000 cubic metres of earthworks in wetlands are rehabilitated. To carry out these activities, expenditure is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 10%, from R129 million in 2023/24 to R141 million in 2025/26.

Transfers from the department amount to R332.6 million in 2023/24 period. These transfers decrease at an average annual amount from R332.6 million in 2023/24 to R141 million in 2025/26, due to a one□off allocation from the department in 2023/24 for the implementation of infrastructure investment projects through the EPWP.

The target of clearing areas invaded by invasive alien species was met, which holds significant impact, particularly in enhancing ecological integrity by restoring natural habitats and biodiversity.

To address transformation and socio-economic development, the management of iSimangaliso Wetland Park Authority ringfenced 40% of opportunities for previously disadvantaged community groups, with the latest allocation achieving 32%. This includes concessions such as the boating concession at Kosi Bay Lakes.

Notably, iSimangaliso Wetland Park has maintained a zero-rhino poaching record over the past two years.

The DFFE will strengthen enforcement of environmental laws to combat poaching of our fauna and flora and illegal fishing while enhancing regulatory frameworks to ensure that conservation efforts go hand-in-hand with sustainable economic growth and job creation.

The Marine Living Resources Fund

The fund was established in terms of the Marine Living Resources Act, 1998 (Act 18 of 1998). The fund's mandate and core business are to manage the development and sustainable use of South Africa's marine resources, and protect the integrity and quality of the marine ecosystem. The fund also ensures fair and equitable access to South Africa's marine resources for the benefit of all citizens.

Over the medium term, the entity planned to conduct 16 500 enforcement and compliance operations in prioritised fisheries sectors, enabling the effective protection of South Africa's marine resources, creating 4 500 jobs in coastal and rural communities, and broadening the scope of the aquaculture sector by increasing the number of locations and species farmed.

Goods and services account for all of the entity's spending over the next three years. Expenditure is set to increase from R322.8 million in 2023/24 to R352 million in 2025/26 at an average annual rate of 9.5%. Transfers from the department constitute an estimated 66,4% (R1 billion) of the entity's revenue over the period ahead. The remainder is set to be generated through levies charged on fish caught and fish products; application, licence, permit and harbour fees; and fines and confiscations.

South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI)

SANBI was established in 2004 in terms of the NEMBA of 2004. Its mandate is to monitor and report on the status of South Africa's biodiversity; all listed threatened or protected species, ecosystems and invasive species; and the impact of any genetically modified organisms released into the environment.

Over the medium term, the institute will focus on restoring and rehabilitating ecosystems across South Africa by maintaining and improving existing national botanical and zoological gardens; conducting research and supporting policies on biodiversity; and refurbishing existing infrastructure in the newly designated and developed national botanical gardens in Kwelera (Eastern Cape) and Thohoyandou (Limpopo).

Expenditure is expected to decrease at an average annual rate of 7.4%, from R588 million in 2023/24 to R542.9 million in 2025/26. Departmental transfers account for 73,9% (R1.7 billion) of the institute's revenue over the medium term, with the remainder set to be generated through entry fees charged at botanical and zoological gardens.

South African National Parks (SANParks)

The SANParks' mandate is to conserve, protect, control and manage national parks and other defined protected areas and their biodiversity. The entity plays a significant role in the economy, as the presence of an efficiently managed system of national parks is a key component of the national tourism economy, and acts as a catalyst for local development. Through the implementation of the EPWP, the entity has provided significant support to small, medium and micro enterprises, particularly in rural areas.

Over the medium term, the entity will focus on fighting poaching, particularly rhino poaching in the Kruger National Park and abalone poaching in the Western Cape; acquiring 30 752 ha of land as part of its land inclusion plan; developing and upgrading infrastructure within national parks; and managing more than four million ha of terrestrial and 369 657 ha of marine protected biodiversity through a system of 21 national parks and 10 marine protected areas. In carrying out these activities, expenditure is expected to increase at an average annual amount from R1.1 billion in 2023/24 to R4.6 billion in 2025/26. The entity expects to generate 63,6% (R5.9 billion) of its revenue over the period ahead through visitor fees and the remainder through transfers from the department.

SANParks is responsible for 21 national parks in seven provinces, with a total area of just more than 4 million ha and comprising 67% of the protected areas under state management. The national parks include:

- Addo Elephant National Park;
- Agulhas National Park;
- Ai-Ais/Richtersveld Transfrontier Park;
- Augrabies Falls National Park;
- Bontebok National Park;
- Camdeboo National Park;
- Garden Route (Tsitsikamma, Knysna and Wilderness) National Park;
- Golden Gate Highlands National Park;
- Karoo National Park;
- Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park;
- Kruger National Park;
- Mapungubwe National Park;
- Marakele National Park;
- Mokala National Park;
- Mountain Zebra National Park;
- Namaqua National Park;
- Table Mountain National Park (which incorporates the Cape of Good Hope, Table Mountain and Silvermine Nature Reserves);
- Tankwa Karoo National Park; and
- West Coast National Park.

SANParks has secured $10 million from the Global Environment Facility to fund a project implementing the Mega Living Landscapes concept in the Barberton-Makhonjwa, Greater Addo, and Eastern Cape Grasslands landscapes.

South African National Parks Week

SANParks celebrated its 18th annual SA National Parks Week from 16 to 24 September 2023 with its partners, TotalEnergies Marketing South Africa and FNB. SANParks extended SA National Parks Week to include weekends at some of the national parks. The week granted free access to most of the 21 national parks for day visitors, especially people from the local communities. However, free access to parks did not include free access to accommodation facilities and other tourist activities.

South African Weather Service (SAWS)

The SAWS was established in terms of the South African Weather Service Act of 2001. Its core mandate is to provide two distinct services: the public good service, funded by government; and commercial services, where the user pay principle applies. Key activities include maintaining, extending and improving the quality of meteorological services; providing risk management information; collecting meteorological data over South Africa and the surrounding southern oceans; and fulfilling government's international obligations under the conventions of the World Meteorological Organisation and the International Civil Aviation Organisation.

Over the medium term, the SAWS aimed to focus on: developing and improving early warning infrastructure for severe weather, including climate response initiatives for inclement weather conditions; providing innovative meteorological and related products and services through the development and implementation of community weather-smart products and services; and increasing its provision of aviation meteorological services. Expenditure is expected to decrease at an average annual rate of 19%, from R528 million in 2023/24 to R427 million in 2025/26. The weather service expects to derive 72,2% (R1.6 billion) of its revenue over the medium term through transfers from the department and the remainder through commercial activities and services rendered.

Over the medium term, R375 million will be allocated to improve and optimise the South African Weather Service's RADAR, surface observation, air quality, and ICT infrastructure networks, among other priorities.

Role players

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

In support of the NDP, government is working through the SANBI to spearhead an innovative programme of work on analysing ecological infrastructure and costing natural capital. This body of knowledge will empower the DFFE to make informed development-related decisions. Its research management covers systematics and collections expansion, conservation and applied biodiversity science, and climate change. SANBI is also responsible for ensuring that biodiversity knowledge influences policy, management and decision making.

Its biome programmes, which focus on South Africa's biodiversity hotspots, ensure that the country's most important biodiversity regions, such as grasslands, wetlands and succulent Karoo, are protected in a sustainable and beneficial way. SANBI is increasingly embracing biodiversity in its broadest sense through the inclusion of the country's fauna as part of its taxonomic research mandate. It is coordinating a catalogue of all South Africa's species (at least 100 000), including animals, through the South African Tree of Life Project.

The institute operates environmental education programmes within its national botanical gardens, while outreach greening programmes focus on promoting indigenous gardening at disadvantaged schools in surrounding areas. SANBI is South Africa's official body for facilitating access to the Adaptation Fund, set up to help developing countries cope with climate change. It was established by the parties to the Kyoto Protocol of the UNFCCC to finance concrete adaptation projects and programmes in developing countries that are parties to the protocol.

Environmental resources

National Botanical Gardens

SANBI manages the 10 national botanical gardens, classified as conservation gardens, in seven provinces. Together, they conserve more than 7 500 ha of natural vegetation and associated biodiversity within their boundaries. The national botanical gardens are natural escapes close to some of the country's urban centres, offering visitors a taste of the country's uniquely rich and colourful biodiversity. They feature facilities such as restaurants, function rooms and conference venues and include activities such as hikes, picnics and shopping.

The botanical gardens are:

- Kirstenbosh, Cape Town;
- Pretoria, Tshwane;
- Harold Porter, Betty's Bay;
- Walter Sisulu, Roodepoort;
- Hantam, Nieuwoudtville;
- Free State, Bloemfontein;
- Karoo Desert, Worcester;
- KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg;
- Lowveld, Nelspruit; and
- Kwelera, East London.

SANBI is also managing what is scheduled to become South Africa's 11th national botanical garden – the Thohoyandou Botanical Garden, in the far north-eastern corner of Limpopo.

National Herbarium

The National Herbarium, situated within the Pretoria National Botanical Garden, houses over one million scientific plant specimens from southern Africa. The Crompton Herbarium in Cape Town focuses mainly on the flora of the winter rainfall region of southern Africa, while the KwaZulu-Natal Herbarium in Durban primarily focuses on the flora of the subtropical eastern region of South Africa, in particular the flora of the province.

Protected areas

The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), founded in 1992 at the Rio Summit, is a legally binding agreement on the use and conservation of biological diversity. The CBD provides the framework for 196 parties to guide efforts to conserve and sustainably use biological diversity and equitably share the benefits from the use of genetic resources. In October 2010, the parties approved the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity for 2011 – 2020, including 20 Aichi Targets. There are a number of management categories of protected areas in South Africa, which conform to the accepted categories of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

South Africa has 528 protected areas, of which 20 are marine, totalling 7.5 million ha or 6,2% of the country's land area. South Africa plans to expand the conservation areas under formal protection to the international standard of 10% of the total area of the country. The DFFE works closely with landowners to ensure their participation in the Stewardship Programme, which allows landowners to use their land for biodiversity and conservation purposes. This is aimed at expanding the country's conservation estate.

In contributing to the expansion of the conservation estate, 135 047.0450 ha of land were added in the 2023/24 financial year. The study on the interlinkages of migration, drought, land degradation, and drought has been adopted by Cabinet. Additionally, the Policy Position on the conservation and sustainable use of the five iconic species—black and white rhino, lion, leopard, and elephant—was finalised and adopted by Cabinet.

The National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act Bill has been completed and released for public comments.

Scientific reserves

Scientific reserves are sensitive and undisturbed areas managed for research, monitoring and the maintenance of genetic sources. Access is limited to researchers and staff. Examples of such areas are Marion Island and the Prince Edward Islands near Antarctica.

Wilderness areas

These areas are extensive, uninhabited and underdeveloped. Access is strictly controlled, with no vehicles allowed. The highest management priority is the maintenance of the intrinsic wilderness character. Wilderness areas include the Cederberg Wilderness Area and Dassen Island in the Western Cape, and the Baviaanskloof Wilderness Area in the Eastern Cape.

Transfrontier conservation areas (TFCAs)

A TFCA is a cross-border region. The conservation status of the areas within a TFCA ranges from national parks, private game reserves and communal natural resource management areas to hunting-concession areas. Although fences, highways, railway lines or other barriers separate the constituent areas, they are managed jointly for the long-term sustainable use of natural resources. Unlike in transfrontier parks, free movement of animals between and promote regional peace, cooperation and socio-economic development. The success of TFCAs depends on community involvement. In turn, TFCAs provide local communities with opportunities to generate revenue.

The seven TFCAs are:

- Ai-Ais/Richtersveld (Namibia, South Africa);

- Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park (Botswana, South Africa, Zimbabwe);
- Greater Mapungubwe, Kavango-Zambezi (Angola, Botswana, Namibia, Zambia, Zimbabwe);
- Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park (Botswana, South Africa);
- Lubombo Transfrontier Conservation and Resource Area (Mozambique, South Africa, Eswatini); and
- Maloti-Drakensberg Transfrontier Conservation and Development Area (Lesotho, South Africa).

Biosphere reserves

A biosphere designation is given by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) to special landscapes where people are collaborating to ensure environmental integrity as the basis for their economic development. Biosphere reserves are nominated by their governments for inclusion in the Man and the Biosphere Programme. Whether they are terrestrial, freshwater, coastal or marine in nature, all are experimental areas where different approaches to integrated environmental management are tested. This helps to deepen knowledge of what works in conservation and sustainable development.

South Africa's biosphere reserves include:

The 100 000ha Kogelberg Reserve on the country's southern coast is in the middle of the Cape Floral Region and home to 1 880 different plant species, 77 of which are found only in this region. The Cape West Coast Biosphere Reserve starts in Cape Town in the southern suburb of Diep River and stretches up the west coast as far as the Berg River, encompassing parts of the Cape Floral Region. The reserve includes the Ramsar-protected Langebaan Lagoon as well as Dassen Island, which is home to a penguin colony.

The Cape Winelands Biosphere Reserve includes a part of the Cape Floral Region, as well as the wine-growing region. In the north there is the Waterberg Biosphere Reserve, an area of some 400 000ha in Limpopo. It is an important catchment area for the Limpopo Basin, with four large rivers originating within its borders – the Lephalale, Mokolo, Matlabas and Magalakwena rivers.

The Kruger-to-Canyons Biosphere Reserve stretches from the Kruger National Park to the Blyde River Canyon. It is an important conservation area as it covers three biomes. The Gouritz Cluster Biosphere Reserve is recognised by the UNESCO in terms of the Man and Biosphere Programme.

World heritage sites

A UNESCO World Heritage Site is listed by the organisation as being of special cultural or physical significance. The organisation catalogues, names and conserves sites of outstanding cultural or natural importance to the common heritage of humanity. While each World Heritage Site remains part of the legal territory of the province wherein the site is located, UNESCO considers it in the interest of the international community to preserve each site.

For a site to be awarded a World Heritage status, it has to be recognised as having global historical or environmental significance, signify a phenomenal achievement of humanity or reveal ancient civilisations. The recognition allows the country to access funds for conservation from the World Heritage Fund. To be added onto the list, a country must meet stringent criteria and show how the site will be conserved.

South Africa has 12 world heritage sites proclaimed by the UNESCO:

- **Robben Island** is situated 11km offshore from Cape Town. The island is most famous as the place where Nelson Mandela and his comrades were imprisoned for decades. It is now home to the world-renowned Robben Island Museum and has become a popular tourist attraction.
- **iSimangaliso** was listed as South Africa's first World Heritage Site in December 1999 in recognition of its natural beauty and unique global values. The 332 000ha park contains three major lake systems, eight interlinking ecosystems, 700-year-old fishing traditions, most of South Africa's remaining swamp forests, Africa's largest estuarine system, 526 bird species and 25 000-year-old coastal dunes – among the highest in the world. The name iSimangaliso means "miracle" and "wonder". The park also has four Ramsar sites.
- **The Cradle of Humankind** consists of the hominid fossil sites at Swartkrans, Sterkfontein and Kromdraai. The World Heritage status of Sterkfontein's fossil hominid sites was extended in July 2005 to include the Taung skull fossil site in the North West and Mokopane Valley in Limpopo. The Cradle of Humankind has one of the world's richest concentrations of hominid fossils that provide evidence of human evolution over the past 3.5 million years. Found in Gauteng and North West, the fossil sites cover an area of 47 000 ha. The remains of ancient forms of animals, plants and hominids are encased in a bed of dolomite deposited around 2.5 billion years ago. In April 2010, a new species of hominid, Australopithecus sediba, estimated to be two million years old, was discovered in the Cradle of Humankind.
- **The Ukhahlamba-Drakensberg Park** (a mixed natural and cultural site) is a World Heritage Site covering 242 813ha (2 428km²). The park spans parts of South Africa and Lesotho. It includes the Royal Natal National Park, a provincial park, and the Drakensberg National Park, which covers part of the Drakensberg, the highest mountain in southern Africa. Under the Ramsar Convention, the park is on the List of Wetlands of International Importance.
- **Mapungubwe Heritage Site**: In September 2011, the DFFE, SANParks and Coal of Africa Limited signed a historic Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) as part of the environmental authorisation issued in accordance with the NEMA of 1998, to ensure the integrity of the Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape World Heritage Site. According to the MoA, the integrity of the World Heritage Site will be maintained through comprehensive biodiversity offset programmes, thereby optimising benefits to local communities.
- **Cape Floral Region:** The smallest of the six recognised floral kingdoms of the world is an area of extraordinarily high diversity and home to more than 9 000 vascular plant species, of which 69% are endemic. Much of this diversity is associated with the fynbos biome. The economic worth of fynbos biodiversity, based on harvests of fynbos products (for example, wildflowers) and ecotourism, is estimated to be about R77 million a year. In July 2015, UNESCO approved the extension of the Cape Floral Region Protected Areas World Heritage Site. At the time of inscription, the site was made up of eight protected areas comprising about 553 000ha. The eight protected areas are located in the Eastern Cape and the Western Cape. The extension brings the size of the World Heritage Site to

1 094 742ha and increases the number of protected area clusters making up the Cape Floral Region from eight to 13.

- **The Richtersveld Cultural and Botanical Landscape** covers 160 000 ha of dramatic mountainous desert in the North West. It is the only area where the Nama still construct portable rush-covered, domed houses, or Haru Oms.
- **Vredefort Dome**: About 120 km south-west of Johannesburg, is a representative part of a larger meteorite impact structure, or astrobleme. Dating back more than two million years, it is the oldest astrobleme yet found on Earth. With a radius of 190 km, it is also the largest and the most deeply eroded.

  The Vredefort Dome bears witness to the world's greatest known single energy release event, which had devastating global effects including, according to some scientists, major evolutionary changes. It provides evidence of the Earth's geological history and is crucial to understanding the evolution of the planet. Despite the importance of impact sites to the planet's history, geological activity on the Earth's surface has led to the disappearance of evidence from most of them, and Vredefort is the only example to provide a full geological profile of an astrobleme below the crater floor.
- **The Khomani Cultural Landscape** covers 959 100 ha, forming part of the Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park and including the whole Kalahari Gemsbok National Park, associated with the former San hunter-gatherers. It is a vast desert area associated with Khomani San culture since the Stone Age.
- **The Barberton Makhonjwa Mountains**: Situated in Mpumalanga, the site comprises 40% of the Barberton Greenstone Belt, one of the world's oldest geological structures. These represent the best-preserved succession of volcanic and sedimentary rock dating back 3.25 to 3.6 billion years.

  It features meteor-impact fallback breccias resulting from the impact of meteorites formed just after the Great Bombardment (4.6 to 3.8 billion years ago). It has attracted researchers from all over the world because of its most exposed layers of rock formations. Scientists found fossilised bacteria under thin layers of rock thought to be 3.2 billion years old.

The Presidency has welcomed the latest inscription of the South African human rights and liberation struggle sites in the prestigious list of UNESCO's World Heritage Sites.

The inscription follows the 46th session of the UNESCO World Heritage Committee in New Delhi, India, held from the 21 to 31 of July 2024.

The inscribed sites, termed as "The Human Rights, Liberation and Reconciliation: Nelson Mandela Legacy Sites", which is a serial property comprising 14 components that are located in four provinces and seven municipalities across South Africa are: the Union Buildings, Constitution Hill, Liliesleaf, Sharpeville (comprising three component parts), Walter Sisulu Square, 16 June 1976: The Streets of Orlando West, University of Fort Hare and ZK Mathews House (comprising two component parts), Mqhekezweni, Waaihoek and Ohlange.

Collectively, this serial property demonstrates the events and ideas that served as the core of South Africa's liberation struggle, which continue to inspire humanity and the embrace of reconciliation, more than 30 years later.

The UNESCO World Heritage Committee further inscribed three Middle Stone Age sites as recognition of South Africa's significant contribution to the understanding of the origins of modern human behaviour.

The Emergence of Modern Human Behaviour: The Pleistocene Occupation Sites of South Africa.

The sites are located in the Western Cape and KwaZulu-Natal. The three sites are:

- Diepkloof Rock Shelter, close to Elands Bay, Western Cape;
- Pinnacle Point Site Complex in Mossel Bay, Western Cape; and
- Sibhudu Cave in KwaDukuza, KwaZulu-Natal.

Habitat and wildlife management areas

These areas are subject to human intervention, based on research into the requirements of specific species for survival. They include conservancies; provincial, regional or private reserves created for the conservation of species habitats or biotic communities; marshes; lakes; and nesting and feeding areas.

Protected land and seascapes

These areas are products of the harmonious interaction of people and nature, and include natural environments protected in terms of the Environment Conservation Act, 1989 (Act 73 of 1989), scenic landscapes and historical urban landscapes.

Sustainable-use areas

These emphasise the sustainable use of protected areas such as the Kosi Bay Lake System in KwaZulu-Natal. Nature areas in private ownership are proclaimed and managed to curtail undesirable development in areas with high aesthetic or conservation potential. Conservancies are formed to involve the ordinary landowner in conservation. Landowners can establish a conservancy where conservation principles are integrated with normal farming activities.

Wetlands

The IUCN identifies wetlands as the third most important support system on Earth. Wetlands make up only 2,4% of South Africa's surface area but they are responsible for a disproportionately high value of ecological infrastructure that provides critical ecosystem services such as water purification and flood regulation, among others. Wetlands support a range of specialised plant, insect and mammal life and also supply food, grazing, building and craft material.

They improve water quality, reduce flood impacts, control erosion and sustain river flows. Furthermore, wetlands play a significant role in ensuring a steady supply of clean water for communities and helping government save hundreds of millions of rands that would be required to set up purification plants/facilities.

South Africa was one of the first six countries to become a signatory to the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, called the Ramsar Convention, when it came into force in 1975. It is an intergovernmental treaty that

provides the framework for national action and international co-operation for the conservation and wise use of wetlands and their resources.

The DFFE is responsible for the South African Wetlands Conservation Programme, which ensures that the country's obligations in terms of the Ramsar Convention are met.

South Africa has 22 Ramsar sites, including:

- Barberspan
- Blesbokspruit Nature Reserve
- De Hoop Vlei
- De Mond (Heuningnes Estuary)
- Kosi Bay
- Langebaan
- Makuleke Wetlands
- Ndumo Game Reserve
- Ntsikeni Nature Reserve
- Nylsvley Nature Reserve
- Orange River Mouth Wetland
- Prince Edward Islands in Antarctica
- Seekoeivlei
- St Lucia
- The turtle beaches and coral reefs of Tongaland Ukhahlamba - Drakensberg Park
- Verlorenvlei Nature Reserve
- Wilderness Lakes.

World Wetlands Day is celebrated annually on 2 February. World Wetlands Day 2021 was held under the theme; "Wetlands and Water". Wetlands are rich in biodiversity and are a habitat for a dense variety of plant and animal species. Latest estimates show a global decline of biodiversity, while wetlands are disappearing three times faster than forests. The theme is a unique opportunity to highlight wetland biodiversity, its status, why it matters and promote actions to reverse its loss.

South Africa is one of the contracting parties to the Ramsar Convention. One of the obligations of the contracting parties to the convention is to commemorate World Wetlands Day. South Africa is a water-scarce country, and the water in many streams is polluted. Both droughts and floods are common. In this regard, wetlands play a vital role by removing toxic substances and sediment from water, while also improving downstream water quality and the overall health of communities.

Wetlands are able to reduce the severity of droughts and floods by regulating stream flow. They also help to purify water and provide a habitat for many different plants and animals. Besides these indirect benefits to society, wetlands provide many direct benefits in the form of resources, such as fibre for making crafts, as well as recreational opportunities. However, a lack of community awareness on the value and benefits of wetlands often leads to their transformation by humans.

Marine protected areas (MPAs)

MPAs conserve natural environments and assist in the management of fisheries by protecting and rebuilding economically important stocks. They are also used to develop and regulate coastal ecotourism opportunities.

Government shares joint responsibility for South Africa's MPAs with the SANParks and Ezemvelo KwaZulu-Natal Wildlife.

South Africa's MPAs include:

- Aliwal Shoal, KwaZulu-Natal
- Betty's Bay, Western Cape
- Bird Island, Eastern Cape
- De Hoop, Western Cape
- Dwesa-Cwebe, Eastern Cape
- False Bay, Western Cape
- Goukamma, Western Cape
- Hluleka, Eastern Cape
- iSimangaliso, KwaZulu-Natal
- Langebaan Lagoon, Sixteen Mile Beach, Malgas Island
- Marcus Island, Jutten Island, Western Cape
- Pondoland, Eastern Cape
- Robberg, Western Cape
- Sardinia Bay, Eastern Cape
- Stilbaai, Western Cape
- Table Mountain, Western Cape
- Trafalgar, KwaZulu-Natal
- Tsitsikamma, Western Cape.

Zoological gardens

By mid-2023, the 85ha National Zoological Gardens (NZG), also known as the Pretoria Zoo, housed 3 117 specimens of 209 mammal species, 1 358 specimens of 202 bird species, 3 871 specimens of 190 fish species, 388 specimens of four invertebrate species, 309 specimens of 93 reptile species and 44 specimens of seven amphibian species.

The NZG is the largest zoo in the country and the only one with national status. More than 600 000 people visit the zoo annually. The total length of the walkways in the Zoo in Pretoria is approximately 6km. The highly accredited tourism site, World Atlas, published an article rating the Pretoria Zoo, as one of the 10 best ranked zoos in the world, competing with the well-known Bronx Zoo in New York. An aquarium and reptile Park also form part of the zoo facility in Pretoria.

The aquarium is the largest inland marine aquarium in the country. The third largest collection of exotic trees can be found at the zoo. The NZG has since been incorporated into SANBI. As part of a new repositioning strategy, the zoo will be modernised and its role in species conservation, research, biodiversity education and public engagement, tourism and recreation enhanced. **Some of the government and private venues include the following**:

- **Joburg Zoo** in Johannesburg, which was founded in 1904, covers 55ha of land and houses more than 320 species of animals.
- **Mitchell Park Zoo** in Durban, which was named after Sir Charles Bullen Hugh Mitchell, is the country's second-oldest zoo after the NZG in Pretoria.
- **East London Zoo** is located in the Queens Park Zoological Gardens in East London, Eastern Cape. It is financed and managed by the Buffalo City Metropolitan Municipality. Apart from the animals, the zoo and gardens contain a treasure trove of flora and fauna, some of which is only found in the Eastern Cape.
- **Birds of Eden** is the world's largest free flight aviary and bird sanctuary, located near Plettenberg Bay in the Western Cape. Its unique two-hectare dome (the world's largest) spans over a gorge of indigenous forest. It is home to more than 3 500 birds from over 220 species, with African birds being the main focus.

- **Umgeni River Bird Park** in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal, is situated in 3,5ha of lush tropical landscaping and houses an ever-increasing collection of more than 800 birds from 200 species.
- **World of Birds** is the largest bird park in Africa and one of the few large bird parks in the world. More than 3 000 birds (and small animals) of 400 different species are uniquely presented in more than 100 spacious landscaped walk-through aviaries, allowing you the most intimate closeness with nature.
- **The Bushbabies and Monkey Sanctuary**, situated in Hartbeespoort Dam, provides an environment where monkeys (primates) can be given their freedom in a natural environment. The sanctuary situated in one of the many kloofs (gorges) of the Magaliesberg mountain range provides the perfect environment for monkeys from around the world.

Breeding centres

There are several game-breeding centres in South Africa. The NZG of South Africa is responsible for the management of the Mokopane Biodiversity Conservation Centre, covering 1 333ha. The centre supplements the NZG's breeding programme for various endangered animals, and its own animal collection. It is home to an abundance of exotic and indigenous fauna, such as the lemur, the rare tsessebe, roan antelope and black rhino.

The De Wildt Cheetah and Wildlife Centre near Pretoria is best known for its captive breeding programme that contributed to the cheetah being removed from the endangered list in the South African Red Data Book – Terrestrial Mammals in 1986. De Wildt also breeds a number of rare and endangered African species. The most spectacular of these is the magnificent king cheetah, which is a true cheetah, but with a variation in coat pattern and colour.

De Wildt also plays a major role in breeding and releasing wild dogs. It has donated breeding nuclei of the highly endangered riverine rabbit and suni antelope to the Kruger National Park. The De Wildt Vulture Unit is a rehabilitation and holding facility for injured, poisoned and disabled vultures. The Hoedspruit Endangered Species Centre in Limpopo was established as a breeding programme for the then endangered cheetah. The centre caters for, among other animals, five species of vulture: Cape griffins as well as white-backed, hooded, white-headed and lappet-faced vultures. The centre is also known for its wild dog breeding programme.

The Hoedspruit Research and Breeding Programme includes the rare black-footed cat, vulnerable African wild cat, ground hornbills (in co-operation with the NZG), the bald ibis and the endangered blue crane. Elephant, white rhino, buffalo, caracal, sable antelope, bushbuck and tsessebe have also been cared for and rehabilitated there.

Aquariums and oceanariums

There are aquariums in Pretoria, Gqeberha, Cape Town, Durban and East London. The Aquarium and Reptile Park of the NZG in Pretoria is the largest inland aquarium in Africa, with the largest collection of freshwater fish. It is also the only aquarium in South Africa that exhibits a large variety of marine fish in artificial seawater and the only inland aquarium housing ragged-tooth sharks.

The Gqeberha Oceanarium is one of the city's major attractions. Exhibits include an underwater observation area, a dolphin research centre, and various smaller tanks containing 40 different species of bony fish and two larger tanks that display sharks and stingrays. The Two Oceans Aquarium at the Victoria and Alfred Waterfront, Cape Town, has more than 3 000 specimens representing some 300 species of fish, invertebrates, mammals, birds and plants supported by the waters along the Cape Coast.

The aquarium at uShaka Marine World in Durban incorporates both freshwater and seawater species, and is the fifth-largest aquarium in the world by water volume. It comprises of Sea World, Dolphin World, Beach World, and Wet and Wild World. Sea World has a unique shipwreck-themed aquarium, a penguin rookery and a 1 200-seater dolphin stadium, the largest dolphinarium in Africa.

Snake and reptile parks

The Gqeberha Snake Park at Bayworld has a wide variety of South African and foreign reptiles, including tortoises, boa constrictors, pythons, crocodiles, lizards and venomous snakes such as cobras, mambas and rattlers. Rare and threatened species, including the Madagascar ground boa, are housed in realistically landscaped glass enclosures.

The Aquarium and Reptile Park at the NZG houses 80 reptile species from all over the world. The Hartbeespoort Dam Snake and Animal Park near Pretoria features one of the finest reptile collections in southern Africa. It offers seal shows and snake-handling demonstrations. The Pure Venom Reptile Farm is one of the largest of South Africa's reptile parks. It is inland from Shelly Beach, on KwaZulu-Natal's South Coast. The CrocRiver Enviro Park in Nelspruit is the largest facility of its type in Africa.

The park offers, among other things, turtle, crocodile and fishponds; the water monitor lizard pond; and the Desert House, in which a desert-like atmosphere has been created – this is home to the reptile gallery where indigenous and exotic reptiles from all over the world are displayed. Khamai Reptile Centre's primary aims are conservation, breeding of endangered reptiles and education. Located outside Hoedspruit in Mpumalanga, it offers a close-up look at many local as well as exotic snakes, crocodiles and lizards.

Wildlife protection

The Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) states that big cats, which are among the most widely recognised and admired animals, are facing many and varied threats caused mostly by human activities worldwide. South Africa adheres to the principle of sustainable utilisation of natural resources, as well as principles set out in the NDP aimed at creating a climate-resilient society while growing the economy and increasing jobs.

As such, a range of measures have been introduced to ensure that lion, leopard and cheetah populations are conserved and properly managed. This includes the implementation of a Biodiversity Management Plan for the African Lion. The Scientific Authority of South Africa conducted a Non-Detriment Finding (NDF) as required by CITES. The NDF for lions states that there are currently no

major threats to the wild and managed lion populations in South Africa, although the management of re-introduced wild lions needs some improvement.

Minor, but non-detrimental threats, include over-utilisation, disease, poaching and conflict with communities around protected areas. Wildlife crime not only threatens natural resources, but also the economy through financial burdens and the loss of economic and development opportunities. As a country richly endowed with natural resources, South Africa is not immune to these challenges, with criminal syndicates targeting iconic species, such as the cycad, rhino, elephant and lion, as well as species not often considered as being under threat: birds, tortoises, lizards and snakes.

The declaration of wildlife crime as a priority crime in South Africa has resulted in a multi-disciplinary, multi-sectoral approach focused on collaboration through the national security structure. This involves border and customs officials, the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA), the South African Police Service (SAPS), and institutions such as the Airports Company of South Africa, which manages international airports. The country has also introduced the development of critical skills aimed at increasing its capacity to detect and investigate these crimes.

The DFFE is currently working with the World Wide Fund for Nature on a project to increase the country's ability to tackle wildlife trafficking. This project, funded by the United States Department of State's Bureau of International and Law Enforcement Affairs, focuses on the development of further training materials to bolster the country's national compliance and enforcement programme, including an e-learning platform for officials, audiovisual materials, specific curriculum and manuals.

Traveller awareness material has also been developed to highlight the threat that wildlife crime poses to the rich biodiversity and to encourage people not to support the illegal trade in wildlife. EMIs in the DFFE check consignments of wildlife for exports from South Africa to ensure that they meet all legal requirements. About 300 legal wildlife-related consignments are exported/imported on a monthly basis at the OR Tambo International Airport. The South African Revenue Service (SARS) K9 unit at OR Tambo International Airport uses specialist sniffer dogs to detect attempts to smuggle wildlife into South Africa.

Rhino poaching

During 2023, 499 rhinos were poached across South Africa; 406 were killed on state properties and 93 on privately owned parks/reserves/farms. This was an increase of 51 compared to 448 rhinos poached in 2022.

The pressure has again been felt in the KwaZulu-Natal (KZN), with Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park facing the brunt of poaching cases, losing 307 of the total national poaching loss. This is the highest poaching loss within this province. While KZN recorded 49 arrests and 13 firearms seized, multi-disciplinary teams continue to work tirelessly to slow this relentless pressure. Kruger National Park (KNP), in Mpumalanga, recorded 37% decrease from 2022, with a total of 78 poached in 2023. No rhinos were poached in any other national parks.

As part of government's poverty relief programme, there are several fence monitors employed from neighbouring communities that patrol the western boundary fence of the KNP and report fence breakages, illegal tracks and people entering the KNP, as well as animals escaping from the KNP.

In relation to rhino prosecutions, verdicts were handed down in 36 cases, of which 35 resulted in guilty verdicts and one in a not-guilty verdict. The cases resulted in the conviction of 45 accused rhino poachers/rhino horn traffickers, with a conviction rate of 97%.

Because the demand for rhino horn remains a constant threat to rhino populations, collaboration between the law enforcement agencies, including the South African Police Serice, Directorate for Priority Crime Investigation and the Green Scorpions, customs officials, the Financial Intelligence Centre and the National Prosecuting Authority remain key. These efforts are supported by private security. An important development in strengthening the collaboration between these role players to effectively address the organised nature of rhino poaching and wildlife trafficking is Cabinet's recent approval in May 2023 of the National Integrated Strategy to Combat Wildlife Trafficking (NISCWT).

This strategy aims to break the illicit value chain of wildlife trafficking in South Africa and beyond its borders. It represents a commitment by government to direct law enforcement ability and effort and mobilise societal support to address the threat wildlife trafficking poses to national security and the country's rich biodiversity. The NISCWT also aims to address the illegal trade in, and poaching of, other species that are threatened by trafficking syndicates, like abalone.

The integrated work of the law enforcement agencies including the SAPS, Hawks, SANParks, Environmental Enforcement Fusion Centre, the Environmental Management Inspectorate or Green Scorpions, customs officials, provincial park authorities, and the NPA has resulted in successful convictions.

Managing rhino populations

The biological management initiative focuses on continued movement of rhinos to expand ranges and support rhino strongholds. In small parks and provincial reserves, the translocation of rhinos seeks to mimic how young animals disperse naturally. Within the KNP, the translocation of rhinos from Kruger as part of South Africa's biological management innovations of expanding ranges and establishing additional rhino strongholds is challenged by the emergence of bovine tuberculosis in both black and white rhino, albeit at low incidence.

South Africa's veterinary regulations require several procedures to ensure that translocated rhinos do not serve as a source of spreading the disease into commercial stock production areas of South Africa. The development of efficient systems to overcome this challenge is in progress. Even so, innovative biological management has used translocations within the KNP as a mechanism to direct poaching to focus less on cows. This goes well with initiatives to dehorn rhinos embedded in strategic approaches that target individuals that frequent poaching hotspots, but more importantly, approaches that minimise the losses of cows.

Complimenting these interventions are guarding initiatives that focus on regular individual monitoring of individual rhinos. These combinations of interventions seek to

maximise the breeding potential of both black and white rhinos. The integrated initiatives of SANParks to manage its rhino population have had varied successes. Within the KNP, the continued onslaught of poaching resulted in a continued decline of rhino numbers.

World Ranger Day

The 31st of July marks World Ranger Day. It is celebrated in honour of the men and women that have lost their lives in the line of duty, and those who dedicate their lives to protecting the environment. SANParks honoured its rangers at World Ranger Day celebrations across all 21 national parks.

International cooperation

International co-operation remains a critical component of the overall response strategy to halt rhino poaching and related wildlife crime. South Africa continues to engage countries where rhino horn seizures take place in order to request that samples of the rhino horn DNA be sent to the country for analysis in line with the CITES resolutions. This enables the country to link the seized horns to poaching cases and live rhinos or rhino horn stockpiles, thus providing key information to further support investigations and understand transit routes. The Hawks have also received very good co-operation from China, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore, Vietnam and Japan in their efforts to combat wildlife trafficking.

Marine pollution and sustainability

South Africa has one of the world's busiest shipping routes and has experienced many oil spills over the years. It is estimated that 80% of the world's tanker traffic passes South Africa's coast. The DFFE developed the National Contingency Plan for the Prevention and Combating of Pollution from Ships, in consultation with the South African Maritime Safety Authority and the Department of Transport.

This includes disposing of, recovering or stabilising spilt oil and rehabilitating the environment. With 80% of marine pollution emanating from land-based activities, the DFFE plans to implement the National Programme of Action for Land-based Sources of Pollution, while refining strategies for combating marine pollution from oil spills.

The DFFE has embarked on a process to adopt a new protocol on land-based sources of marine pollution under the amended Nairobi Convention for the Protection, Management and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Western Indian Ocean. The department has also developed the Cape Zone Oil Spill Plan.

Protecting the coastline

To counter illegal activities along the coastline, as well as the country's 1 155 000km² Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), the DFFE boosted its compliance unit with the appointment of more than 80 fishery control officers and 100 honorary fishery control officers, after the implementation of the Honorary Fishery Control Officers Policy. The department took delivery of four environmental protection vessels, as part of measures to protect marine and coastal resources, namely the Lillian Ngoyi, Ruth First, Victoria Mxenge and Sarah Baartman. They patrol up to the 200 nautical mile limit from the shore and the most remote reaches of the EEZ as well as around the Prince Edward Islands.

The vessels also conduct multilateral patrols in the Southern African Development Community coastal states.

The Phakisa approach

Operation Phakisa enables government to implement its policies and programmes better, faster and more effectively. The initiative was designed to fast-track the implementation of solutions on critical development issues. This is a unique initiative to address issues highlighted in the NDP Vision 2030 such as poverty, unemployment and inequality. The DFFE has registered notable progress with regards to Operation Phakisa: Oceans Economy; Chemicals and Waste Phakisa and Operation Phakisa: Biodiversity.

Economies

Operation Phakisa: Oceans Economy

South Africa is a maritime nation with jurisdiction over one of the largest exclusive economic zones in the world. The country's oceans represent a significant asset for current and future generations, with enormous economic potential, in aquaculture, bioprospecting, marine ecotourism, extractive industries, and less obvious benefits of healthy ecosystem services, such as climate regulation, carbon storage and waste absorption.

By May 2021, the growing Oceans Economy had contributed R41 billion to South Africa's GDP, creating 26 764 jobs in six focus areas, including marine transport and manufacturing, offshore oil and gas exploration, aquaculture, small harbours development, coastal and marine tourism, marine protection services and ocean governance. The DFFE continues to unlock the economic potential of South Africa's oceans, growing the GDP and creating more sustainable jobs – while ensuring that the country's oceans and coastal ecosystems are sustainably managed. Highlights include the development of the National Guideline Towards the Establishment of Coastal Management Lines.

This is intended to minimise risks posed by short- and long-term coastal processes such as storm surges, erosion and sea level rise. A national coastal access strategy is also being developed to provide guidance around the public's access to closed-off beaches. Marine pollution is another challenge that threatens fragile ecosystems. South Africa has a number of measures in place to tackle this problem, including the National Pollution Laboratory operated by the Walter Sisulu University, which is expected to start working in the near future.

The laboratory will allow for in-depth analysis of the samples that could not be done through mobile laboratories. In addition, South Africa is amongst the countries that have endorsed the UN Environment Programme's Clean Seas Campaign. The campaign is aimed at stepping up international, regional and national efforts to combat marine litter. As part of the campaign, the DFFE has announced the piloting of its Source-to-Sea Initiative – a strategy to combat threats to both freshwater and marine ecosystems. The oceans have the potential to contribute up to R177 billion to the GDP and create over one million jobs by 2033.

Operation Phakisa: Oceans Economy MPAs

The gazetting of a network of 20 representative Operation Phakisa: Oceans Economy MPAs has increased South Africa's marine ecosystem area under protection in the

country's EEZ, from 0,4% to 5,4%, to provide protection to 90% of habitat types, as well as contribute to global protection in line with South Africa's international commitments.

The network strives to support multiple objectives for biodiversity in alignment with the Oceans Economy goals. The MPAs represent seamounts, submarine canyons, volcanic pinnacles and a variety of ecosystem types on the shelf, continental margin and abyss in both the Indian and Atlantic oceans. They also provide the first protection for several threatened and fragile ecosystem types, including threatened mud, gravel, and shelf edge habitats and sensitive deep-water scleractinian, stylasterine and soft coral-dominated ecosystem types.

The 20 MPAs will, among other things, contribute to fisheries sustainability, advance marine ecotourism and help maintain resilience in ecosystems that are under stress from climate change. Work on these MPAs dates back to 2014, when government endorsed a plan to achieve, as part of Operation Phakisa: Oceans Economy, a viable network of MPAs. South Africa's ocean space, which is one of the most varied in the world, is highly productive with rich biodiversity providing for living and non-living resources that contribute significantly to the country's economy and to job creation. MPAs provide safe spaces in which fish can breed undisturbed.

They are essential to maintain eco-certification of the South African deep-sea trawl fishery. This certification process assesses whether habitat and nursery areas for hake fishery are adequately protected. MPAs also contribute to growing South Africa's marine eco-tourism sector by providing undisturbed natural habitat for whales, sharks, seals, dolphins, turtles and seabirds for international and domestic tourists to experience.

An adequate network of MPAs will also provide the basis for ongoing resilience to the impact of climate change. Oceans are an essential component of the climate system, absorbing and transferring heat, and regulating the exchange of carbon dioxide with the atmosphere. With increasing carbon dioxide levels and rising ocean temperatures, this regulatory capacity is at risk. The network of MPAs will assist in building ecological resilience, and therefore social and economic resilience in the growing Oceans Economy.

Operation Phakisa: Biodiversity Economy

South Africa has a multi-faceted approach to the management of its rich natural heritage. The approach focuses on an inclusive, value-chain approach to the development of the biodiversity economy, taking into consideration the fact that communities are the primary custodians of the country's biodiversity.

To attract investments in the biodiversity economy, we profiled 54 bankable businesses on the Biodiversity Sector Investment Portal. As a result, two projects attracted an investment of $450 000 to promote conservation and community well-being.

Cabinet approved for public comment the revised National Biodiversity Economy Strategy (NBES). The revised NBES seeks to advance an inclusive biodiversity sector that locally beneficiates the rich indigenous biological and genetic resources for a thriving people and nature. This renewed NBES was central to discussions during the 2024 Biodiversity Economy and Investment Indaba (BEII) held in March.

Operation Phakisa: Chemicals and Waste

The waste economy has the potential to address inequality, alleviate poverty and create jobs. The DFFE continues to support waste pickers through various programmes, such as the Recycling Enterprise Support Programme. The primary objective of the programme is to provide developmental funding for projects in the form of start-up grants. These projects are either start-up or pre-existing enterprises establishing buy-back centres, material recovery facilities, construction and demolishing solutions and plastic palletisation plants in line with the Operation Phakisa initiatives.

In terms of chemicals, Cabinet has recommended that South Africa should ratify the Minamata Convention on Mercury and the Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol on the Protection of the Ozone Layer. The Kigali Amendment will have co-benefits for mitigating climate change and ozone depletion. The South African government is also committed to minimise plastic pollution.

The DFFE recently conducted a Plastic Material Study and is in the process of consulting with the cosmetics industry to phase out the use of microbeads in cosmetics. Plans are also underway to review the impact of the implementation of plastic bag policies. In addition, the DFFE will continue to work with the packaging sector (paper, glass, plastic and metal) to raise the amount of waste diverted from landfill to above 58%.

The department is expected to launch the Keep South Africa Clean Campaign with the aim of mobilising citizens to become environmentally conscious and create a South Africa free of litter and illegal dumping.

The department is committed to supporting local government in increasing waste diversion from landfill sites through reuse, recycling, and recovery, focusing on packaging waste such as paper, plastic, and glass through Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) schemes. Eight municipalities are targeted to receive EPR infrastructure and support for separate waste collection.

The department surpassed its target for reducing Hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs) in 2023, achieving more than a 50% reduction. Our efforts are aiding the restoration of the ozone layer, with scientific data showing that the ozone hole is shrinking due to the effective management of Ozone Depleting Substances (ODS).

The DFFE published Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) schemes for Paper and Packaging, E-waste and Lighting for implementation on pesticides, portable batteries and lubricant oils. This will create economic incentives to promote waste reduction; encourage product design to cater for recyclability, re-use and treatment; and facilitate a circular economy.

During the 2023/24 financial year, 338 municipal councillors and officials were trained on waste management, which contributes to capacitating local government to deliver on the waste management mandate.

The DFFE will continue to provide technical assistance to municipalities applying for waste management fleet purchases using parts of municipal infrastructure grants to enhance waste collection services, combat illegal dumping, and improve landfill site management. Thirty-two

municipalities have received support for cleaning campaigns aimed at enhancing cleanliness.

The implementation of the Municipal Greening and Cleaning Programme through a partnership model with the municipalities created the most work opportunities. The partnership had the department paying for the EPWP stipends and providing the primary project management responsibilities. The municipalities provided personal protective equipment (PPE), tools of trade and medical screening. The Municipal Greening and Cleaning Programme contributed to the waste management service delivery through daily cleaning-up and clearing of illegal dumping hotspots.

Recently, Cabinet approved the Industry Waste Tyre Management Plan (IndWTMP) for implementation. It was prepared in accordance with Section 29 of the National Environmental Management: Waste Act.

In the 2023/24 financial year, 53 333 tons of waste tyres were processed, marking a 38% increase from 36 354,76 tons in the previous year. Additionally, approximately

25 000 tons were exported, diverting them from storage.

Chemicals and waste management

South Africa has taken steps to promote the environmentally sound management of chemicals and waste throughout the life cycle, including being a party to a range of multilateral environment agreements and an active member in instruments on chemicals and waste.

These include the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade; Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants; Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer; Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movement of Hazardous Wastes; and Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management, which is governed by the International Conference on Chemicals Management.

South Africa had a significant role in negotiations concerning the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee to prepare a global legally binding instrument on mercury, including research into coal-dependent power or electricity stations and the situational analysis of mercury in the country. To align fragmented legislation, the DFFE established a National Multi-Stakeholder Committee for Chemicals Management to facilitate co-ordination. The 2020 National Waste Management Strategy gives effect to the terms of the National Environmental Management: Waste Act of 2008. It directs the environmental protection programmes. It also drives a sustainable and environmentally friendly, inclusive economic growth, with three focus pillars – waste minimisation, effective and sustainable services, and waste awareness and compliance.

Waste Management Bureau

The Waste Management Bureau aims to reduce waste through recycling. The bureau monitors recycling plans and provides specialist services to government and recycling companies. Over the medium term, the bureau plans to introduce tyre recycling initiatives. The bureau also plans to introduce the Recycling Enterprise Support Programme, which will provide support services, training and advice to transporters, storage depot operators and tyre recyclers.

Youth Jobs in Waste and Township Greening

These projects are funded by the DFFE through its Environmental Protection and Infrastructure Programme and aim to contribute towards poverty alleviation while empowering beneficiaries to participate in the mainstream economy. Youth will benefit from this project through the formation of self-help groups, which will positively impact on their knowledge of financial literacy and self-empowerment.

The Youth Jobs in Waste initiative is focused on landfill operation and management, planning administration relating to waste collection and planning and undertaking waste awareness campaigns. The people who will be assisting with the activities will be based in different municipalities for a year. The DFFE aims to create eco-friendly, greener open spaces that are safe, attractively designed, and well managed for the benefit of all the country's communities as well as promoting maximum use of alternative energy sources and an environment that is clean, green and healthy for all.

The department has funded numerous projects within the Randfontein Municipality, which are being implemented using labour-intensive methods in line with the EPWP, targeting 60% women in employment, 55% youth and 2% persons with disabilities. The waste sector has been identified as a key role player in achieving the goal of economic upliftment through job creation as the DFFE works towards reaching the NDP's goal of creating an environmentally sustainable, climate change resilient, low-carbon economy and just society by 2030.

The Youth Jobs in Waste Programme was designed to address some of the critical areas of assistance, including capacity-building, where youth are placed in municipalities for a period of a year to assist with administration relating to waste collection and planning.

Recycling

The National Recycling Forum is a non-profit organisation created to promote the recovery and recycling of recyclable materials in South Africa. Members of the forum include representatives of:

- the formal recycling industry in South Africa;
- government departments;
- regional recycling forums;
- local government-based organisations; and
- local government utilities and co-opted advisory members.

To promote the interests of its members and the formal recycling industry in South Africa, the National Recycling Forum:

- Provides a national communication forum for key players in the field of recycling; interacts with central and provincial government to encourage the recycling of glass, paper, plastics, tinplate steel, used oil and electrical and electronic waste; facilitates the formation of regional forums that draw their memberships from enthusiastic and interested volunteers as well as small recyclers, in the major centres of South Africa; and encourages the establishment of buy-back centres and drop-off points through the activities of its members in the various centres.
- Collect-a-Can, one of the oldest recycling initiatives in South Africa, has been instrumental in creating a culture of recycling in the country. It has obtained local and

international acclaim for its contribution towards protecting the environment, as well as its significant contribution to job creation and poverty alleviation.

The founders of Collect-a-Can, ArcelorMittal South Africa and Nampak, started the company 23 years ago to proactively address the steel beverage can industry's responsibility to the environment. Their Cash for Cans initiative encourages cans to be collected and sold to Collect-a-Can for cash, because recovery and recycling aid job creation in many communities and create an additional source of income for schools, NGOs, and other community groups.

Collect-a-Can has introduced millions of school children to caring for the environment through its schools' competition. Recycling has been valued at a contribution of as much as R50 billion to the South African economy. In effect, waste is now a renewable resource and not something to throw away.

Clean-up and Recycle SA Week

The Clean-up and Recycle SA Week is an annual initiative by the local plastics industry, supported and endorsed by various packaging and retail streams and retailers. Each year, close to 120 000 volunteers participate in these clean-up activities that take place along roadsides, rivers, schools, residential and illegal dumping areas. The initiative is supported by the DFFE, provincial governments, municipalities, environmental organisations, businesses, schools and communities with the intention to promote and unite the world's approach towards clean-up campaign initiatives.

The DFFE has been celebrating the Clean-up and Recycle Week SA through awareness-raising activations to encourage communities to know the benefits of keeping their environment clean and diverting their waste away from landfill sites through innovative means, either through reduction, reuse, repurposing, recycling or upcycling of their waste materials.

The Clean-up and Recycle SA Week's objectives are clearly aligned with those of the Good Green Deeds Programme as it seeks to highlight the importance of active citizenry in the protection and management of natural resources and pollution in the neighbourhoods they live in, rivers, oceans and the role they play in the lives of all South Africans.

Climate change and air quality management

South Africa is making steady progress in implementing the National Climate Change Response Policy, despite having to balance its economic aspirations and environmental protection. Government continues to engage actively and meaningfully in international climate change negotiations, specifically with the UNFCCC.

The policy implementation actions and activities flowing from this include the analysis of mitigation potential in key economic sectors as the basis for the establishment of desired emission reduction outcomes and defining the optimal mix of measures for achieving those outcomes, with the greatest benefit and least cost to the economy.

Air quality remains an important and challenging environmental issue in South Africa. Technical and legislative tools have been developed to roll-out and monitor the implementation of national environmental management, including the:

- National Framework for Air Quality Management;
- Air quality model by-laws;
- Air-quality management planning manual;
- National Ambient Air Quality Standards and Listed Activities; and the
- Minimum Emission Standards.

Several of these tools were under review to accelerate the ongoing implementation of the Air Quality Act of 2004. The South African Air Quality Information System (SAAQIS) contains the latest updated data on locations and can give the status of air quality or pollution for a specific day and time on its website: www.saaqis.org.za. The DFFE and the SAWS have upgraded the SAAQIS. South Africans can now view the state of air live from the government monitoring network on their smartphones and other gadgets.

Several air quality monitoring stations, mostly in Mpumalanga, eThekwini Municipality, the City of Johannesburg and the City of Tshwane, report to the SAAQIS. South Africa reached the legally binding climate change agreement at the 21st Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC in Paris, France in December 2015.

The agreement was the culmination of a four-year negotiation process that was initiated in Durban in 2011 at the 17th Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC. South Africa is among the countries that have signed the Paris Agreement – committing to ensuring that the country continued to play a positive role in the building of a low-carbon, job-creating and pro-development green economy.

17th Air Quality Governance Lekgotla was hosted on 04 to 06 September 2023 at the Protea Hotel The Ranch in Limpopo. The theme of the 2023 Annual Air Quality Governance Lekgotla was "Scalable Emission Reduction by 2030". The deliberations were to prioritise the establishment of a platform that will take forward the implementation of emission reduction through tools and interventions that support the implementation objective. This included a focused compliance effort, a functional atmospheric emission licensing regime and a functional ambient air quality monitoring network. The Lekgotla provided an opportunity for government officials to interact and strengthen regulatory tools towards improved air quality management. Various air quality officials from all three spheres of government participated in various issues such as air quality management planning tools, ambient air quality monitoring and compliance monitoring and enforcement.

Environmental Impact Assessment

The environmental impact assessment is a tool to advance sustainable development. South Africa's environmental impact assessment regulations are:

- streamlining the environmental impact assessment process;
- introducing an approach where impact on the environment gets more attention; and
- introducing a listing notice dedicated to activities planned for predefined sensitive areas.

The Environmental Assessment Practitioners Association of South Africa (EAPASA) aims to:

- achieve effective quality assurance in environmental assessment practice in South Africa;
- promote the empowerment of black and female professionals within the environmental assessment field;
- encourage continued professional development for environmental assessment practitioners; and
- promote awareness of the purpose and practice of environmental assessment in South Africa.

The DFFE is already fully integrating impact assessments on waste and environmental impact assessment. In order to advance and fast-track environmental authorisations for key infrastructure projects, the department continues to undertake Strategic Environmental Assessments. The vast scientific information from these assessments has aided in the streamlining of decision making for South Africa's Strategic Infrastructure Projects led by The Presidency.

For the 2023/24 financial year, the department finalised and issued decisions on 100% (99/99) national environmental impact assessment applications within the stipulated time frame of 57 working days, for applications within the gazetted Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Corridors. For other applications not within the gazetted SEA Corridors, the department finalised 99% (221/224) National Environmental Impact Assessment applications within stipulated time frame of 107 working days. The department's Directorate of Appeals and Legal Review concluded 16 Eskom Minimum Emission Standards appeal decisions and prioritised and finalised 30 energy-related appeals within the financial year, assisting in relieving the energy situation.

Aquaculture

Aquaculture incorporates the breeding, trading or rearing of aquatic organisms in a controlled or selected aquatic environment for recreational, commercial or subsistence purposes. It is divided into freshwater culture and mariculture. Species farmed in the latter include dusky kob, abalone, Pacific oysters, Mediterranean mussels and black mussels, among others. According to the National Aquaculture Strategic Framework, the sector is relatively small, and government wants to create a climate in which it can grow. Special attention will be paid to freshwater aquaculture, as it has shown growth potential.

Government is also planning to boost investments in research, development technology, transfer and extension, as well as education and training programmes in aquaculture. Abalone fishing is severely restricted in South African waters; however, poaching is rife, as it is a lucrative trade. Poaching has caused the decline in abalone numbers over the years. The species is highly coveted and fetches high prices, especially in the Far East.

The National Aquaculture Policy Framework was developed against the backdrop of a global aquaculture sector that has seen an increased demand for fishery products. The policy provides a unified framework for the establishment and development of an industry that contributes towards sustainable job creation and increased investment. In South Africa, marine and freshwater aquaculture presents a good opportunity to diversify fish production to satisfy local demand; contribute to food security, job creation, economic development and rural development; and improve export opportunities.

Aquaculture has been given a boost through its inclusion in the Oceans Economy: Operation Phakisa. While the marine-based mariculture part of aquaculture has been around for some years, focusing on species such as abalone, oysters and mussels, freshwater aquaculture is experiencing a rapid expansion, owing in part to government's multi-pronged aquaculture promotion campaign.

Globally, wild fish stocks have been dwindling, growing at a modest 1% per annum, while aquaculture has grown by 7% and accounts for 44% of the global fish production. As such, aquaculture is seen as a quick win for growing the Oceans Economy.

Erosion and desertification

The health of the country's soil is of great concern. Community-managed land has the potential to generate billions of rands worth of ecosystem benefits in South Africa through, for example, reduced pollution, clean water and erosion control. It adds that investment in avoiding land degradation and restoring degraded land makes sound economic sense and the benefits generally far exceed the costs. As such, the country has managed to secure more than $3.6 million through the Global Environment Facility's fund for the implementation of a project to address desertification, land degradation and the effects of drought in grazing lands in Limpopo and the Northern Cape.

Globally, negotiations are underway to discuss possible options for addressing drought under the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD). According to the UN Environment Programme, desertification affects 900 million people in 99 countries, with 24 million metric tons (Mt) of topsoil being lost to erosion annually. The resultant land degradation costs Africa about $9 billion every year. Most South African soil is unstable. The country loses an estimated 500 Mt of topsoil annually through erosion caused by water and wind.

About 81% of South Africa's total land area is farmed. However, only 70% of this area is suitable for grazing. Overgrazing and erosion diminish the carrying capacity of the veld and lead to land degradation. This process has already claimed more than

250 000 ha of land in South Africa. South Africa is a signatory to the UNCCD. Its main objectives include cooperation between governments, organisations and communities to accomplish sustainable development, especially where water resources are scarce.

South Africa also acts as the co-ordinator for the Valdivia Group for Desertification. The group consists of Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Chile, New Zealand, South Africa and Uruguay. The aim is, among other things, to foster scientific and technological co-operation. South Africa has introduced legislation such as the NEMBA of 2004 to promote the conservation of biodiversity, and fight desertification and land degradation.

Biodiversity

South Africa is home to some 24 000 species, around 7% of the world's vertebrate species, and 5,5% of the world's known insect species (only about half of the latter have been described). In terms of the number of endemic species of mammals, birds, reptiles and amphibians found in South Africa, the country ranks as the fifth richest in Africa and the 24th richest in the world. Marine biodiversity is also

high, with more than 11 000 species found in South African waters, which is about 15% of global species.

More than 25% of these species (or 3 496 species) are endemic to South Africa, many of which are threatened, especially in river ecosystems (82%) and estuaries (77%). South Africa ratified the Nagoya Protocol, a 2010 supplementary agreement to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) that ensures fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the use of genetic resources.

The protocol is a legally binding agreement outlining a set of terms prescribing how one country will gain access to another country's genetic resources and how the benefits derived will be shared. The aim of the National Biodiversity and Business Network is to assist businesses from various sectors to integrate and mainstream biodiversity issues into their strategies and operations. Government and businesses are realising that the economic and social development of the country depends on healthy ecosystems and biodiversity. The NDP confirms that national economic growth depends on the environmental sustainability of the country's proposed development path.

South Africa is the third most biodiverse country in the world, after Indonesia and Brazil. These countries harbour most of the Earth's species and collectively accommodate more than two thirds of global biodiversity. South Africa is a signatory to several biodiversity-related multilateral agreements such as the:

- CBD Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety;
- Ramsar Convention;
- CITES;
- UNCCD; and
- Convention on Migratory Species.

The National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan 2015 – 2025 is aimed at establishing a framework and plan of action for the conservation and sustainable use of South Africa's biodiversity and the equitable sharing of benefits derived from this use. The National Biodiversity Framework (NBF) provides a framework to co-ordinate and align the efforts of the many organisations and individuals involved in conserving and managing South Africa's biodiversity, in support of sustainable development. The NBF is a requirement of the NEMBA of 2004.

The NBF and the National Protected Areas Expansion Strategy are important existing policy instruments for the protection of species and ecosystems. Through the release of the National Biodiversity Assessment by SANBI, the country is able to better target future protected area expansion. The assessment has also assisted with South Africa's national and international reporting obligations, including the state of environment reporting, and the CBD Country Report – reporting against Aichi Targets or the Sustainable Development Goals.

The revised NBF has been approved for public comment. Three internationally recognised biodiversity hotspots are found in South Africa. They are the:

Cape Floral Kingdom (equivalent to the fynbos biome); Succulent Karoo (shared with Namibia); and Maputaland-Pondoland-Albany Centre of Plant Endemism, which stretches from the Albany Centre in the Eastern Cape, through the Pondoland Centre of Plant Endemism and KwaZulu-Natal, and the eastern side of Eswatini, into southern Mozambique and Mpumalanga. The Succulent Karoo Biome is one of only two arid biodiversity hotspots in the world, the other being the Horn of Africa. There are eight major terrestrial biomes, or habitat types, in South Africa, which are divided into 70 veld types.

Cabinet has approved the release of the Report of the Ministerial Task Team for consideration of voluntary exit options and pathways for the captive lion industry.

The prohibition notice on the establishment/registration of new captive lion breeding facilities was finalised for approval for implementation and approved by the Minister in March 2024.

The Minister of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment, Barbara Creecy, hosted the International Day of Biological Diversity on 22 May 2024 at Wits University, Johannesburg. The theme was "From Agreement to Action: Build Back Biodiversity". Scientific evidence tells us that biodiversity loss, together with climate change, poses an existential threat to the future of humanity. Our government adopted the White Paper on Conservation and Sustainable Use of South Africa's Biodiversity, which is intended to ensure we domesticate this significant global agreement. The White Paper calls for change in business practices to reduce biodiversity loss, adding net value, or at least ensuring no net biodiversity loss. It therefore provides an excellent opportunity for South African businesses to contribute towards achieving global targets for biodiversity conservation.

Sustainable development and transformation require the private sector and government to work together to achieve common goals. In the case of biodiversity conservation, businesses can contribute significantly by adopting environmentally responsible practices, promoting sustainable development, and minimising negative impacts on fragile ecosystems. However, achieving these goals will require government to draw up supportive policies and ensure the effective enforcement of environmental regulations.

South Africa, Malaysia, Colombia and India, have been selected to participate in the Global Environment Facility project entitled Business Action and Advocacy for the Planet. The project is executed by Business for Nature, hosted at the World Business Council for Sustainable Development and supported by local partners in each country. In South Africa, the project is to be implemented by the National Biodiversity and Business Network (NBBN) of the Endangered Wildlife Trust. The EWT is uniquely positioned to partner with the DFFE and SANBI to support the development of action-orientated targets and solutions for the implementation of the business-related aspects of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF).

The project will engage both large and small companies and will see the drafting of a government-led business action plan on biodiversity. The outcomes of this project will also inform the revision of the 2015 to 2025 National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan. It is of paramount importance that all these processes result in the creation of a national target on the role of business in biodiversity conservation. There is also a fast-expanding programme of work centred around nature-related risks to economic sectors. This work will help us to better understand risks associated with diminishing ecosystem services and provide input into decision-making and policy.

In support of this programme, the French Development

Agency (Agence Française de Développement), in collaboration with SANBI and the department, has developed South Africa's first study on nature-related risks and opportunities. The research highlights the complex relationship that ecosystem services have with our traditional business sectors and the role they play in providing people and communities with socio-economic contributions.

By mainstreaming biodiversity considerations into operations, products, and services, South African businesses can promote sustainable development and ensure the responsible management of the country's natural resources. Through broad-based partnerships and co-operation, we can succeed in ensuring that we restore and protect our country's biodiversity.

Minister Barbara Creecy hosted the Biodiversity Economy and Investment Indaba Presidential event from 24 to 28 March 2024 at the Birchwood Hotel in Boksburg, Gauteng. South Africa is a special country with exceptional biodiversity, much of which is unique and makes us one of the world's megadiverse countries. This biodiversity wealth gives people tangible benefits like food, clean water, medicine and materials. It supports agricultural and fisheries production and helps protect us from natural hazards such as droughts and floods, and provides a vibrant tourism industry while offering natural spaces for recreational, spiritual and cultural activities.

The African Biotrade Festival was hosted between 14 and 15 September 2023 at Sandton Convention Centre in Gauteng. Biodiversity is the foundation for BioTrade value chains. Access and benefit-sharing (ABS) helps to ensure that these value chains contribute to conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and ultimately trigger socio-economic development. In this context, the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH manages three projects hosted on this platform: The ABS Capacity Development Initiative, BioInnovation Africa and ABS- compliant Value Chains in South(ern) Africa (ABioSA).

A total of 1 467 000 visitors visited national gardens, and more than 217 000 children and youth participated in the "Kids in Gardens" Biodiversity Education Programme", which is run in national botanical and zoological gardens.

National biodiversity biomes

Savanna Biome

The Savanna Biome is the largest biome in southern Africa, occupying 46% of its area, and over a third of South Africa. It is an area of mixed grassland and trees, generally known as bushveld. In the Northern Cape and Kalahari sections of this biome, the most distinctive trees are the camel thorn (Acacia erioloba) and the camphor bush (Tarchonanthus camphoratus). In Limpopo, the portly baobab (Adansonia digitata) and the candelabra tree (Euphorbia ingens) dominate.

The central bushveld is home to species such as the knob thorn (acacia nigrescens), bushwillow (Combretum spp.), monkey thorn (Acacia galpinii), mopani (Colophospermum mopane) and wild fig (Ficus spp.). In the valley bushveld of the south, euphorbias and spekboom trees (Portulacaria afra) dominate. Abundant wild fruit trees provide food for many birds and animals in the Savanna Biome. Grey loeries, hornbills, shrikes, flycatchers and rollers are birds typical of the northern regions.

The subtropical and coastal areas are home to Knysna loeries, purple-crested loeries and green pigeons. Raptors occur throughout the biome. The larger mammals include lion, leopard, cheetah, elephant, buffalo, zebra, rhino, giraffe, kudu, oryx, waterbuck and hippopotamus. About 8.5% of the biome is protected. The Kruger National Park, Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park, Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park, iSimangaliso and other reserves lie in the Savanna Biome.

Nama-Karoo Biome

The Nama-Karoo is the third-largest biome in South Africa, covering about 20,5% of the country or more than 260 000km2. It stretches across the vast central plateau of the western half of the country. This semi-desert receives little rain in summer. Rainfall varies from about 200 millimetres (mm) a year in the west to 400mm a year in the north-east.

Summer is very hot, and winter is very cold with frequent frost. Most of the plants are low shrubs and grass. Many plants are deciduous. Trees such as the sweet thorn (Acacia karoo) are usually only found along rivers or on rocky hillsides. Common animals include the bat-eared fox, ostrich, spring hare, tortoises and brown locust. The riverine rabbit is a threatened species found in the Nama-Karoo Biome. This biome includes the Namaland area of Namibia, and the central Karoo area of South Africa. Because of low rainfall, rivers are non-perennial.

Cold and frost in winter and high temperatures in summer demand special adaptation by plants. Only 1% of the Nama-Karoo Biome falls within officially protected areas, of which the Karoo and Augrabies national parks are the largest. Overgrazing and easily eroded soil surfaces are causing this semi-desert to advance slowly on the neighbouring savanna and grassland biomes.

Grassland Biome

The Grassland Biome is the second-largest biome in South Africa, covering an area of 339 237 km2 and occurring in eight of South Africa's nine provinces. It is one of the most threatened biomes in South Africa, with 30% irreversibly transformed and only 1.9% of the biodiversity target for the biome formally conserved. The Grassland Biome provides essential ecosystem services, such as water production and soil retention necessary for economic development. It holds important biodiversity of global and domestic significance and value.

Trees are scarce and are found mainly on hills and along riverbeds. Karee (Rhus lancea), wild currant (Rhus pyroides), white stinkwood (Celtis africana) and several acacia species are the most common. The Grassland Biome has the third-largest number of indigenous plant species in the country. Eight mammal species endemic to South Africa occur in the wild in this biome. The area is internationally recognised as having high species endemicity for birds. The black korhaan, blue crane and guinea fowl are among the birds found in the area.

Succulent Karoo Biome

The Succulent Karoo Biome covers a flat to gently undulating plain, with some hilly and broken veld, mostly situated to the west and south of the escarpment, and north of the Cape Fold Belt. One of the natural wonders of South Africa is the annual blossoming of the Namaqualand wild flowers (mainly

of the family asteraceae), which transforms the semi-desert of the Northern Cape into a fairyland. After rain, the drab landscape is suddenly covered with a multicoloured carpet of flowers (from August to October, depending on the rainfall).

This is a winter rainfall area with extremely dry and hot summers. Succulents with thick, fleshy leaves are plentiful. Most trees have white trunks to reflect the heat. The quiver tree (aloe dichotoma) and the human-like elephant's trunk (pachypodium namaquanum) are prominent in the Richtersveld. Grass is scarce. The animal life is similar to that of the neighbouring Fynbos and Nama-Karoo biomes. The biome includes 2 800 plant species at increased risk of extinction.

Fynbos Biome

The Fynbos Biome is one of the six accepted floral kingdoms in the world. This region covers only 0,04% of the Earth's land surface. Fynbos, which is found mainly in the Western Cape, is the name given to a group of evergreen plants with small, hard leaves (such as those in the Erica family). It is made up mainly of the protea, heathers and restio. The Fynbos Biome is famous for the protea, which is South Africa's national flower.

The biome also contains flowering plants now regarded as garden plants, such as freesia, tritonia, sparaxis and many others. Protected areas cover 13,6% of the Fynbos Biome and include the Table Mountain and Agulhas national parks. This biome is not very rich in bird and mammal life, but does include the endemic Cape grysbok, the geometric tortoise, the Cape sugarbird and the protea seed-eater. Baboon, honey badgers, caracal, the buck and several types of eagle and dassies are found in the mountains.

Forest Biome

South Africa's only significant natural forests are those of Knysna and Tsitsikamma in the Western and Eastern Cape respectively. Other reasonably large forest patches that are officially protected are in the high-rainfall areas of the eastern escarpment (Drakensberg mountains), and on the eastern seaboard. Forest giants such as yellowwood (Podocarpus spp.), ironwood (Olea capensis) and lemonwood (Xymalos monospora) dominate.

The indigenous forests are a magical world of ferns, lichens and colourful forest birds such as the Knysna loerie, the endangered Cape parrot and the rameron pigeon. Mammals include the endangered samango monkey, bushpig, bushbuck and the delicate blue duiker.

Thicket Biome

The Thicket Biome is the second-smallest biome in South Africa and is known for its high biodiversity. Subtropical thicket ranges from closed shrubland to low forest, dominated by evergreen succulent trees, shrubs and vines. It is often impenetrable and has little herbaceous cover. Roughly 20% of the species found there are endemic to the Thicket Biome.

The Thicket Biome, which is predominantly in the Eastern Cape, supports four species of tortoise: the leopard tortoise (Geochelone pardalis), angulate tortoise (chersina angulata), tent tortoise (Psammobates tentorius) and parrot-beaked tortoise (Homopus areolatus).

Desert Biome

True desert is found under very harsh environmental conditions, which are even more extreme than those found in the Succulent Karoo and the Nama-Karoo biomes. The climate is characterised by summer rainfall, but also by high levels of summer aridity. Rainfall is highly variable from year-to-year. Desert is found mostly in Namibia, although it does occur in South Africa in the lower Orange River Valley.

The vegetation of the Desert Biome is characterised by the dominance of annual plants (often annual grasses). This means that after a rare season of abundant rain, the desert plains can be covered with a sea of short annual grass, whereas in drier years, the plains appear bare, with annual plants persisting in the form of seeds. Perennial plants are usually encountered in specialised habitats associated with local concentrations of water from broad drainage lines or washes. Nearer the coast, coastal fog also governs the distribution of certain species commonly associated with the desert.

The Desert Biome incorporates abundant insect fauna, which includes many tenebrionid beetles, some of which can use fog water. There are also various vertebrates, including reptiles, springbok, ostrich, gemsbok, snakes and geckos. Some areas in this biome are formally protected in the Richtersveld National Park.

International cooperation

Benguela Current Large Marine Ecosystem (BCLME)

The BCLME is regarded as one of the richest ecosystems on Earth, with ecosystem goods and services estimated to be worth at least $54.3 billion a year. Offshore oil and gas production, marine diamond mining, coastal tourism, commercial fishing and shipping are some of the most important industrial activities that take place in the region. The accord, signed in Angola, is a formal agreement between Angola, Namibia and South Africa that seeks to provide economic, environmental and social benefits for the three countries.

The Benguela Current Commission is a permanent intergovernmental organisation, with a mandate to promote the long-term conservation, protection, rehabilitation, enhancement and sustainable use of the BCLME. South Africa has signed several international conventions, treaties, protocols and other agreements supporting the principles of sustainable development including the:

- CBD (ratified in 1995); Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (South Africa became a party in 2003);
- Kyoto Protocol (signed in 2003);
- UNCCD; World Heritage Convention (ratified in 1997);
- Convention on Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar Convention) (ratified in 1975); and
- Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species (acceded in 1991).

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
South Africa ratified the UNFCCC in 1997. The UNFCCC is aimed at:

- implementing urgent action, from 2013 to 2020, including the adoption of a second commitment period under the Kyoto Protocol and a number of institutional mechanisms such as the GCF;
- acknowledging the inadequate commitments to reduce emissions made thus far; a work programme was agreed

upon to increase pre-2020 levels of ambition; and
- action for the future with the negotiation of a legal agreement for the period beyond 2020.

The UNFCCC entered into force in 1994. The COP to the UNFCCC meets annually to assess progress in addressing climate change. The COP is the supreme body of the convention and is its highest decision-making authority. With 195 parties, the UNFCCC has near universal membership and is the parent treaty of the 1997 Kyoto Protocol.

The Kyoto Protocol has been ratified by 193 of the UNFCCC parties. Under the protocol, 37 states, consisting of highly industrialised countries and those making the transition to a market economy, have legally binding emission limitation and reduction commitments. The ultimate objective of both treaties is to stabilise GHG concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that will prevent dangerous human interference with the climate system.

The launch of negotiations to shape the new global climate change agreement and first discussions on how to raise ambition took place at the UNFCCC in Bonn, Germany, in May 2012, which prepared decisions for adoption at the UNFCCC in Qatar later in 2012.

South Africa, through the DFFE, participated in the 28th Conference of the Parties (COP28) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change Conference (UNFCCC) between 30 November 2023 and 12 December 2023 in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. COP28 provided a key platform for both progress on negotiation issues under the UNFCCC, as well as for broader conversations, including on the need for transformation of the global financial architecture.

COP28 took place at a time when all regions of the world were facing challenges posed by a rapidly changing climate and the best available science was informing policy makers on the risks and potential solutions. It was also a period of increased geopolitical tensions, trade disputes and divisions amongst parties on issues such as carbon border taxes, particularly between developed and developing countries. Many countries were facing resource constraints that hindered their ability to take decisive climate action and developed countries continued to backtrack on their commitments and to try to reframe the nature of climate finance. South Africa's vision was to deliver on the pillars of the Paris Agreement and focused on specific action on four paradigm shifts: fast-tracking the energy transition and slashing emissions before 2030; transforming climate finance by delivering on old promises and setting the framework for a new deal on finance; putting nature, people, lives and livelihoods at the heart of climate action and mobilising for the most inclusive COP ever.

The COP28 decision recognises different theme areas for adaptation action, and it has measurable targets that are time-bound. It also recognises the importance of securing adequate public finance for adaptation from developed countries. South Africa welcomed the decisions on the operationalisation of the Loss and Damage Fund, Just Transition Pathways Work Programme, the Mitigation Work Programme and the Global Goal on Adaptation. These decisions are in line with our national framework on Just Transition, in particular the recognition of a country's right to pursue its climate resilience path in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication.

The conference aimed to accelerate global climate action and implement the Paris Agreement. This aligns with the general objectives of COP meetings, which focus on international co-operation to combat climate change.

The themes highlighted for COP28 included:
- Transitioning away from fossil fuels towards clean energy;
- Scaling up climate finance, especially for developing countries;
- Enhancing adaptation and resilience to climate impacts; and
- Nature-based solutions and protecting biodiversity.

These themes are consistent with the discussions and priorities set forth in various COP sessions, particularly given the increasing urgency surrounding climate change.

Key outcomes from COP28 included:
1. Adoption of the UAE Consensus, which called for a just transition away from fossil fuels.
2. Operationalisation of the Loss and Damage Fund, with initial pledges exceeding $700 million.
3. Commitment to triple global renewable energy capacity and double energy efficiency improvements by 2030.
4. Agreement to scale up climate finance, urging developed countries to exceed the $100 billion annual target.
5. Recognition of the need for a just transition addressing social and economic impacts on workers and communities.

UN Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD)

The UN CSD was established by the UN General Assembly in December 1992 to ensure effective follow-up of the UN Conference on Environment and Development, also known as the Earth Summit. From its inception, the CSD was highly participatory in structure and outlook by engaging in its formal proceedings a wide range of official stakeholders and partners through innovative formulae.

Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora

South Africa was a founding member of the CITES treaty, which was adopted on 3 March 1973, but only came into force on 1 July 1975. Signed by 149 countries, CITES is an international agreement between governments to protect endangered species against overexploitation through regulations regarding imports and exports and, in some cases, prohibiting trade.

CITES was drafted as a result of a resolution adopted in 1963 at a meeting of members of the IUCN. CITES accords varying degrees of protection to more than 30 000 animal and plant species, whether they are traded as live specimens, fur coats or dried herbs. The DFFE, SANBI, the Scientific Authority and provincial authorities are working together to ensure full compliance with decisions taken at the 17th Conference of Parties to CITES.

These include identifying and implementing protocols for the registration of over 1 000 facilities for breeding captive-bred parrots; strengthening the monitoring of leopard populations to improve science-based decision-making; and initiating a research project to understand how trade in lion bone may impact wild lion populations. Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer International

Ozone Day is an annual event that commemorates the date of the signing of the Montreal Protocol in 1987. South Africa, which became a signatory to the Montreal Protocol in 1990, has phased out chlorofluorocarbons, halons, methyl chloroform and carbon tetrachloride.

International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer

The ozone layer, a fragile shield of gas, protects the Earth from the harmful portion of the rays of the sun, thus helping preserve life on the planet. The International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer is commemorated annually on 16 September.

World Summit on Sustainable Development

At the UN World Summit on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2030, held in September 2015, world leaders adopted 17 SDGs of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Over the next 15 years, with these new goals that universally apply to all, countries would mobilise efforts to end all forms of poverty, fight inequalities and tackle climate change, while ensuring that no one is left behind. The SDGs build on the success of the Millennium Development Goals and aim to go further to end all forms of poverty.

The goals are unique in that they call for action by all countries, poor, rich and middle income, to promote prosperity while protecting the planet.

UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20)

Rio+20 refers to the UN Conference on Sustainable Development that took place in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in June 2012. The meeting took place 20 years after the landmark 1992 Earth Summit in Rio, when more than 108 heads of state agreed to work together to develop national strategies to reduce carbon emissions, stabilise GHG, protect forests from destruction, and pay for their share of the damage caused to the Earth through pollution.

At the Rio+20 talks, 50 of the 193-member states of the UN launched new energy strategies, and private investors pledged more than $50 billion to carry out the goal of doubling the share of global renewable energy and the rate of energy efficiency improvement by 2030.







SOUTH AFRICA
YEARBOOK
2024/25

Government Systems

South Africa is a constitutional democracy with a three-sphere system of government and an independent judiciary. The national, provincial and local levels of government all have legislative and executive authority in their own spheres, and are defined in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa of 1996 as distinctive, interdependent and interrelated.

Legislation also provides for the role of traditional leadership as an institution at local level on matters affecting local communities through the establishment of houses of and councils for traditional leaders. It is a stated intention in the Constitution that the country be run on a system of co-operative governance. Government is committed to building a free, non-racial, non-sexist, democratic, united and successful South Africa.

The Constitution

The Constitution was approved by the Constitutional Court on 4 December 1996 and took effect on 4 February 1997. It is the supreme law of the land. No other law or government action can supersede the provisions of the Constitution. The signing of the Constitution was a commemorative gesture in remembrance of the people who died during a peaceful demonstration against the pass laws on 21 March 1960. South Africa's Constitution is one of the most progressive in the world and enjoys high acclaim internationally. Human rights are given clear prominence in the Constitution.

The Preamble

The Preamble states that the Constitution aims to:

- heal the divisions of the past and establish a society based on democratic values, social justice and fundamental human rights;
- improve the quality of life of all citizens and free the potential of each person;
- lay the foundations for a democratic and open society in which government is based on the will of the people, and in which every citizen is equally protected by law; and
- build a united and democratic South Africa that is able to take its rightful place as a sovereign State in the family of nations.

Founding provisions

South Africa is a sovereign and democratic state founded on the following values:

- Human dignity, the achievement of equality and the advancement of human rights and freedom; non-racialism and non-sexism;
- Supremacy of the Constitution and the rule of law; and
- Universal adult suffrage, a national common voters' roll, regular elections and a multi-party system of democratic government to ensure accountability, responsiveness and openness.

Fundamental rights

The fundamental rights contained in the Constitution seek to protect the rights and freedom of individuals. The Constitutional Court guards these rights and determines whether actions by the state are in accordance with constitutional provisions.

Government

Government consists of national, provincial and local spheres which are distinctive, interdependent and interrelated. The powers of the lawmakers (legislative authorities), government (executive authorities) and courts (judicial authorities) are separate from one another.

Parliament

Parliament is the legislative authority of South Africa and has the power to make laws for the country, in accordance with the Constitution. It consists of the National Assembly (NA) and the National Council of Provinces (NCOP). Parliamentary sittings are open to the public. The role of Parliament, as the representative of the people, is to promote and oversee adherence to the values of human dignity, equality, non-racialism, non-sexism, and all other rights enshrined in the Bill of Rights, and to oversee the implementation of constitutional imperatives.

Through legislative and other measures, Parliament also ensures that the independence, impartiality, accessibility and effectiveness of the judiciary and other state institutions is upheld. The mandate of Parliament is based on the provisions of Chapter 4 of the Constitution, which establishes Parliament and sets out the functions it performs. Parliament is elected to represent the people, ensure government by the people under the Constitution, and represent the interests of provinces in the national sphere of government.

Members of Parliament (MPs) elect the President, provide a national forum for the public consideration of issues, pass legislation and scrutinise and oversee executive action. Parliament's policy priorities set out long-term policy and outcomes. These are aligned with the priorities and outcomes of the NDP. To ensure that these outcomes and priorities are met over feasible timeframes, five-year, 10-year and 15-year milestones have been set. Since 1994, a number of steps have been taken to make it more accessible and to motivate and facilitate public participation in the legislative process. The official governmental website, *www.parliament.gov.za*, encourages comment and feedback from the public.

Legislative and Policy Framework

The mandate and functions of Parliament are based on the following core pieces of legislation:

- Constitution of the Republic of South Africa of 1996, which sets out the composition, powers and functions of Parliament;
- Powers, Privileges and Immunities of Parliament and Provincial Legislatures Act, 2004 (Act 4 of 2004), which defines and declares certain powers, privileges and immunities of Parliament, provincial legislatures, members of the NA, delegates to the NCOP and members of provincial legislatures;
- Money Bills Amendment Procedure and Related Matters Act, 2009 (Act 9 of 2009), which provides for a procedure to amend Money Bills before Parliament, and for norms and standards for amending Money Bills before provincial legislatures; and
- Financial Management of Parliament and Provincial Legislatures Act, 2009 (Act 10 of 2009), as amended by Act 34 of 2014, which regulates the financial management of Parliament in a manner consistent with its status in terms of the Constitution. Its objective is to ensure that all revenue, expenditure, assets and liabilities of Parliament are managed efficiently.

Other legislation relevant to the work of Parliament is the:

- Permanent Delegates Vacancies Act, 1997 (Act 17 of 1997);
- Determination of Delegates (NCOP) Act, 1998 (Act 69 of 1998); the Mandating Procedures of Provinces Act, 2008 (Act 52 of 2008); and
- Remuneration of Public Office Bearers Act, 1998 (Act 20 of 1998). The joint rules of Parliament, rules of the NA and rules of the NCOP augment these Acts, as the Constitution empowers Parliament to make rules and orders concerning its business. Additional frameworks of relevance to the work of Parliament include the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals, the African Agenda 2063, The Southern African Development Community (SADC) Regional Indicative Strategic Plan, the NDP 2030 and the Medium Term Strategic Framework (MTSF).

Cabinet

The Cabinet consists of the President, as head, the Deputy President and Ministers. The President appoints the Deputy President, Ministers and Deputy Ministers, assigns their powers and functions, and may dismiss them. The President may select any number of Ministers from the members of the NA, and may select no more than two Ministers from outside the assembly. The NA is elected to represent the people and to ensure democratic governance as required by the Constitution.

It does this by electing the President, providing a national forum for public consideration of issues, passing legislation, and scrutinising and overseeing executive action. The NA consists of no fewer than 350 and no more than 400 members elected through a system of proportional representation. The NA, which is elected for a term of five years, is presided over by the Speaker, assisted by the Deputy Speaker.

Office Bearers of the NA

At its first sitting after a general election, the NA elects the Speaker, the principal office bearer of the NA. The Speaker has many responsibilities which include constitutional, statutory (in terms of the law), procedural and administrative powers and functions.

The duties of the Speaker fall broadly into three categories: presiding over sittings of the House, maintaining order and applying its rules; acting as representative and spokesperson for the NA and (with the Chairperson of the Council) for Parliament; and acting as Chief Executive Officer for Parliament, in conjunction with the Chairperson of the Council. Though the Speaker is a member of a political party, he or she is required to act impartially and protect the rights of all parties.

The Speaker is assisted by the Deputy Speaker and three House Chairpersons, each with specific areas of responsibility determined by the Speaker. The leader of the opposition – a leader of the largest minority party (or largest party that is not in government) – enjoys a special status in Parliament. The post is specified in the Constitution and is accorded a specific salary, though the holder has no specific duties in terms of the rules.

Committees

In accordance with the powers given to it by the Constitution, the NA establishes a range of committees with assigned powers and functions. The committees are required to report regularly on their activities and to make recommendations to the House for debate and decision. There is a portfolio committee for each corresponding government department. The composition of the committees reflects, as far as is practicable, the numerical strengths of the parties represented in the NA. The committee deliberates on Bills that cover the respective department's area of jurisdiction and scrutinises and reports on its annual budget and strategic plan.

Members of the committees determine whether government departments are delivering on what they promised and whether they are spending the public money they receive in a responsible manner. As part of their oversight work, committees may also do site visits where they find out directly from the people at ground level whether government is delivering on its promises. If a committee reports on a matter and makes certain recommendations, the report is debated in a full sitting or plenary to give other members of the House an opportunity to engage with the content. Once the report has been debated, the House decides whether to adopt the committee's recommendations.

The House may also decide to only note the report or it may refer the report back to the committee with an instruction to do further work.

National Council of Provinces

The NCOP is mandated to represent the provinces to ensure that provincial interests are taken into account in the national sphere of government. The NCOP consists of 90 provincial delegates (10 delegates for each of the nine provinces). A provincial delegation consists of six permanent delegates and four special delegates. The permanent delegates, who are appointed by the nine provincial legislatures, are based at Parliament in Cape Town. The four special delegates consist of the Premier of the province and three special delegates, assigned by each province from Members of the Provincial Legislature (MPLs) and rotated depending on the subject matter being considered by the NCOP.

The Premier of a province is the head of the province's delegation but he or she can assign any other delegate to lead the delegation in his or her absence. Organised local government is also represented in the NCOP through the South African Local Government Association (SALGA). SALGA is entitled to 10 representatives who may participate in the debates and other activities of the NCOP but may not vote. The NCOP must have a mandate from the provinces before it can make certain decisions. Special calculations of the popular vote in elections make sure that minority interests are represented in each province's delegation to the NCOP.

The NCOP links Parliament to the provincial legislatures and local government associations. It also provides information on draft legislation and allows the public to make electronic submissions. The NCOP came into existence in February 1997.

Functions of Parliament

The core functions of Parliament include making laws, overseeing the work of the Executive and state institutions, facilitating public participation, international participation and co-operative governance.

Law-making

Section 43(a) of the Constitution vests the legislative authority of the national sphere of government in Parliament. This confers on the NA the power to consider, pass, amend or reject any legislation before the NA and to initiate or prepare legislation, except Money Bills. It also confers on the NCOP the power to consider, pass, amend, propose amendments ,or reject any legislation before the council and initiate or prepare legislation falling within a functional area listed in Schedule 4 of the Constitution or other legislation referred to in Section 76(3), except Money Bills.

The Constitution distinguishes between four categories of Bills:

- Bills amending the Constitution (Section 74);
- Ordinary Bills not affecting provinces (Section 75);
- Ordinary Bills affecting provinces (Section 76); and
- Money Bills (Section 77).

Whilst any of these categories of Bills may be introduced in the NA, only Bills referred to in Section 76(3) of the Constitution may be introduced in the NCOP. Money Bills, such as the Appropriation Bill and the Division of Revenue Bill, may only be introduced in the NA and not in the NCOP. The Constitution and the Rules of the NA and NCOP outline the processes that Parliament must follow when passing each category of Bills.

Furthermore, Section 18(1) of the Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework Amendment Act, 2003 (Act 41 of 2003), obliges the Secretary to Parliament to refer any Parliamentary Bill relating to customary law or customs of traditional communities to the National House of Traditional Leaders (NHTL) for comment before it is passed by the House of Parliament in which it was introduced.

The NHTL has 30 days to comment on a Bill so referred. As the representative of the people of South Africa, Parliament realises the importance of processing and/or passing quality legislation aimed at improving the quality of life of the people and involving the public in the processing of legislation. To this end, it plans to develop a legislative model to guide MPs and staff in the processing of legislation. The main aim of the model is to enhance the law-making processes and procedures of Parliament to enable the institution to pass quality laws that will improve the quality of life of all.

Oversight

The parliamentary oversight function is one of the cornerstones of democracy. It holds the Executive accountable for its actions and ensures that it implements policies in accordance with the laws and budget passed by Parliament. The robust monitoring of the Executive by Parliament is an indicator of good governance, as it is through oversight that Parliament can ensure a balance of power and assert its role as the defender and/or the legitimate custodian of the people's interests.

The Constitution envisages a specific oversight role for the NA and the NCOP, respectively. To this end, it places an obligation on the NA to provide for mechanisms to ensure that all Executive organs of state in the national sphere of government are accountable to it and to maintain oversight of the exercise of national executive authority, including the implementation of legislation. The Constitution requires the NCOP to exercise oversight over national aspects of provincial and local government.

The Oversight and Accountability Model makes provision for various oversight mechanisms, including exercising oversight through committees, oversight visits, the passing of budget votes, questions for executive reply, members' statements, notices of motion, debates on matters of public importance and constituency work. One of the significant features provided for in the model is the establishment of a Joint Parliamentary Oversight and Governance Assurance Committee to pursue all assurances, undertakings and commitments given by Ministers on the floor of the Houses and the extent to which these assurances have been fulfilled.

Public participation

Participatory democracy is based on the premise that public participation processes strengthen institutions of representative democracy by actively involving the public in the decision-making processes of government. The Constitution requires the NA and the NCOP, respectively, to facilitate public involvement in the legislative and other processes of the houses and committees by conducting business in an open manner. Whilst Parliament may take reasonable measures to regulate access, it may only exclude the public from a sitting of a House or committee if it is reasonable and justifiable to do so in an open and democratic society.

In an effort to streamline public participation processes and make them more effective, the legislative sector has developed a Public Participation Framework to guide the public participation activities of Parliament and provincial legislatures. The framework provides certain minimum norms and standards to ensure alignment in public participation processes and activities. Based on this framework, Parliament has developed the Public Participation Model, which provides the institution with minimum requirements for public involvement and participation.

Specific public participation mechanisms outlined in the model include the People's Assembly, the NCOP's Taking Parliament to the People Programme, oversight visits by parliamentary committees, sectoral engagements such as youth and women's parliaments, petitions and other forms of participation in law-making and other processes.

International participation

Parliamentary international relations is the continuation of a political process and dialogue among legislatures of the world. At different international meetings, MPs and presiding officers have the opportunity to exchange views with their counterparts from other countries on a range of international challenges. The Parliament of South Africa participates in several international forums and organisations, including the:

- Pan-African Parliament;
- SADC Parliamentary Forum;
- Commonwealth Parliamentary Association;
- Inter-Parliamentary Union; and
- African, Caribbean, Pacific-European Union Forum.

Parliament has identified four guidelines that inform its international relations programme of action:

- Developing and strengthening partnerships in Africa: Parliament, in line with the country's foreign policy, gives special attention to Africa in its overall international relations policy framework. This includes engaging proactively with some of the legislative assemblies of countries where the South African Government has been involved in peace building efforts.
- Advancing multilateralism: Evolving international structures have placed a greater responsibility on parliamentarians, in view of their oversight role, to interact with one another on matters such as respect for the rule of law, human rights, and governments' transparency and accountability. Parliament's participation in international parliamentary bodies is also aimed at making significant progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals and getting support for Africa's development agenda.
- Bilateralism through friendship societies and strategic groups: At this stage, Parliament is focusing on building bilateral relations with other legislative bodies through proactively forming "friendship groups" with those bodies rather than establishing formal ties.

However, the NA has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the People's Assembly of the People's Republic of China, the only formal bilateral agreement it has entered into to date.

- Providing for public input: Parliament makes provision, through the relevant offices, committees and other mechanisms, to ensure that there is ongoing engagement with the public on important international relations issues, in line with the vision and programmes of Parliament.

Cooperative governance

The Constitution creates three spheres of government at national, provincial and local level as distinctive, interdependent and interrelated. It enjoins all spheres of government to observe and adhere to the principles of co-operative governance. Parliament plays a significant role in facilitating co-operative governance through its work with the other arms and spheres of government.

This includes the appointment and dismissal of office bearers of institutions supporting democracy, various commissions, boards and councils. Parliament also ratifies international protocols and conventions, confirms the provisional suspension of magistrates, and approves the salaries, allowances and benefits of magistrates and judges.

The NCOP provides a forum for the representation of local government at national level through SALGA. Specific co-operative governance mechanisms spearheaded by the council include the NCOP Oversight Week, Provincial Week and Local Government Week. The NCOP Oversight Week enables members to follow up on matters arising from the Taking Parliament to the People Programme to verify information received. The 2023 Provincial Week was held from 1 to 15 September 2023, under the theme "Building Viable Provincial and Municipal Infrastructure for Effective Delivery of Services to Communities".

The week-long high-impact oversight programme aimed at assessing progress in the building of sustainable human settlements to improve the quality of life for the poor and building viable water and sanitation infrastructure for the effective delivery of services to the communities. The programme grants permanent delegates to the NCOP an opportunity to return to their respective provinces to assess progress made in the delivery of services to citizens and also provides them with an opportunity to contribute to addressing challenges facing the communities.

The Free State delegation focused on the provision of water and sanitation infrastructure, visiting water and sanitation projects, as well as water reticulation sites and special economic zones. The Northern Cape delegation focused on the provision of safe drinking water and assisting communities that are affected by drought, including visiting water provision projects, dams, water reticulation sites and provincial storage weirs, as well as crime and its drivers.

The Provincial Week is one of the flagship oversight programmes of the NCOP for all spheres of the legislative sector, including provincial legislatures and municipalities, to reconnect with the local communities and identify service delivery challenges, seek solutions, as well as innovative ways to drive effective development for all communities.

Local Government Week aims to strengthen the relationship between the NCOP and SALGA by, amongst others, debating matters relating to local government and seeking solutions to challenges facing the local sphere of government within the context of cooperative government and intergovernmental relations.

Government clusters

Government clusters are groupings of government departments with crosscutting programmes. They foster an integrated approach to governance that is aimed at improving government planning, decision-making and service delivery. The main objective is to ensure proper coordination of all government programmes at national and provincial levels.

The main functions of the clusters are to ensure the alignment of government-wide priorities, facilitate and monitor the implementation of priority programmes and to provide a consultative platform on cross-cutting priorities and matters being taken to Cabinet. The clusters of the Forum of South African Directors-General (FOSAD) mirror the ministerial clusters. The FOSAD clusters provide technical support to the ministerial clusters. The Director-General (DG) in The Presidency is the chairperson of FOSAD. Ministers enter into delivery agreements with the President, having to give progress reports on their departments' set targets.

Economic Sectors, Investment, Employment and Infrastructure Development Cluster

The departments in this cluster are:

- Mineral Resources and Energy (Chair)
- Tourism (Chair)
- Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development
- Communications and Digital Technologies
- Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (CoGTA)
- Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment
- Employment and Labour
- Finance
- Higher Education, Science and Innovation
- Human Settlements, Water and Sanitation
- International Relations and Cooperation
- The Presidency

- Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities
- Police
- Public Enterprises
- Public Works and Infrastructure
- Small Business Development
- State Security
- Trade, Industry and Competition
- Transport

Co-Chairpersons:

- Minister of Mineral Resources and Energy
- Minister of Tourism

Governance, State Capacity and Institutional Development Cluster

The departments in this cluster are:

- CoGTA (Chair)
- Public Service and Administration (Chair)
- Finance
- Home Affairs
- Justice and Correctional Services
- The Presidency
- Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities
- Public Enterprises

Co-Chairpersons:

- Minister of CoGTA
- Minister of Public Service and Administration

Social Protection, Community and Human Development Cluster

The departments in this cluster are:

- Health (Chair)
- Basic Education (Chair)
- Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development
- CoGTA
- Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment
- Employment and Labour
- Higher Education, Science and Innovation
- Human Settlements, Water and Sanitation
- Justice and Correctional Services
- The Presidency
- Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities
- Public Works and Infrastructure
- Small Business Development
- Social Development
- Sport, Arts and Culture
- Transport

Co-Chairpersons:

- Minister of Health
- Minister of Basic Education

International Cooperation, Trade and Security Cluster

The departments in this cluster are:

- Sport, Arts and Culture (Chair)
- Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (Chair)
- Communications and Digital Technologies
- Defence and Military Veterans
- Finance
- International Relations and Cooperation
- Justice and Correctional Services
- Mineral Resources and Energy
- The Presidency
- State Security
- Tourism
- Trade, Industry and Competition Co-Chairpersons:
- Minister of Sport, Arts and Culture
- Minister of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment.

Justice, Crime Prevention and Security Cluster

- The departments in this cluster are:
- Defence and Military Veterans (Chair)
- Police (Chair)
- Finance
- Home Affairs
- International Relations and Cooperation
- Justice and Correctional Services
- The Presidency: Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation
- Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities
- Social Development
- State Security
- Small Business Development Co-Chairpersons:
- Minister of Defence and Military Veterans
- Minister of Police

The Presidency

As the executive manager of government, The Presidency is at the apex of South Africa's government system. It is situated in the Union Buildings in Pretoria, and has a subsidiary office in Tuynhuys, Cape Town.

The Presidency comprises the following political principals:

- The President, who is the Head of State and Government;
- The Deputy President, who is the Leader of Government Business (in Parliament);
- The Minister in The Presidency;
- The Minister of Electricity;
- The Minister in The Presidency for Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation;
- The Minister in The Presidency for Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities;
- The Deputy Minister in The Presidency for Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities;
- Two Deputy Ministers in The Presidency; and
- The Deputy Minister in The Presidency for State Security.

The Presidency has three structures that support governance operations directly. They are:

- **The Cabinet Office**, which provides administrative support to Cabinet. It implements administrative systems and processes to ensure the overall optimal functioning of the Cabinet and its committees. It also facilitates the management of decision- making processes of the Cabinet and its committees.
- **Policy Co-ordination Advisory Services** comprises a Deputy DG and five chief directorates, which support policy processes developed by respective clusters of DGs.
- **Legal and Executive Services** provides legal advice to the President, Deputy President, the Minister, as well as The Presidency as a whole, and is responsible for all litigation involving the political principals.
- **The President**, as the Head of State, leads the Cabinet. He or she is elected by the NA from among its members and leads the country in the interest of national unity, in accordance with the Constitution and the law.

The President appoints the Deputy President from among the members of the NA. The Deputy President assists the President in executing government functions.

National Development Plan 2030

The NDP is South Africa's socio-economic policy blueprint that focuses, among other things, on:

- eliminating poverty by reducing the proportion of households with a monthly income below R419 per person from 39% to zero, and the reduction of inequality;
- increasing employment from 13 million in 2010 to 24 million by 2030;
- broadening the country's ownership of assets by historically disadvantaged groups;
- ensuring that all children have at least two years of pre-school education and that all children can read and write by Grade 3;
- providing affordable access to healthcare; and
- ensuring effective public transport.

Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation

The Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME) is mandated to:

- support the National Planning Commission (NPC);
- facilitate the implementation of the NDP through the development of sector-specific; and outcome-specific medium-term plans and delivery agreements, and monitor and evaluate their implementation;
- ensure the alignment of departments' strategic and annual plans and budget allocations with government's MTSF;
- monitor the performance of individual national and provincial government departments and municipalities, and facilitate targeted intervention programmes;
- monitor frontline service delivery and manage the Presidential Hotline;
- develop and implement the annual national evaluation plan, and support the national evaluation system; and
- promote good planning, monitoring and evaluation practices in government.

Over the medium term, the department will focus on supporting the implementation of the NDP, co-ordinating planning programmes across government, and monitoring and evaluation to support the implementation of government programmes and priorities. As the department mainly relies on its human resources to drive its mandate, expenditure on compensation of employees accounts for an estimated 67,6% (R1 billion) of the total budget over the medium term.

Supporting the implementation of the NDP through the NPC

The department is tasked with facilitating the implementation of the NDP. This is carried out by the NPC and its secretariat, which is mandated to provide an independent and critical view of the country's developmental trajectory, monitor its implementation, and provide feedback and guidance. Over the medium term, the commission planned to participate in and initiate three research projects in support of the implementation of the NDP while engaging all social partners and forging new partnerships.

To realise this, the commission plans to facilitate one strategic engagement and partnership in each year over the medium term to develop cross-cutting views on specific issues with the aim of finding sustainable and innovative solutions to obstacles that hinder the implementation of the NDP. This work will be facilitated by the commission's secretariat through an allocation of R138.3 million over the medium term in the National Planning Co-ordination programme.

Co-ordinating planning programmes across government

In an effort to strengthen coherence and harmony across government's planning system, the department has developed a policy framework for integrated planning. To give effect to this, it has developed guidelines on the institutionalisation of the MTSF to support the integration of its priorities and targets across the planning system.

The department aims to ensure that enhanced planning finds expression across all spheres of government through the district development model, which addresses challenges to government service delivery by promoting local procurement to enhance job creation, promote and support local businesses, and involve communities.

The model's approach to planning and implementation aims to improve coherence among all spheres of government, as well as the 44 districts and eight metros across the country, as development spaces that can be used as centres of service delivery and economic development, including job creation.

This work will be facilitated through the custodian of the government planning system, the National Planning Co-ordination subprogramme, which has a budget of R117.7 million over the medium term.

Monitoring to support the implementation and achievement of government programmes and priorities

To promote the alignment, co-ordination and integration of development planning, in line with realising the NDP's development outcomes, the department will monitor the implementation of government's 2019-2024 MTSF over the medium term, which entails the production of a targeted two integrated monitoring reports per year. These activities will take place in the Outcomes Monitoring and Support subprogramme in the Sector Monitoring Services programme.

The subprogramme has a budget of R182.6 million over the medium term. To improve the quality of service delivery, the department is also tasked with monitoring frontline services, including complaints and compliments received through the Presidential Hotline, and plans to produce two reports per year over the medium term on frontline service delivery. These activities are carried out in the Public Service Monitoring and Capacity Development subprogramme in the Public Sector Monitoring and Capacity Development programme, spending in which accounts for 95.1% (R254.4 million) of the programme's total budget over the MTEF period.

Evaluating to support the implementation and achievement of government programmes and priorities

In line with the NDP's vision to build a capable and developmental state, the department will, through the National Evaluation Policy Framework, manage and support the evaluation of priority government policies, programmes and systems, and produce a targeted 12 evaluation reports over the medium term to support evidence-based planning, monitoring and evaluation across government. These activities will be carried out in the Evaluation, Research, Knowledge and Data Systems subprogramme, which accounts for 92.9% (R124.9 million) of the Evidence and Knowledge Systems programme's budget.

The department aimed to continue developing the centralised data management system, which is expected to provide users – including government departments, members of the public and academics – with an improved interface for accessing, retrieving, analysing and reporting on government performance information. The system is envisaged to act as a knowledge hub to enable a greater understanding of the effectiveness of government interventions and their impact on society. To develop the system, R9.6 million is allocated over the medium term in the Evaluation, Research, Knowledge and Data Systems subprogramme in the Evidence and Knowledge Systems programme.

Government priorities

The NDP sets out a long-term vision for the country and is the programme through which South Africa aims to advance radical economic transformation through development planning. Government's 2025 – 2030 Medium-Term Development Programme (MTDP) outlines the priorities to be implemented in the 7th Administration and the interventions required across South Africa's national development pillars.

The three priorities are:

- Drive inclusive growth and job creation;
- Reduce poverty and tackle the high cost of living;
- Build a capable, ethical and developmental state.

Elections

National and provincial elections are held once every five years. All South African citizens aged 18 and over are eligible to vote. The Constitution places all elections and referendums in the country across all three spheres of government under the control of the IEC, established in terms of the IEC Act, 1996 (Act 51 of 1996).

The obligations of the IEC are to:

- Manage elections of national, provincial and municipal legislative bodies;
- Ensure that the elections are free and fair;
- Declare the results of the elections; and
- Compile and maintain a voters' roll. The duties of the IEC are to:
- Compile and maintain a register of parties;
- Undertake and promote research into electoral matters;
- Develop and promote the development of electoral expertise and technology in all spheres of government;
- Continuously review electoral laws and proposed electoral laws, and make recommendations;
- Promote voter education;
- Declare the results of elections for national, provincial and municipal legislative bodies within seven days; and
- Appoint appropriate public administrations in any sphere of government to conduct elections when necessary.

The IEC manages an average of approximately 130 by-elections per year. By-elections are held when ward councillors vacate their seats for a variety of reasons, including death, resignation or expulsion from a party or a council.

Election process

There are two kinds of electoral systems:

- **Constituency-based elections** – Voters in each local area (constituency) elect an individual candidate to represent them in Parliament. The person who wins the majority of votes in each constituency becomes an MP. The party with the majority of MPs forms government. In this electoral system, the individual MP holds the seat, not the political party to which he or she belongs.
- **Proportional representation elections** – Voters in a large area vote for political parties. The political party chooses the people who will become its MPs. Each party is allocated a number of seats proportional to the number of votes it received in the election. Before 1994, South Africa utilised constituency-based elections, but since then national and provincial elections have used proportional representation and party lists.

Local government elections use a mixture of proportional representation and constituency-based elections.

Parliament elections

Parliament is elected using proportional representation and party lists. Before the election, each political party submits a list of candidates in numbered order of preference. The seats in Parliament are allocated in proportion to the number of votes cast in the election. This means a party that won 10% of the votes receives 10% of the seats. If a party wins 20 seats, the first 20 people on its party list become MPs.

Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs

The Ministry consists of the Department of Cooperative Governance (DCoG) and the Department of Traditional Affairs (DTA).

Department of Cooperative Governance

The DCoG is mandated to develop and monitor the implementation of national policy and legislation to enable government to fulfil its developmental role; develop, promote and monitor mechanisms, systems and structures to enable integrated service delivery and implementation within government; and promote sustainable development by providing support and exercising oversight of provincial, local government and its entities.

Chapter 13 of the NDP outlines a vision for building a capable and developmental state through interdepartmental coordination and strengthening local government. This vision is expressed specifically through Priority 4 (spatial integration, human settlements and local government) of government's 2019 - 2024 MTSF, with which the work of the DCoG is closely aligned.

Over the medium term, the DCoG continues to focus on expanding access to essential services, strengthening disaster risk management, and creating work opportunities in high-unemployment regions. According to the latest projections, total expenditure is expected to grow at an average annual rate of approximately 5,6%, rising from R127 billion in 2023/24 to R148 billion in 2026/27. Transfers to provinces and municipalities remain the primary expenditure, constituting approximately 95% (R410 billion) of the department's total budget over the Medium-Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) period, funding the local government equitable share and infrastructure grants. Expenditure on compensation of employees is projected to increase modestly from R382 million in 2023/24 to R394 million in 2026/27, reflecting a continued reduction in staff complement due to natural attrition, with personnel numbers anticipated to decline from 533 in 2023/24 to 497 in 2026/27.

Increasing access to basic services

The local government equitable share, an unconditional grant, helps municipalities cover the costs of providing basic services and administration, particularly in areas with limited revenue. Over the medium term, this grant accounts for approximately 83% (R341.5 billion) of departmental spending. Allocations to the Intergovernmental Policy and Governance programme are expected to increase at an average annual rate of 7,2%, reaching R123 billion by 2026/27. To help municipalities manage rising costs for bulk electricity and water, an additional R9.3 billion has been allocated to the equitable share over the MTEF period.

The municipal infrastructure grant and integrated urban development grant continue to support capital investment in basic infrastructure, aiming to reduce backlogs in underserved communities. The municipal infrastructure grant will provide R66.2 billion over the next three years, while the integrated urban development grant is set to invest R6.8 billion in public infrastructure in urban areas. The district development model will be implemented in at least 54 municipalities per year, encouraging integrated planning and more effective service delivery across all spheres of government.

Mitigating the risk of disasters

Disaster management remains a key priority, with the department focusing on supporting the most vulnerable district municipalities to implement robust disaster risk reduction strategies. The Disaster Risk Reduction and Capacity Development subprogramme receives R162 million over the medium term. Expenditure for the National Disaster Management Centre is expected to decrease as COVID-19 and flood relief funding winds down, but ongoing support for resilience-building and climate adaptation measures remains sustained.

Creating income security in areas of high unemployment

The Community Work Programme remains a cornerstone of government's employment initiatives, targeting 250 000 participants each year in communities with high unemployment rates. The programme is allocated R14.2 billion over the MTEF period, supporting job creation, community development and skills acquisition for vulnerable groups.

Legislation

The mandate of the DCoG is derived from the following legislation:

- Intergovernmental Relations Framework Act, 2005 (Act 13 of 2005);
- Municipal Property Rates Act, 2004 (Act 6 of 2004);
- Disaster Management Act, 2002 (Act 57 of 2002);
- Municipal Systems Act, 2000 (Act 32 of 2000); and
- Local Government: Municipal Structures Act, 1998 (Act 117 of 1998).

Entities

Municipal Demarcation Board (MDB)

The MDB derives its legislative mandate from Chapter 7 of the Constitution and Section 3 of the Local Government: Municipal Demarcation Act (1998). The board is mandated to determine and redetermine municipal boundaries and render advisory services. In terms of the Local Government: Municipal Structures Act of 1998, the board is also mandated to delimit wards, conduct capacity assessments for municipalities, and assess the capacity of the executive council responsible for local government.

Over the MTEF period, the board will continue to improve its administrative and legislative functions, and begin ward delimitation processes to ensure that all municipalities that qualify to have wards are finalised in time for the 2026 local government elections. Spending on compensation of employees accounts for an estimated 57,1% (R140.9 million) of total expenditure over the period ahead for the board's 48 funded posts. Expenditure is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 0,1%, from R81.6 million in 2022/23 to R81.7 million in 2025/26. The board expects to derive 96.6% (R229.3 million) of its revenue over the MTEF period through transfers from the department.

Municipal Infrastructure Support Agent (MISA)

The MISA was established in terms of Section 7(5)(c) of the Public Service Act of 1994. The agent provides technical support to and builds technical capacity in municipalities to enhance their capability to efficiently plan, deliver, operate and maintain municipal infrastructure. Over the medium term, the agent will continue to provide technical support to selected municipalities to improve access to basic services and the reliability of services.

To ensure the effective and efficient development, implementation and maintenance of municipal infrastructure, the agent plans to enrol 450 candidates in the young graduate programme and provide 1 250 municipal officials with technical skills training over the MTEF period. Compensation of employees accounts for an estimated 62,1% (R705.6 million) of the agent's total expenditure over the period ahead.

Expenditure is expected to decrease at an average annual rate of 1.4%, from R400.2 million in 2022/23 to R383.6 million in 2025/26, mainly due to the retention of surplus funding from a one-off allocation in 2021/22 for the innovative solid waste management project as part of the presidential employment initiative. The agent is set to derive 99,2% (R1.1 billion) of its revenue over the MTEF period through transfers from the department. Revenue is set to decrease in line with spending.

South African Local Government Association (SALGA)

The SALGA is an association of municipalities recognised by the Organised Local Government Act, 1997 (Act 52 of 1997). The association's strategic role is to represent the interests of local government within the overall system of government, assist members to fulfil their developmental goals, participate actively in intergovernmental relations, voice local government interests and provide solutions to challenges in local government.

However, after reviewing the association's legislative mandate, National Treasury has resolved that it has been incorrectly classified in the Public Finance Management Act (1999). The process to delist the association from the Act is currently under way. As the association's core functions of research and municipal governance support are

labour intensive, spending on compensation of employees accounts for an estimated 53.7% (R1.2 billion) of its total budget over the medium term for 406 personnel.

Total expenditure is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 4.7%, from R679.9 million in 2022/23 to R802 million in 2025/26. The association is set to derive 91.9% (R2.5 billion) of its revenue over the MTEF period through membership fees from municipalities. Revenue is expected to increase in line with expenditure.

Provincial government

In accordance with the Constitution, each province has its own legislature, consisting of between 30 and 80 members. The number of MPLs is determined according to a formula set out in national legislation. The members are elected in terms of proportional representation. The executive council of a province consists of a premier and a number of members of the executive council. Premiers are appointed by the President. Decisions are taken by consensus, as is the case in the national Cabinet.

Besides being able to make provincial laws, a provincial legislature may adopt a constitution for its province if two thirds of its members agree. A provincial constitution must correspond with the national Constitution. According to the Constitution, provinces may have legislative and executive powers, concurrent with the national sphere, over:

- Agriculture
- Casinos, racing, gambling and wagering
- Cultural affairs
- Education at all levels, excluding university and university of technology education
- Environment
- Health services
- Human settlements
- Language policy
- Nature conservation
- Police services
- Provincial public media
- Public transport
- Regional planning and development
- Road traffic regulation
- Tourism
- Trade and industrial promotion
- Traditional authorities
- Urban and rural development
- Vehicle licensing
- Welfare services

These powers can be exercised to the extent that provinces have the administrative capacity to assume effective responsibility. Provinces also have exclusive competency over a number of areas, including:

- Abattoirs
- Ambulance services
- Liquor licences
- Museums other than national museums
- Provincial planning
- Provincial cultural matters
- Provincial recreational activities
- Provincial roads and traffic.

The President's Coordinating Council is a statutory body established in terms of the Intergovernmental Relations Framework Act of 2005, which brings together the three spheres of government on matters of common interest and national importance, thereby strengthening cooperative governance.

Local government

In accordance with the Constitution and the Organised Local Government Act of 1997, up to 10 part-time representatives may be designated to represent municipalities and participate in proceedings of the NCOP. The DCoG aims to build and strengthen the capability and account- ability of provinces and municipalities.

This includes:

- Continued hands-on support through the established system and capacity-building programme, focusing on critical areas such as integrated development planning, local economic development (LED), financial management, service delivery and public participation;
- Evaluating the impact of government programmes in municipal areas, enhancing performance and accountability by improving the quality of reporting on the Local Government Strategic Agenda and improving the monitoring, reporting and evaluation of capacity in local government; and
- Coordinating and supporting policy development, implementing the Local Government Strategic Agenda, and monitoring and supporting service delivery.

Municipalities

South Africa has 257 metropolitan, district and local municipalities. This number comprises eight metropolitan, 44 district and 205 local municipalities. They are focused on growing local economies and providing infrastructure and services. As directed by the Constitution, the Local Government: Municipal Structures Act of 1998 contains criteria for determining when an area must have a Category A municipality (metropolitan municipalities) and when municipalities fall into Categories B (local municipalities) or C (district municipalities). The Act also determines that category A municipalities can only be established in metropolitan areas.

Metropolitan councils have single metropolitan budgets, common property ratings and service-tariff systems, and single-employer bodies.

The eight metropolitan municipalities are:

- Buffalo City (East London)
- City of Cape Town
- Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality (East Rand)
- City of eThekwini (Durban)
- City of Johannesburg
- Mangaung Municipality (Bloemfontein)
- Nelson Mandela Bay Metropolitan Municipality (Gqeberha)
- City of Tshwane (Pretoria).

Metropolitan councils may decentralise powers and functions. However, all original municipal, legislative and executive powers are vested in the metropolitan council. In metropolitan areas, there is a choice of types of executive system: the mayoral executive system where executive authority is vested in the mayor, or the collective executive committee system where these powers are vested in the executive committee.

Non-metropolitan areas consist of district councils and local councils. District councils are primarily responsible for capacity building and district-wide planning. The Local Government: Municipal Structures Act of 1998 provides for ward committees whose tasks, among other things, are to:

- Prepare, implement and review integrated development plans;
- Establish, implement and review municipalities' performance management systems;
- Monitor and review municipalities' performances;
- Prepare municipalities' budgets;
- Participate in decisions about the provision of municipal services; and
- Communicate and disseminate information on governance matters.

Implementation of interventions in municipalities

The department continued to monitor the implementation of Municipal Support and Intervention Plans (MSIP) in 66 municipalities across the country as per the categorisation in the 2022 State of Local Government Report.

In October 2024, the department presented a report to the Governance, State Capacity and Institutional Development Cabinet Committee that showed the implementation of MSIPs resulted in the reduction of distressed municipalities from 66 to 35 in the 2023 State of Local Government Report. In addition, provinces have intervened or maintained interventions in 41 municipalities. In some cases, provinces have deployed teams of experts to support these municipalities. The most recent intervention is that of Thabazimbi Municipality, where the Council was dissolved. Although the election has been held, the Limpopo Provincial Government has retained the team of experts at the municipality for an additional three months.

The National Cabinet has not revoked the three national interventions in Mpumalanga, Free State, and Eastern Cape. The department has deployed a team of experts to support the Enoch Mgijima Municipality while the interventions in Lekwa and Mangaung have no resident experts but are supported through regular engagements in the war rooms established for each municipality.

The department maintains the Results Management Office (RMO), which comprises teams of experts deployed to various municipalities on a needs basis. Currently, 84 experts are deployed to intervene in the areas of infrastructure, energy, finance, and governance. The team also assists the department in the Community Work Programme and the institutionalisation of the District Development Model (DDM). Currently, the RMO is assisting the department in supporting more than 30 municipalities with their blue-drop, green-drop, and no-drop assessment outcomes. These municipalities are supported to prepare and implement corrective action plans to address challenges that have led to sewer spillages in these municipalities.

Interventions on Municipal Financial Management

The department has taken several steps to address the financial sustainability of local government. It regularly analyses municipal compliance with the Municipal Systems Act and the Municipal Property Rates Act. This analysis focuses on key areas such as:

Municipal property valuation: Critical aspects of municipal property valuation, including the valuation roll and maintenance, are examined.

- **Municipal property rating:** Municipal property rating aspects, including rates policies and cent-in-eand rates, are reviewed.
- **Water and electricity tariff policies:** Water and electricity tariff policies, related tariff lists and bylaws are analysed to ensure the adequacy of tariffs.
- **Municipal indigent policies:** Indigent policies and related indigent registers are assessed.
- **Credit control and debt collection policies:** It evaluates credit and debt collection policies and related by-laws to ensure effective implementation.

District Development Model (DDM) implementation

The draft IGR Framework Bill has been accepted by the Cabinet for public comment and will shortly be presented to Parliament for further processing and approval. The DDM, which continues to be the government's primary tool for ensuring integration and eliminating fragmentation, will be strengthened and institutionalised through this bill.

The President has appointed DDM Champions across all 52 DDM spaces to provide oversight over the implementation of the DDM. The DDM champions must ensure that all-of-government and all-of-society collaborate to implement the DDM One Plans in all 52 DDM spaces.

Furthermore, the Department of Cooperative Governance has developed and launched an integrated data management system, the DDM National Strategic Hub, which will enable the whole of government not only to collect but process data for improved and faster decision-making.

The institutionalisation of the DDM made steady progress; however, the envisaged objectives were not fully achieved. The DDM as an approach required a significant shift away from aligning intergovernmental plans and budgets to a system of joint planning and budgeting, without undertaking a major overhaul of existing systems and processes. Calls for a proper regulatory and policy framework for the institutionalisation and implementation of the DDM were echoed across government, which resulted in delays in fully achieving the overall institutionalisation objective. Nonetheless, the 6th Administration managed to develop a set of regulations towards the end of its term that will assist the 7th Administration in fast-tracking the full institutionalisation of the DDM.

As of December 2023, the draft Amendment Bill was submitted to the Office of the Chief State Law Advisor for vetting and legal opinion following the conclusion of intergovernmental dialogues and consultations. In total, 15 districts/metros were supported to implement DDM Catalytic projects as of December 2023.

Implementation of measures to address the effects of climate change

The country faces an increasing number of disaster incidents that occur during the winter and summer seasons and include flooding, storm surges, veld fires and drought. The steadily increasing number of incidents is a manifestation of the severe impact of climate change. These incidents require government to upscale its response and

recovery measures, and this includes partnering with other government agencies and private and non-governmental organisations. The department acknowledges the challenges faced by the country in funding disaster interventions, mainly due to an increase in disaster damages, fiscal deficits and competing priorities. In the 2024/25 financial year, the DCoG approached National Treasury to solicit additional funding to ensure that communities affected by various disasters can optimally access basic services and humanitarian relief. Because of the prevailing strain on the fiscus, there is a need for the private sector and all relevant stakeholders contribute towards restoring a sense of normalcy in the aftermath of disasters. Over and above the R1.268 billion allocations in 2024/25, an additional R1.6 billion was made available through the Adjusted Estimates of National Expenditure (AENE) 2024 process to respond to the disasters that affected 29 municipalities and the provincial sector departments such as agriculture, education, roads, and health across the various provinces in 2023/24 and 2024/25, respectively. This funding comprises R683.955 million and R947.500 million, channelled directly to restore damaged infrastructure, ensuring that essential services to communities remain stable and resilient to disasters. Municipalities are now implementing recovery measures to ensure the restoration of infrastructure needed to enable seamless service delivery.

The NDMC has embarked on a process to review and overhaul the system of disaster management to address emerging issues such as the effects of climate change and rapid urbanisation that are challenging the robustness and agility of the current system. In view of the gaps identified in the disaster management legislative framework to deal with new phenomena, capacity and resourcing disparities across the three spheres of government, and the configuration of the delivery model, a new system has been proposed and will be presented to Cabinet in the near future.

Professionalising the Public Sector

The DCoG introduced competency assessments for senior managers in 2016 in line with the Competency Framework as promulgated in 2014. This requires persons recommended for appointment to senior manager positions in local government to undergo competency-based assessment to ensure that suitably qualified and competent senior managers are appointed by municipalities. The objective of the Competency Framework is also to guide senior managers on the core competencies and lead competencies required to enhance contextualised leadership that guarantees service delivery impact and competencies that drive long-term and measurable service delivery performance results.

The DCoG has recently finalised the review of this competency framework in consultation with professional bodies to ensure that personnel with the relevant technical and professional acumen and experience are appointed in local government, improve the quality of appointments, develop the skills and expertise within municipal structures, and improve overall municipal performance. The benefit of the review is that all municipalities will follow the same assessment procedures and similar batteries to appoint senior managers, which will guide the improvement of the quality of appointments.

Bringing stability to governance in metros and restoring the delivery of services

The amendments to the Local Government: Municipal Structures Act, 1998 provide for a legislative framework to guide the formation and management of coalition governments, as well as providing systems to minimise the challenges of coalitions related to poor governance, service delivery and instability in municipal councils, within the local government sphere.

The Bill will compel political parties to enter into a written and negotiated binding agreement between parties that form a coalition government in a municipality in which no political party has a majority of seats in the council, so as to promote continued service delivery and transparent and open governance.

On 27 March 2024, the Bill was approved by Cabinet for publication in the Government Gazette for public comments with an extended closing date of 31 August 2024. Post the publication, the Department convened a two-day workshop (25 to 26 September 2024) with all major stakeholders in local government and sector departments, to consider the comments received on the Bill. The Bill will be introduced into Parliament in due course.

Engender a culture of maintenance of public infrastructure

The IUDG provides for a planning component to be used by recipient municipalities to develop an infrastructure asset management plan. These plans are critical in ensuring that municipalities plan for the maintenance of existing infrastructure.

Reforming the local government system and improving the delivery of basic services

Significant progress has been made with the establishment of structures of local government and the delivery and extension of access to services for South Africa's millions of citizens.

The department is embarking on a comprehensive process to review the 1998 White Paper on Local Government between now and March 2026. The White Paper Review is one of the flagship projects and part of the continuous efforts by the department to address challenges and improve the functioning of the local government system.

The aim of the White Paper Review is to identify and rectify any incorrect assumptions in the White Paper that have hindered the effective functioning of local government and make appropriate recommendations for implementation following local government elections in 2026. The department initiated a process to review the various pieces of legislation that impact on local government with the view to entrenching good practices and addressing the challenges that have been experienced. This culminated in the development of the Local Government: General Laws Amendment Bill ("the Bill").

The Bill is aimed at enhancing the functionality and efficiency of local government. This Bill reflects the government's ongoing commitment to ensuring good governance and improving service delivery within municipalities across South Africa.

On 27 March 2024, the Bill was approved by Cabinet for publication in the Government Gazette for public comments with an extended closing date of 31 August 2024. The Bill

will be processed concurrently with the process undertaken by the Department to review the White Paper on Local Government.

The Minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, as required in terms of Section 20 of the Local Government: Municipal Structures Act, 1998 ("the Structures Act"), determined and published a formula by notice in Government Notice No. 5249 in the Government Gazette No. 51331 on 2 October 2024 determining the number of councillors for the different categories of municipalities in preparation for the 2026/2027 local government elections.

Municipal Infrastructure Grant (MIG)

The grant aims to eradicate municipal infrastructure backlogs in poor communities to ensure the provision of basic services such as water, sanitation, roads and community lighting. The DCoG is responsible for managing and transferring the MIG, and provides support to provinces and municipalities on implementing the grant projects.

Community Work Programme

This is a key government initiative aimed at mobilising communities to provide regular and predictable work opportunities at the local government level. The purpose of the programme is to provide an employment safety net for those without access to opportunities designed to lift them out of poverty. The programme recognises that policies to address unemployment and create decent work will take time to reach people living in marginalised areas where few opportunities exist.

Local Economic Development

LED is an approach to economic development that allows and encourages local people to work together to achieve sustainable economic growth and development, thereby bringing economic benefits and improved quality of life to all residents in a local municipal area. LED is intended to maximise the economic potential of municipal localities and enhance the resilience of macroeconomic growth through increased local economic growth, employment creation and development initiatives within the context of sustainable development.

The "local" in economic development points to the fact that the political jurisdiction at local level is often the most appropriate place for economic intervention, as it carries with it the accountability and legitimacy of a democratically elected body. LED programmes provide support in the following areas:

- Developing and reviewing national policy, strategy and guidelines on LED;
- Providing direct and hands-on support to provincial and local government;
- Managing the LED Fund;
- Managing and providing technical support to nodal economic development planning;
- Facilitating, coordinating and monitoring donor programmes; and
- Assisting LED capacity-building processes.

Through these interventions and resources, local role players and interest groups are mobilised to achieve economic growth and create jobs to reduce poverty.

Department of Traditional Affairs

The DTA is mandated to oversee issues related to traditional affairs and support the development of stable and cohesive traditional communities. The 2003 White Paper on Traditional Leadership and Governance sets out a national framework, and the norms and standards that define the role of the institutions of traditional leadership in South Africa. It seeks to support and transform the institutions in accordance with constitutional imperatives and restore the integrity and legitimacy of traditional leadership in line with African indigenous law and customs subject to the Constitution. South Africa also has provincial houses of traditional leaders in the Eastern Cape, Free State, KwaZulu-Natal, Limpopo, Mpumalanga and the North West.

National and provincial houses of traditional leaders enhance the cooperative relationships within national and provincial government. Local houses of traditional leaders deepen and cement the relationship between municipalities and traditional leaders on customary law and development initiatives. Over the medium term, the department planned to continue focusing on monitoring the implementation of the Traditional and Khoi-San Leadership Act, 2019 (Act 3 of 2019) and ensuring that customary initiation is practised safely, as guided by the Customary Initiation Act of 2021.

This will entail monitoring the development of principal and senior traditional leadership in royal families' customary laws of succession and genealogies in eight provinces per year over the period ahead to mitigate disputes and claims, in line with the provisions of the Traditional and Khoi-San Leadership Act of 2019. By 2025/26, the Commission on Khoi-San Matters aims to research and investigate all applications it receives for the recognition of Khoi-San communities and leaders, and to make recommendations to the Minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs on the recognition of Khoi-San communities and leaders.

To create a safe and regulated environment for initiates in all provinces, the department plans to monitor and ensure compliance with the implementation of the Customary Initiation Act, 2021 (Act 2 of 2012) over the medium term. These activities are expected to drive an increase in expenditure in the Institutional Support and Coordination programme from R91.7 million in 2022/23 to R101.8 million in 2025/26, at an average annual rate of 3,5%.

Total expenditure is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 5,2%, from R180.1 million in 2022/23 to R209.7 million in 2025/26, due to an additional allocation of

R30 million over the MTEF period to support the implementation of priorities of the Traditional and Khoi--San Leadership Act of 2019. As a result, spending in the Research, Policy and Legislation programme is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 5,9%, from R29.7 million in 2022/23 to R35.2 million in 2025/26.

The compensation of the department's 134 employees accounts for an estimated 50,2% (R303.8 million) of total expenditure over the MTEF period, increasing at an average annual rate of 5,5%, from R89.7 million in 2022/23 to R105.4 million in 2025/26.

Legislation

The department's mandate is informed by the following

legislation:
- Traditional and Khoi-San Leadership Act of 2019; and
- Commission for the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Cultural, Religious and Linguistic Communities Act, 2002 (Act 19b of 2002).

Entity

Commission for the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Cultural, Religious and Linguistic Communities

The Commission for the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Cultural, Religious and Linguistic Communities was established in terms of Section 181(1)(c) of the Constitution to protect and promote the rights of cultural, religious and linguistic communities, and to strengthen constitutional democracy. The commission's core functions include research, conflict resolution and public education on the rights of cultural, religious and linguistic communities. Expenditure is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 3,2%, from R47.1 million in 2022/23 to R51.7 million in 2025/26.

Spending on compensation of employees accounts for an estimated 66,5% (R100.4 million) of total expenditure over the period ahead. The commission is set to derive 99,3% (R147.4 million) of its revenue over the period ahead through transfers from the department.

Traditional leadership

The Constitution states that the institution, status and roles of traditional leadership, according to customary law, are recognised. Government acknowledges the critical role of traditional leadership institutions in South Africa's constitutional democracy and in communities, particularly in relation to the Rural Development Strategy. It, therefore, remains committed to strengthening the institution of traditional leadership. To this end, numerous pieces of legislation have been passed and various programmes implemented to ensure that traditional leadership makes an important contribution to the development of society.

The department is also working on a range of issues, including policies on unity and diversity, initiation, traditional healing, traditional leaders' protocol, family trees, the remuneration and benefits of traditional leaders based on uniform norms and standards, and involving the Khoisan people in the system of governance in South Africa. Parliament extended the term of the Commission of Traditional Leadership Disputes and Claims from 2016 to 2020 – to allow the commission time to finalise outstanding disputes and claims, and deal with the 320 traditional leadership disputes and claims per year that were envisaged.

Traditional councils

Legislation has transformed the composition of traditional councils to provide for elements of democracy. It states that 40% of members must be elected and that one third of members must be women. Legislation has also opened up opportunities for municipalities and traditional councils to achieve cooperative governance. Traditional councils have been given a strong voice in development matters and may now enter into partnerships and service-delivery agreements with government in all spheres. The National Khoisan Council aims to unite the Khoisan communities and create a platform through which they can raise issues affecting them as a group of communities. The most important issue is the statutory recognition and inclusion of the Khoisan people in formal government structures.

National House of Traditional Leaders

The Constitution mandates the establishment of houses of traditional leaders by means of either provincial or national legislation. The NHTL was established in terms of the then NHTL Act, 1997 (Act 10 of 1997). Its objectives and functions are to promote the role of traditional leadership within a democratic constitutional dispensation, enhance unity and understanding among traditional communities and advise national government.

Provincial houses of traditional leaders were established in all six provinces that have traditional leaders. The national and provincial houses of traditional leaders enhance the cooperative relationships within national and provincial government, while the establishment of local houses of traditional leaders deepens and cements the relationship between municipalities and traditional leaders on customary law and development initiatives.

It was established to:
- Represent traditional leadership and their communities;
- Advance the aspirations of the traditional leadership and their communities at national level;
- Advance the plight of provincial houses of traditional leaders, traditional leadership and their communities at national government level;
- Participate in international matters that have to do with custom, traditions and matters of common interest; and
- Influence government legislative processes at national level.

Commission on Traditional Leadership Disputes and Claims

The commission was established in terms of the Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework Act (Act 41 of 2003). It is tasked with restoring the dignity of traditional leaders and their communities by investigating and ensuring that the institution of traditional leadership is restored to where it belongs. It also investigates all claims to any position of traditional leadership (king/queen/principal/senior traditional leader, and headmen and headwomen), including disputes over the boundaries of traditional councils.

Section 25 of the Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework Act of 2003 requires that the commission investigate and make recommendations on cases where there is doubt as to whether a kingship, principal traditional leadership or senior traditional leadership and headmanship was established in accordance with customary law and customs.

Public Service and Administration

The Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) draws its mandate from Section 195 (1) of the Constitution, which sets out basic values and principles to which the Public Service should adhere; and the Public Service Act, 1994 (Act 103 of 1994), which gives the Minister of Public Service and Administration the responsibility to establish

norms and standards relating to:

- The functions of the public service;
- Organisational structures and the establishment of departments, and other governance arrangements in the public service;
- The conditions of service and other employment practices for employees;
- Labour relations in the public service;
- The health and wellness of employees;
- Information management in the public service;
- Electronic government;
- Integrity, ethics, conduct and anti-corruption in the Public Service; and
- Transformation, reform, innovation and any other matter to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the Public Service and its delivery of services to the public.

The department provides an enabling environment to ensure government departments that deliver services have adequate capacity to carry out their mandates. In seeking to do this, over the medium term, the department will focus on intensifying the fight against corruption in the public service, reducing government's wage bill, ensuring adherence to Batho Pele principles, and developing regulations and reviewing key legislation.

The NDP articulates a vision of a capable and developmental state built through strengthening delegation, accountability and oversight in the public service. This vision is supported by Priority 6 (a capable, ethical and developmental state) of government's 2019-2024 MTSF, with which the work of the DPSA is closely aligned.

Intensifying the fight against corruption

The department will continue to intensify the fight against corruption in the public service over the MTEF period by strengthening disciplinary action in such cases, and promoting a culture of accountability and ethical and professional behaviour. Part of combating corruption entails limiting the scope for conflicts of interest through measures such as prohibiting public servants from conducting business with the state. This entails conducting lifestyle audits on certain categories of employees and monitoring the implementation of the financial disclosure framework. The public administration ethics, integrity and disciplinary technical assistance unit developed guidelines for this in 2021/22.

The unit provides technical assistance and support to institutions in all spheres of government; develops norms and standards on ethics, integrity, conduct and discipline management in public administration; and will monitor adherence to the financial disclosure framework once it is adopted. The unit also forms part of the anti-corruption task team and serves in the intergovernmental fusion centre at the Financial Intelligence Centre, where it assists with identifying public service employees investigated for fraud related to government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The department plans to support 12 departments over the medium term on the implementation of the guidelines while increasing awareness of public-sector lifestyle audits, especially in terms of the repercussions of committing fraudulent activities; and providing support to all government departments on the implementation of the guidelines. To carry out activities related to intensifying the fight against corruption, R75.8 million is allocated over the period ahead in the Public Administration Ethics, Integrity and Disciplinary Technical Assistance Unit subprogramme in the Negotiations, Labour Relations and Remuneration Management programme.

Reducing government's wage bill

The department is tasked with ensuring that the public-sector wage bill becomes more affordable. As such, in collaboration with National Treasury and other departments, the department planned to review remuneration policies across government with the aim of developing a single remuneration framework for the public sector (excluding State-Owned Enterprises). This is expected to be achieved over the medium term, and will be in line with the principles of fair, equitable and sustainable remuneration.

The implementation of the framework is also expected to reduce remuneration inequality for employees performing similar tasks in different spheres of government.

To carry out these activities, R73.7 million is set aside over the medium term in the Remuneration, Employment Conditions and Human Resource Systems subprogramme in the Negotiations, Labour Relations and Remuneration Management programme.

Developing regulations and reviewing key legislation

Over the period ahead, the department will focus on developing regulations to enable the full implementation of the Public Administration Management Act of 2014. Following consultations with internal and external stakeholders on the draft White Paper on the Transformation and Modernisation of Public Administration, regulations for the Act were submitted to relevant stakeholders. The amended Act is expected to be finalised and tabled in Parliament in 2023/24.

Once in effect, it will inform the formulation of further regulations and other legislative provisions to enhance the principles of a unified public administration. The department also plans to review the Public Service Act of 1994 and related policies over the period ahead. To carry out these activities, R34.8 million over the medium term is allocated in the Legal Services subprogramme in the Administration programme.

Entities

Centre for Public Service Innovation (CPSI)

In terms of Section 3(1)(i) of the Public Service Act of 1994, the responsibility for innovation in the public sector is vested in the Minister for Public Service and Administration. The CPSI is tasked by the Minister to fulfil this mandate, which includes establishing norms and standards relating to transformation, reform and innovation to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the Public Service and its delivery of services to the public.

Over the medium term, the department aims to use innovation to identify and offer solutions to service delivery challenges. It plans to do so by partnering with other government departments, non-governmental organisations,

the private sector, tertiary institutions, academics and international entities to enhance government's implementation of the district development model. The process of developing innovative solutions involves investigating challenges and then finding or creating a prototype, approach, model, service or product for further testing, piloting and/or replication.

Accordingly, in 2023/24, the department plans to initiate four new research and development projects, such as the development of apps for emergency medical services. These are expected to enhance the delivery of services such as forensics and transport. These and other related activities will be carried out in the Research and Development and Institutional Support and Replication subprogrammes in the Public Sector Innovation programme.

The programme is allocated R70.3 million over the MTEF period. As part of its efforts to bring about a culture of innovation in the public sector, the department will continue to coordinate nine innovation knowledge platforms that share innovative approaches, solutions and models across all spheres of government. Many of these initiatives are aimed at supporting the development of digital skills among young people. These activities are allocated R28.1 million over the medium term in the Enabling Environment and Stakeholder Management subprogramme in the Public Sector Innovation programme.

One of these platforms is the annual Public Sector Innovation Awards, through which the department identifies at least two innovative solutions submitted to the awards for replication in targeted government sectors, particularly for identified service delivery challenges. Replication initiatives are carried out in the Institutional Support and Replication subprogramme, which is allocated R20.4 million over the period ahead.

The department's budget is set to increase at an average annual rate of 3,6%, from R45 million in 2022/23 to R50.1 million in 2025/26. Compensation of employees accounts for 57,2% (R83 million) of the department's total budget, increasing from R25.1 million in 2022/23 to R28.9 million in 2025/26 at an average annual rate of 4,8%.

National School of Government (NSG)

The NSG is mandated to provide training or effect its provision in terms of the Public Service Amendment Act, 2007 (Act 30 of 2007). The school carries out its mandate by developing relevant training and development programmes for delivery to South African public service officials at all levels.

Through education and training, the school promotes the progressive realisation of the values and principles governing public administration, and enhances the quality of human resource capacity in public service institutions. The school uses its trading account, which was established in terms of the PFMA of 1999, as a delivery vehicle for its core output.

The department's overarching objective is to contribute to fulfilling the educational, training and development needs of the Public Service. To achieve this, over the MTEF period, the department will focus on continuing and increasing its active online learning interventions, and revising the funding model of its entity to improve revenue generation. The number of online education, training and development interventions provided over the medium term was expected to increase from eight in 2022/23 to 10 in 2025/26.

To achieve this, the department planned to continue implementing six ICT projects per year in fields such as learning and training management systems to enable the school to operate more efficiently in its operations. These projects will assist the school in increasing the number of learners accessing compulsory and demand-led training, and education and development programmes. These activities will be carried out in the Administration programme, which is allocated R355.4 million over the MTEF period.

The department will continue to work on revising its entity's funding model by looking at alternative and broader sources of revenue beyond the fiscus to ensure financial sustainability. This will entail, among other interventions, a drive to increase the uptake of the school's education, training and development offerings from 75% in 2022/23 to 80% in 2025/26. Spending for these activities is within an allocation of R338.9 million over the medium term in the Management and Corporate Services subprogrammes in the Administration programme. Spending on the revised funding model is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 3,2%, from R5 million in 2022/23 to R5.5 million in 2025/26.

Total expenditure is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 2,6%, from R231.1 million in 2022/23 to R249.4 million in 2025/26. Transfers to the training trading account constitute 50,4% (R361.8 million) of the department's budget over the medium term, while the remaining 49,6% is allocated to the Administration programme.

Public Service Commission (PSC)

The PSC is an independent institution established in terms of Chapter 10 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa of 1996. It derives its mandate from sections 195 and 196 of the Constitution, which set out the values and principles governing public administration. The commission is vested with custodial oversight responsibilities for the Public Service, and monitors, evaluates and investigates public administration practices. It has the power to issue directives on compliance with personnel procedures relating to recruitment, transfers, promotions and dismissals. Over the MTEF period, the PSC planned to continue promoting constitutional values and principles; investigate grievances; conduct research and monitor compliance with the Public Service monitoring and evaluation system and adherence to applicable procedures and standards of service delivery; and produce reports on human resource management in the Public Service.

Total expenditure is expected to increase from R295.5 million in 2022/23 to R318.5 million in 2025/26, with compensation of employees comprising an estimated 75,4% (R689.6 million) of this spending. By promoting constitutional values and the principles governing public administration, the commission hopes to change the behaviour and attitude of public servants in their daily activities.

To give effect to this, the PSC, in collaboration with various spheres of government, planned to host 20 engagements per year on constitutional values and principles to promote service delivery and functionality in the public service. Spending for these engagements is within the Monitoring and Evaluation programme, which has an allocation of

R138.9 million over the medium term.

The PSC will continue to investigate grievances related to labour or human resources lodged by public servants to their respective departments, and finalise 85% of them by recommending appropriate actions within 30 days of receipt. This is budgeted for in the Leadership and Management Practices programme, which has an allocation of R154.7 million over the medium term. The commission is tasked with conducting investigations following the receipt of complaints from the public or of its own accord.

Complaints could be related to, among other things, corruption, appointment and procurement irregularities, and the conduct of public servants. The objective of investigations is to identify shortcomings and/or wrongdoings and provide redress to citizens through the effective and efficient delivery of public services. Accordingly, the commission will continue to manage the functioning of the National Anti-Corruption Hotline and conduct research and advocacy work to promote professional ethics in the Public Service.

To quantify its progress, the commission intends to produce three oversight reports on the implementation of the ethics framework and four articles on the promotion of professional ethics per year over the medium term. Expenditure on these activities is within an allocation of R181.4 million over the MTEF period in the Integrity and Anti-corruption programme.

Integrated Public Service Month (IPSM)

South Africa commemorates PSM in September each year. It is a regular national event that requires all national and provincial departments to participate by putting in place activities and campaigns to improve service delivery. PSM is a follow-up to and mirrors the UN and Africa Public Service Day, which takes place on 23 June every year. The PSM serves as a reminder of what it means to serve communities and to also look at the impact the government has, especially around issues of service delivery.

As part of the PSM, public servants are expected to:

- Roll up their sleeves and spring-clean their service delivery points;
- Visit schools, hospitals, police stations and courts, talk to citizens, mediate the delivery of services and get things done;
- Unblock the bottlenecks and red-tape in the delivery of services;
- Ensure the systems and infrastructure are working and use public resources efficiently to the benefit of the citizens; and
- Recommit themselves to belong, to care and to serve the people.

Improving the implementation of Batho Pele principles

Adherence to Batho Pele principles means putting people first in the delivery of public services. Accordingly, over the medium term, the department will continue to provide the necessary support to departments by monitoring the quality and implementation of the revised Batho Pele programme, and the extent to which departments promote and implement the principles.



Each department is required to develop standards to guide its implementation of the principles. To this end, R48.4 million is allocated over the MTEF period in the Service Delivery Improvement, Citizen Relations and Public Participation subprogramme in the Government Service Access and Improvement programme.

Batho Pele

The Batho Pele initiative is aimed at improving service delivery to the public. Batho Pele is a Sesotho phrase meaning “People First”. From this concept, eight principles for transforming public service delivery were derived.

These are:

- Regular consultation with customers;
- Set service standards;
- Increased access to services;
- Higher levels of courtesy;
- More and better information about services;
- Increased openness and transparency about services;
- Remedying failures and mistakes; and
- Giving the best possible value for money.

Batho Pele Excellence Awards

The annual National Batho Pele Excellence Awards recognise public servants who are selfless, dedicated, committed and go the extra mile in servicing citizens. Eligible to public servants across the three spheres of government, the awards seek professionalism in the Public Service.





SOUTH AFRICA
YEARBOOK
2024/25

Health

The National Development Plan (NDP): Vision 2030 sets out nine long-term health goals for South Africa. Five of these goals relate to improving the health and wellbeing of the population and the other four deal with aspects of strengthening health services.

By 2030, South Africa should have:

- Raised the life expectancy to at least 70 years;
- Progressively improved tuberculosis (TB) prevention and cure;
- Reduced maternal, infant and child mortality;
- Significantly reduced prevalence of non-communicable diseases (NCDs);
- Reduced injury, accidents and violence by 50% from 2010 levels;
- Completed health system reforms;
- Primary healthcare teams that provide care to families and communities;
- Iniversal healthcare coverage; and
- Filled posts with skilled, committed and competent individuals.

National Department of Health (NDoH)

The NDoH derives its mandate from the National Health Act, 2003 (Act 61 of 2003), which requires that it provides a framework for a structured and uniform health system for South Africa and sets out the responsibilities of the three levels of government in the provision of health services. Its mission is to improve health by preventing illness and disease, and promoting healthy lifestyles. It aims to consistently improve the health care delivery system by focusing on access, equity, efficiency, quality and sustainability.

Over the medium term, the department will focus on: preventing and treating communicable and non-communicable diseases by continuing to strengthen primary health care; supporting tertiary services; and strengthening health systems, including infrastructure, in preparation for the introduction of National Health Insurance (NHI).

An estimated 90,3% (R173.9 billion) of the department's budget of R192.3 billion over the MTEF period comprises transfers to provincial departments of health for conditional grants. Total spending is projected to increase at an average annual rate of 4,3%, from R58.6 billion in 2023/24 to R66.4 billion in 2026/27. This is due to additional allocations of R1.2 billion in 2024/25, R1.3 billion in 2025/26 and R1.3 billion in 2026/27 for conditional grants to support provinces to partly absorb the implications of the 2023 public sector wage agreement.

These additions also partially offset Cabinet-approved reductions of R1.5 billion in 2024/25, R3 billion in 2025/26 and R3.3 billion in 2026/27. Given that more than 90 per cent of the department's budget is for conditional grants, these carry the largest share of the reductions, with the comprehensive HIV/AIDS component of the district health programmes grant being reduced, on average, by R1.3 billion per year over the MTEF period and the health facility revitalisation grant being reduced by R1.2 billion per year over the same period. These reductions were made feasible by the achievement of cost efficiencies in the form of lower than anticipated tender prices for antiretroviral drugs (ARVs), significant underspending in 2022/23, and the uptake of ARV treatment running significantly below target.

Reductions to the health facility revitalisation grant were partly justified by historical underspending and some infrastructure projects being placed on longer-term completion timeframes. The net effect results in overall reductions of R225.4 million in 2024/25, R1.7 billion in 2025/26 and R1.9 billion in 2026/27.

To address service backlogs and the pressing need to resolve the unequal distribution of tertiary services, the national tertiary services grant has been protected from reductions. An estimated R1.1 billion over the MTEF period is added to the grant to partly support provinces to fund salary increases for personnel funded through it. An amount of R80.6 million over the MTEF period is shifted to the department from the Department of Science and Innovation for the social impact bond, an outcomes-based financing mechanism, for adolescent girls and women.

Some interventions through the mechanism include the provision of ARV treatment, pre-exposure prophylaxis, contraceptives and educational programmes aimed at behavioural challenges. The South African Medical Research Council leads this work, which is funded through a new transfer payment.

Treating and preventing diseases and promoting primary healthcare

With an allocation of R85.7 billion over the MTEF period, the district health programmes grant constitutes almost half of the department's budget. This includes the comprehensive HIV/AIDS component, which has an allocation of R75.6 billion over the medium term, and the district health component, which is allocated R10.2 billion over the same period.

As the department was able to negotiate lower prices for ARVs, no major revisions have been made to targets for the comprehensive HIV/AIDS component. The target for clients remaining on ARV treatment is slightly lower than what was previously published for 2024/25 (6.7 million instead of R6.5 million) and 2025/26 (7 million instead of 6.7 million), as uptake has been lower than expected. As of November 2023, only about 5.5 million clients were on treatment against an annual target of 6 million.

This is attributed to poor health-seeking behaviour, particularly among men. The department will use outreach services such as community health workers and innovative medicine dispensing models to improve performance in this area. The target for 2026/27 is 6.9 million.

Outreach services are largely funded through the district health component, in which spending is set to increase at an average annual rate of 6.5%, from R2.9 billion in 2023/24 to R3.5 billion in 2026/27, in the Primary Health Care programme. This will enable the department to continue to retain an appropriate number of community health workers and fulfil their mandatory stipend increases. The component also funds human papillomavirus vaccinations and a range of interventions for TB and malaria.

The central chronic medication dispensing and distribution programme makes chronic medicines more accessible by allowing them to be dispensed conveniently at alternate pick-up points such as private pharmacies. It is funded through the NHI indirect grant. An estimated 40% of the department's clients on ARVs use the service.

Supporting tertiary healthcare services

Tertiary health care services are highly specialised referral services provided at central and tertiary hospitals. These

services are not, however, equitably distributed as there are only 35 hospitals offering tertiary services in the country and most of them are in urban areas. As such, patients are often referred from one province to another, which requires strong national coordination and cross-subsidisation through the national tertiary services grant to compensate provinces for providing tertiary services to patients from elsewhere.

The grant has allocations of R15.3 billion in 2024/25, R15.9 billion in 2025/26 and R16.7 billion in 2026/27 in the Hospital Systems programme, increasing at an average annual rate of 5.9%. To improve equity and reduce the need for interprovincial referrals over the long term, a portion of the grant is earmarked for strengthening tertiary services through the purchasing of machinery and equipment and recruiting medical specialists in provinces where they are underdeveloped.

Funding for oncology services, amounting to R737.3 million over the next three years, which was previously partly funded through the NHI grant, has been shifted to the national tertiary services grant to consolidate funding for cancer services.

Strengthening health systems towards providing NHI

The National Assembly and the National Council of Provinces had endorsed the NHI Bill. If enacted, it will have significant implications for the funding and organisation of health care in South Africa. Preparatory work for this, which includes capacity building, is largely funded through the NHI indirect grant, which has an allocation of R6.9 billion over the MTEF period.

The grant previously had three components, two of which (the non-personal services component and the personal services component) have been combined to form the health systems component. The new combined component is allocated R2.4 billion over the MTEF period, with spending set to increase at an average annual rate of 4,6%.

This is expected to strengthen health systems, particularly information systems; help address the findings of the Office of Health Standards and Compliance; improve implementation of the ideal clinic initiative; improve the dispensing of medicines through the central chronic medication dispensing and distribution programme; and provide proof of concept, including the piloting of contracting units, for primary health care.

The other component within the grant, which deals with health facility revitalisation, is intended to fund strategic infrastructure projects through an allocation of R4.6 billion over the MTEF period. An estimated R1.6 billion of the grant's allocation over the MTEF period, funded from the budget facility for infrastructure, is for the construction of the Limpopo Academic Hospital.

A further R22 billion over the MTEF period is set to be transferred to provinces through the direct health facility revitalisation grant. As Cabinet-approved reductions have been implemented mainly on projects in planning stages, they are not expected to impact negatively on projects that have already been initiated.

Medical Aid coverage

According to Statistics South Africa's (Stats SA) General Household Survey (GHS) of 2023, despite some fluctuations, the percentage of individuals who were covered by a medical aid scheme changed very little between 2002 and 2023, declining only slightly from 15,9% to 15,7% over the period.

Medical aid coverage was most common in the Western Cape (25,7%) and Gauteng (22,4%), and least common in Limpopo (9,5%) and Mpumalanga (9,8%). White persons comprised 31,7% of all medical aid beneficiaries.

A higher percentage of individuals in metros were members of medical aid schemes than in the general population (23,5% compared to 15,7%). Figure 5.4 shows that membership was most common in the City of Tshwane (30,0%) and Cape Town (27,8%), and least common in Mangaung (18,7%) and the City of Johannesburg (19,8%).

About 71,7% of white individuals were members of a medical aid scheme compared to 41,3% of Indian/Asian individuals, 19,6% of coloureds and 9,8% of black Africans. However, expressed as a share of all medical aid members, black Africans comprised 51,2% of all members compared to 31,7% of whites.

Legislation and policies

The legislative mandate of the NDoH is derived from the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa of 1996 and several pieces of legislation passed by Parliament. Legislation falling under the NDoH portfolio includes the:

- National Health Act of 2003 provides a framework for a structured health system within South Africa, taking into account the obligations imposed by the Constitution and other laws on the national, provincial and local governments regarding health services.
- Medicines and Related Substances Act, 1965 (Act 101 of 1965), provides for the registration of medicines and other medicinal products to ensure their safety, quality and efficacy, and also provides for transparency in the pricing of medicines.
- Hazardous Substances Act, 1973 (Act 15 of 1973), provides for the control of hazardous substances, in particular those emitting radiation.
- Occupational Diseases in Mines and Works Act, 1973 (Act 78 of 1973), provides for medical examinations on people suspected of having contracted occupational diseases, especially in mines, and for compensation in respect of those diseases.
- Pharmacy Act, 1974 (Act 53 of 1974), provides for the regulation of the pharmacy profession, including community service by pharmacists.
- Health Professions Act, 1974 (Act 56 of 1974), provides for the regulation of health professions, in particular medical practitioners, dentists, psychologists and other related health professions, including community service by these professionals.
- Dental Technicians Act, 1979 (Act 19 of 1979), provides for the regulation of dental technicians and for the establishment of a council to regulate the profession.
- Allied Health Professions Act, 1982 (Act 63 of 1982), provides for the regulation of health practitioners, such as chiropractors, homeopaths, and for the establishment of a council to regulate these professions.
- SAMRC Act, 1991 (Act 58 of 1991), provides for the establishment of a medical research council, which is responsible for health research.

- Choice on Termination of Pregnancy Act, 1996 (Act 92 of 1996), provides a legal framework for the termination of pregnancies based on choice under certain circumstances.
- Sterilisation Act, 1998 (Act 44 of 1998), provides a legal framework for sterilisations, including for people with mental health challenges.
- Medical Schemes Act, 1998 (Act 131 of 1998), provides for the regulation of the medical schemes industry to ensure consonance with national health objectives.
- Tobacco Products Control Act, 1993 (Act 83 of 1993), provides for the control of tobacco products, the prohibition of smoking in public places and of advertisements of tobacco products, as well as the sponsoring of events by the tobacco industry.
- National Health Laboratory Service (NHLS) Act, 2000 (Act 37 of 2000), provides for a statutory body that offers laboratory services to the public health sector.
- The Council for Medical Schemes (CMS) Levy Act, 2000 (Act 58 of 2000), provides a legal framework for the CMS to charge medical schemes certain fees.
- Mental Health Care Act, 2002 (Act 17 of 2002), provides a legal framework for mental health in the country and, in particular, the procedures for admission and discharge for various categories of mental health care users in health establishments, with an emphasis on human rights and accessible, comprehensive and integrated mental health care, treatment and rehabilitation services, including forensic mental health services.
- Nursing Act, 2005 (Act 33 of 2005), provides for the regulation of the nursing profession.
- Traditional Health Practitioners Act, 2007 (Act 22 of 2007) provides for the establishment of the Interim Traditional Health Practitioners Council, and registration, training and practices of traditional health practitioners in the country.
- Foodstuffs, Cosmetics and Disinfectants Act, 1972 (Act 54 of 1972), provides for the regulation of foodstuffs, cosmetics and disinfectants, in particular quality standards that must be complied with by manufacturers, as well as the importation and exportation of these items.

Other legislation applicable to the NDoH:

- Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act, 2007 (Act 32 of 2007), provides for the management of victims of crime.
- The Criminal Procedure Act, 1977 (Act 51 of 1977), Sections 212(4)(a) and 212 (8)(a), provides for establishing the cause of non-natural deaths. Sections 77, 78 and 79 provide for forensic mental observations and management of state patients declared by the Courts.
- The Children's Act, 2005 (Act 38 of 2005), gives effect to certain rights of children as contained in the Constitution, to set out principles relating to the care and protection of children, to define parental responsibilities and rights, and to make further provision regarding children's courts.
- The Child Justice Act, 2008 (Act 75 of 2008), as amended; Section 11 provides for criminal capacity assessment of children who are above 10 years but under the age of 14 years;
- The Occupational Health and Safety Act, 1993 (Act 85 of 1993), provides for the requirements with which employers must comply to create a safe working environment for employees in the workplace.
- The Compensation for Occupational Injuries and Diseases Act, 1993 (Act 130 of 1993), provides for compensation for disablement caused by occupational injuries or diseases sustained or contracted by employees in the course of their employment, and for death resulting from such injuries or diseases.
- The National Road Traffic Act, 1996 (Act 93 of 1996), provides for the testing and analysis of drunk drivers; the Constitution has pertinent sections which provide for the rights of access to healthcare services, including reproductive health and emergency medical treatment.
- The Employment Equity Act, 1998 (Act 55 of 1998), provides for the measures that must be implemented in the workplace to eliminate discrimination and promote affirmative action.
- The State Information Technology Act, 1998 (Act 88 of 1998), provides for the creation and administration of an institution responsible for the State's information technology system.
- The Skills Development Act, 1998 (Act 97 of 1998), provides for the measures that employers are required to take to improve the levels of skills of employees in workplaces.
- The Public Finance Management Act of 1999 provides for the administration of state funds by functionaries, their responsibilities and incidental matters.
- The Promotion of Access to Information Act, 2000 (Act 2 of 2000), amplifies the constitutional provision pertaining to accessing information under the control of various bodies.
- The Promotion of Administrative Justice Act, 2000 (Act 3 of 2000), amplifies the constitutional provisions pertaining to administrative law by codifying it.
- The Promotion of Equality and the Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act, 2000 (Act 4 of 2000), provides for the further amplification of the constitutional principles of equality and elimination of unfair discrimination.
- The Division of Revenue Act, 2015 (Act 1 of 2015), provides for the manner in which revenue generated may be disbursed;
- The Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment Act, 2003 (Act 53 of 2003), provides for the promotion of black economic empowerment in the manner that the State awards contracts for services to be rendered, and incidental matters.
- The Labour Relations Act, 1995 (Act 66 of 1995); establishes a framework to regulate key aspects of the relationship between employer and employee at individual and collective level.
- The Basic Conditions of Employment Act, 1997 (Act 75 of 1997), prescribes the basic or minimum conditions of employment that an employer must provide for employees covered by the Act.

Programmes and projects

National Health Insurance (NHI)

The programme aims to achieve universal health coverage by improving the quality and coverage of health services through the development and implementation of policies and health financing reforms. Its objectives are to:

- Expand access to chronic medication for stable patients through the delivery of 7.5 million medicine parcels through the central chronic medication dispensing and distribution programme by March 2025.



- Implement an equitable budgeting system and the contracting of providers for the delivery of primary health care services in contracting units for primary health care.

Subprogrammes:

- Programme Management provides leadership to the programme to improve access to high-quality healthcare services by developing and implementing universal health coverage policies and health financing reform.
- Affordable Medicine is responsible for developing systems to ensure the sustained availability of and equitable access to pharmaceutical commodities. This is achieved through the development of governance frameworks to support: the selection and use of essential medicines; the development of standard treatment guidelines; the administration and management of pharmaceutical tenders; the development of provincial pharmaceutical budget forecasts; the reform of the medicine supply chain; and the licensing of people and premises that deliver pharmaceutical services.
- Health Financing and NHI designs and tests policies, legislation and frameworks to achieve universal health coverage and to inform proposals for national health insurance. It develops health financing reforms, including policies affecting the medical schemes environment; provides technical oversight of the Council for Medical Schemes; manages the direct national health insurance grant and the NHI indirect grant; and implements the single exit price regulations, including policy development and implementation initiatives in terms of dispensing and logistical fees. This subprogramme will focus increasingly on evolving health financing functions such as user and provider management, healthcare benefits and provider payment, digital health information, risk identification and fraud management.

Role of the NHI in South Africa

Since the dawn of democracy, the health sector has undergone several reforms to establish a more equitable, accessible and affordable healthcare system that can meet the health needs of all South African residents. However, these past reforms have been too little and too slow. Everyone has the right of equal access to quality and affordable healthcare. Fundamental changes are required to create a strengthened healthcare system capable of providing this level of service.

The problem: South Africa's health system is very complicated and fragmented, resulting in high levels of waste. Consequently, health outcomes do not match the resources invested in the system. Both public and private sectors have challenges that make current healthcare delivery systems unsustainable.

The plan to strengthen the health system: South Africa is a member of the United Nations community and has committed to implement universal health coverage, as have all other 95 member states. The desired outcome is that "all people have access to the full range of quality health services they need, when and where they need them, without financial hardship".

The NHI is South Africa's strategy to achieve universal health coverage. It is a centralised, national insurance fund from which the government will buy healthcare services from healthcare providers in both public and private sectors. All eligible South African residents, as defined in the NHI Act, 2023 (Act 20 of 2023), will be able to visit these providers whenever they need healthcare, without any payment. The NHI will make healthcare more affordable, by reducing the cost of healthcare due to the economies of scale that can be achieved by purchasing healthcare for the entire population.

Like home or car insurance, everyone will contribute to this fund routinely, whether they need healthcare or not, and then make a withdrawal from these pooled funds when they need healthcare. Contributions will be made through taxes and special contributions, in line with what each person can afford. "Withdrawals" will be made every time they visit a healthcare provider. When visiting a healthcare provider, they will not have to make any payment, because the NHI Fund will pay for the costs of care.

NHI's history: The NHI is a journey to transform South Africa's health sector. It will take many years to be fully realised and requires input from all sectors to ensure no one is left behind. For the NHI Fund to be effective, the entire health system will undergo reform for many years to come. These reforms include integration of the private and public sectors and reforms to make both sectors more effective and more efficient, which will include implementation of robust governance structures.

The NHI is not a new concept, nor specific to South Africa. Many countries around the world implement a similar structure to provide affordable and accessible quality healthcare. The NHI journey started in 2011 when the NHI Green Paper was published for public consultation. This was followed by NHI pilot projects in 2012 with a focus on health system strengthening initiatives. The NHI White Paper was published in 2015 laying the foundation for the NHI as the vehicle to achieve universal health coverage and a unified health system.

President Cyril Ramaphosa signed the NHI Bill into law on 15 May 2024, marking a key milestone in the journey towards universal and comprehensive quality health coverage for all.

Now that the Bill has been assented to by the President, the NHI Act of 2023 will be phased in gradually, using a progressive and programmatic approach based on financial resource availability from 2024 to 2028. The Act will be implemented in two phases:

- Phase 1 commenced in 2023 and will continue for three years until 2026.
- Phase 2 will commence in 2026 and will run for another three years until 2028.

Communicable and Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs)

The programme develops and supports the implementation of national policies, guidelines, norms and standards, and the achievement of targets for the national response needed to decrease morbidity and mortality associated with communicable and non-communicable diseases. It develops strategies and implements programmes that reduce maternal and child mortality.

Its objectives are to:

- Reduce the risk of women developing cervical cancer by vaccinating 90% of eligible girls aged nine to 14 against human papillomavirus in each year over the medium term, and expanding screening to 38 districts by March 2027.
- Reduce maternal and child mortality by training 390 clinicians in sexual and reproductive health by March 2027.
- Support the effective implementation of the national strategic plan on malaria elimination over the medium term by:
  - Ensuring indoor residual insecticide spray coverage of at least 95% of households in malaria-endemic municipalities
  - Conducting information and communication campaigns on malaria prevention
  - Investigating and classifying confirmed cases within 72 hours.
- Increase the total number of HIV-positive people accessing antiretroviral treatment from 6.5 million in March 2024 to 6.9 million in March 2027 by:
  - Implementing the universal test-and-treat policy; and
  - Expanding the number of public health care facilities with youth zones from 2 140 in March 2024 to 2 400 by March 2027.
- Make progress towards ending TB by 2035 by improving treatment adherence to achieve a drug-susceptible TB treatment success rate of 95% by March 2027 and multidrug-resistant TB treatment success rate of 82% by March 2027.
- Reduce premature mortality as a result of non-communicable diseases by screening 60% of clients for hypertension and diabetes in 2024/25.

Subprogrammes:

- Programme Management ensures that efforts by all stakeholders are harnessed to support the overall purpose of the programme, and that the efforts and resources of provincial departments of health, development partners, donors, academic and research organisations, and non-governmental and civil society organisations all contribute in a coherent and integrated way.
- HIV, AIDS and STIs formulates policy services related to HIV and sexually transmitted infections, and monitors and evaluates these services; and manages and oversees the comprehensive HIV and AIDS component of the district health programmes grant implemented by provinces, and the coordination and direction of donor funding for HIV and AIDS. This includes the United States President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief; the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria; and the United States Centres for Disease Control and Prevention.
- Tuberculosis Management develops national policies and guidelines for TB services; sets norms and standards, and monitors their implementation in line with the vision of eliminating infections, mortality, stigma and discrimination; coordinates and manages the national response to the TB epidemic; and incorporates strategies needed to prevent, diagnose and treat both drug-sensitive TB and drug-resistant TB.
- Women's Maternal and Reproductive Health develops and monitors policies and guidelines for maternal and women's health services; sets norms and standards, and monitors and evaluates the implementation of these services; and supports the implementation of key initiatives as indicated in the maternal and child health strategic plan and the reports of the ministerial committees on maternal, perinatal and child mortality.

Primary Healthcare Services

The programme develops and oversees the implementation of legislation, policies, systems, and norms and standards for a uniform district health system, environmental health services, communicable and NCDs, health promotion and nutrition. It has five budget subprogrammes, namely:

- District Health Services: This is the vehicle for the delivery of primary healthcare services. It is central to supporting the health system to be efficient and effective. There is a need for functional district health management offices to manage the primary healthcare facilities such that they meet the standards of the Office of Health Standards
- Compliance and Ideal Clinic status, as well as achieve set targets for their key population health indicators.
- Environmental and Port Health Services: Environmental health is at the heart of public health interventions. The service's mandate is to lead the implementation of public awareness, health promotion and disease prevention, surveillance and inspection of both private and public premises. It is responsible for strengthening, supporting and monitoring the provision of environmental health services by developing relevant legislation, policies, guidelines,

norms and standards. These instruments are also used to assess and audit the compliance of municipalities and public health facilities to the relevant prescripts. It is also responsible for strengthening and monitoring the provision of port health services by controlling and preventing cross-border movement of goods and people in order to control public health risks, prevent importation of communicable diseases and any events of international concern. In response to the department's focus on environmental health assessments in the first half of the year, compliance assessments of ports of entry were prioritised during the remaining months.

- Health Promotion, Nutrition and Oral Health: Optimal health promotion and disease prevention is essential to the success of primary healthcare. Recognising South Africa's quadruple burden of disease, the subprogramme has identified the need to strengthen the Tobacco Control Programme. To achieve this, the Tobacco Products Control Act of 1993 was reviewed to tighten loopholes and address key issues pertaining to tobacco control in accordance with the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control.
- Noncommunicable Diseases (NCDs): The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development recognises the huge impact of NCDs worldwide, with a target set to reduce premature deaths from NCDs by one-third by 2030. The NCD Countdown 2030, stipulates that women between the ages 30-70 show a 21,2% likelihood of death caused by NCDs, while men have a 32,3% likelihood of dying from NCDs. Reducing NCDs and premature mortality requires a combination of redressing social and commercial determinants, promotion of good health through improved diet, increased physical activity, stopping tobacco use and reducing alcohol-related harm, increasing early diagnosis and treatment, and improved management and control of NCDs, including greater accessibility to services as well as strengthening referral and follow-up. The department is in the process of approving the National Strategic Plan for the Prevention and Control of NCDs 2022-2027.

The User Guide on the Management of Hypertension in Adults at PHC Level was approved and training will be expanded over the next year. The Department will embark on a national NCD campaign to strengthen community levels services to promote wellness, improve screening for hypertension, diabetes, obesity and specified mental health conditions, early detection, linkages to care and support compliance among patients.

- Mental disorders continue to be a major and growing cause of Disability-Adjusted Life Years (DALYs). Importantly, the DALYs for mental disorders are high during youth and mid-adulthood. There is substantive evidence for both the effectiveness and cost-benefit of mental health interventions, including large benefits in treating common mental disorders such as depression and anxiety. The department is in the process of developing Regulations for renal dialysis and organ transplantation, in order to regulate and improve these services in the country.
- Communicable Diseases: These are major causes of morbidity and mortality, and life expectancy is expected to increase through effectively addressing these conditions. Communicable diseases are, therefore, central to obtaining the department's vision of a long and healthy life for all South Africans.

Hospital, Tertiary Health Services and Human Resource Development

The programme develops policies, delivery models and clinical protocols for hospitals and emergency medical services (EMS). It also ensures the alignment of academic medical centres with health workforce programmes, training of health professionals and that the planning of health infrastructure meets the health needs of the country. It also assists government to achieve the population health goals of the country through nursing and midwifery, by providing expert policy and technical advice and recommendations on the role of nurses in the attainment of desired health outputs.

The programme has five subprogrammes:

- The Hospitals and Tertiary Health Services is responsible for tertiary services planning, policies that guide the management of and service standards in hospitals, as well as ensuring the production of appropriate numbers, staff mix and appropriately qualified health professionals.
- The Trauma, Violence, EMS and forensic Chemistry Laboratory is responsible for improving the governance, management and functioning of EMS in the country through strengthening the capacity and skills of EMS personnel, identification of needs and service gaps, and provision of appropriate and efficient EMS by providing oversight of provinces. It is also responsible for ensuring the effective and efficient rendering of forensic chemistry services to support the criminal justice system and reduce the burden of disease and unnatural causes of death.
- The Office of Nursing Services is responsible for ensuring that nursing and midwifery practitioners are competent and responsive to the burden of disease and population health needs.
- The Health Facilities Infrastructure Planning focuses on coordinating and funding health infrastructure to enable provinces to plan, manage, modernise, rationalise and transform infrastructure, health technology and hospital management, and improve the quality of care in line with national policy objectives.
- The Workforce Development, Management and Planning Programme is responsible for effectively articulating human resource needs and optimising the performance of the health workforce to achieve the strategic goals of the national health system in line with the adopted national Human Resources for Health Strategy.

Health Regulation and Compliance Management

The programme promotes accountability and compliance by regulatory bodies and public entities for effective governance and the quality of healthcare. It has two subprogrammes:

- The Compensation Commissioner for Occupational Diseases and Occupational Health, which is responsible for the payment of compensation to active and ex-workers in controlled mines and workers who have been certified to be suffering from cardiopulmonary-related diseases as a result of workplace exposures in the controlled mines or

works. Over the medium term, business processes will be re-engineered with regard to revenue collection; reducing the turnaround period in settling claims; amending the Occupational Diseases in Mines and Works Act of 1973; and improving governance, internal controls and relationships with stakeholders.
- The Public Entities Management, which exercises oversight over the public entities and statutory councils in support of the executive authority's responsibility for public entities and statutory health professional councils falling within the mandate of the health legislation.

HIV, AIDS and TB

HIV, AIDS, TB, other communicable diseases of interest and NCDs remain great threats to overall public health in South Africa. Government continues to promote the consistent use of condoms to prevent HIV, other STIs and unplanned pregnancies. The National Strategic Plan (NSP) for HIV, TB and STIs 2023-2028 serves as a blueprint and roadmap to guide and inform the country's response to HIV, TB and STI epidemics.

Through the implementation of the four previous NSPs, South Africa has made notable progress with respect to the HIV prevention and treatment programme, with over 5.7 million people on treatment. Of those on treatment and tested for viral load suppression, about 92% were virally suppressed, as of November 2022. New HIV infections have been declining and continue to do so. Successes have also been recorded in the prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV. Since 2000, partnerships and collaboration among government, civil society, organised labour and business sectors of SANAC have been central to implementing the National Strategic Plans. These partnerships have been strengthened over time, resulting in the development and launch of the SANAC Partnerships Strategy in 2020 and the adoption of the Policy-in-Action approach, which ensures multi-sectoral provision of integrated services to communities, including those that are most vulnerable and hard to reach. This fifth NSP for HIV, TB and STIs NSP 2023-2028 provides the strategic framework for a multi-sectoral approach that is people-and community-centred, to overcome these three epidemics as public health threats and social challenges. It provides a review of the burden of disease for HIV, TB and STIs; outlines some of the progress made; as well as several challenges that need to be addressed urgently.

Operation Phakisa and the Ideal Clinic Initiative

Operation Phakisa 2 is a government programme aimed at prioritising 3 500 primary healthcare facilities. It aims at turning every public health clinic into a facility that is people-centred and provides comprehensive, quality healthcare services. The Ideal Clinic Realisation and Maintenance Process started in 2013 to systematically build on the work of the facility improvement teams.

An ideal clinic has good infrastructure, adequate staff, adequate medicine and supplies, good administrative processes and adequate bulk supplies that use applicable clinical policies, protocols, and guidelines as well as partner and stakeholder support, to ensure the provision of quality health services to the community. An ideal clinic will cooperate with other government departments as well as with the private sector and NGOs to address the social determinants of health.

Facilities must be maintained to function optimally and remain in a condition that can be described as the "ideal clinic". Integrated clinical services management (ICSM) will be a key focus within an ideal clinic. ICSM is a health system strengthening model that builds on the strengths of the HIV programme to deliver integrated care to patients with chronic and/or acute diseases or who come for preventative services by taking a patient-centric view that encompasses the full value chain of the continuum of care and support.

Access to medicine

The Affordable Medicines Directorate within the NDoH is responsible for developing and implementing networked systems to provide end-to-end visibility of the medicines supply chain with the aim of reducing stockouts. In order to support the modernisation of the pharmaceutical supply chain, the NDoH implemented a number of strategic information system reforms, including the implementation of the:
- Stock Visibility System (SVS);
- Rx Solution and other electronic stock management systems; and
- Central Chronic Medicines, and Dispensing and Distribution Programme.

One of the key initiatives to realise the visibility of healthcare commodities in the country is the National Surveillance Centre (NSC), a web-based platform that visualises medicine availability information from several sources of the value chain into one central point. The submission of the information to the NSC is made possible through the collective efforts of health establishments, provincial warehouses and supplier stakeholders who submit relevant data to the system at agreed time intervals.

The information comes from various health systems, including SVS, Rx Solution, Medsas, Oracle and Commerce for warehouses, RSA Pharma Database and other electronic stock management systems as applicable. Using key performance indicators, data is visualised into easy-to-interpret graphs and tables that allow responsible persons to proactively manage and make timely decisions regarding medicine availability, thereby contributing to a more resilient medicine supply chain.

Medicine pricing

The Pharmaceutical Economic Evaluations directorate within the NDoH, in conjunction with the Pricing Committee, is responsible for ensuring transparency in medicine prices in the private sector through the implementation of a single exit price, logistics fees and dispensing fees for pharmacists and other licensed persons. In consultation with the Minister of Health, it ensures the exclusion of certain medicines as prescribed by Section 18A of the Medicines and Related Substances Act, 1965 (Act 101 of 1965) which prohibits the use of incentive schemes during the sale of medicines and medicinal devices.

It works jointly with the South African Health Products Regulatory Authority (SAHPRA), and the Council for Medical Schemes (CMS) to regulate medical devices and ensure improved access to costly medicines respectively.

Records management and unique patient identifier

This is a system whereby patients are registered on a central database, which enables quick and effective dispensing of the right medication to the right client, as well as serving as a deterrent to people visiting multiple clinics or medical centres in one day to collect absurd and, often, illegal amounts of medication. As part of the NHI, the NDoH has implemented this system in collaboration with the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research and the departments of Science, Technology and Innovation and Home Affairs.

School health: Integrated School Health Programme (ISHP)

The Departments of Basic Education and Health jointly implemented the ISHP, a programme that will extend the coverage of school health services to all learners in primary and secondary schools. The programme offers a comprehensive and integrated package of services, including sexual and reproductive health services for older learners.

The health services package for the ISHP includes a large component of health education for each of the four school phases (such as how to lead a healthy lifestyle, and drug and substance abuse awareness), health screening (such as screening for vision, hearing, oral health and TB) and on-site services (such as deworming and immunisation). The ISHP services contribute to the health and well-being of learners by screening them for health barriers to learning.

Prevent, Avoid, Stop, Overcome and Protect (PASOP) Campaign

The PASOP Campaign was launched in an effort to call on all communities to join hands with government in the fight against HIV and AIDS, and TB. It is aimed at influencing people's behaviour and attitude around these diseases, as the NDoH works tirelessly to ensure that new HIV infection rates are reduced. The campaign calls on South Africans to:

- P - Prevent new infections and transmissions;
- A - Avoid re-infections, deaths and mother-to-child transmission;
- S - Stop risky behaviour and practices;
- O - Overcome living with HIV and the stigma; and
- P - Protect themselves, loved ones and others.

PASOP targets all but with a distinct focus on lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex, men-sleeping-with-men, the youth, commercial sex workers, migrant workers, informal settlements, women and drug users. The campaign places high emphasis on the responsibility of self and non-stigmatisation.

Public entities and statutory health professional councils

Mines and Works Compensation Fund

The Mines and Works Compensation Fund was established in terms of the Occupational Diseases in Mines and Works Act, 1973 (Act 78 of 1973) and was listed as a Schedule 3A public entity effective from 2023/24. The fund collects levies from controlled mines and works; compensates workers, former workers and the dependants of deceased workers in controlled mines and works who have developed occupational diseases in their cardiorespiratory organs; and reimburses workers for any loss of earnings while being treated for TB. The fund is administered and controlled by the department's Compensation Commissioner for Occupational Diseases subprogramme.

The fund will focus on increasing the number of benefit payments made from 3 930 in 2023/24 to 5 000 in 2024/25, as well as increasing claims finalised by the compensation commissioner from 3 353 in 2023/24 to 5 000 in 2026/27. These activities will be funded through revenue generated by levies and interest received from investments in the compensation for ex-miners programme, which accounts for 99.9 per cent of overall expenditure. Expenditure for programme is set to increase at an average annual rate of 7,5%, from R383.8 million to R476.2 million over the same period.

The fund expects to derive 77,9% (R1.4 billion) of its revenue over the medium term through interest on investments and 22% (R405.4 million) through the levies it receives from controlled mines and works. Revenue is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 1,2%, from R582.5 million in 2023/24 to R604.6 million in 2026/27.

Council for Medical Schemes

The CMS was established in terms of the Medical Schemes Act, 1998 (Act 131 of 1998) to oversee the medical schemes industry and regulate it by controlling and coordinating its functions. As part of this, the council also serves the needs of medical scheme members by protecting and informing the public about their rights, handling complaints, ensuring industry compliance with the Act, improving management and governance, and advising the Minister of Health on regulatory matters as they pertain to medical schemes.

Over the MTEF period, the council will continue to ensure sound regulation of the medical schemes industry and support the department in its efforts to achieve universal health coverage. The council aims to achieve this partly by completing its review of prescribed minimum benefits and consolidating options and medical schemes to mitigate against risk pool fragmentation.

Total expenditure is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 5%, from R203.6 million in 2023/24 to R236 million in 2026/27. The council expects to generate 94,2% (R655.8 million) of its revenue over the medium term through the collection of levies from medical schemes and derive 2,8% (R19.1 million) through transfers from the department.

National Health Laboratory Service

The NHLS was established in terms of the NHLS Act of 2000 and provides pathology services for the majority of the South African population through its 233 laboratories across the country. From 2022/23, it assumed responsibility for forensic chemistry laboratory services from the department. The entity also houses the National Institute for Communicable Diseases and the National Institute for Occupational Health.

The entity will continue to play a critical role in the diagnosis of HIV and TB over the MTEF period. To ensure early detection of cervical cancer, in addition to cervical smear testing, the entity plans to implement human papillomavirus testing in 2024/25. Funding for these activities will be made available through the laboratory tests programme, which has an allocation of R33.4 billion over the medium term, constituting 76,6% of total expenditure.

The entity will continue to conduct surveillance of communicable diseases through the National Institute for Communicable Diseases, provide specialised diagnostic services and outbreak responses when needed, conduct research into public health, and build capacity through targeted training to produce a fit-for-purpose and responsive workforce in the surveillance of communicable diseases. An estimated R1.3 billion is allocated over the MTEF period to carry out these functions.

Total expenditure is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 4,9%, from R13.4 billion in 2023/24 to R15.5 billion in 2026/27. To address backlogs and increase the processing capacity of laboratories through additional space, analytic instruments and human resources, spending on forensic chemistry laboratories is expected to account for 2% (R875.3 million) of the entity's total budget over the period ahead.

The service expects to derive 92,1% (R40.7 billion) of its revenue over the MTEF period through the fees it charges for laboratory tests and 4,5% (R1.9 billion) through transfers from the department. Transfers from the department have been reduced by R159 million in 2024/25, R165.5 million in 2025/26 and R171.3 million in 2026/27, partly because of the entity's large accumulated surpluses.

Office of Health Standards Compliance (OHSC)

The Office of Health Standards and Compliance was established in terms of the National Health Amendment Act (2013), which mandates it to monitor and enforce the compliance of health establishments with the norms and standards prescribed by the Minister of Health in relation to the health system, and ensure the consideration, investigation and settlement of complaints relating to non-compliance with prescribed norms and standards in a procedurally fair manner.

Over the medium term, the office will continue to monitor the delivery of health care services in an effort to improve the quality and safety of health care at public and private health facilities. As such, the office expects to increase the percentage of private health establishments it inspects and certifies for compliance with established norms and standards, from 19% in 2023/24 to 21% over the medium term. To bolster the necessary support for the health ombud's work on investigations and handling complaints, the entity is allocated an additional R30 million over the MTEF period to retain about 10 temporary employees.

This is set to drive an increase in expenditure in the complaints management and office of the ombud programme at an average annual rate of 18.7 per cent, from R21.4 million in 2023/24 to R35.8 million in 2026/27. Total expenditure is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 7,4%, from R161.5 million in 2023/24 to R200.1 million in 2026/27. The office derives its revenue entirely through transfers from the department.

South African Health Products Regulatory Authority (SAHPRA)

The South African Health Products Regulatory Authority was established in terms of the Medicines and Related Substances Act of 1965. The authority's functions are to provide for the monitoring, evaluation, regulation, investigation, inspection, registration, and control of medicines, scheduled substances, clinical trials, medical devices, in vitro diagnostics, and other related matters in the public interest.

Over the MTEF period, the authority will focus on ensuring adequate health product registrations. This includes issuing safety and quality certifications for products, including verifying their efficacy. Since the authority's work is labour intensive, its main cost driver is compensation of employees, which increases at an average annual rate of 4,4%, from R265 million in 2023/24 to R301.4 million in 2026/27.

Expenditure is expected to increase at an annual average rate of 4,9%, from R394.8 million in 2024/25 to R455.1 million in 2026/27. The authority's revenue is mainly derived through transfers from the department, amounting to R449 million over the medium term; and from fees charged, amounting to R777.8 million. Revenue is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 6,1%, from R380.9 million in 2023/24 to R455.1 million in 2026/27.

South African Medical Research Council (SAMRC)

The council's mandate in terms of the South African Medical Research Council Act (1991) is to promote the improvement of the health and quality of life of the population through research, development and technology transfer. In line with this mandate, the council conducts and funds relevant and responsive health research, capacity development, innovation and research translation.

Over the MTEF period, the council intends to accept and publish about 3 075 journal articles, books and book chapters by authors affiliated with or funded by it. This work will be undertaken by the core research programme, which accounts for an estimated 53,7% (R2.7 billion) of the council's budget over the medium term.

Expenditure is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 9,3%, from R1.3 billion in 2023/24 to R1.7 billion in 2026/27, partly as a result of funds reallocated from the Department of Science and Innovation to the council through a transfer payment from the Department of Health to continue the work on the social impact bond for adolescent girls and women.

The council's revenue is mainly derived through departmental transfers, which account for an estimated 55,9% (R2.7 billion) of the council's revenue over the period ahead, while income received from grants amounts to 39,2% (R2 billion). Total revenue is projected to increase at an average annual rate of 9,3%, from R1.3 billion in 2023/24 to R1.7 billion in 2026/27.

Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPSCA)

The HPCSA is committed to promoting the health of the population, determining standards of professional education and training, and setting and maintaining high standards of ethical and professional practice. To safeguard the public and indirectly the professions, registration in terms of the Health Professions Act of 1974 is a prerequisite for practising any of the health professions with which the council is concerned.

The council guides and regulates the health professions

in the country in aspects pertaining to registration, education and training, professional conduct and ethical behaviour, ensuring continuing professional development, and fostering compliance with healthcare standards. The mission of the HPCSA is quality and equitable healthcare for all. All individuals who practise any of the healthcare professions incorporated in the scope of the HPCSA are obliged to register with the council. Failure to do so constitutes a criminal offence.

Its mandate includes:

- Coordinating the activities of the professional boards;
- Promoting and regulating interprofessional liaison;
- Determining strategic policy;
- Consulting and liaising with relevant authorities;
- Controlling and exercising authority over the training and practices pursued in connection with the diagnosis, treatment or prevention of physical or mental defects, illnesses or deficiencies in people;
- Promoting liaison in the field of training; and
- Communicating to the Minister of Health information that is of public importance.

As part of its recent milestones, the new HPCSA Council has developed and approved a strategic plan for the period 2021/22 – 2025/26, covering various issues, including:

- Digitally enabling the council;
- Ensuring that the council undertakes its business in a manner that ensures and maintains its financial viability;
- Improving relationships between the council and its relevant stakeholders;
- The council will improve all processes that are employed to deliver professional conduct functions;
- The council will have fully capacitated members of council and professional boards delivering on their fiduciary responsibilities; and
- The council will achieve organisational performance improvements.

Allied Health Professions Council of South Africa (AHPCSA)

The Allied Health Professions Act, 1982 (Act 63 of 1982), provides for the regulation of complementary health practitioners, such as chiropractors, homeopaths, and other complementary health professions and for the establishment of a council to regulate these professions.

The AHPCSA is a statutory health body established in terms of the Allied Health Professions Act of 1982 to control all allied health professions, which include aromatherapy, ayurveda, Chinese medicine and acupuncture, chiropractic treatment, therapeutic reflexology, therapeutic massage therapy, homeopathy, naturopathy, therapeutic aromatherapy, osteopathy, phytotherapy and Unani Tibb.

The AHPCSA is mandated to:

- Promote and protect the health of the public;
- Manage, administer and set policies relating to the professions registered with the AHPCSA;
- Investigate complaints relating to the professional conduct of practitioners, interns and students;
- Administer the registration of people governed by the AHPCSA; and
- Set standards for the education and training of intending practitioners.

South African Dental Technicians Council (SADTC)

The SADTC controls all matters relating to the education and training of dental technicians or dental technologists and practices in the supply, making, altering or repairing of artificial dentures or other dental appliances.

Its mandate includes:

- Promoting dentistry in South Africa;
- Controlling all matters relating to the education and training of dental technicians, dental technologists and practitioners who supply, make, alter or repair artificial dentures or other dental appliances; and promoting good relationships between dentists, clinical dental technologists, dental technicians and dental technologists.

South African Pharmacy Council (SAPC)

The SAPC is the regulator established in terms of the Pharmacy Act of 1974 to regulate pharmacists, pharmacy support personnel and pharmacy premises in South Africa. Its mandate is to protect, promote and maintain the health, safety and wellbeing of patients and the public by ensuring quality pharmaceutical service for all South Africans.

The council is tasked with:

- Assisting in promoting the health of South Africans;
- Advising the Minister of Health or any other person on any matter relating to pharmacy;
- Promoting the provision of pharmaceutical care, which complies with universal norms and values;
- Upholding and safeguarding the rights of the general public to universally acceptable standards of pharmacy practice;
- Establishing, developing, maintaining and controlling universally acceptable standards; and maintaining and enhancing the dignity of the pharmacy profession.

Interim Traditional Health Practitioners Council of South Africa (ITH- PCSA)

The ITHPCSA is a professional council responsible for the regulation of traditional health practitioners in South Africa. It is estimated that South Africa has approximately 300 000 trained traditional health practitioners currently practising. This figure does not include those still in training, new graduates entering the sector each year, or practitioners migrating from neighbouring countries.

Several research studies have estimated that approximately 70% of the country's population consult traditional health practitioners for their health needs. The growing number of traditional health practitioners, the high number of people depending on them for primary health needs, and the proliferation of bogus practitioners, makes the regulation of the sector a matter of critical significance for government.

Role players

South African National AIDS Council (SANAC)

The SANAC is a voluntary association of institutions established by Cabinet to build consensus across government, civil society and all other stakeholders to drive an enhanced country response to the scourges of HIV, TB and STIs. Under the direction of the council, government

created the SANAC Trust as the legal entity that is charged with achieving its aims.

Non-governmental organisations

Many NGOs at various levels play a crucial role in healthcare, and cooperate with government's priority programmes. They make an essential contribution, in relation to HIV and AIDS, and TB, and also participate significantly in the fields of mental health, cancer, disability and the development of primary healthcare systems. The involvement of NGOs extends from national level, through provincial structures, to small local organisations rooted in individual communities.

Resources

Medical practitioners

These include doctors working for the State, those in private practice and specialists. The majority of doctors practise in the private sector. In selected communities, medical students supervised by medical practitioners provide health services at clinics. In terms of the continuing professional development system, all doctors, irrespective of earlier qualifications, must obtain a specified number of points to retain their registration. The system requires that doctors attend workshops, conferences, refresher courses, seminars, departmental meetings and journal clubs.

Non-compliance with the requirements of the system could result in a doctor being deregistered. Applications by foreign health professionals are subject to assessment by the Examinations Committee of the Medical and Dental Professions Board. Those admitted have to write an examination and thereafter can be registered in the particular category for which they applied and were assessed.

Pharmacists

All pharmacists are obliged to perform one year of remunerated pharmaceutical community service in a public health facility.

Nurses

Nurses are required to complete a mandatory 12-month Community Service Programme, thereafter they may be registered as nurses (general, psychiatric or community) and midwives.

Provincial hospitals

Provincial hospitals offer treatment to patients with or without medical aid cover. Patients are classified as hospital patients, if they can't afford to pay for treatment. Their treatment is then partly or entirely financed by the particular provincial government or the health authorities of the administration concerned.

Provincial hospital patients pay for examinations and treatment on a sliding scale in accordance with their income and number of dependants. Patients with medical aid are charged a private rate that is generally lower than the rate charged by private hospitals.

World AIDS Day

World AIDS Day is commemorated each year on 1 December. This is a global opportunity for communities to unite in the fight against HIV and AIDS, show support for people living with HIV, and remember those who have died.

Population estimates

South Africa's mid-year population is estimated to have increased to 63,02 million in 2024, with the female population accounting for 51% (approximately 32,13 million) of the population. This according to the report released by Statistics South Africa in July 2024.

Gauteng continues to record the largest share of the South African population, with approximately 15,83 million people (25,1%) living in this province. KwaZulu-Natal is the province with the second largest population, with an estimated 12,34 million people (19,6%) living in this province. With a population of approximately 1,36 million people (2,2%), the Northern Cape remains the province with the smallest share of the South African population.

According to the report, 27,5% of the population is aged younger than 15 years (16,8 million) and approximately 9,7% (6,13 million) is 60 years or older. The provinces reflecting the highest percentage of children younger than 15 within their structures are Limpopo (33,2%) and the Eastern Cape (31,8%). The proportion of elderly persons aged 60 years and older in South Africa is increasing over time and, as such, policies and programmes to care for the needs of this growing population should be prioritised.

The report further shows that life expectancy at birth for 2024 is estimated at 63,6 years for males and 69,2 years for females. The infant mortality rate for 2024 is estimated at 22,9 per 1 000 live births.

The estimated overall HIV prevalence rate is approximately 12,7% among the South African population. The total number of people living with HIV (PLWHIV) is estimated at approximately 8,0 million in 2024. For adults aged 15-49 years, an estimated 16,7% of the population is HIV positive.

For the period 2021-2026, Gauteng and Western Cape are estimated to experience the largest inflow of migrants of approximately, 1 401 895 and 491 296 respectively.

There is a reduction in international migration, which is indicative of the COVID-19 travel restrictions and subsequent impact on migratory patterns since March 2020. Migration is an important demographic process, as it shapes the age structure and distribution of the national and provincial population.





SOUTH AFRICA
YEARBOOK
2024/25

Home Affairs

The Department of Home Affairs (DHA) derives its mandate from the Constitution and various Acts of Parliament and policy documents. This mandate entails the management of citizenship and civil registration, international migration and refugee protection. It allows the department to be a key enabler of national security, citizen empowerment, efficient administration and socioeconomic development. These functions must be managed securely and strategically. The department's services are divided into two broad categories: civic services and immigration services.

Over the medium term, the department planned to continue focusing on securing international migration through the establishment of the Border Management Authority (BMA), modernising ICT infrastructure to ensure integrated planning and efficient administration, ensuring access to rights and services, and digitising records.

The department's budget allocation over the medium term is R12.5 billion in 2026/27, R12.1 billion in 2027/28 and R12.6 billion in 2028/29 financial years. The annual growth increases at an average annual rate of 4.6%, from R11.1 billion in 2025/26 to R12.6 billion in 2028/29.

Programme one: Administration expenditure increases at an average annual rate of 6,9%, from R2.7 billion in 2025/26 to R3.3 billion in 2028/29;

Programme two: Citizen Affairs expenditure increases at an average annual rate of 2,2%, from R3.3 billion in 2025/26 to R3.5 billion in 2028/29.

Programme three: Immigration Affairs expenditure increases at an average annual rate of 5,3%, from R837 million in 2025/26 to R979 billion in 2028/29.

Programme four: Institutional Support and Transfers expenditure increases at an average annual rate of 4,7%, from R4.2 billion in 2026/27 to R4.9 billion in 2028/29.

Over the 2026 Medium-Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) period, spending on compensation of employees accounts for 37.2% (R13.8 billion) of total expenditure, goods and services amounts to 22,4% (R8.4 billion) of total spending, departmental agencies and accounts is 39,8% (R14.8 billion) of total expenditure and payment for capital assets is 0,3% (R111.8 million) of total expenditure.

The operations of the Border Management Authority (BMA)

The BMA facilitates and manages the legitimate movement of people and goods within the border law enforcement area and at ports of entry, and cooperates with and coordinates its border law-enforcement functions with other organs of state.

On 1 April 2024, the BMA celebrated its first anniversary since its official establishment on 1 April 2023, marking one year of dedicated service in securing South Africa's ports of entry and facilitating legitimate movements.

The establishment of the BMA was the result of the transfer of border control functions and officials from four key departments, namely Home Affairs, Health, Forestry Fisheries and the Environment, as well as Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD) into a single, integrated authority mandated to secure and manage South Africa's borders.

As the third national armed law enforcement authority of the Republic, the officials have the responsibility to facilitate immigration services, port health, environmental and agricultural biosecurity, including access control and general law enforcement at the ports of entry and border law enforcement areas.

An amount of R4.2 billion was transferred to the BMA over three years to fulfil its mandate. These transfers are made through the BMA subprogramme in the Institutional Support and Transfers programme.

Modernising ICT infrastructure

The department is committed to screening all passengers and crew travelling to, from or through South Africa by air or sea in advance. For this purpose, the passenger's name record is expected to be rolled out over the MTEF period to enable improved risk assessment by including data from airline reservation systems, such as payment details, travel itineraries and baggage information. Preparatory work has begun to implement the system. This includes the purchasing of hardware, software design, system and hosting maintenance and the appointment of service providers. For this purpose, R225.5 million is allocated in 2023/24 in the Immigration Affairs programme.

Other ICT modernisation projects across the department over the medium term include rolling out biometric movement control systems at identified ports of entry; developing a live-capture system for births, marriages and deaths; managing asylum seekers; and developing and rolling out the eVisa system. The online eVisa service provides a convenient and secure option to process an eVisa application with the South African Department of Home Affairs.

The service provides direct interaction with the department that is responsible for lawfully processing and granting eVisas to travellers entering South Africa. The four easy steps make it possible to provide all the information required and effectively track the status and outcome of your application.

Ensuring access to rights and services

The department's planned hybrid access model is expected to provide for the optimal number and location of physical offices (321) and mobile units (127) to reach 778 visiting points over the MTEF period. In 2023/24, the department planned to procure 100 mobile units at a cost of R145 million.

These mobile units will be equipped with the necessary hardware, systems and connectivity to function as physical offices. To manage these units, 100 mobile operators and 100 mobile unit clerks were set to be recruited at a cost of R70 million in 2023/24. To fund these activities, R55 million is allocated in 2023/24 in the Transversal Information Technology Management subprogramme in the Administration programme, and R90 million was made available in 2023/24 through self-financing expenditure.

Over the medium term, the department planned to introduce self-service machines that will allow clients to directly apply for smart ID cards and passports, and for re-issuing birth, marriage and death certificates. These machines will be installed in offices to increase the number of clients that can be served, as well as in strategic locations such as shopping centres. The department ran a pilot programme at Menlyn Mall in Pretoria. These initiatives were expected to cost R10 million in 2023/24 in the Transversal Information Technology Management subprogramme in the Administration programme.



Digitising records

Through its digitisation of records project, the department intended to convert more than 340 million paper-based South African civic records into an electronically searchable format by 2025/26. In doing so, it also plans to contribute to public and social employment by recruiting unemployed young graduates to work on the project. For this purpose, R500 million was allocated towards the project in 2022/23, which saw the recruitment of 6 000 graduates at a cost of R289 million. The remainder was used to procure capital assets such as digital scanners, storage and backup hardware and barcode printers.

The department planned to recruit a further 4 000 graduates in early 2023/24. To further the project, R839.9 million is allocated in 2023/24 in the Citizen Affairs Management subprogramme under the Citizen Affairs programme. These funds were mainly to be used for recruiting more graduates, compensation of employees and payment for capital assets.

Legislation

The mandate of the DHA is derived from a broad legislative framework, including the:

- Constitution of the Republic of South Africa of 1996;
- Births and Deaths Registration Act, 1992 (Act 51 of 1992), as amended (Act 18 of 2010);
- Marriages Act, 1961 (Act 25 of 1961);
- Recognition of Customary Marriages Act, 1998 (Act 120 of 1998);
- Civil Union Act, 2006 (Act 17 of 2006);
- Alteration of Sex Description and Sex Status Act, 2003 (Act 49 of 2003);
- National Archives and Records Service of South Africa Act, 1996 (Act 43 of 1996), as amended;
- Identification Act, 1997 (Act 68 of 1997);
- Immigration Act, 2002 (Act 13 of 2002);
- Refugees Act, 1998 (Act 130 of 1998);
- South African Citizenship Act, 1995 (Act 88 of 1995), as amended (current Act 17 of 2010); and
- South African Passports and Travel Documents Act, 1994 (Act 4 of 1994).

Entities

Independent Electoral Commission (IEC)

The Electoral Commission was established in terms of the Electoral Commission Act, 1996 (Act 51 of 1996) which sets out the commission's composition, powers, functions and duties. It is mandated to manage national, provincial and local government elections, and ensure that those elections are free and fair, and declare results within a prescribed period.

Over the medium term, the commission will focus on planning and conducting the 2026 Local Government Elections (LGEs). Planned operations over the period ahead include: procuring, printing, distributing and warehousing registration and election materials; making payments for rental and infrastructure for an estimated 23 300 voting stations; amending ballot papers as a result of legislative changes; appointing and training an estimated 518 000 electoral, expansion and counting staff; maintaining the voters' roll; making system enhancements to anticipate the outcome of electoral system reform on, among other things, candidate nomination, ballot paper generation and result and seat assignment systems; and procuring a building for the commission's national office. To facilitate the successful execution of the upcoming elections, in addition to the R2.9 billion allocated over the MTEF period in the electoral operations programme, the commission will receive an additional allocation of R885 million in 2026/27.

The commission plans to undertake extensive civic and democracy education and communication campaigns in preparation for the two national registration events leading up to the 2026 LGEs. These campaigns will be rolled out

on various platforms, particularly social media. They aim to keep the electorate informed and improve voter turnout and include a communication strategy to roll out the amended Electoral Act (1998). Expenditure on outreach is expected to amount to R652 million over the medium term.

To ensure compliance with applicable provisions of the Political Funding Act (2018), activities carried out through the party funding programme will focus on intensifying the commission's role in managing and administering the Political Representatives Fund, previously known as the Represented Political Parties' Fund, and the Multi-party Democracy Fund. This work, which is allocated R68.2 million over the next three years, is expected to include thorough monitoring and oversight through recording, producing and publishing quarterly reports containing declarations of direct funding by political parties.

Expenditure is expected to decrease at an average annual rate of 12.1%, from R3.2 billion in 2024/25 to R2.2 billion in 2027/28, due to fluctuations in allocations in election and non-election years. The Commission is set to derive 95.5% (R7 billion) of its revenue over the medium term through transfers from the department and the remainder through interest on investments. Revenue is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 0.4%, in line with increases in departmental transfers.

Government Printing Works (GPW)

The Government Printing Works (GPW) is the State's dedicated provider of security printing and related services to all organs of state, across all spheres of government. Reporting to the Minister of Home Affairs and under the oversight of the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee for Home Affairs, GPW operates within the framework of the Public Service Act (PSA) and the Public Finance Management Act (PFMA).

GPW plays a crucial role in supporting the constitutional and legislative mandates of the DHA, particularly its civic mandate, by ensuring the production of secure documents and dissemination of government information.

In line with its evolving role in a digital era, GPW revised its vision to be the state's mandated security document enabler and digital trust centre aimed at:

1. Providing cost-effective, secure, reliable, and timely services to all spheres of government;
2. Ensuring equitable access to information for the public; and
3. Harnessing digital transformation, innovation, and service excellence to share government information through technology.

Over the Medium-Term Development Plan (MTDP) period, 2025-2030, GPW will focus on:

1. Transforming into a digital trusted centre through the provision of digital products and services;
2. Repositioning business operations to enable verification and certification of digital products, ensuring long-term viability and sustainability;
3. Improving customer experience through the delivery of timely, high-quality, and hybrid/digital services;
4. Ensuring a strong return on investment, with sound financial management and sustainability;
5. Investing in business continuity capacity to minimise production downtime;
6. Attracting, developing, and retaining the human resources required to meet hybrid and digital market demands; and
7. Implementing an asset management plan to upgrade facilities, machinery, and equipment to meet both current and future operational needs.

Through these initiatives, GPW aims to remain at the forefront of secure document production while embracing digital transformation to support the State's service delivery and information dissemination objectives.

Programmes

Civic Services

The Civic Services Branch within the DHA is responsible for ensuring secure, efficient and accessible services and documents for citizens and lawful residents in the country. It does this through the execution of the following core functions:

- Management of the National Population Register (NPR);
- Management of passports and travel documents;
- Determination of the status of citizens;
- management of South African IDs and the Home Affairs National Identification System (HANIS)/Automated Biometric System;
- Management of births, marriages and death records; and
- Registration of births, marriages, deaths as well as amendments of personal particulars.

In addition, the branch renders a verification of identity service to all government institutions, banks and other private sector institutions.

Citizenship

In South Africa, the right to citizenship is enshrined in Section 20 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa of 1996. The Births and Deaths Registration Act governs the registration of births in South Africa. The registration of births in South Africa falls under the mandate of the DHA. To better enforce the registration of births, the Act mandates the registration of births within 30 days from date of birth.

South African citizenship may be granted by way of:

- Birth or descent;
- An application for naturalisation as a South African citizen;
- An application for resumption of South African citizenship;
- Registration of the birth of children born outside South Africa to South African fathers or mothers;
- An application for exemption; and
- The South African Citizenship Amendment Act, 2010 (Act 17 of 2010), which, among others, ensures that a child:
  - born to a South African parent inside or outside the country is a South African by birth, as long as the child is registered according to South African law;
  - born of non-South African parents, but adopted by South African parents is a citizen by descent; and
  - born of non-South African parents in South Africa, may, at the age of 18 years, apply for naturalisation. While they are minors, such children will retain the citizenship of their parents with no claim to any other citizenship.

Dual citizenship

South Africa allows dual citizenship. It occurs when a person is a citizen of more than one country. All South African dual citizens who come into the country as South African citizens must enter and leave South Africa on their South African passports. There is a penalty of a fine or imprisonment for failure to enter or leave the country using the South African passport.

National Population Register

Early registration of birth is essential to ensure the integrity and credibility of the National Population Register (NPR), which is used to affirm the identity, status and rights of citizens. Furthermore, the optimisation of early birth registration is aligned to the UN Sustainable Development Goal 16, which is aimed at providing access to justice, ending the scandal of invisibility, trafficking of children and providing legal identity for all, including birth registration by 2030.

Various public service institutions depend on the availability of the official birth registration figures for planning and execution of their respective mandates. The DHA continues to make steady progress towards universal birth registration. The department strives to build a credible, accurate and secure NPR with birth as the single point of entry, by registering birth within the first 30 calendar days of birth. In 2024/25 the department registered 868 476 children and 725 125 were registered within 30 days.

The DHA has embarked on an early birth registration strategy that includes expanding the DHA office footprint in health facilities, to bring Home Affairs services closer to the people. In this way, parents can register their children before leaving the hospital or health facilities, a service that is more convenient than planning a visit to Home Affairs at a later stage. Birth certificates are printed on the spot. This service is rendered in partnership with the Department of Health. Births can be registered at any of the 391 health facilities or 348 Home Affairs front offices.

Deploying mobile units

As part of increased access to services and a multi-channel strategy, mobile offices are to be deployed to geographical areas with the population threshold of 40 000 and below. Most of these visits are in the rural and far-flung areas, schools and this is to assist clients mainly on smart ID card applications and other departmental services. The department has 220 mobile offices.

Using mobile units, the DHA has been able to target learners ensuring that South African learners doing grade 12 sit for their examinations already in possession of a Smart ID Card. In the 2024/25 financial year, the DHA visited 7 870 schools working in partnership with the Department of Basic Education.

In the 2024/25 financial year, 10 159 sites were visited where there is no DHA footprint as identified by the Hybrid Access Model. The fleet was able to collect 247 231 applications for Smart ID cards and 10 548 for South African passports.

During the 2024/25 financial year, the DHA issued a record number of 3.5 million Smart ID cards. Of the Smart ID cards issued, 970 047 were for first-time applicants, which is indicative of the impact the DHA is making in the lives of young people of the country.

Since the inception of live capture in 2013, the department has issued 25 102 201 Smart ID Cards to South African citizens.

Immigration Services

The DHA's Immigration Branch is responsible for control over the admission of foreign nationals for purposes of visitation, work, study, business and residence into South Africa as well as their departure. Management of international migration in South Africa is guided by the 2017 White Paper on International Migration.

The White Paper aims to:

- discourage illegal migration into South Africa by ensuring the legal stay of foreign nationals in the country by applying and renewing the relevant permits through law enforcement activities;
- create an enabling environment for foreign direct investment in South Africa;
- attract scarce skills required by the economy, in accordance with the 2014 vision of eradicating poverty and underdevelopment;
- issue visas and permits as expeditiously as possible and according to simplified procedures;
- ensure that security considerations are fully satisfied together with stakeholders in the criminal justice cluster and the State regains control over the immigration of foreign nationals to South Africa;
- ensure that economic growth is promoted through the employment of needed foreign labour; foreign investment is facilitated; the entry of exceptionally skilled or qualified people is enabled and academic skills transferred;
- exchange programmes in the SADC are facilitated;
- ensure that tourism is promoted;
- ensure that the contribution of foreigners to the South African labour market does not adversely affect existing labour standards and the rights and expectations of South African workers;
- ensure that a policy connection is maintained between foreigners working in South Africa and the training of South African citizens; and
- ensure that a human-rights-based culture of enforcement is promoted including complying with the international human rights instruments on detention.

Immigration Services is also responsible for the regulation of migration through designated ports of entry and via foreign missions, as supported through its issuance of a range of visas and permits which prescribe conditions of entry into South Africa based on the category of the application made.

The Corporate Accounts Unit assists public and private organisations with applications for the importation of scarce skills and business visas. It is also responsible for the publication of the Critical Skills List as well as the administration of the various visa schemes of the department such as the Trusted Employer Scheme (TES), the Trusted Tour Operator Scheme (TTOS), the Screen Talent and Global Entertainment Scheme (STAGES) and for Meetings, Events, Exhibitions and Tourism Scheme (MEETS).

The Inspectorate section is responsible for enforcing the Immigration Act of 2002 and must ensure that all foreign visitors are legally residing within the country. In the event

of transgressions, the Inspectorate will enforce immigration legislation through measures which may include detaining them. If their undocumented or illegal status is confirmed, the Inspectorate will then effect deportations.

The Inspectorate also manages a world-class holding facility, the Lindela Repatriation Centre, for persons who may be detained and are awaiting deportation. This facility has been opened to allow for unannounced oversight inspection by the South African Human Rights Commission and inspecting judges. In terms of international bodies, the oversight also is conducted through unannounced visits by the UN Rapporteurs on detention, International Organization for Migration (IOM), and International Committee for the Red Cross to confirm that all persons processed through the holding facility are treated with dignity and offered protection in the form of accommodation, meals and medical treatment (where it may be required).

Detention in police stations subsequent to arrest pending their direct deportation or transfer to the Lindela Repatriation Centre is permitted only to those declared as compliant with the Nelson Mandela Rules for the Minimum Detention Standards.

The management of immigration maintains the systems and policies that enable BMA to ensure that persons travelling to the country can be profiled well in advance, testing the credibility of travel documentation, personal identity and running background checks on the possible listings against national or international stop lists. These systems are powerful tools for development and for socioeconomic inclusion, which contributes to social stability and cohesion.

Secure identity systems can enable e-commerce and government to drastically reduce fraud and costs; thus, attracting investment and giving the country a competitive edge. Knowing who is in the country, and why, is critical for national security and stability in a globalised world characterised by rapid movements of people, goods, and even spreading epidemics and pandemics (such as the COVID-19). A risk-based methodology is thus underpinned by a seamless interface of technology, reporting systems and proactive management by Immigration Services.

White Paper on Citizenship, Immigration and Refugee Protection

The DHA had embarked on a painstaking exercise of drafting the White Paper on Citizenship, Immigration and Refugee Protection: Towards a Complete Overhaul of the Migration System in South Africa. On 10 April 2024, the White Paper was approved by Cabinet and was published in the Government Gazette for public information on 17 April 2024. Conflicts, armed violence, disasters, pandemics, seeking better business and work opportunities and other factors force people to leave their countries of origin to other countries.

There have been consistent loud voices calling for effective policy measures and legislative interventions dealing with migration in South Africa. These voices grew louder as violent clashes between foreign nationals and citizens reared their ugly heads. Many groups for and against migration are gaining momentum. South Africa has different pieces of legislation dealing with citizenship, immigration and refugee protection, namely the South African Citizenship Act of 1995, Immigration Act of 2002 and Refugees Act of 1998, as amended.

In fact, the South African Citizenship Act of 1995 is a relic of the colonial era and a replica of the 1949 Citizenship Act under the Union of South Africa. In practice, these pieces of legislation are not in harmony with each other. Piecemeal amendments were made without any policy framework whatsoever. The UN adopted the 1951 UN Refugees Convention and the 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees.

Meanwhile, the then Organisation of African Unity (OAU), now African Union (AU), endorsed its own 1969 OAU Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa 1969 to deal with the peculiar circumstances of migration and refugees in Africa. This was done in the spirit of Pan-Africanism.

The 1969 OAU Convention prohibits the refusal of entry, expulsion or extradition of asylum seekers and refugees. It also provides for certain exclusions on certain grounds. In fact, the refugee laws in most of the AU countries based on the 1969 OAU Convention are much more stringent than the Refugees Act in South Africa. Furthermore, the principle of Pan-Africanism does not promote illegal entry in the countries that are signatories to the 1969 OAU Convention.

Asylum seekers and refugees were not recognised in South Africa until 1993. During the apartheid era, South Africa did not accede to any international and regional conventions relating to the status of refugees and asylum seekers. South Africa administered its refugee policy on an ad-hoc basis, granting refugee status mostly to White nationals from Zimbabwe, Portugal and Mozambique. The Aliens Control Act governed immigration during the apartheid era. The preference of Whites over “non-Whites” (Blacks) became the focus of the immigration policy.

The Refugees Act was passed in 1998. In line with the 1951 Convention, the 1967 Protocol and the 1969 OAU Convention, the Refugees Act prohibits refusal of entry, expulsion or extradition of asylum seekers and refugees. In 1996, two years after the first democratic elections, South Africa acceded to various international agreements such as the 1951 Convention, the 1967 Protocol, the 1969 OAU Convention and other international instruments. This was done without the government having developed a clear policy on migration, including refugee protection. The government did not make reservations and exceptions permitted in terms of international law.

Both the 1951 Convention and 1967 Protocol provide for reservations. In terms of article 42 of the 1951 Convention, any State may make reservations to articles of the Convention other than articles 1, 3, 4, 16(1), 33, 36-46 inclusive. Article VII of the 1967 Protocol provides that any State may make reservations in respect of articles IV and I other than articles 1, 3, 4, 16(1) and 33.

Many countries made reservations in respect of both the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol. South Africa did not make any reservations in respect of the 1951 Convention and 1967 Protocol. This was a serious mistake on the part of the government. It is not surprising that South African courts developed jurisprudence regarding asylum and refugees (in the absence of reservations and exceptions) which is unfavourable to the interests of the government.

The White Paper proposes that the government of the Republic of South Africa must review and/or withdraw from

the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol with a view to acceding to them with reservations like other countries. The Refugee Protection and Immigration legislation must provide for reservations and exceptions as contained in the 1951 Convention and the 1969 OAU Convention. Particularly in that South Africa does not have the resources to grant the socioeconomic rights envisaged in the 1951 Convention.

The White Paper makes radical proposals regarding citizenship:

- Section 4 (3) of the Citizenship Act requires to be reviewed, together with other sections, including those relating to citizenship by naturalisation during the legislative process.
- The United States of America, Canada, Switzerland and Britain are developed countries with resources that far exceed those of South Africa, and have developed strict immigration, citizenship and refugee laws to protect the rights of their citizens.
- The Births and Deaths Registration Act, 1992 (Act No. 51 of 1992) and Citizenship Act, 1995 (Act 88 of 1995) must be repealed in their entirety and be included in the single legislation dealing with citizenship, immigration and refugee protection. This will remove contradictions and loopholes in the paths towards citizenship as is now the case with the three pieces of legislation.
- The criteria for granting any form of citizenship must be strictly in accordance with the law.
- A proper register should be kept for all persons granted citizenship by naturalisation by the Minister. The register must be tabled every year in Parliament by the Minister.

South Africa is today a great place to live in and many people in the world aspire to live, work or to be citizens of South Africa. In the result, many foreign nationals come to South Africa and stay in the country illegally. No one can account for all undocumented migrants. The DHA has no idea how many illegal immigrants are in South Africa. However, Immigration Services deport between 15 000 and 20 000 illegal foreigners every year at a huge cost. This number is on the increase. The BMA is expected to significantly reduce the risk of foreigners entering the country illegally.

The Immigration Act introduced fundamental changes (albeit controversial) and a host of visas such as temporary visa, study visa, business visa, critical skills visa, corporate visa, spousal visa, retired persons visa, relative visa, intra-company visa and permanent residence. A new policy framework and legislative intervention is required to establish the Immigration Division whose members are duly qualified to deal with the granting of various visas. The current system is unworkable as staff members are overworked. The Director-General (DG) and Minister deal with appeals/reviews.

Given the responsibilities that the two have, it is impossible for them to deal with the appeals/reviews. Given the current challenges, there is merit in establishing an independent body to deal with appeals/reviews, such as Immigration and Refugee Board: Immigration Division, Refugee Protection Division and Immigration Appeal Division. The closing date for the submission of public comments on the White Paper on Citizenship, Immigration and Refugee Protection was 31 January 2024.

International engagements

Policy and cooperative governance: the Immigration Services Branch is involved in numerous international engagements through participation in various bilateral and multilateral forums.

- Bilateral level: this includes regular engagements with all the Southern African Development Community (SADC) countries and other African countries. It also involves bilateral engagements with other countries outside of Africa in line with South Africa's foreign policy, as directed by the Department of International Relations and Cooperation.
- Multilateral level: engagements take place at a number of forums such as:
  - The AU: AU Summit of Heads of States and Government (presidential invites).
  - The IOM: Migration Dialogue for Southern Africa.
  - The UN: particularly the UN High Level Dialogue on Migration and Development.
  - The SADC: the Ministerial Committee of the Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation.

AU and Agenda 2063

South Africa, working through the SADC, continues to support the implementation of the aspirations espoused in Agenda 2063. In this regard, the DHA will continue to support the implementation of the AU Free Trade Area through the rationalisation of ports of entry and introduction of one-stop border posts. The DHA will also support the facilitation of secure movement of persons into South Africa. To this end, South Africa will engage in bilateral engagements with other African countries on visa exemptions to support the AU Protocol on Free Movement of Persons.

Management of asylum seekers and refugees

The Administration of Refugees and Asylum Seekers section within the DHA is managed in line with the Constitution, the Refugees Act of 1998, the 1951 UN Convention on the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol and the 1969 Organisation of African Unity Convention on Refugees. Refugees enjoy all the human rights contemplated in the Bill of Rights except the right to vote. To this end, Asylum Seeker Management is responsible for the determination of the status of asylum seekers and refugees, and the issuing of related permits, confirming and providing enabling documents in the form of Section 22 and Section 24 Refugee Travelling Document and Refugee Identity Document permits to qualifying clients.

There are five Refugee Reception Offices (RROs): Musina RRO in Limpopo, Tshwane RRO in Gauteng, Durban RRO in KwaZulu-Natal, Port Elizabeth RRO in the Eastern Cape and Cape Town RRO in the Western Cape.

Key operations at RROs include:

- Receiving and capturing new asylum applicants, including biometrics with photo and a full set of fingerprints stored in the HANIS; booking clients that cannot be assisted on the same day;
- Adjudicating their asylum claims;
- Granting refugee status;
- Referring manifestly unfounded, fraudulent and abusive decisions to the SCRA;
- Referring unfounded decisions to the Refugee Appeal Board;

- Processing failed asylum seekers through the Immigration Act of 2002;
- Extending permits of clients awaiting final decisions;
- Preparing and communicating the SCRA and Refugee Appeal Board decisions to asylum seekers;
- Joining declared family members;
- Processing resettlements and voluntary returns of refugees and asylum seekers;
- Receiving applications for and handing over refugee ID and travel documents to persons granted refugee status;
- Preparing submissions for the SCRA reviews of refugee status in line with country- of-origin reports;
- Preparing submissions for people applying to be refugees indefinitely; and
- Administering transgressions (over-stayers, lost permits).

Refugee Appeal Authority

The Refugee Appeals Authority of South Africa (RAASA) is an independent statutory body established in terms of Section 8(A)(1) of the Refugees Act, 1998 (Act 130 of 1998), as amended. The primary mandate of RAASA is to consider all the appeals made against the decisions of the Refugee Status Determination Officers (RSDO). Upon receipt of an application by an asylum seeker and conclusion of the hearing by the RSDO, the RSDO must either: grant asylum, reject the application as manifestly unfounded, abusive or fraudulent or unfounded.

Management of the inspectorate

The section has two directorates within the Immigration Branch – Deportations and Central Law Enforcement at national level. At provincial level, there are inspectorate units for each of the local Home Affairs frontline offices.

The branch manages the deportation of undocumented or illegal foreign nationals. Besides the coordination of deportations to the country of origin, scope is provided to manage visa and entry stop lists, receive and adjudicate appeals against deportations, and appeals for the upliftment of prohibitions, and undesirability statuses. Within the mandate of central law enforcement, officials undertake special investigations and joint operations within the security cluster and participating enforcement arms.

The inspection of businesses with government departments such as Employment and Labour contributes to securing the labour environment for citizens and legally employed foreign nationals, as well as compliance with the Basic Conditions of Work Act, 1997 (Act 75 of 1997). The coordination and cooperation with law-enforcement agencies include the investigation of syndicates involved in illegal migration and corruption, civics cases involving the acquisition of South African documents illegally and the detection of international fugitives from justice, as well as investigating cases involving terror suspects.

The department also cooperates with international bodies and foreign governments to ensure that potential illegal foreigners or terror suspects are detected. Inspectorate officials are also trained to assist with the detection and fraudulent use of fake passports and IDs. This is specialised, and passports are often made to appear genuine at face value; however, a proper investigation can reveal embedded flaws that enable the DHA to react timeously to institute appropriate measures to prevent further distribution and use. Such instances involve criminal cases that require officials to testify in prosecution cases to ensure the conviction of the perpetrators.

The DHA also initiated the first-ever community border crossing point between South Africa and Botswana at Tshidilamolomo in the North West, with the aim of rolling these out to other border crossings with selected neighbouring countries. Government is committed to contributing to regional integration in Africa and efforts to ease the movement of Africans on the continent.

Management of visas and permits

The section is responsible for providing policy direction and setting standards with regards to issuing of temporary residence visas and permanent residence permits. Permitting renders a critical function supporting macroeconomic investment and attraction of critical and other relevant skills that are in high demand in South Africa due to the lack of such skills. The effective and efficient issuance of critical skills visas is a priority but with attention also being given to the overall improvement of turnaround times for issuance of other categories of permits and visas.

In this way, the DHA is supporting economic stimulus as well as the simplification of the visa regime to aid in the attraction of sought-after academics, scientific and engineering skills. It is also an area where the department has made substantial investment to define the regulatory environment and enabling conditions under which priority applications can be processed within a targeted and monitored turnaround period. The function performed by permitting is critical in respect of supporting the development of the economy and adding to the stimulus of trade, investment and tourism.

It also facilitates attraction and retention of critical skills according to a risk-based approach to enhance economic growth through skilled labour and investment, tourism, cross-border trade, business in consultation with key government departments and stakeholders. In February 2022, the department published a revised list of critical skills needed for national economic growth. Permitting supports intergovernmental policy to enhance bilateral and multilateral relations with countries that are of interest to South Africa and encourages contacts between business, representatives of cultural, scientific and educational and research institutions. It manages the process of visa exemption agreements that promote intra-regional trade, attract investment for development and promote cross-regional infrastructure projects.

As a key deliverable of the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Investment, the department is also a member of the national one-stop-shop that was opened as part of government efforts to ease the way of doing business in South Africa and to attract investors. The DHA contributes to the one-stop-shop centres by offering investors and their families reduced turnaround times for visas by establishing a dedicated centre at its back office to deal with applications received from the centres and offer immigration-related advice.

The service is focused on supporting large corporates, businesses, organisations, and employers who make an important contribution to the economy in infrastructure, manufacturing, energy, retail, professional and financial services, research and development, and knowledge

production. In the 2023/24 financial year, the DHA planned to implement the recommendations of the Operation Vulindlela (OV) Work Visa Review Report. Set up in 2020 to support the Cabinet and the President to accelerate the implementation of priority structural reform, the task of OV in the visa and permit environment was to review the regulatory framework and processes that govern the issuing of critical skills, general work, business, and intracompany transfer visas at the DHA.

To achieve this, the efficacy of the South African work-visa processing system was benchmarked against countries that are recognised as successful in attracting foreign national skilled workers. The OV Report compared South Africa's performance to that of like countries in the sense that they also have a scarce skills deficit alongside high unemployment, a conundrum that characterises many emerging economies. The OV Work Visa Review Report made several recommendations such as the introduction of start-up visas and remote working visas.

The report also recommends the introduction of a Trusted Employer Scheme (TES) which is a scheme that rewards "good" or trusted users of the programme with lower document thresholds and faster processing times. During 2024/25, the department has rolled out the second phase of the TES. Equally, a Trusted Tour Operator Scheme was introduced and the first phase rolled out to China and India to enhance tourism. The most important incentive for a business is quick processing or faster mobilisation of staff, allowing the business to start earning revenue from the services of the foreign employee earlier. The Immigration Act of 2002 requires any foreign national who enters the country and who is not a holder of a visa or a permanent residence permit, to produce a port of entry visa.

As such, the DHA processes applications in respect of visitors' visas, relatives' visas, medical treatment visas and retired persons' visas in accordance with published timeframes while permanent residence applications are dealt with under sections 26 and 27 of the Act, which make provision for eleven different categories under which an application for a permanent residence permit can be lodged. Exemptions and waivers require a client to substantiate his or her case and show exceptional circumstances in the form of a motivation.

The circumstances are investigated, verified and forwarded to the Minister of Home Affairs for a decision. The decision on such cases is solely at the discretion of the Minister. The DHA has also made provision for a person that may be aggrieved by the decision of the department to decline his or her application for a visa or permit, to apply for a review of the decision, or submit an appeal application against that decision. Appeals may be submitted twice – first to the DG, and if they are rejected on the first appeal, clients may appeal to the Minister of Home Affairs.

The Appeals Unit was recently established in response to requirements for the department to demonstrate better efficiency in its management of such appeals and the turnaround times in which they are concluded. A performance target has also been set by the department to monitor achievements against this objective and to satisfy sustainable maintenance of the turnaround. Special dispensations are considered by the DHA when there are exceptional circumstances that must be considered.

Special dispensation applications are handled in accordance with Section 31(2) (b) of the Immigration Act of 2002, in terms of which the Minister of Home Affairs may "grant a foreigner or a category of foreigners the rights of permanent residence for a specified or unspecified period when special circumstances exist which justify such a decision."

The special dispensation does not grant the holder the right to apply for permanent residence. Women, children and persons with disabilities who are eligible are assisted with applications.

Port Control

The mandate of the Port Control section up to 1 April 2023 is to facilitate the legal entry and departure of all persons into and out of South Africa through designated ports of entry and the management of the extended border through pre-clearance of persons travelling by air and sea. Port Control focuses on facilitating the movement of bona fide visitors and tourists with the highest possible degree of certainty, security and efficiency in support of national security, priorities and interests whilst preventing illegal migration through the ports of entry.

From 1 April 2023, the National Department of Health (NDoH)'s port health services function was shifted from the Primary Healthcare Programme to the Border Management Authority (BMA), a newly established entity of the Department of Home Affairs.

Visa requirements

Foreigners who wish to enter South Africa must be in possession of a valid machine-readable passport or travel document. They must have valid visas, except in the case of certain countries whose citizens are exempt from visa control for bona fide holiday and business visits of a limited duration. Such exemptions are normally limited to permits, which are issued for 90 days or less at the ports of entry.

The visa system is aimed at facilitating the admission of acceptable foreign nationals at ports of entry. The visa becomes a permit upon entry; therefore, no additional permit will be issued. Children from visa exempt countries only need a passport if an adult accompanies them.

If unaccompanied, a child should carry the following documents:

- Copy of a birth certificate.
- Parental consent letters.
- Copy of the passport(s)/ID(s) of the parent(s)/legal guardian(s).
- Contact details of the parent(s)/legal guardian(s).
- Letter from the person who is to receive the child in South Africa, containing his/her residential address and contact details of where the child will reside.
- Copy of the ID/valid passport and visa or permanent residence permit of the person who is to receive the child in South Africa.

Where applicable:

- Copy of an adoption order.
- Copy of a death certificate of the deceased parent/parents or legal guardian.
- Copy of a court order granting full parental responsibilities and rights or legal guardianship in respect of the child.

The requirements for parental consent and birth certificates remain unchanged in the case of South African children travelling – in view of the requirements of the Children's Act, 2005 (Act 38 of 2005). Where the DHA has issued a child passport containing the particulars of the parents, a birth certificate is not required. Foreign children who require visas need to submit the above documents during the visa application process. The requirements for children travelling are aimed at the protection of children.

Outsourced permitting partnership for management of frontline services

The DHA has outsourced the frontline client services (receiving permits and visa applications) to VFS Global. The company has 12 offices in nine provinces and 11 cities within South Africa. Visa and permit applications are accepted across these 12 centres and subsequently assessed by the DHA head office in Pretoria.

Non-South Africans with a legal residency permit can apply for a visa or permit at these centres found at:

- Bloemfontein, Free State;
- Bruma (Bedfordview), Gauteng;
- Cape Town, Western Cape;
- Durban, KwaZulu-Natal;
- George, Western Cape;
- Johannesburg, Gauteng;
- Kimberley, Northern Cape;
- Mbombela, Mpumalanga;
- Gqeberha, Eastern Cape;
- Pretoria, Gauteng;
- Polokwane, Limpopo; and
- Rustenburg, North West.

Regulations state that one cannot change from a visitor's visa to another type of visa. Applications for change of conditions must be made at a mission abroad – an embassy or consulate, where the applicant is an ordinary resident or holds citizenship. However, exceptional circumstances include if an applicant needs life-saving medical treatment or is an accompanying spouse or child of a business or work visa holder who wishes to apply for a study or work visa.

Life partners looking to apply for temporary residency in South Africa based on a life partner visa will need to prove that they have been together for two years; those applying for permanent residency will need to prove that they have been together for five years. Spouses looking to apply for temporary residency in South Africa based on a spousal visa will not need to prove that they have been in a previous relationship for a certain number of years. If a partner or spouse was in a previous marriage, it is necessary to provide official documents that prove the dissolution of such marriage – either by divorce or the death of the other spouse.

The DHA has officially eradicated the exceptional skills and quota permit categories. Current exceptional skills and quota permit holders will not be able to renew their permits going forward. Those looking to renew their visa while in the country must do so 60 days before the current one expires.

Applications for a general work visa will have to include a certificate from the Department of Employment and Labour confirming the following:

- Despite a thorough search, the prospective employer could not find a South African employee with the skills and experience equivalent to those of the applicant;
- The applicant has proven skills and experience in line with the job offer;
- The salary and benefits of the applicant are not inferior to those of citizens or permanent residents; and
- The contract signed by both the employer and applicant stipulates conditions that are in line with the labour laws of South Africa.

The applicant will need a document to prove that the South African Qualifications Authority has approved their qualifications. A sworn translator must translate this document into one of the official languages of South Africa. The work visa will be valid for a maximum of five years. The critical skills work visa is based on a list of occupations that are considered critical (examples include agricultural engineers, land surveyors and forestry technicians) in South Africa.

To apply for a visa in this category, the applicant does not need a job offer, but within one year of being granted a visa, will need to prove that he or she is gainfully employed within their field. This visa replaced the exceptional skills and quota visas. Holders of visas who wish to change the terms or status of their visa must submit an application no less than 60 days prior to the current visa's date of expiration. It is a requirement for businesses to get a recommendation letter from the Department of Trade, Industry and Competition (the dtic) for a business visa.

A minimum of R5 million must be invested into South Africa. Any accountant registered with the South African Institute of Professional Accountants or the South African Institute of Chartered Accountants can verify the availability of funds for a business visa. The business owner's workforce must be 60% South Africans or must be permanent residents employed in various positions. Business visas will be granted for no longer than three years at a time. No business visa will be issued to a foreigner who intends to establish or invest in a business that is listed as an undesirable business undertaking.

To obtain an intra-company visa, the employee in question must be employed with the foreign office/business for a minimum of six months before being eligible for transfer to South Africa. This visa is available for four years but is non-renewable. Holders of a study visa may not conduct part-time work exceeding 20 hours of labour a week. Both study and exchange visas are only issued for the duration of the study period or exchange programme, respectively.

An exchange visa (for people under 25 years) will not be granted to conduct work pertaining to what is considered undesirable work as published by the Minister of Home Affairs in the gazette, after consultation with the Minister of Trade, Industry and Competition.

Sojourn

Foreign nationals who are in the country illegally and are, therefore, guilty of an offence may be classified into three categories, namely those who:

- Entered the country clandestinely;
- Failed to renew the temporary residence permits issued to them at ports of entry; and
- Breached the conditions of their temporary residence permits without permission, such as holiday visitors who took up employment or started their own businesses.

Depending on the circumstances, people who are in South Africa illegally are prosecuted, removed or their sojourn is

legalised. Officers at the various regional and district offices of the DHA oversee tracing, prosecuting and removing illegal foreigners from the country. Employers of illegal foreigners may also be prosecuted.

Permanent residence

Government allows immigration on a selective basis. The DHA is responsible for:

- Processing applications for permits for consideration; and
- Admitting people suitable for immigration, such as skilled workers in occupations in which there is a shortage in South Africa.

The department particularly encourages applications by industrialists and other entrepreneurs who wish to relocate their existing concerns, or to establish new concerns in South Africa. The DHA is not directly involved in an active immigration drive. In categories where shortages exist, the normal procedure is for employers to recruit abroad independently and, in most cases, initially apply for work permits. The DHA considers the applications for prospective immigrants who wish to settle in the relevant provinces.

Enquiries, in this regard, may be made to the nearest office of the DHA in South Africa, to missions abroad, or to the DG of the DHA for the attention of the Directorate: Permitting, in Pretoria. The DHA will prioritise applications for permits from holders of critical skills, general work and business visas, in line with the country's objective of attracting critical skills.

Temporary residence

A temporary residence visa allows a foreign national, such as international students, foreign workers and tourists, to legally stay in South Africa for 30 days and longer than 90 days. If you wish to stay in South Africa for a period of less than 90 days to visit family or as a tourist, you may apply for a visitors' visa. The Immigration Act of 2002 aims at setting in place a system of immigration control which ensures that visas are issued as expeditiously as possible, based on simplified procedures and objective, predictable and reasonable requirements and criteria and without consuming excessive administrative capacity.

The Act mandates the DHA to promote economic growth through the employment of needed foreign labour, facilitate foreign investment, enable the entry of exceptionally skilled or qualified people, facilitate academic exchanges within the SADC and promote tourism, without compromising the security of the Republic.

The Act also provides for various categories of visas, such as:

- Transit visas for the purpose of transiting the Republic en route to a neighbouring country;
- Visitors' visas for visits not exceeding 90 days;
- Visitor's visas for activities longer than 90 days but not exceeding three years;
- Study visas;
- Treaty visas;
- Business visas;
- Medical treatment visas;
- Relatives' visas;
- Work visas;
- Retired persons' visas; and
- Exchange visas.

With effect from 26 May 2014, applicants are required to apply for a visa in person at the South African diplomatic representative in his or her country of origin or at a South African diplomatic representative in a neighbouring country if there is no South African diplomatic representation in the applicant's country of origin as well as within the Republic. The purpose of the in-person application is for biometric data to be captured.

Applicants are advised to ensure that they apply for the correct temporary residence visa commensurate with the intended activities to be undertaken in the Republic, since holders of visitor's visas are no longer allowed to apply for change of status or change of conditions relating to his or her visitor's visa from inside the country except where the holder is a spouse, a parent, or a child of a South African citizen or permanent resident holder.

The same applies to a person who obtained a visitor's visa for short-term employment activities in terms of Section 11(2) of the Immigration Act who cannot apply for a work visa from inside the country.







SOUTH AFRICA
YEARBOOK
2024/25

Human Settlements

The Department of Human Settlements (DHS) is mandated in terms of Section 3 of the Housing Act, 1997 (Act 107 of 1997) to establish and facilitate a sustainable national housing development process in collaboration with provinces and municipalities. In fulfilling its mandate, the department determines national policy and norms and standards for the development of housing and human settlements, prescribes national housing delivery goals, and oversees provincial and municipal performance outcomes against national targets.

To ensure an effective housing development process, the department funds, capacitates and supports provinces and municipalities in the implementation of human settlements projects. Over the medium term, the department aimed to continue focusing on developing integrated human settlements; upgrading informal settlements; and creating an enabling environment for affordable housing by continually reviewing policy and implementation programmes, and strengthening support to provinces and municipalities to implement human settlements programmes.

Housing

According to Statistics South Africa's General Household Survey of 2023, slightly more than eight-tenths (83,5%) of South African households lived in formal dwellings in 2023, followed by 12,2% in informal dwellings, and 3,9% in traditional dwellings. Households that lived in formal dwellings were most common in Limpopo (95,1%) and Mpumalanga (90,1%).

Western Cape (19,2%) had the highest percentage of households that lived in informal dwellings, followed by Gauteng (18,4%) and the North West (17,1%). Traditional dwellings were most common in the Eastern Cape (17,1%) and KwaZulu-Natal (10,3%).

About 83,0% of households in metropolitan areas lived in formal dwellings while 16,0% lived in informal dwellings. Informal dwellings were most common in Ekurhuleni (19,2%), Cape Town (18,9%) and Johannesburg (18,2%), and least common in Nelson Mandela Bay (6,3%).

Households that lived in rented dwellings were most common in Gauteng (37,8%) and the Western Cape (27,8%), and least common in the Eastern Cape (12,7%), Limpopo (15,0%) and the Northern Cape (15,2%). Households that owned the dwellings they lived in, regardless of whether they have fully paid for it, were most common in KwaZulu-Natal (74,6%), Mpumalanga (72,1%), the Northern Cape (71,2%) and Limpopo (71,0%). Only 46,4% of households in Gauteng, and 63,4% in the Western Cape owned the dwellings they lived in. Nationally, 13,2% of households occupied the dwellings they were living in rent-free.

The percentage of households that received some form of government housing subsidy increased from 5,6% in 2002 to 12,0% in 2023. A notably higher percentage of female-headed households (14,4%) than male-headed households (10,1%) received subsidies. This is in line with government policies that give preference to households headed by individuals from vulnerable groups, including females, and individuals with disabilities.

About 9,7% of households that lived in subsidised dwellings either reported weak or very weak walls, or weak or very weak roofs. Responses varied across provinces. Households in Mpumalanga (respectively 16,1% and 13,6%) were generally least satisfied with the quality of walls and roofs, while those in Gauteng complained least about the state of their dwellings' walls (2,7%) and roofs (3,2%).

Developing integrated human settlements

One of the DHS's objectives is to create inclusive communities within an improved spatial landscape. As such, over the MTEF period, the department planned to finalise 11 integrated plans in priority development areas that are intended to advance spatial transformation and deliver integrated human settlements projects. The medium-term target is to deliver 180 000 fully subsidised houses and issue 388 104 title deeds to beneficiaries from low-income households.

Spending for these activities is within the Integrated Human Settlements Planning and Development programme's allocation of R73.5 billion. The programme's budget increases at an average annual rate of 5.1%, from R22.1 billion in 2022/23 to R25.6 billion in 2025/26. An additional R2.2 billion is allocated through the urban settlements development grant for: the Lufhereng integrated urban development project in Johannesburg, a mixed-use residential housing development that aims to promote spatial integration and provide affordable rental housing units; and the Avoca Node project, which aims to create an enabling environment for private sector-led housing developments in eThekwini Municipality.

These were the only projects approved to access the budget facility in the human settlements sector. Transfers to the grant are made in the Integrated Human Settlements Planning and Development programme. From 2023/24 the DHS aimed to take over the implementation of the emergency housing programme. As a result, the provincial emergency housing grant and the municipal emergency housing grant ended. This adjustment will increase expenditure on payments for capital assets from R15.3 million in 2022/23 to R575.9 million in 2025/26.

Upgrading informal settlements

The department assists provinces and municipalities with comprehensive planning for the upgrading of informal settlements. This involves providing secure tenure, safe and reliable water and sanitation and adequate access to social services. Related work is completed in phases, with phases 1 to 3 comprising the provision of secure tenure and basic services such as water, sanitation, lighting and refuse removal.

Community participation in the upgrading process is a key pillar in the programme as beneficiaries are encouraged to find adequate upgrading solutions that are specific to their communities. To upgrade a targeted 900 informal settlements to phase three across the country, provincial and municipal spending through the informal settlements upgrading partnership grant is expected to amount to R27.2 billion over the medium term.

A further R120 million over the period ahead is expected to ensure that provinces and municipalities deliver 60 000 serviced sites per year through the national upgrading support programme. The department intends to hire consultants to augment capacity for the upgrading of informal settlements and the provision of affordable rental housing. Spending for

this is within the department's budget for consultants, which is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 7,3%, from R188.8 million in 2022/23 to R233.5 million in 2025/26.

The Informal Settlement Upgrading Programme (ISUP) has, in the medium term, set a target of 1 500 informal settlements for upgrading. By mid-2023 a total of 1 269 informal settlements were at various phases of the upgrading process. The ISUP had immense challenges that the department sought to overcome by entering into social compacts with communities and ensuring that suitable land parcels are acquired to build houses for the communities.

South Africa hosted an international meeting with United Nations Habitat (UN-Habitat) in October 2022, to launch a framework for a Global Action Plan on Slums and Informal Settlements. The Global Action Plan Framework on Informal Settlements and Slums is a necessary tool for the world to achieve Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Target 11.1 which is to "ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services and upgrade slums".

South Africa was an active proponent of the inclusion of Sustainable Development Goal 11 in Agenda 2030 and ensured that the issue of informal settlements and slums was adequately addressed, even in the New Urban Agenda. South Africa is also using its membership of Cities Alliance, to intensify its fight against urban poverty, hunger and deliver sustainable development.

Facilitating affordable housing

Affordable housing broadly constitutes the provision of rental and social housing programmes, and instruments to provide housing finance to traditionally unserved segments of the population. These are critical components in the creation of a functional residential property market. To this end, the department aimed to increase the supply of rental and social housing stock, and assist low-income and middle-income households that earn above the qualifying threshold to receive state-subsidised housing but below the threshold to secure a home loan.

Accordingly, the department planned to build 10 800 rental housing units and disburse 12 000 finance-linked individual subsidies over the next three years. As a result, over the



period ahead, spending in the Rental and Social Housing programme is expected to be R3.1 billion and spending in the Affordable Housing programme is expected to be R1.9 billion. The human settlements sector must be responsive to the ever-changing human needs, which is made possible by creating an adaptive policy environment. In line with government's promise to ensure security and comfort, the DHS has changed the Norms and Standards to improve the lives of the qualifying beneficiaries.

These changes are aimed at responding to the economic changes, especially the rising cost of living, energy poverty and security needs for the vulnerable. From 1 April 2023, all subsidised houses that are being built will be provided with solar panels and rainwater harvesting devices, especially in rural communities. For persons with disabilities, the houses will be fitted with burglar bars to improve security. The DHS has increased the subsidy quantum by 29,7% for the 2023/2024 financial year, mainly to address the increasing building costs.

The adjustment will ensure that government speeds up the pace of delivery and ensures that the quality of houses provided to beneficiaries does not deteriorate. More importantly, to ensure that contractors do not abandon sites due to unaffordable costs. Effective from April 2023, in real terms, the housing programmes were adjusted as follows:

- BNG services and top structure – R286 364
- House for persons with disabilities – R307 166
- Military veterans house – R348 069
- First Home Finance - R169 265
- Social housing – R460 984

Eradication of asbestos

Asbestos, which is a health hazard, is an apartheid relic that still weighs heavily on the health of poor households.

Government is eradicating asbestos as a matter of priority. The number of asbestos roofs that have been removed in the past financial year includes 1 500 roofs in Seshego and 2 100 roofs in kaNyamazane.

The department is committed to the eradication and correct disposal of asbestos roofs and walls in old township properties across all nine provinces. In the current financial year, a total budget of R220 million has been allocated to the provincial HSDG business plans in the Eastern Cape, Free State and KwaZulu-Natal to implement 27 projects across the provinces to remove asbestos roofs.

Eradication of mud houses

Mud houses whose structural integrity is compromised and those that are found on pieces of land that are unsuitable for settlement, collapse under the weight of heavy rains and floods. Most people in the rural parts of our country are increasingly finding themselves homeless as more mud houses collapse.

Since last year's pronouncement on the prioritisation of the eradication of mud houses, five provinces have implemented the programme to eradicate mud houses. In the past financial year, a total of 8 262 mud houses were eradicated. Seven provinces have planned to eradicate 11 791 mud houses with a budget of R1.7 billion in the 2023/24 financial year.

Government aimed to introduce the use of remote sensing through satellite technology and other modern technology applications to help locate and get a total count of all mud houses across the country. This means it will have to acquire the skills to capacitate the department to be able to use these technologies.

Legislation and policy

The mandate of the DHS is derived from the following legislative framework:

- Housing Act of 1997, which provides for the facilitation of a sustainable housing development process, and further lays down general principles applicable to housing development in all spheres of government, including defining the functions of national, provincial and local governments in respect of housing development;
- Estate Agency Affairs Board (EAAB) Act, 1976 (Act 112 of 1976), which provides for the establishment of an EAAB and an Estate Agents Fidelity Fund, including the control of certain activities of estate agents in the public interest;
- Social Housing Act, 2008 (Act 16 of 2008), which provides for the establishment of the Social Housing Regulatory Authority (SHRA), as regulator of all social housing institutions, and further defines the functions of national, provincial and local governments in respect of social housing;
- Prevention of Illegal Eviction and Unlawful Occupation of Land Act, 1998 (Act 19 of 1998), as amended, which provides for the prohibition of unlawful eviction and further provides procedures for the eviction of unlawful occupiers, including the repeal of the Prevention of Illegal Squatting Act, 1951 (Act 52 of 1951);
- Housing Consumers Protection Measures Act, 1998 (Act 95 of 1998), which makes provision for the protection of housing consumers and also provides for the establishment and functions of the National Home Builders Registration Council (NHBRC);
- Rental Housing Act, 1999 (Act 50 of 1999), which provides clear roles and responsibilities of government in respect of rental housing property and also makes provision for promoting access to adequate housing through creating mechanisms for ensuring the proper functioning of the rental housing market;
- Public Finance Management Act (PFMA), 1999 (Act 1 of 1999), as amended, which secures transparency, accountability, and sound management of the revenue, expenditure, assets and liabilities of the institutions to which it applies. The Act regulates financial management in the national government and provincial spheres of government. It also assists in ensuring that all revenue, expenditure, assets as well as liabilities of those two spheres of government are managed efficiently and effectively. The Act further provides for the responsibilities of persons entrusted with financial management in those two spheres of governments:
- Home Loan and Mortgage Disclosure Act, 2000 (Act 63 of 2000), which promotes the practice of fair lending by requiring disclosure by financial institutions of information regarding the provision of home loans. It also serves to establish an Office of Disclosure. The Act requires lenders to compile and disclose annual data on the demographic makeup and geographic distribution of housing-related loans;
- Intergovernmental Relations Framework Act, 2005 (Act 13 of 2005), which serves to establish a framework for the three spheres of government to promote and facilitate intergovernmental relations among them. The Act also provides for mechanisms and procedures in order to facilitate the settlement of intergovernmental disputes among spheres of government;
- Housing Development Agency (HDA) Act, 2008 (Act 23 of 2008), which serves to establish the agency and to provide for its functions and powers. It also outlines the roles of the agency, which are to facilitate the acquisition of land and landed property, in a way that complements the capacities of government across all spheres, and to fast-track land acquisition and housing development services for the purpose of creating sustainable human settlements;
- Spatial Planning and Land Use Management Act, 2013 (Act 16 of 2013), which provides a framework for spatial planning and land use management in South Africa. It specifies the relationship between the spatial planning and the land use management system and other kinds of planning. It also ensures that the system of spatial planning and land use management promotes social and economic inclusion;
- Community Schemes Ombud Service (CSOS) Act, 2011 (Act 9 of 2011), which serves to provide for the establishment of the Community Schemes Ombud Service and to provide for its mandate and functions. The Act also provides for a dispute resolution mechanism in community schemes;
- Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment Act, 2003 (Act 53 of 2003), which establishes a legislative framework for the promotion of Black economic empowerment (BEE) and empowers the relevant Minister to issue codes of good practice and to publish transformation charters for

key sectors. The Act further establishes the BEE Advisory Council;

- Expropriation Act, 1975 (Act 63 of 1975), which serves to provide for the expropriation of land and other property for public and certain other purposes;
- Development Facilitation Act, 1995 (Act 67 of 1995), which facilitates and speeds up the implementation of the Reconstruction and Development Programme and projects;
- Less Formal Township Establishment Act, 1991 (Act 113 of 1991), as amended, which provides for shortened procedures for the designation, provision and development of land and for the establishment of townships for less formal forms of residential settlement;
- National Environmental Management Act (NEMA), 1998 (Act 107 of 1998), as amended, which protects ecologically viable areas representative of South Africa's biological diversity and its natural landscapes and seascapes in a system of protected areas. The Act places a responsibility on the department to adhere to sustainable development and conservation principles;
- Sectional Titles Management Act, 2011 (Act 8 of 2011), which provides for the establishment of body corporates to manage and regulate sections and common property in sectional titles schemes and for that purpose to apply rules applicable to such schemes. It further requires the body corporates to establish a sectional titles schemes management advisory council; and
- Division of Revenue Act, 2018 (Act 14 of 2018), as amended, which provides for the equitable division of revenue raised nationally among the national, provincial and local spheres of government for various financial years. It also makes a determination of each province's equitable share and allocations to provinces, local government and municipalities from national government's equitable share and the responsibilities of all three spheres pursuant to such division and allocations.

Entities

Community Schemes Ombud Service

The CSOS was established in terms of the CSOS Act, 2011 (Act 9 of 2011) to provide dispute resolution services for community schemes; monitor and control the quality of all governance documentation for sectional title schemes; and take custody of, preserve and provide public access to scheme governance documentation. The ombud will focus on ensuring that 80% of scheme governance documents are registered and compliant with the legislative framework by 2025/26.

To this end, spending on regulation is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 5,6%, from R117.5 million in 2022/23 to R138.6 million in 2025/26. Total expenditure is expected to increase from R431.9 million in 2022/23 to R467.2 million in 2025/26 at an average annual rate of 2.7%. The CSOS was expected to incur an operating deficit in 2022/23 as its expenditure plans include spending the surplus funds it generated in 2021/22, for which National Treasury approval has been granted. The ombud derives its revenue through levies paid by community schemes. Revenue is expected to increase in line with expenditure.

Property Practitioners Regulatory Authority (PPRA)

The PPRA was established in terms of the Property Practitioners Act of 2019 to regulate property practitioners in the marketing, promotion, management, sale, letting, financing and purchase of immovable property. The authority also regulates the conduct of property practitioners in dealing with consumers and manages the Property Practitioners Fidelity Fund (PPFF).

Over the medium term, the authority will focus on improving compliance within the sector by inspecting a targeted 920 estate agencies and renewing 211 128 fidelity fund certificates. Spending on compliance constitutes a projected 25,8% (R157.5 million) of total expenditure, increasing from R49.2 million in 2022/23 to R56.6 million in 2025/26 at an average annual rate of 4,8%. Total expenditure is expected to decrease at an average annual rate of 3,8%, from R230.3 million in 2022/23 to R204.8 million in 2025/26, as the authority repositions from the old EAAB to become a streamlined regulator in the sector. The authority derives its revenue from fees and levies from property practitioners and fees from managing the PPFF.

Property Practitioners Fidelity Fund

The PPFF is managed by the PPRA. The fund protects the interest of the public from negligence on the part of property practitioners in dealing with real estate transactions. Expenditure in the fund is expected to decrease at an average annual rate of 7%, from R91.8 million in 2022/23 to R73.8 million in 2025/26, as improved compliance reduces the number of claims against the fund. It generates revenue through administrative fees, interest earned on trust accounts and recovered claims.

Housing Development Agency

Established in terms of the HDA Act of 2008, the HDA is mandated to identify, hold, develop and release land for integrated human settlements development. The agency also provides project-level technical assistance and project management services to provinces and municipalities. Over the medium term, the agency aimed to continue focusing on assisting provinces and municipalities with the implementation of human settlements programmes and projects. The agency is expected to provide upgrading support to provinces and municipalities for 850 informal settlements.

To this end, spending on built environment projects constitutes the largest spending item in the budget at 56,4%. Expenditure is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 4%, from R503.7 million in 2022/23 to R566.7 million in 2025/26. The agency derives revenue from programme management fees and transfers from the department. Revenue is expected to increase in line with expenditure.

National Home Builders Registration Council

The NHBRC is established in terms of the Housing Consumer Protection Measures Act of 1998 to protect the interests of housing consumers and regulate the home building industry. The council provides warranty protection



against poor workmanship in newly built homes and ensures that home builders adhere to prescribed technical standards in the building process.

The council will continue to focus on improving compliance with building standards by inspecting a targeted 448 749 homes over the MTEF period. Total expenditure is expected to increase from R862.8 million in 2022/23 to R949.3 million in 2025/26 at an average annual rate of 3,2%. The council generates its revenue through fees for the enrolment of newly constructed homes, the registration and renewal of membership for home builders, and the provision of technical services.

Revenue is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 4,4%, from R1.3 billion in 2022/23 to R1.5 billion in 2025/26 as 45 280 home builder memberships are renewed, and 155 420 houses in the subsidy sector and 137 703 houses in the non-subsidy sector are enrolled to protect consumers against poor workmanship.

National Housing Finance Corporation (NHFC)

The NHFC was established as a development finance institution in 1996. The corporation is responsible for expanding access to housing finance for low-income and middle-income households through financial intermediaries.

The corporation will focus on increasing affordable housing finance to intermediaries over the medium term. As such, its loan book is expected to increase from R4.5 billion in 2022/23 to R5.9 billion in 2025/26. To fund this growth, the corporation plans to seek the Minister of Finance's approval to borrow in terms of Section 66(5) of the PFMA of 1999.

The corporation is also mandated to administer the finance-linked subsidy programme, which is set to disburse 10 405 subsidies over the medium term to first-time home buyers at a projected cost of R1.6 billion over the MTEF period. As a result, total expenditure is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 4,7%, from R942.6 million in 2022/23 to R1.1 billion in 2025/26.

The corporation derives its revenue from interest on loans, income from controlled entities and revenue from rental properties and management fees. Total revenue is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 3,2%, from R1.2 billion in 2022/23 to R1.3 billion in 2025/26.

Social Housing Regulatory Authority

The SHRA was established in terms of the Social Housing Act of 2008 to regulate and invest in the social housing sector. The authority regulates social housing institutions and the units they manage, provides capital subsidies to accredited social housing institutions and builds the capacity of the sector. Over the medium term, the authority aimed to focus on increasing the number of social housing units for rental, with the aim of delivering 8 000 units per year.

To this end, expenditure on project development for social housing is set to constitute 89,4% (R2.6 billion) of total expenditure over the medium term. Expenditure is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 4.3%, from R887.4 million in 2022/23 to R1 billion in 2025/26. The entity derives all its revenue through transfers from the department. Revenue is expected to increase in line with expenditure.

Programmes and funding

Finance-Linked Individual Subsidy Programme (FLISP)

The Constitution enshrines the right of everyone to have access to adequate housing and makes it incumbent upon government to take reasonable measures to achieve this. Among government's many programmes, the FLISP is specifically intended for the market segment whose income is inadequate to qualify for a home loan but exceeds the maximum limit applicable to access government's Free Basic House Subsidy Scheme.

This market segment, generally known as the "affordable/gap" market, earns between R3 501 and R15 000 per month. Households in this segment, if buying a home for the first time, may apply for a FLISP subsidy. The subsidy attaches to the beneficiary and not to the property. This is used to decrease the mortgage bond and applies only to people who have never been assisted by government.

It is disbursed as a once-off subsidy. With effect from the 2022/23 financial year, FLISP also aimed to extend to non-mortgage housing finance facilities, and accordingly, the subsidy may be used in combination with one of the following products and situations:

- Housing loans granted or guaranteed by a pension and provident fund.
- Unsecured housing loans from any registered lender.
- Housing loans granted or guaranteed by cooperative or community-based savings schemes.
- FLISP can be used in combination with individual own resources or savings loans supported by employer-based schemes such as Government Employees Housing Scheme or private sector employer assisted housing schemes.

- Housing loans supported by Permission-to-Occupy issued by government or recognised traditional authority.

With effect from 1 April 2022, the FLISP quantum range increased by between 7,2% and 10%. This change was expected to go a long way in enhancing affordability of home loans as households will be able to put in higher deposits for their home loans or cover other housing acquisition or building costs.

Rental and social housing

Social housing provides medium density rental housing to low-income households. The programme promotes the provision of affordable rental housing, monitors the performance of the SHRA and develops capabilities in the rental housing sector through intergovernmental collaboration and evidence-based research.

Over the medium term, work under the programme will include promoting the delivery of affordable rental housing by conducting research and developing policies and programmes as and when required, strengthening cooperation and collaboration by facilitating intergovernmental forums and stakeholder partnerships on an ongoing basis, and accelerating the provision of affordable rental housing by providing capital and operational funding to the SHRA to deliver 18 000 social housing units and monitoring and evaluating the financial and non-financial performance of affordable rental housing programmes and projects monthly and quarterly.

Since the last adjustment of the qualification criteria in 2018, tenants have been struggling to pay their rent due to inflation and substantial increases in utility costs. Government has revised the bands for households earning from R1 850 to R22 000 gross monthly income for people to qualify as opposed to the previous range of R1 500 to R15 000. This is expected to align with the broader definition of affordable housing programmes such as FLISP.

Integrated Human Settlements Planning and Development

The programme manages the development of policy, planning and research in the creation of sustainable and integrated human settlements, oversees the delivery of the Integrated Residential Development Programme, and coordinates intergovernmental partnerships with stakeholders.

Over the medium term, work under the programme will include accelerating the delivery of spatially integrated housing and human settlements development by transferring and monitoring the HSDG and Title Deeds Restoration Grant to provinces, the Urban Settlements Development Grant to metropolitan municipalities, and undertaking research and developing housing and human settlements policies and programmes.

It will also promote planning coordination and strengthen intergovernmental cooperation across and within different spheres of government by providing support to provinces and municipalities in the development of 57 integrated implementation plans over the medium term and facilitating intergovernmental forums and stakeholder partnerships on an ongoing basis.

Informal Settlements

The programme provides policy, planning and capacity support for the upgrading of informal settlements, and oversees the implementation of the Informal Settlements Upgrading Programme. Over the medium term, work under the programme will include accelerating the provision of security of tenure, basic services and related infrastructure by managing the transfer of the Informal Settlements Upgrading Partnership Grant to municipalities and provinces, undertaking evidence-based research and developing responsive policies, and supporting provinces and municipalities through the National Upgrading Support Programme.

Affordable Housing

The programme facilitates the provision of affordable housing finance, monitors market trends and develops research and policy that respond to demand. It also oversees housing finance entities reporting to the Minister of Human Settlements. Over the medium term, work under the programme will include strengthening cooperation and collaboration by facilitating intergovernmental forums and stakeholder partnerships.

It will also accelerate the provision of affordable housing finance by providing capital and operational funding to the NHFC for the administration of the FLISP, researching and developing policies and programmes that promote the provision of affordable housing finance for households as and when required, and monitoring and evaluating the financial and non-financial performance of affordable housing programmes and projects.

Housing subsidies

A housing subsidy is a grant given by government to qualifying beneficiaries to be used for housing purposes. The subsidy is either paid to a seller of a house or, in new developments, it is used to finance the construction of a house that complies with the Ministerial Minimum Norms and Standards. The house is then transferred to the qualifying beneficiary.

One of the DHS's areas of responsibility in the delivery of human settlements relates to the bottom-most end of the market, where it provides housing subsidies to the poor. This is where the bulk of the housing backlog exists, affecting mainly those who earn below R3 500 a month.

Individual subsidies

An individual subsidy provides qualifying beneficiaries with access to housing subsidies to acquire ownership of improved residential properties (a stand or house) or to finance the acquisition of a serviced site linked to a house-building contract that is not part of an approved housing-subsidy project.

The latter option is only available to beneficiaries with access to housing credit. The subsidy amount of R84 000 comprises R6 000 for the raw land cost, R22 162 for internal municipal engineering services and R55 706 for the cost of constructing the top structure.

Consolidation subsidies

This subsidy mechanism gives former beneficiaries of serviced stands, financed by the previous housing dispensation (including the Independent Development Trust's site and service schemes), the opportunity to acquire houses.

Housing Development Finance Programme

The grant funds the delivery of housing and human settlements programmes, and manages all matters related to improving access to housing finance and developing partnerships with the financial sector.

Its objectives are to:

- Manage the performance of provinces and municipalities by monitoring the expenditure and non-financial performance of human settlements development and housing programmes monthly and quarterly;
- Accelerate the delivery of housing and human settlements by providing funding from the HSDG, the Urban Settlements Development Grant and transfers to public entities on a scheduled ongoing basis;
- Improve access to housing finance by collaborating with the private sector and related entities to develop mechanisms to increase market penetration and provide loans to low- and middle-income households on an ongoing basis; and
- Ensure equal access to housing finance through monitoring the lending practices of the financial sector by publishing an annual report on mortgage finance.

Institutional subsidies

Institutional subsidies are available to qualifying housing institutions. The subsidy is paid to approved institutions to provide subsidised housing on deed of sale, rental or rent-to-buy options. This is done on condition that the beneficiaries may not be compelled to pay the full purchase price and take transfer within the first four years of receiving the subsidy. Institutions must also invest capital from their own resources in the project.

Subsidies for persons with disabilities

People with disabilities who qualify for a housing subsidy receive additional amounts to improve their houses with special additions, such as paving and ramps to their doors, grab rails in bathrooms and visible doorbells for the deaf.

Enhanced Extended Discount Benefit Scheme

The scheme promotes home ownership among tenants of state-financed rental stock, including formal housing and serviced sites. The scheme is only available to beneficiaries who took occupation of such rented houses before 15 March 1991.

Rural subsidies

These housing subsidies are available to beneficiaries who enjoy only functional tenure rights to the land they occupy. This land belongs to the State and is governed by traditional authorities. These subsidies are only available on a project basis and beneficiaries are supported by implementing agents. Beneficiaries also have the right to decide how to use their subsidies, either for service provision, building houses or a combination of these.

Farm resident subsidies

The Housing Subsidy Programme for Farm Residents addresses the wide variety of housing needs of people working and residing on farms by providing a flexible package of housing models to suit the local context. In most instances, the programme is applied where farm residents are required to reside close to their employment obligations and where the farm land is distant from the nearest town, rendering the settlement of the farm residents in town impracticable.

Farm residents play an important role in all aspects of their housing solutions regarding the selection of options, the design and implementation phase, as well as the ongoing management of the housing stock.

Human Settlements Development Grant

The grant reflects the conditional allocation transferred to all provinces for the delivery of housing projects, as per the National Housing Code.

Rural Housing Loan Fund

The Rural Housing Loan Fund is a wholesale lending institution. It is mandated to facilitate access to housing credit to low-income rural households by providing wholesale finance through a network of retail intermediaries and community-based organisations.

International relations

South Africa is party to the UN Millennium Development Goals, which provide for the significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers by 2020. In addition to these conventions, South Africa adheres to the following declarations under the UN Habitat Programme:

- Vancouver Declaration on Human Settlements of 1976; and
- Istanbul Declaration on Cities and other Human Settlements of 1996 and the Habitat Agenda of 1996, the focus of which is to address the plight of people without adequate housing.

World Urban Forum (WUF)

The WUF was established by the UN to ensure that member states and the world respond to ensure proper and sustainable management of urbanisation in towns and cities across the globe. The matters which receive attention include eradicating the ill effects of urbanisation, such as poverty, unemployment, and inequality, and managing the negative consequences of climate change on communities.

It brings together government leaders, ministers, mayors, diplomats, members of national, regional and local government, non-governmental and community organisations, professionals, academics, grassroots leadership of women and youth, to debate and propose solutions to ensure proper, working, equitable and sustainable livelihoods for households and people living in urban areas.

The forum also advises the Executive Director of the UN-Habitat and the UN-Habitat's Governing Council on key issues that should inform the work of UN Habitat and all key stakeholders in the field of human settlements and urban development.





SOUTH AFRICA
YEARBOOK
2024/25

International Relations and Cooperation

According to the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa of 1996, the President is ultimately responsible for the country's foreign policy and international relations. It is the President's prerogative to appoint heads of mission, receive foreign heads of mission, conduct state-to-state relations and negotiate and sign all international agreements. International agreements that are not of a technical, administrative or executive nature must be approved by Parliament, which also approves the country's ratification of, or accession to, multilateral agreements. All international agreements must be tabled in Parliament for information purposes.

The Minister of International Relations and Cooperation is entrusted with the formulation, promotion, execution and daily conduct of South Africa's foreign policy. The Department of International Relations and Cooperation's (DIRCO) overall mandate, which is codified in the Foreign Service Act, 2019 (Act 26 of 2019), is to work for the realisation of South Africa's foreign policy objectives. This is achieved by:

- coordinating and aligning South Africa's international relations abroad;
- monitoring developments in the international environment;
- communicating government's policy positions;
- developing and advising government on policy options to create mechanisms and avenues for achieving objectives;
- protecting South Africa's sovereignty and territorial integrity;
- promoting South African trade and tourism;
- contributing to the creation of an enabling international environment for South African businesses;
- sourcing developmental assistance; and
- assisting South African citizens abroad.

DIRCO's strategic objectives are to:

- protect and promote South African national interests and values through bilateral and multilateral interactions;
- conduct and coordinate South Africa's international relations and promote its foreign policy objectives;
- monitor international developments and advise government on foreign policy and related domestic matters;
- contribute to the formulation of international law and enhance respect for its provisions;
- promote multilateralism to secure a rules-based international system;
- maintain a modern, effective department driven to pursue excellence; and
- provide a world-class and uniquely South African state protocol service.

The National Development Plan (NDP) is the overarching apex policy framework that guides the work of government. In the area of international relations, the NDP states that in order for South Africa to achieve its national goals of eradicating poverty, lowering inequality, creating jobs and making the transition to a resilient carbon economy, foreign relations must be driven by the country's domestic economic, political and social demands, as well as regional, continental and global obligations.

In pursuance of this injunction, DIRCO has translated the NDP goals into a strategic programme that seeks to:

- sustain political, economic and social relations;
- strengthen political and economic integration and development of the Southern African Development Community (SADC);
- consolidate the African Agenda;
- strengthen and consolidate South-South relations;
- leverage relations with the North in the advancement of national and continental priorities and the agenda of the South; and
- advocate for the reform and strengthening of the global system of governance.

South Africa's international diplomatic footprint consists of diplomatic missions in 114 countries in which the country has representation, and through the accreditation of more than 160 countries and international organisations resident in South Africa. The country's diplomatic and consular missions implement its foreign policy to enhance its international profile and serve as strategic mechanisms for the achievement of national interests.

In addition, training and policy analysis remain of strategic importance for the execution of DIRCO's mandate. Chapter 7 of the NDP details a vision for facilitating South Africa's broad-based socio-economic development and fostering strong international ties. This articulation is supported by Priority 7 (a better Africa and world) of government's 2019 – 2024 Medium-Term Strategic Framework (MTSF).

South Africa will continue supporting peace efforts and the entrenchment of human rights around the globe. The country is a member (2023 – 2025) of the Human Rights Council and intends to renew its candidature. South Africa will use its presence in the Council to promote the work of the Council and pursue its objectives and priorities in the context of a human rights agenda, including the rights of vulnerable groups such as women, children, persons with disabilities and the LGBTQIA+ community. That agenda, informed as it is by the core values and principles enshrined in the Constitution including the Bill of Rights, which protects and preserves the rights of all people in the country, affirming the democratic values of human dignity, equality and freedom, will support South Africa's established and new global solidarity efforts. It will continue its support for a two-state solution for Israel and Palestine. South Africa continues with all efforts for peace and freedom for the people of Palestine and Western Sahara, and in solidarity with the blockaded people of Cuba.

Advancing the African Agenda

In its efforts to advance peace and security and prevent conflict in Africa, the department will continue playing an active role in the structures and processes of the African Union (AU). Accordingly, South Africa will continue advancing the implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and the AU's Agenda 2063. To support these activities, the department anticipates spending R952,2 million over the medium-term on AU membership fees. This expenditure is in the Membership Contribution subprogramme within the International Transfers programme.

The SADC is a major vehicle for South Africa's pursuit of regional development and integration. As such, the department intends to produce four reports per year on the outcomes of South-South engagements reflecting South Africa's participation and interests, such as enhancing trade relations and reducing conflict in Southern Africa. As a member of the SADC, South Africa will continue to ensure

that its interests and those of other members are advanced. An amount of R477,2 million over the MTEF period is set aside in the Membership Contribution subprogramme in the International Transfers programme for South Africa's membership contributions to the SADC.

Participation in global forums

South Africa advances its interests at the global level through its membership of and participation in United Nations (UN) programmes and forums. Accordingly, over the medium-term, South Africa will continue to promote and advance its foreign and domestic policy imperatives, which include advancing the African Agenda on peace and security, human rights, and economic and social development, as well as supporting the UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The department plans to spend R624,4 million over the next three years on membership fees. This expenditure is in the Membership Contribution subprogramme in the International Transfers programme.

Managing infrastructure projects and properties

In an effort to strengthen its property portfolio over the MTEF period, the department plans to purchase properties for office and residential purposes to cut down on rental costs and re-purpose underused state-owned properties in its global portfolio. Re-purposing involves converting offices or large official residences into staff quarters. Plans are in place to build on state-owned vacant land in New Delhi, India, and Luanda, Angola, over the MTEF period; and refurbish, renovate and maintain 24 existing properties across the world in accordance with the outcomes of conditional assessments to preserve and prolong the department's property portfolio. To carry out these activities, R633,3 million over the medium-term is allocated in the Foreign Fixed Asset Management subprogramme in the Administration programme.

Peace and security

South Africa has continued to play a key role in contributing towards peace and stability on the continent. In January 2025, South Africa led a ministerial delegation to Juba, in its capacity as chair of the AU Ad Hoc High-level Committee on South Sudan (C5). In February 2025, on the margins of the AU Summit, South Africa also participated in the high-level meeting convened by the AU Peace and Security Council to discuss the evolving and concerning security situations in the DRC and Sudan. Moreover, South Africa participated in the 12th Regional Oversight Mechanism of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and the Great Lakes Region held in Kampala, Uganda, in May 2025.

In addition, in recent years South Africa deployed troops in Mozambique and the DRC to help combat violent extremism, terrorist insurgency, instability and conflict, respectively. While the SADC Mission in Mozambique (SAMIM) and the SADC Mission in the DRC (SAMIDRC) have withdrawn from both countries, South Africa still maintains troops in the DRC under MONUSCO's Force Intervention Brigade. All these efforts were aimed at achieving the Agenda 2063 flagship project of silencing the guns in Africa by 2030.

Development issues on the continent

On continental development issues, the AU Development Agency, also known as AUDA-NEPAD, is the implementing agent for "Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want". With the recent adoption of the Second 10-Year Implementation Plan (STYIP) by African Heads of State and Government at the AU Summit in February 2024, the programme activities of AUDA-NEPAD become even more crucial for continental economic growth.

As the host country to AUDA-NEPAD, South Africa played a continental leadership role in shaping active implementation of Agenda 2063 across Africa, inclusive of addressing regional needs through the SADC Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan and national needs through the NDP. Implementation of Agenda 2063 will also feed into meeting the targets of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). South Africa is currently serving a two-year term (2023 – 2025) as the 2nd Vice Chair of the AUDA-NEPAD Heads of State and Government Orientation Committee (HSGOC) and the AUDA-NEPAD Steering Committee. Both bodies are responsible for overseeing the strategic and political direction of AUDA-NEPAD programmes and projects in Africa in support of Agenda 2063. In February 2024, South Africa successfully participated in the 41st Summit of the AUDA-NEPAD HSGOC.

African Peer Review Mechanism

The African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) is a specialised agency of the AU, established in 2003. The APRM is considered a tool for sharing experiences, reinforcing best practices, identifying deficiencies, and assessing capacity-building needs to foster policies, standards, and practices that lead to political stability, high economic growth, sustainable development, and accelerated sub-regional and continental economic integration.

In December 2023, South Africa hosted the 20th Anniversary Celebrations of the APRM in Sandton. During this meeting, the launch of South Africa's 2nd Generation Country Review Report took place, thereby further highlighting South Africa's commitment to the essence of good governance in Africa. In February 2024, South Africa successfully participated in the 33rd Summit of the APR Forum of Heads of State and Government.

Implementation of the AU Decade on African Roots and Diaspora (2021-2031)

South Africa, as a member of the AU Ministerial High Committee in charge of the Agenda of the Decade on African Roots and Diaspora, continued to participate on behalf of the Southern Africa Region, alongside Angola and Namibia. The High Committee provided a roadmap and way forward in relation to the convening of the 9th Pan-African Congress, which is scheduled to take place in Lomé, Togo, in December 2025. The theme of the Congress is "Renewal of Pan-Africanism and the role of Africa in the reform of multilateral institutions: mobilising resources and reinventing ourselves to act". South Africa's engagement within the High Committee provides an opportunity to refocus and inject

new impetus into the diaspora's thematic issue at a strategic level. South Africa actively participates and contributes to advancing the agenda towards the realisation of the objectives and vision of the Decade of African Roots and Diasporas.

Qualification of slavery, deportation and colonisation as crimes against humanity and genocide against the peoples of Africa .

The AU Assembly of Heads of State and Government, through its Decision Assembly/AU/Dec.934(XXXVIII) adopted at its 38th Ordinary Session, designated South Africa alongside Algeria, Ghana and Togo to follow up on the implementation and implications of the Decision, in collaboration with the Commission, and the Republics of Ghana, South Africa and Algeria. Collaboration in this context must be with all AU member states, diaspora organisations, Afro-descendants and international organisations.

Pan-African Parliament

In discharging its obligations as the host country to the Pan-African Parliament (PAP), South Africa successfully facilitated the hosting of the requisite sessions of the Pan-African Parliament, which saw the successful election of the Bureau of the PAP to direct the operations of the organ.

AU Champion for Pandemic Preparedness, Prevention and Response (PPPR)

The Assembly of Heads of State and Government at its 37th Session held in February 2024, successfully realigned President Cyril Ramaphosa's title to now serve as the AU Champion for Pandemic Preparedness, Prevention and Response (PPPR). This is in recognition of the key role that South Africa played in terms of its COVID-19 response within the continent, including local vaccine manufacturing.

Agenda 2063

South Africa was appointed as the Chair of the AU Ministerial Follow-up Committee on the Implementation of Agenda 2063 for the years 2025 and 2026, demonstrating its commitment to the Second Ten-Year Implementation Plan. The critical role and responsibility of the committee is to provide political leadership and direction regarding the implementation of Agenda 2063. The committee is also tasked with ensuring effectiveness, efficiency and accountability in the delivery of Agenda 2063 and its successful implementation.

In view of the above, South Africa will utilise its chairship of the Committee to call for action in terms of domestication, monitoring and evaluation of Agenda 2063.

The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCTA)

South Africa has continued to play a leading role in the acceleration of the AfCFTA, focusing on the expedition of the ratification of the AfCFTA Protocol on Women and Youth in Trade, whose implementation will be a catalyst for women's inclusion in trade within the AfCFTA. South Africa continued to prioritise the finalisation of the Annexes to the AfCFTA Protocol on Investment.

South Africa was elected the co-champion of the AfCFTA Protocol on Digital Trade. The start of trading under the AfCFTA continues to result in a steady increase in South African goods entering the African market beyond SADC.

South Africa has undertaken to establish a National Implementation Committee (NIC). The Committee's core mandate is to promote overall effective coordination and collaboration among relevant stakeholders in an effort to maximise the opportunities presented by the expanded market access, as well as to address any challenges that may arise. The NIC is led by the Minister of Trade, Industry and Competition, Parks Tau.

Institutional reform of the AU

The institutional reform of the AU remains a critical aspect in the strengthening of the AU as a fit-for-purpose organisation for the realisation of "Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want". South Africa actively participated in the process of the election and appointment of the senior leadership of the AU. The AU Heads of State elected Lerato Mataboge as the AU Commissioner for Infrastructure and Energy. The successful conclusion of the election and appointment of the senior leadership of the AU consolidated the reform of the AU, and South Africa will continue to actively participate in other aspects of the reform going forward.

The African Monetary Institute (AMI)

The AU agreed to operationalise the African Monetary Institute (AMI) and that it undertake the coordination for the implementation of the macroeconomic convergence criteria of the African Monetary Cooperation Programme (AMCP) and further undertake the preparatory work requisite to the ultimate creation of an African Central Bank.

Following its adoption by the Assembly, the AMI will be based in Abuja, Nigeria. The Central Bank, when implemented, will enable the AfCFTA to thrive and increase intra-Africa trade. South Africa will continue to actively participate in the advancement of priorities related to finance, monetary affairs, economic planning and integration as critical building blocks to a prosperous continent.

South-South cooperation and BRICS

One of the ways in which a context of global collaboration could be advanced is through influential formations that work to advance an inclusive, progressive, forward-looking international development agenda in light of increased unilateralism, protectionism, health, climate and economic crises, as well as geopolitical tensions.

The Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa grouping (BRICS) was launched in 2006 by leading emerging and developing countries united by the urgent need to increase the representation, voice and role of the Global South in global governance. Building on their shared principles and common interests, BRICS members cooperate in a wide range of areas under the three BRICS pillars of political and security, financial and economic, and social/people-to-people cooperation.

Following expansion of its membership in 2025, BRICS accounts for around half of the world's population, over 40% of global economic activity, and around a quarter of the world's exports. BRICS is using its increased representation and voice to shape a just world order as well as to explore opportunities for South-South cooperation to develop pragmatic solutions to challenges facing the majority of the world.

Legislation

DIRCO derives its mandate from the following legislation:

- Foreign States Immunities Act, 1981 (Act 87 of 1981), which regulates the extent of the immunity of foreign states from the jurisdiction of the South African courts and provides for matters connected therewith;
- Diplomatic Immunities and Privileges Act, 2001 (Act 37 of 2001), which provides for the immunities and privileges of diplomatic missions and consular posts and their members, Heads of State, special envoys and certain representatives of the UN and its specialised agencies, and other international organisations and certain people;
- African Renaissance and International Cooperation Fund (ARF) Act, 2001 (Act 51 of 2000), which establishes cooperation between South Africa and other countries, in particular African countries, through the promotion of democracy, good governance, the prevention and resolution of conflict, socio-economic development and integration, humanitarian assistance and human resource development; and
- International agreements (multilateral and bilateral): International agreements concluded by South Africa in terms of sections 231 (2) and 231 (3) of the Constitution.

Entity

African Renaissance and International Cooperation Fund (ARF)

The African Renaissance and International Cooperation Fund (ARF) was established in terms of the ARF Act of 2000 to enhance cooperation between South Africa and other countries, particularly African ones; promote democracy and good governance; prevent and resolve conflict; encourage socio-economic development and integration; provide humanitarian assistance; and develop human resources.

Over the MTEF period, the ARF will continue focussing on supporting projects that will enhance African trade, goods exchange, economic development and integration. Total expenditure is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 2,7% from R51,2 million in 2022/23 to R55,5 million in 2025/26. The entity is set to derive 97,5% (R157 million) of its revenue over the period ahead through transfers from the department. These are expected to increase at an average annual rate of 3,1% from R49,7 million in 2022/23 to R54,5 million in 2025/26. The remainder is set to be generated through interest income.

Programmes

International Cooperation

The purpose of the programme is to participate in initiatives of international organisations and institutions in line with South Africa's national values and foreign policy objectives. Subprogrammes within the International Cooperation programme include the following:

- Global System of Governance–provides for multilateralism and an international order based on rules. This entails participating in and playing an active role in all forums of the UN system and its specialised agencies, and funding programmes that promote the principles of multilateral activity;
- Continental Cooperation–provides for the enhancement of the African Agenda and sustainable development;
- South-South Cooperation–provides for partnerships with countries of the South in advancing South Africa's development needs and the needs of the African Agenda; and creates political, economic and social convergence for the fight against poverty, underdevelopment and the marginalisation of the South; and
- North-South Dialogue–provides for South Africa's bilateral and multilateral engagements to consolidate and strengthen relations with organisations of the North to advance and support national priorities, the African Agenda and the developmental agenda of the South.

Public Diplomacy and Protocol Services

The purpose of the programme is to communicate South Africa's role and position in international relations to domestic and international arenas and provide state protocol services. It ensures a better understanding of South Africa's foreign policy by providing ongoing strategic public diplomacy direction and state protocol services nationally and internationally.

Its subprogrammes include:

- Public Diplomacy – promotes a positive projection of South Africa's image; communicates foreign policy positions to domestic and foreign audiences; and markets and brands South Africa by using public diplomacy platforms, strategies, products and services; and
- Protocol Services – facilitates incoming and outgoing high-level visits and ceremonial events; coordinates and regulates engagements with the local diplomatic community; provides protocol advice and support to the various spheres of government; facilitates the hosting of international conferences in South Africa; and manages the state protocol lounges and guesthouses.

International transfers

The objective of international transfers is to promote multilateral activities that enhance South Africa's economic and diplomatic relations on the continent and with the world by providing for:

- South Africa's annual membership fee contributions to international organisations such as the UN, the AU and SADC; and
- Annual transfers to recapitalise the ARF as a contribution to its operations.

Enhancing economic diplomacy

In anticipation of growth in the African and Asian regions, South Africa took a conscious decision to expand and strengthen its diplomatic missions in the two regions. As South Africa consolidated its political relations on the continent by expanding its diplomatic footprint through 47 embassies, high commissions and consulates general, the country has also rapidly advanced its economic relations in Africa through the expansion of its trade volumes, investment portfolio and economic relations across the length and breadth of the continent.

This has resulted in Africa becoming a prime destination for South African-originated goods and services, especially value-added goods, which assists in contributing to the R198-billion trade surplus, creating much-needed jobs and opportunities in the manufacturing, retail, fast-moving

consumer goods, financial services and transport/logistics sectors. It is also worth noting that the SADC accounts for approximately 80% of South Africa's total trade with the continent. With regard to Asia and the Middle East, South Africa's trade and investment in these regions have grown considerably and continue to do so.

In 1994, trade with Asia and the Middle East combined was approximately R45 billion and has increased to approximately R2.8 trillion for Asia and R250 billion with the Middle East in 2024. There is a direct correlation between the growth of South Africa's diplomatic missions and the phenomenal expansion of its trade and investment relations on both the African continent and in Asia and the Middle East. The same applies to the Americas and Europe.

As South Africa explores new markets, it continues to maintain close economic ties with the industrialised economies of the North, which provide, among others, preferential market access to some of South Africa's exports. Enhancing the economic and political dialogue is an important part of South Africa's economic diplomacy strategy, as they remain a primary source of foreign direct investment (FDI) and official development assistance flows into South Africa.

DIRCO also uses international summits such as the BRICS, Group of Twenty (G20), the SADC, the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) as well as state visits and bilateral consultation mechanisms to promote the trade and investment case for South Africa. Government created a significant footprint in Asian markets as part of efforts to return the country to pre-COVID-19 economic growth. In 2021, government intended to identify new opportunities and expand those that have benefit for South Africa.

In order to intensify efforts to stimulate growth, government is working tirelessly to raise the country's global visibility by promoting South Africa as the best place to do business, visit, work, study and to live. Government is also responding to new opportunities and harnessing the collective capabilities of DIRCO's resources both at home and abroad.

Disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control

A primary goal of South Africa's policy on disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control includes reinforcing and promoting the country as a responsible producer, possessor and trader of defence-related products and advanced technologies. In this regard, DIRCO continues to promote the benefits that disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control hold for international peace and security.

As a member of the Supplier's Regimes and of the Africa Group and the NAM, the importance of non-proliferation is promoted, considering that export controls should not become the means whereby developing countries are denied access to advanced technologies required for their development.

In seeking solutions to intractable disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control challenges in the international arena, a bridge-building approach has been followed to seek realistic and achievable solutions. While dealing with challenging issues from a pragmatic perspective, due recognition has been given to the role that civil society can play in partnership with the governments of the world, especially in the context of seeking solutions to the divergent views that often characterise international negotiations.

South Africa is a signatory to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) at the UN in New York. The country signed the treaty at a ceremony held on the margins of the 72nd Session of the UN General Assembly (UNGA). It aims to contribute towards achieving the objective set out in the very first resolution adopted by the UNGA in 1946 to eliminate all weapons of mass destruction.

The treaty complements other international instruments by contributing towards fulfilling the nuclear disarmament obligations under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, the objectives of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty and the various nuclear-weapon-free-zone treaties, such as the Pelindaba Treaty that already banned nuclear weapons in Africa. South Africa believes that efforts to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons should be matched by a concurrent effort to eliminate all nuclear weapons in a verifiable and irreversible manner.

The TPNW does not spell out all the details of such a process but rather allows for further negotiations on these arrangements to be agreed upon when states possessing or hosting nuclear weapons are ready to accede to it. While the doors into this treaty have always been open, some chose to abdicate leadership and not participate in it.

At the third Meeting of States Parties (3MSP) to the TPNW held from 3 to 7 March 2025 in New York, South Africa was elected as President of the TPNW and will preside over the First Review Conference of the TPNW to be held in December 2026.

South Africa chaired the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) in 2025 and the 34th Plenary Meeting of the NSG took place from 21 to 25 July 2025 in Cape Town, South Africa. The NSG brings together 48 participating governments with the European Commission and the Chair of the Zangger Committee participating as permanent observers. The plenary was chaired by Ambassador Xolisa Mabhongo of the Republic of South Africa. The Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Ronald Lamola, delivered the keynote address on behalf of the Government of South Africa at the opening session. The NSG is an effective component of the international non-proliferation architecture, of which the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) is the cornerstone, including on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. The group aims, in line with the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540, to contribute to the prevention of proliferation of nuclear weapons through the implementation, on a national basis, of export controls for nuclear and nuclear-related dual-use equipment, materials, software, and related technology, without hindering international cooperation on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

Global governance and continental agenda

South Africa's foreign policy is formulated and executed in a constantly evolving global environment. It therefore requires frequent recalibration through comprehensive reviews of various foreign policy levers, tools and instruments to remain relevant and in line with the department's mandate.

Global governance

South Africa participates in a rules-based multilateral system aimed at achieving global political and socio-economic stability and security. Multilateralism, and by implication,

the commitment to an international law, rules-based, just and equitable international order, remains a focal point of South Africa's foreign policy. Consequently, South Africa will continue engaging the multilateral system, particularly the UN, through its agencies, funds, programmes and processes to advance its foreign policy priorities.

These engagements consider that the multilateral system does not fully reflect global political and economic realities and needs reform. A key priority for South Africa is to accelerate the reform of the UNSC, revitalise the UNGA and to advance the reform of the broader global governance architecture with a view to improve its representivity and focus its responsiveness to the needs of, and challenges faced by developing states.

The current unpredictable global environment poses a number of risks to the UN and the global governance system, particularly as it relates to, among others, the dynamics within the UNSC on issues of peace and security (including the situation in the Middle East), promotion and protection of human rights, funding for multilateral processes and honouring commitments to enable national implementation of multilateral decisions such as the 2030 Agenda and SDGs, as well as the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, which for the first time brings all nations to a common cause of undertaking ambitious efforts to combat climate change and adapt to its effects, with enhanced support to assist developing countries to do so.

Ensuring sustainable development in the current global environment will require concerted engagement in the UN system and other multilateral structures, such as the G20, in promoting access to vaccines, post-COVID-19 economic recovery, debt sustainability and liquidity, economic growth and the improvement of social well-being

and infrastructure through increased trade and investment as well as the fair and equitable movement of goods and services. This will include addressing systemic issues to enhance the coherence and consistency of the international monetary, financial and trading systems in support of development.

The follow-up and review to commitments made in the International Financing for Development conferences, including the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, seeks to mobilise much-needed resources for the implementation of the SDGs.

Furthermore, in the wake of numerous terror attacks across the world, countering international terrorism remains a priority on the agenda of the UN, particularly regarding the abuse of cyber platforms for propaganda, recruitment and planning of attacks, radicalising the youth and inciting extremism leading to terrorist attacks. Development, human rights, security and international law are promoted through international forums such as the UN and its agencies.

United Nations

The UN occupies the central and indispensable role within the global system of governance. South Africa was one of the 51 founding members of the UN in 1945. Since then, UN membership has grown to 193 states. After being suspended in 1974 owing to international opposition to the policy of apartheid, South Africa was re-admitted to the UN in 1994, following its transition to democracy.

As a UN member state, South Africa has demonstrated its commitment to multilateralism and the central role of the UN in the system of global governance. South Africa has consistently proposed steps towards a stronger and more effective UN, including enhancing its role within the limitations of the charter in the maintenance of international peace and security, promotion of human rights and the emphasis on sustainable development.

In addition, South Africa has been actively involved in the reform processes of the UN, especially the UNSC. After 80 years in existence, the UN has made strides in terms of reforms; however, the reform of the UNSC still remains elusive. South Africa has called for urgent and comprehensive reform of the UNSC, and continues to participate in processes to revitalise the UNGA by ensuring that it fully dispenses with its role as envisioned in the United Nations Charter.

South Africa participated in the General Debate of the United Nations General Assembly and the 79th Session of the High-Level Week, which took place in New York from 20 to 26 September 2024. The theme for the session, chosen by the President of the General Assembly, H.E. Philemon Yang of Cameroon, was "Unity in diversity, for the advancement of peace, sustainable development and human dignity for everyone, everywhere". President Ramaphosa led the South African delegation to UNGA79 from 20 to 26 September 2024.

South Africa's speech delivered at the UNGA79, and its overall participation in key high-level meetings and side events, provided an opportunity to outline the country's foreign policy priorities and to reflect on challenges facing states in the international system. Based on current geopolitical challenges, President Ramaphosa reiterated South Africa's commitment to promoting multilateralism, the pacific settlement of conflict and the necessity for "developed countries to support the attainment of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, especially relating to the need to focus on the means of implementation such as financing for development."

UN Security Council

South Africa's most recent term as non-permanent member of the UN Security Council was from 2019 to 2020. This was South Africa's third term on the UNSC. Its term was defined by the theme: "Continuing the Legacy: working for a just and peaceful world", drawing on the legacy of former President Nelson Mandela following the centenary of his birth as well as the legacy of South Africa's two previous terms on the council. During that time, South Africa built on its previous terms on the council and focussed on the implementation thereof, including UN-AU cooperation; the Women Peace and Security, and Youth Peace and Security agendas; and the peaceful settlement of disputes.

South Africa's last year in the council coincided with its chairship of the AU. This presented the country with a unique opportunity to advance the African Agenda in both institutions and harmonise its priorities of promoting UNSC decisions in support of the AU initiative of silencing the guns across Africa. During its time on the UNSC, South Africa continued to promote a multilateral approach to addressing issues relating to international peace and security in order to ensure global sustainable peace.

The importance of a proactive approach to the maintenance

of international peace and security, particularly in the form of drawing greater attention to preventative diplomacy mechanisms, as well as post-conflict reconstruction and development, underpinned much of South Africa's engagement on the council.

South Africa strived for consensus and unity of the UNSC in its attempts to play the role of a bridge-builder and to improve proactive actions on issues on the agenda of the council and thus the integrity of the UNSC. It achieved five consensus outcomes during its December 2020 presidency of the Council, illustrating its effectiveness in pursuing the unity of the Council and support for its initiatives. South Africa pursued collaboration with all council members and thus continued to identify opportunities for cooperation with like-minded countries. In this regard, as an elected member, the country forged close links with the other two African countries serving on the council, the so-called "A3".

Since its last term on the Council, South Africa has continued to closely follow the work of the UNSC, including by participating in the open debates of the Council, ranging from matters related to women, peace and security to preventative diplomacy. Most notably, South Africa participated actively in the quarterly debates on the question of Palestine, highlighting its initiatives regarding addressing the genocide in Gaza and re-establishing the viability of the two-state solution.

In Pretoria, South Africa has continued to coordinate and collaborate with the elected members of the Security Council based in Pretoria, highlighting its positions on various matters before the Council and thus maintaining South Africa's relevance despite not serving on the Council.

South Africa's multilateral approach to international peace and security emphasises conflict prevention, peaceful conflict resolution, and post conflict efforts to entrench the peace.

Regarding the Ukraine-Russia conflict, South Africa's approach continues to be informed by its commitment to a negotiated solution and the implementation of international law. The government of South Africa engages relevant role-players to promote a cessation of hostilities, an immediate and unconditional ceasefire, respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, the start of negotiations to end the conflict, and the inclusion of all key parties to the conflict. This approach has been represented during open sessions of the UNSC and in South Africa's international engagements on the matter.

South Africa supported the countering of extremism and terrorism within cooperative multilateral frameworks, including that of the UN, the AU, and BRICS, and remains committed to developing international consensus while ensuring global counter-terrorism efforts are informed by international law and a respect for human rights. Specifically, the department participated in the BRICS counter-terrorism working group in preparation for the 2025 BRICS Summit.

International Court of Justice

The International Court of Justice (ICJ) is the principal judicial organ of the UN. South Africa has been consistently active in the work of the ICJ, which has grown markedly in the last year. In 2023, DIRCO successfully led the campaign for the election of the first South African to be elected to the ICJ, Judge Dire Tladi.

South Africa has additionally been active in providing written and oral submissions in advisory opinions before the ICJ, notably the advisory opinion on Palestine and Climate Change.

South Africa instituted proceedings against Israel before the ICJ on 29 December 2023, alleging that Israel was responsible for violations of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide ("Genocide Convention") in Gaza and requested the Court to indicate provisional measures orders. The ICJ ordered provisional measures on 26 January 2024, 28 March 2024, and 24 May 2024.

Given the continued violations by Israel of the Genocide Convention and the ICJ's provisional orders, consideration is being given to the viability of approaching the UNSC to enforce the provisional measures orders already indicated by the Court under Article 94(2) of the UN Charter.

Such an effort would most likely fail due to a US veto, and the matter could then go to the General Assembly for consideration (there is a mechanism which allows for issues to be considered by the General Assembly if the Security Council fails to act due to a veto). Alternatively, the General Assembly could be approached directly.

There is a likelihood that the General Assembly would adopt a resolution calling for compliance with the ICJ's provisional measures, but it would not be binding. However, if a resolution is adopted, it would signal that the majority of UN member states support compliance with the decisions of the ICJ.

DIRCO's active involvement in the work of the ICJ reflects South Africa's commitment to international law and justice, protecting human rights, advancing peace and security, multilateralism, and a rules-based international order based on international law. It is a clear example of the implementation of Chapter 7 of the NDP, which is positioning South Africa in the world.

Sustainable development

During the reporting period, the DIRCO engaged with multilateral international organisations, of which South Africa is a member state on sustainable development, with the objective to promote integrated implementation of the NDP, the UN 2030 Agenda, the AU Agenda 2063, and the SADC revised Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP).

South Africa participates in the annual High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) held under the auspices of the ECOSOC and the five-yearly review held under the auspices of the UN General Assembly. The HLPF is the UN's main platform on sustainable development, with the aim of following up and reviewing the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at the global level. The policy approach is to advance all three pillars of sustainable development—economic, social and environmental— and to accord priority to all seventeen SDGs.

South Africa's participation in the HLPF is to learn from other developing countries that will be presenting their Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) in dealing with the developmental agenda. The forum also keeps track of progress, promotes coherent policies informed by science,

evidence, and country experiences, and addresses new and emerging issues regarding the SDGs.

UN Economic and Social Council

The UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) is a premier organ of the UN responsible for the economic and social development matters of the world. South Africa regards sustainable development as a collective opportunity and responsibility that can be achieved through multilateral cooperation and will continue its active role in the ECOSOC-mandated processes to address the follow-up and review of financing for development outcomes and the means of implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, all of which are crucial to the realisation of the SDGs.

South Africa further actively participates in the functional commissions of the ECOSOC such as the Commission for Social Development, the Commission on the Status of Women, the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND), and the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ), amongst others.

Additionally, South Africa will serve as a member of the ECOSOC for the period of 2025 to 2027.

Climate Change

Climate change is an integral part of the UN 2030 Agenda on sustainable development, the AU's Agenda 2063 and the NDP, especially since climate change is a cross-cutting issue, and for developing countries the climate crisis cannot be solved outside of a development context. South Africa faces poor economic growth compounded by the fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic, acute energy challenges, and increasing pressure on natural resource-based sectors. As such, climate change further exacerbates socio-economic challenges while also offering new opportunities associated with the transition of the global economy towards a lower carbon future.

DIRCO, in partnership with national stakeholders, particularly the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE) as the lead government agency, contributes to multilateral negotiations, foreign policy advice and supports the implementation of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and its Kyoto Protocol and Paris Agreement. Addressing the triple challenges of unemployment, poverty and inequality informs South Africa's approach to addressing climate change, and hence building resilience strengthens development. In shifting to a low-carbon, inclusive, climate-change resilient development path and embracing the global energy transition, we must ensure that we leave no-one behind.

South Africa locates its climate actions and energy transition in the context of sustainable development, the right to development and just transitions. Cabinet has adopted a National Framework for South Africa's Just Transition, and we are working with international partners to secure support for the implementation of the Just Energy Transition Investment Plan (JETP-IP). The country's active participation in the Brazil, South Africa, India and China (BASIC) group and its prominent role in the AU's Committee of African Heads of State and Government on Climate Change (CAHOSCC), the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN), and the African Group of Negotiators (AGN), as well as the Group 77 and China, necessitates that South Africa plays a key role in advancing, nationally and through the UNFCCC, not only its own interests but also those of fellow African and other developing countries.

Science and Technology

In partnership with the departments of Communications and Digital Technologies, Science and Innovation (DSI) and Trade, Industry and Competition, the DIRCO supports matters related to civil aviation, maritime transport, science, technology and innovation from a socio-economic perspective at a multilateral level. Key international engagements are within the International Civil Aviation Organisation, International Maritime Organisation, International Telecommunication Union, Universal Postal Union, the UN Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and the Internet Governance Forum. These engagements bolster South Africa's influence in this arena to support the country's economic and social growth to increase employment, gender and youth empowerment.

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) was established in 1997 as a specialised UN agency to assist Member States in their fight against illicit drugs, crime, corruption and terrorism. South Africa participates actively in the meetings of the UNODC including the annual sessions of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) and the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ), taking place in Vienna, which provide a platform for South Africa to exchange information, technical assistance, capacity building, law enforcement, prosecuting and judiciary cooperation, and best practices in combatting transnational organised crime and corruption both on a national level and regional/international level and allows for a more coordinated approach.

Working with relevant departments/authorities in the area of crime prevention and criminal justice, DIRCO continues coordinating the requests for technical assistance from UNODC through its Regional Office for Southern Africa, located in Pretoria.

South Africa actively participated in the Ad Hoc Committee to elaborate a comprehensive international convention on countering the use of ICTs for criminal purposes which culminated in a Convention on Cybercrime adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in December 2024. The Convention is expected to foster coordination and cooperation among state and non-state actors to combat cybercrime considering digital evolution, as well as provide capacity building, technical assistance and transfer of technology for developing countries.

South Africa is a party to the UN Convention Against Transnational Organised Crime, the Convention against Corruption as well as the three drug control Conventions, namely the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, 1961, as amended by the 1972 Protocol; the Convention on Psychotropic Substances, 1971, and the Convention Against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, 1988.

South Africa is a member of the Commission on Narcotic

Drugs (2024 – 2027) and the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (2024 – 2026).

UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

South Africa joined the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) on 12 December 1994 and is an active participant in key UNESCO governance structures such as the General Conference and the World Heritage Committee. The country currently serves as a member of the organisation's Executive Board for the term 2021 – 2025. Through its participation in UNESCO meetings and conferences, including those of the World Heritage Committee (WHC), South Africa utilises UNESCO to advance its socio-economic development and to contribute towards building peace through international cooperation in the fields of education, science (human, natural and social), culture, communication and information.

South Africa also contributes to the organisation's programme of work and budget allocations and ensures that Africa and gender equality remain the key priorities for UNESCO. South Africa acceded to the Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict (December 2003) and the Convention on the Protection of Underwater Cultural Heritage (May 2015). Since South Africa ratified the World Heritage Convention on 10 July 1997, UNESCO has inscribed several sites in the country as world heritage sites, namely the:

- Fossil Hominid Sites of South Africa (1999);
- Robben Island Museum (1999);
- iSimangaliso Wetland Park (1999);
- Maloti-Drakensberg Park (2000);
- Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape (2003);
- Cape Floral Region Protected Areas (2004);
- Vredefort Dome (2005);
- Richtersveld Cultural and Botanical Landscape (2007);
- Khomani Cultural Landscape (2017);
- Barberton Makhonjwa Mountains (2018);
- Human Rights, Liberation and Reconciliation: Nelson Mandela Legacy Sites (2024); and
- The Emergence of Modern Human Behaviour: The Pleistocene Occupation Sites of South Africa (2024).

World Health Organisation

The relevance and prominence of the nexus between foreign policy and global health issues, and the need to promote synergies between them, are significant and growing. Foreign policy can sustain political momentum, advance cooperation and find solutions to health and other global challenges based on the principles of global solidarity and equity.

South Africa is one of the 194 member states that constitute the World Health Organisation (WHO). The country takes part in the annual World Health Assembly (WHA), which is the WHO's supreme decision-making body, as well as in its executive board meetings. South Africa also participates in the WHO's Regional Committee for Africa, which convenes annually after the WHA to reflect on decisions taken at the assembly (particularly those relevant to the continent) and plan for the following year's WHA.

Through its participation in these structures, South Africa contributes to setting international norms and standards on key issues regarding global and public health, such as:

- the implementation of international health regulations;
- addressing antimicrobial resistance;
- the fight against HIV and AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria;
- building resilient healthcare systems in developing states;
- ensuring access to medicines;
- achieving Universal Health Coverage; and
- contributing to economic growth through health employment.

South Africa continues to see the WHO as the leading global institution to take forward issues of global health aimed at achieving the SDGs, including for delivering universal health coverage (UHC) with primary health care at its core and in strengthening pandemic prevention, preparedness, and response (PPPR).

South Africa continues to play an active role on the African continent, as well as in the international arena on global initiatives in dealing with future pandemic prevention, preparedness, and response. These include, but are not limited to, participating in the WHO's Intergovernmental Negotiating Body (INB) tasked with developing and negotiating a legally binding WHO convention, agreement or other international instrument on pandemic prevention, preparedness and response, and in the Working Group on Amendments to the International Health Regulations (2005) (WGIHR).

South Africa chaired the Foreign Policy and Global Health Initiative (FPGH) from April 2023 to May 2024. The FPGH network was formed on the margins of the UN General Assembly Debate in 2006 when the then Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Brazil, France, Indonesia, Norway, Senegal, South Africa and Thailand agreed on the important role of global health issues in foreign policy matters. In 2007, they adopted the Oslo Declaration, which included an Agenda for Action. Now members of the FPGH network must consider whether their initiative has been successful and whether it is still relevant.

The FPGH Network is based on the premise that health is one of the most important, yet still broadly neglected, long-term foreign policy issues. It recognises the nexus between global health and foreign policy and that it should be at the crux of tackling health emergencies at a global level due to the cross-border nature of these pandemics. It underscores investment in health as fundamental to economic growth and development and that, threats to health may also compromise a country's stability and security. The initiative was thus born from the belief that health as a foreign policy issue needs a stronger strategic focus on the international agenda.

On 19 May 2025, the FPGH Ministers of Health convened their traditional meeting on the margins of the 78th World Health Assembly. It was chaired by the Vice Minister for Science, Technology, Innovation and Health Economic Industrial Complex in the Ministry of Health of Brazil, Dr Fernanda De Negri. South Africa's delegation was led by the Deputy Minister of Health, Dr Phaahla.

Brazil presented the theme for its chairmanship: Accelerating the Fight against Socially Determined Diseases, which was welcomed by the Group, particularly for drawing attention to the relationship between the necessity to combat inequality, poverty and hunger.

International Renewable Energy Agency

The International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) is an intergovernmental organisation mandated to facilitate cooperation, advance knowledge and promote the adoption and sustainable use of renewable energy. The agency was established in 2009, with South Africa as a founding member. Since its inception, the organisation has become the leading actor in facilitating international energy cooperation within the context of driving the global energy transition towards the increased deployment and utilisation of renewable energy.

The NDP identifies energy as a catalyst for economic growth and development, and these can be realised through investment in energy infrastructure. South Africa has maintained proactive steps in transitioning to a low-carbon economy and future cooperation with IRENA is integral to this transition.

Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development Centre

The Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) serves as a catalyst to generate discussions on the global economy, the international financial architecture, financial regulatory reform and global economic governance – with the aim of creating a strong platform for influencing global economic policy. Although South Africa is not a member of the OECD, it is one of five countries that have "Key Partner" status with the OECD, alongside Brazil, China, Indonesia and India.

Engagement with the OECD has the potential to relate directly to three overarching development objectives—ensuring that inclusive economic growth is a critical condition for addressing South Africa's triple challenge of unemployment, poverty and inequality; sustaining a skilled and capable workforce in order to support the delivery of the NDP targets and advancing the African Agenda. The OECD holds an annual Ministerial Council Meeting consisting of high-ranking officials from both member nations and partner countries of the OECD.

In June 2025, Minister Ronald Lamola led the South African delegation, joined by Trade, Investment and Competition Minister Parks Tau, at the OECD headquarters in Paris, chaired by Costa Rica, with Australia, Canada and Lithuania as Vice-Chairs under the theme: "Leading the way towards resilient, inclusive, and sustainable prosperity through rules-based trade, investment and innovation".

South Africa's relations with the OECD are governed by the South Africa-OECD Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for Cooperative Activities signed in 2023. The MoU contains a Joint Work Programme for Collaboration over a period of five years. The MoU further aims to advance the implementation of South Africa's National Development Plan 2030 and to assist South Africa to achieve its objectives to address the challenges of unemployment, inequality and poverty in all its forms and dimensions in South Africa.

International Labour Organisation

South Africa was a member of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) from 1919 to 1966, when it was suspended due to the apartheid policy, and was readmitted in 1994. South Africa's objective in its engagement with the ILO is geared towards influencing global debates on labour issues as well as exchanging experiences towards resolving its challenges.

In November 2021, South Africa ratified the ILO Convention on Eliminating Violence and Harassment in the World of Work, as it is consistent with the domestic and international objectives of promoting women's rights. South Africa is the 10th member state of the ILO to have ratified the convention. Convention Number 190 entered into force for South Africa on 29 November 2022.

The Convention was first adopted during the 108th International Labour Conference (ILC), the ILO Centenary Conference, which was held in Geneva in 2019. The convention recognises that violence and harassment in the world of work "can constitute a human rights violation or abuse – a threat to equal opportunities, is unacceptable and incompatible with decent work" and thus aims to encourage member states to come up with measures to protect workers and employees from violence and harassment.

It reminds member states that they have a responsibility to promote a general environment of zero tolerance. The convention covers violence and harassment occurring in the workplace, during work-related trips, in work-related communications, in employer-provided accommodation, and when commuting to and from work.

In May 2022 South Africa and the ILO co-hosted the 5th Global Conference on the Elimination of Child Labour that adopted the Durban Call to Action to end Child Labour. The outcome document included commitments on the following six issues:

- Make decent work a reality for adults and youth above the minimum age for work.
- End child labour in agriculture.
- Strengthen the prevention and elimination of child labour, including its worse forms, forced labour, modern slavery, trafficking in persons, and the protection of survivals through data-driven and survivor-informed policy and programmatic responses.
- Realise the child's right to education and ensure universal access to free, compulsory, quality, equitable and inclusive education and training.
- Achieve universal access to social protection.
- Increase finance and international cooperation for the elimination of child labour and forced labour.

South Africa supports the recent ILO's World Social Protection Report 2024-2026: Universal Social Protection for Climate Action and a Just Transition, which highlights that universal social protection is a pivotal policy lever to prevent and address the adverse consequences of the climate crisis and to enable a just transition as well as to reduce vulnerability and to increase the resilience of people, economies and societies by providing a robust response to mutually reinforcing lifecycle risks.

World Trade Organisation

Geoeconomic pressures and contestations – whether trade restrictions and unilateral sanctions, the weaponisation of the international payment system, or economic coercion – are reshaping the international economic and trade environment. The global trading system is facing unprecedented challenges due to the impact of unilateral measures, which undermine it and render it vulnerable to current evolving global trade and economic dynamics. Escalating global trade tensions have widespread repercussions that disproportionately affect

developing nations, ranging from negatively impacting the flow of goods and services to further undermining the role of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in regulating global trade.

South Africa supports the rules and foundational principles of the WTO as key elements of a predictable rules-based multilateral global trading system and also unequivocally supports trade and export-led growth strategies and the WTO's trade liberalisation agenda.

Some WTO rules prejudice the trade and development interests of developing countries, and South Africa is fully committed to constructively working towards the necessary WTO reform with a view to making meaningful progress and to securing balanced and inclusive outcomes to deliver a successful 14th WTO Ministerial Conference in Cameroon in 2026.

World Intellectual Property Organisation

The World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) is mandated to manage intellectual property services through global partnerships and collaboration. Through its various committees, WIPO advocates for the promotion and protection of intellectual property rights and the enforcement of trademarks, industrial designs, patents, trade secrets, copyright and related rights.

WIPO further provides a forum for its members to strengthen their developmental agenda, which is a critical component for intellectual property (IP) enforcement and development. It also provides capacity building and technical assistance on IP for the digital economy and international trade to developing countries applicable to small and medium enterprises prepare.

South Africa became a member of the WIPO on 23 March 1975. The country participates in the WIPO committees to advance and shape global IP policy framework development that is sensitive to the interests and applicable to developing countries. South Africa's participation in WIPO is guided by its IP Policy. Government regards IP as an important policy instrument for promoting innovation, technology transfer, research and development, industrial development and, more broadly, economic growth. South Africa believes that the WIPO's efforts to advance IP, creativity and innovation, serve the country's objective for a people-centred development agenda based on Agenda 2030 and our continental vision contained in the AU Agenda 2063.

South Africa participated in two Diplomatic Conferences in 2024 which led to the conclusion of the Agreement on Genetic Resources and Associated Traditional Knowledge, and the Design Law Treaty (DLT), and reiterated the imperative of building towards further consensus on the wide spectrum of issues related to IP facing WIPO. This has provided renewed impetus to the activities and role of WIPO.

World Economic Forum

The World Economic Forum (WEF) is an independent international forum that brings together senior leaders in business, as well as in political and academic spheres, for high-level discussions on how to accelerate global growth and development. Ordinarily, the annual meetings are organised in Davos, Switzerland, in January as well as a series of regional summits in Africa—WEF on Africa, Latin America, the Middle East, North Africa, and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

South Africa's objective in dealing with the WEF is to promote the country as an attractive investment destination and to influence discussions pertaining to global and continental issues.

South Africa's participation in the 2025 WEF Annual Meeting coincided with the country's assumption of the G20 presidency from December 2024 until 30 November 2025. President Cyril Ramaphosa accompanied by nine Cabinet Ministers became the first African Head of State to address a WEF Plenary. South Africa utilised the WEF platform to promote its G20 presidency, to strengthen South Africa's role as a responsible and principled member of the international community, to promote the country as a dependable business partner and to lobby for inward investment.

The 55th Annual Meeting of the WEF in Davos presented an opportunity to align South Africa's participation with the WEF 2025 theme, "Collaboration for the Intelligent Age", and the priorities of South Africa's G20 presidency under the theme, "Solidarity, Equality, Sustainability", communicating its vision for fostering multilateral cooperation, inclusive growth, and sustainable development.

Group of Seven

The Group of Seven (G7) was formally established in 1975, following the financial crisis brought about by the 1973 oil crisis. To improve the coordination of global economic and financial policy, the initial meetings were held by the Finance Ministers of the world's five most industrialised and developed countries—France, Germany, Japan, the US, and the UK, who were later joined by Canada and Italy at a presidential level, to form the G7. Russia joined the group in 1998, when it was known as the G8, until its suspension from the group in 2014 due to the situation in the Crimea.

South Africa is not a member of the G7, but some G7 presidencies invite the country as a guest to the outreach part of the Leaders' Summit, as a key voice from Africa and the Global South. The country's engagement with the group is aimed at leveraging resources and capacity of the G7 countries to facilitate Africa's socio-economic development.

The G7 countries represent approximately 40% of global gross domestic product (GDP) and 10% of the world's population. The agenda of the G7 has, since the turn of the century, evolved from a sole focus on discussions on economic and financial issues to matters of peace and security, global governance, international terrorism, the environment, refugees and other geopolitical and foreign policy-related matters.

President Cyril Ramaphosa participated in the G7 Summit Outreach Session held in Kananaskis, Canada, on 17 June 2025. South Africa reaffirmed the G7 as a strategic partner the country in a number of areas (including the G7's support for South Africa's just transition efforts) and highlighted the importance of international cooperation on matters of mutual interest (including cooperation between the G7 and G20 presidencies).

Financial Action Task Force

The Financial Action Task Force (FATF) is an intergovernmental body that was established by the G7 in 1989 to set international norms and standards to promote the effective implementation of measures for combating money laundering, terrorist financing and other related threats to the integrity of the international financial system. It comprises 37 jurisdictions, two regional organisations and nine associate regional groupings. Its recommendations are intended to be of universal application. South Africa became a member of the FATF in 2003. The country is also a member of a FATF-style regional body—the Eastern and Southern Africa Anti-Money Laundering Group (ESAAMLG). One of the features of FATF and ESAAMLG is a mutual evaluation exercise.

Group of Twenty

South Africa assumed the presidency of the Group of Twenty (G20) on 1 December 2024 and led the bloc until 30 November 2025. South Africa is the only African country that is a permanent member of the G20, and, therefore, this was the first time in the G20's history that an African country presided over this august bloc of developing and developed countries. The G20 Presidency, while being a privilege and an honour, also came with tremendous responsibility. This responsibility is even greater given that we live in what the United Nations Secretary-General calls a world of impunity, of inequality and of deep uncertainty, all fraying at the seams of our global order. Notably, structured and institutionalised inequality has become a major threat to global economic growth and stability. South Africa's presidency aimed to build on the successes of the past three presidencies led by the Global South – (Indonesia (2022), India (2023) and Brazil (2024) – and was an opportunity for South Africa to champion the aspirations of emerging economies.



South Africa's presidency sought to address the three strategic priorities of the Government of National Unity's 7th Administration, namely, to reduce poverty and tackle the high cost of living; to build a capable, ethical and developmental state; and to drive inclusive growth and job creation.

South Africa's G20 presidency was held under the theme: "Solidarity, Equality, Sustainability", a theme that sought to harness global will and capabilities to confront the enormous challenges facing the world. Under its theme, South Africa advanced the following four national priorities, which will be pursued through the relevant working groups:

- Strengthening disaster resilience and response.
- Ensuring debt sustainability for low-income countries.
- Mobilising finance for a just energy transition.
- Harnessing critical minerals for inclusive growth and sustainable development.

Three High-Level Task Forces:

- Task Force 1 – Inclusive Economic Growth, Industrialisation, Employment and Reduced Inequality.
- Task Force 2 – Food Security.
- Task Force 3 – Artificial Intelligence, Data Governance and Innovation for Sustainable Development.

One Review:

- A review of the work of the G20, The G20 at 20 years": A Reflection on Key Achievements and the Way Forward, will also feature as one of South Africa's deliverables.

One elevated Compact with Africa 2.0:

- Building on the German G20 presidency's Compact with Africa deliverable, South Africa planned to work with all G20 members to pursue a G20 broadened and effective Compact with Africa (CwA), which includes increasing the number of participating African Union members in the CwA.

The high-level deliverables and priorities under this theme lie at the core of the original G20 mandate of promoting strong, sustainable, balanced and inclusive growth.

Humanitarian affairs

Humanitarian affairs globally are at a critical juncture with an unprecedented level of humanitarian crises worsened

by ongoing armed conflicts. According to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, the number of displaced persons increased to 123.2 million worldwide by the end of 2024. Humanitarian needs have increased amid the ever-increasing reduction of funding for humanitarian organisations. The humanitarian crises are driven largely by protracted conflicts. Stronger and more frequent shocks, including natural disasters are disproportionately impacting the world's most vulnerable, particularly women and children. Humanitarian responses to crises have saved lives and helped to restore livelihoods but have not always succeeded in addressing underlying vulnerabilities.

Informed by the spirit of ubuntu and the principle of solidarity, South Africa actively contributes to humanitarian diplomacy by engaging with the UN and other humanitarian agencies tasked with alleviating and addressing humanitarian needs across the globe. Among others, South Africa engages with and contributes to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the Central Emergency Relief Fund (CERF), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), and the World Food Programme (WFP). South Africa also participates in multilateral platforms that discuss and chart a way forward on the global responses and coordination of humanitarian action, such as the ECOSOC Humanitarian Affairs Segment.

South Africa is one of the core six founding members of the global initiative to galvanise political commitment to International Humanitarian Law (IHL) together with the ICRC. The country continues to demonstrate leadership in strengthening IHL at the national, regional, and international levels, in the face of increasing erosion of IHL in various parts of the world. The country also participated in the 34th International Red Cross and Red Crescent Conference to reinforce respect and compliance with IHL. It further co-hosted together with the ICRC the 23rd Regional Annual Seminar on the Implementation of IHL for Southern Africa and Indian Ocean Island States and the 6th Commonwealth Meeting on implementing IHL, underscoring the country's commitment to advancing humanitarian law and its practical application.

The Branch Global Governance and Continental Agenda (GGCA), as part of South Africa's humanitarian commitments, annually makes humanitarian contributions to humanitarian organisations, which allow the organisations to respond to the various complex humanitarian situations across the world. During the 2024/25 financial year, South Africa contributed R22 563 090 to five humanitarian agencies, namely, the UNHCR, OCHA, CERF, ICRC, and WFP. South Africa also participates actively in forums on disaster risk reduction, recognising the devastating impacts of disasters on countries, communities and livelihoods. The country is committed to the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and prioritises, among others, the importance of disaster preparedness, investing in disaster risk reduction, and building resilience. South Africa participated in the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, held in June 2025, in Switzerland, which served as a global multi-stakeholder forum to assess progress on the implementation of the Sendai Framework.

Moreover, South Africa is actively involved in multilateral forums dealing with food security through primarily the meetings of the Rome-based Agencies (RBAs), including the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO), WFP and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). These agencies also have country and/or regional offices based in South Africa, which form part of ensuring that the internationally agreed upon norms and standards on food security and humanitarian assistance are implemented at the national level through collaboration. South Africa, through its ambassador in Rome, continues to chair the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) for the period 2023–2025. CFS is the global committee entrusted with ensuring the coordination of global efforts to end hunger and ensure food security for all.

Food insecurity still remains extremely high, with 864 million people estimated to be severely food insecure and 2.3 billion people facing hunger globally (SOFI, 2024). About 343 million people are estimated to be acutely food insecure across the 74 countries with a WFP operational presence and where data is available. The number of acutely food-insecure people is nearly 200 million above pre-pandemic levels. Immediate life- and livelihood-saving assistance is required for 44.4 million people estimated to be in a state of emergency or worse levels of acute food insecurity in 2024. Statistics South Africa further indicates that individuals living on less than R1 109, which is below the Lower Bound Poverty Line (LBPL), or roughly $62.14 per month, were considered poor. To this effect, 13.2 million people in South Africa are living in extreme poverty with poverty thresholds of $2.15 daily. This makes it important for South Africa to strengthen the country's collaboration with key agencies. In this regard, South Africa stands to benefit from the FAO support through the Technical Cooperation Framework (TCP).

South Africa also actively participates in forums dealing with migration, refugees, asylum seekers, internally displaced persons, as well as international humanitarian law. South Africa's participation in these forums, which include the UNHCR Executive Committee and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) Council, is informed by the goal of influencing norms and standards aimed at ensuring protection for the above categories of people and creating a policy space to engage on these issues. South Africa often advocates for responsibility and burden sharing to ensure that there is also support for host countries. South Africa further advocates for the respect for and compliance with international humanitarian law in accordance with the Geneva Conventions and their additional protocols.

Continental agenda

African Union

The establishment of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) in 1963 by 32 countries in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, was intended to continue the fight against colonialism and apartheid on the African continent, promote unity and solidarity, safeguard the sovereignty and territorial integrity of member states and coordinate and intensify cooperation for development.

Following the realisation of the objectives that were set during the advent of the OAU, particularly the mission to emancipate the continent from the shackles of colonial and apartheid rule, the AU was formed and brought into force in 2002, wherein 54 countries agreed to chart a new path for

the continent, more specifically its economic development. This new path, which was set in 2002 by the AU, was underpinned in the determination to tackle and address the multifaceted social, economic and political challenges through forging an integrated continent that can ultimately realise its full economic potential and play its rightful role in the global economy.

To this end, the AU is making progressive strides and moving in the right direction in its mission to address the longstanding challenges of underdevelopment, and consequent poverty, unemployment and inequality on the continent. The AU recognised the need to develop a long-term strategy, resulting in the adoption of Agenda 2063 in 2015 by the Heads of State and Government during the 24th Ordinary Session in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Agenda 2063 has identified seven cardinal aspirations, which provide an indication of what the continent should achieve by the year 2063:

- a prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development;
- an integrated continent, politically united based on the ideals of Pan-Africanism and the vision of Africa's Renaissance;
- an Africa of good governance, democracy, respect for human rights, justice and the rule of law;
- a peaceful and secure Africa;
- an Africa with a strong cultural identity, common heritage, values and ethics;
- an Africa where development is people-driven, unleashing the potential of its women and youth; and
- Africa as a strong, united and influential global player and partner.

Appreciating the need that the realisation of the objectives set by Agenda 2063 should be fulfilled, there was a formulation of its first 10-year implementation plan. Thus far, there has been progress in this regard, as evidenced by:

- the adoption of the Protocol on the Free Movement of Persons in Africa,
- member states having committed to the AfCFTA; and
- the Single African Air Transport Market being launched.

These flagship programmes of Agenda 2063 are the catalysts that will ensure the acceleration of integration within the continent and will further enable African countries to maximise economic opportunities, particularly trade amongst them. The objective of the AfCFTA is to promote intra-African trade and offer an opportunity to create larger economies of scale, a bigger market and improve the prospects of the African continent to attract investment. In addition, the AfCFTA will bring together the 55 member states of the AU, covering a market of more than 1.2 billion people, including a growing middle class and a combined GDP of more than USD$3,4 trillion.

Furthermore, the AU has noted that in order to successfully move the continent forward, it has to transform the manner in which it conducts its business. Currently, the AU is undergoing a rigorous process of reviewing how it has been operating, through engaging the recommendations made during the institutional reform process. The successful implementation of the agreement borne out of this process will ensure that the AU becomes more effective and efficient in carrying out its mandate. South Africa, as a member of the AU, remains committed to the organisation and it has demonstrated its desire to ensure that the organisation succeeds.

Currently, South Africa is hosting the Pan-African Parliament, the APRM and the AUDA-NEPAD, among others. Additionally, the country continues to play a steering role in matters related to peace and security on the continent. South Africa is a member of and chairs the AU Committee of Five on South Sudan and, through the late former Deputy President David Mabuza, was involved in mediating the agreement that led to the establishment of the Transitional Government of National Unity in South Sudan on 22 February 2020.

South Africa is a member of the AU High-Level Committee on Libya tasked with supporting a Libyan-led process for peace, security and national reconciliation. South Africa is also one of 13 signatories to the Peace and Security Cooperation (PSC) Framework for the DRC and the Great Lakes Region. The 12th Regional Oversight Mechanism (ROM) Summit, which South Africa participated in, focused on finding solutions for the security challenges in the DRC, Sudan and South Sudan. Through these initiatives and its active involvement, South Africa continues to contribute towards the realisation of the aspiration of silencing the guns in Africa.

Peace and Security Council

South Africa continues to promote peace and stability on the African continent through preventative diplomacy, peacemaking, peacebuilding and peacekeeping efforts. In this context, the country's approach to peacekeeping resonates strongly with the AU's aspirational goal of "Silencing the Guns by the Year 2030". The AU's flagship project on addressing peace and security issues in the context of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) is built around structures, objectives, principles and values, as well as decision-making processes relating to the prevention, management and resolution of crises and conflicts and post-conflict reconstruction and development on the continent.

Furthermore, the Peace and Security Council of the AU remains the main pillar of the APSA, and it is supported by various structures, including the AU Commission, the Panel of the Wise, the Continental Early Warning System, the African Standby Force and the Peace Fund. The relationship between the AU and the regional economic communities/regional mechanisms for conflict prevention, management and resolution remains crucial for the success of the APSA. South Africa has actively participated, through both bilateral and multilateral efforts, to resolve some of the continent's pressing conflict areas.

These countries include Lesotho, the DRC, Madagascar, Burundi, South Sudan, Somalia, the Central African Republic (CAR), Mali and Libya. South Africa also remains engaged in the peace and security dynamics of the Horn of Africa, the Sahel, the Great Lakes Region and the Lake Chad Basin. South Africa will continue to play its part in conflict resolution in these countries and respective regions. In addition, South Africa reaffirms its continued solidarity to assist the people of Western Sahara in pursuit of their inalienable right to self-determination and decolonisation. South Africa remains steadfast in its rejection of all acts of terrorism and extremism

that have increasingly affected Africa, contributing to internal instability.

AU regional economic communities

The AU is the principal institution responsible for promoting sustainable development at economic, social and cultural level, as well as integrating African economies. Regional economic communities are recognised as the building blocks of the AU, necessitating their close involvement in formulating and implementing all AU programmes. To this end, the AU must coordinate and take decisions on policies in areas of common interest to member states, as well as coordinate and harmonise policies between existing and future regional economic communities, for the gradual attainment of the AU's objectives.

Seven specialised technical committees are responsible for the actual implementation of the continental socio-economic integration process, together with the Permanent Representatives Committee. South Africa's development is intertwined with that of the southern Africa region and the African continent at large. The country's efforts at ramping up industrialisation should be viewed within the overall framework of the SADC Industrialisation Strategy and Roadmap, as approved by the SADC Extra-Ordinary Summit in April 2015. South Africa seeks to industrialise the regional and continental economies in order to develop its own manufacturing capacity.

In addition, the country seeks to radically alter the colonial and postcolonial pattern where Africa was a supplier of raw materials. It is of the view that Africa should produce value-added goods for exports into the global economy. It is only in this way that Africa can address the paradox of a rich-resource continent inhabited by a poverty-stricken population and make a decisive break with the past.

Southern African Development Community (SADC)

The SADC developed from the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC), which was established in 1980. It adopted its current name during a summit held in Windhoek, Namibia, in August 1992. Before 1992, the aim of the SADCC was to forge close economic cooperation with southern African countries, excluding South Africa, to bolster their economies and reduce their dependence on the South African economy.

From 1992, when the organisation became SADC, its mandate changed to:

- promoting and defending peace and security;
- evolving common values, systems and institutions;
- establishing an open economy based on equality, mutual benefit and balanced development;
- breaking down tariff barriers;
- promoting trade exchanges and mutual investment;
- realising the free movement of goods, personnel and labour services;
- achieving the unification of tariffs and currencies; and
- establishing a free trade zone.

The initial member states were Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Eswatini, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. South Africa became a member after 1994. South Africa has consistently sought to nurture regional integration at three levels: the Southern African Customs Union (SACU), the SADC and the Tripartite Free Trade Agreement between the SADC, the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa and East African Countries (EAC). In particular, South Africa has championed a "developmental regionalism" approach that combines market integration, cross-border infrastructure development, as well as policy coordination to diversify production and boost intra-African trade.

Development partners

One key feature that distinguishes the AU from its predecessor, the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) is its vision of an integrated, prosperous, equitable, well-governed and peaceful United States of Africa, effectively managed by its own citizens and representing a creative and dynamic force in the international arena. The last component of this vision establishes the need to cooperate strategically with other regional groupings, international organisations and states to promote Africa's interests, acquire support to enable the attainment of her objectives, increase Africa's international stature and obtain the global leverage that would enable the continent to maximise its impact in the geopolitical arena.

Consequently, South Africa through the AU, has entered a number of structured strategic partnerships around the world in line with the clear vision and development strategy of the AU. The partnerships emphasise the implementation of industrialisation and technology transfer, infrastructure development, trade and investment, development of human capital, social investment, and sustainable and inclusive growth policies, programmes and projects of continental, regional and national dimension.

These relations include continent-continent partnerships such as the Africa-EU partnership, the Africa-South America Summit and partnership between Africa and the Arab World, and country-continent partnerships such as the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC), the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD), the Africa-India Forum, the Africa-Turkey partnership and the Africa-Korea partnership. These partnerships are established and covered or governed by strategic partnership agreements, MoUs, declarations and frameworks of cooperation and various senior officials meetings, ministerial meetings and summits have been held over the years to review these partnerships. These strategic partnerships enable African partners to take advantage of the continent's anticipated growth, its growing consumer market, demand for industrial products, demand for engineering, procurement, construction services, and supply of basic raw materials, natural resources and strategic industrial inputs.

Previously, the partnerships involved commitments to provide assistance in agricultural and technological development, human capital development, industrialisation, infrastructural development, as well as military expertise for the peacebuilding and peacemaking efforts of the AU. However, the emerging trend is that partners are aggressively promoting their respective private sectors to the fore and trade, investments and market access are acquiring prominence. Relations with countries of the South remain strong and the BRICS membership has yielded benefits for the country and is expected to do so for the rest of the continent.

Efforts continue within BRICS on common objectives, including addressing challenges in respective regions and the world at large. BRICS also continues to provide alternative market access as well as strategic political support in pursuit of a just and equitable world. In the same vein, South Africa continues to support the consolidation of the India, Brazil and South Africa (IBSA) Dialogue Forum. The forum serves as an intimate platform that coordinates matters of common interest and promotes development through the IBSA Fund for the alleviation of poverty and reduction in hunger.

The Indian Ocean region is of vital importance and of growing geostrategic significance. South Africa views the IORA as the preeminent regional organisation linking Africa, the Middle East and Asia via the Indian Ocean. The association is growing in stature and prominence.

Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa (BRICS)

In 2023, Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa (BRICS) leaders decided to invite new members during the Johannesburg VI BRICS Summit, and by January 2025 BRICS had doubled to include Brazil, China, Egypt, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Iran, Russia, South Africa and the United Arab Emirates. BRICS now accounts for around half of the world's population, more than 40% of global economic activity and around a quarter of the world's exports.

BRICS members cooperate in a wide range of areas under the three BRICS pillars of political and security, financial and economic, and social/people-to-people cooperation. South Africa's membership of BRICS, therefore, enables the country to employ additional and powerful tools in its fight to address the triple challenges of unemployment, poverty and inequality, including through increased trade, investment, tourism, capacity building, skills and technology transfers. The broad scope of BRICS Science, Technology and Innovation cooperation and its funding mechanism and framework programme is another example of mutually beneficial BRICS cooperation that enables increased funding opportunities, capacity building, as well as skills and technology transfer. With an emphasis on pragmatic and mutually beneficial cooperation that delivers tangible results, BRICS cooperation has also expanded beyond governments to include, among others, parliament, the private sector, entrepreneurs, professional organisations and academia. The Kazan BRICS Summit in October 2024 decided to elevate cooperation between BRICS civil society organisations and mainstream their interests with the establishment of a BRICS Civil Council alongside the existing BRICS Business Council, BRICS Think Tank Council, BRICS Women's Business Alliance and the BRICS Youth Council.

BRICS members also established the New Development Bank (NDB), which has provided South Africa over $7 billion in funding for 15 projects that address our infrastructure needs in sectors such as water, energy, transport and logistics networks. In 2025, Algeria joined the NDB alongside Bangladesh, Egypt, and the UAE. Colombia and Uzbekistan are expected to finalise their membership soon following approval in June 2025.

Following the recent stages of membership expansion, BRICS continues to attract great interest globally, with many countries of the Global South sharing our needs, interests, values and principles and recognising the benefits of South-South cooperation. The 2024 Kazan BRICS Summit decided to invite like-minded progressive countries of the global South to explore deepened cooperation with BRICS, and by June 2025, Belarus, Bolivia, Cuba, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Nigeria, Thailand, Uganda, Uzbekistan, and Vietnam had joined as BRICS partner countries.

BRICS is using its increased representation and voice, and its deepened partnership with the Global South, to shape a more just world order as well as to explore opportunities to develop pragmatic solutions that the world so urgently needs. In Kazan, BRICS leaders responded to global economic disparities and geopolitical tensions by directing BRICS structures to play their role in supporting BRICS trade through increased local currency use as well as in shaping a more inclusive, sustainable global economy and driving reform towards a more representative financial architecture.

Following negative global developments, including the substantial defunding of development aid and multilateral development institutions, BRICS leaders responded during the 2025 Rio de Janeiro Summit by addressing these pressing global challenges with the development of global norms that respond to the needs of the global South and the launch of BRICS-led initiatives on public health, climate finance and artificial intelligence. BRICS leaders also advocated for sustainable peace and security through dialogue and diplomacy and reiterated the urgent need for reform and the strengthening of multilateralism to better respond to the needs of the global majority.

IBSA Dialogue Forum

The IBSA Dialogue Forum brings together three large pluralistic, multicultural and multi-racial societies from three continents as a purely South-South grouping of like-minded countries committed to inclusive sustainable development in pursuit of the well-being of their people and those of the developing world. The principles, norms and values underpinning the IBSA Dialogue Forum are participatory democracy, respect for human rights, the rule of law and the strengthening of multilateralism.

The realisation of the trilateral alliance between IBSA stems from three commonalities between the three countries, namely: all three countries are vibrant democracies, they share common views on various global issues and they are substantial emerging economies within their sub-regions.

The IBSA Fund is a flagship programme of the dialogue forum that has successfully delivered impact-driven projects in developing and least developed countries. The IBSA Fund has made it possible for South Africa to contribute in a meaningful and substantive manner towards international efforts to alleviate extreme poverty and reduce hunger in developing countries. In 2023, Brazil took over as the new President of IBSA with a promise to invigorate the IBSA formation. The IBSA Fund has achieved great strides in uplifting the most vulnerable in some African countries, particularly women and children.

The fund has made available over $4 million, which will be rolled out to projects in countries such as Mozambique, Lesotho, Senegal and the Gambia. The engagement process of the IBSA countries takes place on a number of levels, including Summit (Heads of State and Government), the IBSA Trilateral Ministerial Commission meeting (Ministers), and Senior Officials and Technical (through various working groups).

Indian Ocean Rim Association

The Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) is a charter-based regional multilateral organisation of 23 member states around the Indian Ocean and 12 Dialogue Partner countries. It seeks to build and expand understanding and mutually beneficial cooperation through a consensus-based, evolutionary and non-intrusive approach. The IORA was established on 7 March 1997, and it is an initiative that came into existence through former President Nelson Mandela's visionary leadership during his official visit to India in 1995.

The IORA region is a huge market of more than three billion people. South Africa views the IORA as an important platform for the implementation of its economic diplomacy objectives as well as the articulation of its foreign policy, which upholds the importance of multilateralism and global collaboration in resolving the intricate challenges facing the world.

South Africa's membership of the IORA provides an important platform to pursue the country's domestic imperatives as well as other regional and global programmes, such as the AU's Agenda 2063; the 2050 African Integrated Maritime Strategy; the AUDA-NEPAD, Agenda 2030; and the AfCFTA. The IORA member states vary considerably in terms of their areas, populations and levels of economic development. They can also be divided into a number of sub-regions: Australasia, Southeast Asia, South Asia, West Asia and Eastern and Southern Africa, each with its own regional groupings (such as the ASEAN, the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation, Gulf Cooperation Council and the SADC). Despite such diversity and differences, these countries are bound together by the Indian Ocean.

The IORA is making significant strides as a platform for Indian Ocean states. The endeavours of IORA through its working groups have achieved substantial contributions to skills enhancement, technology transfer, technological simulations and industrial simulations. This work is important for unlocking the oceans economy through localisation and value chain creation.

Commonwealth

The modern Commonwealth is a voluntary association of 56 independent member countries. Membership is diverse and includes developed and developing countries in Africa, Asia, the Americas, the Caribbean, Europe and the South Pacific. Since rejoining the Commonwealth in 1994, South Africa has interacted closely with the work of the Commonwealth, contributing politically, financially and in terms of capacity and expertise to the work of the organisation.

South Africa remains an active member of the organisation and attends all high-level meetings, including the Commonwealth Foreign Affairs Ministers Meeting and the biannual Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM). The 2024 CHOGM took place in Apia, Samoa, from 25 to 26 October 2024 and handed over the position of Chair-in-Office from Rwanda to Samoa. Ms Shirley Ayorkor Botchwey was elected as the new Commonwealth Secretary-General. The Government of Antigua and Barbuda also offered to host the next CHOGM in November 2026.

Non-Aligned Movement

With its 121 member states, the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) is the largest grouping of countries outside of the UN, making it an important role player in global and multilateral affairs. Since its inception in 1961, the movement has played a crucial and highly visible political role in representing the interests of developing countries, particularly in the eradication of colonialism, supporting struggles for liberation and self-determination, the pursuit of world peace and the search for a more equitable and just global order.

South Africa remains an active member of the movement and attends all high-level meetings, including the monthly meeting of the NAM Coordinating Bureau (CoB) in New York, the NAM Ministerial Meeting, the NAM Committee on Palestine, and the NAM Summit. The NAM Summit is the highest decision-making authority of the movement and meets every three years. South Africa attended the NAM Ministerial Meeting of the Coordinating Bureau (CoB) that was held in Baku, Azerbaijan, on 5 and 6 July 2023 to prepare for the NAM Summit.

At the summit, the chairship rotated from Azerbaijan to Uganda until 2026, and the Government of Uzbekistan offered to host the next Summit in 2026. The NAM Mid-Term Ministerial Conference will be held from 15 to 16 October 2025 in Kampala, Uganda, to review the developments and implementation of decisions of the preceding summit, to prepare for the following summit, and to discuss matters of urgency. A meeting of the NAM Ministerial Committee on Palestine will also be held on 15 October 2025.

The NAM remains an important role player in the multilateral system and continues to play an active role on issues pertaining to development, UN reform, disarmament, human rights, peacekeeping and peacebuilding, among others.

Group of 77

The Group of 77 (G77) was established on 15 June 1964 by 77 developing countries' signatories of the Joint Declaration of the Seventy-Seven Developing Countries issued at the end of the first session of the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in Geneva, Switzerland.

Beginning with the first Ministerial Meeting of the G77 in Algiers (Algeria) from 10 to 25 October 1967, which adopted the Charter of Algiers, a permanent institutional structure gradually developed, which led to the creation of chapters of the G77 with liaison offices in Geneva (Conference on Trade and Development), Nairobi (UN Environment Programme), Paris (UNESCO), Rome (Food and Agriculture Organisation/ International Fund for Agricultural Development), Vienna (United Nations Industrial Development Organisation) and the Group of 24 in Washington DC (International Monetary Fund and World Bank).

Although members of the G77 have increased to 134 countries, the original name was retained due to its historic significance. The G77 is the largest intergovernmental organisation of developing countries in the UN. It provides the means for the countries of the South to articulate and promote their collective economic interests and enhance their joint negotiating capacity on all major international economic issues within the UN system and promotes South-South cooperation for development. The functioning and operating modalities of the work of the G77 in the various chapters have certain minimal features in common, such as a similarity in membership, decision-making and certain operating methods.

A chairperson, who acts as its spokesperson, coordinates the group's action in each chapter. The Chairship, which is the highest political body within the organisational structure of the G77, rotates on a regional basis (between Africa, Asia-Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean) and is held for one year in all the chapters.

Southern Africa

South Africa has played a pivotal role in Southern Africa through its foreign policy initiatives, reflecting its commitment to regional stability and sustainable development. In the peace and security sphere, South Africa mediated in regional conflicts, including in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Mozambique. In terms of economic integration and trade, South Africa was at the forefront of advancing the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA) and the streamlining of trade and investment growth within SADC.

Within the reporting period, President Ramaphosa hosted the following visits: the Republic of Namibia Working Visit in October 2024, the Republic of Angola State Visit in December 2024, and the Republic of Mozambique Working Visit in March 2025. President Ramaphosa attended the inauguration ceremonies of the President-elect Mr Daniel Chapo of the Republic of Mozambique in January 2025 and President-elect Dr Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah of the Republic of Namibia in March 2025 in his efforts to support and strengthen democracy in the region. Minister Ronald Lamola also held Political Consultations with his Namibian and Angolan counterparts in October and November 2024, respectively.

East Africa

Branch Africa further played a pivotal role in advancing South Africa's foreign policy objectives in the East African region during the reporting period, emphasising strengthened bilateral relations, economic diplomacy, and regional cooperation in alignment with the National Development Plan (NDP) and Medium-Term Strategic Framework (MTSF). President Ramaphosa undertook significant Working Visits to Uganda, Rwanda, and South Sudan from 6 to 18 April 2024, focusing on regional peace and security initiatives and consolidating bilateral cooperation. In Uganda, discussions between President Ramaphosa and President Yoweri Museveni addressed challenges in the DRC and South Sudan, committing to collaborative solutions. In Rwanda, a meeting between President Ramaphosa and President Paul Kagame emphasised resolving the DRC conflict and enhancing bilateral ties. In South Sudan, President Ramaphosa, as a guarantor of the Revitalised Agreement on the Resolution of Conflict in South Sudan (R-ARCSS), engaged with President Salva Kiir and Dr Riek Machar to resolve outstanding provisions and build trust ahead of the forthcoming 2026 elections, reinforcing South Africa's commitment to regional stability.

Several planned high-level engagements with Eritrea, Burundi, Ethiopia, Kenya, Seychelles, Mauritius, Sudan, Uganda, and Comoros were deferred due to scheduling conflicts, political transitions, and regional instability in some areas. These engagements are set to be rescheduled in the near future. South Africa's missions in the region also monitored several key elections, including in the Comoros, Mauritius and Madagascar. These electoral outcomes underscored varied democratic progress, with Mauritius achieving a smoother transition compared to the significant integrity issues in Comoros and Madagascar.

North and Central Africa

In the North and Central African region, the strengthening of bilateral political and economic relations through structured bilateral engagements continued to be at the core South Africa's foreign policy priorities. South Africa held structured bilateral engagements in the region with various countries.

The 10th South Africa-Egypt Joint Commission for Cooperation (JCC) took place on 19 April 2024. The meeting focused on several areas of cooperation between the two countries, such as agriculture, land reform and rural development, correctional services, health, higher education and training, home affairs matters, justice and constitutional development, finance, science and innovation, sport, arts and culture, tourism, trade, industry and competition, transport, and water and sanitation. Following the JCC, the South Africa Egypt Political Consultations which took place from 13 to 14 November 2024, two Ministers agreed on the establishment of Mid-Term Review meetings led by Senior Officials, to expand cooperation between the countries but also to seek collaboration with other African countries to promote continental economic integration and sustainable development.

Political Consultations also took place between South Africa and Algeria on 22 April 2024 at Senior Official's level as part of the Bi-National Commission (BNC) mechanism between the two countries. The consultations were aimed at solidifying the strong relations between South Africa and Algeria through enhanced political links and diplomatic cooperation. Discussions also focused on regional, continental, and international issues of mutual interest. The Political Consultations were followed by a State Visit by President Ramaphosa to Algeria from 4 to 7 December 2024, which included a meeting of the BNC between South Africa and Algeria. Bilateral Agreements and Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) on bilateral cooperation in different sectors and the progress made in the implementation of the outcomes of the previous BNC were examined. It was also agreed that a follow-up mechanism will be established in order to oversee the advancement of the bilateral partnership and the implementation of the decisions made during the sessions of the BNC by way of a Ministerial Review Mechanism. In addition, a Business Forum took place on the sidelines of the State Visit, providing the opportunity for the business community to explore partnership potentials while offering a platform for exchange and networking for the public and private economic operators of both countries. A key outcome of the visit was to elevate the bilateral relationship to a strategic level through the signing of a "Strategic Partnership Declaration".

Minister Lamola undertook a Working Visit to Equatorial Guinea as President Ramaphosa's Special Envoy on 17 January 2025. The purpose of the visit was to deliver a special message from President Ramaphosa to President Nguema Mbasogo requesting him to grant clemency to the two South Africans detained since February 2023 on humanitarian grounds, and that they be released to return home to their families. No agreement was reached during

the discussion, but the two ministers agreed to meet again to continue deliberations on these matters.

West Africa

The overall picture in the West Africa region remains positive, despite some challenges. In Senegal, presidential and legislative elections were held in 2024, which further consolidated democracy. In addition, Ghana continued to consolidate its democracy, with presidential elections held in 2024 as well. However, the threat of terrorism and armed insurgency continues to pose a threat to the territorial integrity in some states.

Furthermore, in July 2024, Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger signed a treaty marking the formal launch of the Alliance of Sahel States (AES), establishing steps aimed at creating a confederation. Following the outbreaks of military takeovers in the three countries, the African Union (AU) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) had imposed sanctions on the three countries.

In West Africa, South Africa continued to foster close relations with many countries in the region, including Nigeria, Ghana, Senegal, Côte d'Ivoire and Togo. The 11th Session of the Bi-National Commission (BNC) between the Republic of South Africa and the Federal Republic of Nigeria was held in Cape Town on 3 December 2024. The session was co-chaired by President Ramaphosa and the President of Nigeria, President Bola Ahmed Tinubu.

The BNC was preceded by the Ministerial Meeting held on 2 December and the Senior Officials Meetings on 28 and 29 November 2024. Some of the key objectives of the BNC were to reach consensus on monitoring progress on commitments made during the 10th BNC and other related meetings with a view to finding ways to advance issues of common interest and mutual benefit. The BNC also agreed on the exploration of new possible areas of economic, trade and investment cooperation, especially in Nigeria's infrastructure development space. The Commission also encouraged the implementation of the 34 Agreements and Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) signed between the two countries and committed to regular engagements between the various Working Groups in support of the Joint Implementation Committee (JIC) and the Consular and Migration Forum (CMF).

The Ivorian-South African Week, which commemorated 30 years of diplomatic relations between democratic South Africa and Côte d'Ivoire, took place from 7 to 11 October 2024 in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire. The event featured a diverse range of activities aimed at enhancing the visibility of South Africa and Côte d'Ivoire. This included presentations on investment opportunities in both countries and focused discussions on animal resources and fisheries, agriculture, education, the financial sector, as well as minerals and energy. The South African delegation also included approximately 60 businesses executives which participated in various events and engagements.

The West African region is rich with mineral resources such as oil, gas, iron ore, manganese, diamonds and gold amongst others. The countries have developed National Development Plans (NDPs) accompanied by Public-Private Partnership (PPP) projects, driving potentially significant development in the region and offering opportunities for South African banks, investors and finance development institutions. The investment attractiveness of the region in terms of foreign direct investment flows (FDI) is positive but deteriorating due to increasing instability and insecurity in several countries in the region. In addition, South African enterprises have faced challenges in the region, such as changing regulatory frameworks, unfavourable tax regimes, repatriation of funds, and arbitrary fines that have led to substantial disinvestment by South African enterprises.

Relations with Asia and the Middle East

The People's Republic of China

South Africa and China established formal diplomatic ties in January 1998. Since then, relations have progressed from Strategic Partnership, Comprehensive Strategic Partnership to an All-Round Strategic Cooperative Partnership in the New Era. The recent elevation not only solidified relations but also signals the future trajectory grounded in strong political ties, a shared commitment to balanced trade and transformative economic growth.

The two countries have achieved a significant number of bilateral cooperation agreements in economic, trade, investment, tourism, health, education, science and innovation, oceans and coastal environment, and environmental protection. South Africa and China are close international cooperation partners in the political, economic, social, technical, and diplomatic domains. The partnership transcends bilateral political cooperation to include regional and multilateral collaboration premised on mutual trust and interests.

South Africa remains committed to the One China Policy. Bilateral relations are anchored by the Ten-Year Strategic Programme of Cooperation (2020–2029), pursued through an exchange of State Visits and high-level engagements, and structured bilateral mechanisms at various levels, including the Bi-National Commission, the Joint Working Group on Cooperation, the Strategic Dialogue, the Joint Economic Trade Committee and the People-to-People Exchange Mechanism.

South Africa and China have committed to building, developing, and strengthening relations based on shared principles of friendship and mutual trust; equality and mutual benefit; coordination; mutual learning; and working together for development. This undertaking is founded on four strategic pillars:

- A strong and historic political bond;
- Vibrant economic ties that support mutual development and deepen technical cooperation;
- Multilateral collaboration on global governance reform and sustainable development within BRICS, FOCAC, G20 and the UN; and
- Deepening people-to-people exchanges and socio-economic cooperation.

South Africa and China maintain vibrant economic ties, with China as one of South Africa's largest global trading partners and South Africa as China's leading partner in Africa. In 2024, total trade reached R670 billion, down from R692 billion in 2023, with a trade deficit of R155 billion in China's favour (these figures include trade with Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Macao in line with the One China Policy). Addressing the structure of trade between the two nations remains a key priority. Efforts focus on expanding market access and

increasing exports of value-added goods, guided by the Department of Trade, Industry and Competition's Top 100 Products for export to China.

South Africa is advancing export diversification and strengthening cooperation with China through a comprehensive strategy that promotes new investments, beneficiation and localised manufacturing, and inward procurement missions. A permanent South African expo in China will provide a year-round platform to showcase the country's products, services, and investment opportunities, enhancing its national brand in the world's largest consumer market.

Priority investment areas include chemicals, capital equipment, automotive (including electric vehicles and batteries), rail components, steel, and agro-processing aligned with South Africa's goals of decarbonisation, diversification, and digitalisation. A targeted investment booklet highlights opportunities in green hydrogen, mining, energy, chemicals, and agriculture, aimed at attracting Chinese investment and procurement. This was promoted at major platforms such as the G20 Summit and the South Africa Investment Conference, with a strong call for Chinese companies to participate.

The cooperation between the two countries is broad and multifaceted, encompassing a wide range of sectors and involving various government departments and provinces. Several bilateral technical projects under the FOCAC umbrella are currently at either the feasibility assessment or the early phases of implementation, which hold significant potential to contribute to local economic development and job creation. There is a regular consultation between South Africa and China on global and multilateral issues, such as within the frameworks of the United Nations, the G20, and BRICS, wherein both countries tend to actively articulate the interests of the developing world, the Global South, and the African continent.

Japan

South Africa and Japan enjoy well-established relations, which are particularly strong in the fields of trade and investment; science and technology cooperation; and skills or capacity development assistance. Since 2010, the bilateral relations have been upgraded to a Strategic Cooperation Partnership.

South Africa and Japan cooperate within the framework of a structured bilateral mechanism called the Partnership Forum, which is convened at ministerial level. The 13th South Africa-Japan Partnership Forum Meeting co-chaired by the two foreign affairs ministers in October 2022 in Tokyo, resulted in successful deliberations that further strengthened bilateral relations between the two countries.

Over the years, cooperation has strengthened to foster closer political relations through high-level engagements between the two countries. The most recent of these was a Working Visit to Japan by the Deputy President from 15 to 19 March 2025, accompanied by the ministers of Trade, Industry and Competition; Sport, Arts and Culture; Agriculture; and Higher Education and Training; as well as the deputy ministers of International Relations and Cooperation; and Science, Technology and Innovation.

There was a focus on strengthening economic cooperation in areas such as manufacturing and machinery, mining and mineral beneficiation, energy cooperation (green hydrogen and green ammonia), the automotive industry and expanded market access for South Africa's agricultural products, amongst others.

Engagements with the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) explored collaboration in technology, scientific research, skills transfer, TVET education, and employment opportunities through scholarships, internships, and programmes such as the Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) initiative, alongside sport, cultural diplomacy, and support for South Africa's Just Energy Transition Programme.

Japan is a major investor in the South African economy, with investments exceeding R90 billion and 260 Japanese companies supporting over 150 000 local jobs. As the world's fourth-largest economy, Japan maintains strong trade ties with South Africa, with total bilateral trade in 2024 amounting to R132 billion and a South African trade surplus of R52 billion.

Republic of Korea

Bilateral relations between South Africa and Republic of Korea (ROK) continue to grow annually, with the focus on trade and investment. South Africa and ROK cooperate within the framework of the Joint Commission of Cooperation (JCC), which is convened at ministerial level. The inaugural session of the JCC between the ROK and South Africa took place in October 2022, covering a broad spectrum of sectoral cooperation. South Africa is scheduled to host the next edition of the JCC in 2026. On 16 June 2025, President Cyril Ramaphosa and ROK President Lee Jae-myung held an introductory meeting on the margins of the G7 Summit, reaffirming their commitment to deepening bilateral engagement.

South Africa is the ROK's largest trading partner in Africa, and the ROK is South Africa's fourth-largest trading partner in Asia. Total trade between the two countries has been growing steadily, with the balance in South Africa's favour. However, owing to recent global trade influences, the two countries have experienced a contraction in trade volumes, from R56 billion in 2023 to R44 billion in 2024, with exports to the ROK amounting to R30 billion and imports totalling R14 billion. These matters continue to be addressed through the existing structured bilateral mechanism.

ROK investments remain concentrated in the consumer electronics, automotive, original equipment manufacturing, and software and IT services sectors, with major companies such as Hyundai, Samsung, KIA, Daewoo, and LG maintaining a strong presence in South Africa.

Democratic People's Republic of Korea

Due to the imposition of various UNSC sanctions against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), bilateral relations between the two countries have remained limited.

To promote bilateral relations, South Africa and the DPRK signed an MoU on Diplomatic Consultation in 2022. This structured mechanism will serve as a platform to broaden the scope of sectoral cooperation between the two countries.

South Africa has consistently advocated for the denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula, maintaining that nuclear weapons and the pursuit of such capabilities do not enhance security but instead pose a threat to both regional

and international stability and security.

Mongolia

The Mongolian Embassy in Egypt is accredited to South Africa, while South Africa and Mongolia maintain cordial relations with their respective embassies in Beijing and Cairo accredited to each other and the most recent bilateral political consultations held in Pretoria in January 2020. The two countries see strong potential to deepen economic ties, particularly in mining, agriculture, education, culture, and clean energy. Mongolia, though sparsely populated, is rich in coal, gold, oil, gas, and arable land, and imports over US$4 billion in goods annually, mostly from China and Russia.

Current trade is modest, valued at approximately R15.5 million and largely favouring South Africa, with key opportunities identified in mining and mining equipment, agricultural products and machinery, as well as SASOL's coal-to-liquid and green coal technologies. South Africa also has the potential to expand exports of wines, fruits, nuts, beef, and seafood to Mongolia, despite challenges posed by the country's landlocked geography.

South and Central Asia

Central Asia

The South African Ambassador to Kazakhstan is accredited to Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Kyrgyzstan, while the South African Ambassador in Turkey is accredited to Uzbekistan, both on a non-residential basis. Tajikistan's Ambassador to Egypt and Kyrgyzstan's Ambassador in Saudi Arabia are accredited on a non-residential basis to South Africa.

Kazakhstan

Bilateral relations between South Africa and Kazakhstan are cordial and are conducted under the umbrella of the structured Protocol on Regular Political Consultations, signed in 1997 and co-chaired at the level of Deputy Minister. The Bilateral Political Consultation serves to explore opportunities to strengthen bilateral relations between South Africa and Kazakhstan, focusing on trade and investment, skills exchange and academic cooperation, and to build on existing cooperation at various levels in the multilateral forums.

The seventh round of Bilateral Political Consultations took place in Astana on 7 June 2023. The consultations reviewed progress made since the previous round, and the consultations further explored closer cooperation in the fields of education and skills exchange, science and technology, mining, agriculture and energy to encourage the expansion of economic cooperation.

Total trade between South Africa and Kazakhstan has increased from $16 million in 2015 to $25 million in 2024, registering an average growth rate of 26.5%. South Africa's exports increased from $11 million in 2015 to $18 million in 2024, registering an average growth rate of 22%. There was, however, a decline in 2017 and 2018 with an annual growth rate of -61% and -4%, respectively, before trade jumped by 28% in 2019. Exports improved again after a decline in 2020 from $14 million to $27.8 million in 2023 and declined again in 2024 with an annual growth rate of -34%.

South Africa's imports from Kazakhstan increased from $4.8 million in 2015 to $7.4 million in 2024, registering an average growth rate of 46%. South African imports from Kazakhstan have shown an undulating pattern from 2015 to 2024. Increased imports between 2018 and 2022 can be attributed to South African imports of inorganic and organic chemicals of precious metals; salt; sulphur; earths and stone; zinc and articles; as well as lead and articles from Kazakhstan.

South Asia

South Africa's economic strategy in South Asia is strongly focused on deepening trade and investment linkages, particularly with countries that offer potential for future growth and where synergies and complementarities in products and technologies exist. South Africa enjoys cordial relations with India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nepal, Afghanistan, and the Maldives.

India

The strategic partnership between South Africa and India is anchored by a deep and shared history of friendship and solidarity. Bilateral relations with India are structured via a Joint Ministerial Commission (JMC) and Foreign Office Consultations (FOC), which are held at Senior Officials' level.

Cooperation in strategic areas of interest such as digital technologies, tourism, agriculture, trade and investment continues between the two countries under the umbrella of the strategic and historical relationship that both countries share. These areas of co-operation have the potential to unlock growth and development opportunities for South Africans, as well as enhanced economic opportunities.

Many of the common foreign policy objectives that both countries share are pursued multilaterally, especially through South-South initiatives. South Africa and India are both committed to the BRICS, IBSA, IORA, the BASIC group of countries, the G77 plus China, the NAM, the Commonwealth and the G20. Close cooperation with India exists within these groupings.

Pakistan

South Africa's bilateral relations with Pakistan were established in April 1994 and are underscored by strong bonds of solidarity, friendship and cooperation. The relations are managed through a Joint Commission (JC), which meets biennially. The Agreement establishing the JC was signed on 25 November 2021.

The signing of the Agreement on the Establishment of a JC was a great milestone for the two countries and is expected to further reinforce the existing warm relationship.

There is potential for the two countries to expand economic and trade ties as Pakistan seeks new opportunities to grow its economy. In times of global economic uncertainty, the promotion of economic co-operation in strategic areas such as manufacturing, oil and gas, services and general trade and investment are areas of mutual strategic benefit to both countries.

South Africa continues to pursue relations with Pakistan in adherence to its core foreign policy principles of non-alignment, and through such engagements, opportunities can be found to enhance the lives of South Africans and the economic prospects of South Africa, with both countries considered regional markets with large and diverse

resources.

Sri Lanka

Bilateral relations between South Africa and Sri Lanka are cordial and conducted under the umbrella of the structured Partnership Forum. The major exports to Sri Lanka are minerals, primarily coal. Bilateral relations have shown a marked strengthening as a result of growing collaboration over a wide spectrum of activities, most notably tourism, investment, trade, and educational exchanges.

Following the end of the civil war in Sri Lanka in 2009 and upon request from Sri Lanka, South Africa has been supporting reconciliation and nation-building initiatives in Sri Lanka by sharing South African best practices in reconciliation and nation-building with Sri Lanka. In March 2023, a Sri Lankan ministerial delegation led by the Foreign Minister, Ali Sabry, and which included the Justice Minister, Dr Wijeyadasa Rajapaksha, visited South Africa to study South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission. A key outcome of the visit to South Africa was an agreement to sign an MoU on technical cooperation relating to the establishment of the proposed Commission for Truth, Unity and Reconciliation in Sri Lanka.

Bangladesh, Nepal and Maldives

The South African High Commissioner in New Delhi, India, is accredited to Bangladesh on a non-residential basis. Bangladesh holds large potential for the expansion of trade and economic relations. Over the recent years, bilateral relations between South Africa and Bangladesh have deepened and grown exponentially.

Bilateral relations between the two countries are cordial and are conducted under the umbrella of the structured Agreement on the Establishment of Regular Diplomatic Consultations, which is co-chaired at Senior Official level.

Nepal

The South African High Commissioner in New Delhi is accredited non-residentially to Nepal, while Nepal has a resident diplomatic mission in Pretoria. South Africa and Nepal enjoy good bilateral relations, consolidated further through the exchange of high-level bilateral visits. Various visits from Nepal have also focused on learning from the South African model of transitional justice, best practices and good governance.

In an effort to further enhance the strong bilateral relations between the two countries, South Africa and Nepal have, on 10 March 2023, signed a Declaration of Intent on Co-operation, which provides for a structured bilateral mechanism at Senior Official level, through which bilateral relations would be advanced.

Maldives

The South African High Commissioner in Colombo, Sri Lanka, is accredited to the Maldives on a non-residential basis. While bilateral relations between South Africa and the Maldives are cordial, there is currently no bilateral mechanism in place to advance relations between the two countries.

South-East Asia

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) is the primary intergovernmental regional organisation in Southeast Asia, established in 1967 to promote economic and security cooperation among its ten member states: Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam. Timor-Leste is on track to become the organisation's 11th member. ASEAN's combined population exceeds 680 million people. In 2024, the region's collective gross domestic product reached approximately US$3.9 trillion, positioning ASEAN as the fifth-largest economy in the world. Its strategic location at the crossroads of major global trade routes, coupled with its role as a manufacturing and supply chain hub, underscores its growing geopolitical and economic significance.

In July 2023, South Africa was formally approved as the eighth Sectoral Dialogue Partner (SDP) of ASEAN, becoming the first African country to attain this status, following its application in February 2023. This milestone highlights ASEAN's recognition of South Africa as a key partner in promoting interregional cooperation. On 21 November 2024, Deputy Minister Moraka co-chaired the second ASEAN–South Africa Joint Sectoral Committee (ASA-JSCC) meeting alongside the ASEAN Secretary-General in Jakarta, Indonesia. The outcomes of this meeting have laid the groundwork for the implementation of projects under the Practical Cooperation Areas (PCA), as well as the strategic planning of future ASEAN–South Africa collaboration. ASEAN features strongly in South Africa's market diversification strategy.

Thailand

South Africa's bilateral relations with Thailand continue to grow, anchored by strong economic cooperation and expanding sectoral engagement. Thailand is South Africa's largest trading partner in the Southeast Asian region, with increasing investment in key sectors such as automotive manufacturing. Agricultural trade is also advancing, with South Africa regaining market access for apples in December 2024 after a 16-year hiatus, and exports of citrus and table grapes are expanding.

Malaysia

South Africa's bilateral relations with Malaysia, marked by traditional friendship and cordiality, have continued to progress, supported by an active commercial relationship that promotes two-way trade between the countries. Reflecting the deepening of these ties, President Cyril Ramaphosa has been invited to attend the ASEAN Summit in Malaysia in 2025. Additionally, South Africa has invited Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim to participate in the G20 Summit in his capacity as Chair of ASEAN.

Singapore

South Africa and Singapore enjoy warm and collaborative relations. Singapore is world-renowned as a centre of excellence, and it has been particularly supportive in assisting South Africa with skills development under the Singapore Cooperation Programme of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. More than 1 500 South African civil servants have participated in training courses in Singapore. A high point in our relations was the incoming State Visit of the

former Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong to South Africa in May 2023 and the Official Visit of Deputy President Paul Mashatile to Singapore in December 2023.

Indonesia

Formal diplomatic relations between South Africa and Indonesia were established in 1994. In 2008, South Africa and Indonesia signed the Joint Declaration on a Strategic Partnership for a Peaceful and Prosperous Future, elevating the long-standing relations between the two countries to a strategic level. A Joint Commission, Foreign Office Consultations (FOC) and a Joint Trade Committee (JTC) have been established. President of the Republic of Indonesia, H.E Prabowo Subianto, has formally invited President Cyril Ramaphosa to undertake a visit to Indonesia in 2025.

Vietnam

Ties between South Africa and Vietnam have evolved into a robust and multi-dimensional partnership, underpinned by growing cooperation across a wide range of sectors. Bilateral economic relations are coordinated through the Partnership Forum for Economic, Trade, Scientific, Technical, and Cultural Cooperation, which convenes biennially and is co-chaired at Deputy Minister level. Notably, progress has been made on key bilateral instruments, including an MoU on Combating Crime and an MoU on Cooperation in the Field of Minerals, both of which are expected to further deepen collaboration.

Philippines

South Africa and the Philippines established diplomatic relations on 1 November 1993, marking the beginning of a warm and cordial partnership. Bilateral relations have steadily progressed, supported by high-level interactions such as the 5th Bilateral Consultative Forum (BCF) held on 23 February 2023 in Pretoria, co-chaired at Deputy Minister level. This Structured Bilateral Mechanism aims to deepen cooperation across multiple sectors and enhance policy dialogue. The Philippines is scheduled to host the next BCF in Manila in 2025.

Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Laos and Timor-Leste

South Africa's relations with Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, the Laos and Timor-Leste are cordial.

Australasia and the Pacific Islands

Australia

South Africa and Australia enjoy cordial relations and interact biennially through the Senior Officials' Meeting (SOM). The last SOM was held in South Africa in March 2023. The next session of the SOM is due to be held in Australia. South Africa and Australia cooperate across a range of sectors and issues, including law enforcement, sport, tourism, education, defence relations, and science and technology.

Recent high-level meetings have signalled Australia's intention to strengthen ties with Africa. In July 2025, South Africa launched new passport application centres in Sydney and Melbourne to improve service turnaround times for applicants through the VFS Global services.

Australia is one of South Africa's largest trading partners, with both countries possessing large, export-orientated resource sectors alongside advanced agriculture, mining, and service industries. South Africa's major imports from Australia include chemicals, mineral products, and machinery. Conversely, South Africa's exports to Australia are dominated by high-quality passenger motor vehicles, aircraft, vessels, machinery, and iron and steel products.

New Zealand

South Africa and New Zealand enjoy cordial bilateral relations coordinated through a biennial Senior Officials' Meeting (SOM). The last SOM was held in South Africa in May 2022, with the next session scheduled to be held in New Zealand. Both countries share cooperation in business, tourism, agriculture, disarmament, fisheries, environmental protection, and issues related to indigenous people and human rights.

A significant feature of the South Africa-New Zealand relationship is its sporting ties in rugby, cricket, netball and, of late, soccer. Reflecting the close people-to-people relations, South Africa amended its visa requirements in 2019 to allow New Zealand citizens visa-free entry for up to 90 days for tourism and related purposes. In July 2025, South Africa launched the VFS Global Services for South African passport applications in Auckland, to reduce turnaround times for obtaining these documents.

The two countries work well within the multilateral arena, as evidenced by close co-operation within the UN and the Commonwealth. New Zealand remains a major commercial partner for South Africa in the Oceania region. Given the strength of these political relations, South Africa has invited New Zealand's Minister of Trade, Todd McClay to participate in the G20 Trade and Investment Working Group meeting in Gqeberha.

Relations with the Middle East

South Africa enjoys strong historical relations and ties of solidarity with countries of the Middle East, anchored by the strategic objective of strengthening South-South relations. South Africa has strengthened the bilateral relationships with countries from the Gulf region from a political as well as economic perspective. The Gulf region's strategic location and vast energy reserves are also critical for ensuring export hubs as well as global energy security. Within the political realm, South Africa's engagements to promote peace and security have been through diplomatic support for conflict resolution efforts in Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, and Yemen and contributing towards finding a sustainable resolution to the protracted Israel-Palestine conflict.

Deputy Minister Thandi Moraka undertook a visit to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Sultanate of Oman in May 2025, also engaging Chambers of Commerce and Special Economic Zone Authorities with the specific aim of deepening economic diplomacy as well as driving further inward investment.

Palestine

South Africa and Palestine have enjoyed warm relations since the inception of democracy. Official diplomatic relations between a democratic South Africa and Palestine

were established in 1995. Over the last two decades, bilateral relations have strengthened with the establishment of a JCC, while a Political Consultations Mechanism has further reinforced relations. The overall objectives of these platforms are to monitor and guide the conduct of bilateral relations.

South Africa remains concerned and condemns the continued illegal settlement expansion by Israel, which constitutes a contravention of international law, particularly the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949. South Africa believes that the only way to bring about lasting peace in the Middle East is to have a two-state solution for Palestine and Israel based on the international recognition and independence of the State of Palestine.

This would be based on the 4 June 1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital, functioning within recognised and secure borders and living side-by-side in peace with Israel and its other neighbours, as endorsed in the Quartet Roadmap, the Madrid Principles, the Arab Peace Initiative, and the relevant UNSC resolutions.

Syria

Since the start of the Syrian civil war in 2011, the two countries have continued to maintain diplomatic relations. South Africa affirmed its support for Syria's territorial integrity and reiterated its support for a political solution to the conflict in Syria. South Africa also declared its condemnation of all violence and human rights violations and remains concerned about the deteriorating humanitarian and security situation in Syria. South Africa has called on all parties involved to work for a comprehensive and peaceful resolution of the conflict, considering the legitimate aspirations of the people of Syria, through inclusive national dialogue and a Syrian-led political process.

South Africa remains committed to protecting the fundamental interests of the Syrian people, maintaining peace and stability in the Middle East region and upholding the purposes and principles of the Charter of the UN and basic norms governing international relations.

The MoU on Bilateral Consultations between the Republic of South Africa and the Syrian Arab Republic was concluded in 2023 on the margins of the Africa-Saudi Summit. The MoU recognises the importance of a formalised and constructive dialogue concerning bilateral relations between South Africa and Syria, as well as the fact that there are regional and international issues of common interest between the two countries.

Iraq

Bilateral relations are cordial and collaborative. The level of trade between the two countries has fluctuated. There are several bilateral agreements in various fields being negotiated, which will constitute an important framework for advancing bilateral relations. South Africa supports all international initiatives and the government of Iraq's efforts to restore stability and build inclusive and effective governance. The country reaffirmed its support for the mandate of the UN mission in Iraq. It also supports the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Iraq in line with the principles of the UN Charter.

Jordan

Jordan was the first Arab country to establish diplomatic relations with South Africa in 1993. The embassy of South Africa was established in Amman in December 1993, and the embassy of Jordan was opened in Pretoria in June 1994.

The two countries enjoy a warm and increasingly diverse relationship, underpinned by strengthening political ties. An MoU on Bilateral Political Consultations (BCP) was concluded in 2023, which recognises the importance of constructive dialogue as well as engaging on regional and international issues of common interest between the two countries. The MoU on Bilateral Political Consultations provides the two countries with an ideal mechanism for structured cooperation in existing opportunities and untapped potential; these straddle a wide spectrum of human endeavour, from political cooperation to socio-economic issues.

In addition to leveraging the MoU on BCP for political co-operation, focus will also be on the enhancement of economic ties, as well as in the areas of cultural interaction, tourism, education and people-to-people relations.

Lebanon

South Africa has no residential diplomatic presence in Lebanon, but the South African embassy in Syria is accredited to Lebanon. South Africa and Lebanon established diplomatic relations on 27 June 1994. To further enhance bilateral ties and to institutionalise regular and structural political engagements between the two countries, an MoU on Bilateral Consultations was signed on 23 August 2022. It is envisaged that the MoU will institutionalise a structured bilateral consultation mechanism between the two countries at Senior Officials' level.

At a political level, bilateral cooperation with Lebanon on regional peace and security challenges is important for South Africa to reach its strategic objectives in this region, pursuing significant trade, investment, tourism, and other opportunities.

United Arab Emirates

South Africa has strengthened its diplomatic and economic relations with the United Arab Emirates (UAE) in recent years, reflecting its position as South Africa's largest trading partner in the Middle East. The UAE is also a growing source of investment into the South African economy. Bilateral relations between the two countries are driven through a Ministerial Joint Commission, which reviews relations in the various fields of cooperation, including trade and investment, energy, agriculture, transport, and social development. The third Session of the Joint Commission between the Republic of South Africa and the UAE was held in Abu Dhabi on 13 June 2023. The mechanism also allows for the identification of new projects in a broad field of cooperation. The UAE also joined BRICS on 1 January 2024.

Iran

The primary mechanism for engagement with Iran is the Joint Commission for Cooperation (JCC), established in 1995, which allows for a high-level review of bilateral relations and considers areas to further strengthen relations. During the ministerial segment of the 15th session of the South Africa-Iran JCC held on 10 August 2023, the respective foreign ministers reflected on the level of bilateral relations between the countries and the progress made since the previous session to further strengthen bilateral sectoral cooperation.

The Commission is supported by an intersessional mechanism, the Deputy Ministerial Working Group, which further monitors the implementation of decisions and undertakings made during the JCC.

South Africa remains committed to diplomacy and the peaceful resolution of conflicts, as a matter of principle, and considers the JCPOA an important achievement in this regard. The JCPOA was unanimously endorsed by UNSC Resolution 2231, which provides a binding legal framework to the agreement.

Saudi Arabia

Diplomatic relations between South Africa and Saudi Arabia were formalised in May 1994. South Africa imports approximately 47% of its oil from Saudi Arabia. The various positive outcomes of the State Visit by President Ramaphosa from 15–16 October 2022 were further pursued. Deputy President Mashatile attended the inaugural Saudi-Africa Summit on 10 November 2023. On the margins of the summit, a meeting was also co-chaired by former Minister Naledi Pandor and the Saudi Minister for National Economy, Dr Majed Al Qasabi, and it was agreed that South Africa and Saudi Arabia will cooperate in areas such as renewable energy, finance, agriculture and in support of the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA).

To grow trade, investment and economic ties, including business-to-business cooperation between South Africa and Saudi Arabia, several business interactions have been arranged with Saudi Arabia. The country is a large investor in the energy sector in South Africa, with ACWA Power playing a major role in South Africa's energy mix through its solar plants in several parts of the country.

The Kingdom has increased its cooperation with South Africa in the agro-processing sector, and Saudi Arabia is now a vital partner and key market for our exports, including South African red meat in Saudi Arabia. South Africa remains committed to solidifying strong bilateral relations in all fields, in line with the aspirations of the leadership of the two countries. This includes increased interaction on regional and international developments.

Qatar

South Africa's political and economic relations with Qatar have diversified and grown significantly over recent years and have become more diverse. Qatar has traditionally enjoyed a healthy trade surplus owing to the high proportion of oil and petrochemical trade with South Africa. SASOL has invested in and is a 49% shareholder with Qatar Energy (51%) in the US$1 billion ORYX GTL joint venture, which is its flagship project abroad. In Qatar, ORYX GTL, the world's first commercial-scale gas-to-liquids plant, uses SASOL's proprietary GTL technology to convert natural gas into liquid fuel and chemical products. Qatar's significant investments in South Africa focus on the financial and business services and chemicals sectors (sales, marketing and support projects).

At the invitation of the Amir of Qatar, His Highness Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, President Ramaphosa undertook a State Visit to the State of Qatar in Doha from 14 to 15 November 2023 accompanied by the Ministers of International Relations and Cooperation; Agriculture, Rural Development and Land Reform; Trade, Industry and Competition; Defence and Military Veterans and Basic Education. Three bilateral MoUs were signed during the visit, covering areas such as the establishment of a Mechanism for Bilateral Consultations, which would upgrade the current Senior Officials' bilateral consultations level to a ministerial level, cooperation on basic education, and cooperation on the empowerment of women and persons with disabilities.

Kuwait

Kuwait remains an important partner for South Africa in the Middle East, particularly in terms of economic relations. Kuwait has become an increasingly important market for South African exports of live animals, processed food products, machinery, and products of the chemical and allied industries. Kuwaiti companies have made substantial investments in the construction and development of hotels and real estate in South Africa and have invested on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange. Kuwait has a diverse investment portfolio in South Africa, which includes, among others, investments in blue-chip companies, real estate and resorts, an airfreight wholesaler, an auto parts import company and companies organising livestock imports from South Africa, such as Al-Mawashi.

Oman

Diplomatic relations were established in 1995 and are managed through the South Africa-Oman Bilateral Partnership Forum. Oman has a resident embassy in Pretoria. Due to austerity measures implemented post-COVID-19, the South African embassy in Muscat was closed in April 2022, and the South African embassy in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, is now accredited to Oman. Oman is also South Africa's second-largest trading partner in the Middle East, preceded only by the UAE. Oman is also of strategic importance for South Africa's energy security, as almost 20% of all diesel imports in 2023 were sourced from Oman. Both countries are keen to attract further investment in diverse areas. Significant potential exists for enhanced cooperation in various fields such as agro-processing to enhance, notably, livestock and frozen meat exports, construction, education, training, defence, energy, science and innovation, etc.

Yemen

Relations between South Africa and Yemen are cordial. Both countries are members of the UN, the IORA and the NAM. The continued civil war in Yemen has hindered the development and strengthening of bilateral relations.

South Africa continues to support the ongoing efforts by the UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Yemen, Hans Grundberg, towards a peace process in Yemen.

Bahrain

Relations with Bahrain were formalised in November 1993. Trade relations between South Africa and Bahrain have been steadily expanding, with promising prospects for further growth.

To further capitalise on relations, South Africa appointed an Honorary Consul in Manama to assist the accredited embassy in Riyadh, serving as a contact point for South African business interests, promoting trade, investment and

tourism.

North America

Canada

Canada and South Africa share cordial and historic relations based on shared values such as respect for democracy, human rights, multilateralism and diversity. Historic relations are based on Canada's opposition to apartheid in South Africa and contribution to the development of the Constitution. In multilateral forums, Canada and South Africa collaborate on such issues as the promotion of ethical governance, gender empowerment, sustainable development and climate change.

The Annual Consultations, at Senior Official level, are a structured mechanism that provides a platform for foreign policy discussions and sectoral cooperation on various areas, including trade and investment, development cooperation, science and innovation, clean technology, environmental affairs, mining and the cultural industries. About two-thirds of South African exports to Canada relate to minerals and mining equipment, with agricultural and chemical products making up the rest.

Canadian investments in South Africa are also largely concentrated in the mining and minerals sector, with more than 50% of total investment in this sector. The other 50% is fairly diversified across a number of sectors, including transportation, food processing, hospitality, ICT and instrumentation sectors. There are ongoing efforts to further diversify trade and investment relations, including through Canadian investments in the energy sector in support of South Africa's green transition.

In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, cooperation in the health and science and innovation sectors has been strengthened through the signing of an MoU on Health, which will allow the two countries to intensify cooperation in specialised fields, taking advantage of their respective strengths and world-class expertise. Canada has officially joined the Square Kilometre Array Observatory (SKAO), and Canadian technologies are key components of the MeerKAT telescope. On the environmental front, the Working on Fire (WoF) initiative allows for the deployment of South African firefighters to Canada to combat wildland fires and has been hugely impactful, with scope for further expansion.

Canada's Strategy for Africa: A Partnership for Shared Prosperity and Security, launched on 6 March 2025, signals new opportunities for enhanced collaboration, whilst building on continued support for the African Union (AU), African Development Bank and the implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA) and capacitating its Secretariat. Canada supported the AU's full membership in the G20 and worked with South Africa in identifying areas of convergence for a common agenda during their respective 2025 presidencies. South Africa and Canada have been having direct engagement on the alignment of their respective G20 and G7 presidencies for the betterment of humanity and the deepening of their bilateral relations. Canada is supportive of the AU's full membership in the World Trade Organisation (WTO) in the future.

United States of America

Formal diplomatic relations between the United States of America (US) and the Republic of South Africa were established in 1799 with the opening of a US Consulate in Cape Town. Following South Africa's democratic transition in 1994, both nations share foundational constitutional values, notably a commitment to human rights, democratic governance, and an independent judiciary. This period witnessed a series of high-level state visits designed to solidify the bilateral relationship and foster personal rapport between successive leaders: President Nelson Mandela visited the US in October 1994; President William J. Clinton reciprocated in South Africa during March 1998; President Thabo Mbeki undertook an official visit to the US in May 2000; President George W. Bush visited South Africa in July 2003; President Barack H. Obama travelled to South Africa in June 2013; and President Cyril Ramaphosa conducted Working Visits to the US from 15 to 17 September 2022 and 19 to 22 May 2025. Engagement has been further sustained through regular visits by senior US administration officials and multiple congressional delegations.

Despite persistent divergence on geopolitical issues, bilateral cooperation with the US remains robust, broad and historic, covering a wide spectrum of sectoral cooperation aligned to the National Development Plan (NDP) and Medium-Term Strategic Framework (MTSF) priorities. South Africa and the US also share strong people-to-people ties through the African diaspora and bonds of solidarity that were fostered during the confluence of the Civil Rights and anti-apartheid movements.

Bilateral relations are at the strategic level, and the US remains a key partner for South Africa in pursuing domestic priorities and in supporting the African Agenda (economic integration, peace, security and post-conflict reconstruction). The relations are primarily conducted through three structured bilateral mechanisms (SBMs), which are the Strategic Dialogue at Ministerial Level; the Working Group on African and Global Issues (WGAGI) at Director-General Level; and the Annual Bilateral Forum between DIRCO and the US Embassy at the level of Deputy Director-General. Both countries are committed to building on issues of common interest and to maintaining a constructive dialogue on areas of divergence while deepening common understanding of convergences, with a view to strengthening the bilateral strategic partnership for mutual benefit.

On the economic and trade fronts, the US is the second-largest trade partner of South Africa by country. Furthermore, the US was the second-largest destination of exports, accounting for 7.5% of total South African exports globally. The top South African exports to the US account for 84% of total exports to that destination, and this include Platinum Group Metals (PGMs); automotive; aluminium; iron and steel: ores, sag and ash; nuclear reactors, boilers, machinery and mechanical appliances; edible fruit and nuts; organic chemicals; electrical machinery and equipment; and inorganic chemicals. South Africa's exports to the US are under three programmes, which are the most favoured nation (MFN) scheme of the WTO; the Africa Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA); and the Generalised System of Preferences (GSP). The share of exports under these programmes was as follows in 2024: MFN (72%), AGOA (26%), and GSP (2%).

On the investment front, both countries have witnessed

relatively high figures of two-way investments, with South Africa being home to over 600 direct US enterprises and the US having attracted over 20 South African companies, making South Africa the biggest African investor in the US.

Regional organisations

European Union

South Africa has made significant strides in advancing its strategic partnership with the European Union (EU) in pursuance of its foreign policy objective of strengthening North-South relations. Milestones in this strategic partnership include several high-level engagements in the past year, including the 16th Joint Cooperation Council (JCC) held on 15 January 2025 in Brussels; the 28th Inter-Parliamentary Meeting (IPM) held 18 to 19 February 2025 in Cape Town; and the 16th Ministerial Political Dialogue (MPD) held on 19 February 2025 in Cape Town, which culminated in the convening of the 8th South Africa-EU Summit in Cape Town on 13 March 2025.

These high-level meetings reaffirmed the importance of the partnership for both sides, based on shared values and common interests. South Africa was able to secure the continued commitment of the EU to support national priorities such as education, health, science, technology and innovation, energy, and trade and investment. In particular, we agreed on pathways to intensify our cooperation on the clean energy transition, pandemic preparedness and response, vaccine production, and digital and infrastructure connectivity. Importantly, the EU agreed to support the beneficiation of critical raw materials at source, as well as a commitment to contribute to the just element of the energy transition to cushion the impact on vulnerable communities and to create jobs and skills. The opportunity was also used to elevate cooperation on strategic matters such as peace, security and defence, including shared commitments to peaceful resolution of conflicts in the region and the world.

Amid growing global geopolitical tensions and economic realignments, South Africa has leveraged its principled, non-aligned stance to assert itself as a credible partner to the EU. This was especially evident during the 8th South Africa-EU Summit, where alignment on global governance reform and multilateral trade cooperation was reinforced by President Ramaphosa and his EU counterparts. The EU's endorsement of South Africa's G20 presidency and its support for WTO reform demonstrate a shared vision for a more equitable international trading system. Notably, the EU's Global Gateway Investment Package of €4.7 billion for South Africa marks a pivotal opportunity to accelerate our transition to a low-carbon economy, while also bolstering health systems and digital infrastructure. Importantly, it also includes a "just" component to support jobs, skills and capacity building to help cushion the impact on vulnerable communities.

South Africa remains the EU's key trade partner on the African continent, and the EU as a bloc is South Africa's largest trading partner. Total trade between South Africa and the EU grew by 56%, rising from approximately R512 billion in 2016, when the EPA came into force, to R797.7 billion in 2024 (the dtic).

Key Outcomes of the 8th South Africa-EU Summit

- The parties agreed to launch negotiations towards a Clean Trade and Investment Partnership (CTIP) to support the development of strategic and cleaner value chains for raw materials, including for local beneficiation, renewable and low-carbon energy (including safe and sustainable low-carbon hydrogen) and clean technology by improving the conditions for mutually beneficial investment. This will help to facilitate the leverage of public and private financing towards developing cleaner supply chains in South Africa. The CTIP with South Africa will be the first of its kind on the continent and is expected to boost the competitiveness of both sides.
- In recognition of the need to harness critical minerals for inclusive growth and sustainable development and support the development of a framework towards clean industrialisation and investments, South Africa and the EU agreed to launch negotiations with the view to establish an MoU on Sustainable Minerals Value Chains. Both sides support an agreement that promotes value addition and beneficiation of critical minerals at – or close to – the source of extraction.
- To bolster existing energy cooperation in support of a just energy transition in South Africa, the EU, and globally, it was agreed to establish a regular Bilateral Energy Dialogue that will cover energy access, low-carbon energy technologies and also complement our already rich engagement in multilateral fora. It was further agreed to support the development of strategic low-carbon value chains, which can support decarbonisation and industrial development.

In the current volatile geopolitical environment, South Africa and the EU committed to strengthening their strategic partnership based on mutually beneficial outcomes and shared values such as democracy, human rights, respect, support for inclusive multilateralism and the fundamental principles of the UN, as well as to defending and reforming institutions of global governance.

Western Europe

Austria

South Africa-Austria relations are on a new trajectory after the first-ever State Visit to South Africa by President Alexander van der Bellen of Austria took place during the first week of July 2025. The main outcomes of the State Visit are closer trade and investment relations and the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in the field of Technical Vocational Training through Work-Based Learning and a Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation on Consular Affairs.

The South Africa-Austria Bilateral Consultations, chaired at the level of Deputy Minister, is the primary formal mechanism for the coordination of relations between the two countries, which is focused on the fields of arts and culture, higher education, renewable energy, trade and investment, and waste management. Austria hosted the fourth Meeting of the Bilateral Consultations on 5 May 2025 in Vienna, during which it was agreed that the fifth Bilateral Consultations Meeting will be hosted by South Africa in the 2025/26 financial year.

Bilateral trade is gradually recovering to pre-COVID-19 pandemic levels. South Africa's total trade with Austria reached R16 billion in 2024, a marginal increase on the previous year. Austria maintains a healthy trade surplus

with South Africa, and its biggest exports are automotive components and machinery, while South Africa's major exports to Austria are machinery and iron and steel products.

South Africa is Austria's top economic partner in Africa, receiving a third of Austrian exports to the continent. There are more than seventy Austrian companies with subsidiaries or agencies in South Africa. These enterprises are active across various sectors, including energy, water management, manufacturing, and infrastructure. According to the South African Reserve Bank, Austria's direct investment in South Africa in 2023 totalled R17.7 billion, most of which was in equities and investment funds. These investments have made an invaluable contribution to job creation and skills and technology transfer in South Africa.

The latest tourism statistics show the impact of COVID-19 on the flow of tourists. In 2019, South Africa received 30 376 Austrian tourists, this number declined to only 3 914 in 2021. The number of Austrian tourists to South Africa has since recovered to 21 313 in 2024, still below the pre-pandemic level.

Belgium

South Africa and Belgium enjoy substantive and diverse relations, which were reinforced by the State Visit of King Philip of Belgium in March 2023. High-level structured engagements between South Africa and Belgium take place through a Joint Commission (JC) at Deputy Ministerial level. Five meetings of the JC have taken place, the last of which was hosted in Brussels on 18 December 2024. The meeting celebrated progress since 2022 and highlighted collaboration in vaccine production –particularly the mRNA Tech Transfer Hub in Cape Town – and in science, research, and education through initiatives like VLIR-UOS scholarships. Both sides emphasised the value of Belgian expertise in innovation, offering South Africa new opportunities in recycling, raw materials, and skills development.

In addition, South Africa has very strong relations with the Flanders region of Belgium, which has a regional representation in South Africa. South Africa and Flanders also manage their relationship through a JC, but at Deputy Director-General level. The main areas of cooperation with Flanders are arts and culture; human rights; higher education, science and innovation; trade and investment; as well as youth. The 8th South Africa-Flanders Joint Committee meeting, held on 19 December 2024 in Brussels, underscored the continued deepening of bilateral relations through strategic dialogue and practical cooperation across multiple sectors.

Economic engagement continues to grow, with Belgium emerging as a key trade and investment partner. With over $13 billion invested in South Africa by 2023, Belgium is a major contributor to sectors such as mining, pharmaceuticals, agrifood, and green technology. Trade flows remain strong and balanced in South Africa's favour, while new avenues are opening in renewable energy, hydrogen innovation, and circular economy practices. The Port of Antwerp-Bruges functions as a gateway for South African goods into Europe, and Belgian interest in South Africa's green economy strategy, especially under the Hydrogen Society Roadmap, reflects long-term complementarity.

South Africa's bilateral trade decreased slightly from R91 billion in June 2023 to R83.79 billion in May 2024. Belgium is also one of the top 10 investors in South Africa, with over 180 Belgian companies in South Africa in areas such as mining, green energy, ports, logistics and agriculture.

COVID had a significant impact on Belgian tourist arrivals in South Africa. In 2019, the last "normal" year for tourism before the pandemic, South Africa received 54 233 Belgian tourists, but this number declined by 83% to only 9 106 in 2021. The number of tourists has since recovered from 34 826 in 2022 to 47 733 at the end of June 2024.

Germany

Germany is one of South Africa's most important strategic partners. It is the second-largest market for South African exports, the third-largest source of overseas tourists, and a major investor, with about 600 German companies in South Africa, mainly in the auto industry, telecommunications, pharmaceuticals, and machinery and mining industries.

Bilateral relations between the two countries are managed through a Bi-National Commission (BNC), which is chaired at the level of foreign ministers. The 11th Meeting of the BNC was held in Pretoria on 27 June 2023, and the 12th BNC is scheduled to take place in Berlin in 2025. South Africa and Germany have concluded 72 bilateral agreements, which provide a legal framework for cooperation in several areas.

Germany also has an extensive development programme in South Africa, covering areas such as vaccine production, developing infrastructure for renewable energy, vocational education and training aligned strongly with the needs of the energy transition, upskilling women to make them fit for jobs in digital technologies, and upgrading urban spaces in South African townships that are particularly affected by violence.

Germany is among the largest contributors to climate resilience programmes in South Africa. It is an original member of the International Partners' Group of the Just Energy Transition Partnership (JETP). Focus areas for the ongoing German-South African Energy Partnership, which was established in 2013, include just energy transition, energy storage, green hydrogen, digitalisation and energy efficiency.

South Africa is Germany's largest trade partner in Africa. Trade between the two countries has grown from €3.5 bn in 1990, the first year on record, to €29.6 bn in 2024. South Africa's major exports to Germany in 2024 were vehicles, aircraft and vessels. South Africa's major import during this period was equipment components.

The latest tourism figures from Statistics South Africa show that the number of German tourists to South Africa amounted to 254 992 for the period 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024.

Luxembourg

South Africa and Luxembourg enjoy cordial bilateral relations, with a number of South Africa's largest companies having subsidiaries or European headquarters registered in Luxembourg. The largest of these is MINORCO (a company owned by Anglo American, De Beers and the Oppenheimer family).

Since 1994, South Africa and Luxembourg have signed seven bilateral agreements, ranging from economic to development cooperation in the areas of health and agriculture. Luxembourg's significance for South Africa

lies mainly in the country being an important centre of the international financial community.

According to SARS South Africa's imports from Luxembourg amounted to R746,79 million and South Africa's exports to Luxembourg to R578,95 million.

The Netherlands

The Netherlands is South Africa's sixth-largest trading partner, a major investor and development partner and the fourth-largest source of overseas tourists. Much of the focus of the bilateral relationship is on green hydrogen and just energy transition. The Netherlands is now a full member of the International Partner Group of the JETP.

Relations between South Africa and the Netherlands are managed through a Joint Commission for Cooperation (JCC), which meets biennially at Ministerial level. Four meetings of the JC have taken place since the inaugural meeting in Pretoria on 3 February 2020. The Fourth Meeting of the South Africa-Netherlands Joint Commission for Cooperation was hosted by Dutch Foreign Minister Caspar Veldkamp in The Hague on 19 May 2025.

The latest trade figures show that total trade had increased from R70 billion in 2020 to R100 billion in 2024. However, trade declined from 2020 due to a decrease in coal exports, which reached R26 billion in 2022 but only R4 billion in 2024. In 2024 South Africa's exports to the Netherlands were fruit and iron ore, while South Africa's major imports from the Netherlands were petroleum oils and machinery.

More than 350 Dutch companies are operating in South Africa, making an invaluable contribution to job creation and skills development in South Africa.

In 2019, the last "normal" year for tourism before the COVID-19 pandemic, South Africa received 144,071 Dutch tourists, but this number declined by 85% to only 21 755 in 2021. The number of tourists has since recovered to 132 422 in 2024.

South Africa and the Kingdom of the Netherlands also have an excellent and longstanding partnership in the management of water resources, which was reaffirmed by the signing of the renewed Memorandum of Understanding on 22 March 2023.

Switzerland

South Africa's bilateral relations with Switzerland remain strong, covering areas such as trade and investment, science and innovation, higher education (in particular vocational training), arts and culture and human rights. In recent years, the political dialogue has expanded as a result of Switzerland's mediation role in Mozambique and elsewhere on the African continent.

The annual bilateral High-Level Consultations (HLC) and regular high-level visits reflect strong and growing political ties. The HCLs are chaired by the deputy foreign ministers of the two countries. The 11th Meeting of the HLC was held in Bern, Switzerland, on 25 November 2024, with the 12th HLC scheduled to take place in South Africa towards the end of 2025.

Switzerland maintains a development programme in South Africa, which has transitioned from development assistance to economic development. The programme is implemented in consultation with National Treasury. The Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO) manages programmes that support capable entrepreneurs, foster access to sustainable value chains, and improve resource efficiency, which all support the South African government's efforts to rejuvenate the economy.

Swiss non-government organisations (NGOs) and foundations have always been involved in social development projects in South Africa. The International Committee of the Red Cross, hosted in Switzerland has, for example, played an important part in South Africa's history. During the time of apartheid, the Red Cross was an important channel of communication between political prisoners on Robben Island and their families.

Total trade between South Africa and Switzerland declined marginally from R20.8 billion in 2023 to R19.8 billion over the 12 months to the end of July 2024. South Africa's main exports to Switzerland were aluminium and coal, precious metals (especially gold), agricultural products, and wine, while the main imports were machinery and pharmaceutical products.

Switzerland is amongst the 10 largest direct foreign investors in South Africa, with an estimated 100 companies, subsidiaries, or production plants sustaining approximately 50 000 jobs. Swiss investments in South Africa are mainly in sectors such as pharmaceuticals, finance, and manufacturing. Swiss companies in South Africa include Adeco, Carghill, Clariant, Credit Suisse, Franke Geberit, Glencore Xstrata, Mercuri Energy, Nestle, Novartis, Roche, and Schindler Lifts.

Tourism flows are recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2019, the last "normal" year for tourism before the pandemic, South Africa received 55 432 Swiss tourists. The number declined to only 11 375 in 2021 but recovered to 42 721 over the twelve months to the end of July 2024.

Switzerland officially joined the Square Kilometre Array Observatory as a full member on 19 January 2022, which is an addition to the significant science, technology and education programmes between the two countries. Science and innovation remain top priorities in South Africa's bilateral cooperation with Switzerland. In this regard it is worth mentioning that Switzerland has for the past 10 years occupied the top of the Global Innovation Index of most innovative countries in the world.

United Kingdom

Bilateral relations between South Africa and the United Kingdom (UK) are broad, deep and strategically significant, encompassing cooperation in health, education, science and technology, energy, the environment, defence, police, arts and culture, and sport. The relationship is anchored by the biennial South Africa-UK Bilateral Forum at Foreign Ministerial Level, most recently held in Cape Town from 4 to 5 November 2024, where Foreign Minister Ronald Lamola and Foreign Secretary David Lammy agreed to strengthen ties in trade, agriculture, defence, and the just energy transition. The two nations share strong institutional and diplomatic ties as members of the Commonwealth, G20, WTO and other multilateral fora.

The UK is one of South Africa's most important trading partners, with bilateral trade valued at approximately $6.93 billion in 2024. Trade between the UK and South Africa is regulated by the Southern African Customs Union (SACU), Mozambique and UK Economic Partnership Agreement

(SACU+M – UK EPA). In 2024, the UK was South Africa's eighth-largest trading partner in the world and second-largest in Europe.

The UK is a leading source of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in South Africa. A total of 386 UK companies have invested in 505 FDI projects in South Africa and created 51,023 jobs with a capital investment recorded at $22.62 billion. The UK has invested in sectors such as business services, financial services, software and IT services, communications, industrial equipment, metals, coal, oil and gas, transportation & warehousing, food and beverages, hotels and tourism.

Ireland

Relations between Ireland and South Africa are historic, cordial, and marked by shared values and experiences, particularly in the fight against apartheid and the pursuit of peace in Northern Ireland.

Political and economic relations between the two countries encompass a broad spectrum of cooperation, such as trade and investment, education, science and innovation and gender equality. Ireland's developmental programmes have greatly assisted many initiatives in South Africa since 1994, and the partnership continues to this day. The third South Africa-Ireland Joint Commission for Cooperation was successfully held in Dublin on 18 September 2024 and represents the commitment of both countries to further bilateral cooperation in trade, investment and business; education and skills development; science and innovation; women empowerment; and gender equality, amongst others. South Africa and Ireland often cooperate at the multilateral level where they share a common commitment to multilateralism, the international rule of law, and the promotion and protection of human rights.

Since 2013, Ireland has been offering scholarships to South Africans to study a one- year master's programme under the Kader Asmal Fellowship Programme (KAFP) annually. The programme targets and supports women in STEM and prioritises early career professionals and graduates from Historically Disadvantaged Institutions (HDI) and Universities of Technology. Approximately 107 South Africans had benefited from the programme. There is also strong cooperation in the field of science and technology between the two countries, which is centred around two main initiatives: the Irish Tech Challenge South Africa and the Digiskills Africa programme. The Digiskills Africa initiative ensures support for graduates currently undertaking or who have completed their master's degrees by providing short courses in digital transformation, which is an in-demand skill in the pharmaceuticals, engineering, and manufacturing sectors. The Irish Tech Challenge is rooted in promoting innovation, fostering technology development, and ensuring effective technology deployment within South Africa. It also aims to empower diversity with a special emphasis on encouraging applications from women, young entrepreneurs, and start-ups aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including climate-focused start-ups. The aim is to provide South African start-ups with global expansion support.

Bilateral trade between South Africa and Ireland increased by 12,5% to US$638 million in 2024. A total of 31 Irish companies have invested in 47 FDI projects in South Africa. These projects represent US$2.81 billion of capital investment and created 1 479 jobs. Irish companies have invested in sectors such as renewable energy, software and IT services, business services, aerospace, communications, financial services, food & beverages, automotive components, coal, oil and gas, consumer electronics and others.

France

France is a significant technological, trade, investment, tourism and development cooperation partner for South Africa. Bilateral technical cooperation between South Africa and France exists in various sectors, including energy, agriculture, manufacturing, transport, education and science and technology. About 250 French companies have invested in South Africa and employ around 300 000 people. On 16 May 2025, the Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Ronald Lamola, met with his French counterpart, Jean-Noel Barrot, in Paris for the ninth Session of the South Africa-France Forum for Political Dialogue (FPD). The two ministers engaged on a number of areas for bilateral cooperation of mutual interest and concern. Minister Lamola and his French counterpart also discussed pertinent regional issues on the African continent, and on the global scale, the Russia-Ukraine conflict and current political situation in the Middle East were discussed. The ministers agreed to speed up the finalisation of the elevation of the FPD to a Joint Ministerial Commission.

On 21-23 May 2025, Deputy President, H.E Paul Mashatile undertook a Working Visit to France on the occasion of the Investment Conference. The event sought to enhance economic and people-to-people relations between the two countries and brought together public and private sector leaders. The delegation comprised leaders of State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs). Also accompanying the Deputy President were a number of ministers and deputy ministers. The conference served as a platform for presenting investment prospects within South Africa, particularly in critical sectors such as energy, infrastructure, and manufacturing.

Greece

South Africa and Greece enjoy traditional ties of friendship and cooperation as well as a convergence of views and cooperation on various regional and international issues in general. South Africa-Greece relations are underpinned by the presence of a substantial and influential Greek professional and business community. The South African Embassy in Athens is actively engaged with the Greek Foreign Ministry and other key ministries to enhance bilateral relations between the two countries, particularly in the maritime and education sectors.

Cyprus

South Africa has long-standing bilateral relations with Cyprus. It has maintained strong ties with the country, partly because of a substantial and influential Cypriot community in South Africa. The two countries collaborate mainly in the field of education. Currently, there are about 47 South African students enrolled at the University of Nicosia, with the majority pursuing medicine and business administration.

Italy

South Africa and Italy's bilateral relationship has evolved over time, with both countries engaging in diplomatic, economic and cultural cooperation. South Africa is host to more than 30 000 Italian citizens.

Both countries have signed several agreements in various areas of cooperation in fields such as science and technology, culture, defence and police. The 2nd Bilateral Consultations meeting was co-chaired by the Deputy Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Alvin Botes, and the Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Edmondo Cirielli, on 21 November 2024 in Rome, Italy. The countries are in the process of exploring further areas of cooperation in sectors such as energy and environment, agriculture, health, education, water resource management and small business development.

In 2024, Italy was South Africa's 16th-largest trading partner in the world and fourth-largest in the EU. According to FDI Markets, between January 2003 and June 2024, 43 Italian companies invested in 70 FDI investment projects in South Africa, with the capital investment recorded as $5.11 billion.

Spain

South Africa's bilateral relationship with Spain is managed through the Bilateral Consultations, which meets annually at Deputy Minister level. The 15th South Africa-Spain Bilateral Consultations was held in Pretoria on 23 April 2024. Spain was represented by the State Secretary for Foreign and Global Affairs, Diego Martínez Belío. The discussions focused on various areas of mutual interest, including bilateral trade and investment, climate change and renewable energy, sport, culture, education and language training, as well as science and innovation.

In 2024, Spain was South Africa's 21st-largest trading partner in the world and fifth- largest trading partner in the EU. According to FDI Markets, from January 2003 until August 2025, seven South African companies invested in 13 FDI projects across Spain. These projects represented $326.60 million of capital investment in Spain. During the same period, 43 Spanish companies invested in 60 FDI projects across South Africa. These projects represented $2.46 billion of capital investment in South Africa. Spanish companies invested in sectors such as renewable energy, textiles, financial services, software and IT services, and consumer products, among other sectors.

Portugal

South Africa and Portugal maintain friendly political relations, and the two countries have strong historical and cultural ties. There are approximately 500 000 South Africans of Portuguese descent and about 200 000 Portuguese nationals who reside in South Africa permanently, serving as an important economic link between South Africa and Portugal.

The South Africa-Portugal Bilateral Consultations facilitate cooperation in the fields of agriculture, defence, education, energy, science and technology, tourism as well as trade and investment. The relations between the two countries were further advanced by a series of high-level engagements, which took place between 2022 and 2025. These meetings were at the level of President, Minister, and Deputy Minister.

The eighth meeting of the South Africa-Portugal Bilateral Consultations took place on 27 March 2025 in Pretoria and was co-chaired by Deputy Minister Alvin Botes and the Portuguese Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, Prof. Nuno Sampaio. The Bilateral Consultations focused on strengthening bilateral political trade and cultural relations, science and innovation and language training.

Investment has been growing, with 26 Portuguese companies having invested in South Africa over 30 years, creating many employment opportunities as well as providing local supply content as well. Between January 2003 and August 2025, 8 Portuguese companies invested in 16 FDI projects across South Africa with approximately $341 million in capital investment. The main activities are business services, sales, marketing and support, retail, logistics, distribution and transportation, and manufacturing.

Holy See

South Africa's relations with the Holy See were formally established in March 1994 by an agreement signed between former President Nelson Mandela and Pope John Paul II. The Holy See actively participates in events that promote sustainable economic growth, reduce poverty, create jobs, encourage inter-religious dialogue and mediate conflict.

Central, Eastern Europe, Nordic and Baltic countries

Nordic countries

South Africa enjoys good relations with all the Nordic and Baltic countries, flowing from the strong grassroots support of these countries for democratisation in South Africa. Relations have been established in various fields at both public and official levels. The scope of Nordic development cooperation is broad and has benefitted civil society and government. Although Nordic countries stopped providing development assistance to South Africa in 2009, these countries continue to provide technical support and also partner with South Africa and civil society in addressing development needs in various fields. There is also close cooperation on multilateral issues informed by mutually shared values and human rights.

The Nordic countries are strong supporters of the AUDA-NEPAD and are directly involved in conflict resolution and reconstruction projects in Africa. This was reinforced by the signing of the Declaration of Intent on Partnerships in Africa in 2008, which laid a framework for future trilateral cooperation.

Denmark

Bilateral relations between South Africa and Denmark are predicated on the historic Danish support and solidarity with the liberation struggle against apartheid in the early 1960s, leading to the eventual establishment of formal diplomatic relations at the advent of South Africa's democracy. Denmark is also an important partner with regard to overseas development cooperation. South Africa's relations with Denmark are coordinated through the South Africa-Denmark Senior Officials Consultations and the main areas of cooperation include water resource management, science and technology, and maritime and environmental affairs. South Africa's relations with Denmark are coordinated

through a strategic partnership agreement. In signing the strategic partnership agreement, both countries confirm their mutual commitment to a strategic partnership aimed at advancing political cooperation, expanding economic relations and promoting trade and investment, among others.

Estonia

South Africa formally recognised the independence of Estonia and the other Baltic States on 28 August 1991. Bilateral relations between the two countries have been developing gradually since the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1991. In 2023, the Government of Estonia appointed a non-resident ambassador to South Africa based in the capital, Tallinn, Estonia. The South African Embassy in Stockholm, Kingdom of Sweden, is accredited to Estonia. The first Senior Officials Consultation between South Africa and Estonia took place in April 2024 at the level of Deputy Director-General and focused on strengthening bilateral political and economic cooperation, specifically in the areas of digitisation and cyber security.

Finland

Diplomatic relations between South Africa and Finland were re-established in 1994. The bilateral relationship was given more definite structure with the signing of the Declaration of Intent at the Skagen Nordic Summit in 2000. Regular Bilateral Consultations are coordinated at Senior Official Level. The main areas of cooperation include trade and investment, science and technology, innovation, education (marine studies), ICT, and energy. The Blue Economy and Circular Economy are central to both countries and are also emphasised as areas with potential for future partnerships.

South Africa and Finland signed a Letter of Intent (LOI) on 25 April 2023 to support more inclusive and participatory peace mediation approaches that are gender and youth responsive and to enhance the role of peace mediation in multilateral fora. In accordance with the objectives of this Letter of Intent, the two countries will co-operate on aspects of mutual interest related to peace mediation, including but not limited to the following areas:

- cooperation in thematic priority areas such as youth, peace, and security; and
- explore opportunities for enhanced cooperation in peace mediation initiatives.

To give practical application of the intent, South Africa and Finland is hosting a Young Peace Mediators' Mentoring Programme, launched on 6 June 2025.

Finland is also a strong international partner in areas of global concern such as strengthening multilateralism, international law, peacebuilding and mediation, the advancement of gender and human rights, as well as on issues of climate change.

Iceland

Diplomatic relations were established in 1995 on a non-residential basis. Iceland is accredited to South Africa from its Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Reykjavík, and South Africa is accredited to Iceland from its Embassy in Oslo, Norway. Iceland forms part of the Nordic coalition of like-minded states concerning their policies towards South Africa, Africa, and international issues, and they play an important role in keeping Africa on the global agenda.

Latvia

South Africa was among the first countries to recognise the independence of Latvia, following the restoration of the independence of the country on 29 August 1991. South Africa established full diplomatic relations with Latvia on 4 November 1991. The two countries have since enjoyed warm and cordial relations, but due to a lack of vigorous economic interaction and a well-defined bilateral cooperation framework, relations between the two countries have failed to reach their full potential.

Latvia does not have an embassy in South Africa, but the country has a non-resident ambassador accredited to South Africa stationed in Riga, the capital of Latvia. South Africa has non-resident accreditation through the Ambassador in Sweden.

Lithuania

South Africa and Lithuania entered into diplomatic relations in 2008, and the first Lithuanian Ambassador to South Africa was appointed in 2015. The South African Embassy in Sweden is accredited to Lithuania. Relations between South Africa and Lithuania are coordinated at Senior Official Level. The main areas of cooperation between South Africa and Lithuania include trade and investment, energy, transport, science and technology, academics, and cultural cooperation.

Norway

Full diplomatic relations between South Africa and Norway were established in January 1992. Both countries cooperate and support each other in bilateral and multilateral relations. South Africa's relations with Norway are coordinated through the South Africa-Norway High-Level Consultations – a mechanism within the framework of the 1996 Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Bilateral Political Consultations, established to deepen relations and expand trade and investment.

Bilateral cooperation has grown to include regional and international issues of mutual interest. South Africa and Norway have worked together on the UNSC in promoting the Women, Peace and Security Agenda, and peace and mediation on the African continent. Norway also supports the NDP priorities through technical cooperation in the areas of oceans management, cooperation in trade and investment, renewable energy, climate change, materials efficiency, waste management and recycling, shipbuilding (boat building), agro-processing and minerals.

Sweden

Relations between Sweden and South Africa date back to the 1930s, when a South African legation was opened in Stockholm. Relations were upgraded to ambassadorial level in 1994. Bilateral relations between South Africa and Sweden were further cemented by the South Africa-Sweden Partnership Year in 1999. Since then, a number of events have taken place, reinforcing and deepening the already close bilateral relations. In recognition of a strategic partnership that exists between the two countries, the South Africa-Sweden BNC was established in 2000, chaired at the level of Deputy President and Deputy Prime Minister, respectively.

Areas of cooperation include trade and investment, higher education, science and technology, water-resource management, energy, maritime affairs, culture, ICT, environmental affairs, and defence. Besides the work of the BNC, South Africa and Sweden established a Defence Committee that convenes independently of the BNC. A memorandum on Defence Cooperation was concluded in 2000. The defence committee discusses and exchanges information within areas of regional security, defence management, bilateral defence agreements, peacekeeping operations, mutual visits, exchange of defence-related information, training and defence-industrial cooperation.

Eastern Europe

The Eastern Europe region is of crucial importance to South Africa's strategic objectives, straddling a wide spectrum of political and economic interests. The region is well endowed with strategic commodities and minerals that are of vital significance to South Africa's economy. Eastern Europe offers South Africa strategic opportunities to support its Industrial Strategy through increased trade, investment, and technology transfer. Countries in the region possess advanced manufacturing capabilities, particularly in sectors such as machinery, automotive components, and industrial equipment, all of which align with South Africa's goals to strengthen its domestic manufacturing base. By fostering partnerships with Eastern European nations, South Africa can gain access to cost-effective technologies and expertise that support industrial upgrading, skills development, and infrastructure improvement.

In addition, Eastern Europe provides South Africa with access to wider European markets, creating opportunities for increased exports and deeper integration into global value chains. By establishing targeted bilateral partnerships, joint ventures, and collaborative initiatives in sectors such as agro-processing, renewable energy, and digital technologies, South Africa can broaden its industrial foundation and lessen reliance on its conventional trade partners. Such cooperation supports the country's goals of reindustrialisation, employment creation, and inclusive economic development.

Azerbaijan

South Africa and Azerbaijan established diplomatic relations in 1991. The South African Embassy in Ankara is also accredited to Azerbaijan on a non-residential basis. Structured bilateral relations were established by means of an MoU on Regular Diplomatic Consultations that was concluded in February 2014. The MoU provides for the strengthening and broadening of the scope of bilateral cooperation in the political, economic, scientific, technological, cultural and humanitarian areas. Other areas of potential interest are energy, defence and air services.

Bilateral relations are coordinated at the level of Senior Officials and areas of cooperation include trade and investment, defence, energy and higher education.

Belarus

Diplomatic relations between South Africa and Belarus were established in March 1993. Currently, the South African ambassador to the Russian Federation is the non-residential Ambassador to Belarus. Belarus opened its embassy in South Africa in January 2000, and the first South African ambassador presented credentials in February 2000. The two countries enjoy good bilateral relations that have been strengthened by the exchange of high-level visits for political consultations in the past few years. On the economic front, South Africa and Belarus mainly engage through the Inter-governmental Committee on Trade and Economic Cooperation (ITEC), led by the Department of Trade, Industry and Competition.

The committee is co-chaired at the level of Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs on the Belarusian side and Deputy Minister of Trade, Industry and Competition on the South African side. The primary objective of the cooperation is to strengthen and develop trade and economic cooperation on a long-term and stable basis and on the principles of equality and mutual benefit.

Georgia

Full diplomatic relations between South Africa and Georgia were established in 1992. The South African Embassy in Kyiv, Ukraine, is non-residentially accredited to Georgia. The Government of Georgia opened an embassy in South Africa in August 2011. Structured bilateral engagements between South Africa and Georgia, at the level of Senior Officials, were established in November 1993 by means of a Protocol on Cooperation between the then Department of Foreign Affairs (now the DIRCO) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia. The Deputy Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Alvin Botes attended a Senior Officials meeting held in Georgia in 2023, which focused on strengthening bilateral relations between the two countries across various sections as well as the continuous support for the two countries on issues of mutual interest in the multilateral structures such as the United Nations.

Areas of focus include tourism, trade and investment, agriculture, culture and sport. The two countries have established a winemakers exchange programme, which has seen student and expert exchanges between Telavi State University, a Georgian university and Stellenbosch University's Wine Sciences Department.

Russian Federation

Diplomatic relations between Russia and South Africa were established on 28 February 1992. The historical links between the two countries remain strong. The former USSR was one of the key supporters of the struggle for liberation in South Africa. South Africa became the first African state to recognise the independence of Russia, post the dissolution of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). South Africa regards Russia as an important strategic partner, and close bilateral and multilateral ties exist between the two countries.

Since the re-establishment of bilateral relations, South Africa's relations with Russia have evolved into a strategic relationship over the past few years through continued high-level political engagements. The Declaration on a Strategic Partnership between South Africa and Russia was signed on the margins of the fifth BRICS Summit held in Durban in March 2013 by the two countries' heads of state. President of the Republic of South Africa, H.E. Cyril Ramaphosa and Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Ronald Lamola attended the 16th BRICS Summit in Kazan, Russia

in October 2024. President Ramaphosa held a bilateral meeting with the President of the Russian Federation, H.E. Vladimir Putin, on the margins of the BRICS Summit. The Deputy Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Thandi Moraka participated in the First Ministerial Conference of the Russia-Africa Partnership Forum in Sochi, Russia in November 2024. Several telecons took place at the Heads of State and Ministers level during the reporting period with several counterparts in Russia, Türkiye and Ukraine. Bilateral meetings with countries in the region took place on the margins of the multilateral foras. The former Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Dr Naledi Pandor, participated at the BRICS Foreign Minister's meeting held in Russia in June 2024. Several Cabinet Ministers and other senior government officials undertook Official Visits to Russia.

Deputy President Paul Mashatile undertook a Working Visit to the Russian Federation in June 2025. The Working Visit took place in two cities: Moscow for political engagements with the Prime Minister of the Russian Federation and St Petersburg to participate in the St Petersburg International Economic Forum (SPIEF'25). The purpose of the visit was to strengthen bilateral political, economic and trade relations between South Africa and Russia, with a particular focus on sectors such as agriculture, automotives, energy and mining industries, as well as science and technology cooperation.

One of the primary mechanisms for improving the bilateral relationship and advancing government's development objectives is the Intergovernmental Committee on Trade and Economic Cooperation (ITEC), which was established in 1999.

The committee is the most important mechanism underpinning mutually beneficial trade and economic ties between the two countries. It has proven to be an effective instrument for effective engagement on trade and investment issues, as well as critical skills and technology transfers, amongst others. The ITEC has given practical substance to the political commitment on the part of the two countries to work together, as expressed in the Treaty of Friendship and Partnership signed by both countries.

Sectors covered within agriculture, forestry and fisheries, energy, education, mineral resources, science and technology, transport, water and sanitation, trade and industry. Besides the work of the ITEC, South Africa and Russia established a defence committee that convenes independently. There is also growing inter-regional and provincial cooperation that bodes well for strengthened economic cooperation, tourism and people-to-people contact. The 18th ITEC Session took place in Moscow, Russia, in April 2025.

Serbia

Diplomatic relations between South Africa and Serbia were established in April 2002 when Serbia was still referred to as the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Serbia regards South Africa as a strategic partner on the African continent, a regional power and a leading economy that is playing a positive role in promoting peace, security and sustainable development in Africa. South Africa held structured engagements at a Senior Officials level chaired by the Deputy Director-General, Americas and Europe of the Department of International Relations and Cooperation, Ambassador Maud Dlomo, co-chaired by the Acting Assistant Minister for Bilateral Cooperation of Serbia, Ambassador Irena Šarac, in September 2023. The Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) discussed matters related to South Africa-Serbia bilateral relations, including scholarship programmes for South African students, possible cooperation in the area of visa waivers, and enhancing trade between the two countries.

South Africa's contribution to the advancement of multilateralism, the rule of law, human rights and an equitable global governance system is similarly appreciated. Serbia opened its embassy in Pretoria in June 1996. The South African ambassador in Athens, Greece, is accredited to Serbia on a non-resident basis. Both countries enjoy cordial bilateral relations, which are coordinated at the level of Senior Officials. Areas of cooperation include trade and investment, education and agriculture.

Türkiye

Diplomatic relations between South Africa and Türkiye were established in 1995 and they have resident embassies in Pretoria and Ankara, respectively. The two countries enjoy good bilateral relations, which have been strengthened by a number of bilateral agreements on different areas of cooperation. The two countries signed a Bi-National Commission, which is to be inaugurated in October 2025. The South Africa-Türkiye Strategic Partnership is informed by the two countries' growing political and economic profiles and their geostrategic locations in Africa and Euro-Asia; Türkiye's rapidly growing political and economic footprint in Africa, including the Africa- Türkiye Strategic Partnership; the two countries' capacity to project their foreign policies regionally and globally; and active participation and membership in various organisations such as the G20 and the UN. The former Minister of International Relations and Cooperation participated as a guest speaker by delivering a lecture at the Antalya Diplomacy Forum (ADF) in Türkiye in March 2024.

On the economic front, relations between South Africa and Türkiye are coordinated through the South Africa- Türkiye JEC, led by the Minister of Trade, Industry and Competition on the South African side. The primary objective of the JEC, which was established in 2005, is to promote and deepen bilateral trade and economic relations between the two countries. Priority sectors for the JEC include agriculture and agribusiness; automotives; infrastructure, energy and construction services; minerals resources; textile and clothing; and tourism.

Ukraine

Bilateral relations between South Africa and Ukraine are cordial. Diplomatic relations between the two countries were established in March 1992, and their embassies were established in Kiev and Pretoria in 1992 and 1995, respectively. The South African Embassy in Ukraine is accredited on a non-residential basis to Georgia, Moldova, and Armenia. The two countries regularly engage through political consultations at Senior Official Level.

These political consultations are guided by both the MoU between Ministries of Foreign Affairs of South Africa and Ukraine (1994) and the Joint Declaration on Relations and Cooperation between South Africa and Ukraine (November 1996) that provide for regular bilateral political

consultations between the foreign ministries. The main areas of cooperation between the two countries are science and technology; defence; and cooperation between the South African Council for Geoscience and the Ministry of Environmental and Natural Resources of Ukraine, with more possible areas of cooperation currently being explored. There are growing trade relations between

South Africa and Ukraine. The Director-General of International Relations and Cooperation, Zane Dangor, and the National Security Advisor, Dr Sidney Mufamadi, participated in a series of Ukraine Peace Initiative meetings in Kyiv, Germany, and Switzerland in 2024.

The Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Ronald Lamola, hosted his counterpart, the Foreign Minister of Ukraine, H.E Andri Sybiha, on a Working Visit in Pretoria in October 2024, which resulted in a commitment to strengthen bilateral and economic relations between the two countries. The engagements also led to the remote signing of the Agreement on the Visa Waiver for Diplomatic and Official Passport holders.

Central Europe

Central Europe has seen substantial improvement in relations with South Africa. A number of bilateral mechanisms with these countries were established at various levels. The areas of cooperation have been considerable in, inter alia, the fields of education, arts and culture, science and technology, agriculture, water affairs, trade and tourism. South Africa works very closely with Central European countries on multilateral forums. While a number of Central European countries are serviced by non-residentially accredited ambassadors, relations with these countries are considered important to South Africa's foreign policy goals.

Bulgaria

South Africa and Bulgaria have maintained cordial and warm relations dating back to the liberation struggle, as Bulgaria hosted a number of anti-apartheid activists. Diplomatic relations at the level of ambassador were established through the exchange of notes in February 1992, and the South African Embassy in Sofia started functioning in 1992, while the Bulgarian Embassy in Pretoria was opened in February 1993.

With the intention of expanding relations, several bilateral agreements have been concluded in the areas of air services, defence, tourism, security, arts and culture, healthcare and medical sciences, and education, while several others are under consideration. Bilateral trade and investments remain at a low level.

Following a Cabinet decision to close South African foreign missions across the globe as a strategic cost-cutting measure, the South African Embassy in Bulgaria was officially closed on 30 June 2025. This, however, does not mean that bilateral relations with Bulgaria have been downgraded, and the mission in Athens, Greece, has been accredited on a non-residential basis to Bulgaria to continue engagements with Bulgaria, given the historical importance of the relations.

Croatia

Bilateral relations between South Africa and Croatia have developed steadily since diplomatic relations were established in 1992. The South African Embassy in Hungary is accredited to Croatia, while Croatia opened its embassy in Pretoria in November 1995. Bilateral relations between the two countries are coordinated at the level of Senior Officials, with emphasis in various areas such as marine technology, higher education and training, science and technology, and tourism. The most recent round of Political Consultations took place in December 2024 at the level of Deputy Minister.

Czech Republic

Full diplomatic relations between South Africa and the Czech Republic were established in 1991, and resident embassies in each other's capitals were established soon after. Bilateral relations have evolved to a level of maturity, underpinned by increasing commercial and business-to-business activities, as well as people-to-people exchanges. Political consultations are coordinated at Deputy Minister level. Areas of cooperation between the two countries include tourism, defence, medical equipment, pharmaceuticals and agro-processing.

Trade and economic relations between South Africa and the Czech Republic are governed by the South Africa-Czech Republic Joint Committee for Economic Cooperation (JCEC), which aims to promote and deepen bilateral trade and economic cooperation. The sixth session of the JCEC will be held in Prague, Czechia, in the course of 2025.

Hungary

Hungary was the first among the Central European countries to establish diplomatic ties with South Africa. Full diplomatic relations between the two countries were established in July 1991. Both countries enjoy cordial bilateral relations. Political consultations are coordinated at Deputy Ministerial Level. Areas of cooperation between the two countries include higher education, science and technology, water-resource management, defence and agro-processing. The two countries are working towards the signing of a Joint Commission of Cooperation (JCC), which aims to promote and deepen bilateral trade and economic cooperation.

Poland

Diplomatic relations between South Africa and Poland were concluded in December 1991, and embassies were opened in each capital. Political consultations between the two countries are coordinated at the Deputy Ministerial Level. Areas of cooperation between Poland and South Africa include aeronautics, automotive, defence and agriculture. Poland, with a population of 38 million people, is the largest single market among the "new" EU states. South Africa is Poland's top trade partner in Africa. The two countries have agreed to establish a JEC, which will promote and deepen trade and economic cooperation. It is envisaged that the JEC will be inaugurated during the next session of the Political Consultations scheduled for the fourth quarter of the current financial year.

Romania

South Africa and Romania established diplomatic relations in November 1991. The formal mechanism, legalising bilateral political consultations on an institutionalised basis between South Africa and Romania, was signed in September 2016. The protocol is crucial in strengthening bilateral relations as well as providing a political framework for other agreements

and commitments. South Africa and Romania signed an agreement in the field of science and technology in September 2004.

The partnership has successfully contributed to scientific advancement in both countries. Other areas of cooperation between South Africa and Romania include energy, mining, agriculture and marine technology. The Government of Romania, through the embassy in Pretoria, has launched a successful programme of donating equipment to South African schools in disadvantaged areas.

Slovakia

Full diplomatic relations between the former Federal Republic of Czechoslovakia and South Africa were established in October 1991. The dissolution of the Federal Republic of Czechoslovakia brought about the Slovak Republic as a separate sovereign state in 1993. The bilateral diplomatic relations entered into with the Federal

The Republic of Czechoslovakia continued uninterrupted with the Slovak Republic. South Africa's bilateral relations with Slovakia are sound. Whilst South Africa does not have an embassy in Bratislava, the country's relations with Slovakia are managed on a non-resident basis by the South African Embassy in Vienna.

Areas of cooperation between South Africa and Slovakia are in the fields of automotive (including automotive components), agro-processing, medical equipment and pharmaceuticals. Economic relations between South Africa and Slovakia are governed by a JCEC.

Slovenia

Full diplomatic relations between South Africa and Slovenia were established in 1992. While South Africa does not have an embassy in Slovenia, the country's relations with Slovenia are managed on a non-resident basis by the South African Embassy in Vienna. The Ambassador of Slovenia to Egypt is accredited on a non-residential basis to South Africa. Both countries enjoy cordial bilateral relations. Bilateral relations between the two countries exist at the level of Senior Officials, with meetings taking place alternately every two years.

Latin America and the Caribbean

South Africa continues to build and maintain mutually beneficial political, economic and social relations with Latin America and the Caribbean, and to strengthen cooperation to advance the developmental agenda of the South and global governance reforms through the UN, NAM, G77 plus China, BRICS, IBSA, G20 and the Caribbean Community and Common Market (CARICOM).

At a bilateral level, the scope of cooperation covers, among others, the following areas: agribusiness; Antarctica; aquaculture and fisheries; arts and culture; defence, education and skills development; energy; environment; health; infrastructure development; mining; science and innovation; social development; trade and economic cooperation; tourism; and transport.

The SACU-MERCOSUR (Brazil, Uruguay, Argentina, Bolivia, Paraguay) Preferential Trade Agreement opens new markets for SACU members to South American countries, particularly in sectors like agriculture, mining, and manufacturing. For MERCOSUR countries, it provides an opportunity to access the African market, which is often underexplored compared to other regions like Europe or Asia.

The region is also an integral part of the AU's sixth region due to the significant presence of an African diaspora in Latin America and the Caribbean. This shared heritage and history provides a strong basis to build enduring relations and cooperation to advance the African Agenda as elaborated in Agenda 2063.

Mexico

Bilateral relations between South Africa and Mexico are sound. South Africa and Mexico's bilateral relations are conducted through a Bi-National Commission (BNC) at Ministerial Level. South Africa is Mexico's biggest trading partner in Africa. The priority areas for bilateral cooperation are agribusiness, arts and culture, the automotive industry, education and skills development, mining, science and technology, and tourism.

The two countries work closely together in multilateral forums on issues such as South cooperation, human rights, gender equality, global governance reforms and nuclear disarmament. Several South African companies, such as Old Mutual, Aspen, Blue Label Telecoms, Standard Bank, Naspers, Sappi, Mondi, and Dimension Data, have operations operating in Mexico.

Guatemala

South Africa and Guatemala enjoy cordial relations. The South African Embassy in Mexico is responsible for South Africa's relations with Guatemala on a non-residential basis.

Panama

South Africa and Panama enjoy cordial bilateral relations. The diplomatic relations were established on 10 January 1995. The Government of Panama opened an embassy in Pretoria in August 2000.

There are over 3 000 South Africans living and working in Panama, especially in mining, banking and finance, and the logistics industry. South Africa's Ambassador in Mexico City is also accredited as South Africa's non-residential Ambassador to Panama. Panama's experience as a regional trade and logistics hub presents opportunities for mutually beneficial technical cooperation with South Africa.

Nicaragua

South Africa enjoys cordial and historical relations with Nicaragua. South Africa and Nicaragua established bilateral relations on 15 September 1994. The South African Ambassador in Mexico City is also accredited to Nicaragua. Nicaragua opened its embassy in Pretoria in January 2024. Gold has become Nicaragua's most valuable export and is continuing to make a substantial contribution to the Nicaraguan economy.

Brazil

South Africa continues to enjoy cordial relations with Brazil, premised on the principles of solidarity and development cooperation. The two countries also enjoy strategic partner status and close cooperation in BRICS, IBSA, the UN, and the G20. The South Africa-Brazil Joint Commission meets at Ministerial level and is supported by a Senior Officials Meeting comprising ten thematic working groups, including

mining and energy; environment; health; justice and correctional services; trade and investment; tourism; arts; culture; sport, higher education and cooperation between the diplomatic academies; defence; technical development cooperation; and agriculture.

Argentina

Argentina is South Africa's third-largest trading partner in the Latin America and Caribbean region after Brazil and Mexico. Relations are managed through a Bi-National Commission at Ministerial Level. More recently, political consultations at Deputy Ministerial level convened to ensure regular high-level bilateral interaction and to deepen bilateral cooperation. Key areas of bilateral cooperation with Argentina include agriculture, energy, mining, ocean and Antarctic cooperation, science and technology, outer space, and sport.

The Caribbean

South Africa enjoys cordial relations with the countries of the Caribbean. Most inhabitants of the Caribbean are of African descent and have strong historical and cultural links to the continent. South Africa's endeavour, in conjunction with the AU and the Caribbean Community, to strengthen cooperation between Africa and the African Diaspora in the Caribbean, has given added impetus to bilateral and multilateral relations. South Africa attaches importance to strengthening its relations with the Caribbean and developing common positions on global issues such as access to the markets of the industrial North, reform of international institutions and promoting the development agenda and protection of small island states.

The Caribbean Community

The Caribbean Community was established in 1973. The organisation comprises 15 Caribbean nations and dependencies. The community's main purposes are to promote economic integration and cooperation among its members to ensure that the benefits of integration are equitably shared and to coordinate foreign policy. South Africa enjoys cordial relations with the countries of the Caribbean Community and recognises that the majority of inhabitants in this region are of African descent with historical and cultural links to the African continent.

In this regard, South Africa is committed to strengthening relations with the African Diaspora in line with a similar commitment by the AU that is guided by Pan-African solidarity and South-South cooperation. South Africa was granted formal Observer Status to the Caribbean Community in February 2014. South Africa and the Caribbean Community continue to work together in multilateral forums.

South Africa supports the Caribbean-led push (through CARICOM) for reparatory justice reparations for slavery and colonialism. Both regions are part of the Global South coalition pushing for climate adaptation financing, especially for loss and damage. There is also growing cooperation through university partnerships, heritage programmes, and Pan-African festivals.

Uruguay

South Africa and Uruguay have solid bilateral relations that are conducted through political consultations at Deputy Ministerial level. The priority areas for cooperation are agribusiness, mineral resources and energy (especially renewable energy), education (higher [STEM] and basic), sport, software development, and trade and investment.

Chile

South Africa and Chile enjoy sound bilateral relations, which are conducted through a Joint Consultative Mechanism at Deputy Ministerial Level. South Africa is Chile's largest trading partner in Africa and is a significant investor in the country's mining sector, with major South African mining houses such as Anglo American and Gold Fields having invested in the Chilean market. The biggest area of trade between South Africa and Chile is capital goods for mining and mining technology and services. Other important areas of cooperation are agribusiness, fisheries and aquaculture, education, science and innovation, Antarctic cooperation, trade and investment, science and innovation (including astronomy), and sport.

Central America and the Andean region

The Andean Community

The Andean Community is composed of Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru and they have a Free Frade Agreement with the objective of creating a customs union. Cooperation with Latin American countries is in line with South Africa's foreign policy objective of South-South cooperation to strengthen social and economic relations and technical cooperation to advance mutual development priorities.

With regard to South Africa's industrialisation imperatives, the Latin American region is rich in mineral resources, and countries such as Chile, Peru, Ecuador and Bolivia have expressed a strong interest in working with South Africa to strengthen trade, investment and technical cooperation in mining.

Ecuador

The bilateral relationship between South Africa and Ecuador remains cordial and is conducted through a Political Consultation Mechanism. The main areas of cooperation are environment, fisheries, defence industry, mineral resources and energy, science and innovation, and trade.

Paraguay

South Africa and Paraguay have concluded the MoU on Political Consultations, an important step forward in the bilateral relations. The MoU will serve as a framework for the development and consolidation of cooperation at bilateral, regional and multilateral levels.

Peru

Bilateral relations between South Africa and Peru are anchored through an MoU on the Establishment of Political Consultations. The areas of cooperation include mining, agriculture, defence, aqua-culture and fisheries, science and technology, tourism, and trade and investment.

South Africa is a large investor in Peru. Major South African mining companies in Peru include Goldfields Ltd, Anglo-American South Africa Ltd, and Dust-a-Side Pty (Ltd), among others. South African mining investments in Peru have significantly facilitated market opportunities for capital and mining equipment and mining services in Peru. Agro-processing, aquaculture, arts and culture, trade and investment, and sport are important areas for cooperation.

Venezuela

South Africa-Venezuela relations are underpinned by historic ties of solidarity. South Africa continues to pursue relations with Venezuela, especially in the context of South-South cooperation through NAM, G77 plus China, and the UN. Priority areas for cooperation are agribusiness, arts and culture, energy (oil and gas), mining, and pharmaceuticals. In April 2025, the inaugural session of the Consultative Mechanism that the two countries established in 2009 was launched at Deputy Ministerial level.

Colombia

South Africa has cordial and growing bilateral relations with Colombia. There is a steady and significant growth of two-way investments between the two countries, especially in mining and agribusiness. Colombia has the second-largest population of Afro-descendants in Latin America after Brazil, and close people-to-people relations are forged. The priority areas for cooperation are agribusiness, arts and culture, the defence industry, education, energy, the environment, science and technology, trade and investment, and sport. In July 2025, the Political Consultations Mechanism was launched at Deputy Ministerial level.

Cuba

South Africa's solidarity with Cuba is one of the most enduring and meaningful international relationships in its post-apartheid foreign policy. Rooted in a shared anti-colonial struggle and revolutionary solidarity, this bond is political, historical, and deeply symbolic. The deep and multifaceted relations between South Africa and Cuba are anchored through the Joint Consultative Mechanism (JCM). The two countries have firm bilateral cooperation and partnership with around fifteen (15) bilateral agreements, at the apex of which is the Nelson Mandela-Fidel Castro Health Programme. After health, the most active sectors of cooperation remain basic education, science and technology; water resources; and public works in which Cuban doctors, engineers, teachers and technical experts are deployed across several provinces.

Both countries are part of the Global South and collaborate in forums like the G77+ China, BRICS+, and the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM).

The Dominican Republic

South Africa and the Dominican Republic enjoy cordial diplomatic relations established in May 2002. The Dominican Republic has a free-market economy and benefits from strong trade links with the Caribbean region as well as the US. The main economic drivers are construction, manufacturing and tourism.

The Dominican Republic is an attractive trading partner for South Africa in the Caribbean owing to the country's advanced and open economy. The priority areas for cooperation with the Dominican Republic are arts and culture, mining, energy, tourism, and sport.

Guyana

Prior to the dawn of freedom and democracy in 1994, Guyana was one of the strong supporters of South Africa's freedom struggle. South Africa and Guyana enjoy cordial bilateral relations established on 4 November 1994. One of the largest offshore oil discoveries in Guyana recently presents opportunities for trade, investment and technical cooperation in the Guyanese oil industry and infrastructure development.

Jamaica

South Africa and Jamaica have strong historical and political ties; the latter having played an important role in supporting South Africa in the struggle against apartheid. Bilateral relations and sectorial cooperation with Jamaica were strengthened during the second Political Consultations at senior officials' level that took place on 24 October 2024.

Trinidad and Tobago

Trinidad and Tobago is viewed as an important bilateral partner in the Caribbean region. The large African diaspora in Trinidad and Tobago forms a strong link with Africa and serves as a further catalyst for ongoing cooperation between the respective regions. Trinidad and Tobago's economy is propelled through a well-developed hydrocarbons sector that presents opportunities for trade, investment and technical cooperation in the oil sector.







SOUTH AFRICA
YEARBOOK
2024/25

Justice and Correctional Services

Justice and Constitutional Development

The Department of Justice and Constitutional Development (DoJ&CD) reports to the Minister of Justice and Constitutional Development.

Justice and Constitutional Development

The DoJ&CD derives its mandate from the Constitution and a number of Acts that assign functions to the department. These include the:

- Establishment of magistrate's courts and the appointment of magistrates and other judicial officers;
- Establishment and functioning of the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA);
- Conducting of criminal proceedings; the prosecution of organised crime and corruption, and the forfeiture of assets obtained through illicit means;
- Provision of witness protection to vulnerable and intimidated witnesses and their related persons in judicial proceedings;
- Establishment and functioning of bodies responsible for legal aid, law reform and rule-making;
- Appointment of masters of the high courts;
- Management of third-party funds;
- Administration of the Guardian's Fund and deceased and insolvent estates;
- Management of state litigation;
- Regulation and provision of legal advisory services to government departments;
- Promotion, protection and enforcement of human rights;
- Protection of vulnerable groups; and
- Provision of support to Chapter 9 institutions.

Implementing State Capture Commission and Financial Action Task Force (FATF) recommendations

The National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) is allocated R1.3 billion over the next three years to support the implementation of the State Capture Commission and FATF recommendations. This entails increasing capacity in the authority's National Prosecutions Service (NPS) and Investigating directorate through the appointment of 26 and 94 personnel, respectively; procuring specialist prosecution services for complex matters (especially financial crimes); commissioning contracted forensic auditors and accountants to deal with high-priority asset forfeiture matters; establishing a digital forensic data centre; providing close protection services and integrated security systems; and financing increased operational costs for witness protection.

Accordingly, the number of prosecutions of state capture, fraud or corruption and related matters enrolled in the courts is expected to increase from nine in 2022/23 to 18 in 2025/26. Targets for a new indicator to measure the number of prosecutions involving money laundering charges are expected to be introduced from 2024/25 onwards, after establishing a baseline for such prosecutions in 2023/24. Civil litigation will be initiated based on the special tribunal's recommendations related to the state capture commission. To this end, the Special Investigating Unit (SIU) is allocated R100 million over the next three years, which is expected to enable it to increase the number of cases enrolled at the tribunal from 35 in 2022/23 to 65 in 2025/26.

Reducing gender-based violence and femicide (GBVF)

In its efforts to afford greater protection to citizens, particularly vulnerable groups, the department has moved towards a more gender-focused criminal justice system. A key aspect of this entails implementing the recommendations of the Presidential Summit

Declaration against GBVF and the National Strategic Plan on GBVF. This includes establishing a targeted 40 sexual offences courts as designated courts over the next three years, and improving the management of the National Register for Sex Offenders (NRSO) to ensure the strict vetting of anyone working with vulnerable people.

An allocation of R15 million over the medium term is available to support the establishment of sexual offences courts. The allocation does not affect the department's budget as it is from the criminal assets recovery account. Thuthuzela care centres are 24-hour facilities where victims of sexual offences have access to all relevant services, including police, counselling, doctors, court preparation and prosecutors. The centres were introduced as a critical part of South Africa's anti-rape and gender-based violence strategies, which aim to reduce secondary victimisation, improve conviction rates and reduce the time taken to finalise cases.

By mid-2023, there were 60 centres across the country. To strengthen capacity at these centres, R27.5 million over the MTEF period is reprioritised in the NPA programme was expected to appoint 15 additional personnel, including site coordinators, victim assistance officers and state advocates. This reprioritisation is from the NPS subprogramme's compensation of employees budget as vacant posts for support services in the subprogramme were terminated. The department also planned to increase the number of centres to 68 by 2025/26 at an estimated cost of R15 million in the NPA programme.

The department aimed to continue coordinating and contributing to the implementation of the National Action Plan for Combating Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerances. This entails establishing an effective governance structure to lead and coordinate the implementation of the plan, developing a funding model, and establishing a rapid-response mechanism for incidents of racist and xenophobic offences or hate crimes. To carry out this work, R5.1 million over the medium term is allocated in the State Legal Services programme. In 2022, President Cyril Ramaphosa signed into law legislation aimed at strengthening efforts to end GBV, with a victim-centred focus on combating this dehumanising pandemic.

The President has assented to the Criminal and Related Matters Amendment Act 12 of 2021, the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act Amendment Act 13 of 2021 and the Domestic Violence Amendment Act 14 of 2021. The purpose of the Criminal and Related Matters Amendment Act, 2021 (Act 12 of 2021) is to amend the:

- Magistrates' Courts Act of 1944, so as to provide for the appointment of intermediaries and the giving of evidence through intermediaries in proceedings other than criminal proceedings; the oath and competency of intermediaries; and the giving of evidence through audiovisual link in

proceedings other than criminal proceedings;
- Criminal Procedure Act of 1977, so as to further regulate the granting and cancellation of bail; the giving of evidence by means of closed circuit television or similar electronic media; the giving of evidence by a witness with physical, psychological or mental disability; the appointment, oath and competency of intermediaries; and the right of a complainant in a domestic related offence to participate in parole proceedings;
- Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1997, so as to further regulate sentences in respect of offences that have been committed against vulnerable persons; and
- Superior Courts Act of 2013, so as to provide for the appointment of intermediaries and the giving of evidence through intermediaries in proceedings other than criminal proceedings; the oath and competency of intermediaries; and the giving of evidence through audiovisual link in proceedings other than criminal proceedings, and to provide for matters connected therewith.

The purpose of the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act Amendment Act, 2021 (Act 13 of 2021) is to amend the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act, 2007, so as to:
- Extend the ambit of the offence of incest;
- Introduce a new offence of sexual intimidation;
- Substitute the phrase ‘‘a person who is mentally disabled’’ or ‘‘persons who are mentally disabled’’ wherever the phrase appears with the phrase ‘‘a person with a mental disability’’ or ‘‘persons with mental disabilities’’;
- Further regulate the inclusion of particulars of persons in the National Register for Sex Offenders;
- Extend the list of persons who are to be protected in terms of Chapter 6 of the Act;
- Extend the list of persons who are entitled to submit applications to the Registrar of the National Register for Sex Offenders;
- Further regulate the removal of particulars of persons from the National Register for Sex Offenders; and
- Further regulate the reporting duty of persons who are aware that sexual offences have been committed against persons who are vulnerable, and to provide for matters connected therewith.

The purpose of the Domestic Violence Amendment Act, 2021 (Act 14 of 2021) is to amend the Domestic Violence Act, 1998, so as to:
- Amend and insert certain definitions;
- Further provide for the manner in which acts of domestic violence and matters related thereto, must be dealt with;
- Further regulate protection orders in response to acts of domestic violence;
- Amend provisions of certain laws; and
- Provide for matters connected therewith.

National Anti-Corruption Strategy (NACS)

The NACS, adopted by Cabinet in November 2020, has signalled the resolve of the Anti-Corruption Task Team (ACTT) to deliver on its work. Building on the key tenets of the Constitution, the Anti-Corruption Legal Framework, the National Development Plan (NDP) and other instruments, such as international treaties, the strategy uses research and stakeholder inputs to outline actions needed to achieve a society free of corruption. The strategy is a whole-of-society effort that envisions an ethical and accountable state, business and society, characterised by high levels of integrity and respect for the rule of law. It promotes active citizenry that is empowered to hold leaders and organisations accountable.

It foresees a state where all members of society have zero tolerance for corruption.

This NACS provides a framework and action plan for the country as a whole and seeks to create a society in which:
- • Government’s administrative and procurement processes are reinforced to allow for greater monitoring, accountability and transparency;
- • The public is educated about what constitutes corruption and empowered to respond when or where it is noted;
- • The public and whistle-blowers are encouraged to report corruption, are supported and adequately protected when doing so;
- Public officials are held accountable for service delivery or the lack thereof;
- The business sector and civil society organisations operate in a values-driven manner and are held accountable for corrupt practices; and
- There is a culture of zero tolerance towards corruption in any sector and full accountability for those involved in corruption.

The Anti-Corruption Task Team (ACTT) is a collective of government stakeholders tasked with implementing the government’s anti-corruption agenda. The multi-agency ACTT was formed in October 2010 to fast-track high-priority investigations and prosecutions on corruption-related matters through a multi-disciplinary and integrated operational approach. The ACTT is a sub-committee of the Justice Crime Prevention and Security (JCPS) Cluster. The ACTT is chaired by the head of the Directorate for Priority Crime and Investigations and co-chaired by the National Director of Public Prosecution (NDPP).

This multi-agency body has been tasked with strengthening and developing anti-corruption policies and legislation; ensuring compliance with bi-lateral agreements with other international law-enforcement agencies; and improving the country’s international standing and general public perceptions about corruption. The ACTT is made up of these agencies:
- Directorate for Priority Crime Investigation (DPCI);
- Special Investigation Unit (SIU);
- NPA;
- Investigating Directorate of the NPA;
- Asset Forfeiture Unit (AFU);
- South African Police Service (SAPS);
- SAPS Crime Intelligence;
- State Security Agency;
- Financial Intelligence Centre (FIC);
- National Intelligence Coordinating Committee;
- DoJ&CD;
- Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA);
- Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs;
- Government Communication and Information System.

Legislation and policies

The following instruments of legislation are relevant to the successful functioning of the DoJ&CD:

- Legislation providing for the establishment and functioning of superior courts, magistrates' courts and special courts: The Constitutional Court Complementary Act, 1995 (Act 13 of 1995); the Supreme Court Act, 1959 (Act 59 of 1959); the Magistrates' Courts Act, 1944 (Act 32 of 1944); and the Small Claims Court Act, 1984 (Act 61 of 1984).
- Legislation providing for the appointment of judges and other judicial officers, the conditions of service, discipline and training: The Judges Remuneration and Conditions of Employment Act, 2001 (Act 47 of 2001); the Judicial Service Commission (JSC) Act, 1994 (Act 9 of 1994), as amended; the South African Judicial Education Institute (SAJEI) Act, 2008 (Act 14 of 2008); and the Magistrates' Act, 1993 (Act 90 of 1993).
- Legislation providing for the establishment and functioning of the NPA, the SIU and the AFU; the conduct of criminal proceedings; the investigation of organised crime and corruption; and the forfeiture of assets obtained through illicit means: the NPA Act, 1998 (Act 32 of 1998); the Criminal Procedure Act (CPA), 1977 (Act 51 of 1977); the Prevention of Organised Crime Act (POCA), 1998 (Act 121 of 1998); the SIU and Special Tribunals Act, 1996 (Act 74 of 1996); and the Witness Protection Act, 1998 (Act 112 of 1998).
- Legislation providing for the establishment and functioning of bodies responsible for legal aid, law reform and rule-making: The Legal Aid Act, 1969 (Act 22 of 1969); the South African Law Reform Commission (SALRC) Act, 1973 (Act 19 of 1973); and the Rules Board for Courts of Law Act, 1985 (Act 107 of 1985).
- Legislation providing for the appointment of masters of the High Court and the administration of the Guardian's Fund and deceased and insolvent estates: The Administration of Estates Act, 1965 (Act 66 of 1965), and the Insolvency Act, 1936 (Act 24 of 1936).
- Legislation regulating the provisioning of legal advisory services to government departments: The State Attorney Act, 1957 (Act 56 of 1957).
- Legislation relating to the promotion, protection and enforcement of certain human rights: The Promotion of Administrative Justice Act, 2000 (Act 3 of 2000), the Promotion of Access to Information Act, 2000 (Act 2 of 2000), and the Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act, 2000 (Act 4 of 2000), better known as the Equality Act of 2000.
- Legislation pertaining to the protection of vulnerable groups: The Child Justice Act, 2008 (Act 75 of 2008), the Children's Act, 2005 (Act 38 of 2005), the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act, 2007 (Act 32 of 2007), the Maintenance Act, 1998 (Act 99 of 1998), and the Domestic Violence Act, 1998 (Act 116 of 1998).
- Legislation providing support to Chapter 9 institutions: The Human Rights Commission Act, 1994 (Act 54 of 1994), and the Public Protector Act, 1994 (Act 23 of 1994).
- Legislation regulating the management and control of public expenditure: The Public Finance Management Act, 1999 (Act 1 of 1999).
- Legislation regulating operations in the public service: The Public Service Act, 1994 (Act 103 of 1994), as amended.
- Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act, 2012 (Act 6 of 2012).
- Criminal Procedure Amendment Act, 2012 (Act 9 of 2012).
- Judicial Matters Amendment Act, 2012 (Act 11 of 2012).
- Repeal of the Black Administration Act and Amendment of Certain Laws Amendment Act, 2012 (Act 20 of 2012).
- Sheriffs Amendment Act, 2012 (Act 14 of 2012).
- The Criminal Law SIU (Forensic Procedures) Amendment Bill 2013 paves the way to regulate and promote the use of deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) in combating crime, considering constitutional requirements. The use of DNA evidence holds the potential to alleviate bottlenecks in the criminal justice system. Maximising the use of DNA evidence promotes fairness, confidence and certainty in the administration of South Africa's laws.
- The Constitution 17th Amendment Act of 2013 is implemented with the Superior Courts Act, 2013 (Act 10 of 2013), which repeals the Supreme Court Act of 1959.
- The Legal Practice Act, 2014 (Act 28 of 2014), establishes a new regulatory framework for the profession, enhances opportunities to enhance access to services of attorneys and advocates, and creates mechanisms to address the spiralling cost of litigation.

Entities

Legal Aid South Africa

Legal Aid South Africa was established in terms of Section 2 of the Legal Aid South Africa Act, 2014 (Act 39 of 2014), to provide state-funded legal aid and advice to eligible individuals to ensure access to justice and the realisation of individuals' rights to legal representation in accordance with the Constitution. The entity focuses on providing legal assistance to children, women, detainees, and in divorce or domestic violence cases and land rights matters. The entity will continue to prioritise providing legal assistance to eligible people over the MTEF period at the state's expense. Expenditure is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 2,6%, from R2.2 billion in 2022/23 to R2.4 billion in 2025/26. Spending on compensation of employees accounts for an estimated 80,8% (R7.4 billion) of total expenditure over this period.

The entity is set to derive 98,8% (R9.1 billion) of its revenue over the medium term through transfers from the department. This includes an additional allocation of R240.4 million for the legal representation portion of the land rights management facility as part of a function transfer from the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development. This funding will be used to establish a land rights management unit in the Legal Aid Services programme to offer legal representation and assistance on land-related matters.

Expenditure is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 2.7%, from R2.1 billion in 2021/22 to R2.2 billion in 2024/25, with compensation of employees accounting for 81,6% (R1.7 billion) of this spending, increasing at an average annual rate of 2,5%. Included in this are additional allocations of R11.2 million in 2022/23, R11.3 million in 2023/24 and R11.8 million in 2024/25 to fund the costs of 15 legal practitioners appointed in 2021/22 to service newly

established courts for specialised commercial crimes in Limpopo, Mpumalanga, North West and Northern Cape.

The entity expects to derive 99% (R6.4 billion) of its revenue over the medium term through transfers from the department, increasing at an annual average rate of 2,8%, from R2 billion in 2021/22 to R2.2 billion in 2024/25.

Public Protector of South Africa (PPSA)

The PPSA was established in terms of Section 181 of the Constitution, which mandates it to strengthen constitutional democracy by investigating any conduct in state affairs, or in the public administration in any sphere of government, that is alleged or suspected to be improper or result in any impropriety or prejudice; report on that conduct; and take appropriate remedial action. Section 182 of the Constitution states that the Public Protector must be accessible to all persons and communities.

Over the next three years, the entity will focus on conducting investigations to root out improper conduct and maladministration in state affairs. In doing this, the Public Protector aims to finalise 80% of early resolution cases within six months, service delivery cases within 12 months, and good governance and integrity cases within 24 months. Expenditure is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 3%, from R360.9 million in 2022/23 to R394.2 million in 2025/26. Compensation of employees is the institution's main cost driver, spending on which is set to increase at an average annual rate of 3,3%, from R270.9 million in 2022/23 to R298.9 million in 2025/26. The entity expects to derive 99,1% (R1.5 billion) of its revenue over the medium term through transfers from the department. These are set to increase at an average annual rate of 3%.

South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC)

The SAHRC is an independent statutory body established in terms of chapter 9 of the Constitution with a mandate to enhance constitutional democracy by promoting, protecting and overseeing human rights. It promotes awareness of human rights, ensures compliance with socioeconomic rights outlined in the Constitution, offers education and training, and works to provide effective remedies when violations occur.

The powers and functions of the commission are further detailed in the Human Rights Commission Act of 1994. The commission is also tasked with overseeing the national preventive mechanism, which was created as part of South Africa's adherence to the United Nations Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment; and managing the independent monitoring mechanism in line with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Over the next three years, the commission aimed to advance human rights, and safeguard against and oversee the prevention of human rights violations by collaborating with relevant parties, advocating for human rights reforms and positions in policies and legislation, and fostering adherence to these rights, as outlined in the Bill of Rights. In line with its objective of ensuring compliance with socioeconomic rights, the commission planned to increase the number of complaints and enquiries finalised from 3 000 in 2022/23 to 5 000 in each year of the MTEF period.

This will be done through focus group dialogues with communities. Total expenditure is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 1.9%, from R216.9 million in 2022/23 to R229.3 million in 2025/26. Compensation of employees accounts for 70% (R612.6 million) of total spending, increasing at an average annual rate of 3.4%, from

R144.4 million in 2022/23 to R159.4 million in 2025/26. The commission expects to derive 98.6% (R863.6 million) of its revenue over the medium term through transfers from the department, increasing at an average annual rate of 3.1%.

Special Investigating Unit (SIU)

The SIU derives its mandate from the SIU and Special Tribunals Act of 1996. Its primary function is to investigate serious malpractice, maladministration and corruption affecting the administration of state institutions, and take or assist in taking appropriate and effective legal action against wrongdoers. A Special Tribunal was established in 2019/20 to act as a dedicated court for civil proceedings. The tribunal aims to provide timely litigation to recover wrongfully acquired funds and assets. Over the medium term, the entity will aim to initiate civil litigation in the tribunal to hear cases related to the recommendations of the state capture commission.

As a result, the number of cases enrolled at the tribunal is expected to increase from 35 in 2022/23 to 65 in 2025/26. To enable this, the entity has been allocated an additional R50 million in 2023/24, R30 million in 2024/25 and R20 million in 2025/26. The entity aimed to develop the capabilities to investigate and root out maladministration and corruption at all levels of the State. To enable this, expenditure is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 20,3%, from R871.5 million in 2022/23 to R1.5 billion in 2025/26. This increase is mainly due to an increase in spending on compensation of employees, from R576.2 million in 2022/23 to R1.1 billion in 2025/26, at an average annual rate of 23,7%. This is expected to enable the entity to increase its number of personnel from 650 in 2022/23 to 900 in 2025/26.

As a result, the number of investigations closed per year is expected to increase from 1 450 in 2022/23 to 1 750 in 2025/26, and the number of investigative reports submitted to The Presidency is expected to increase from 20 to 33 in the same period.

The entity expects to derive 60% (R2.2 billion) of its revenue over the next three years through charging client departments and state institutions for services rendered, and 40% (R1.5 billion) through transfers from the department. Non-tax revenue is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 35,5%, from R402.6 million in 2022/23 to

R1 billion in 2025/26, largely due to the anticipated increase in the number of billable hours for investigations.

Role players

National Prosecuting Authority (NPA)

The NPA was established in 1998 and comprises the National Director of Public Prosecutions, Deputy National Directors of Public Prosecutions, Directors and Special Directors of Public Prosecutions and other members of the prosecuting authority appointed at or assigned to the NPA, and members of the administrative staff. It provides a coordinated prosecuting service that ensures that justice is

delivered to victims of crime through general and specialised prosecutions. It also removes profit from crime and protects certain witnesses.

The NPA has the power to: institute and conduct criminal proceedings on behalf of the State, carry out any necessary functions incidental to instituting and conducting such criminal proceedings, and discontinue criminal proceedings. The Deputy National Directors of Public Prosecutions are responsible for the following divisions:

- NPS
- AFU and International Relations
- Legal Affairs
- Administration.

The Special Directors of Public Prosecutions head the following specialised units:

- Sexual Offences and Community Affairs (SOCA) Unit.
- Priority Crimes Litigation Unit.
- Office for Witness Protection (OWP). Over the medium term, the authority aimed to focus on increased feelings of safety and security; improved investor confidence in South Africa through high-impact prosecution, and improved access to NPA services for all.

To achieve these outcomes, the NPA planned to address key challenges in its operating environment, including stabilising the organisation, ensuring that sufficient financial and human resources are available to enable effective operations, improving public perceptions of the NPA and repairing its reputation, and enhancing collaboration and cooperation between all criminal justice agencies.

National Prosecutions Service (NPS)

The NPS is a core division of the NPA, responsible for general and specialised criminal prosecutions. The Directors of Public Prosecutions are the heads of their respective areas of jurisdiction, which are established according to provincial demarcations in each of the seats of the high courts. All the public prosecutors and state advocates working in the district, regional and high courts fall under the responsibility and direction of the Directors of Public Prosecutions. The Special Directors of Public Prosecutions are appointed to carry out certain functions and responsibilities related to a particular crime type, as assigned by the President by proclamation in the Government Gazette.

Office for Witness Protection

The OWP is established in terms of the Witness Protection Act of 1998, and is headed by a director, appointed by and operating under the direction and authority of the Minister of Justice and Correctional Services, for the purpose of administering the Act.

The OWP is responsible for the protection (including temporary protection) of witnesses and related persons, in accordance with the Act. All OWP functions and duties are classified secret in terms of the Witness Protection Act of 1998.

Asset Forfeiture Unit (AFU)

The AFU was established in May 1999 as a division of the NPA to focus on the implementation of Chapter 5 and Chapter 6 of the POCA of 1998. The unit was created to ensure that the powers in the Act to seize criminal assets would be used to their maximum effect in the fight against crime, in particular, organised crime. Criminal assets seized by the AFU are paid into the Criminal Assets Recovery Account. It seizes assets acquired from the proceeds of crime or that have been part of an offence through criminal or civil processes.

Specialised Commercial Crime Unit (SCCU)

The SCCU is mandated to investigate and prosecute commercial crimes and organised commercial crimes. The complexity of commercial crimes requires a more methodical and collaborative investigatory approach if investigations are to lead to a positive result for the State. For this reason, the relationship between commercial investigative branches of SAPS, especially the Directorate for Priority Crime Investigation (DPCI/Hawks), and the NPA is more synergistic. As an active participant in the ACTT, the SCCU actively identifies, investigates and fast tracks for prosecution corruption cases in the private and public sectors.

Beyond investigating and prosecuting commercial crimes, the SCCU team is required, through ongoing engagements with local and international colleagues, to keep up with

international commercial crime trends. Interactions are designed to inform SCCU on specific issues related to cross-border crime. For example:

- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) with regard to issues related to the foreign bribery offences.
- Financial Action Task Force (FATF) with regard to issues related to the money laundering offence.
- Global Action on Cybercrime, with regard to issues related to cybercrime.

Commercial crimes can be categorised as simple as bank fraud to more complex tax schemes to intricate cybercrimes that span the globe. The SCCU's seasoned prosecutors are trained to understand, investigate, and prosecute each of these diverse types.

The SCCU is tasked with investigating and prosecuting cases identified by the DPP and the DPCI as priorities. As well as managing the investigation and prosecution of complex cases referred by the Public Protector and SIU that require the specialised skills of the SCCU prosecutors. At a time when public corruption leads the news, the SCCU is tasked with investigating and prosecuting all public sector fraud and corruption allegations and making a determination on prosecution.

The global nature of some commercial crimes makes investigation and prosecution a challenge. The SCCU prosecutors are trained to understand the complexity of these crimes and are trained to navigate the global banking system used to hide illicit gains.

Specialised Commercial Crime Courts (SCCC)

The DoJ&CD continues to play a crucial role in the fight against corruption through the implementation of the Anti-Corruption Strategy. Part of the department's responsibility in combatting corruption is ensuring the effective and optimal functioning of the SCCCs, which are expected to be extended to all provinces that do not have these courts – over the medium term. Much success has been derived from

the existing SCCC model which allows for a close integration of the work between prosecutors and investigators, and dedicated courts, ensuring that matters are quickly and effectively processed instead of having to await space on an open court roll.

Whilst it was initially envisaged that these courts would be set up in three years, the DoJ&CD was able to expedite this by establishing six courts in the 2020/21 financial year. In the 2021/22 and 2022/23 financial years, the department will ensure that the capacity and efficacy of the SCCCs are enhanced and optimised.

Priority Crimes Litigation Unit

The unit is mandated to tackle cases that threaten national security. It was created by a presidential proclamation. The primary function of the unit is to manage and direct investigations and prosecutions in respect of the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (nuclear, chemical and biological).

Sexual Offences and Community Affairs

The SOCA unit's mandate is to act against the victimisation of vulnerable groups, mainly women and children. The unit develops strategy and policy, and oversees the management of cases relating to sexual offences, domestic violence, human trafficking and maintenance.

The unit aims to:

- Improve the conviction rate in gender-based crimes and crimes against children;
- Protect vulnerable groups from abuse and violence;
- Ensure access to maintenance support; and
- Reduce secondary victimisation.

One of the entity's key achievements in ensuring government's commitment to the fight against sexual offences and GBV is the establishment of Thuthuzela Care Centres. These are one-stop facilities located at public hospitals in communities where sexual assault is particularly high. The facilities are aimed at reducing secondary victimisation, improving conviction rates and reducing the cycle time for the finalisation of rape cases.

Master of the High Court

The Master of the High Court serves the public in respect of:

- Deceased estates;
- Liquidations (insolvent estates); and
- Registration of trusts, tutors and curators' administration of the Guardian's Fund (minors and people with mental disabilities).

The Master's Office has five main divisions, which are all aimed at protecting the financial interests of people whose assets or interests are, for various reasons, managed by others. As part of the turnaround strategy in the Master's Office, there has been a special focus on training frontline officials. The Master's Office is also investigating methods to deliver a more efficient and effective service to the public through the Internet.

Office of the Family Advocate

The role of the Family Advocate is to promote and protect the best interests of children in civil disputes over parental rights and responsibilities. This is achieved by monitoring pleadings filed at court, conducting enquiries, filing reports, appearing in court during the hearing of the application or trial, and providing mediation services in respect of disputes over the parental rights and responsibilities of fathers of children born out of wedlock.

In certain instances, the Family Advocate also assists the courts in matters involving domestic violence and maintenance. Furthermore, litigants are obliged to mediate their disputes before resorting to litigation. Unmarried fathers can approach the Family Advocate directly for assistance without instituting any litigation. Children's rights to participate in, and consult on, decisions affecting them have been entrenched; the Family Advocate is the mechanism whereby the voice of the child is heard.

Areas of legislation

Sexual offences

The Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act of 2007 provides a legal framework to support an integrated approach to the management of sexual offences, thereby aiming to reduce secondary trauma to victims of such crimes.

National Register for Sexual Offenders

The DoJ&CD has developed the NRSO, which was deployed in 195 courts. The register was established by an Act of Parliament in 2007. It is a record of names of those found guilty of sexual offences against children and people with mental disabilities. The NRSO gives employers in the public or private sectors, such as schools, crèches and hospitals, the right to check that the person being hired is fit to work with children or mentally disabled people.

Information on whether a person is on the list is available on request, along with the relevant motivation, before any confirmation or information is released.

Maintenance

The main objective of the Maintenance Act of 1998 is to facilitate the securing of maintenance money from parents and/or other persons able to maintain maintenance beneficiaries, mainly children, who have a right to maintenance. Parents and/or guardians must maintain children in the proportion in which they can afford. Therefore, both parents and/or sets of families need to take responsibility for the maintenance of the child or children concerned.

Maintenance Courts are situated in Magistrates' Courts. Mothers or fathers who do not get support for their children from the other parent can approach Maintenance Courts to claim maintenance from that parent. There are Maintenance Officers in charge of maintenance matters at Magistrates Courts. It is not necessary to have an attorney to claim maintenance. Maintenance Officers are always on hand to help those in need to complete the necessary forms.

In the case where one of the parents of the child refuses to pay maintenance; then the case must go to the Maintenance Court. In this case, the Maintenance Officer will provide details to the parties on when to appear in court and which court to go to. The Maintenance Amendment Act, 2015 (Act 9 of 2015), further ensures that maintenance systems are effective, putting the following measures in place, among others:

- A beneficiary will be able to claim maintenance where they

work and not only where they live. This will make it easier for beneficiaries to go to the maintenance court during working hours.
- If the person from whom maintenance is sought cannot be located, despite all reasonable efforts, the court can grant an order directing electronic communication service providers to provide the court with contact information.
- Maintenance courts must complete their enquiries as speedily as possible. The views of the person who is obliged to pay maintenance must be sought.
- If a person has defaulted on paying maintenance, their personal details will be submitted to all credit bureaus. This will prevent maintenance defaulters from continuing to receive credit while owing maintenance. They will effectively be blacklisted.

Guardian's Fund

The Guardian's Fund was created to hold and administer funds which are paid to the Master of the High Court on behalf of various persons known or unknown, for example, minors, persons incapable of managing their own affairs, unborn heirs, missing or absent persons or persons having an interest in the moneys of a usufructuary, fiduciary or fideicommissary nature. Each Master of the High Court has its own Guardian's Fund. Through the fund, the DoJ&CD contributes substantially to poverty alleviation.

Domestic violence

The Protection from Harassment Act, 2011 (Act 17 of 2011), is the first specific legislation to address sexual harassment in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region. The essence of the Act is to provide a quick, easy and affordable civil remedy in the form of a protection order for incidences of stalking. The legislation arose out of a SALRC investigation into the legal framework governing stalking and domestic violence. A key component of the Act is that it seeks to cover all forms of stalking, not just that involving people engaged in a relationship. A protection order can be issued instructing the harasser to cease harassment. The Act sets out how a complainant is to apply for a protection order and the procedure to be followed in granting one.

The legislation also provides for the issuing of an interim protection order without the

knowledge of the respondent, given certain conditions. A victim of cyberstalking can apply to a court for an interim protection order even when the identity of the alleged stalker is unknown. The law will also empower the police to investigate a stalker to identify the perpetrator even before a victim launches an application for a protection order.

Human trafficking

The Prevention and Combating of Trafficking in Persons Act, 2013 (Act 7 of 2013), defines trafficking to include the recruitment, transportation, sale or harbouring of people by means of force, deceit, the abuse of vulnerability and the abuse of power for exploitation. The Act addresses the scourge of trafficking in persons holistically and comprehensively. Besides creating the main offence of trafficking in persons, the legislation creates offences such as debt bondage; the possession and destruction of, and tampering with, travel documents; and using the services of victims of trafficking, all of which facilitate innocent persons becoming victims of this modern-day form of slavery.

The legislation gives effect to South Africa's international obligations in terms of the UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children. South Africa fully recognises the existence of human trafficking and smuggling activities. These crimes are mostly perpetuated by transnational syndicates, hence the call from many states for regional and international cooperation, as well as the introduction of aligned legislation and immigration procedures.

To address these challenges, UN member states require fair, responsible, ethical and efficient criminal justice systems and crime prevention strategies that contribute to sustainable economic and social development. It also imposes a responsibility on states to work together. These scourges have also had a negative impact on the people of South Africa. Government therefore fully supports the UN's promotion of objectives relating to the continued and focused national and international prevention, and combating of these crimes.

In South Africa, migration and human trafficking are a result of a complex set of interrelated push-and-pull factors. On the push side, factors such as poverty, lack of opportunities, dislocations from family and community, gender, racial and ethnic inequalities and the break-up of families are all relevant. The pull factors include the promise of a better life, consumer aspirations and lack of information on the risks involved, established patterns of migration, porous borders and fewer constraints on travel.

As a result of these factors, South Africa has become a source, transit and destination country for trafficked and smuggled men, women and children. South African girls are trafficked or smuggled for the purposes of commercial sexual exploitation and domestic servitude, while boys are trafficked or smuggled for use in street vending, food service and agriculture. The Prevention and Combating of Trafficking in Persons Act of 2013 deals comprehensively with human trafficking in all its forms and, in particular, provides for the protection of and assistance to victims of trafficking. Persons engaged with trafficking will be liable on conviction to a severe fine or imprisonment, including imprisonment for life or such imprisonment without the option of a fine or both.

Other existing laws being used to prosecute traffickers include the Children's Act of 2005, which provides for the criminalisation of the trafficking of children, while the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act of 2007 contains provisions that criminalise trafficking in persons for sexual purposes. South Africa has also been successful in using the racketeering offences in the POCA of 1998 to deal with criminal organisations involved in trafficking. Under common law, depending on the circumstances of each case, persons suspected of trafficking could

be charged with kidnapping, common assault, assault with intent to do grievous bodily harm, extortion, attempted murder and murder.

Those involved in acts of trafficking in persons may be prosecuted using the Immigration Act, 2002 (Act 13 of 2002); the Basic Conditions of Employment Act, 1997 (Act 75 of 1997); the Intimidation Act, 1982 (Act 72 of 1982); the Domestic Violence Act of 1998, and the Films and

Publications Act, 1996 (Act 65 of 1996).

Programmes and projects

Court Services

The purpose of the programme is to facilitate the resolution of criminal and civil cases and family law disputes by providing accessible, efficient and quality administrative support to the lower courts, and managing court facilities.

State Legal Services

The purpose of this programme is to provide legal and legislative services to government, supervise the administration of deceased and insolvent estates and the Guardian's Fund, prepare and promote legislation and undertake research in support of this.

Auxiliary and Associated Services

The purpose of the programme is to provide a variety of auxiliary services associated with the DoJ&CD's purpose. It also funds the Interdepartmental Justice Modernisation Programme and the President's Fund, and transfers payments to public entities and constitutional institutions.

Child justice

Children's Act

The Department of Social Development leads the implementation of the Children's Act of 2005. The DoJ&CD's main responsibility is towards the Children's Court operations relating to the Act. Embracing information and communication technology has allowed the DoJ&CD to extend its reach on modern-day platforms that are more accessible to children, thereby increasing access and engagement with potentially vulnerable or threatened children who would otherwise not have access to the department and, consequently, support and assistance.

The DoJ&CD has developed a child-friendly Frequently Asked Questions link on its website. In addition, the department created an email address, children@justice.gov.za, which the public may use to report issues relating to children. The Children's Court is the DoJ&CD's principal legal mechanism to intervene and assist children who need care and protection. To gather statistics from the Children's Courts, the department developed the Children's Court Monitoring Tool. Data about matters coming to court relating to children in need of care is gathered monthly. Section 14 of the Children's Act of 2005 states that every child has the right to bring a matter to the Children's Court. This means that Children's Courts can serve as direct entry points for a child to seek help and protection. Children's Courts have been rendered highly accessible through the Act.

Child Justice Act

The Child Justice Act of 2008 promotes and protects the constitutional rights of children in conflict with the law. The Act provides special measures, designed to break the cycle of crime and restore in these children a lifestyle that is law-abiding and productive. The DoJ&CD established governance structures to ensure the effective inter-sectoral implementation of the Act. Nine provincial child justice forums are coordinating and monitoring the implementation of the Act at provincial level.

Restorative justice

Restorative justice responds to crime in a way that focuses on the losses suffered by victims, by both holding offenders accountable for the harm they have caused and building peace in communities. Restorative justice strategies, programmes and processes in the criminal justice system are in place to try and heal the harm caused by crime, from a holistic point of view, for the victim, the offender and the community concerned – with the aim of rebuilding broken relationships and encouraging social justice and social dialogue.

Restorative justice options are always voluntary for victims involved. Alternative dispute resolution is defined as the disposal of disputes outside formal court proceedings. The processes and mechanisms may or may not include the restorative-justice approach.

Integrated Case-Flow Management Framework

The DoJ&CD, in partnership with stakeholders from other partner organisations, is developing an enhanced version of case-flow management in the court environment. To eradicate case-flow blockages, workable solutions were adopted.

These include:

- Continuous cooperation of stakeholders to implement and maintain case-flow management at all courts;
- Establishing judicial leadership and case-flow management buy-in processes in the lower and higher courts in the form of case-flow management forums;
- Facilitating and monitoring the creation of case-flow management governance structures to sustain productivity in the courts' environment; and
- Maintaining case-flow management.

Systems that support case-flow management in the courts include the Integrated Case Management System (ICMS). This system spans all disciplines of cases administered in the justice environment. The ICMS draws on several core modules to perform basic functions such as information warehousing, case numbering and document scanning.

The specific functionality for each court and office is then built on these foundations. The further development of the ICMS Masters System aims to create a Paperless Estate Administration System for the Master's Office. This system will computerise the administration process in deceased estates, as all documentation will be scanned and stored electronically.

Audio-Visual Remand (AVR) System

The system links Magistrates' Courts to Correctional Services Remand Detention centres/facilities via closed-circuit television. The development in this area of support to case-flow management for the courts has brought about a significant improvement in the movement of cases through the use of technology.

Case-Reduction Backlog Project

The JCPS Cluster departments have introduced a case backlog intervention to reduce the number of backlog cases in regional and district courts, and provide additional capacity to the backlog priority sites. The intervention ensures that the inflow of the number of new cases is balanced by the

number of matters concluded. The project deliverables have been integrated into the outputs of the JCPS Cluster Delivery Agreement.

The DoJ&CD has provided resources in the form of infrastructure, court personnel, the judiciary, magistrates and budget, in support of the prosecution and judiciary to remove these cases from the backlog roll.

Integrated Justice System

This system aims to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the entire criminal justice system by increasing the probability of successful investigation, prosecution, punishment for priority crimes and, ultimately, rehabilitation of offenders. Further issues receiving specific attention include overcrowding in prisons and awaiting-trial prisoner problems, as well as bail, sentencing and plea-bargaining. Government wants to eliminate the duplication of services and programmes at all levels.

The benefits of proper alignment include: less duplication of services; the effective use of scarce and limited resources and skills; and joint strategic planning and a planned approach instead of being reactive. The JCPS Cluster has structured itself to focus on two main areas of responsibility – operational and developmental issues relating to the justice system, and improving the safety and security of citizens.

International legal relations

South Africa has, over the past 25 years, become a signatory to many international and regional human rights instruments and has complied with obligations emanating from these instruments. Over the next five years, the DoJ&CD planned to table country reports in compliance with its international obligations arising out of core human rights treaties such as the Universal Periodic Review, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; and the International Convention against Torture and Other Cruel or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

The department will work towards the finalisation of accession to outstanding international instruments, including the Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid, International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance and many relevant others. The department will also review, modernise and improve the Extradition Regime and the Mutual Legal Assistance Framework to ensure effectiveness and enhance collaboration with other states in the fight against crime in general. The conclusion of extradition and mutual legal assistance treaties will focus on countries in Latin America and Southeast Asia.

The main functions of the Chief Directorate: International Legal Relations, in the DoJ&CD, are to identify and research legal questions that relate to matters pertaining to the administration of justice between South Africa and other countries, as well as international bodies and institutions. The Chief Directorate is involved in direct liaison and negotiations at administrative and technical levels with foreign countries to promote international legal cooperation, and for the possible conclusion of extradition and mutual legal assistance agreements. It also aims to establish greater uniformity between the legal systems of southern African countries, especially within the SADC.

The chief directorate coordinates human rights issues at international level under the auspices of the UN and the African Union. Its functions are divided into eight broad categories:

- Regular liaison on international legal matters with the SADC;
- Coordinating all Commonwealth matters pertaining to the
- Administration of justice;
- Interacting with the UN, the Hague Conference and the International Institute for the Unification of Private Law;
- Interacting with foreign countries outside the SADC region;
- Preparing Cabinet and Parliament documentation for the ratification of human rights treaties, including report writing; and
- Processing requests for extradition, mutual legal assistance in criminal matters, interrogatory commissions, as well as requests for maintenance in terms of the Reciprocal Enforcement of Maintenance Orders Act, 1963 (Act 80 of 1963).

Owing to the number of departments and/or institutions involved in the execution of extradition and mutual legal assistance requests and, taking into consideration that diplomatic channels are followed to transmit documents, delays are experienced from time to time. Provisions are included in extradition and mutual legal assistance agreements to provide for direct communication between central authorities. The drastic reduction in the turnaround time for the processing of these requests should be a clear indication to the rest of the world that South Africa will neither be a safe haven for fugitives nor a breeding ground for transnational organised crime.

International Criminal Court (ICC)

South Africa remains committed to the global promotion of the rule of law and will continue cooperating with the UN system to ensure the success of the international human rights architecture. South Africa views the ICC as an important element in a new system of international law and governance.

Office of the Chief Justice (OCJ)

Over the next three years, the OCJ aimed to focus on improving access to justice and the services of the superior courts, and increasing access to judicial education courses. The work of the Superior Court Services programme is intended to enable access to justice, primarily by ensuring that the judiciary is supported. The programme has a budget of R3.1 billion over the next three years, accounting for 39.9% of the department's total allocation.

To strengthen access to its services, the department aimed to fill an estimated 33 critical positions for registrars, clerks and judges' secretaries at superior courts. Between 2022/23 and 2025/26, this is expected to result in an increase in: the finalisation of default judgments from 74% to 80%; the finalisation of taxations of legal bills of costs from 80% to 90%; and spending on compensation of employees from R1.96 billion to R1.97 billion.

This nominal increase in spending on compensation of employees is due to an additional allocation for inflationary salary adjustments amounting to R218.1 million over the

next three years coupled with an increase in personnel over the same period.

To increase efficiencies such as the turnaround time in dealing with cases, the Court Online system is expected to be rolled out in 2023/24 to seven prioritised superior courts in the Eastern Cape, Free State, Mpumalanga, Limpopo, the Northern Cape, the North West and the Western Cape.

The plan is to implement the system in all the courts over the MTEF period as determined by the judiciary based on their current infrastructure. Spending for this is within the Corporate Services subprogramme's allocation of R174.1 million in that year. In its efforts to enhance the judicial skills of current and aspiring judicial officers, the department planned to increase the number of judicial education and training courses conducted from 110 in 2022/23 to 125 in 2025/26. This is expected to lead to expenditure of R92.7 million over the next three years in the SAJEI subprogramme in the Judicial Education and Support programme.

South African Judicial Education Institute

The SAJEI was established in order to promote the independence, impartiality, dignity, accessibility and effectiveness of the courts through continuing judicial education as provided for in the SAJEI Act 14 of 2008. The Institute commenced with training in January 2012.

Legislation and policies

In discharging its mandate, the OCJ is guided by the Constitution, other legislation and policies that constitute the legal framework for the establishment of the office. The Superior Courts Act of 2013 reaffirms the Chief Justice as the head of the Judiciary, responsible for the establishment and monitoring of norms and standards for the judicial functions of all courts. The Act further empowers the Chief Justice to issue written protocols or directives, or give guidance or advice, to judicial officers – in respect of norms and standards for the performance of the judicial functions; and regarding any matter affecting the dignity, accessibility, effectiveness, efficiency or functioning of the courts.

Constitutional mandates

The Constitution provides for the independence of the Judiciary and protects judicial independence by prohibiting any interference with the functioning of the courts. It further imposes a duty on organs of state to assist and protect the courts to ensure, amongst other things, their independence, impartiality and efficiency. Furthermore, the Constitution as amended in 2013, formalises the Chief Justice as the head of the Judiciary and entrusts him with the responsibility for the establishment and monitoring of norms and standards for the judicial functions of all courts. It also designates the Constitutional Court as the highest court in all matters.

To advance the transformation imperatives of the Constitution, schedule 6 of the Constitution provides for the rationalisation of all courts and all relevant legislation with a view to establishing a judicial system suited to the requirements of the Constitution. The Constitution furthermore provides that, after a national election, the Chief Justice is required to convene the first sitting of the National Assembly, and to preside over the election of the Speaker of Parliament.

Ministry of Correctional Services

The Department of Correctional Services (DCS) reports to the Minister of Correctional Services.

Department of Correctional Services (DCS)

DCS is mandated to place offenders in a secure, safe and humane environment and ensure that rehabilitation and successful reintegration programmes are implemented. This mandate is derived from the Correctional Services Act, 1998 (Act 111 of 1998), the Criminal Procedure Act (CPA) of 1977, the 2005 White Paper on Corrections in South Africa and the 2014 White Paper on Remand Detention Management in South Africa. This legislation allows DCS to contribute to the preservation and promotion of a just, peaceful and safe society by ensuring that the corrections environment is secure, safe and humane and that offenders are optimally rehabilitated to reduce their likelihood of reoffending.

The department's appropriation for the 2025/26 financial year is R29,221,952,000, increasing to R30,567,412,000 in 2026/27 and reaching R31,950,271,000 in the 2027/28 financial year.

The NDP articulates a vision for a safer South Africa by 2030, and this vision is supported by Priority 5 (social cohesion and safe communities) of government's 2025 – 2029 MTSF. The department's overarching objectives are to detain inmates in safe, secure and humane conditions in correctional centres and remand detention facilities; provide sentenced offenders with needs-based rehabilitation programmes and interventions; and reintegrate offenders into communities as law-abiding citizens by effectively managing non-custodial sentences and parole.

To achieve these objectives, over the period ahead, the department will focus on implementing its self-sufficiency and strategic framework, providing adequate security at correctional facilities, and facilitating restorative justice. In response to budget constraints, over the period ahead, the department plans to become more self-sufficient. This will entail running production workshops and agricultural farms aimed at upskilling and rehabilitating offenders by training them to produce items, such as furniture, uniforms, shoes, baked goods and agricultural products, that can be sold or used within the department.

The department has 21 big farms and 115 small gardens, 11 bakeries, 19 textile workshops, 10 steel workshops, 10 wood workshops, and one shoe factory, where products are produced for own use. Apart from enhancing offenders' employability beyond incarceration, the department has an opportunity to contribute to poverty alleviation and job creation within communities and forge good working relationships between centres and communities. Departmental farms produce various products, including vegetable, fruits, red meat, pork, milk, butter, chicken, eggs and animal fodder.

In this regard, the department runs the following operations:

- 16 orchards nationally, making it possible to provide fruits needed for inmates;
- 20 farms that have potential to produce fodder for animal feed;
- 17 dairies nationally;

- 15 piggery projects nationally that produce pork for inmates; and
- Seven layers nationally.

The department plans to supplement these potential income streams through offender labour.

Providing adequate security and security equipment at correctional facilities

Over the next three years, the department aims to prevent escapes and reduce the percentage of injuries in correctional facilities. To achieve this, it will enhance its security operations by providing personnel with appropriate equipment, including body armour, ammunition, leg irons, handcuffs, metal detectors, tonfas, gas or fire filters, pepper spray, neutralisers and mobile parcel scanners.

Improving facilities

To continue implementing strategies to reduce expected overcrowding in correctional facilities, over the next three years, the department will provide for the construction and refurbishment of facilities. This will ensure that additional bed spaces are made available.

Effective rehabilitation

The department aims to continue ensuring that all sentenced offenders are provided with effective rehabilitation programmes to enable their successful reintegration into society. In its efforts to achieve this, the department will implement programmes that focus on addressing the underlying causes of offending behaviour, providing educational and vocational training to offenders to improve their life skills and employability upon release, and continuing to implement the self-sufficiency and sustainability framework.

The framework is intended to guide the department towards finding innovative ways to generate its own revenue and contribute to economic development while upskilling and rehabilitating offenders. Implementing the framework primarily entails running production workshops and agricultural farms where offenders are trained to produce items – such as furniture, uniforms, shoes, baked goods and agricultural products – that can be sold or used within the department.

The department plans to supplement these potential income streams by offender labour. The percentage of sentenced offenders on correctional sentence plans is expected to increase to 98% over the period ahead, and 100% of offenders are expected to participate in occupational skills programmes. All funding related to the rehabilitation of offenders is provided through the Rehabilitation programme.

Re-integrating offenders into society

Community Corrections plays a pivotal role within the South African criminal justice system. This approach not only serves as a cost-effective alternative to incarceration but also marks a significant shift from traditional punitive measures towards a focus on rehabilitation and reintegration of offenders into society.

Community Corrections encompasses a range of non-custodial measures and supervision methods for individuals under the jurisdiction of DCS. This includes supervision, community-based sanctions and services tailored for offenders, as mandated by various authorities such as the Correctional Supervision and Parole Board (CSPB), High Court and the Minister. The department's commitment to this system is reflected in the management of 234 Community Corrections offices, 69 satellite offices and 764 service points nationwide, which provide essential services to parolees, probationers and other individuals within the community corrections framework. These facilities not only serve offenders but also engage families, service providers and oversight bodies, fostering a collaborative environment for rehabilitation and reintegration.

Additionally, the department is committed to community development through our plough-back initiatives, which aim to involve 21 784 parolees and probationers in projects that benefit the affected communities. Recognising the often-overlooked needs of crime victims, the department is also dedicated to providing socio-economic support to 594 victims in the 2026/2027 financial year, addressing their unmet needs and fostering healing.

The department's efforts in Community Corrections reflect a holistic approach to criminal justice, prioritising rehabilitation, reintegration, community engagement and the restoration of relationships. The department believes that through collaboration with various stakeholders, it can ensure that offenders are reintegrated as law-abiding citizens, ultimately contributing to safer communities for all South Africans.

In its efforts to enable the effective reintegration of offenders into society, the department provides aftercare support through the facilitation of programmes and skills that seek to assist parolees and former offenders to be self-sufficient. The department will continue to implement the social reintegration framework that seeks to reposition Community Corrections. This will include provision of resources, professionalising Community Corrections, increasing stakeholder management and offering rehabilitation programmes.

Role players

National Council for Correctional Services (NCCS)

The NCCS is a statutory body that guides the Minister of Correctional Services in developing policy relating to the correctional system and the sentence-management process.

Judicial Inspectorate of Correctional Services (JICS)

JICS was established in 1998 with the statutory objective to facilitate the inspection of correctional centres so that the inspecting judge may report on the treatment of inmates and on conditions in correctional centres. JICS is an independent office.

Medical Parole Advisory Board

The Correctional Matters Amendment Act, 2011 (Act 5 of 2011), provides for a new Medical Parole Policy and correctional supervision. The Medical Parole Advisory Board was appointed in February 2012 to look into all seriously and terminally ill inmates who have submitted reports requesting to be released on medical grounds.

Correctional Supervision and Parole Boards

Correctional Supervision and Parole Boards are responsible for dealing with parole matters and matters of correctional supervision. The boards have decision-making competency except for:

- decisions regarding the granting of parole to people who are declared dangerous criminals in terms of Section 286A of the CPA of 1977;
- the converting of sentences of imprisonment imposed in terms of Section 276 (A) (3) of the CPA of 1977 into correctional supervision; and
- decisions with regard to those sentenced to life imprisonment.

In such cases, recommendations are submitted to courts that, in turn, make decisions in respect of conditional placement.

There are 53 Correctional Supervision and Parole Boards in South Africa. These boards are chaired by community members who are regarded as suitable and capable of carrying out the responsibilities by virtue of occupation, standing or cultural reverence. DCS provides the members with intensive training in respect of the processes, legislative implications and relative policies.

In addition, two members of the community are appointed as members of the board. Trained staff members of DCS fill the positions of vice-chairperson and secretary. A board can also co-opt a representative of the SAPS and a representative of the DoJ&CD. However, if the representatives of the SAPS and of DoJ&CD are not co-opted to participate in a board hearing, the chairperson of the board may request the departments to provide written inputs in respect of specific serious crimes.







SOUTH AFRICA
YEARBOOK
2024/25

Mineral Resources and Energy

The Department of Mineral Resources and Energy (DMRE) is mandated to ensure the transparent and efficient regulation of South Africa's mineral resources and minerals industry, and the secure and sustainable provision of energy in support of socioeconomic development. Several acts regulate the mining, minerals and energy sectors.

The 1998 White Paper on Energy Policy, alongside the 2003 White Paper on Renewable Energy, sets out government's overarching position on the supply and consumption of energy. Other applicable policies include the National Development Plan , the Integrated Energy Plan (IEP), Integrated Resource Plan (IRP), the Electricity Pricing Policy, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, the National Environmental Management: Air Quality Act of 2004 and the National Energy Act of 2008.

The NDP envisages that, by 2030, South Africa will have an adequate supply of electricity and liquid fuels to maintain economic activity and prevent economic disruptions, and a mining sector that prioritises the welfare of its human resources and the environment. To give effect to this vision, over the medium term, the DMRE will focus on transforming mining and energy resources, rehabilitating mines and the environment, extending access to electricity, enhancing energy efficiency, and managing nuclear energy in accordance with international commitments.

These focus areas contribute to Priority 1 (economic transformation and job creation) and Priority 5 (social cohesion and safe communities) of government's 2019-2024 Medium Term Strategic Framework.

The department's spending priorities

Over the medium term, the department will continue to focus on regulating the petroleum sector; ensuring mine health, safety and equity; rehabilitating mines and the environment; and extending access to electricity. This is intended to ensure that South Africa has an adequate supply of electricity and liquid fuels to maintain economic activity and prevent disruptions, and to give effect to a mining sector that prioritises the welfare of its human resources and the environment.

Transfers and subsidies to public entities and municipalities account for an estimated 74,4% (R19.6 billion) of the department's planned spending over the MTEF period. Most of this is allocated to the integrated national electrification programme, which is set to receive R12.9 billion through the Mineral and Energy Resources Programmes and Projects programme. Total expenditure is expected to decrease at an average annual rate of 3,9%, from R10.3 billion in 2023/24 to R9.1 billion in 2026/27, mostly because of Cabinet-approved reductions to the department's budget amounting to R8.3 billion over the medium term.

The department plans to mitigate the effects of these by performing more functions in-house rather than using consultants, arranging more meetings virtually, and filling only critical vacant posts. The total number of personnel is expected to decrease from 1 550 in 2023/24 to 1 461 in 2026/27. Spending on compensation of employees is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 4,5%, from R1.1 billion in 2023/24 to R1.2 billion in 2026/27. An estimated 25,3% (R7.2 billion) of the department's expenditure over the next three years is set aside for operational expenditure, of which R3.5 billion is for compensation of employees and R3.6 billion is for goods and services.

Regulating the mining and petroleum sectors

The National Development Plan envisages that, by 2030, South Africa will have an adequate supply of electricity and liquid fuels to maintain economic activity and prevent economic disruptions. The plan also sets out objectives for the mining sector to prioritise the welfare of human resources and the environment. To give effect to this vision, over the medium term, the department will focus on transforming mining and energy resources and securing energy supply by developing and revising legislation and policies.

To accelerate transformation in the mining and energy sectors over the MTEF period, the department aims to monitor and enforce compliance with the Mineral and Petroleum Resources Development Act of 2002. This is expected to be done by conducting 212 social and labour plan inspections and 500 mine economic inspections per year over the next three years. To enforce compliance with regulatory standards and transformation objectives in the petroleum sector, the department plans to inspect 1 500 petroleum retail sites and issue rights or permits to 200 historically disadvantaged South Africans per year over the period ahead.

These activities are carried out through the Minerals and Petroleum Regulation programme, which is allocated R1.7 billion over the medium term. Developing integrated minerals and energy plans, policies and legislation, as well as advancing global relations, are key components of the department's work. As a result, the department plans to revise the 2019 Integrated Resource Plan by 2024/25 and amend the Mineral and Petroleum Resources Development Act of 2002, the Mine Health and Safety Act of 1996, the Petroleum Products Act (1977), and develop the South African Petroleum Company over the MTEF period. Allocations for this work amount to R3.7 billion over the period ahead in the Mining, Minerals and Energy Policy Development programme.

As minerals exploration is crucial for the sustainability and future growth of the mining industry, amounts of R80 million in 2024/25 and R120 million in 2025/26 have been allocated in the Mining, Minerals and Energy Policy Development programme to establish a dedicated exploration fund for mining. The fund will be used for mining exploration to uncover untapped resources within South Africa's borders, and will be driven by the department in partnership with the Council for Geoscience (which will provide technical services) and the Industrial Development Corporation (which will administer the fund and has committed R200 million to co-fund and operationalise it).

Ensuring mine health, safety and equity

The department conducts investigations, inspections and audits on mines to ensure that they comply with minimum health and safety requirements. As this work is labour intensive, spending on compensation of employees accounts for an estimated 82.5% (R609.8 million) of the Mine Health and Safety Inspectorate programme's budget over the MTEF period. The programme is set to receive 2,6% (R738.8 million) of the department's total budget over

the period ahead. Other cost drivers include inspections, audits, fatal accident inquiries and investigations at mines, and travel and accommodation costs for inspectors, for which R114.9 million is allocated under goods and services.

Rehabilitating mines and the environment

To promote the health and safety of mine employees and people in surrounding communities, the department will continue to rehabilitate dangerous, derelict and ownerless mining sites. Accordingly, over the medium term, it aims to intensify its efforts to rehabilitate derelict and ownerless mines, and seal off dangerous shafts to promote the health and safety of mine employees and people in surrounding communities. With the increase in illegal mining, especially in Gauteng, it has become crucial for the department to accelerate the closure of mine shafts as they provide easy access for illegal miners to reach previously mined working surfaces.

Over the next three years, the department plans to rehabilitate nine mines and seal off 120 shafts and holdings. To ensure this work takes place, an additional amount of R181.9 million has been reprioritised from the Integrated National Electrification Programme subprogramme for the Council for Mineral Technology and Research (Mintek) in 2024/25. The entity is allocated R586.4 million for this purpose over the medium term in the Environmental Management Projects subprogramme, in addition to its allocation of R849.7 million in the Economic Growth, Promotion and Global Relations subprogramme.

Extending access to electricity

The integrated national electrification programme oversees and manages processes for the financing and implementation of the electrification programme, manages the annual planning processes including electrification infrastructure plans, and manages and coordinates technical audits for the Mineral and Energy Resources Programmes and Projects programme.

In support of government's policy to extend access to electricity to all South Africans, an additional 300 000 households are expected to be connected to the electricity grid over the next three years. To enable this, six new substations are set to be built and nine substations are expected to be upgraded. A further 15 000 households per year are expected to be provided with non-grid electrification, mainly solar. Most households to be electrified are in deep rural areas within the district development model's 44 priority districts in KwaZulu-Natal and the Eastern Cape. Over the period ahead, R6.9 billion is allocated to the integrated national electrification programme (Eskom) grant while R5.1 billion is allocated to the integrated national electrification programme (municipal) grant. A further R715 million is allocated for the non-grid part of the programme.

Cabinet-approved reductions and reprioritisations within the department are expected to result in a decrease in allocations to the integrated national electrification programme amounting to R7.8 billion over the MTEF period. The department is working on revising the programme model to accommodate this.

Enhancing energy efficiency

By enabling municipalities to undertake initiatives to upgrade municipal infrastructure that is not energy efficient, such as replacing street and traffic lights with greener technology, the department aims to realise a target of 1.5 terawatt hours of energy savings over the medium term. As a result, allocations to the energy efficiency and demand-side management grant in the Energy Efficiency Projects subprogramme within the Mineral and Energy Resources Programmes and Projects programme are expected to increase at an average annual rate of 4,7%, from R224.1 million in 2023/24 to R257.5 million in 2026/27.

Regulating nuclear energy

Allocations to the Nuclear Energy Regulation and Management programme account for an estimated 12,3% (R3.4 billion) of the department's budget over the medium term and mainly comprise transfers to entities. The South African Nuclear Energy Corporation is allocated R2.9 billion, of which R2.3 billion will be used for its operational costs and R630.8 million for the decontamination and decommissioning of old nuclear facilities. In collaboration with other stakeholders, the department is implementing a multipurpose research reactor project that will replace the SAFARI-1 nuclear research reactor by 2030. The new project aims to ensure that South Africa remains one of the top radioisotope producers in the world.

Legislation

The Acts that regulate the mining, minerals and energy sectors include the:

- Mineral and Petroleum Resources Development Act, 2002 (Act 28 of 2002), which provides the regulatory framework for equitable access to, and the sustainable development of mineral resources and related matters;
- Mine Health and Safety Act, 1996 (Act 29 of 1996), which governs mine health and safety;
- National Energy Act, 2008 (Act 34 of 2008), which empowers the Minister of Mineral Resources and Energy to plan for, and ensure the security of supply for, the energy sector;
- Petroleum Products Act, 1977 (Act 120 of 1977), which regulates the petroleum industry at manufacturing, wholesale and retail levels; and
- Electricity Regulation Act, 2006 (Act 4 of 2006), which establishes a national regulatory framework for the electricity supply industry, including registration and licensing.

Entities

Central Energy Fund (CEF)

The CEF is listed in schedule 2 of the Public Finance Management Act (PFMA), 1999 (Act 1 of 1999), and is governed by the Central Energy Fund Act (1977) and the Companies Act (2008). Its mandate is to research, finance, develop and exploit appropriate energy solutions to contribute to South Africa's security of energy supply.

Through its subsidiaries, the fund is also mandated to finance and promote the acquisition of coal; exploit coal deposits; manufacture liquid fuel, oil and other products from coal; market these products; and acquire, generate, manufacture, market, distribute or research any other form of energy. The fund's subsidiaries are the Petroleum Oil

and Gas Corporation of South Africa (PetroSA), the South African Gas Development Company (iGas), PASA, Oil Pollution Control South Africa, the Strategic Fuel Fund, the African Exploration Mining and Finance Corporation, ETA Energy Solutions and CCE Solutions.

Over the medium term, the entity will continue its efforts to stabilise PetroSA financially and strategically by implementing the corporation's turnaround plan. It will also support and implement the consolidation of PetroSA, the Strategic Fuel Fund and iGas into a national oil company. The proposal for this has been approved by Cabinet and the consolidation process is under way. During this process, the entity will consider ways to increase organisational efficiency and productivity across the group by optimising business processes through interventions such as the development of automated and digital solutions.

Total expenditure is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 6,5%, from R29.3 billion in 2022/23 to R35.4 billion in 2025/26. The oil and gas (national oil company) programme, which includes exploration, production, refining and trading, among other things, accounts for 92,1% (R92.1 billion) of the entity's expenditure over the medium term, as most of its activities are in these sectors. Spending on compensation of employees accounts for an estimated 5,7% (R5.6 billion) of total expenditure, increasing at an average annual rate of 6,8% over the medium term. As the entity will need to obtain external funding for its capital investments, interest payments during the period ahead are expected to amount to R1.1 billion.

The fund expects to generate 95,7% (R97.1 billion) of its revenue over the period ahead through commercial activities and the balance through other sources such as dividends and interest. Total revenue is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 8,2%, from R29 billion in 2022/23 to R36.7 billion in 2025/26, mostly driven by

PetroSA's anticipated recovery as a result of the implementation of the turnaround plan, and dividends from the investment in the Republic of Mozambique Pipeline Company.

Council for Geoscience

The Council for Geoscience was established in terms of the Geoscience Act (1993) to promote the search for and exploitation of minerals in South Africa. Its mandate is to generate, compile, curate and publish world-class geoscience knowledge products, provide geoscience-related services to the South African public and industry, and render advisory services related to geohazards and geoenvironmental pollution. The data generated by the council enables key activities such as the assessment of environmental impacts from mining, geohazards and shale gas development.

Total expenditure over the medium term is expected to amount to R2.4 billion, increasing at an average annual rate of 14%, mostly as a result of additional funding of R200 million in 2023/24 and R300 million in 2024/25 for onshore and offshore mapping. Compensation of employees accounts for an estimated 53,3% (R1.2 billion) of this amount because the entity requires highly specialised skills to fulfil its mandate. Spending on compensation of employees is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 8,5%, from R342.1 million in 2022/23 to R436.6 million in 2025/26, to cater for the expected increase in the council's provision of geoscientific mapping and research services.

Spending on goods and services, mostly for project costs, accounts for a projected 43,3% (R1.1 billion) of expenditure over the MTEF period. The council derives 80,6% (R1.9 billion) of its revenue over the medium term through transfers from the department and the balance through fees charged for the provision of geoscientific mapping and research services.

Mine Health and Safety Council

The Mine Health and Safety Council was established in terms of the Mine Health and Safety Act of 1996. It is mandated to advise the Minister of Mineral Resources and Energy on occupational health and safety at mines, develop legislation, conduct research and liaise with other statutory bodies. The council operates through a partnership between organised labour, employers and the DMRE. The council will continue to focus on conducting research to provide solutions to occupational health and safety challenges.

This entails developing technology to reduce noise in machines, and developing drone technology with a focus on wireless communication systems, surveying, mapping and navigation, health, safety and security, and integration for smart mining. Expenditure is set to increase at an average annual rate of 4,4%, from R120.6 million in 2022/23 to R137.4 million in 2025/26. Spending on compensation of employees accounts for 53,9% (R212.1 million) of total expenditure, while spending on goods and services, mostly for research, accounts for 38,3% (R150.2 million).

The council derives 95.7% (R377.6 million) of its revenue over the period ahead through levies from mining companies. Transfers from the department account for an estimated 3,8% (R14.9 million) of revenue over the medium term.

Mintek

Mintek's mandate, as set out in the Mineral Technology Act (1989), is to maximise the value derived from South Africa's mineral resources through, among other things, research and development, technology transfer, and the creation of an enabling environment for the establishment and expansion of mineral industries. To this end, Mintek develops appropriate, innovative technology for transfer to the industry, and provides test work, consultancy, analytical and mineralogical services to clients around the world.

Skilled personnel are key to the execution of meaningful research. As a result, an estimated 52,3% (R926.5 million) of the entity's budget over the medium term is allocated for compensation of employees. Mintek will also continue with programmes to increase the academic qualifications of researchers and provide the necessary platforms to increase experience levels. Spending on goods and services is expected to amount to R693.5 million (39,4% of total expenditure) over the MTEF period, which includes specialised service fees to produce research.

An amount of R387 million over the period is allocated for the rehabilitation of ownerless and derelict asbestos mines and holings. Expenditure is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 0,6%, from R587.7 million in 2022/23 to R599.1 million in 2025/26. The entity derives

48,7% (R869.2 million) of its revenue over the medium term through transfers from the department and 48,3% (R856.3 million) through commercial activities. Revenue is set to increase at an average annual rate of 0,8%, from R590.2 million in2022/23 to R640.3 in 2025/26. To address low growth, Mintek has established a division for technology transfer, which will facilitate the movement of research projects to commercialise and provide these solutions to industry.

National Energy Regulator of South Africa (NERSA)

NERSA was established in terms of the National Energy Regulator Act of 2004 and is listed as a schedule 3A public entity in terms of the PFMA of 1999. The entity is mandated to regulate the electricity industry in terms of the Electricity Regulation Act of 2006, the piped gas industry in terms of the Gas Act of 2001, and the petroleum

pipelines industry in terms of the Petroleum Pipelines Act of 2003. The regulator's focus over the medium term will continue to be on ensuring: the security, accessibility and affordability of energy supply; and fair competition and regulatory certainty in the energy sector.

It plans to do this by setting and approving energy tariffs, licensing and registering energy service providers, and monitoring and enforcing compliance with regulations. To support these activities, expenditure is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 7,3%, from R396.8 million in 2022/23 to R490.6 million in 2025/26. NERSA derives its revenue mainly through licence fees and levies on the electricity, piped gas and petroleum pipeline sectors, and through interest earned on investments. Total revenue is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 13,3%, from R337 million in 2022/23 to R490.6 million in 2025/26.

National Nuclear Regulator (NNR)

The NNR derives its mandate from the NNR Act of 1999, which requires it to regulate safety standards for nuclear activities in South Africa. This includes establishing safety standards and regulatory practices, ensuring nuclear installations are safe by enforcing regulatory control, granting nuclear authorisations, conducting compliance inspections, and ensuring that provisions are in place for nuclear emergency planning.

As the regulator relies on personnel with highly specialised skills to fulfil its mandate, compensation of employees is expected to account for 63,5% (R700 million) of total spending over the medium term. Total expenditure is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 5%, from R330.9 million in 2022/23 to R383 million in 2025/26.

The regulator expects to generate 68,2% (R753.3 million) of its revenue over the MTEF period through operator licence fees and 13,6% (R147.3 million) through transfers from the department. To supplement its revenue, the regulator will explore models for charging for the services it provides through its Centre for Nuclear Safety and Security, such as education, training and research.

National Radioactive Waste Disposal Institute

The National Radioactive Waste Disposal Institute was established in terms of the National Radioactive Waste Disposal Institute Act of 2008 to manage the disposal of radioactive waste at the national level. The institute is responsible for the long-term care and disposal of radioactive waste in a safe, technically sound, socially acceptable, environmentally responsible and economically feasible manner.

Over the medium term, the institute planned to focus on finalising the Vaalputs functional shift, in particular the nuclear installation licence, so that it can begin operating and managing the facility, and generate revenue by providing waste disposal and related services to waste generators. The institute will seek to establish an above-ground centralised interim storage facility to address the national inventory of radioactive intermediate-level waste, high-level waste, long-lived waste, spent or used nuclear fuel and disused sealed radioactive sources.

Expenditure is set to increase at an average annual rate of 2,9%, from R51.9 million in 2022/23 to R56.5 million in 2025/26. An estimated 81,4% (R131.8 million) of the institute's spending over the medium term is on compensation of employees, while goods and services constitute 16,3% (R27.2 million) of its budget. Revenue, which is derived almost entirely from departmental transfers, is expected to increase in line with spending.

South African Diamond and Precious Metals Regulator (SADPMR)

The SADPMR was established in terms of Section 3 of the Diamonds Act of 1986, with a mandate to implement and enforce the provisions of that act, the Precious Metals Act of 2005, the Diamond Export Levy (Administration) Act of 2007 and the Diamond Export Levy Act of 2007. The regulator's core functions include facilitating the buying, selling, exporting and importing of diamonds through its Diamond Exchange and Export Centre, and regulating the acquisition, possession, smelting, refining, beneficiation, use and disposal of precious metals. Expenditure is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 3,3%, from R113.9 million in 2022/23 to R125.6 million in 2025/26.

As a regulatory authority, the entity relies on its personnel to perform compliance inspections and audits in the diamond and precious metals industry. Accordingly, compensation of employees constitutes an estimated 73,3% (R266.9 million) of expenditure over the medium term. Transfers from the department are expected to account for 53,8% (R198 million) of revenue over the medium term, while fees – mostly for licences and permits – are expected to generate 44,2% (R165.5 million). Revenue is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 4,1%, from R114.5 million in 2022/23 to R129 million in 2025/26.

South African National Energy Development Institute

The South African National Energy Development Institute was established in terms of the National Energy Act of 2008. It is mandated to direct, monitor and conduct applied energy research and development, and demonstrate and deploy specific measures to promote the uptake of green energy and energy efficiency in South Africa. Expenditure is expected to amount to R278.7 million over the medium term. It is expected to decrease at an average annual rate of 8,5%, from R125.2 million in 2022/23 to R96 million in 2025/26, due to donor funding for completed projects not

carrying over into the medium term.

The institute derives 93,2% (R258.1 million) of its medium-term revenue through transfers from the department and other sources such as donor funding and funding from the Department of Science and Innovation for energy research. Revenue is expected to decrease at an average annual rate of 8,5%, from R125.2 million in 2022/23 to R96 million in 2025/26, due to the receipt of one-off allocations for European Union-funded projects. These include achieving net-zero energy in wastewater treatment plants in South Africa and improving the energy performance of government buildings.

South African Nuclear Energy Corporation

The South African Nuclear Energy Corporation derives its mandate from the Nuclear Energy Act of 1999, the nuclear energy policy and directives conferred on it by the Minister of Mineral Resources and Energy. It is listed as a schedule 2 public entity in terms of the PFMA of 1999. The corporation's subsidiaries include international fluorochemical producer Pelchem; radiopharmaceutical and radioisotope producer Nuclear Technologies Product Radioisotopes; and Pelindaba Enterprises, which specialises in the manufacturing of power-generation components.

The corporation operates the SAFARI-1 nuclear reactor for research, technology development and the production of radioisotopes; is responsible for the decommissioning and decontamination of old nuclear facilities; and contributes to South Africa's obligations in terms of international nuclear treaties and agreements. Over the medium term, the corporation aimed to focus on the production of nuclear medicine and industrial isotopes and fluorochemical products; nuclear and industrial manufacturing; radiation applications; research and development for new products; and the provision of support for nuclear power generation. While doing this, it will seek to rationalise the group to leverage synergies and remove unnecessary duplications.

The corporation will continue to provide support for the decommissioning and decontamination of disused nuclear facilities, and work on a replacement for the SAFARI-1 nuclear reactor, which is expected to reach the end of its useful life in 2030. In the meantime, the reactor is expected to be operational for 287 days per year to allow the corporation to comply with international safety requirements and maintain radiation doses within acceptable levels.

Expenditure is set to increase at an average annual rate of 6%, from R2.4 billion in 2022/23 to R2.9 billion in 2025/26. The corporation relies on highly skilled personnel to carry out these activities. Accordingly, compensation of employees accounts for an estimated 47,3% (R3.9 billion) of total expenditure. Spending on goods and services accounts for an estimated 48% (R4 billion), mainly for the production of medical radioisotopes.

The corporation expects to derive 68,7% (R6 billion) of its revenue over the medium term through the sale of nuclear technology products, chemical products and nuclear engineering services, and the balance mostly through departmental transfers. These transfers fund operational requirements and specific activities such as the decommissioning of strategic plants, waste management at all disused nuclear facilities, the production and use of low-enriched uranium fuel, and nuclear safety. Revenue is projected to increase from R2.4 billion in 2022/23 to R3.1 billion in 2025/26, at an average annual rate of 8,3%.

State Diamond Trader

The State Diamond Trader's mandate, as defined in the Diamonds Amendment Act of 2005, is to promote equitable access to and local beneficiation of the country's diamonds. The trader is mandated to conduct research, develop a client base, contribute to the growth of the local diamond beneficiation industry, and develop efficient ways to market diamonds not suitable for local beneficiation. Expenditure is set to increase at an average annual rate of 2,1%, from R824.7 million in 2022/23 to R877.9 million in 2025/26.

Goods and services account for 97,8% (R2.5 billion) of total expenditure, mostly for the procurement of rough diamonds as the trader will contribute to the growth of the local diamond beneficiation industry and increase the sale of rough diamonds to historically disadvantaged South Africans. Travel costs are expected to increase over the period ahead due to inspections and participation in local and international diamond trade shows. Revenue is generated entirely from sales, increasing at an average annual rate of 2%, from R829.1 million in 2022/23 to R880 million in 2025/26.

Mining Qualifications Authority

The future of mining in the country depends largely on the successful implementation of skills development initiatives. Particular focus is placed on artisan and artisan aids, as well as other technical skills. The authority was established as a sector education and training authority. It facilitates the development of appropriate knowledge and skills in the mining, minerals and jewellery sectors.

Reserves

Gold

The large-scale gold mines operating in South Africa include the record-setting TauTona Gold Mine, which extends 3.9 km underground. TauTona means "great lion" in Setswana. South Africa accounts for 10,5% of the world's gold reserves. The Witwatersrand Basin remains the world's largest gold resource.

Coal

Government has emphasised the importance of ensuring a sustainable local coal supply for the country's energy requirements. This commodity currently plays a vital role in meeting South Africa's primary energy needs, as well as in the economy in general. It is recognised that coal contributes to the economy, not only by supplying energy, but through the generation of export revenue, contributing to the GDP and creating employment.

Platinum group metals (PGMs)

Platinum, palladium, rhodium, osmium, ruthenium and iridium occur together in nature alongside nickel and copper. Platinum, palladium and rhodium, the most economically significant of the PGMs, are found in the largest quantities. South Africa is the world's leading platinum and rhodium

producer, and the second-largest palladium producer after Russia. South Africa's production is sourced entirely from the Bushveld Complex, the largest known PGM resource in the world.

Platinum

South Africa accounts for over 80% of known global reserves of the PGMs. The Merensky Reef, stretching from southern Zimbabwe through to the Rustenburg and Pretoria regions, is the centre of platinum mining in South Africa, playing host to companies such as Rustenburg Platinum Mines and Bafokeng Rasimone Platinum Mines.

Palladium

South Africa is the world's second-largest palladium producer. All of South Africa's production is sourced from the Bushveld Igneous Complex, which hosts the world's largest resource of PGMs. Palladium, together with platinum, is more abundant than any of the other PGMs.

Ferrous minerals

The new investments in the manganese industry are among the largest in the country, and support government's drive to increase beneficiation in South Africa.

Copper

Palabora, a large copper mine, smelter and refinery complex managed by the Palabora Mining Company in Limpopo, is South Africa's only producer of refined copper Useful by-product metals and minerals include zirconium chemicals, magnetite, nickel sulphate and small quantities of gold, silver and platinum.

Manganese

South Africa has significant proven manganese reserves, but the exploitation of the mineral has not reflected its development potential.

Industrial minerals

Of the hundreds of producers of industrial minerals in South Africa, almost half are in the sand and aggregate sector. There are producers of clays (brickmaking), limestone and dolomite, dimension stone, salt and silica in South Africa. Bulk consumption of industrial minerals is realised in the domestic market, as most are low-priced commodities sold in bulk, making their economic exploitation highly dependent on transport costs and distance to markets.

Geology

South Africa has a long and complex geological history. The preservation of so much Archaean geology, dating back more than 2 500 million years, has resulted in the Archaean Witwatersrand Basin, as well as several greenstone belts, being preserved.

Mining production

South Africa has long been considered a regional and global mining powerhouse, with more than 90% of the world's platinum group metals. However, South Africa has been engulfed by a series of political shocks and economic underperformance that have taken a significant toll on its position as Southern Africa's leader in the extractives industry. Amid a backdrop of recession and allegations of corruption, South Africa faces the challenges associated with an ageing mining sector. Some concerns exist around the pace of transformation in the mining and minerals industry. Government has published a new Mining Charter aimed at strengthening its effectiveness, while considering the realities facing the industry.

Shale gas

Shale gas is a natural gas that occurs and can be extracted from shale. The natural gas, which is embedded in the Karoo Basin, can be used for energy production. The CGS and PetroSA are undertaking shale gas research that unlocks the unknowns and assumptions about shale gas occurrence in the country. The project will build scientific skills in shale gas exploration and exploitation as this resource has not been exploited in the country. The programme is funded by the DMRE and will assist government in making well informed decisions about the future of shale gas in South Africa. The programme aims to collect and review new geological information to define an environmental baseline, to assess the amount of recoverable gas mainly from the Whitehill and Prince Albert Formations, to assess various geo-environmental impacts such as ground water dynamics with possible contamination, and monitor potential seismic interferences.

The Shale Gas Project will serve as a baseline study for future shale gas research work and play a vital role in the review of petroleum exploration and exploitation regulations.

Energy

Guided by the National Energy Act of 2008, government's responsibility is to ensure that diverse energy resources are available in sustainable quantities and at affordable prices to support economic growth. Government is committed to extending access to electricity and enhancing energy efficiency, managing nuclear energy in terms of international commitments and diversifying the energy generation mix. The NDP proposes that gas and other renewable resources like wind, solar and hydroelectricity will be viable alternatives to coal and will supply at least 20 000 MW of the additional 29 000 MW of electricity needed by 2030.

Other recommendations in the NDP include diversifying power sources and ownership in the electricity sector, supporting cleaner coal technologies, and investing in human and physical capital in the 12-largest electricity distributors. South Africa has committed to attaining substantial reductions in carbon dioxide emissions by 2025. The country supports research, technology development and special measures aimed at environmentally sustainable economic growth.

National Strategic Fuels Stock Policy

The National Strategic Fuels Stock Policy sets out the framework for the storage of fuel stock by government and the industry. It aims to ensure uninterrupted supply of petroleum products throughout South Africa by providing adequate strategic stocks and infrastructure such as storage facilities and pipeline capacity. Strategic stocks are to be used during declared emergencies. The Minister of Mineral Resources and Energy will have the power to decide when

a shortage of fuel and oil is at such a level as to warrant an emergency.

National Liquid Petroleum Gas Strategy

The strategy's main objectives are to provide access to safe, cleaner, efficient, portable, environmentally friendly and affordable thermal fuel for all households, and to switch low-income households away from the use of coal, paraffin and biomass to LPG. The strategy highlights options that could be adopted for the orderly development of the LPG industry in South Africa to make LPG an energy carrier of choice for thermal applications. LPG is considered one of the safest, cleanest and most sustainable energy sources.

Gas Utilisation Master Plan (GUMP)

The GUMP scope includes the development of gas pipeline infrastructure for the country's needs and to connect South Africa with African countries endowed with vast natural gas resources. The GUMP is a roadmap which analyses the potential and opportunity for the development of South Africa's gas economy and sets out a plan of how this could be achieved. A key objective of the GUMP is to enable the development of indigenous gas resources and stimulate the introduction of a portfolio of gas supply options. The Gas to Power Programme will provide a market for a potential supply of gas. It also provides long-term gas demand sinks for future indigenous gas supplies.

National building standards

Energy-efficient regulations for new buildings form part of the deliverables of South Africa's National Energy Strategy to strengthen standards and regulations for energy efficiency. The energy-efficient regulations apply to residential and commercial buildings, places of learning and worship, certain medical clinics and other categories of buildings. The regulations make it compulsory for all new buildings to be designed and constructed to a standard that makes it possible for the user to minimise the energy required to meet the functional requirements. This will save energy significantly, which will relieve pressure on the electricity supply grid. In addition to temperature regulations, all buildings will also have to be fitted with renewable energy water-heating systems, such as solar systems, which also have to comply with South African national standards.

Southern African Power Pool (SAPP)

The SAPP was created with the primary aim of providing reliable and economical electricity supply to the consumers of each of the SAPP members, consistent with the reasonable use of natural resources and the effect on the environment. The SAPP allows the free trading of electricity between the Southern African Development Community (SADC) member countries, providing South Africa with access to the vast hydropower potential in the countries to the north, notably the Congo River (Inga Falls).

Electricity

As part of the Integrated National Electrification Programme, which aims to extend access to electricity to all households across South Africa, about 590 000 households are expected to be connected to the electricity grid over the medium term. A further 20 000 households per year over the same period would be provided with non-grid (mainly solar) electrification systems. Government plans to develop an electrification master plan to inform the roll-out of electrification connections for universal access.

Integrated National Electrification Programme

Through the Integrated National Electrification Programme, the DMRE is responsible for assisting municipalities with funding for implementation of electrification projects so that universal access to electricity is reached by 2025. Beyond reaching universal access to energy for all and addressing the electrification backlog, it is vital that policy guidelines are adhered to when implementing electrification projects through the INEP.

Alternative energy sources

Biofuel

The biofuels industry in South Africa, the continent's biggest agricultural producer, has been held back by an inadequate regulatory regime and concerns that biofuels would hurt food security and affect food prices. Canola, sunflower and soya are feedstock for biodiesel, while sugarcane and sugar beet are feedstock for ethanol. Maize, South Africa's staple food, will not be used in the production of biofuels to ensure food security and control high prices.

The biofuels sector has strong linkages to agriculture, manufacturing and distribution, and has the potential to create substantial numbers of labour-intensive jobs in the agriculture sector in particular. In addition, second generation biofuel technology can also contribute to South Africa meeting its renewable energy targets sustainably.

Hydropower

Energy from water can be generated from waves, tides, waterfalls and rivers, and will never be depleted as long as water is available. South Africa has a mix of small hydroelectricity stations and pumped water storage schemes. South Africa has entered into a treaty for the development of the Grand Inga Project in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), with some of the power intended for transmission to South Africa across the DRC, Zambia, Zimbabwe and Botswana.

The regional development drivers are compelling, since there is very little energy trade between these countries, due to the lack of infrastructure. The potential for intra-SADC trade is huge as it could open economic trade.

Solar power

Most areas in South Africa average more than 2 500 hours of sunshine per year, and average daily solar-radiation levels range between 4.5 kilowatt-hours per square metre (kWh/m2) and 6.5 kWh/m2 in one day. The southern African region, and in fact the whole of Africa, has sunshine all year round. The annual 24-hour global solar radiation average is about 220 W/m2 for South Africa.

Wind Power

Wind energy, like solar energy, is a free and sustainable renewable energy source that is being used to generate electricity.

Hybrid systems

Hybrid energy systems are a combination of two or more renewable energy sources such as photovoltaic, wind, micro-hydro, storage batteries and fuel-powered generator sets to provide a reliable off-grid supply.

Nuclear

The Nuclear Energy Policy of 2008 highlights the vision of government to become self-sufficient in all aspects of the nuclear value chain for peaceful use. Amongst government policy objectives is the promotion of nuclear energy as an important electricity supply option through the establishment of a national industrial capability for the design, manufacture and construction of nuclear energy systems. Government has committed, through the Nuclear Energy Policy and IRP, to an energy mix consisting of coal, gas, hydro, nuclear, solar and wind. The Nuclear New Build Programme will enable the country to create jobs, develop skills, create industries and catapult the country into a knowledge economy.

The IRP 2010 – 2030 envisages 9 600 MW additional nuclear capacity by 2030. The IRP is a 20-year projection on electricity supply and demand. Eskom operates the Koeberg Nuclear Power Station near Cape Town, the only nuclear power station in South Africa and the entire African continent, which supplies power to the national grid. The extension of life of Koeberg Power Station is critical for continued energy security in the period beyond 2024, when it reaches the end of its 40-year life. In accordance with IRP2019, the Koeberg Power Plant design life must be extended by another 20 years to ensure that the necessary technical and regulatory work can be completed.

To this end, the DMRE will commence with preparations for a nuclear build programme towards an additional 2 500 MW at a scale and pace that the country can afford, to ensure security of energy supply.

Integrated Resource Plan

The IRP is a legal instrument for South Africa's energy generation planning. The IRP is designed to help meet forecast annual peak and energy demand, as well as a specified reserve margin. This will be achieved through a combination of supply-side and demand- side resources over a specified future period and driven by a set of predetermined objectives, which include ensuring the security of South Africa's energy supply, reducing the cost of South Africa's energy supply, minimising water usage related to energy supply and reducing carbon dioxide emissions.

The plan is the leading policy framework for addressing the short- to long-term challenges that the country faces with regard to its energy needs. It formulates specific interventions to address electricity infrastructure development based on least-cost electricity supply and demand balance, considering security of supply and the environment (minimising negative emissions and water usage). The plan identifies the preferred generation technology required to meet expected demand growth up to 2030.

The available options include:

- Coal: Beyond Medupi and Kusile, coal will continue to play a significant role in electricity generation in South Africa in the foreseeable future as it is the largest base of installed generation capacity and makes up the largest share of energy generated. Due to the design life of the existing coal fleet and the abundance of coal resources, new investments must be made in more efficient coal technologies (High-Efficiency, Low-Emissions (HELE) technology, including supercritical and ultra-supercritical power plants with CCUS to comply with climate and environmental requirements.
- The stance adopted by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development and financial institutions regarding financing coal power plants is to consider the support of HELE technology. This ensures that South African coal still plays an integral part in the energy mix. Given the significant investments required for carbon capture and storage (CCS) and CCUS technology, South Africa could benefit from establishing strategic partnerships with international organisations and countries that have made advancements in the development of CCS, CCUS and other HELE technologies.
- Nuclear: Koeberg Power Station will reach its end of design life in 2024. To avoid the demise of nuclear power in the energy mix, South Africa has granted an extension on the design life and the expansion of the nuclear power programme into the future. In line with power system requirements, additional capacity from any technology deployed should be done at a scale and pace that flexibly responds to the economy and associated electricity demand, in a manner that avoids tariff shocks in particular. It is the user of electricity that ultimately pays.

To this end, as is the case with coal, small nuclear units will be a manageable investment when compared to a fleet approach. The development of such plants globally is therefore particularly interesting for South Africa, and upfront planning with regard to additional nuclear capacity is a requisite, given the less than 10-year lead time, for timely decision making and implementation.

- Natural gas: Gas-to-power technologies provide the flexibility required to complement renewable energy. While in the short term the opportunity is to pursue gas import options, local and regional gas resources will allow for scaling up within manageable risk levels. Exploration to assess the magnitude of local recoverable shale and coastal gas is being pursued. There is enormous potential and opportunity in this respect and the Brulpadda gas resource discovery in the Outeniqua Basin of South Africa, piped natural gas from Mozambique (Rovuma Basin), and indigenous gas like coal-bed methane and ultimately shale gas, could form a central part of the strategy for regional economic integration within SADC. Cooperation with neighbouring countries is being pursued and partnerships are being developed for joint exploitation and beneficiation of natural gas within the SADC region.
- Renewable energy: Solar photovoltaic (PV), wind and concentrated solar power with storage present an opportunity to diversify the electricity mix, to produce distributed generation and to provide off-grid electricity. Renewable technologies also present ample potential for the creation of new industries, job creation and localisation across the value chain. The Wind Atlas, developed for South Africa, provides a basis for the quantification of the potential that wind holds for power generation elsewhere in the country, over and above the prevalence of wind resources around the coastal areas.

- Most wind projects have been developed in the Western Cape and Eastern Cape thus far. The generation of electricity and heat (to be supplied for industrial processes), through biomass and biogas holds huge potential in South Africa, recognising that such projects range from small (kW) to larger (MW) scale and could be distributed across the industrial centres. Biomass from the waste, paper and pulp, and sugar industries can be utilised in co-generation plants and deliver electricity at a price-competitive level with minimal transmission and distribution infrastructure requirements. When deployed together, the nexus between the biomass and government-backed biofuels programmes could improve the economics of the initiatives and create job opportunities in rural and urban centres.
- Energy storage: There is a harmonising relationship between smart grid systems, energy storage and non-dispatchable renewable energy technologies based on wind and solar PV. The traditional power delivery model is being disrupted by technological developments related to energy storage, and more renewable energy can be harnessed despite the reality that the timing of its production might be during low-demand periods. Storage technologies, including battery systems, compressed air energy storage, flywheel energy storage and hydrogen fuel cells are developments that can address this issue, especially in the South African context where over 6 GW of renewable energy has been introduced, yet the power system does not have the requisite storage capacity or flexibility.

Integrated Energy Plan

The development of a national IEP was envisaged in the White Paper on the Energy Policy of the Republic of South Africa of 1998 and, in terms of the National Energy Act of 2008. The IEP provides a roadmap of the future energy landscape for South Africa which guides future energy infrastructure investments and policy development. The IEP examines current energy consumption trends within different sectors of the economy and uses this to project future energy requirements, based on different scenarios.

While the IEP focuses on demand for all energy forms across all the economic sectors at a high level, more detailed analysis of different demand growth profiles and supply-side options for the two main energy sub-sectors, namely electricity generation and liquid fuels supply, will be detailed in supporting sector plans. For the gas sub-sector, a draft framework which explores future possible options for the development of a gas market in South Africa is being developed. This has been undertaken to analyse the differences in each of the sectors, considering the complexities and level of maturity of each sub-sector.

Natural gas

There is enormous potential and opportunity through the Brulpadda gas resource discovery in the Outeniqua Basin of South Africa and piped natural gas from Mozambique (Rovuma Basin). Indigenous gas, like coal-bed methane and shale gas, forms a central part of the country's strategy for regional economic integration within SADC. Cooperation with neighbouring countries is being explored and partnerships are being developed for joint exploitation and beneficiation of natural gas within the SADC region. The SADC Gas Master Plan will identify the short- and long-term infrastructure requirements to enable the uptake of a natural gas market.

South Africa continues to run diesel plants at Ankerlig (Saldanha Bay), Gourikwa (Mossel Bay), Avon (Outside Durban) and Dedisa (Coega Industrial Development Zone), because of the unavailability of natural gas, which is cheaper than diesel. The gas to power nexus has not yet been exploited to the extent that gas plants at Avon and Dedisa could be converted to combined cycle plants, provided that natural gas, either pipeline or LNG infrastructure, is developed.

Renewable Energy Independent Power Producer Procurement Programme (REIPPPP)

The REIPPPP has become one of the world's most progressive and successful alternative energy programmes. Ever since the introduction of these renewable energy technology programmes (solar, wind, biomass, small hydro and landfill gas power), plants have been going up across the country, feeding additional, clean energy into the national grid.

The REIPPPP represents the country's most comprehensive strategy to date, in achieving the transition to a greener economy. The programme has been designed to contribute to the development of a local green industry and the creation of green jobs. The programme seeks to procure energy from small-scale IPPs with projects that generate between one MW and five MW of energy from solar, wind, biomass and landfill gas projects.

International cooperation

South Africa is a member of the International Energy Forum (IEF), which aims to foster greater mutual understanding and awareness of common energy interests among its members. The 74-member countries of the forum are signatories to the IEF Charter, which outlines the framework of the global energy dialogue through this intergovernmental arrangement. South Africa is a member state of the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) which seeks to make an impact in the world of renewable energy by maintaining a clear and independent position, providing a range of reliable and well-understood services that complement those already offered by the renewable energy community and gathering existing, but scattered, activities around a central hub.

The country has been a member of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) for decades and has been both a recipient and provider of services emanating from the agency. As a member state of the IAEA, permanent member of the board of directors and actively participating in nuclear energy, safety, technology, security and disarmament, South Africa has contributed to efforts to of ensure that nuclear energy is used for peaceful purposes like power generation, as well as medical, industrial and agricultural initiatives.

Sustainable development in Africa

The Intergovernmental Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on the Western Power Corridor Project is a flagship programme for the African Union Development Agency-New Partnership for Africa's Development. It intends to pilot the

use of hydro-electric energy obtained from the Inga rapids site in the DRC to ensure the security of supply in the SADC.

The participating utilities are those of Angola, Botswana, the DRC, Namibia and South Africa. A joint-venture company has been formed to initiate studies determining the viability of the project and to build, own and operate the infrastructure. The main project outside South Africa's borders is Westcor. It entails a five-way intergovernmental MoU signed between the utilities of Angola, Botswana, the DRC, Namibia and South Africa. Westcor will tap into some of the potential in the DRC. Inga III, a 3 500-MW hydro plant on the Congo River, will be the first of these projects.

At the same time, the countries to the north could benefit through access to the coal-fired power resources in the south. Such an arrangement should stabilise the energy requirements of the region well into this century. Exploitation of the vast hydropower resources would constitute a significant infusion of renewable energy resources into the energy economy of the region over the medium to long term. The Lesotho Highlands Water Project could contribute some 72 MW of hydroelectric power to the system in the short term. Global pressures regarding the environmental impact and displacement of settlements by huge storage dams are likely to limit the exploitation

of hydropower on a large scale. Irrespective of the size of installation, any hydropower development will require authorisation in terms of the National Water Act, 1998 (Act 36 of 1998).

Import and export of fuel products

The import of refined products is restricted to special cases where local producers cannot meet demand. It is subject to state control to promote local refinery usage. When overproduction occurs, export permits are required and generally granted, provided that the needs of both South Africa and other Southern African Customs Union members are met. More diesel than petrol is exported, due to the balance of supply and demand of petrol and diesel relative to refinery configurations. Although petrol and diesel make up 55% of total liquidfuel exports, South Africa is also the main supplier of all other liquid fuels to Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia and Eswatini.

Energy and the global environment

South Africa is classified as a developing country or a non-Annex 1 country. This means that within the international political and negotiation context, South Africa is not required to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions. South Africa is among the top 20 emitters of GHGs in the world and the largest emitter in Africa, largely because of the economy's dependence on fossil fuels. It emits more than 400 megatonnes of carbon dioxide per year. The National Climate Change Strategy requires that government departments collaborate in a coordinated manner to ensure that response measures to climate change are properly directed and carried out with a national focus.

The South African economy depends greatly on fossil fuels for energy generation and consumption, and is subsequently a significant emitter due to relatively high values being derived from emission intensity and emissions per capita. Therefore, South Africa is proactively moving the economy towards becoming less carbon-intensive, with the DMRE playing a prominent role. The department has introduced systems to access investment through the clean development mechanism of the Kyoto Protocol. It developed the White Paper on Renewable Energy and Clean Energy Development, together with an energy efficiency programme, to support diversification in pursuit of a less carbon-intensive energy economy.

The South African Renewables Initiative secures international financing partnerships in investment in deploying renewable energy and develops renewable supply chains through securing a critical mass of renewable energy, without imposing undue burden on the fiscus or the South African consumer. In line with this objective, the DMRE has signed a declaration of intent with Germany, the United Kingdom, Denmark, Norway and the European Investment Bank. The agreement will lead to the establishment of a fund to assist in the deployment of renewable energy.

Further, the DMRE participates in structures such as the:

- IRENA
- IEF
- International Partnership for Energy Efficiency Cooperation,
- United Nations (UN) Industrial Development Organisation,
- Clean Energy Ministerial, and
- African Union-European Union Energy Partnership.

Programmes

Minerals and Petroleum Regulation

The programme regulates the mining, minerals and petroleum sectors to promote economic growth, employment, transformation and sustainable development. The programme's objectives over the medium term include:

- Improving the participation of historically disadvantaged South Africans in the mining sector and contributing to its transformation by issuing mining rights and permits to 600 historically disadvantaged South Africans over the medium term, and monitoring and enforcing compliance with procurement requirements that relate to historically disadvantaged South Africans, as prescribed by the mining charter, on an ongoing basis.
- Monitoring and enforcing compliance with the statutory obligations of the Mineral and Petroleum Resources Development Act of 2002 and the Mining Charter by conducting 636 social and labour plan verification inspections, 1 500 mine economic verification audits and 4 122 environmental verification inspections over the medium term.
- Ensuring the development and transformation of the liquid fuels industry, and the security of supply of petroleum and petroleum products, by monitoring and enforcing technical and economic compliance with legislation, specifications, standards and licence conditions annually.
- Facilitating the orderly operation of the petroleum sector by analysing fuel supply and efficiently adjudicating licences for manufacturing, wholesaling and retailing activities on an ongoing basis.
- Strengthening the regulatory framework in the liquid fuels petroleum industry by implementing an accounting system

to introduce a transparent fuel pricing mechanism that will provide appropriate returns to investors in the liquid fuels sector across the value chain on an ongoing basis.

Mining, Minerals and Energy Policy Development

The programme formulates, maintains and implements integrated minerals and energy policies to promote and encourage investment in the mining and energy industry.

The programme's objectives over the medium term include:

- Promoting investment in the mining, minerals and upstream petroleum sectors over the medium term by hosting 24 promotional and awareness activities or events for local and foreign investors and participating in local and international mining and petroleum conferences and events, engaging with stakeholders in various forums, and leading the implementation of key government priorities; ensuring the full implementation of plans for developing the oceans economy for oil and gas exploration through Operation Phakisa; ensuring the full implementation of the shale gas action
- Plan through consultations, advocacy, research and promotional activities for shale gas exploration; publishing various mining and energy reports and publications on an ongoing basis.
- Managing diplomatic imperatives and relations with foreign countries to benefit South Africa by establishing and implementing bilateral and multilateral partnerships for mining and upstream petroleum development on an ongoing basis.
- Improving energy security over the medium term by amending the Electricity Regulation Amendment Act of 2007 and its regulations, the National Radioactive Waste Disposal Institute Act of 2008 and its regulations, and the Gas Amendment Act of 2021.
- Enabling transformed, competitive and sustainable minerals and petroleum sectors by amending the Petroleum Products Act of 2006 by 2024/25, and amending the Mine Health and Safety Act of 1996, the Mineral and Petroleum Resources Development Act of 2002 and the Diamonds Amendment Act of 2005, over the MTEF period.
- Transforming and growing the mining and energy sectors by enabling the revision of the integrated resources plan by 2023/24.
- Contributing to a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by approving and registering 12 carbon offset projects over the medium term.

Mine Health and Safety Inspectorate

The Mine Health and Safety Inspectorate programme promotes mine health and safety, and aims to contribute to skills development and transformation. The programme's objectives over the medium term include:

- promoting health and safety by reducing occupational fatalities by 10%, occupational injuries by 5% and occupational diseases by 10% over the medium term; implementing the occupational health and safety improvement strategy, and enforcing guidelines on an ongoing basis; conducting investigations, inspections and audits on an ongoing basis; 80% adherence to prescribed timeframes for resolving medical appeals; 100% adherence to timelines for appeals to the chief inspector of mines; 80% adherence to timelines for applications in terms of the Mineral and Petroleum Resources Development Act of 2002.
- contributing to skills development in the mining sector by implementing, monitoring and evaluating the certificate of competency model on an ongoing basis.

Mineral and Energy Resources Programme

The programme manages, coordinates and monitors projects focused on access to mineral and energy resources. The programme's objectives over the medium term include:

- Increasing access to electricity by managing the funding and monitoring the implementation of the integrated national electrification programme on an ongoing basis.
- Increasing public awareness on energy issues while empowering disadvantaged and vulnerable groups by identifying, implementing, managing and coordinating upliftment programmes and projects on an ongoing basis.
- Ensuring the efficient management of electricity supply on an ongoing basis by enhancing the application of business principles for project management to assist programme and project managers; coordinating, monitoring and reporting on the implementation of programmes and projects focused on the development, improvement and transformation of the energy generation, refinement, transmission and distribution industry and its infrastructure.
- Promoting the sustainable use and management of mineral and energy resources over the medium term by rehabilitating nine derelict and ownerless mines; providing marginal mines with subsidies for water management solutions; managing the funding and monitoring of the energy efficiency and demand-side management grant to municipalities, and promoting and facilitating access for and the development of artisanal and small-scale mining activities within the industry.

Nuclear Energy Regulation and Management

The programme manages the South African nuclear energy industry and controls nuclear materials in terms of international obligations, nuclear legislation and policies to ensure the peaceful use of nuclear energy. The programme's objectives over the medium term include:

- Ensuring compliance with international nuclear obligations by applying relevant statutory frameworks and following the best practice guidelines of the International Atomic Energy Agency on an ongoing basis.
- Regulating the security of nuclear material, related equipment and facilities by developing and publishing appropriate regulations on an ongoing basis.
- Creating public awareness and increase the understanding of nuclear technology through the implementation of the nuclear communications strategy on an ongoing basis.





SOUTH AFRICA
YEARBOOK
2024/25

Police, Defence and Military Veterans

Department of Police

The National Development Plan (NDP): Vision 2030 envisions a South Africa where people feel safe and enjoy a community life free of crime. Achieving this requires a well-functioning Criminal Justice System (CJS), in which the police, the judiciary and correctional services work together to ensure that suspects are caught, prosecuted, convicted if guilty and securely incarcerated and rehabilitated.

The South African Police Service (SAPS) commitment within this framework is to provide "a safe and secure environment that is conducive for social and economic stability, supporting a better life for all" (NDP, 2030).

The 2024 – 2029 Medium-Term Development Plan (MTDP) aligns with the goals and objectives of the NDP and the minimum programme of priorities of the Government of National Unity. The NDP remains South Africa's long-term plan towards 2030 and is aligned with its international commitments. The MTDP is the medium-term plan towards the achievement of the NDP, replacing the Medium-Term Strategic Framework (MTSF) by aligning with international naming conventions and emphasising development outcomes. Government has set five goals for the next five years, which are:

- A dynamic, growing economy.
- A more equal society, where no person lives in poverty.
- A capable state delivering basic services to all citizens.
- A safe and secure environment.
- A cohesive and united nation.

To achieve these goals, the MTDP (2024-2029) identifies three strategic priorities, which will be implemented across the state:

- Strategic Priority 1: Drive inclusive growth and job creation.
- Strategic Priority 2: Reduce poverty and tackle the high cost of living.
- Strategic Priority 3: Build a capable, ethical and developmental state.

Achieving the first two Strategic Priorities will require a capable state that can deliver on the country's developmental objectives. Several interventions that build the capability of the state are outlined in Chapter 5.

Effective policymaking requires a clear vision and priorities, institutions of decision-making that are robust and adaptable to ensure policy coherence and make choices when trade-offs occur and the capacity to implement these consistently and effectively. Following the first democratic elections in 1994, significant progress was made in restructuring and transforming the public service, along with the rapid expansion of service delivery to pursue the new developmental agenda of the state.

At the same time, some challenges have proved difficult to address. These include a growing emphasis on compliance at the expense of delivery, fragmented structures, weak technical capacity, a focus on process rather than on outcomes and a failure to promote and reward innovation and success.

Strategic Priority 3 aims to build a capable, ethical and developmental state, which is critical for the success of the other two Strategic Priorities. The rights of women, youth and persons with disabilities must be mainstreamed across all three priorities. The SAPS plays various leading and supporting roles towards the following outcomes:

- Reformed, integrated and modernised Criminal Justice System.
- Effective Border Security.
- Secured Cyber Space.
- Increased feelings of safety of women and children and in communities.
- Reduced number of priority offences.
- Enhanced peace and security in Africa.

South African Police Service

Chapter 12 of the NDP outlines a vision to build safer communities through demilitarising and professionalising the police service and adopting an integrated and holistic approach to safety and security in South Africa. The SAPS's work is in alignment with Priority 3 of the MTDP, which expresses the vision of "Building a capable, ethical and developmental state." The primary focus is on the provision of safety and security, which is the primary contributor in addressing the triple challenge of poverty, inequality and unemployment.

The SAPS, South Africa's principal law-enforcement body, derives its powers and functions from Section 205 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, and from the SAPS Act, 1995 (Act 68 of 1995). This legislation regulates the SAPS in terms of its core functions, which are to prevent, investigate and combat crime; maintain public order; protect and secure the inhabitants of South Africa and their property; and uphold and enforce the law. The vision of the SAPS is to create a safe and secure environment for all people in South Africa.

The mission of the SAPS is to:

- prevent and combat crime that may threaten the safety and security of any community;
- investigate any crimes threatening the safety and security of any community;
- ensure that offenders are brought to justice; and
- participate in efforts to address the causes of crime.

The National Commissioner is the Accounting Officer of the SAPS. Deputy National Commissioners and Provincial Commissioners report to the National Commissioner. District Commissioners and Police Station Commanders report to the Provincial Commissioners.

Key expenditure focus areas

Building capacity in the SAPS

To improve police visibility, enhance community responsiveness and build public confidence in the police service, the department planned to recruit additional members over the medium term. Modernisation initiatives include upgrading Information Communication Technology infrastructure, improving connectivity, deploying mobile technologies and using automatic number plate recognition units and digital fingerprint enrolment devices to support visible and specialised policing capabilities. These plans will be implemented through the Administration Programme, which has an allocation of R68.8 billion over the next three years and the Visible Policing Programme, which has an allocation of R189.7 billion over the same period.

Reducing violent crime, gender-based violence and femicide

To reduce the levels of violent crime and gender-based violence and femicide (GBVF), while adapting to resource constraints, the Department will emphasise community mobilisation for increased police visibility through strategic partnerships. Initiatives include community engagement, awareness campaigns and the revitalisation of community police boards and forums.

To achieve these objectives, the department has adopted the whole-of-government and whole-of-society framework, as guided by the Integrated Crime and Violence Prevention Strategy. This approach promotes the implementation of an integrated, developmental, collaborative, knowledge-based and evidence-based approach to the prevention of crime and violence in South Africa. In line with this framework, the SAPS will implement the Increased Crime Prevention and Combating Action Plan, which targets violent crime, including GBVF, through a data-driven approach and high-density operations in priority station precincts. As a result of implementing the plan, the percentage of contact crimes reported is expected to decrease by 14,5% over the medium-term. Similarly, over the next three years, the detection rate for contact crimes against women is set to improve to more than 71% and the detection rate for contact crimes against children to more than 65%. These initiatives will mainly be implemented through the Detective Services Programme, which has an allocation of R71.3 billion over the medium-term.

Reducing crimes that have a direct impact on economic activity

Economic infrastructure task teams, supported by the organised crime investigation capability, aim to combat crimes affecting the economy, such as illegal mining, infrastructure-related crimes such as vandalism and theft and extortion in the construction sector. The Department further aims to enhance crime detection, focusing on contact crimes, corruption, commercial crimes and cybercrime. To achieve this, specialised capabilities, including the Directorate for Priority Crime Investigation (DPCI), Forensic Services and Crime Intelligence, will look to collaborate with internal and external stakeholders. Efforts will continue to address organised crime, money laundering and terror financing in line with recommendations from the Financial Action Task Force. These initiatives will be implemented through the Detective Services Programme and the Crime Intelligence Programme, which have budgets of R71.3 billion and R15.1 billion over the medium-term.

In the State of the Nation Address by President Cyril Ramaphosa, on 6 February 2025, the following priorities were highlighted:

- Dismantling organised crime syndicates and combating financial crimes through serious organised crime project investigations and ensuring trial-ready cases for serious commercial crime.
- Addressing crime in priority provinces and municipalities through the implementation of evidence-based policing.
- Intensifying Operation Shanela to reduce the reported incidence of crime.
- Reducing gun-related crime and violence by recovering illegal firearms in circulation.
- Expanding personnel within the Detective Service environment.
- Adopting surveillance, analytics and smart policing solutions for modern law enforcement.

Strategic focus over the short- to medium-term period

Aligned with the SAPS Impact Statement “a safe and secure environment that is conducive for social and economic stability and supporting a better life for all”, central to this is the enabling of the strategic direction by ensuring rigorous financial governance, robust risk management and the effective allocation of resources necessary to respond to the ever-evolving threat landscapes.

The 7th Administration has identified nine focused policing priorities to steer the SAPS. These priorities encompass reducing the murder rate, illegal firearms, drug networks, GBVF, illegal immigration, organised crime, gang activity, illegal mining and internal corruption. Threats of violent contact crime and threats against infrastructure, economic crime and public trust are to be continuously assessed. Our financial planning must remain agile, ensuring annual and multi-year budgets reflect shifting priorities such as crime hotspots, GBVF-focused interventions, critical infrastructure protection and anti-money laundering efforts.

To ensure that resource alignment to outputs and performance indicators in the Annual Performance Plan are consistent with the Strategic Plan and the MTDP, ensuring outputs along the “Pathway of Change” are adequately funded.

To ensure that these strategic priorities are met, the SAPS has identified critical enablers: advanced technology for detection and rapid response; enhanced crime intelligence capabilities; capacity-building for detectives; improved forensic services; better fleet management; upgraded infrastructure; and strengthened working and living conditions for officers.

The G20 Summit will be secured with a sum of R219.2 million; the Local Government Elections in 2026 will be funded with R400 million; and R150 million was redirected to the Directorate for Priority Crime Investigation (DPCI) over a two-year period to support anti-corruption efforts. More than R1.6 billion will be invested in GBVF response, with R1.5 billion being allocated to Family Violence, Child Protection and Sexual Offences units, R40 million being allocated for awareness campaigns and R50 million being allocated to strengthen provincial responses. An amount of R85 million is targeted at the top 35 crime-heavy police precincts across Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal, the Western Cape and the Eastern Cape; R28 million for CPFs; and R8,5 million for community engagement initiatives such as *izimbizos*. Infrastructural investments include R670 million for building/upgrading stations, R20 million for mobile Community Service Centres (CSCs) and R45 million for maintenance. Technological modernisation features prominently, with plans to deploy drones, body worn cameras, dashboard cameras and integrated digital tools for enhanced situational awareness.

The SAPS is also expanding partnerships with Business Against Crime South Africa, to pilot automated police stations, enhance forensic laboratories and integrate data systems with private-sector technologies.

Efforts to professionalise human resources include recruiting 5 500 new trainees, re-enlisting 200 former detectives and launching an online recruitment system. The DPCI will also expand with 300 internal promotions, hiring 250 specialised trainees and approximately 260 new posts to bolster its capacity in anti-corruption and cybercrime.

Ensure that supply chain processes align with institutional procurement plans and actual needs. Address gaps in capacity, timelines and implementation, especially in immovable asset management and police infrastructure. Given constraints in compensation and infrastructure budgets, promote a leaner, frontline-focused structure, channel funds toward investigative and visible policing and manage capital resources like stations, vehicles and forensic tools through a structured Integrated Resource Strategy. Strengthen linkages between financial and operational intelligence tools, ensuring assets amongst others vehicle fleet, Information Communication Technology (ICT) and forensic infrastructure support data-driven policing strategies. Embed a strong culture of financial accountability including lifestyle audits, consequence management and anti-corruption oversight aligned with broader national strategies to combat corruption and organised crime.

Legislation

The Minister of Police is responsible for determining national policing policies and the overall execution of the department's mandate, in relation to the following key pieces of legislation:

- Civilian Secretariat for Police Service Act, 2011 (Act No 2 of 2011).
- Control of Access to Public Premises and Vehicles Act, 1985 (Act No 53 of 1985).
- Critical Infrastructure Protection Act, 2019 (Act No 8 of 2019).
- Dangerous Weapons Act, 2013 (Act No 15 of 2013).
- Explosives Act, 1956 (Act No 26 of 1956), to be replaced by Explosives Act, 2003 (Act No 15 of 2003).
- Firearms Control Act, 2000 (Act No 60 of 2000).
- Game Theft Act, 1991 (Act No 105 of 1991).
- Intimidation Act, 1982 (Act No 72 of 1982).
- Independent Police Investigative Directorate Act, 2011 (Act No 1 of 2011).
- National Key Points Act, 1980 (Act No 102 of 1980).
- Private Security Industry Regulation Act, 2001 (Act No 56 of 2001).
- Protection of Constitutional Democracy Against Terrorist and Related Activities Act, 2004 (Act No 33 of 2004).
- Regulation of Gatherings Act, 1993 (Act No 205 of 1993).
- Second-Hand Goods Act, 2009 (Act No 6 of 2009).
- South African Police Service Act, 1995 (Act No 68 of 1995).
- Stock Theft Act, 1959 (Act No 57 of 1959).
- Tear-Gas Act, 1964 (Act No 16 of 1964).

In addition to the above, the SAPS derives its powers and functions mainly from the following key legislation:

- Child Justice Act, 2008 (Act 75 of 2008).
- Children's Act, 2005 (Act 38 of 2005).
- Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act, 2007 (Act 32 of 2007).
- Criminal Matters Amendment Act, 2015 (Act 18 of 2015).
- Criminal Procedure Act, 1977 (Act 51 of 1977).
- Counterfeit Goods Act, 1997 (Act 37 of 1997).
- Customary Initiation Act, 2021 (Act 2 of 2021).
- Customs and Excise Act, 1966 (Act 91 of 1966).
- Cybercrimes Act, 2020 (Act 19 of 2020).
- Diamonds Act, 1986 (Act 56 of 1986).
- Disaster Management Act, 2002 (Act 57 of 2002).
- Domestic Violence Act, 1998 (Act 116 of 1998).
- Drugs and Drug Trafficking Act, 1992 (Act 140 of 1992).
- Exchange Control Regulations, 1961.
- Films and Publications Act, 1996 (Act 65 of 1996).
- Financial Intelligence Centre Act, 2001 (Act 38 of 2001).
- Immigration Act, 2002 (Act 13 of 2002).
- Inquest Act, 1959 (Act 58 of 1959).
- Implementation of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court Act, 2002 (Act 27 of 2002).
- International Cooperation in Criminal Matters Act, 1996 (Act 75 of 1996).
- Liquor Act, 2003 (Act 59 of 2003).
- Marine Living Resources Act, 1998 (Act 18 of 1998).
- Mental Healthcare Act, 2002 (Act 17 of 2002).
- National Conventional Arms Control Act, 2002 (Act 41 of 2002).
- National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act 107 of 1998).
- National Road Traffic Act, 1996 (Act 93 of 1996).
- National Strategic Intelligence Act, 1994 (Act 39 of 1994).
- Non-Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction Act, 1993 (Act 87 of 1993).
- Older Persons Act, 2006 (Act 13 of 2006).
- Precious Metals Act, 2005 (Act 37 of 2005).
- Prevention and Combating of Corrupt Activities Act, 2004 (Act 12 of 2004).
- Prevention and Combating of Torture of Persons Act, 2013 (Act 13 of 2013).
- Prevention and Combating of Trafficking in Persons Act, 2013 (Act 7 of 2013).
- Protection from Harassment Act, 2011 (Act 17 of 2011).
- Prevention of Organised Crime Act, 1998 (Act 121 of 1998).
- Regulation of Interception of Communication and Provision of Communication-Related Information Act, 2002 (Act 70 of 2002).
- Safety at Sports and Recreational Events Act, 2010 (Act 2 of 2010).
- Sexual Offences Act, 1957 (Act 23 of 1957).
- State of Emergency Act, 1997 (Act 64 of 1997).

Code of Conduct

Employees of the SAPS are bound by the prescripts contained in Section 205 (3) of the Constitution to prevent, combat and investigate crime, to maintain public order, to protect and secure the inhabitants of the country and their property and to uphold and enforce the law. Employees are also bound to uphold and abide by the prescripts contained in the SAPS Act of 1995 and other legislation, the SAPS Employment Regulations, 2018 and National Instruction 18 of 2019 (Integrity Management in the SAPS), to adhere to the SAPS Code of Conduct.

The Code of Conduct serves as a guideline for SAPS

members to know and understand their responsibilities and obligations towards the general public. Each member of the SAPS is obliged to give a written undertaking to adhere to the principles of the Code of Conduct, to ensure a safe and secure environment for all people of South Africa and to protect the life and property of the citizens of South Africa and all its inhabitants, including foreigners.

This ensures that all members are faithful to South Africa, honour the Constitution and abide by it in the performance of their duties and their daily tasks. Posters of the Code of Conduct and information about ethical behaviour in the SAPS are displayed at all police stations and units. Over and above the members of the DPCI shall continue to observe the Oath of Office in terms of Section 17E(1)(b) of the SAPS Act, 1995 (Act 68 of 1995).

Budget

In 2024/25, the SAPS was allocated a budget R113,6 billion, compared with R105,4 billion, in 2023/24.

Resources

It is essential that the Department manage its human resources to ensure the effective, economical and equitable distribution and use of all human resources so that the SAPS can achieve its primary goals. To ensure that objectives are met by the end of the financial year, an enlistment plan is compiled annually in accordance with the allocated budget and the established targets and priorities, which are detailed in the Estimates of National Expenditure (ENE).

At the end of March 2025, the Department's personnel establishment stood at 187 681, showing an overall upward trend in staffing over the past five years. This reflects a strategic effort to strengthen human resources, particularly in operational capacities. The five-year trajectory indicates a gradual recovery from a low of 182 126 in 2020 to the current level (187 681), nearing the ENE target of 187 878, demonstrating significant progress towards optimal staffing levels. The enlistment of 20 035 new entry-level trainees between 2023/24 and 2024/25 contributed to this growth.

In 2024/25, the SAPS experienced a turnover rate of 3,2%. The Department's turnover rate has remained relatively consistent over the past four years, with a rate of 3,3% in 2020/21; 3,1%, in 2021/22; and 3,3%, in 2022/23. The highest number of losses experienced by the SAPS were attributed to retirements, which were followed by resignations.

The Employment Equity Act, 1998 (Act 55 of 1998) provides the foundation for sustainable and transformative progress on gender equity in the workforce and the employment of people with disabilities. A breakdown of personnel by management level and gender reveals ongoing initiatives to promote gender equality, particularly at senior management levels. By March 2025, there were 26 top management officials (13 males and 13 females), reflecting full gender equality at the top tier (50/50). At senior management level (levels 13 to 16), 775 positions were occupied, 469 males and 306 females, indicating that women comprised 39,48% of senior managers. While this is still short of the Department's goal of 50% gender representation at these levels, it represents a notable effort toward equity, with continued scope for targeted development and empowerment of female leadership.

Disability representation also received attention in line with national transformation goals. By March 2025, the Department had 3 174 employees with disabilities, a modest increase from 3 075 in March 2020. Although this remains below the 2% target of the total workforce (currently about 1,7%), it reflects consistent efforts toward inclusion. Recognising the physical demands of frontline policing, the Department strategically deploys employees with disabilities in administrative and support roles, where they can still make meaningful contributions. Additionally, 5% of vacant support posts are ring-fenced for persons with disabilities during recruitment processes, providing further opportunities for inclusive employment.

The SAPS is currently at a police-to-citizen ratio per capita of 1:406 and it has the same meaning when converted and expressed as the police density per 100 000 citizens (406/100 000).

The Department of Public Service and Administration has selected the SAPS to participate in a Graduate Recruitment Scheme Pilot Project. The Graduate Recruitment Scheme of the SAPS is viewed as a turnaround strategy for youth development, in terms of facilitating the provision of work experience to unemployed youth, based on their qualifications. In 2024/25, 805 interns were provided with internship and workplace integrated learning opportunities.

The National Commissioner allocates funds, annually, for the development of skills and attainment of pertinent qualifications within the SAPS. During the 2024 academic year, a total of 571 employees were awarded bursaries. This includes 367 continuing bursary holders and 204 new bursary applicants. These bursaries form part of the SAPS's commitment to promoting continuous professional development and upskilling of its workforce.

Police safety

Attacks and murders of SAPS employees, both on and off duty, threaten the country's stability. These incidents undermine public confidence in the SAPS's ability to fulfil its constitutional mandate to prevent, combat and investigate crime, maintain public order, and uphold the law. They also create the perception that criminals can act with impunity, disregarding law enforcement while furthering their criminal activities.

A police safety committee, derived from the Police Safety Strategy, is in place as a tool to coordinate all activities, in support of enhancing the safety of all SAPS members. These include the implementation of employee health and wellness programmes, the enhancement of tactical training, analysis of attack incidents to develop proactive preventative measures, and safety awareness campaigns, both within the SAPS and among the public.

Despite these efforts, attacks on police remain a serious concern. The 2024/25 financial year saw a total of 27 members killed in the line of duty. In total, 74 members were murdered, on and off duty, representing a 33,33% decrease from 111 members in 2023/24.

PROGRAMMES

Administration

The programme's focus areas for 2024/25 were aligned with the strategic priority of enhancing safety, security and

organisational performance within the SAPS.

Safety and infrastructure initiatives include: monitoring SAPS-owned firearms to minimise losses and improve management; establishing new police stations through the Infrastructure Development Programme; implementing CCTV systems at prioritised sites; and upgrading National Network Communication Infrastructure to improve operational connectivity and responsiveness.

Capacity building strengthens SAPS through: annual enlistment and training of entry-level police officers; and assessment and certification of learners in operational areas, specialised capabilities, and Leadership and Management Development Programmes.

Ethical conduct and compliance are promoted through: planned ethics and integrity advocacy and awareness programmes; finalisation of cases referred by the Independent Police Investigative Directorate; and completion of audits, forensic investigations and inspections at police stations across the country.

Achievements towards outcomes

Firearm management: Stolen or lost SAPS firearms often end up in criminal hands, eroding public confidence. Every firearm loss is thoroughly investigated to identify causes and implement corrective measures. Despite numerous preventative measures, the issue persists.

Infrastructure expansion: Three new police stations were completed during the reporting period: Phaudi (Limpopo), Dwarsberg and Kanana (North West). Six additional prioritised stations were fast-tracked through Pre-Manufactured Collapsible Units, an alternative construction method that reduces delivery time. Fifteen chassis cab trucks were converted into mobile contact points, providing flexible policing services in areas where permanent facilities are unavailable or require additional support.

Enhanced security: CCTV systems were substantially expanded across SAPS premises in 2024/25, improving safety for members, the public and visitors while deterring potential attacks and reassuring communities.

Recruitment and capacity: More than 10 000 new SAPS Act recruits were enlisted, enhancing capacity, visibility, strategic deployment and public confidence while strengthening crime reduction operations.

Specialised training: Members received training in prioritised areas including gender-based violence, crimes against vulnerable groups, crowd management, forensic science, crime prevention, cybercrime and investigations, strengthening overall capability and professionalism.

Visible Policing

The programme's focus areas address critical threats to public safety, economic stability and community trust through intelligence-led, evidence-based policing.

Economic crime prevention: Extortion and violent crime in the construction sector are targeted by monitoring reported cases and arrests at specified sites. Critical economic infrastructure is protected through tracking infrastructure-related crimes and related arrests. Firearm regulation is strengthened through recovery of illegal and SAPS-owned firearms and finalisation of new firearm applications.

Contact crime reduction: Priority interventions include reducing reported incidents, minimising escapes from police custody, recovering stolen or hijacked vehicles, conducting national and provincial Izimbizos and community engagements, and overseeing the 10111 Command Centre Reform Project. A data-driven approach targets the Top 30 High Contact Crime Stations.

Victim support and community partnerships: Victim-friendly services are provided to crime victims, including those affected by Gender-Based Violence and Femicide. Community Police Forums are maintained at police stations to strengthen partnerships. Public disorder and crowd management operations are conducted constitutionally, stabilising unrest and ensuring peaceful outcomes.

Specialised operations and border security: High-risk and medium- to high-risk security incidents are managed through specialised interventions. Border security is reinforced through proactive responses to wanted person alerts and stolen vehicle hits, as well as profiling and searching vehicles, containers and cargo at land borders, seaports and airports.

Crime statistics

The South African Government is committed to ensuring that all people are and feel safe, as outlined in the Delivery Agreement. High-density operations are implemented in all nine provinces, guided by national crime threat analysis.

Crime remains a critical challenge. According to global crime indices from Statista and Numbeo, South Africa ranks fifth globally and first in Africa, with a crime index score of 74.7 in early 2025. Crime instills fear across all communities, inhibiting citizens from communicating freely, engaging in economic activities, and preventing entrepreneurs and investors from seizing opportunities the country offers. Every crime threatens the rights and freedoms secured by the Constitution.

Government has prioritised crime prevention. In July 2024, the Minister of Police described South Africa's crime levels as "too high and intolerable", committing to tough measures to tackle rising contact crimes such as murder, rape, hijacking and kidnappings while modernising policing and rooting out corruption. This priority extends beyond security and justice departments to all national departments capable of contributing to crime reduction.

Understanding crime metrics: Reported contact crime is not a direct or reliable indicator of police performance alone. Crime rates are influenced by complex socio-economic factors including inequality, education levels, drug abuse and community dynamics. Addressing root causes requires long-term economic, social and developmental interventions beyond immediate police responses. Police enforcement – apprehending offenders and maintaining public order – addresses symptoms but cannot completely resolve underlying causes.

Medium-term trends: Between 2019/20 and 2024/25, the 17 community-reported serious crimes showed a general decrease, while contact crimes increased until a marginal decrease in 2024/25. This suggests a concerning shift from property-related crimes toward more violent offenses against persons, including murder, assault and robbery.

Crimes against women and children

South Africa has strengthened its legal framework to enhance protection for women, children and survivors of Gender-Based Violence and Femicide (GBVF). Between 2023 and 2024, President Cyril Ramaphosa signed three key GBVF bills into law, reinforcing constitutional rights to equality, dignity and freedom from violence, maltreatment, abuse and exploitation. These legislative advancements ensure greater access to justice for survivors, addressing systemic gaps that previously hindered effective responses. The SAPS has prioritised combating and preventing GBVF as a critical focus area, recognising the devastating impact on individuals and communities. Through specialised units, improved training, victim-friendly services and multi-sectoral collaboration, the SAPS upholds survivors' rights and contributes to the national goal of ending GBVF.

Achievements towards outcomes

Firearm regulation has improved through increased recovery of illegal firearms, strengthening regulation and reducing weapons in circulation. However, ongoing theft, loss and untraceable firearms remain concerns despite enforcement efforts. Finalising firearm applications within prescribed time frames has further enhanced regulation, promoted responsible ownership and increased public confidence in the SAPS.

Economic Infrastructure Task Teams (EITTs) conducted investigations resulting in asset recovery, disruption of criminal activities, enhanced infrastructure security measures and arrests. Illicit trade enforcement through closing illegal liquor outlets and conducting compliance assessments at registered second-hand goods dealers reduced illicit trade, improved public safety and protected legitimate businesses.

Comprehensive law enforcement through arrests, seizures, roadblocks, re-arrest of escapees and vehicle recoveries disrupted criminal networks and reinforced law enforcement authority, though crime levels remain high. Community policing was strengthened through victim-friendly services at all police stations and functional Community Police Forums at nearly every station, enhancing responsiveness to Gender-Based Violence and community participation in crime prevention, particularly supporting GBVF survivors.

Public order management maintained constitutionally grounded stability through successful policing of peaceful gatherings and stabilization of unrest incidents, upholding the rule of law. Border security was strengthened through Enhanced Movement Control System detection of wanted persons and stolen vehicles, combined with optimized profiling and searching of vehicles and cargo at ports of entry, maintaining trade flow while enhancing security.

Detective Services

The programme's focus areas strengthened investigative capacity to address serious and priority crimes.

Contact crime investigation monitors detection rates, with particular emphasis on the 30 High Contact Crime Stations. Crimes against women and children are prioritized through improved detection rates for contact crimes affecting these vulnerable groups. Targeted interventions address extortion and violent crime in the construction sector at specified sites, while Organised Crime Investigations tackle infrastructure-related crimes.

Organised crime disruption focuses on reducing drug syndicates through neutralization of identified operations and arrest of key perpetrators, supporting implementation of the Drug Master Plan. Similarly, neutralizing and arresting members of organized criminal groups and gangs linked to prioritized crime threats forms a core component of disrupting organized crime networks.

Forensic capacity is enhanced through compliance with legislative requirements for taking buccal samples from Schedule 8 arrested offenders and comprehensive use of forensic investigative leads. Fingerprint processing and criminal record maintenance are strengthened by generating original previous conviction reports and updating trial results for guilty verdicts. Forensic evidence processing addresses both routine and non-routine exhibits, manages and reduces backlogs including DNA case exhibits, and optimises use of ballistic intelligence and biology DNA intelligence in investigations.

Serious crime investigation reduces corruption in public and private sectors through preparation of trial-ready cases. Serious organized crime project investigations are closed, serious commercial crime investigations deliver trial-ready cases, and cybercrime support case files are successfully investigated.

Crime Detection

Contact crime detection rates have improved significantly, particularly at the 30 High Contact Crime Stations which serve as focal points for intensified policing and resource allocation. Crimes against women and children receive special focus, with improved detection rates reflecting strengthened investigative protocols, specialised training and victim-friendly approaches that encourage reporting and cooperation. These gains facilitate justice for survivors and prevent further victimisation.

The upward trend in detection rates and targeted focus on priority stations have positively impacted investigation and management of contact crimes. These achievements underscore the importance of sustained support, capacity building and community engagement in reducing the incidence and impact of contact crimes across South Africa.

Organised crime disruption has increased through neutralization of identified drug syndicates and organized criminal groups, with arrests disrupting networks linked to priority threats. Forensic capabilities have been enhanced through increased compliance with taking buccal samples from arrested offenders and comprehensive use of forensic investigative leads. The National Forensic DNA Database contained 1,305,692 forensic DNA profiles by the end of 2024/25.

Successful prosecutions demonstrate investigative effectiveness. In 2024/25, the General Crime Investigation Service secured 308 life sentences for 159 individuals. Family Violence, Child Protection and Sexual Offences secured 604 years of life imprisonment for 438 defendants in 505 cases.

Forensic Science

Fingerprint processing and criminal record maintenance have directly improved investigative outcomes. More original previous conviction reports are being generated, and trial

results are updated more frequently with guilty verdicts, strengthening the evidentiary foundation for prosecutions.

Forensic case exhibit processing has increased for both routine and non-routine cases, enhancing investigative support. Integration of criminal records and forensic evidence has proven pivotal in building stronger cases, improving conviction likelihood and contributing to effective crime investigation and disruption across South Africa.

National priority offences

The Directorate for Priority Crime Investigation (DPCI/ Hawks), established under Section 17C of the SAPS Act 1995 (Act 68 of 1995), is mandated to investigate national priority offences as provided for in Section 17D. The Directorate focuses on serious corruption, serious organised crime and serious commercial crime.

Trial-ready case preparation increased significantly in 2024/25 across all three focus areas. Serious corruption cases in the public sector progressed to prosecution more efficiently, strengthening accountability and deterring corrupt practices. This improved case readiness has enhanced confidence in the justice system's ability to hold offenders accountable and address systemic corruption effectively.

Serious organised crime project investigations closed at higher rates, enabling disruption and dismantling of organised criminal networks and reducing their operational capacity. This progress reflects enhanced investigative coordination and strategic prioritisation within SAPS. Serious commercial crime cases similarly advanced to trial readiness, demonstrating the critical role of meticulous case preparation and project management in combating these priority offences.

Effective response to cybercrime

Cybercrime encompasses internet-related fraud and contraventions under the Electronic Communications and Transactions Act, 2002 (Act No 25 of 2002), and continues to threaten South Africa and the globe. Priority Crime Specialised Investigation facilitates international cooperation against national priority crimes and provides investigative support for serious cyber-related crimes to DPCI operational components through specialised online investigations, social media investigations, open source intelligence and investigation of unauthorised network access.

The Fourth Industrial Revolution brings significant technological advancement but also substantial risk. The threat to South Africa's economy and population posed by malicious criminal targeting of cyberspace requires coordinated legislative, policy, strategic and operational responses through collaborative, preventive effort from all sectors.

The DPCI's Cybercrime unit achieved notable successes in 2024/25 through enhanced capacity, adaptation to the cyber forensic investigative support environment and more effective stakeholder collaboration. This resulted in a higher proportion of case files being successfully investigated.

The Cybercrimes Act of 2020 provides the overarching legal authority for regulation, investigation and criminalisation of cybercrimes. The Act criminalises offences including unlawful access to computers or data storage devices, illegal acquisition or interception of data, unlawful acquisition, receipt or possession of passwords, online forgery, extortion, fraud and theft of incorporeal property. It further criminalises three types of data messages: those inciting damage to property or violence, those threatening people with damage to property or violence, and those unlawfully containing intimate images.

Crime Intelligence

The programme's focus areas strengthened intelligence capabilities to support proactive crime prevention and law enforcement operations.

Network operations infiltrate criminal groupings and syndicates to collect intelligence on priority threats. These operations terminate activities linked to prioritised crime threats, disrupting organised criminal networks.

Security risk and vetting assessments safeguard the integrity of SAPS personnel, systems and facilities through security clearance finalisation, ICT security assessments and overt mandatory physical security assessments of critical infrastructure and sensitive operations.

Intelligence reports are generated and operationalised at district, provincial and national levels, ensuring actionable intelligence informs operational planning, enhances situational awareness and supports targeted interventions against identified threats.

Intelligence-led policing

Network operations have improved significantly, with increased successful termination of operations infiltrating and dismantling criminal groupings and syndicates. These achievements have enabled law enforcement to proactively disrupt prioritised crime threats before they escalate, enhancing public safety and operational efficiency.

Security risk and vetting assessments have been strengthened through finalisation of critical security clearances, ICT security evaluations and overt mandatory physical security assessments. These measures have bolstered personnel and infrastructure integrity, reducing vulnerabilities and safeguarding sensitive operations.

Intelligence report operationalisation has improved across district, provincial and national levels. Proactive reports facilitate anticipatory responses to emerging threats, enabling strategic resource deployment to mitigate crime risks effectively. Reactive reports support rapid, informed responses to incidents as they occur, enhancing investigative outcomes and operational coordination.

These advancements in operational execution, security management and intelligence dissemination have substantially improved SAPS's capacity to combat crime through informed, targeted and timely interventions.

Protection and Security Services

The programme's focus areas ensured safety and security of protected persons, venues and strategic sites.

In-transit and static protection services are provided to designated individuals and identified government interests, along with physical protection and venue security. These protective measures maintain operations free from security breaches and are implemented according to established security protocols, safeguarding national leadership, government interests and critical events.

Physical security is maintained at identified government buildings and strategic installations through systematic

auditing and evaluation of National Key Points. These measures ensure compliance with security standards, enhance resilience against potential threats and support safeguarding of critical state assets.

Identified dignitaries and government interests protected

In-transit and static protection services, along with physical and venue security, operated without security breaches in 2024/25, ensuring safety of high-profile individuals and critical events. This reinforced public confidence in the state's ability to safeguard leadership, institutions and strategic assets whilst deterring threats and maintaining stability in high-risk environments.

Auditing of strategic installations and evaluation of all National Key Points strengthened national security readiness by identifying and addressing vulnerabilities, ensuring compliance with legislative and security standards, and protecting critical infrastructure against sabotage, disruption or other security risks. These outcomes protect vital state interests and demonstrate the capacity of security services to uphold the rule of law.

SAPS Commemoration Day

National Police Commemoration Day takes place on the first Sunday in September to honour police officers who died in the line of duty in the preceding 12 months. A total of 39 officers (three females and 36 males) were commemorated during the National Commemoration Day held at the Union Buildings on 1 September 2024. The event was led by Acting President of the Republic, Deputy President Paul Mashatile. On Commemoration Day, the SAPS inscribes and preserves fallen members' names on the Wall of Remembrance, ensuring they are remembered by current and future generations. Family, friends and colleagues of the 39 members who died in the line of duty between April 2024 and March 2025 attended, along with ministers from various government departments.

The Deputy President laid a wreath at the remembrance wall on behalf of the Republic of South Africa, the Minister of Police laid a wreath on behalf of the Department of Police, and the National Commissioner of the SAPS laid a wreath on behalf of the Service.

Through the SAPS Employee Health and Wellness component, the organisation continues to provide psychological and spiritual support to families, friends and colleagues of deceased members.

Military Veterans

The Department of Military Veterans derives its mandate from the Military Veterans Act 18 of 2011, which requires it to provide national policy and standards on socio-economic support to military veterans and their dependants, including benefits to help realise a dignified, unified, empowered and self-sufficient community of military veterans.

Acknowledging military veterans' contribution towards the fulfilment of a free and democratic South Africa has the potential to deepen social cohesion and national unity while redressing the inequities of the past. It is with this in mind that the department focuses on providing qualifying military veterans and their dependants with access to key benefits such as basic and higher education support, military veterans' pension, housing subsidies and mortgage settlement, healthcare and wellness, business empowerment and skills development programmes as stipulated in the Military Veterans Act, 2011.

The department's total budget for the 2025/26 financial year is R878 million. In terms of the overall budget, the department plans to intensify the rollout of military veterans pensions with the aim of reaching 9 600 deserving military veterans or their dependants by 2027/28. In accordance with section 3(1)(c) of the Military Veterans Act, 2011, the means test will be applied to ensure this benefit is directed towards the most deserving. During the 2025/26 MTEF period, 63% of the total allocated budget is earmarked for the disbursement of military veterans' benefits.

The first Chairperson of the Presidential Task Team (PTT), the late Deputy President DD Mabuza, was invaluable in ensuring the pension benefit for military veterans was disbursed since November 2023. With the support of the Presidential Task Team on Military Veterans led by the Deputy President of the Republic, 4 378 military veterans have been supported at a cost of R217,5 million.

The Minister of Defence and Military Veterans intends to establish a transversal team to assist the department in unlocking the challenges it currently faces. This team will be made up of multidisciplinary agencies, individuals and government bodies tasked with turning the departmental mandate into actionable objectives. During this financial year, the Database Verification, Cleansing and Enhancement workstream of the PTT is verifying military veterans across the country in a continued effort to ensure that military veterans are able to register on the South African National Military Veterans Database, the gateway to all the benefits facilitated by the department. Parallel to the verification process, cleansing and digitising of the database are equally key priorities in ensuring the database's integrity.

Working hand-in-hand with other government departments, such as the Department of Sport, Arts and Culture, and the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development, among others, the Department of Military Veterans intends to repatriate fallen heroes and heroines who lost their lives during the struggle for our nation's freedom. This repatriation effort seeks to bring back their remains from countries outside the Republic. Between September 2024 and September 2025, 35 mortal remains have been repatriated and reburied while further work is under way. The countries that have been earmarked for this project are Lesotho, Zambia, Zimbabwe and Angola.

The department's Education Support Benefit has over the past three financial years provided learners and students with bursaries to study at various institutions of basic and higher learning. During the 2021/22 financial year, 3 711 learners and students received support at a cost of R88 million. In the 2022/23 financial year, 4 114 learners and students received support at a cost of R126 million. In the 2023/24, 3 690 learners and students cost the department R135 million in education support. For the 2024/25 financial year, 2 738 learners and students were provided with education support to continue with their studies. To date, at least 100 higher education learners have graduated.





SOUTH AFRICA
YEARBOOK
2024/25

Social Development

The department of Social Development (DSD) ensures protection against vulnerability by creating an enabling environment for the provision of comprehensive, integrated and sustainable social development services. The department provides social development services and leads government's efforts to forge partnerships through which vulnerable individuals, groups and communities become capable and active participants in their own development as well as in society.

As part of the broader mix of government's social protection measures, the department provides social welfare services and social development programmes through local and regional services, and administers long-term social grants that benefit the elderly, people with disabilities, and children. It also makes short-term cash transfers and in-kind support for households in distress or with insufficient means.

Over the medium term, the department will continue to provide social welfare services and income support to the poor and most vulnerable through various social grants; reform social security and prevent fraud in the administration of social grants; minimise the impact of social ills on society; and assist in building sustainable communities to alleviate poverty.

Departmental budget and priorities

The department's total budget over the period ahead is R801.7 billion, of which transfers and subsidies account for 99,6% (R798.9 billion) over the medium term. Transfers to social assistance grants make up the bulk of the department's spending, amounting to R774.4 billion over the next three years, while the remainder is spent on transfers to entities. Cabinet has approved reductions to the department's budget amounting to R1.8 billion over the period ahead.

Of this, transfers to the South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) will be reduced by R1.5 billion, while the department's spending on goods and services is expected to be reduced by R226.3 million. To mitigate the impact of these reductions on performance, the department plans to curtail spending on goods and services such as travel and subsistence, consultants, and venues and facilities. The SASSA plans to reduce spending on contract payments.

Providing social welfare services and income support

Social welfare services are provided through social service practitioners in partnership with community structures, including non-profit organisations (NPOs). Services include care and support for the elderly; child services, including the provision of places of safety, safe adoption and foster care services, and child and youth care centres; support services for people with disabilities; social behaviour change programmes; and psychosocial services, such as providing support for victims of gender-based violence and femicide (GBVF).

Through provincial social development departments, spending on social welfare services is estimated to be R68.4 billion over the period ahead. Social assistance grants are disbursed through the Social Assistance programme, allocations to which are set to increase at an average annual rate of 1%, from R252.1 billion in 2023/24 to R259.8 billion in 2026/27.

This nominal increase is in line with inflation-related adjustments to grant values and only a slight increase in beneficiaries over the period. In 2025/26, the social assistance budget decreases to R248.4 billion due to the discontinuation of the COVID-19 social relief of distress grant. This termination is expected to result in a reduction in the total number of grant beneficiaries, from an estimated 27.8 million in 2023/24 to 19.7 million in 2026/27.

To enable the administration of these grants through the South African Social Security Agency, R23.4 billion is allocated over the MTEF period to the Social Grants Administration subprogramme in the Social Security Policy and Administration programme.

Reforming social security and preventing fraud

The department aims to complete an extensive review of social security policy. It plans to do this by ensuring that proposed reforms are able to be implemented given the department's constrained resources. Accordingly, a White Paper on Social Security is expected to be finalised over the MTEF period. In addition, after the decision to extend the COVID-19 social relief of distress grant until the end of 2024/25, the department will finalise policy options on the replacement of the grant, taking into consideration the need to strengthen employment pathways and means for sustainable livelihoods.

To carry out these activities, the Social Security Policy Development subprogramme in the Social Security Policy and Administration programme is allocated R204 million over the period ahead. The department has allocated R114.3 million over the next three years to the Appeals Adjudication subprogramme in the same programme. These funds are intended to strengthen the department's systems, including its records management system, to enhance its responsiveness in addressing social assistance appeals through the Independent Tribunal for Social Assistance Appeals. Accordingly, the department aims to increase the percentage of appeals addressed within 90 days, from 80% in 2023/24 to 95% in 2026/27.

Fraud prevention is critical to ensuring the sustainable administration of social assistance. In seeking to address the debilitating effects of fraud in the administration of social grants, the department will continue to play a proactive role in helping SASSA with its fraud prevention initiatives. For this purpose, R237 million is allocated over the medium term to the Social Grants Fraud Investigations subprogramme, which is also in the Social Security Policy and Administration programme.

Mitigating social ills

Over the MTEF period, the department will continue to monitor the implementation of the intersectoral protocol on the prevention and management of violence against children, child abuse, neglect and exploitation; provide psychosocial services; and implement social and behaviour change programmes, including life skills and awareness programmes on HIV and AIDS, substance abuse, GBVF, teenage pregnancy, gangsterism, violence against children and other forms of social crime. These activities will be carried out through the Welfare Services Policy Development

and Implementation Support programme, which is allocated R955.1 million over the next three years.

The high rate of substance abuse in South Africa remains a critical concern. Through the Substance Abuse subprogramme in the Welfare Services Policy Development and Implementation Support programme, the department will intensify education and awareness campaigns on substance abuse in collaboration with relevant stakeholders such as institutions of higher learning and civil-society organisations. The subprogramme is allocated R61.3 million over the medium term to carry out related activities.

The department is a key role player in the implementation of the national strategic plan on gender-based violence and femicide, which is in place to combat GBVF. In carrying out its responsibilities as part of the strategy, over the medium term, the DSD intends to create capacity for stakeholders in identified hotspots to provide psychosocial services and implement an integrated sheltering policy.

The purpose of these activities is to identify the different approaches required to cater for various victims, including uneducated or unemployed young women who will need to be linked to skills programmes or economic activities. These activities will be carried out with allocations amounting to R245.9 million over the medium term in the Social Crime Prevention and Victim Empowerment subprogramme in the Welfare Services Policy Development and Implementation Support programme.

Building sustainable communities to alleviate poverty

NPOs are critical partners in the delivery of social and other services. They are regulated by the NPO Act of 1997, which promotes the effective and fair regulation of NPOs. Over the MTEF period, the department plans to enhance the registration and oversight processes of NPOs by developing a policy framework, improving the turnaround time for registrations, and improving compliance monitoring. For this purpose, R131.1 million is allocated over the period ahead in the Registration and Monitoring of NPOs subprogramme in the Social Policy and Integrated Service Delivery programme.

The Community Development subprogramme in the same programme supports the implementation of interventions that are geared towards empowering communities. This is done through strengthening capacity and creating structures that facilitate sustainable community development. Over the period ahead, the department plans to finalise a comprehensive policy for community development. As part of this, households and communities will be assisted to identify challenges as well as measures that could be put in place to strengthen capacity, solidarity and social capital in communities.

Through the programme, the department also intends to link 2% of all grant recipients to sustainable livelihood opportunities. To fund the department's sustainable livelihoods projects, an amount of R26.6 million is allocated to the subprogramme over the medium term. An amount of R654.5 million is allocated to the National Development Agency through the Social Policy and Integrated Service Delivery programme over the medium term to contribute towards poverty eradication. The agency will support this by providing grants to civil society projects that focus on the development needs of the poor.

Social security

According to StatsSA General Household Survey (GHS), the percentage of individuals who benefited from social grants steadily increased from 12,8% in 2003 to approximately 31% between 2017 and 2019, before increasing sharply to 39,4% in 2023. This growth was tracked closely by that of households that received at least one social grant.

The percentage of households that received at least one social grant increased relatively consistently from 30,8% in 2003 to 45,5% in 2019, before rising to 52,4% in 2020 due to the introduction of the special Social Relief of Distress Grant (SRD) COVID-19 grants. The percentage of households that receive at least one grant has, since then, declined to 50% in 2023.

Grant beneficiaries were most common in the Eastern Cape (52,9%) and Limpopo (50,4%), and least widespread in Western Cape (24,4%) and Gauteng (26,9%). Households that received at least one type of social grant were most common in the Eastern Cape (64,9%) and the Free State (63,9%), and least common in Gauteng (36,6%) and Western Cape (38,6%).

The SRD grant of R350 per month was introduced in 2020 in an attempt to offset the impact of COVID-19. Since then, the percentage of individuals in the age group 18-59 years who received the grant has increased from 5,3% in 2020 to 12,4% in 2023.

About 27,8% of all individuals and 38,9% of all households in metropolitan areas received some kind of social grant (compared to 39,4% of individuals and 50,0% of households nationally). Individual grant receipt was highest in Mangaung (41,4%), Buffalo City (38,0%) and Nelson Mandela Bay (37,0%) and lowest in Cape Town (21,7%), Tshwane (25,4%) and Ekurhuleni (26,4%).

A similar pattern is evident for households at metropolitan level. The receipt of one or more social grants was most common for households in Mangaung (59,4%) and Buffalo City (53,8%) and least common in Tshwane (33,6%), Johannesburg (35,4%), and Cape Town (36,2%).

Legislation and frameworks Several pieces of legislation determine the mandate of the DSD:

- The Children's Act of 2005, as amended, which gives effect to certain rights of children as contained in the Constitution, and sets out principles and processes relating to their care and protection;
- The NPOs Act, 1997 (Act 71 of 1997), which establishes an administrative and regulatory framework within which NPOs can conduct their affairs, and provides for their registration by the DSD;
- The Older Persons Act, 2006 (Act 13 of 2006), which is aimed at maintaining and promoting the rights, status, wellbeing, safety and security of older people. It provides for older people to enjoy quality services while staying with their families and in their communities for as long as possible, and to live in residential care facilities;
- The Prevention of and Treatment for Substance Abuse Act, 2008 (Act 70 of 2008) and associated regulations, which provide a legal framework for the establishment, registration and monitoring of in-patient treatment centres and halfway houses;

- Social Assistance Act, 2004 (Act 13 of 2004), which provides a legislative framework for providing social assistance. The Act sets out the different types of grants payable, as well as their qualifying criteria;
- The Social Service Professions Act, 1978 (Act 110 of 1978), which provides for the regulation of social service professionals;
- The 1997 White Paper for Social Welfare sets out the principles, guidelines, policies and programmes for developmental social welfare in South Africa. A new White Paper for Social Development is currently under review;
- The 1998 White Paper on Population Policy for South Africa is aimed at promoting the sustainable development of all South Africans by integrating population issues with development planning in all spheres of government and all sectors of society; and
- The 2015 White Paper on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which focuses on putting in place measures to reduce the exclusion and inequality experienced by persons with disabilities. This includes contributing towards fighting poverty among people with disabilities and their families, and providing policy guidelines on building capacity in the public sector to deliver equitable and accessible services to them.

Entities

National Development Agency

The NDA is a schedule 3A public entity established in terms of the National Development Agency Act of 1998. Its primary mandate is to contribute towards the eradication of poverty and its causes by granting funds to civil society organisations to implement development projects in poor communities. Over the period ahead, the agency plans to implement its turnaround strategy that was approved by its new board in July 2023.

The new approach envisaged in the turnaround strategy seeks to empower impoverished communities by supporting the establishment and funding of sustainable enterprises and cooperatives to reduce poverty and reliance on social grants. The agency plans to support and fund the establishment of 600 community-owned enterprises that will provide income to 6 000 community members over the MTEF period.

The agency has allocated R5 million per year over the MTEF period for this purpose. In line with its aim of reducing poverty and developing communities, over the next three years, the agency plans to partner with research and academic institutions to produce nine research publications and host 15 development policy dialogues to engage with relevant stakeholders. Spending on these activities is expected to amount to R31.8 million over the MTEF period.

Expenditure is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 1%, from R222.2 million in 2023/24 to R228.9 million in 2026/27. Spending on compensation of employees is the agency's main cost driver, accounting for 69,8% (R466 million) of its total budget over the medium term. The agency is set to derive almost all its revenue over the period ahead from departmental transfers, amounting to R654.5 million.

South African Social Security Agency

The South African Social Security Agency Act of 2004 provides for the establishment of the South African Social Security Agency (SASSA), whose broad objectives are to ensure the effective and efficient administration, management and payment of social assistance to qualifying beneficiaries. The agency provides social grants to eligible individuals who are unable to support themselves and their dependants. It also provides temporary assistance to people in crisis situations such as declared and undeclared disasters, and relief for household distress such as loss of a breadwinner.

Bank charges for the payment of social grants contribute to a significant portion of the agency's operational expenditure. For this purpose, R1.4 billion is set aside over the medium term in the Benefits Administration Support Programme. The agency continues to make progress in increasing social grant uptake among eligible beneficiaries. The number of grants, including grant-in-aid and excluding those receiving assistance from the Social Relief of Distress Grant (SRD), is expected to increase from 19.1 million in 2023/24 to 19.5 million by the end of 2024/25, representing a year-on-year increase of approximately 2%. By 2026/27, the number of social grant recipients is expected to increase at the same rate to 20.3 million, at an estimated cost of R259.8 billion.

Over the MTEF period, the agency plans to automate most of its business processes. This entails streamlining its operations to ensure, among other things, that the majority of applications for social grants are processed within five days from the current 10 days. The agency will continue to prioritise interventions such as improving its financial management system to address negative findings from internal and external audits; implementing measures to reduce the cost of administering social assistance; building management capacity to help fight fraud and corruption; and migrating to a web-based internal system. An estimated R26 million is allocated over the MTEF period for spending on these activities.

The upgrade of the beneficiary biometric identification solution will also be prioritised over the MTEF period at an estimated cost of R14 million. The planned upgrades will include facial recognition as an additional biometric identifier, and high-performance search and matching capabilities to efficiently scan beneficiary fingerprints in the database to identify potential duplicates and thereby reduce fraud. Given the negative impact of load-shedding on grant disbursement processes, the agency plans to acquire alternative energy solutions such as solar panels, inverters, batteries and generators over the period ahead.

Accordingly, more than 200 local offices have been identified for improvements, including the installation of alternative power supplies, at a total cost of R14 million. Total expenditure is expected to amount to R23.7 billion, decreasing marginally by 0,4%, from R8.2 billion in 2023/24 to R8.1 billion in 2026/27, due to Cabinet-approved reductions of R461.8 million in 2024/25, R491.8 million in 2025/26 and R521.3 million in 2026/27. The agency will be required to find efficiencies to absorb these reductions. The agency is set to derive 99,9% (R23.6 billion) of its revenue over the next three years through transfers from the department. Revenue is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 2,4%, from R7.6 billion in 2023/24 to R8.1 billion in 2026/27.



Programmes and projects

Social Assistance

Over the medium term, the DSD will continue to transfer funds to SASSA for the provision of social grants to the elderly, children, war veterans and persons with disabilities. Social grants account for an estimated 94,3% (R175.3 billion per year on average) of the department's total budget over the MTEF period. Spending on grants is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 7,5% over the medium term. Mostly due to inflationary adjustments to the value of the grants and growth in the number of beneficiaries.

The elderly population – people older than 60 years, is growing by 3% per year. As such, the number of beneficiaries who receive the old age grant is expected to increase. As the child population grows, the number of beneficiaries who receive the Child Support Grant (CSG) is also expected to increase. The high level of unemployment and poverty levels in the country, combined with high wage inequality and low labour market participation, are contributory factors to the growth of social grants to children. Furthermore, the continuing trend of generally low wages paid to those who are working means that a high proportion of working parents do not earn sufficient wages to adequately provide for their children.

For the foreseeable future, the Social Assistance programme will continue to be an important lever in government's arsenal to tackle poverty and inequality. In the immediate future as the country battles the COVID-19 pandemic, the social assistance system has become even more important as a key response to mitigate the severe impact on incomes and livelihoods of vulnerable workers and their households. The economic fallout of the pandemic continues to reverberate across the economy, necessitating urgent intervention including the increased allocation of R40 billion to augment the social grants budget.

The allocation provided R250 increases for the Older Person's Grant, Disability Grant, Foster Child Grant and the Care Dependency Grant, alongside a once-off R300 boost to the CSG and a five-month R500 monthly payment to caregivers. To support those aged 18 to 59 who ordinarily do not receive social grants, a temporary COVID-19 SRD grant of R350 per month was introduced.

Social Security Policy and Administration

The programme aims to amend the Social Assistance Act of 2004 and the Fund-Raising Act, 1978 (Act 107 of 1978), to address existing gaps and inconsistencies in the legislation. Specifically, the Social Assistance Amendment Act, 2020 (Act 16 of 2020) introduced a provision to empower the Minister of Social Development, with the concurrence of the Minister of Finance, to augment the CSG benefit provided to orphaned children residing with relatives. This is intended to reduce the demand on the foster child system by reducing the number of children entering the foster care system purely to access the Foster Child Grant due to the large differential in value between this grant and the CSG.

The Act will also enhance access to administrative justice by reducing the time it takes for appeals to be adjudicated from 180 days to 90 days. The DSD expects the workload of the tribunal to increase once the Act is passed, since all complainants will be able to come directly to the tribunal without first approaching SASSA. When proclaimed, the Act will also pave the way for the establishment of an inspectorate for social assistance appeals, which will be tasked with ensuring and promoting the integrity of the social assistance framework.

The programme further aims to complete the extensive policy proposals on social security reform, ranging from extending social assistance coverage to all, introducing mandatory contributions for retirement, death and disability, creating a platform for informal sector workers to participate in social security coverage, and developing an appropriate institutional architecture for a coherent, efficient and sustainable social security system in the long term.

The severe impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the economy and its ability to create jobs has raised new questions about the reliance on economic growth to address unemployment and poverty, and revived interest in the prospect of a basic income grant as another lever to tackle poverty and inequality, and engender a more inclusive growth path.

Ongoing policy development will continue, particularly to address very specific social security coverage gaps in relation to pregnant and lactating women, and institutional

mechanisms and the cost thereof, to crowd in all government interventions to address the social protection needs of children, using the social grants as an entry point. The department will also table the Fundraising Amendment Bill to Parliament, in order to streamline the administration of the various funds established before the democratic dispensation to provide humanitarian relief in times of disaster.

Welfare Services Policy Development and Implementation Support

The purpose of the programme is to create an enabling environment for the delivery of equitable developmental welfare services through the formulation of policies, norms, standards and best practices, and the provision of support to implementing agencies.

This programme consists of the following subprogramme:

- Service Standards, which ensures the transformation and standardisation of social welfare services through the development and coordination of overarching policies and legislation that promote integrated, quality-driven, professional and accountable service delivery;
- Social Work Scholarship, which provides full scholarships for social work students;
- Substance Abuse, which develops, supports and monitors the implementation of policies, legislation, and norms and standards for combating substance abuse;
- Older Persons, which develops, supports and monitors the implementation of policies, legislation, and norms and standards for social welfare services to older people;
- Disability Rights, which promotes the empowerment and rights of persons with disabilities through accelerated mainstreaming of disability considerations and the strengthening of disability specific services;
- Children, which develops, supports and monitors the implementation of policies, legislation and norms and standards for social welfare services to children;
- Families, which develops, supports and monitors the implementation of policies, legislation and programmes for services aimed at strengthening families;
- Social Crime Prevention and Victim Empowerment, which develops, supports and monitors the implementation of policies, legislation and programmes aimed at protecting, empowering and supporting victims of crime and violence; and
- HIV and AIDS, which develops, supports and monitors the implementation of policies, programmes and guidelines aimed at preventing and mitigating the impact of HIV and AIDS in line with the 2017 to 2022 National Strategic Plan for HIV, sexually transmitted infections and TB.

The psychosocial support programmes are meant to build competencies and capacities for these groups to cope with life demands and stresses and manage relationships well. Some of the interventions entail building capacity of social service practitioners to enable mainstreaming of counselling, testing, treatment and adherence support for children and adolescents in particular.

The DSD continues to make significant efforts to improve access to substance misuse treatment services, as seen by the construction of public treatment centres in the Eastern Cape, the Northern Cape, the Free State and North West in 2020/21. In addition, the department received R9 million in financing to build 17 community care centres in the North West, KwaZulu-Natal and Limpopo.

These centres work to improve service delivery in all beneficiary communities by ensuring that multiple partners provide integrated and comprehensive services in a safe and well-equipped location. Through a collaboration with the Department of Public Works and Infrastructure, the DSD was able to secure a state-owned facility to use as the GBV Command Centre.

Social Policy and Integrated Service Delivery

The purpose of the programme is to support community development and promote evidence-based policy making in the DSD and the social development sector. Community development programme implementation is geared towards empowering communities through capacity enhancement and creation of structures. Poverty and inequality continue to ravage communities as they are experienced through multiple deprivation and vulnerabilities, which include poor nutrition, unemployment, poor education and poor health outcomes. The department plans to intensify its effort to ensure that vulnerable households and communities are profiled to determine their socio-economic needs. It will conduct community capacity enhancement in all nine provinces to bolster social cohesion.

Functional community structures will be created as part of preventing and addressing social ills in communities. Out of 19.1 million grant recipients, the department intends to target 2% to link the beneficiaries to sustainable livelihoods. Through the programme, the department will facilitate the implementation of the NPO Funding Policy and Partnership Model, thereby ensuring uniformity in the sector. The programme will also ensure the formulation of the overarching Community Development Policy that will harness implementation of community development in the country.

Through the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP), the DSD will continue to create meaningful work opportunities as a social protection safety net for vulnerable individuals over the MTSF period. This is in line with government's commitment to job creation as contained in the Phase 4 EPWP Business Plan. The department also administers the NPOs Act of 1997 and has identified the following outputs: NPO Policy Framework, turnaround time on NPO registration, NPO compliance monitoring and NPO education and awareness programmes as pillars that will ensure that the outcome – reduced levels of poverty – is achieved.

This is hoped to be achieved by increasing public trust and confidence through effective yet fair regulation of NPOs. Reducing poverty levels requires contributions from NPOs in delivering programmes that support the achievement of set outcomes. This requires that NPOs understand legislation and compliance thereof in order to be credible and accountable entities that can deliver on their respective mandates. The planned outputs on the provision of education and awareness programmes to NPOs will lead to an empowered and strengthened sector that is able to deliver quality services to vulnerable and poor communities, thus improving the quality of life.



The DSD will, in the next MTSF, implement the National Food and Nutrition Security Plan for South Africa. The plan seeks to ensure implementation of food and nutrition security initiatives targeting vulnerable individuals and households. This will be accomplished through the coordination of the DSD's food and nutrition interventions which include all centre-based feeding programmes providing nutritious food to the poor and vulnerable in partnership with civil society organisations, social partners and agencies.

Community development will seek to ensure development of the National Community Development Policy Framework, with an emphasis on the creation of vibrant and sustainable communities. The department will also prioritise the linking of recipients below 60 years to sustainable livelihoods opportunities. The Community Development branch will continue with the development of a policy framework, guidelines and tools to enhance community development within the country.

Ten-Point Plan

The strategic plan of the DSD is informed by the 10-Point Plan, which represents the priorities to be addressed by the social development sector. These are:

- Rebuilding of family, community and social relations: Restoring the ethics of care and human development in all welfare programmes. This requires an urgent rebuilding of family, community and social relations in order to promote social integration.
- Integrated poverty eradication strategy: Designing an integrated poverty eradication strategy that provides direct benefits to those in greatest need, especially women, youth and children in rural areas and informal settlements.
- Comprehensive social security system: Developing a comprehensive social security system that builds on existing contributory and non-contributory schemes and prioritises the most vulnerable households.
- Violence against women and children, older persons and other vulnerable groups: Responding to the brutal effects of all forms of violence against women, children, older persons and other vulnerable groups, as well as designing effective strategies to deal with perpetrators.
- HIV and AIDS: Programmes include a range of services to support community-based care and assistance for people living with HIV and AIDS. Particular attention will be given to orphans and children infected and affected by HIV and AIDS.
- Youth development: Developing a national strategy to reduce the number of youth in conflict with the law and promoting youth development within the framework of the National Crime Prevention Strategy and in partnership with the National Youth Commission.
- Accessibility of social welfare services: Making social welfare services accessible and available to people in rural, peri-urban and informal settlements, and ensuring equity in service provision.
- Services to people with disabilities: Redesigning services to people with disabilities in ways that promote their human rights and economic development and working with people with disabilities to ensure that their needs are met without further marginalising them.
- Commitment to cooperative governance: Work must be based on a commitment to cooperative governance that includes working with different spheres of government and civil society.
- Train, educate, re-deploy and employ a new category of workers in social development: This includes the re-orientation of social service workers to meet the challenges of South Africa and link these to regional and global demands.

Expanded Public Works Programme

The EPWP is a nationwide programme under the auspices of government and state-owned enterprises. The programme provides an important avenue for labour absorption and income transfers to poor households in the short to medium term. It is also a deliberate attempt by public sector bodies to use expenditure on goods and services to create job opportunities for the unemployed. The EPWP projects employ workers on a temporary or ongoing basis either by government, contractors or NGOs under the Ministerial Conditions of Employment for the EPWP or learnership employment conditions.

The Vuk'uphile Learnership Programme is an EPWP Contractor Development Programme. It is a subprogramme of the EPWP infrastructure sector which is aimed at training and developing emerging contractors within the construction industry. The programme develops the administrative, technical, contractual, managerial and entrepreneurial skills of the learners within a learner-contracting entity. The Vuk'uphile Learnership Programme uses labour-intensive methods of construction.

The EPWP Knowledge Management Committee is composed of various national government departments such as Social Development, Environmental Affairs, and Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, with the Department of Public Works and Infrastructure (DPWI) leading the committee. While the DPWI must continue with its role of coordinating the EPWP nationally, the DSD drives the implementation of the projects in the social sector space.

War on Poverty Campaign

The Cooperative Shop Project is aimed at combating poverty by linking social grant beneficiaries, particularly the caregivers of children receiving the CSG and other vulnerable groups, to meaningful socioeconomic opportunities. The DSD and its entities identify cooperatives that need support, with the intention of developing skills of the members of the cooperative to ensure they are able to produce goods of quality.

The project is in line with government's developmental agenda and could be seen as an addition to the grants that are provided. The primary intention is not to take people out of the grant system but to provide opportunities for grant beneficiaries to supplement their income.

Food for All Programme

The DSD is tasked with facilitating and monitoring the implementation of the Food for All Programme. To this end, distressed households are being provided with food through the DSD and the Food Forward SA programme. While this provides short-term relief for poor households, government recognises that longer-term solutions are needed. Government is committed to improving its efforts at ensuring food security for all in the country, starting with vulnerable households and communities. To this end, households have been assisted in establishing food gardens to produce their own food, thus participating in their own development.

National Family Policy

The DSD is tasked with implementing the National Family Policy, and provides training in family-preservation services, marriage preparation and enrichment, parenting/primary care-giving and support for families in crisis to service providers in the area of family services. The 2013 White Paper on Families emphasises the need for all to build strong families that protect the most vulnerable members of society. The purpose of the White Paper is to provide a platform for all South Africans to engage and exchange views on how to build stable families. It also addresses some of the challenges faced by individuals in families, including the abuse of women, children, the elderly and people with disabilities.

National Minimum Wage (NMW)

The NMW came into effect in January 2019. In March 2024, the NMW for each ordinary hour worked was increased from R25.42 to R27,58. The adjustment provides exceptions for several worker groups, including:

- workers employed on the Expanded Public Works Programme are entitled to a minimum wage of R15.16 per hour; and
- Workers who have concluded learnership agreements contemplated in section 17 of the Skills Development Act, 1998 (Act 97 of 1998) are entitled to allowances contained in Schedule 2.

The minimum wage is a tool to ensure that vulnerable workers do not fall below the poverty line and it is designed to reduce inequality and huge disparities in income in the national labour market.

HIV and AIDS Youth Programme

Isibindi is a programme which deploys child and youth care workers in communities to assist children in vulnerable homes. Isibindi has a special focus on Grade 12 learners. The assistance by Isibindi child and youth care workers ensures that children remain in school and attend classes. The child and youth care workers support these children and make sure that they are relieved from household responsibilities, including being parents to their siblings while they are trying to pass Grade 12.

Almost 300 Isibindi projects have been replicated across South African provinces, serving over 100 000 children who would otherwise have fallen outside of the care and protection matrix. Including quality assurance mechanisms and a community development approach, the Isibindi model has received public acclaim, and is currently being scaled up through a South African government initiative. Additional components of the model include a young women's empowerment programme, a young men's empowerment programme, a non-centre based ECD model and a disability model – all of which enable progressive realisation of a wide range of children's rights and protection needs, through effective deployment of community-based child and youth care workers.

HIV and AIDS Advocacy, Awareness and Outreach Programme

Achieving a meaningful and clear understanding of the scientific facts about HIV and AIDS will lead to individual self-management regarding the risk of HIV infection. The awareness programme has four main pillars – disclosure, communication, rights and facilitation. The programme also deals with the physical and emotional consequences of HIV and AIDS. It addresses the following challenges:

- The lack of accurate and current information on HIV and AIDS;
- The lack of access to care, support, treatment and new healthcare developments; and
- Discrimination against the infected and affected.

The programme aims to involve people living with HIV and AIDS in initiatives that directly help affected and infected people to alleviate stigmatisation.

Victim Empowerment Programme

South Africa's Victim Empowerment Policy is based upon the concept of restorative justice. Victim empowerment is a means of facilitating access to a range of services for all people who have individually or collectively suffered harm, trauma and/or material loss through violence, crime, natural disaster, human accident and/or through socioeconomic conditions. It is the process of promoting the resourcefulness of victims of crime and violence by providing opportunities to access services available to them, as well as to use and build their own capacity and support networks and to act on their own choices.

National Directory on Services for Victims of Violence and Crime

The National Directory on Services for Victims of Violence and Crime is updated annually in collaboration with the provincial Victim Empowerment Policy managers or coordinators and their provincial counterparts. As part of its prevention and treatment efforts on substance and drug abuse, the DSD runs Sobriety Week is a national campaign aimed at creating awareness among the general South African public, particularly the youth, women and pregnant women about the adverse effects of liquor abuse.

Sobriety Week incorporates International Foetal Alcohol Syndrome Day, which is observed internationally on 9 September every year to highlight the irreversible damage caused to unborn babies when their mothers consume alcohol during pregnancy. Government recognises challenges such as unemployment, which result in people using and abusing alcohol.

Children and youth

The Home Community-Based Care Programme is the centrepiece of government's interventions to build a protective and caring environment for vulnerable children. Most services to orphans and vulnerable children are rendered through home community-based care and include early identification of vulnerable children and their families, referrals, training of community caregivers, and psychosocial support and material assistance.

This approach is geared towards keeping children within their families and communities. It is aimed at providing comprehensive care and support, which is complemented by proactive action at community level. This includes linking families with poverty alleviation projects and other services in the community, such as food security initiatives and ECD services.

Child Labour Programme of Action

The Child Labour Programme of Action is a national partnership initiated by government and civil-society partners comprising organised business, organised labour and NGOs. It is led by the Department of Employment and Labour. It is South Africa's roadmap towards the prevention, reduction and eventual elimination of child labour. The programme was first adopted in 2003, after extensive consultation within government, with a wide range of organisations outside government and with groups of teenage children involved in different forms of child labour. The programme sets out specific actions to be taken and assigns responsibility for these actions.

Childline South Africa

Childline offers a 24-hour toll-free crisis line (116) to children and families across South Africa. It provides immediate assistance to children and families in crisis who need counselling and information. Childline is an NPO that works to protect children from all forms of violence and creates a culture of respect for children's rights. Programmes delivered through the provincial offices include:

- A crisis line;
- Child rights and education;
- Training and education of volunteers;
- Training of other professionals who work with child protection services and children;
- Therapy for abused and traumatised children and their families;
- Court preparation of child witnesses;
- Networking and coordination;
- Lobbying and advocacy; and
- Analysis of law and policy.

National Child Protection Week

National Child Protection Week is commemorated in the country annually to raise awareness of the rights of children as articulated in the Constitution, 1996 and the Children's Act of 2005. The campaign is led by the DSD in partnership with key government departments and civil society organisations rendering child protection services.

The Constitution has the highest regard for children, their protection and non-violation of their rights. Protecting children from violence, exploitation and abuse is not only a basic value but also an obligation set out in Article 28 of the Constitution. Government has put in place various early intervention programmes that focus on sexual and reproductive health and rights, such as an Integrated Programme of Action that responds to teenage pregnancy by coordinating the work of all stakeholders. It ensures that resources are directed to the hardest hit areas with a focus on prevention and early intervention.

The National Integrated School Health Programme strengthens key interventions towards dealing with teenage pregnancy. The Policy on the Prevention and Management of Learner Pregnancy in Schools is grounded in supporting learners who fall pregnant and is aimed at reducing the increasing number of learner pregnancies at schools. The DSD's Sinovuyo Parenting Programme helps build the capacity of teenage parents to care for their children, and life skills programmes such as Yolo, ChommY, Boys and Men Championing Change and Ezabasha are helping develop young people.

The DSD has a 24-hour call centre dedicated to providing support and counselling to victims of GBV:

- The toll-free number to call is 0800 428 428 (0800 GBV GBV) to speak to a social worker for assistance and counselling.
- Callers can also request a social worker from the Command Centre to contact them by dialling *120*7867# (free) from any cell phone.
- Other numbers to call are Childline South Africa on 0800 055 555 and Child Welfare South Africa on 0861 4 CHILD (24453)/011 452-4110.

COVID-19 Rapid Needs Assessment Report

In October 2020, the DSD and the United Nations Development Programme officially launched the COVID-19 Rapid Needs Assessment Report after the department commissioned the agency to conduct a rapid assessment of the COVID-19 situation, with a specific focus on vulnerable groups. The results revealed the deeply ingrained socioeconomic challenges such as poverty, unemployment and inequality. The human impact of the pandemic has been devastating, with income loss estimated at between R41 and R53 million for 9.5 million affected formal sector employees, and 2.5 million informal workers and owners of small, micro and medium enterprises.

The report also revealed that 740 616 informal workers were at risk of falling below the upper poverty line during the extended lockdown due to COVID-19, while 900 000 households had severely inadequate access to food. The report recommended that the country needed to prepare for the long haul. The key recommendation included raising the COVID-19 SRD grant from R350 to at least R560 per month.

Role players

Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities

The Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities is situated in The Presidency. The department derives its mandate from Section 9(3) of the Constitution. It is required to champion socioeconomic transformation and the empowerment and participation of women, youth and people with disabilities through mainstreaming, advocacy, and monitoring and evaluation. The NDP envisages economic participation, education and skills development for women and other vulnerable groups, and the elimination of violence against women and children.

This vision is given expression through Priority 1 (economic transformation and job creation), Priority 5 (social cohesion and safe communities) and Priority 6 (a capable, ethical and developmental state) of government's 2019 to 2024 MTSF. The work of this department is directly aligned with these priorities through facilitating the planning, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation, and auditing processes responsive to gender, youth and disability rights across the state.

Accordingly, over the medium term, the department intends to focus on reducing GBVF, and strengthening the national gender machinery; making interventions for economic empowerment; engaging in responsive government□wide planning, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation; ensuring compliance with international commitments; promoting the rights of people with disabilities and supporting the development of young people.

Persons with disabilities

The 2016 DSD White Paper on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (WPRPD) takes its cue from the Constitution and a number of international instruments, including the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its Optional Protocol, the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action, and the sustainable development goals, which reaffirm the human rights of people with disabilities. The White Paper is a crucial step along the journey of improving the lives of people with disabilities and moves the country closer to a fully inclusive society.

The White Paper:

- Updates South Africa's 1997 White Paper on an Integrated National Disability Strategy;
- Integrates obligations of the United Nations (UN) Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and in the Continental Plan of Action for the African Decade of Persons with Disabilities (both of which South Africa has signed), with South Africa's legislation, policy frameworks and the NDP;
- Endorses a mainstreaming trajectory for realising the rights of persons with disabilities;
- Provides clarity on and guides the development of standard operating procedures for mainstreaming disability;
- Guides the review of all existing, and the development of new, sectoral policies, programmes, budgets and reporting systems, to bring these in line with both Constitutional and international treaty obligations;
- Stipulates norms and standards for the removal of discriminatory barriers that perpetuate the exclusion and segregation of persons with disabilities; and
- Outlines the responsibilities and accountabilities of the various stakeholders involved in providing barrier-free, appropriate, effective, efficient and coordinated service delivery to persons with disabilities, and guides self-representation of persons with disabilities.

It is intended to accelerate transformation and redress with regard to full inclusion, integration and equality for people with disabilities. South Africa must collectively contribute to the empowerment of people with disabilities through accessible disability information services, inclusive ECD opportunities and accessible rehabilitation services.

This would enable people with disabilities to take up the opportunities created in much larger numbers, improving performance in achieving equity targets. People with disabilities represent the voice of the sector in institutions such as the South African Human Rights Commission, the Commission on Gender Equality, the Board of the South African Broadcasting Corporation, the National Youth Development Agency and many transformation and developmental entities.

The South African experience has also helped to shape the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Continental Plan for the African Decade of Persons with Disabilities. South Africa has been celebrating the International Day for People with Disabilities annually since 1997. The vision of the WPRPD is the creation of a free and just society inclusive of all persons with disabilities as equal citizens. It commits duty bearers to realising the rights of persons with disabilities by:

- Accelerating implementation of existing legislation that advocates equality for persons with disabilities;
- Taking calculated action to ensure that their rights as equal persons are upheld;
- Removing discriminatory barriers to access and participation;
- Ensuring that universal design informs access and participation in the planning, budgeting and service delivery value chain of all programmes;
- Recognising the right to self-representation;
- Acknowledging that not all persons with disabilities are alike, and that personal circumstances, gender, age, sexuality, religious and cultural backgrounds, and geographical location, requires different responses; and
- Embedding the obligations contained in the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in legislation, policy and service delivery.

The WPRPD is built on nine strategic pillars:

- Removing barriers to access and participation.
- Protecting the rights of persons at risk of compounded marginalisation.
- Supporting sustainable integrated community life.
- Promoting and supporting the empowerment of children, women, youth and persons with disabilities.
- Reducing economic vulnerability and releasing human capital.

- Strengthening the representative voice of persons with disabilities.
- Building a disability equitable state machinery.
- Promoting international cooperation.
- Monitoring and evaluation.

Blind SA

Blind SA is an organisation for the blind, and is governed by the blind. Situated in Johannesburg, it is aligned with other member organisations throughout South Africa. Blind SA's main focus is to improve the quality of life of all South Africa's visually impaired people by empowering them through education. Its objectives are to protect and promote the interests of people with visual impairment and enable all visually impaired people to achieve their optimal potential through independence, and by providing developmental care for and protecting the rights of those who, owing to circumstances beyond their control, are unable to do so themselves.

Orientation, mobility and skills development for blind and newly blinded people are an important aspects of the work undertaken by Blind SA. The organisation provides, among other things, study bursaries for visually impaired students for further education, Braille publications in all South African official languages, Braille training that entails writing and reading, and orientation and mobility training.

The purpose of Blind SA is to end the cycle of poverty for blind South Africans, empowering them with knowledge and information through education, Braille and developmental services. It aims to break down barriers, provide opportunities and create answers that improve the quality of life for the blind community so that they can live the life they choose. Recent initiatives include Mali-Bhala – a money counter and signature guide. This locally created device comes in two standard sizes that are designed to fit either in a person's wallet or pocket. It is used as an indicator to differentiate between the five South African 'Mandela' bank notes and as a signature guide.

South African Braille Authority (SABA)

The SABA promotes and advocates for Braille and Braille-related matters in South Africa. Its purpose is to set and maintain standards for Braille in all 11 official languages of South Africa. These standards relate to the development and maintenance of Braille codes; production of quality Braille; the teaching of, access to and promotion of Braille; Braille examinations; and many other Braille-related matters.

Members of the SABA include schools for the blind, consumer organisations of the blind, student disability units, Braille producers and the South African Library for the Blind. Through the SABA, South Africa is a member of the International Council on English Braille. The membership enables the country to stay abreast of and participate in international Braille-related matters.

South African National Council for the Blind (SANCB)

The SANCB is the coordinating body for more than 100-member organisations spanning the full spectrum of services offered to blind and partially sighted people throughout the country. The SANCB comprises four core business areas, namely social development, the bureau for the prevention of blindness, education and fundraising and public relations. To combat as much as 80% of avoidable blindness, the council regularly undertakes tours with its mobile eye care clinics to rural areas for eye screening, referrals and to perform cataract removal operations.

The SANCB provides entrepreneurial training, adult basic education and training, and facilitates skills training such as computer literacy and call centre programmes through its Optima College. It is also affiliated to international organisations, including the African Union of the Blind and the World Blind Union.

Support for the deaf

South Africa's national organisation for the deaf is the Deaf Federation of South Africa (DeafSA). It acts as the national research, information and community action organisation on behalf of South Africans who are culturally and linguistically deaf, hard of hearing and deafblind. DeafSA, formerly known as the South African National Council for the Deaf (SANCD), was founded in 1929. In 1995, the SANCD was transformed into a new democratically elected organisation, the DeafSA. This resulted in a paradigm shift from an organisation for the deaf to one of the deaf.

The changes in the constitution and attitudes also meant that decisions about the services and affairs of deaf people were no longer taken by hearing people on behalf of deaf people – but by deaf people. The organisation has nine provincial chapters throughout South Africa. An estimated 500 000 to 600 000 South Africans use SASL. As sign language has grown in South Africa – particularly baby sign language – an NPO, Sign Language Education and Development, has been formed to promote the language. Signing with hearing babies and children is being promoted through the Signsational Kids website. South Africa has a long-established deaf education system.

The Institute for the Deaf in Worcester operates Deaf College South Africa, which trains deaf people for jobs. In addition, the Bible College for the Deaf in Gauteng trains people to work in deaf ministry. The University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg has a Centre for Deaf Studies. The centre offers programmes in deaf education and focuses on teaching, research and community service. Among other services, the National Institute for the Deaf provides services for the multiple disabled deaf, runs two deaf churches and provides audiological and mental health services.

A Deaf Child Centre at the Department of Paediatrics and Child Health at the University of Cape Town provides pre-school education and community services. This centre also focuses on deafness research. The Carel du Toit Centre, based in Cape Town, provides early childhood auditory-oral education. In addition, the centre engages in community outreaches, helping families with hearing-related needs and more practical needs, such as food.

A similar centre is the Eduplex in Pretoria. It provides auditory-oral pre-school and primary school educational services, teaching hearing and deaf children together, and provides training to prospective teachers, audiologists and therapists. In 2018, Sign Language was administered as a new subject for the first time during the National Senior Certificate examinations.



South African Sign Language (SASL) Charter

In 2020, the Pan South African Language Board (PanSALB) launched the SASL Charter. As September is Deaf Awareness Month, the launch of the SASL Charter kick-started various activities undertaken by PanSALB in various parts of the country to raise awareness about this initiative. The charter was conceptualised to address issues that relate to communication, access to information, facilities and social justice for the deaf community, including the quality of service provided by SASL interpreters.

The charter articulates the linguistic rights of deaf persons in South Africa and is aimed at creating conditions for the development of SASL. It compels all government departments, and other organs of state, as well as the private sector, to make provisions for SASL interpreting. It also guarantees access to services by deaf persons by ensuring that essential service staff, such as social workers and police officers, receive advanced level training in SASL.

Older people

The DSD promotes a holistic approach to active ageing and wellbeing among the country's senior citizens. A number of initiatives have been rolled out by the departments of Social Development, Health, Tourism, Sport, Arts and Culture, and other stakeholders to promote general health among older persons, especially through sports and activities that promote general wellbeing. In 2008, government implemented a national active ageing programme in line with the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing of 2002.

The Madrid Plan of Action offers a bold agenda for handling the issue of ageing in the 21st century. It focuses on three priority areas – older persons and development, advancing health and wellbeing into old age, and ensuring enabling and supportive environments. The Older Persons Act of 2006 aims to enhance the quality of life and improve the health of older persons by engaging them in programmes that promote social, physical, mental and emotional wellbeing, to prevent or delay the onset of ageing challenges and keep illnesses related to old age at bay. The Older Persons' Parliament takes place annually in October. It gives older persons the opportunity to engage with the executive on critical issues affecting their lives.

Training and skills development

Recruitment and Retention Strategy for Social Workers

The Unemployed Social Workers Database informs the DSD about the number of unemployed social workers who have studied outside the DSD scholarship programme. This aims to address the issue of qualified social workers who are unemployed. Government has mandated the development of strategies to facilitate the recruitment and retention of such scarce skills. The DSD has been the main driver in the implementation of this social policy. In addition, the NDP indicates that 60 000 social workers will be needed by 2030 to serve the population.

Professionalising community development

The Council for Social Service Professions was established in terms of the Social Service Professions Act of 1978.

The key functions are:

- protecting and promoting the interests of the professions, in respect of which professional boards have been or are to be established, and to deal with any matter relating to such interests;
- advising the Minister of Social Development on matters affecting the professions in respect of which professional boards have been established; and
- controlling and exercising authority regarding all financial matters relating to the council and the professional boards; and assisting in the promotion of social services.





SOUTH AFRICA
YEARBOOK
2024/25

Sport, Arts and Culture

The Department of Sport, Arts and Culture (DSAC) is mandated to provide leadership to the sport, arts and culture sector to accelerate its transformation; oversee the development and management of the sector; legislate on sports participation, sports infrastructure and safety; improve South Africa's international ranking in selected sports through a partnership with the South African Sports Confederation and Olympic Committee (SASCOC); preserve, develop, protect and promote the cultural, heritage, and linguistic diversity and legacy of South Africa; lead nation-building and social cohesion; enhance archives and records management structures and systems; and promote access to information.

The department's overarching objective is to develop, transform, preserve, protect and promote sport, arts and culture at all levels of participation to foster an active, winning, creative and socially cohesive nation. In support of this, the department will, over the period ahead, focus on promoting social cohesion and facilitating nation-building; creating job opportunities to contribute to economic growth; developing and promoting sport and recreation; transforming and building capacity in the sport, arts and culture sector; and building and maintaining heritage assets.

Departmental priorities

Promoting social cohesion and facilitating nation building

The Social Cohesion and Nation Building subprogramme in the Arts and Culture Promotion and Development programme is responsible for coordinating the department's commitment to government's priority to foster social cohesion. This includes planned 15 community dialogue platforms in 2024/25 at a projected cost of R3 million to encourage active citizen participation. Through eminent South Africans appointed as social cohesion advocates, the department plans to implement 20 annual advocacy platforms on social cohesion at an estimated cost of R15 million over the MTEF period.

Creating job opportunities in the cultural and creative industries

The Mzansi Golden Economy programme unlocks the potential for economic growth by exposing creative products to markets and audiences to promote artists and create access to opportunities. The programme funds a targeted 15 projects per year to enable market access, nine provincial community arts development programmes, 25 national and provincial flagships, and 65 creative industry projects. Over the medium term, R1.2 billion is allocated to the Mzansi Golden Economy subprogramme in the Arts and Culture Promotion and Development programme.

These funds will mainly be used to create a targeted 60 390 job opportunities in the cultural and creative sector and through the creative industries stimulus. Of this allocation, R69.4 million is earmarked for placing 1 020 artists in schools over the next three years with the aim of developing and improving art practitioners' pedagogical capabilities and skills to collaborate with educators and communicate and interact more effectively with learners. The presidential employment stimulus was launched in October 2020 to mitigate the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic across all sectors. The programme's reach into the creative industry is realised through the creative industries stimulus, which is allocated R351 million in 2024/25 to create an estimated 30 390 jobs.

Developing and promoting sport and recreation

Sport has the potential to bring together diverse groups and create a socially cohesive society with a common national identity. In recognition of this, the Recreation Development and Sport Promotion programme has an allocation of R4.1 billion over the MTEF period. Of this amount, R1.2 billion is within the Infrastructure Support subprogramme and R1.9 billion is channelled to the mass participation and sport development grant. The grant supports programmes such as the Move for Health Day; the National Indigenous Games Festival; National Recreation Day, which will be integrated with the Big Walk; the Nelson Mandela Sport and Culture Day; and various outreach programmes, including the ministerial outreach programme.

The grant also enables provincial departments responsible for sport, arts and culture to offer development and support programmes for talented and high-performance athletes. Accordingly, R56.8 million is allocated to encourage the development of young people through supporting 90 school sport leagues at the district level and R80.9 million is allocated to enable 4 000 of them to showcase their skills at events such as the National School Sport Championship. In 2024/25, R40.2 million is allocated for supporting 90 organised community-based sport and recreation activities, and R78.4 million is allocated to provide sports equipment and attire to schools, hubs and clubs to enable participation in sport and recreation. An estimated 53,1% (R2.2 billion) of the Recreation Development and Sport Promotion programme's budget over the next three years is within the Active Nation subprogramme.

Transforming and building capacity in the sport, arts and culture sector

The department is committed to upskilling and transforming the sport, arts and culture sector. This mainly involves building capacity through bursaries, internships and incubator programmes. Over the medium term, R150 million is allocated to support 66 capacity-building projects in the cultural and creative sector; R16.7 million is allocated in the National Language Services subprogramme in the Arts and Culture Promotion and Development programme to award language bursaries to 420 university students; and R12 million is allocated towards human language technology projects.

As part of the R94 million set to be transferred to a targeted 50 national sport federations through the Winning Nation subprogramme, the department requires that the findings and recommendations published in the eminent persons group report on transformation in sport are addressed.

Maintaining heritage assets

An estimated 45,1% (R8.4 billion) of the department's budget over the medium term is within the Heritage Promotion and Preservation programme. Of this amount, R5 billion is earmarked for the community library services grant through

the Public Library Services subprogramme, and R2.1 billion is set to be transferred to museums for their operations through the Heritage Institutions subprogramme.

To expand access to knowledge and information, the department plans to build 66 libraries and upgrade 135 community libraries at a projected cost of R798.6 million over the MTEF period as part of the community library services grant.

Legislation

The DSAC derives its mandate from the following legislation:

- National Sport and Recreation Act, 1998 (Act 110 of 1998);
- National Heritage Resources Act (NHRA), 1999 (Act 25 of 1999);
- National Council for Library and Information Services (NCLIS) Act, 2001 (Act 6 of 2001);
- Safety at Sports and Recreational Events Act, 2010 (Act 2 of 2010);
- Use of Official Languages Act, 2012 (Act 12 of 2012);
- Heraldry Act, 1962 (Act 18 of 1962);
- Culture Promotion Act, 1983 (Act 35 of 1983);
- National Film and Video Foundation Act (NFVF), 1997 (Act 73 of 1997);
- National Archives and Record Service of South Africa Act, 1996 (Act 43 of 1996);
- Legal Deposit Act, 1997 (Act 54 of 1997);
- South African Geographical Names Council Act, 1998 (Act 118 of 1998); and
- Cultural Institutions Act, 1998 (Act 119 of 1998).

Entities

Boxing South Africa (BSA)

Boxing South Africa was established in terms of the Boxing Act, 2001 (Act 11 of 2001), mandating the entity to administer professional boxing; recognise amateur boxing; create and ensure synergy between professional and amateur boxing; and promote engagement and interaction between associations of boxers, managers, promoters and trainers.

Over the medium term, the entity will continue to focus on contributing to nation building, healthy lifestyles and social cohesion by promoting participation in boxing, especially among young people and women; strengthening the boxing regulatory environment; and ensuring the effective administration of the sport.

Inaugural Mandela African Boxing Cup

The inaugural Mandela African Boxing Cup took place at the International Convention Centre (ICC) in Durban from 15 to 21 April 2024. The tournament was co-organised by the IBA, the African Boxing Confederation (AFBC) and the South African Boxing Association (SANABO). Outstanding fights featured 12 women's and 13 men's weight categories.

Two days later, the action began featuring nations from across the continent and beyond. After a week of competition in Durban, the tournament came to a close on Sunday with boxers from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) claiming 10 titles on finals day.

Commonwealth Games silver medallist Louis Richarno Colin of Mauritius emerged victorious in the men's 63.5kg category, beating home boxer John Paul Masamba by unanimous decision in one of the best finals of the day. Another Mauritian, Fabrice Valerie, defeated Angola's Miguel Kembo to take the men's 51kg title.

Mozambique's world medallists, Alcinda dos Santos and Rady Gramane, experienced contrasting fortunes in the women's finals. Dos Santos dominated her opponent, Eswatini's Temalangeni Dlamini, in the 70kg with the bout ending after a third knockdown. Gramane, however, lost a split decision to Kenya's Elizabeth Andiego in the women's 75kg category. There was more joy for Mozambique in the men's 57kg as Armando Siguaque defeated South Africa's Amzolele Dyeyi.

The DRC secured the most gold medals with 10. Benedicte Diyoka came out of the blocks to win the first bout in the men's 48kg category when South African Dila Vuyolwethu was forced to retire through injury. Gisele Nyembo Muamba followed with a first-round TKO of Veliswa Magaya of Eswatini in the women's 52kg final.

Mbiya Kulenguluka won a close men's 71kg final against Tiago Muxanga of Mozambique with both men thinking they had done enough to earn the decision. Later, Kulenguluka's compatriot Peter Pita Kabeji won the men's 80kg class against Tanzania's Yusuf Changalawe.

The other Congolese champions were Jorbelle Malewu (women's +81kg), Bweluzey Anthony Lazare (men's +92kg), Marie Joel Mwika (women's 81kg), Brigitte Mbabi (women's 66kg), Merveille Mbalayi Mbamba (women's 63kg) and Marcelat Sakobi Matshu (women's 57kg).

Smaller boxing nations also shone: Mouandat Njinnou of Gabon stopped Hoosein Isaacs of South Africa in the second round of the men's 92kg final. Lesotho's Retselisitsoe Kolobe defeated Kobamelo Molatlhegi of Botswana in the men's -48kg bout, and Joshua Cousin won by second-round stoppage in the men's 75kg final against Temesgen Mitiku of Ethiopia. There were also victories for Botswana, Egypt, Tunisia, Angola, Namibia and Bangladesh.

IBA CEO Chris Roberts and Ndileka Mandela, Nelson Mandela's first granddaughter and CEO and founder of the Thembekile Mandela Foundation, announced the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the organisations in order to develop young people's talents. Several key points of collaboration through the MoU include developing joint initiatives through the use of boxing as a tool for social impact and community development, and promoting inclusivity and diversity within the boxing community. Roberts emphasised that Nelson Mandela's legacy continues through boxing.

The tournament coincided with South Africa's commemoration of 30 Years of Freedom and democracy since the historic election of 27 April 1994. As the people of South Africa celebrate the gains, achievements, and the milestone of 30 years of democratic rule and living in a free and democratic society, the national boxing community would like to highlight its own gains and achievements as far as the sport has developed in the country since 1994.

Heritage institutions

The following heritage institutions were established in terms of the Cultural Institutions Act of 1998, and derive their mandates from this Act and the 1996 White Paper on Arts, Culture and Heritage: Die Afrikaanse Taalmuseum en-monument, Ditsong Museums of South Africa, Iziko Museums of South Africa, KwaZulu-Natal Museum, uMsunduzi Museum (incorporating the Voortrekker Museum), National

Museum, Amazwi South African Museum of Literature, the Robben Island Museum, War Museum of the Boer Republics, William Humphreys Art Gallery, Luthuli Museum, Nelson Mandela Museum, Freedom Park, and Engelenburg House Art Collection.

Over the medium term, heritage institutions will focus on collecting and preserving South Africa's national heritage, and providing and promoting access to and awareness of it by collecting, protecting and conserving heritage materials; conducting exhibitions; and contributing knowledge through research and publications. They plan to host a collective 472 exhibitions as a means of encouraging educational and public outreach programmes and celebrating the diversity of the country's cultural and natural heritage. The institutions also plan to celebrate the diversity of the country's cultural and natural heritage by making the services offered by museums accessible to everyone in South Africa.

This will be achieved by increasing awareness of museum services through 190 101 educational interactions with schools at a cost of R242.7 million over the MTEF period in the public engagement programme. To further achieve these objectives, an estimated R813.6 million (25,4%of the institutions' budget) over the medium term will be spent on business development, which includes the acquisition of 349 107 heritage assets or artefacts and publishing or producing 470 new articles over the medium term. Over the period ahead, heritage institutions are set to receive 87,4%(R2.8 billion) of their revenue from the department and the remainder through entrance fees, donor assistance and sponsorships.

Transfers from the department are expected to increase at an average annual rate of 7,2%, from R840.1 million in 2021/22 to R1 billion in 2024/25, which includes the reprioritisation of R21 million in 2022/23 to address the going concern status and operational funding shortfalls at the Amazwi South African Museum of Literature, Die Afrikaanse Taalmuseum en -monument, the Luthuli Museum, the KwaZulu-Natal Museum, the War Museum of the Boer Republics, the William Humphreys Art Gallery and the uMsunduzi Museum.

Libraries

The National Library of South Africa (NLSA) was established in terms of the NLSA Act of 1998, and contributes to socioeconomic, cultural, educational, scientific and innovation development by collecting, recording, preserving and making available the national documentary heritage, and promoting an awareness and appreciation for it by fostering information literacy and facilitating access to information resources. The South African Library for the Blind (SALB) was established in terms of the SALB Act of 1998 and is mandated to provide a national library and information service to blind and visually impaired readers in South Africa.

The NLSA provides services to community libraries in partnership with provincial library services. These services include ICT support, training in preservation and resource development, the promotion of legal deposit by book publishers in terms of the Legal Deposit Act of 1997, and marketing and exhibition services. This work is funded through the community library services grant through an allocation of R69.2 million over the medium term.

The library also plans to digitise 157 000 heritage items and preserve and conserve 55 376 documentary heritage items over the period ahead, funded through allocations amounting to R85.7 million. The library is set to receive an additional R22.5 million to address operational funding shortfalls. This amount is reprioritised from the devolution of the municipal services function from the department to entities. The SALB is funded through operational transfers from the department amounting to R82 million over the medium term. This is expected to enable it to produce 720 Braille book titles and 90 books for visually impaired people in alternative formats, including audio. These items will also be circulated for lending to the public.

The libraries' total expenditure over the medium term is set to increase at an average annual rate of 4,9%, from R167.1 million in 2022/23 to R192.8 million in 2025/26, due to the additional allocations to the National Library of South Africa. Revenue is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 4,9%, from R167.1 million in 2022/23 to R192.8 million in 2025/26.

National Arts Council (NAC)

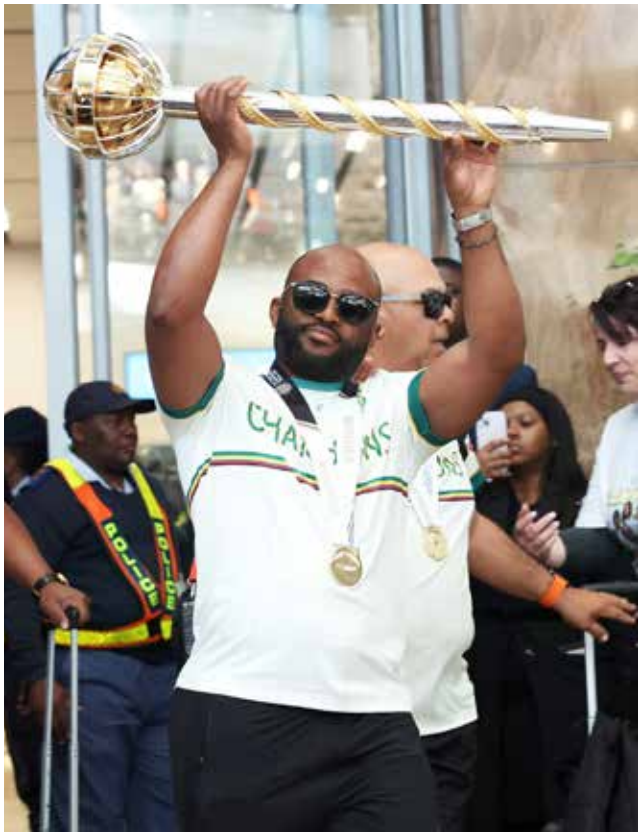
The NAC derives its mandate from the National Arts Council Act of 1997, which requires it to provide and encourage the provision of opportunities for people to practise the arts, foster the expression of a national identity and consciousness through the arts, provide historically disadvantaged artists with additional help and resources to give them greater access to the arts, address historical imbalances in the provision of infrastructure for the promotion of the arts, develop and promote the arts, and encourage artistic excellence.

Redressing past imbalances is pivotal to the council's work. As such, over the MTEF period, it will continue to prioritise applications from historically disadvantaged provinces, marginalised groups and art practitioners in rural and peri-urban areas. In support of this over the period ahead, the council plans to set up help desks in provinces in an effort to assist art practitioners who have limited means to access the council's services. The council has identified organisations or structures in each province to collaborate on hosting the help desks at a projected cost of R1 million over the MTEF period.

To enhance transparency, the board will host annual summits over the period ahead where internal and external stakeholders are encouraged to dissect and review the council's work with the aim of identifying key challenges and providing recommendations.

National Film and Video Foundation (NFVF)

The National Film and Video Foundation is governed by the National Film and Video Foundation Act of 1997, as amended by the Cultural Laws Amendment Act of 2001. It is mandated to develop and promote the film and video industry in South Africa through the programmes it funds and carry out other enabling activities such as providing training to industry players, supporting and developing historically disadvantaged people in the audio-visual industry in line with South Africa's transformation agenda, increasing the number of people trained in scarce skills, and creating job opportunities in the film and video industry.



Providing funding for content development in the film industry is at the core of the foundation's work. As such, funding applications for feature films, documentaries, short films and television format concepts are all considered. The foundation plans to fund 105 South African content development projects and 65 South African productions at a cost of R211 million over the MTEF period.

National Heritage Council (NHC)

The NHC is a schedule 3A public entity established in terms of the NHC Act of 1999 to preserve South African heritage as a priority for nation-building and national identity. Over the medium term, the council plans to focus on increasing awareness about heritage; and developing, promoting and protecting South Africa's national heritage for current and future generations. A key initiative in this regard is developing the Resistance and Liberation Heritage Route and supporting the evaluation process of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) to include the route as a world heritage site.

The Resistance and Liberation Heritage Route project will place greater emphasis on the unsung heroes and heroines of the liberation struggle. The NHC will continue contributing to preserving South Africa's living heritage and creating awareness of tangible and intangible cultural heritage and practices by funding community heritage projects.

Pan South African Language Board (PanSALB)

The PanSALB was established in terms of the PanSALB Act of 1995 to develop the 11 official languages, as well as the Khoi, Nama and San languages and SASL; while promoting and promote multilingualism in South Africa and investigating complaints about language rights and violations from any individual, organisation or institution. Over the medium term, PanSALB planned to conduct language research, address language complaints, promote language awareness, authenticate all terminology submitted, develop and produce 20 printed and recorded lexicographical materials, and improve its financial management.

Performing arts institutions

Performing arts institutions are schedule 3A public entities established in terms of the Cultural Institutions Act (1998). They are mandated to advance, promote and preserve performing arts in South Africa; enhance the contribution of arts and culture to the economy; create job opportunities; and create initiatives that enhance nation building.

The following arts institutions receive annual transfers from the department: Artscape (Cape Town), the Playhouse Company (Durban), the Market Theatre (Johannesburg), the Performing Arts Centre of the Free State (Bloemfontein), the South African State Theatre (Pretoria), and the Mandela Bay Theatre Complex (Gqeberha).

Over the medium term, these institutions will focus on staging a targeted 1 224 productions and 63 festivals, and conducting 220 skills programmes that are representative of South Africa's cultural diversity. In an effort to meet these targets over the next three years, R222.6 million is allocated to business development and R99.6 million is allocated to public engagement. The institutions' combined expenditure is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 1,8%, from R526.2 million in 2022/23 to R555.7 million in 2025/26. They are set to derive 88,5% (R1.1 billion) of their revenue over the period ahead through transfers from the department and the remainder through ticket sales, venue hire and investments.

The South African State Theatre receives an additional R32.6 million over the medium term to fund shortfalls arising from the devolution of the municipal services function from the department to entities.

South African Institute for Drug-Free Sport (SAIDS)

The SAIDS was established in terms of the South African Institute for Drug-Free Sport Act of 1997. The institute is mandated to promote participation in sport free from the use of prohibited substances or methods intended to artificially enhance performance. It is the custodian of anti-doping and ethics in South African sport, and actively collaborates with colleagues in the rest of Africa to keep sport clean.

Over the period ahead, SAIDS aimed to focus on ensuring compliance in global sport on matters of anti-doping, anti-corruption, governance reforms, institutional independence, child safeguarding and data protection. This includes implementing projects to ensure compliance with the World Anti-Doping Code and the UNESCO International Convention against Doping in Sport. Accordingly, the institute plans to conduct 4 800 drug and 750 blood tests on athletes to meet national sports federations' demands for testing services.

South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA)

The SAHRA is a schedule 3A public entity established in terms of the National Heritage Resources Act of 1999. It is mandated to formulate national principles, standards and

policy for the identification, recording and management of the national estate in terms of which heritage resource authorities and other relevant bodies must function. Over the MTEF period, the agency will focus on promoting and preserving the national estate, and will monitor and inspect specifically declared objects and collections. It will also continue to assess and approve permits for the development of heritage sites, and review heritage impact assessment reports submitted by property developers.

Supporting arts and culture

To increase the levels of participation in the arts and culture sector and to develop new audiences, the DSAC plans to provide financial support to activate provincial arts programmes for community centres. This will ensure that they remain the nerve centres for community participation and development in the area of arts and culture, and encourage young people to engage in positive activities. The DSAC has received business plans from community arts centres in all nine provinces, focusing on building capacity in arts administration, arts programming and financial management.

Through the MGE programme, the DSAC has made an open call to financially support arts initiatives from the various arts disciplines throughout the country. In excess of R64 million has been ring-fenced to support both national and provincial flagship projects such as the Mapungubwe Arts Festival, the Cape Town International Jazz Festival, Buyelekaya, Abantu Book Fair and the Cape Town Carnival. To capacitate the sector, the DSAC will support incubator programmes in playhouses.

The DSAC will continue with the renaming of geographical features to reflect the demographics and history of the country. The National Archives of South Africa, an important repository of the collective memory of the country, has been experiencing challenges in terms of the availability of storage space. A study to investigate the feasibility of upgrading the old archives building or constructing a new one, will be conducted. This will also assist with the process of digitisation and responding to emerging technologies.

National symbols

Animal: Springbok

(Antidorcas marsupialis)

The springbok's common name is derived from its characteristic jumping display. It is the only southern African gazelle and is fairly widespread in open, dry bush, grasslands or riverbeds near water. It is also the emblem of South Africa's national rugby team, which bears its name.

Bird: Blue crane

(Anthropoides paradisia)

This elegant crane with its silvery blue plumage is endemic to southern Africa, with more than 99% of the population within South Africa's borders.

Fish: Galjoen

(Coracinus capensis)

The galjoen is found only along the South African coast and is a familiar sight to every angler. It keeps to mostly shallow water and is often found in rough surf and sometimes right next to the shore.

Flower: King protea

(Protea cynaroides)

This striking protea is found in the south-western and southern areas of the Western Cape. It derives its scientific name cynaroides, which means "like cynara" (artichoke), from the artichoke-like appearance of its flower head.

Tree: Real yellowwood

(Podocarpus latifolius)

The yellowwood family is primeval and has been present in South Africa for more than 100 million years. The species is widespread, from Table Mountain, along the southern and eastern Cape coast, in the ravines of the Drakensberg up to the Soutpansberg and the Blouberg in Limpopo.



National Flag

South Africa's flag is one of the most recognised in the world. It was launched and used for the first time on Freedom Day, 27 April 1994. The design and colours are a synopsis of the principal elements of the country's flag history. It is the only six-coloured national flag in the world. The central design of the flag, beginning at the flag pole in a "V" form and flowing into a single horizontal band to the outer edge of the fly, can be interpreted as the convergence of diverse elements within South African society, taking the road ahead in unity.

When displayed vertically against a wall, the red band should be to the left of the viewer, with the hoist at the top. When displayed horizontally, the hoist should be to the left of the viewer and the red band at the top. At meetings, the flag must be placed to the speaker's right when positioned next to or behind them. When placed elsewhere in the meeting venue, it should be to the right of the audience.

National Anthem

South Africa's national anthem is a combined version of Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrika and The Call of South Africa (Die Stem van Suid-Afrika). Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrika was composed by Methodist mission schoolteacher, Enoch Sontonga, in 1897. The words of The Call of South Africa were written by Cornelis Jacobus Langenhoven in May 1918, and the music was composed by Reverend Marthinus Lourens de Villiers in 1921.

Nkosi sikelel' iAfrika
Maluphakanyisw' uphondo lwayo,
Yizwa imithandazo yethu,
Nkosi sikelela, thina lusapho lwayo.

Morena boloka setjhaba sa heso,
O fedise dintwa le matshwenyeho,
O se boloke, O se boloke setjhaba sa heso,
Setjhaba sa South Afrika - South Afrika

Uit die blou van onse hemel,
Uit die diepte van ons see,
Oor ons ewige gebergtes,
Waar die kranse antwoord gee.

Sounds the call to come together,
And united we shall stand,
Let us live and strive for freedom
In South Africa our land.

National Coat of Arms

South Africa's Coat of Arms, the highest visual symbol of the state, was launched on Freedom Day, 27 April 2000. Its central image is a secretary bird with uplifted wings and a sun rising above it. Below the bird is the protea, an indigenous South African flower, representing the aesthetic harmony of all cultures and the country flowering as a nation. The ears of wheat are emblems of the fertility of the land, while the tusks of the African elephant symbolise wisdom, steadfastness and strength.

At the centre stands a shield signifying the protection of South Africans, above which are a spear and knobkierie. These assert the defence of peace rather than a posture of war. Within the shield are images of the Khoisan people, the first inhabitants of the land. The figures are derived from images on the Linton Stone, a world-famous example of South African rock art. The motto of the Coat of Arms – !ke e:/xarra//ke – is in the Khoisan language of the /Xam people, and means "diverse people unite" or "people who are different joining together".

National Orders

National Orders are the highest awards that the country, through its President, can bestow on individual South Africans and eminent foreign leaders and personalities. The Order of Mapungubwe is awarded to South African citizens for excellence and exceptional achievement. The Order of the Baobab is awarded to South African citizens for distinguished service in the fields of business and the economy; science, medicine and technological innovation and community service. The Order of the Companions of OR Tambo is awarded to heads of state and other dignitaries for promoting peace, cooperation and friendship towards South Africa. The Order of Luthuli is awarded to South Africans who have made a meaningful contribution to the struggle for democracy, human rights, nation-building, justice and peace, and conflict resolution.

The Order of Ikhamanga is awarded to South African citizens who have excelled in the fields of arts, culture, literature, music, journalism and sport. The Order of Mendi for Bravery is awarded to South African citizens who have performed extraordinary acts of bravery.

Languages

South Africa is a multilingual country. The Constitution guarantees equal status to 12 official languages to cater for the country's diverse people and their cultures. These are English, isiNdebele, isiXhosa, isiZulu, Afrikaans, Sepedi, Sesotho, Setswana, Siswati, Tshivenda, Xitsonga and SASL.

Other languages used in South Africa include the Khoi, Nama and San languages, Arabic, German, French, Greek, Gujarati, Hebrew, Hindi, Portuguese, Sanskrit, Tamil, Telugu and Urdu.


The Order of Mapungubwe


The Order of The Baobab


The Order of Luthuli


The Order of the Companions of OR Tambo


The Order of Ikhamanga

Programmes, projects and initiatives

Mzansi Golden Economy Strategy (MGE)

The MGE is a strategy to reposition cultural industries in South Africa. The department announced a call for proposals for MGE on 1 June 2021. The department concluded the MGE adjudication on 31 October 2021 with grant letters issued to the Cultural Events category of beneficiaries on 12 November 2021 following a standard due diligence process. This is in addition to the Public Art and Touring Ventures results that were also released in the month of October. In this category of proposals, 689 applications were received for Public Art with 422 for Touring Ventures. Successful applicants for Public Art totalled 45 and 49 for Touring Ventures.

For Cultural Events proposals, a total of 2 583 proposals were received of which it was only possible to support and approve 264. The department received a record number of applications compared to previous years.

The release of the results also took place in the context of a creative sector's stakeholder engagement meeting convened by the department on 5 November 2021. While using this occasion to update the sector on numerous issues of interest and preferred working relations, the department made strong appeals for more collaborative relationships across the creative sector as well as with government. In particular, tendencies of slandering to the point of misinformation was highlighted as a practice which needed to be halted and for energies to rather be invested in frank, robust, constructive, and forward-looking engagements that will propel the growth of the sector.

As in other sectors and as is practice across the state, government prefers to engage with a structure that enjoys the creative sector's support as opposed to individuals. While appreciative of the funding allocated thus far, resources availed are insufficient to provide for the needs of the sector and need to be revisited. There was a need for capacity building programmes that will assist artists to draft business proposals, develop entrepreneurship skills as well as digital skills. The department should work with the sector to conduct workshops that will assist with how to submit appropriate proposals.

There must be improved communication and there is a need for more regular direct interaction between the department and the sector. Different sector organisations must improve ways of collaboration and working relations. There must be reconciliation of differences in the sector to ensure that when engaging the department there is a legitimate single voice and collectivism instead of representations based on individual preferences.

Public Art Development Programme (PADP)

The PADP is a work stream of the MGE. It is implemented to strengthen and grow the arts, culture and heritage sector, with particular emphasis on giving the youth, women, children and persons with disabilities the opportunity to participate and benefit from the PADP. Its objectives include:

- Creating a nationally driven approach which is focused on building community ownership and pride in public and shared spaces through public art projects. It is structured to engage these communities at all stages of the development process, with the express objectives of creating work for artists, designers, researchers, storytellers, crafters and performance artists, to name a few.
- Attracting investment and economic activity to particular locations, including the "far-flung" areas of South Africa.
- Catalysing work creation and economic activity in a range of associated sectors such as tourism, hospitality and property development.

To programme aims to upscale existing public art projects and create public interest in the role of art in their communities towards creating real jobs, stimulating the local economy, enhancing quality of life, raising awareness of local history/heritage and allowing increased diversity of cultural offerings. Those who participate in the PADP gain numerous skills and employment opportunities, including interpersonal, negotiating, conflict management, communication, visual arts, performance art, storytelling, design, research, entrepreneurship, business management, presenting, problem-solving, creative solutions, community participation, community liaison and appraisal skills.

Art Bank of South Africa

The purpose of the Art Bank of South Africa is to identify and purchase contemporary visual artworks from emerging and established South African artists. The objectives of the Art Bank of South Africa are to:

- be a national rental agency for contemporary South African art (artworks will be leased out for a minimum period of two years);
- procure and curate artworks in all public buildings, including government institutions and South African embassies around the world, on a biannual basis, to ensure that good-quality contemporary artworks are displayed; and
- give artists exposure in marketing their work to ensure that they grow their audiences and the consumption of South African art.

Theatre

South Africa has a prolific theatre scene, with more than 100 active spaces around the country offering everything from indigenous drama, music, dance, cabaret and satire to West End and Broadway hits, classical opera and ballet. South African theatre is very interactive, with actors sometimes directly addressing audiences. The country has a long and rich history of storytelling, from the oral narratives and shamanistic dances of the San, to the fables told around the fire by South Africa's indigenous people, to the modern and youthful productions.

South African theatre came into its own during the apartheid years, partly due to the cultural boycott of the country by British and American actors. Without any external influences, South African theatre flourished with its own unique and local feel, particularly the protest theatre of the 1970s and 1980s. The formal South African theatre tradition dates back as far as the 1830s, when Andrew Geddes Bain's Kaatje Kekkelbek (Life Among the Hottentots) was performed in 1838 by the Grahamstown Amateur Company. Over the years, playwrights such as Athol Fugard and Gibson Kente would form the backbone of South African theatre.

Through their plays, actors such as John Kani and Winston Ntshona became some of the early participants of a form of theatre that sought to challenge the apartheid system and question racial attitudes of the time. With mainstream venues like the National Theatre barring black people from creative participation, the Market Theatre in Johannesburg and The Space in Cape Town were just two of many theatres established to give black artists a stage and multiracial audiences. Theatre venues were desegregated in 1978.

Some of the more well-known venues include the Market Theatre, Jo'burg Theatre and Soweto Theatre in Johannesburg; the Baxter and Artscape theatres in Cape Town; and the Playhouse in Durban. Many of the casinos and malls in South Africa are also home to theatres. Pieter Toerien's Theatre & Studio at Montecasino in Johannesburg has hosted major productions such as Dream Girls and Phantom of the Opera. There are also multitudes of festivals that take place across the country. The most well-known is the Makhanda National Arts Festival – the biggest annual celebration of the arts on the African continent. Over the years, the festival has showcased some of South Africa's best-performing arts talent, including up-and-coming artists.

It has also spawned a multitude of similar festivals such as the Klein Karoo Nasionale Kunstefees in Oudtshoorn.

Festivals

Arts and cultural festivals in South Africa offer something for every taste. Many of these have become annual events, growing in popularity and attendance numbers:

- Aardklop, held annually in Potchefstroom, North West, is inherently Afrikaans, but universal in character. The festival provides a platform for the creativity and talent of local artists.
- Arts Alive International Festival in Newtown, Johannesburg provides the best in homegrown and overseas entertainment.
- The Cape Town International Jazz Festival features international and African artists. It also features photographic and art exhibitions.
- The Dance Umbrella is a festival of contemporary choreography and dance, presenting work ranging from community-based dance troupes to international companies.
- The Klein Karoo Nasionale Kunstefees, known as the KKNK, a vibrant festival for the performing arts, is held annually in Oudtshoorn and presentations include drama, cabaret, and contemporary and classical music.
- The National Arts Festival, held annually in July in Makhanda in the Eastern Cape, is one of the largest and most diverse arts gatherings in Africa.
- Oppikoppi Bushveld Bash near Northam in Limpopo offers live performances by rock, alternative and blues bands, both local and from abroad.
- The Splashy Fen Music Festival near Underberg in KwaZulu-Natal offers a variety of mainstream and alternative rock and pop music.
- Standard Bank Joy of Jazz is Johannesburg's biggest annual jazz festival, with local and international artists performing at different venues across the city.
- Up the Creek is a popular music festival on the banks of the Breede River near Swellendam in the Western Cape.
- The Mandela International Film Festival aims to celebrate and stimulate a brave new world of film-making, and is dedicated to improving both the craft and business of film.
- Other festivals that attract visitors at both national and international levels are Innibos in Mbombela, Mpumalanga; Taung Cultural Calabash in the North West; the Awesome Africa Music Festival in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal; the Windybrow Theatre Festival in Johannesburg; and the Hilton Arts Festival in KwaZulu-Natal.

Music

Music is one of the key cultural industries identified in the Cultural Industrial Growth Strategy Report, and government has committed itself to harnessing its potential. Local music accounts for a third of all the music bought by South Africans. Township jazz and blues, especially the kwêla music of the 1940s and 1950s, are being redefined. The country also has a rich choral tradition. Pop and rock musicians have made their mark internationally. Even techno-rave and house music have found their own variations in local culture.

Kwaito and hip-hop are very popular, combining elements of rap, reggae and other musical styles into a distinctly South African style. Kwaai Jazz is also gaining momentum. In addition to its cultural value, music plays an important economic role in the country, generating significant copyright revenue. The Taking South African Music to the World initiative is aimed at improving export opportunities for South African music. The DSAC funds a number of musical ensembles directly and indirectly, through the NAC.

South African Music Awards (SAMAs)

The following winners of the SAMAs were announced on 2 November 2024 at the Gallagher Convention Centre in Midrand, Johannesburg:

Best Adult Contemporary Album: Stimela – Drakensberg Boys Choir.

Ikwekwezi FM Best African Adult Contemporary Album: Sane – Brenda Mtambo.

Best Afro Pop Album: Imizwa – Lwah Ndlunkulu.

Best Alternative Album: I'm With The Singer – I'm With The Singer.

Motsweding FM Best Amapiano Album: Isimo – Kabza De Small and Mthunzi.

Best Classical/Instrumental Album: End of the Beginning – Fanie Dick.

Best Collaboration: 'iPlan' – Dlala Thukzin, Sykes and Zaba.

Best Engineered Album: Reimagined – The Soil.

Best Gqom Album: We Don't Play The Same Gqom 2 – QueDj.

Best Hip Hop Album: Dust – Priddy Ugly.

Best Jazz Album: Enhlizweni: Song Stories From My Heartland – Steve Dyer.

Best Kwaito Album: Most Wanted – Sykes.

Best Maskandi Album: Uyihlo noNyoko – Ugatsheni.

Best Pop Album: Tyla – Tyla.

Best Produced Album: No Other Love – David Watkyns.

Best Produced Music Video: 'Dali' by Kamo Mphela – Kudzi

Umhlobo Wenene FM Best R&B/Soul Album: Testament – Lordkez.

Best Rock Album: Dans Deur Die Donker – Francois van Coke.
Best Traditional Faith Music Album: Mororiseng – Omega Khunou.
Beste Kontemporêre Musiek Album: Estetika – Elandré.
Beste Pop Album: Almal Gly – Die Piesangskille.
Remix of the Year: 'Weekend Special (Jnr SA remix)' – Jnr SA.
Best African Indigenous Faith Music Album: Soothe My Soul: Songs from our South African Church – Ladysmith Black Mambazo.
Best Contemporary Faith Music Album: Unusual – Xolly Mncwango.
SANTAM Newcomer of the Year: Tyla – Tyla.
SAMPRA Album of the Year: Isimo – Kabza De Small and Mthunzi.
Radio 2000 Duo/Group of the Year: Kabza De Small and Mthunzi – 'Isimo'.
Lesedi FM Male Artist of the Year: Ugatsheni – 'Uyihlo noNyoko'.
Ukhozi FM Female Artist of the Year: Tyla – Tyla.
Rest of Africa Award: 'Son Of A Tribe (Royalty Edition)' – Edgar Muzah.
Motsepe Foundation Record of the Year: 'Paris' – Mthandeni SK ft. Lwah Ndlunkulu.
Best Reggae Album: Give Praises – Skeleton Blazer.
Best Dance Album: Permanent Music 3 – Dlala Thukzin.
Best Traditional Music Album: Hamba Naye – Soul Brothers.
CAPASSO Most Streamed Song of the Year: 'Mnike' – Tyler ICU and Tumelo_za. featuring DJ Maphorisa, Nandipha 808, Ceeka RSA and Tyron Dee.
RiSA Audio and Visual Music Video of the Year: 'Lemons (Lemonade)' – AKA & Nasty C.
Chairperson Award: Oskido.
International Achievement: Tyla.
Lifetime Achievement Awards: Sipho Makhabane and Ringo Madlingozi.

Moshito Music Conference and Exhibition

The DSAC hosts the annual Moshito Music Conference and Exhibition, a key music event on the African continent that promotes collaboration among interested parties. The event is designed to provide opportunities for business networking; information exchange; music business education; promotion and product development for national music producers, performers, individuals and entities providing support services; as well as to strengthen business opportunities for the music industry and related media.

Dance

Dancing is part of the African way of life and has become a prime means of artistic expression, with dance companies expanding and exploring new territory. Contemporary work ranges from normal preconceptions of movement and performance art or performance theatre to the completely unconventional. Added to this is the African experience, which includes traditional dance inspired by wedding ceremonies, battles, rituals and the trifles of everyday life. An informal but highly versatile performance venue in Johannesburg, The Dance Factory, provides a permanent platform for a variety of dance and movement groups. The University of the Witwatersrand Theatre is another popular dance venue.

Visual arts

South Africa has a rich variety of visual art, with influences ranging from prehistoric, ancient and indigenous art to western, Asian and contemporary art. Art galleries, ranging from small privately owned commercial galleries, to major regional galleries such as the South African National Gallery in Cape Town, the Durban Art Gallery in KwaZulu-Natal, the Johannesburg Art Gallery in Gauteng and the King George VI Gallery in the Eastern Cape, showcase collections of indigenous, historical and contemporary works. Educational institutions also play an important role in acquiring works of national interest.

Rock art

There are many traces of ancient cultures that existed in southern Africa in the distant past. Experts estimate that there are 250 000 rock art sites south of the Zambezi. The San people left a priceless and unique collection of Stone Age paintings and engravings in the region, which also represents the largest collection of its kind in the world. Rock engravings are scattered on flat rock surfaces and boulders throughout the interior. The artworks depict mainly hunter-gatherers and their relationship with the animal world and historical events, as well as their interaction with and observation of newcomers encroaching upon their living space.

Indigenous people with spears and Nguni cattle, Khoikhoi fat-tailed sheep, European settlers on horseback with rifles and wagons, and ships and soldiers in uniform were captured in surprising detail. Immortalised visions of the artists' spiritual world can also be found on sandstone canvases. These depict complex symbols and metaphors to illustrate the supernatural powers and potency they received from nature. The oldest dated rock art in South Africa, an engraved stone some 10 200 years old, was discovered in a living floor at the Wonderwerk Cave near Kuruman in the Northern Cape. The oldest painted stones (around 6 400 years) were recovered at Boomplaas Cave in the Cango Valley near Oudtshoorn.

Three painted stones were also found at the Klasies River caves, which yielded the second-oldest painted stone, dating back some 3 900 years. The DSAC supports a number of projects, including a rock-heritage project in Clanwilliam in the Western Cape. Millions of pieces of tools made by humankind's ancestors (possibly the Homo heidelbergensis species) were uncovered at Kathu in the Northern Cape in 2014. The site is between 700 000 and a million years old and used to be a huge workshop to produce tools.

The findings were published in the technical magazine, PLoS One, by the universities of Cape Town and Toronto (Canada) and the McGregor Museum in Kimberley. The hominid species produced tools and equipment at the site for 20 000 to 30 000 years, generation after generation.

Photography

With its scenic beauty, abundant wildlife, diversity of cultures and rich historical heritage, South Africa is a photographer's paradise. Many South African photographers have been acclaimed for their work, which features in coffee table books, documentaries, local and international exhibitions, magazines and newspapers. Famous South African photographers include Kevin Carter, Ernest Cole, Alf Kumalo, Peter Magubane, Jürgen Schadeberg, Austin Stevens, Greg Marinovich, Andrew Tshabangu, Sam Nzima and James Oatway.

Architecture

South Africa has a rich architectural heritage, reflecting contributions from all cultural groups in the country. Through the centuries, a unique trend has developed in South Africa's architectural style, which has been referred to as an innovative marriage of traditions. This is evident in the variety of architectural structures found all over the country, ranging from humble dwellings, historical homesteads and public buildings, to modern, commercial buildings reflecting state-of-the-art technology and designs that match the best in the world.

Schools of architecture exist within various South African universities, including the universities of Pretoria, Cape Town, the Free State, KwaZulu-Natal, the Witwatersrand and the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University.

Crafts

A high level of skill is brought to the production of work that has long been a part of African society, and has found new commercial outlets. South African beadwork, once the insignia of tribal royalty, has found a huge range of applications, from the creation of coverings for everything such as bottles and matchboxes, to the reproduction of the red AIDS ribbon using Zulu beadwork known as Zulu love letters. With workplaces ranging from pavements and markets of big cities to dwellings in deep rural areas, South Africans produce a remarkable range of arts and crafts, including various forms of traditional artwork and innovative new products.

There are also several important collections of African art in South Africa, such as the Standard Bank collection at the Gertrude Posel Gallery at Wits University, in Johannesburg. The Durban Art Gallery houses works of historical and anthropological significance. These range from jewellery, tableware, home decorations, embroidery and key rings to skilfully crafted wooden engravings and wirework sculptures. In addition to standard materials, such as beads, grass, leather, fabric and clay, many other mediums are also used.

These include telephone wire, plastic bags, empty cans, bottle tops and food tin labels to create brightly coloured paper mâché bowls. Shops, markets and collectors dealing in African crafts provide much-needed employment and income to communities. Fugitive's Drift in KwaZulu-Natal offers a large variety of skilfully crafted basketry; the Northern Cape Schmidtsdrift community of displaced San people produces paintings influenced by ancient rock art; and the Madi a Thavha Art Gallery in the Soutpansberg region of Limpopo produces and sells a range of arts and crafts created by the local Venda and Tsonga communities. Products include beadwork, sculptures, ceramics and jewellery. South African folk art is also making inroads into Western-style "high art".

The Ndebele tradition of house-painting, part of the widespread African practice of painting or decorating the exteriors of homes, burgeoned amazingly with the advent of commercial paints. It also gave rise to artists such as Dr Esther Mahlangu, who has put her adaptations of the distinctive, highly coloured geometric Ndebele designs on everything, from cars to aeroplanes.

Design

The annual Design Indaba Conference is held in Cape Town. It is also broadcast via live simulcast to multiple cities at a lower price point to broaden the access to the event. Independently curated with a focus on case studies and ingenious problem solving, rather than simply eye-catching portfolios, conference alumni are contemporary industry pace setters. Despite its name, the conference's scope has broadened over the years to include all the creative sectors; in recent years it has been dubbed by some as "The Conference on Creativity".

Literature

South Africa has a rich and diverse literary history, with realism, until relatively recently, dominating works of fiction. Fiction has been written in all of South Africa's 11 official languages – with a large body of work in Afrikaans and English. The local literature sector has become globally competitive and the country's writers continue to command respect throughout the world. Well-known South African writers include Nobel Prize winners John Maxwell Coetzee and Nadine Gordimer, Gcina Mhlope, Phaswane Mpe, Es'kia Mphahlele, Wally Serote, Athol Fugard, Herman Charles Bosman, Sir Percy Fitzpatrick, Breyten Breytenbach, Dalene Matthee, Alan Paton, Olive Schreiner, André Philippus Brink and Njabulo Ndebele

The current generation of writers is also making their mark on the world stage, with writers such as Zakes Mda, Niq Mhlongo and the late Kabelo K Sello Duiker, who have had their novels translated into languages such as Dutch, German and Spanish; and Deon Meyer, whose work has attracted worldwide critical acclaim and a growing international fan base. Originally written in Afrikaans, Meyer's books have been translated into 25 languages, including English, French, German, Dutch, Italian, Spanish, Danish, Norwegian, Swedish, Russian, Finnish, Czech, Romanian, Slovak, Bulgarian, Japanese and Polish.

Well-known poets include the late Professor Keorapetse William Kgositsile, Joseph Mbuyiseni Mtshali, Roy Campbell, Sheila Cussons, Jakob Daniël du Toit (better known as Totius), Elisabeth Eybers, Ingrid Jonker, Antjie Krog, Thomas Pringle, Nicolaas Petrus van Wyk Louw and Eugène Marais. The new pop culture in poetry, often referred to as "spoken-word poetry", is one of the most celebrated art forms in the country and beyond. Poets such as Lesego Rampolokeng, Lebogang Mashile, Kgafela oa Magogodi, Blaq Pearl, Jessica Mbangeni and Mark Manaka are household names in the genre. Regular platforms have been created to give these poets opportunities to hone their skills.

The Publishing Association of South Africa is the largest publishing industry body that is committed to creativity, literacy, the free flow of ideas and encouraging a culture of reading.

South African Literary Awards (SALA)

The aim of the SALA is to pay tribute to South African writers who have distinguished themselves as ground-breaking producers and creators of literature. It also celebrates literary excellence in the depiction and sharing of South Africa's history, value systems and philosophies, and art as inscribed and preserved in all the languages of South Africa, particularly the official languages.

Film

The first-ever newsreel was shot in South Africa during the Anglo-Boer/South African War, which ended in 1902. The weekly newsreel ran for more than 60 years. Film production began in 1916, when Isidore Williem Schlesinger Schlesinger set up Killarney Studios in Johannesburg. The studio produced 42 movies between 1916 and 1922. Access to international markets became limited in the 1920s, and it was only in the 1950s that the market picked up again, when Afrikaans filmmakers developed an interest in the industry. In the 1980s, South Africa gave foreign companies the opportunity to film movies in the country by giving them tax breaks.

The South African film industry contributes R3.5 billion annually to the country's GDP, while employing more than 25 000 people. Government offers a package of incentives to promote its film production industry. They comprise the Foreign Film and Television

Production Incentive to attract foreign-based film productions to shoot on location in South Africa, and the South African Film and Television Production and Co-production Incentive, which aims to assist local film producers in producing local content.

South Africa's first co-production treaty was signed with Canada in 1997, followed by Germany, Italy, the UK, France, Australia and New Zealand. The three largest film distributors in South Africa are Ster-Kinekor, United International Pictures and Nu-Metro. Ster-Kinekor has a specialised art circuit, called Cinema Nouveau, with theatres in Johannesburg, Cape Town, Durban and Pretoria.

Festivals include the Durban International Film Festival; the North West Film Festival; the Apollo Film Festival in Victoria West; the Three Continents Film Festival (specialising in African, South American and Asian films); the Soweto Film Festival; and the Encounters Documentary Festival, which alternates between Cape Town and Johannesburg.

South African Film and Television Awards (SAFTAs)



The SAFTAs honour, celebrate and promote the creativity, quality and excellence of South African film and TV talent and productions, and serve to encourage entrepreneurship and the development of new talent within the industry. The 18th annual SAFTAs took place on 25 and 26 October 2024 at the at the Gallagher Convention Centre in Midrand, Johannesburg and the following winners were announced:

- Best Competition Reality Show: Kokkedoor: Vuur & Vlam | Homebrew Films, kykNET
- Best Structured Soapie Reality Show: Young, Famous and African S2 | Urban Brew Studios & A Pop Media, Netflix
- Best Online Content: The Adventures of Noko Mashaba - Struggles of SA Youth | Rams Comics, YouTube/Facebook
- Best Current Affairs Programme: Checkpoint | eNCA
- Best International Format: The Masked Singer SA | Rose and Oaks Media, SABC3
- Best Entertainment Programme: Koppestamp | Just Ad Production, kykNET
- Best Variety Show: Sport@10 | SABC Sport, SABC1
- Best Achievement In Scriptwriting - Feature Film: The Fragile King | Tristan Holmes, The Ergo Company, Amazon Prime Video
- Best Supporting Actress in a TV Soap: Marlee van der Merwe (Binnelanders) | Stark Films, kykNET
- Best Supporting Actor in a TV Soap: Kabelo Thai (Scandal!) | Ochre Media, e.tv
- Best Supporting Actress in a Telenovela: Mmarona Motsegoa (Redemption) | Burnt Onion Productions & Seriti Films, BET Africa
- Best Supporting Actor in a Telenovela: Mpho Sebeng (The Estate) | Clive Morris Productions, SABC3
- Best Actress in a TV Soap: Elizabeth Serunye (Skeem Saam) | Peu, SABC1
- Best Actor in a TV Soap: Germandt Geldenhuys (Binnelanders) | Stark Films, kykNET
- Best Actress in a Telenovela: Zikhona Sodlaka (Gqeberha - The Empire) | Tshedza Pictures, Mzansi Magic
- Best Actor in a Telenovela: Presley Chweneyagae (The River) |Tshedza Pictures, 1Magic
- Best TV Soap: Skeem Saam | Peu, SABC1
- Best Telenovela: Outlaws | Tshedza Pictures, Showmax
- Best Supporting Actress in a TV Drama: Natasha Sutherland (Lioness S2) | Ochre Media ADO Arena Holdings, M-Net
- Best Supporting Actor in a TV Drama: Nat Ramabulana (Fatal Seduction) | Ochre Media ADO Arena Holdings, Netflix
- Best Actress in a TV Drama: Shannon Esra (Lioness S2) | Ochre Media ADO Arena Holdings, M-Net
- Best Actor in a TV Drama: Thembinkosi Mthembu (Shaka iLembe) | Bomb Shelter, Mzansi Magic
- Best TV Drama: Shaka iLembe | Bomb Shelter, Mzansi Magic
- Best Supporting Actress in a TV Comedy: Dorothy Anne Gould (Yoh! Christmas) | BBZEE Films, Netflix
- Best Supporting Actor in a TV Comedy: Kagiso Modupe (Yoh! Christmas) | BBZEE Films, Netflix
- Best Actress in a TV Comedy: Marion Holm (Taktiek) | Nagvlug Films, kykNET
- Best Actor in a TV Comedy: Prev Reddy (Miseducation) |

Burnt Onion Productions, Netflix
- Best TV Comedy: Yoh! Christmas | BBZEE Films, Netflix
- Best Short Film: Father's Day | Bunzi Bear Pictures, The Film Festival Doctor
- Best Supporting Actress In A Feature Film: Jennifer Steyn (The Fragile King) | The Ergo Company, Amazon Prime Video
- Best Supporting Actor in a Feature Film: Adrian Alper (Seconds) | Free Women Films, Amazon Prime Video
- Best Actress in a Feature Film: Antoinette Louw (The Fragile King) | The Ergo Company, Amazon Prime Video
- Best Actor in a Feature Film: Vusi Kunene (Seconds) | Free Women Films, Amazon Prime Video
- Best Achievement In Directing – Feature Film: The Fragile King | Tristan Holmes, The Ergo Company, Amazon Prime Video
- Best Feature Film: The Fragile King | The Ergo Company, Amazon Prime Video
- Best TV Presenter (public vote): Laconco (Forever Thina) | Urban Brew Studios, Mzansi Magic
- Most Popular TV Soap or Telenovela (public vote): Scandal! | Ochre Media, e.tv
- Lifetime Achiever Award: Arthur Molepo and Mfundi Vundla

Museums

Museums are the windows to the natural and cultural heritage of a country. South Africa can justifiably be called the "museum country of Africa", with the earliest of its museums dating back to the first half of the 19th century. There are more than 300 museums in South Africa. They range from museums of geology, history, the biological sciences and the arts, to mining, agriculture, forestry and many other disciplines.

Visitors can find exhibits, both conventional and eccentric, on every conceivable topic – from beer to beadwork, from fashion to food. New additions are those reflecting the apartheid era, and commemorating those who fought and died for the cause of establishing a democratic country. Most of the country's national museums are declared cultural institutions and fall under the overall jurisdiction of the DSAC. They receive an annual subsidy from the department, but function autonomously.

The following museums report to the Minister of Sport, Arts and Culture:
- Ditsong Museums of South Africa;
- Iziko Museums, Cape Town;
- Natal Museum, Pietermaritzburg;
- National Museum, Bloemfontein;
- Language Museum, Paarl;
- National English Literary Museum, Makhanda;
- Msunduzi/Voortrekker Museum, Pietermaritzburg;
- War Museum of the Boer Republics, Bloemfontein;
- Robben Island Museum, Cape Town;
- William Humphreys Art Gallery, Kimberley;
- Engelenburg House Art Collection, Pretoria;
- Nelson Mandela Museum, Mthatha; and
- Luthuli Museum, KwaDukuza.

The Ditsong Museums of South Africa comprise the National Cultural History Museum, Kruger House Museum, Tswaing Meteorite Crater, Willem Prinsloo Agricultural Museum, Pioneer Museum, Sammy Marks Museum, the Coert Steynberg Museum, the Transvaal Museum and the South African National Museum of Military History in Johannesburg. The Iziko Museums of Cape Town comprise the South African Museum, the South African Cultural History Museum and its satellite museums, the South African National Gallery, the William Fehr Collection and the Michaelis Collection.

The Robben Island Museum was established as a national monument and museum, and declared South Africa's first world heritage site in 1999. Guided tours are offered to historical sites on the island, including the cell in which former President Nelson Mandela was imprisoned. In April 2009, government declared Freedom Park, Pretoria, a cultural institution under the Cultural Institutions Act of 1998. The //hapo Museum at the historic Freedom Park was officially unveiled in 2013. The museum, which is situated at the top of Salvokop in Pretoria, also serves as a monument to the mighty legacy of South Africa's first democratically elected President Mandela. //hapo is a Khoi word which means "a dream".

The museum is helping the country define its history, in holistic terms, from the early wars of dispossession such as the Khoikhoi-Dutch War in the 1500s; the arrival of Jan van Riebeeck in the Cape in 1652; the Third War of Dispossession between the Khoisan and colonial authorities in the 1800s; and the South African War, previously known as the Anglo-Boer War, to the anti-apartheid struggle – all of which form part of the freedom history and define the freedom South Africans enjoy today. The museum is the result of nationwide consultative processes that solicited advice from youth, intellectuals, academics, artistic communities, women's groups, traditional leaders and healers and faith-based organisations.

It is a product of South Africans from all walks of life, and is in every shape and form a community's dream. Other elements include a vast wall commemorating those who paid the ultimate price for freedom, an eternal flame paying tribute to the unknown and unsung heroes and heroines, a gallery dedicated to the legends of humanity, a symbolic resting place for those who have died and the story of southern Africa's 3.6 billion years of history.

Other museums administered by central government departments or research councils are the:
- Museum of the Council for Geoscience (Pretoria);
- Theiler Veterinary Science Museum at Onderstepoort (Pretoria);
- South African Air Force Museum at Swartkop Air Force Base (Pretoria) with its satellites in Cape Town and Gqeberha;
- Museum of the Department of Correctional Services (Pretoria);
- The best-known natural history collections in South Africa are housed in the Iziko Museums, the Ditsong Museums of South Africa, the National Museum and the KwaZulu-Natal Museum.

- **The following natural history museums do not fall under the DSAC, but work closely with the national heritage institutions:**
  - McGregor Museum, Kimberley;

- East London Museum;
- South African Institute for Aquatic Biodiversity, Grahamstown;
- Gqeberha Museum; and
- Durban Museum of Natural History.

The best-known cultural history collections are housed in the Iziko Museums and the Ditsong Museums of South Africa, as well as the Durban Local History Museum and Museum Africa in Johannesburg. The South African National Gallery in Cape Town and the William Humphreys Art Gallery in Kimberley report to the DSAC. The South African Cultural History Museum (Slave Lodge) in Cape Town houses the oldest cultural history collection in the country. The South African Museum (Cape Town) showcases the natural history of South Africa, and relics of the early human inhabitants of the subcontinent.

The huge Whale Hall houses possibly the most impressive of all its exhibitions. This is the only collection in South Africa with a planetarium attached to it. The Transvaal Museum in Pretoria houses the skull of Mrs Ples, a 2.5-million-year-old hominid fossil, and depicts the origin and development of life in South Africa, from the most primitive unicellular form of life to the emergence of mammals and the first human beings. It has an impressive collection of early human fossils and houses some of the largest herpetological and ornithological collections in southern Africa. The Tswaing Meteorite Crater, situated to the north-west of Pretoria, combines a museum with a cultural-development initiative.

The National Cultural History Museum in Pretoria is a centre for the preservation and promotion of the culture and heritage of all South Africans. It explores cultural diversity and commonalities, links the present and the past to offer a better understanding of both, and nurtures the living cultures of all South Africans. Mining is best represented by the De Beers Museum at the Big Hole in Kimberley, where visitors can view the biggest hole ever made by man with pick and shovel. It includes an open-air museum, which houses many buildings dating back to the era of the diamond diggings. Another important mining museum is at Pilgrim's Rest, Mpumalanga, where the first economically viable gold field was discovered.

The entire village has been conserved and restored. Agriculture in South Africa is depicted mainly in two museums. These are Kleinplasie in Worcester, Western Cape, which showcases the wine culture and characteristic architecture of the winelands; and the Willem Prinsloo Agricultural Museum between Pretoria and Bronkhorstspruit, in Gauteng. This museum comprises two "house" museums and runs educational programmes based on its extensive collection of early farming implements, vehicles of yesteryear and indigenous farm animals. The Absa Museum and Archives in Johannesburg preserve the banking group's more than 110 years of history. The museum also houses a unique and very valuable coin and banknote collection.

The Apartheid Museum in Johannesburg offers a realistic view of the political situation in South Africa during the apartheid years. Exhibitions in the museum include audiovisual footage recorded during the apartheid era. The Red Location Museum in Gqeberha highlights the struggle against apartheid and has won several international awards. A common type of museum in South Africa is the "house" museum. Examples include an entire village nucleus in Stellenbosch; the mansion of millionaire industrialist Sammy Marks; the Kruger House Museum, the residence of Paul Kruger, former President of the Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek; and Melrose House, where the Peace Treaty of Vereeniging that ended the Second Anglo-Boer/South African War (1899 to 1902) was signed, around the massive dining table, on 31 May 1902, in Pretoria. Simpler variations include the Pioneer Museum and 1848 House in Silverton, Pretoria; and the Diepkloof Farm Museum, featuring a farmhouse dating back to the 1850s, at Suikerbosrand near Heidelberg, in Gauteng.

There are several open-air museums that showcase the black cultures of the country, for example, Tsonga Kraal near Letsitele, Limpopo; the Ndebele Museum in Middelburg, Mpumalanga; the Bakone Malapa Museum in Polokwane, Limpopo; and the South Sotho Museum in Witsieshoek, Free State. The South African Museum for Military History in Johannesburg reflects the military history of the country, while the War Museum in Bloemfontein depicts the Anglo-Boer/South African War, in particular.

The famous battlefields of KwaZulu-Natal, the Northern Cape and North West are also worth a visit.

International Museum Day is commemorated on 18 May. It is coordinated by the International Council of Museums and its objectives are to raise awareness of the fact that museums are an important means of cultural exchange, enrichment of cultures and development of mutual understanding, cooperation and peace among people. The event highlights a specific theme that changes every year and that is at the heart of the international museum community's preoccupations. Participation in International Museum Day is growing all over the world. The main mission of museums is to oversee the safekeeping and protection of the heritage that lies both within and beyond their walls.

Archives

The archives of governmental bodies are transferred to archive repositories after 20 years, and are accessible to the public and to the office of origin. The National Archives in Pretoria includes the National Film, Video and Sound Archives (NFVSA). Its primary functions are to obtain and preserve films, videotapes and sound recordings of archival value, and to make these available for research and reference purposes.

The archives of central government are preserved in the National Archives' repository in Pretoria. The country's nine provinces run their archiving services independently from the National Archives. The retrieval of information from archives is facilitated by the National Automated Archival Information System, which can be found at www.national.archives.gov.za. It includes national registers of manuscripts, photographs and audio-visual material.

The National Archives is responsible for collecting non-public records with enduring value of national significance. It also renders a regulatory records-management service with regard to current records in governmental bodies, aimed at promoting efficient, transparent and accountable administration. In so doing, it is obliged to pay special attention to aspects of the nation's experience neglected by archives of the past. The National Archives' outreach programme promotes the use of its facilities and functions.

Archives are taken to the people through coordinated national and provincial archive services. The Convention for a Democratic South Africa and Archives of the Multi-Party Negotiating Process, 1993 were submitted and recommended for inclusion in the UNESCO Memory of the World International Register in 2013. This is part of South Africa's contribution to the documented collective memory of the people of the world.

The automated National Register of Oral Sources is an important element of the programme. The National Oral History Association, which was established in 2006, hosts annual oral history conferences.

Library and Information Services (LIS)

The DSAC oversees various libraries, including the NLSA, a statutory body; the SALB; and Blind South Africa. South Africa's growing LIS sector also includes public/community libraries, special libraries, government libraries and higher education libraries.

National Library of South Africa

The NLSA was established in terms of the NLSA Act of 1998, and contributes to socioeconomic, cultural, educational, scientific and innovation development by collecting, recording, preserving and making available the national documentary heritage, and promoting an awareness and appreciation for it, by fostering information literacy and facilitating access to information resources. The NLSA provides services to community libraries in partnership with provincial library services. These services include ICT support, training in preservation and resource development, the promotion of legal deposit by book publishers in terms of the Legal Deposit Act of 1997, and marketing and exhibition services.

This work is funded through the community library services grant through an allocation of R69.2 million over the medium term. The library also plans to digitise 157 000 heritage items and preserve and conserve 55 376 documentary heritage items over the period ahead, funded through allocations amounting to R85.7 million. The library is set to receive an additional R22.5 million to address operational funding shortfalls.

This amount is reprioritised from the devolution of the municipal services function from the department to entities. The libraries' total expenditure over the medium term is set to increase at an average annual rate of 4,9%, from R167.1 million in 2022/23 to R192.8 million in 2025/26, due to the additional allocations to the NLSA. Revenue is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 4,9%, from R167.1 million in 2022/23 to R192.8 million in 2025/26.

Library and Information Association of South Africa (LIASA)

The LIASA is a professional association that represents libraries and information institutions; all library and information workers; and millions of users and potential users of libraries in South Africa. It aims to unite, develop and empower all people in the library and information field. It represents the interests of, and promotes the development and image of LIS in South Africa.

Libraries have always played a role in education, whether school, academic, public or special libraries. Where there are not enough school libraries, public libraries are largely bridging the gap. The concept of lifelong learning is one embodied in all libraries, especially public and community libraries. That any person, young, old, rich, poor, employed or unemployed, can walk into a library and find information (in both electronic and traditional formats) to educate and enrich themselves, is one of the major benefits of libraries.

LIASA celebrated South African Library Week with the theme "Libraries: telling powerful stories" from 20 to 26 March 2023. LIASA remains aligned with South Africa's National Development Plan (NDP) vision that will shape communities through among others, skill development in a focused attempt to reduce unemployment, especially amongst the youth.

National Council for Library and Information Services (NCLIS)

The NCLIS is a council that advises the Ministers of Arts and Culture, Basic Education, and Higher Education, Science and Innovation on matters relating to LIS to support and stimulate the socio-economic, educational, cultural, recreational, scientific research, technological and information development of all communities in the country.

The council is broadly representative and councillors are appointed for their expertise and experience in the field of LIS. Members serve on the council for a renewable term of three years. Some important policy matters include the development of the LIS Transformation Charter, which aligns the role of libraries with the vision and strategic framework of government; the training of librarians; and the funding of the sector.

Legal Deposit Committee

The committee was appointed in terms of the Legal Deposit Act of 1997, which is administered by the DSAC. Members serve on the committee for a renewable term of three years. The mandate of the Act includes:

- Providing for the preservation of the national documentary heritage through the legal deposit of published documents;
- Ensuring the preservation and cataloguing of, and access to, published documents emanating from, or adapted for, South Africa; and
- Providing for access to government information.

The core functions of the Legal Deposit Committee include:

- Advising the Minister of Sport, Arts and Culture on any matter dealt with in this Act;
- Making recommendations concerning any regulations which the Minister of Sport, Arts and Culture may make under this Act;
- Coordinating the tasks carried out by the places of legal deposit; and
- Advising any place of legal deposit regarding any matter dealt with in this Act.

The places of legal deposit include the NLSA, the Library of Parliament in Cape Town, the Mangaung Public Library in Bloemfontein, the Msunduzi/Voortrekker Municipal Library in Pietermaritzburg and the NFVSA in Pretoria. The Act also provides for the establishment of official publications depositories, namely the Constitutional Court Library in Johannesburg, the Phuthaditjhaba Public Library in the Free State, the North West Provincial Library, Information and Archives Service, and the Mpumalanga Library Services.

South African Library for the Blind

The SALB was established in terms of the SALB Act of 1998 and is mandated to provide a national library and information service to blind and visually impaired readers in South Africa. SALB is funded through operational transfers from the department amounting to R82 million over the medium term. This is expected to enable it to produce 720 Braille book titles and 90 books for visually impaired people in alternative formats, including audio.

These items will also be circulated for lending to the public. The SALB has five broad objectives, namely to significantly contribute towards:

- Helping to build a nation of readers;
- Assisting the organised blind community;
- Improving the lives of individuals with print disabilities by meeting their information needs;
- Helping the State to discharge its cultural mandate, and its obligations to blind and visually impaired people; and
- Assisting Africa's development by providing advice, expertise and documents in accessible formats for blind people and the institutions that serve their information needs.

Blind SA

Blind SA is an organisation of the blind, governed by the blind, andis located in Johannesburg. It provides services for blind and partially sighted individuals to uplift and empower them by publishing books, magazines and other documents in Braille. The organisation equips blind people with the skills they need to fully and independently participate in society.

This includes support in living without assistance, getting about, using technology, reading, working and socialising. All this is made possible through the organisation's advocacy, education committee, Braille services, orientation and mobility services and employment programme. It is through this, and the support of its donors, that Blind SA connects South Africans who are blind or visually impaired with the world they live in.

Blind SA provides:

- study bursaries for blind and partially sighted students;
- interest-free loans (for adaptive equipment);
- information (including free Braille magazines);
- assistance in finding sustainable employment;
- advocacy (to act as a pressure group for disability rights);
- braille publications at affordable prices in all the official languages;
- free Braille training (newly blind people or previously disadvantaged blind people); and
- free orientation and mobility training (newly blind people or previously disadvantaged blind people).

International relations

The DSAC's participation in various activities in the international cultural arena helps to identify, promote and exploit mutually beneficial partnerships for social and economic development in South Africa. Together with the African Union (AU) and the New Partnership for Africa's Development, South Africa has embarked on the road to restoring, preserving and protecting its African heritage. DSAC ensures that South African talent takes its rightful place on the global stage, and uses arts and culture as a tool for economic self-liberation.

Bilateral agreements have been signed with France, the UK, China, Cuba, India, New Zealand and many more. South Africa ratified the Convention on the Promotion and Protection of Cultural Diversity in 2006, becoming the 35th member country to do so. In the area of international cooperation on cultural development, the DSAC is committed to promoting the African Agenda. It continues to encourage and support initiatives to promote South African artists on the world stage.

Cultural diplomacy

Government continues to expand its international cultural diplomacy programme led by the DSAC, in order to create opportunities for artists and showcase South African talent. Cultural diplomacy and seasons programmes build relations between individuals, communities, states and institutions, in order to foster a better understanding of each other's cultures and heritage and to use this power to promote peaceful relations.

Cultural diplomacy supports and enhances political dialogue and economic cooperation. It uses the power of culture as a driver and facilitator of economic development, and contributes to poverty reduction, whilst fostering positive, socially cohesive nations. The cultural seasons initiative is one of the tools used for the implementation of cultural diplomacy. It is a concentrated focus of cultural activities and exchanges over a specific period of time, agreed to between two countries and is based on reciprocity. It seeks to profile and strengthen cultural relations between two countries and showcase the best talent while providing growth opportunities for emerging and up-and-coming young artists.

It creates international platforms and opportunities for artists and cultural practitioners of all genres to showcase their work, and to engage with their counterparts and audiences, growing and further developing the arts and culture sector. The initiative creates reciprocal cultural, arts and heritage collaboration and exchanges between involved countries, creating institutional ties, increasing the level of awareness of each other's culture and heritage, and unlocking opportunities in other spin-off areas, including cultural tourism.

Africa cultural seasons

The African cultural seasons are aimed at showcasing South Africa's artistic and cultural talent and promoting regional integration. In line with the NDP and South Africa's foreign policy imperative on regional integration, South Africa's national interests include the development and upliftment of its people, growth and development of the economy, growth and development of southern Africa, and a stable and prosperous African continent.

Africa Month

Africa Day is celebrated annually on 25 May to mark the formation of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) on 25 May 1963 and the AU in 2002, which was created to promote unity in Africa. The day, which is celebrated across the continent, is used to acknowledge progress that Africans have made, while reflecting upon common challenges faced in a global environment.

Indigenous music and oral history

The International Library of African Music attached to the Music Department at Rhodes University is the largest repository of African music in the world. Founded in 1954 by ethnomusicologist Hugh Tracy, the library is devoted to the study of music and oral arts in Africa. It preserves thousands of historical recordings, going back to 1929 and supports contemporary fieldwork.

Transformation in sport

There has been significant progress since the introduction of the Sports Transformation Charter. Federation commitment to the process, quality, and reliability of data submitted has consistently improved. Cricket, football, netball, rugby, and tennis are leading the pack in this regard. Change in demographics at administration level is reflected in that more than half of the boards of federations audited are black and have black presidents.

On the field of play, a substantial number of senior male and underage national representative teams, including athletics, cricket, football, volleyball, boxing, and table tennis have achieved the charter targets. However, senior women and underage national team demographic profiles are lagging behind that of male representative entities, in that charter targets were achieved by only three codes, namely gymnastics, football and boxing, reflecting the magnitude of the task to improve women's position in sport.

Coaching, referee or umpire, and medical and scientific support structures were found to be more challenging from a demographic change perspective for both men and women. These areas have thus become increasingly under the magnifying glass. The purpose of the Sports Transformation Charter is to level the playing fields that enable the majority of South Africans to have equitable access and opportunity to participate and achieve in all areas and at all levels of sport.

It also outlines the principles and the basis for designing and implementing a transformation strategy on the basis of broad-based empowerment; lays the basis for setting transformation-related goals, the achievement of which will become an important barometer in the allocation of funds; intends to assist the South African sport sector to develop and implement broad-based transformation action plans; and intends that the achievement of selected transformation goals will become important criteria for considering applications for Lotto funding.

Role players

South African Sports Confederation and Olympic Committee (SASCOC)

The DSAC and the SASCOC cooperate closely on issues of mutual importance, and the department provides funding to the SASCOC for initiatives such as the preparation of elite athletes for international events. The SASCOC is the national controlling body for the promotion and development of high-performance sport in South Africa and consults with relevant sports bodies in this regard. It prepares and delivers Team South Africa to all international multi-coded sporting events, such as the Olympic Games, Paralympic Games, Commonwealth Games, African Games, Olympic Youth

Games, Commonwealth Youth Games and AU Sports Council (AUSC) Region 5 Games.

The committee is also responsible for the awarding of National Protea Colours to athletes/officials who have met the criteria to represent South Africa in different sporting codes and arenas and, in addition, endorses the applications for bidding and hosting of international events, providing the criteria are all met. Its different strategies, such as the Operation Excellence Programme, were designed to offer support to athletes who have the potential to qualify for participation and return medals at a higher level in multi-coded events under the organisation's umbrella of sports.

It is the premier programme for prospective Olympic and Paralympic medallists. The programme comprises three different tiers that provide varying degrees of funding and support. The Olympic Committee also collaborates with various stakeholders, including other national Olympic committees, to ensure that its main mandate is fulfilled.

World Anti-Doping Agency

The World Anti-Doping Agency aims to bring consistency to anti-doping policies and regulations within sport organisations and governments across the world. The World Anti-Doping Agency's NO! to Doping campaign, which has been running since 2010, has become the leading awareness campaign for most sporting codes around the globe.

National Sport Federations

The various sporting codes in South Africa are governed by their own federations and associations. These include:

- Aero Club of South Africa
- AFL South Africa
- Amateur Fencing Association of Southern Africa
- Anglers and Casting Federation of Southern Africa
- Archery South Africa
- Athletics South Africa
- Badminton South Africa
- Baseball Union of Southern Africa
- Basketball South Africa
- Bowls South Africa
- BSA
- Bridge Federation of Southern Africa
- Canoeing South Africa
- Chess South Africa
- Clay Target Shooting Association of South Africa.
- Confederation of Cue Sport South Africa
- Cricket South Africa (CSA)
- Cycling South Africa
- Federation of Dance Sport South Africa
- Darts South Africa
- Deaf Sports Federation of Southern Africa
- Federation Bocce
- Fitness Sport Aerobics Federation of Southern Africa
- Handball Federation of Southern Africa
- Judo South Africa
- Jukskei South Africa
- Karate South Africa
- Korfball Federation of South Africa
- Lifesaving South Africa
- Majorette and Cheerleading Association South Africa
- Martial Arts and Games Committee of South Africa

- Masters Sports Association of Southern Africa
- Mind Sports South Africa
- Modern Pentathlon Association of South Africa Motorsport South Africa
- National Amateur Bodybuilding Association of South Africa
- National Horseracing Authority
- National Pigeon Organisation of Southern Africa
- National Boxing Organisation of Southern Africa
- Netball South Africa
- Orienteering Federation of Southern Africa
- Parachute Association of South Africa
- Physically Disabled Association
- Powerlifting Federation of South Africa
- Powerboat South Africa
- Ringball South Africa
- Roller Sport South Africa
- Rowing South Africa
- SASCOC
- Scrabble South Africa
- Sheep Shearing Federation of Southern Africa
- Shooting Sport Federation of South Africa
- Snooker and Billiards South Africa
- Snow Sports South Africa
- Squash South Africa
- Soaring Society of South Africa
- Softball South Africa
- South African Amateur Fencing Association
- South African Bodyboarding Association
- South African Deep Sea Angling Association
- South African Figure Skating Association
- South African Fly Fishing Association
- South African Football Association
- South African Gold Panning Association
- South African Golf Association
- South African Gymnastics Federation
- South African Hang Gliding and Paragliding Association
- South African Hockey
- South African Ice Hockey Association
- South African National Archery Association
- South African National Equestrian Federation
- South African Polo Association
- South African Practical Shooting Association
- South African Rugby Union
- South African Sailing
- South African Shore Angling Association
- South African Sports Association for the Intellectually Impaired
- South African Tennis Association
- South African Underwater Sports Federation
- Surfing South Africa
- Swimming South Africa
- Table Tennis Board of Southern Africa
- Taekwondo Federation of South Africa
- Tenniquoits Board of South Africa
- Tenpin Bowling Association of South Africa
- Transplant Sports Association of South Africa
- Triathlon South Africa
- Tug of War Federation of South Africa
- University Sport South Africa
- Volleyball South Africa
- Water Ski Federation of Southern Africa
- Weightlifting Federation of Southern Africa
- Wrestling South Africa
- Wushu Federation of Southern Africa


PROTEAS
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SOUTH AFRICA
YEARBOOK
2024/25

The Presidency

The Presidency is mandated with ensuring that the President can execute his constitutional responsibilities in leading and galvanising government and society to implement the electoral mandate.

The department provides support to the President and Deputy President in the execution of their responsibilities as outlined in Chapter 5 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa of 1996. As such, over the period ahead, the department will focus on enhancing leadership and partnerships through stakeholder engagements to promote the country's social transformation agenda; strengthening governance, state capacity and service delivery through leadership and coordination; and coordinating government policies, legislation and programmes.

The department's total budget over the medium term is R1.9 billion, of which 87,1% (R1.7 billion) is in the Administration programme to provide technical and administrative support to the President, Deputy President and management. Compensation of employees accounts for an estimated 63,7% (R1.2 billion) of the department's budget over the period ahead.

The Presidency comprises eight political principals:

- President, who is the Head of State and Government;
- Deputy President, who is the Leader of Government Business (in Parliament);
- Minister in The Presidency;
- Minister in The Presidency for Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities;
- Deputy Minister in The Presidency for Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities;
- Deputy Ministers in The Presidency; and
- Deputy Minister in The Presidency Responsible for State Security.

The President, as the Head of State, leads the Cabinet. He or she is elected by the National Assembly (NA) from among its members and leads the country in the interest of national unity, in accordance with the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 and the law. The President appoints the Deputy President from among members of the NA. The Deputy President assists the President in executing government functions.

Chapter 1 of the National Development Plan (NDP) sets out a vision for increased government integration towards developing policy in a complex domestic and international environment. Priority 6 (a capable, ethical and developmental state) and Priority 7 (a better Africa and world) of government's 2019-2024 MTSF, with which the work of The Presidency is closely aligned, support this vision.

Enhancing leadership and partnerships

In partnership with the South African National AIDS Council, the office of the Deputy President has continued to lead nationwide initiatives targeted at improving South Africa's health results, particularly reducing the spread of HIV/AIDS, TB and sexually transmitted infections.

In March 2023, the Deputy President presented the 2023 - 2028 National Strategic Plan for HIV, TB and Sexually Transmitted Infections. The department will oversee the implementation of the plan. Funding for these activities is within the Support Services to the Deputy President subprogramme's allocation of R183.8 million over the MTEF period.

The department will continue promoting national unity and accelerate social transformation through the commemoration of national days and days of significance such as Freedom Day, Day of Reconciliation and Human Rights Day. To achieve this, R285.1 million is allocated over the MTEF period in the Support Services to the President subprogramme in the Administration programme. Spending in the subprogramme is set to increase at an average annual rate of 5,6%, from R84.4 million in 2023/24 to R99.4 million in 2026/27.

Strengthening governance, state capacity and service delivery

The department will continue to provide support to the National Prosecuting Authority's investigating directorate, the Special Investigating Unit and its special tribunal, the anti-corruption task team's fusion centre and all state entities involved in fighting corruption. This includes the department's oversight of other departments' implementation of referrals by the Special Investigating Unit and recommendations of the state capture commission.

To carry out these activities, R1.2 billion is allocated over the period ahead in the Management subprogramme in the Administration programme. Spending in the subprogramme is expected to decrease at an average annual rate of 2,1%, from R445.6 million in 2023/24 to R418.5 million in 2026/27, due to a one-off additional allocation in 2023/24 for the appointment of a new Minister.

The District Development Model is a department initiative aimed at improving service delivery by enhancing coherence and integrated planning in South Africa's 44 districts and eight metros. To enhance coordination between the spheres of government, the department will continue to provide leadership and play a coordinating role through its oversight of the model and, through the presidential imbizo, oversee its implementation. The department plans to produce two reports per year on annual oversight visits by the President. These activities are funded through the Support Services to the President subprogramme, which has a budget of R285.1 million over the period ahead.

Coordinating government policies, legislation and programmes

To improve legislative and executive accountability, and to ensure that government business is dealt with and synchronised properly, the Deputy President is responsible for managing the affairs of the executive in Parliament, setting the agenda for parliamentary business initiated by the executive within the timeframe allocated, and performing any function provided for by the joint rules or resolutions adopted in the National Assembly or the National Council of Provinces. Over the medium term, the department will continue to support the Deputy President in monitoring the implementation of the annual legislative and Cabinet programme.

This entails prioritising legislation in Parliament, including bills with Constitutional Court deadlines. Part of the

department's coordination imperative also entails ensuring executive accountability to Parliament, building relations between the executive and leaders of opposition parties, and enhancing the electorate's participation in policy and law-making processes. These activities are carried out in the Support Services to the Deputy President subprogramme.

Bucket eradication

A number of Acts further expand the specific roles and functions of The Presidency and inform its approach to the implementation of its constitutional mandate. They include the:

- Independent Commission for the Remuneration of Public Office Bearers Act, 1997 (Act 92 of 1997);
- Remuneration of Public Office Bearers Act, 1998 (Act 20 of 1998), as amended, which provides a framework for determining the salaries, benefits and allowances of public office bearers, and the secretariat to the Independent Commission located within The Presidency;
- Executive Members' Ethics Act, 1998 (Act 82 of 1998), including the Executive Ethics Code; and
- Intergovernmental Relations Framework Act, 2005 (Act 13 of 2005), which establishes a framework for national, provincial and local governments to promote and facilitate intergovernmental relations, and to provide for mechanisms and procedures to facilitate the settlement of intergovernmental disputes. The Act further seeks to promote cooperative governance as espoused by Chapter 3 of the Constitution, and has informed the formation of the President's Coordinating Council, the Cabinet Cluster System, the Forum of South African Directors-Generals and the formation of inter-ministerial committees.

Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities

The mandate of the Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities (DWYPD) is to lead in socioeconomic transformation for the empowerment and participation of women, youth and people with disabilities through mainstreaming, advocacy, monitoring and evaluation.



Over the MTEF period, the department aimed to continue focusing on strengthening the coordination of the national response to gender-based violence; promoting responsive planning, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation in government; protecting the rights of people with disabilities; and supporting the participation of young people in the economy.

An estimated 76,4% (R1.9 billion) of the department's budget over the medium term is earmarked for transfers and subsidies to the National Youth Development Agency (NYDA) and the Commission for Gender Equality (CGE). Total expenditure is expected to decrease at an average rate of 6,6%, from R1 billion in 2023/24 to R821.7 million in 2026/27. This is mainly because of Cabinet-approved reductions to the department's budget amounting to R212.7 million over the MTEF period.

To accommodate the reductions, the department plans to moderate spending on consultants and travel and subsistence while the NYDA is expected to improve its efficiencies. The agency is set to receive an additional allocation of R250 million in 2024/25 for the continuation of the presidential youth employment initiative's national youth service programme.

Addressing GBVF and supporting empowerment

The National Council on Gender-Based Violence and Femicide Bill is under consideration by the National Council of Provinces. Until the legal framework is finalised, an interim gender-based violence and femicide secretariat will continue to coordinate and oversee the national response.

The department will also conduct public awareness and advocacy events, and support and monitor the implementation of the economic empowerment of women. To achieve these targets, R25.1 million is allocated over the next three years in the Economic Empowerment of Women subprogramme in the Advocacy and Mainstreaming for the Rights of Women programme.

Promoting gender responsive planning, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation

Over the period ahead, the department will continue to coordinate and monitor the implementation of the gender-responsive planning, budgeting, monitoring, evaluation and auditing framework; and conduct research, monitoring and evaluation to inform policy planning and decision-making across government.

The department will also continue to assess the strategic and annual performance plans of other departments to ensure that they are responsive to policy priorities relating to women, young people and people with disabilities, and promote compliance with international commitments in support of these core constituents.

Accordingly, R23.9 million is allocated over the next three years in the Research and Knowledge Management subprogramme in the Monitoring, Evaluation, Research and Coordination programme. The department plans to conduct 12 public participation initiatives and four community mobilisation events over the period ahead to raise awareness and advocate against issues that continue to hinder equality and the these initiatives is budgeted for within an allocation of R59 million over the medium term in the International Relations, Stakeholder Management and Capacity Building subprogramme in the Monitoring, Evaluation, Research and Coordination programme. Promoting the rights of people with disabilities and supporting the empowerment of young people.

Promoting the rights of people with disabilities and supporting the empowerment of young people

The department will continue to advocate for and support policy reviews, work towards the finalisation of the Disability Rights Bill and frameworks to guide government in mainstreaming the inclusion of people with disabilities, strengthen the direct involvement of the disability sector, and enhance awareness programmes. Part of this includes hosting awareness events.

Expenditure for these initiatives is budgeted for within an allocation of R44.4 million over the MTEF period in the Rights of Persons with Disabilities programme. To advance the socioeconomic empowerment of young people, the department will continue to develop and review policies, legislation and frameworks to guide government and other stakeholders. Spending on these initiatives is within an allocation of R31.7 million over the medium term in the Rights of Youth programme.

ENTITIES

Commission for Gender Equality (CGE)

CGE is an independent statutory body established in terms of Section 181 of the Constitution to promote respect for gender equality, and the protection, development and attainment of gender equality. Its legislative mandate is laid out in Section 187 of the Constitution and further prescribed in the amended CGE Act of 1996..

Over the medium term, the commission will focus on promoting and attaining gender equality through activities that advance legislation, policies, investigations, monitoring and advocacy. It plans to do this by influencing legislation and policies through written submissions to Parliament and relevant stakeholders, conducting high-quality research and monitoring and evaluation, investigating complaints, sanctioning and endorsing appropriate remedies on issues that undermine the attainment of gender equality and the empowerment of women.

The commission will continue to conduct advocacy and education initiatives through stakeholder engagements and outreach programmes to raise awareness on gender equality towards a society free from unlawful discrimination and harassment. Human capital is crucial in the commission's work. As such, spending on compensation of employees accounts for an estimated 78,3% (R233.2 million) of its budget over the medium term, increasing at an average annual rate of 4,7%, from R70.8 million in 2023/24 to R81.2 million in 2026/27. The commission derives all of its revenue through transfers from the department, which amount to R292.8 million over the MTEF period.

National Youth Development Agency

The founding legislation of the National Youth Development Agency is the National Youth Development Agency Act of 2008.. The agency's role is to initiate, implement, facilitate and monitor youth development interventions aimed at promoting the empowerment of young people and their participation in economic activities. As such, over the MTEF period, the agency will continue to focus on implementing interventions to support skills development, entrepreneurship and the creation of employment for young people.

These include providing financial and non-financial enterprise support, and placing young people into jobs. Financial support will be provided through grants to youth-owned enterprises, while non-financial support will include the provision of business support services, market access and relevant skills needed to ensure that young people gain the most effective entrepreneurial applications within and across economic value chains.

Over the MTEF period, the agency plans to provide financial support and business development interventions to 9 000 enterprises owned by young people to benefit more than 90 000 young people through creating job opportunities. An amount of R1 billion is allocated to carry out this intervention, accounting for an estimated 58,4% of the agency's total projected expenditure over the period ahead. An additional R179.2 million is allocated to provide more than 120 000 young people with skills to enter the job market and find decent and sustainable employment opportunities.

The National Youth Service Programme is allocated R309.6 million over the MTEF period for the implementation of the Presidential Youth Employment initiative. This includes an additional allocation of R250 million in 2024/25. The agency expects to derive 85,9% (R1.7 billion) of its revenue over the Medium-term through transfers from the department and the remainder through funds sourced from other public and private sector organisations. Revenue is expected to decrease from R831.3 million in 2023/24 to R591.3 million in 2026/27. This is due to Cabinet-approved budget reductions to the agency's budget amounting to R158.4 million over the period ahead, and allocations from the presidential youth employment initiative coming to an end in 2024/25.

PROGRAMMES

Social Transformation and Economic Empowerment Programme

The purpose of the programme is to manage policies that mainstream women's social transformation and economic empowerment. The objective of the programme, over the medium term, is to advance the socio-economic empowerment of women by:

- **promoting** their social empowerment and participation through national dialogues on violence against women and children, and social upliftment programmes;
- **proposing** and developing interventions for their socio-economic empowerment and participation; and
- **developing** interventions to advance gender equality and establishing a just and safe society.

Stakeholder Coordination and Knowledge Management

The purpose of the programme is to ensure policy and stakeholder coordination and knowledge management for the social transformation of women in South Africa.

The programme's objectives over the medium term include:

- **informing** decision-making, policy development and the implementation of socio-economic empowerment initiatives for women, in line with national, regional, continental and global development goals;
- **ensuring** that government departments improve their contribution to the socio-economic empowerment of women by improving the mainstreaming of gender equality within government's planning, monitoring and evaluation systems;
- **improving** gender-sensitive planning, monitoring and evaluation systems by analysing other departments' plans and performance against priority indicators and targets for gender development, facilitating the evaluation of key gender policies and programmes and making recommendations for improvement;
- **positioning** the department as an effective information and knowledge hub on the socio-economic empowerment of women and gender equality by developing a central national gender information system to enable stakeholders to contribute and access relevant information;
- **enabling** effective participation in international multilateral forums on women empowerment and gender equality by instituting timely reporting and convening consultative workshops with relevant stakeholders.

Rights of Persons with Disabilities

The purpose of the programme is to oversee the implementation of initiatives pertaining to the rights of persons with disabilities. Its objective, over the medium term, is to support and monitor the implementation of policies, and coordinate government's implementation of the 2015 White Paper on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

National Youth Development

The purpose of the programme is to oversee the implementation of national youth development initiatives. Its objective, over the medium term, is to promote the development and empowerment of young people by reviewing the legislative framework and other interventions to advance youth rights.

16 Days of Activism for No Violence against Women and Children

The 16 Days of Activism for No Violence against Women and Children is a UN campaign, which takes place annually from 25 November (International Day of No Violence against Women) to 10 December (International Human Rights Day). While the internationally determined time frame of the annual campaign is 16 days until 10 December, the time frame of 365 days was chosen by the South African Government to ensure a programmatic approach to the management of violence against women and children. The 2021 campaign was hosted under the theme "The Year of Charlotte Mannya Maxeke – 16 Days of Activism – Moving from Awareness to Accountability."

National Strategic Plan (NSP) on GBVF

In March 2020, Cabinet approved the NSP on GBVF. The plan aims to provide a multi-sectoral, coherent strategic policy and programming framework to strengthen a coordinated national response to the GBVF crisis by government and the country as a whole. The plan outlines interventions to provide support to survivors and their families and broaden access to justice, drive societal change through awareness-raising and prevention campaigns, strengthen existing programmes to fight GBVF, and broaden access to economic opportunities for women.

As part of institutionalising the implementation of the NSP, a number of processes have been employed by Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities (DWYPD) to enforce accountability, provide leadership and coordinate implementation.

The plan is supported by the following pillars:

- Accountability, leadership and coordination;
- Prevention and restoration of social fabric;
- Protection, safety and justice;
- Response, care, support and healing;
- Economic empowerment; and
- Research and information systems.

Government has allocated nearly R21 billion over the medium term to support these pillars. South Africa is in the

process of ratifying the International Labour Organisation ILO Convention 190, which establishes a global standard for the protection of women in the world of work. The aim is to ensure safe workplaces that are free of violence against women. This work also aims to seek support for gender equality and address GBVF in the workplace at the highest levels of decision-making.

GBVF Response Fund

The fund is aimed at supporting the implementation of the NSP on GBVF and the wider response in the country. The fund is a fulfilment of a resolution of the GBVF Declaration, which followed the GBVF Summit held in 2018.

Through the fund, stakeholders are expected to:

- Spearhead private sector contributions;
- Acquire resources for the implementation of the National Strategic Plan on GBVF;
- Provide necessary programming and financial infrastructure;
- Ensure accountability and governance for private sector funds;
- Facilitate operational and strategic cohesion between donors and government; and
- Provide technical support for efficient and effective delivery of the plan.

During his 2024 State of the Nation Address, President Cyril Ramaphosa reiterated that GBVF persists as a major challenge, characterising it as a second pandemic and a pervasive social ill necessitating intensified comprehensive action. Although political will and private sector initiatives, such as the establishment of the GBVF Response Fund, are evident, the persistent systemic and structural effects of GBVF continue to undermine our progress.

The President's call to intensify collective efforts is an opportunity to turn pragmatic actions into measurable steps, thereby achieving noticeable and impactful reductions in GBVF rates.

International Women's Day (IWD)

Every year, South Africa joins the rest of the world in commemorating IWD. The 2022 event was held under the theme: "Gender equality today for a sustainable tomorrow". This is a global event celebrating social, economic, cultural and political achievements of women. The day also marks a call to action for accelerating gender parity. Marked annually on 8 March, IWD is one of the most important days of the year to:

- celebrate women's achievements;
- raise awareness about women's equality;
- lobby for accelerated gender parity; and
- fundraise for female-focused charities.

IWD has been observed since the early 1900s, with the first gathering held in 1911.

Disability Rights Awareness Month

Disability Rights Awareness Month is commemorated annually from 3 November to 3 December – the National Day of Persons with Disabilities. The 2021 DRAM was held under the theme; "The Year of Charlotte Mannya Maxeke – Create and Realise an Inclusive Society Upholding Rights of Persons with Disabilities''.

Disability is one of the seven focus areas identified by the South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC) to promote, protect, and monitor the realisation of human rights. DWYPD works with a number of membership-based organisations, often referred to as disabled people organisations that are run and managed by persons with disabilities.

These organisations constitute the representative voice of persons with disabilities and are based on the respective membership demographics. They support the development of persons with disabilities by providing them with a common platform to exchange and share experiences and provide information on existing services, as well as facilitate and provide such services.

Government Communication

The Government Communication and Information System (GCIS) was officially launched in May 1998. It was established in terms of Section 7 (Subsection 2 and 3) of the Public Service Act, 1994 (Act 103 of 1994), as amended. It was transferred from the then Department of Communications to The Presidency with effect from 1 April 2020. The mandate of the GCIS is derived from Section 195(g) of the Constitution, which stipulates that South African citizens should be provided with information that is timely, accurate and accessible. This is in support of the constitutional principles of freedom of expression, transparency and openness of government.

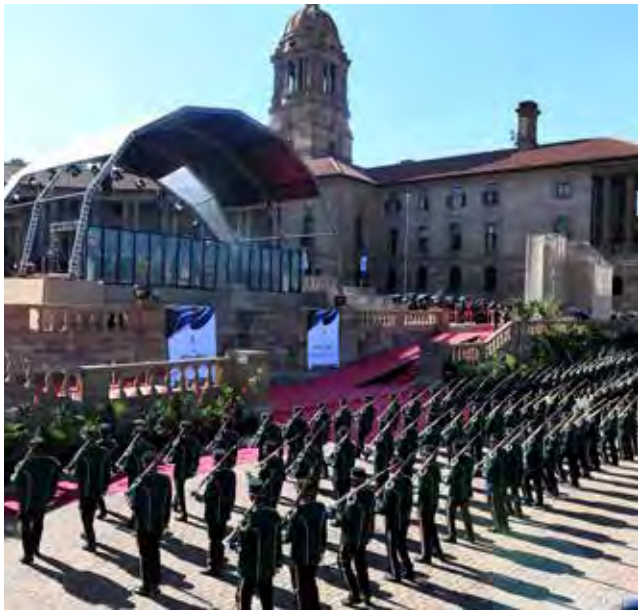
The GCIS is responsible for providing strategic leadership and coordinating government communication to ensure that the people of South Africa are informed and have access to government programmes and policies that benefit them. It facilitates the involvement of South Africans in governance, reconstruction and development, nation building and reconciliation.

The NDP emphasises the need to unite all South Africans around a common goal, ensure citizens are active in their own development, and build a capable and developmental state. This is given expression by Priority 6 (building a capable, ethical and developmental state) of government's 2019-2024 MTSF, with which the work of the GCIS is aligned.

The GCIS:

- provides professional services;
- sets and influences adherence to standards for an effective government communication system;
- drives coherent government messaging; and
- proactively communicates with the public about government policies, plans, programmes and achievements.

The Director-General (DG) of the GCIS is also the official Spokesperson for government. He/she chairs the GCIS Executive Committee – a strategising body that integrates, coordinates and rationalises the work of the department and government communication. To expand its reach to more



South Africans, the GCIS aims to harness and coordinate various communication structures across the government communication system over the medium term.

Essential to doing this economically is joint planning, the sharing of resources and the integration of efforts among government departments. *Vuk'uzenzele* newspaper, which is distributed digitally countrywide, is the only national publication focused on government's key priorities, with an emphasis on service delivery programmes and opportunities created by government.

Over the period ahead, the department will focus on providing and facilitating strategic government communication, coordinating communication across government, and facilitating active citizen participation. The department has a total budget of R2.3 billion, increasing at an average annual rate of 2,6%, from R743.5 million in 2023/24 to R802.8 million in 2026/27. As the department's work is mostly dependent on personnel, spending on compensation of employees accounts for an estimated 39,5% (R925.2 million) of its budget over the MTEF period, while transfers to entities account for an estimated 32,3% (R735.1 million).

Providing and facilitating strategic government communication

The department aims to meet citizens' information needs through advertising government programmes, communicating government priorities and providing civic education. This will be achieved through using various media platforms, including community radio stations, social media, television, newspapers, leaflets and flyers. Key messages and information to be disseminated on these platforms include the 2024 Presidential Inauguration, government's Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan, anti-corruption initiatives, awareness of GBVF, and civic education.

These activities have an allocation of R73.2 million over the medium term in the Content Processing and Dissemination programme. Although the *Vuk'uzenzele* newspaper has been an effective means of communicating and providing citizens with information on government's key priorities, as media consumption patterns have shifted towards digital platforms, from 2024/25, the newspaper will be produced and distributed only digitally (22 editions per year).

However, 13 200 Braille copies will still be produced at a projected cost of R1.6 million per year over the medium term. Digital distribution is expected not only to reduce costs, but also increase reach, with an emphasis on photography and audio-visual content creation. In addition, the department plans to repurpose R14 million of *Vuk'uzenzele*'s budget over the MTEF period to fund an over-the-top streaming service, which is expected to contain content previously disseminated through the newspaper, as well as other government content. This expenditure is also in the Content Processing and Dissemination programme.

The department's social media platforms will be updated regularly to ensure that they effectively share government content. The intention is to create awareness about the challenges facing the country, provide information on how government plans to mitigate them, and suggest ways in which citizens can play a part in resolving them. This will be carried out at an estimated cost of R2.9 million per year over the MTEF period in the Products and Platforms subprogramme in the Content Processing and Dissemination Branch.

Coordinating communication across government

Over the next three years, the department aims to focus on ensuring effective and coordinated communication between government departments. As such, it will provide support to all government departments in conceptualising campaigns, developing communication strategies and content, and facilitating the dissemination of information and stakeholder engagement. Support for the DDM, which aims to improve coherence among all spheres of government, as well as the 44 districts and eight metros across the country, will be reinforced in an effort to enhance service delivery.

The department's footprint at provincial and municipal levels ensures the alignment and coherence of intergovernmental communication systems, processes and messages. This is driven through the coordination of communication forums across government to harmonise the planning of communication campaigns, the alignment of government communication norms and standards, the sharing of best practices, the coherence of messaging, and engagement with domestic and international media. These activities are funded through the Intergovernmental Coordination and Stakeholder Management Branch, which is allocated R417.1 million over the medium term.

Facilitating active citizen participation

To encourage citizen participation, the GCIS aims to initiate outreach programmes such as localised community dialogues, community radio talk shows, and campaign activations in taxi ranks, shopping centres and commuter trains. A targeted 26 engagement sessions at the national level are planned with senior journalists and two engagements with government Heads of Communication, as well as forum meetings such as the Government Communicators' Forum.

Through media engagements, briefings and infographics, the department intends to keep citizens updated on energy-generation initiatives to overcome the energy crisis. This will be carried out through the Media Engagement subprogramme, spending in which accounts for an estimated 12,7% (R53.4 million) of budget in the Intergovernmental Coordination and Stakeholder Management Branch over the medium term.

ENTITIES
Brand South Africa

Brand SA was established in 2002 to manage South Africa's nation brand with the aim of improving the country's global reputation and competitiveness. The entity's primary objective is to develop and implement proactive and coordinated reputation management, communications and marketing strategies for South Africa to attract investment, trade and tourism. Globally, countries are facing unprecedented economic conditions characterised by high cost of living and inflation, energy crises and unemployment, among other things. This makes protecting South Africa's reputation even more pressing. Over the medium term, the entity will focus on implementing activities that contribute positively to shaping South Africa's image and reputation. This will be done through interventions such as assuring investors and profiling the country as an attractive and stable destination.

A nation brand encompasses all the attributes, strengths and innovations that a nation has to offer in all spheres of activity (business, arts, tourism, science and innovation, infrastructure, manufacturing and governance), and depends on much more than government activity, policy or leadership. Over the MTEF period, the entity plans to work on developing a central idea to encapsulate the country's identity and, with that, its unique selling proposition.

This entails developing messaging that shapes a positive narrative that resonates with citizens and how they see themselves. Some of these costs for this initiative will be contained using the entity's existing Play Your Part government messaging platform, through which ambassadors will be mobilised to positively influence the nation brand by sharing their inspiring stories on the entity's website.

To carry out these activities, expenditure is set to increase at an average annual rate of 0,9%, from R219.4 million in 2023/24 to R225.6 million in 2026/27. The slow growth is due to Cabinet-approved reductions amounting to R105.8 million over the medium term. Although the entity plans to contain the impact of these reductions by collaborating with institutions with similar mandates, some performance targets, such as the number of activities that promote pride, active citizenry and social cohesion, will be revised. The entity is set to receive 97,2% (R613.9 million) of its revenue over the medium term through transfers from the department. Revenue is expected to increase in line with expenditure.

Media Development and Diversity Agency (MDDA)

Over the medium term, the MDDA aims to continue providing financial and non-financial support to community and small commercial media, with an emphasis on promoting indigenous languages and contributing to community development. The agency also plans to intensify its focus on ensuring the sustainability of media projects in communities that are underserved by mainstream media.

As such, most of the agency's budget over the period ahead is directed at grant funding for 66 community broadcast projects, to help initiate new projects and strengthen existing ones; and 18 community and small commercial media print and digital projects. Funding for these projects is set to amount to R166 million over the MTEF period.

In line with the agency's plans to ensure the sustainability of community media, over the medium term, it plans to provide training in areas such as governance and social media to 120 community media projects through partnerships with stakeholders and training providers. The training will be supported by 16 media literacy initiatives that will be held across the country in areas with a strong community media presence. Related activities, including eight research projects on key developments that affect the community media sector, are expected to cost R14 million over the medium term.

Total expenditure is expected to amount to R321.5 million over the period ahead, decreasing at an average annual rate of 8,3%, from R137.8 million in 2023/24 to R106.1 million in 2026/27. This takes into account an anticipated decrease in revenue generated from contributions from traditional media funders whose businesses have been affected by the growth in digital media.

The agency is set to derive 56,6% (R181.8 million) of its revenue over the period ahead through the mainstream broadcast sector as donations deductible from the Universal Service and Access Fund levy, and 37,6% (R121 million) through transfers from the department.

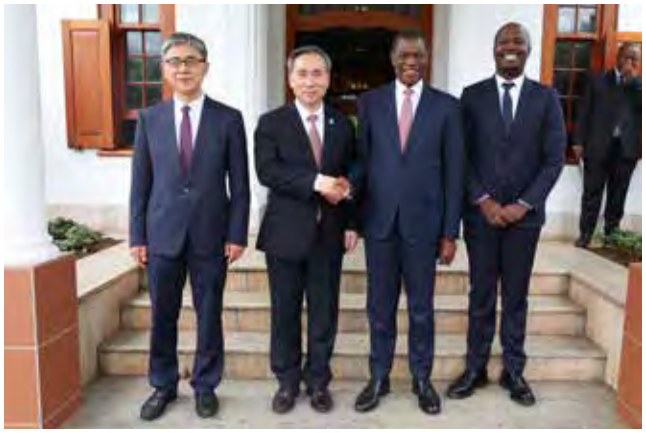
Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation

The Department of Planning Monitoring Evaluation (DPME) is mandated to:

- support the National Planning Commission;
- facilitate the implementation of policies, legislation and regulation related to the NDP with the aim of optimising the national planning system, coordinating national medium-term plans and delivery agreements, and monitoring and evaluating their implementation;
- ensure the alignment of departmental strategic and annual plans with budget allocations and government's medium-term development plan;
- monitor the performance of individual national and provincial government departments and municipalities, and facilitate targeted intervention programmes;
- monitor frontline service delivery and manage the presidential hotline, develop and implement the annual; national evaluation plan, and support the national evaluation system; and
- promote good planning, monitoring and evaluation practices in government.

Over the medium term, the department will focus on strengthening its planning, monitoring, research and evaluation programmes to support the implementation and achievement of government priorities. This will be achieved through supporting the implementation of the NDP, coordinating and strengthening the national planning system, and monitoring and evaluating the implementation and achievement of government programmes and priorities. The department mainly relies on its personnel to drive its mandate.

Accordingly, spending on compensation of employees accounts for an estimated 72,7% (R1.1 billion) of its total budget over the period ahead.



Supporting the implementation of the NDP

The department is tasked with facilitating the implementation of the NDP. This is carried out by the National Planning Commission and its secretariat, which is mandated to provide an independent and critical view of the country's developmental trajectory, monitor its implementation, and provide feedback and guidance. Over the MTEF period, the commission plans to participate in and initiate three research projects in support of the NDP's implementation while engaging all social partners and forging new partnerships. It also plans to facilitate 1 strategic engagement and partnership in each year over the medium term to develop cross-cutting views on specific issues to find sustainable and innovative solutions to obstacles that hinder the NDP's implementation.

This work will be facilitated through allocations to the National Planning Commission Secretariat subprogramme, which accounts for 51,5% (R119.4 million) of spending in the National Planning Coordination programme.

Coordinating and strengthening the national planning system

The implementation of the NDP and improving the country's development outcomes will be supported by the 2024-2029 Medium-Term Development Plan (MTDP), which translates the NDP's objectives into strategic priorities, interventions and targets for the five-year period. To this end, in 2024/25, the department plans to produce the 2024-2029 medium-term development plan, which entails research and consultation with government and nongovernmental organisations.

In improving and strengthening integrated planning across government, the department convenes various planning forums that provide strategic leadership and enhance coherence across the spheres of government. Key among these forums is the National Steering Committee On Integrated Planning, which is a platform for engagements, consultations and communication between the department, other national departments and provincial departments.

Over the period ahead, the department plans to improve the systematic spatialisation of the planning system to ensure sustained spatial transformation in the country. As such, the department will support other departments in all spheres of government in analysing spatial trends and dynamics during their planning processes to ensure targeted government interventions and investment.

The department also plans to integrate the priorities of the national spatial development framework into the 2024-2029 medium-term development plan and develop guidelines for the spatialisation of strategic plans and annual performance plans.

These activities will be facilitated through the National Planning Coordination subprogramme which accounts for a projected 45,4% (R107.6 million) of spending in the programme over the MTEF period.

Monitoring and evaluating the implementation and achievement of government programmes and priorities

The department is tasked with monitoring frontline services to improve the overall quality of government services. Over the period ahead, this entails managing the Presidential Hotline and producing two reports on frontline service delivery per year. These activities are carried out through the Outcomes Monitoring and Support subprogramme which accounts for an estimated 84,8% (R178.3 million) of spending in the Sector Monitoring Service programme over the MTEF period.

Over the period ahead, the department will support the performance management of heads of departments and political principals. These measures are complemented with the implementation of capacity development measures to improve planning, monitoring and evaluation within departments. Spending on these activities is in the Public Service Monitoring and Capacity Development subprogramme, which accounts for 95,3% (R239.9 million) of the Public Sector Monitoring and Capacity Development programme's allocation over the MTEF period.

In line with the NDP's vision to build a capable, ethical and developmental state, over the medium term, the department aims to produce 12 evaluation reports, which are intended to support evidence-based planning, monitoring and evaluation across government. This work will be done through the Evaluation, Research, Knowledge and Data Systems subprogramme, which accounts for 93,1% (R108.5 million) of the Evidence, Knowledge System programme's allocation over the period ahead.

The department will continue to develop the Centralised Data Management System at a cost of R3.2 million over the MTEF period in the Evaluation, Research, Knowledge and Data Systems subprogramme. The system is expected to provide users, including government departments, members of the public and academics, with an improved interface for accessing, retrieving, analysing and reporting on government performance information. The system is envisaged to act as a knowledge hub to enable a greater understanding of the effectiveness of government interventions and their impact on society.





SOUTH AFRICA
YEARBOOK
2024/25

Tourism

Tourism plays a vital role in our economy and offers a significant opportunity to promote social inclusion through social, spatial, and economic development. It does more than just generate revenue - tourism fosters goodwill, social cohesion, and reflects the spirit of South Africa, a nation united in its diversity.

The mandate of the Department of Tourism, as outlined in the Tourism Act, 2014 (Act 3 of 2014), is to promote the growth and development of the tourism sector; promote quality tourism products and services; provide for the effective domestic and international marketing of South Africa as a tourist destination; enhance cooperation and coordination between all spheres of government in developing and managing tourism; and promote responsible tourism for the benefit of South Africa and for the enjoyment of all its residents and foreign visitors. The National Development Plan (NDP) recognises tourism as one of the main drivers of employment, economic growth, and a demand stimulator.

The National Tourism Sector Strategy (NTSS) provides a blueprint for the sector to meet the growth targets contained in the NDP. The NDP identifies tourism as a labour-intensive sector with the potential to stimulate economic growth and transformation.

Tourism growth

According to the World Tourism Barometer released by UN Tourism in May 2025, there was an estimated increase of 12,2% of tourist arrivals globally during 2024 compared to 2023. Global tourist arrivals also increased by 4.9% during the January to March 2025 period compared to the same period in 2024. In 2024, all regions experienced an increase in tourist arrivals and generated a total of about 1,7 trillion US dollars in international receipts.

According to World Travel and Tourism Council's (WTTC) figures released in 2024, the estimated total contribution of the travel and tourism sector to the global economy for 2024 increased to $10.9 trillion US dollars, which is 10,0% of global GDP. This was an 8.5% increase compared to 2023.

Globally, the total contribution of the travel and tourism sector to employment was estimated to be about 357 million jobs in 2024 (10.6% of total employment), which was a growth of 5,3% compared to 2023.

Likewise, South Africa's tourism performance has experienced remarkable growth in 2024, with total tourist arrivals increasing by 5,1% compared to 2023. From January to December 2024, South Africa welcomed nearly 8.9 million visitors from around the world. Of these international arrivals, approximately 6.8 million came from the rest of the African continent. Across all markets except the Middle East, there was a notable rise in arrivals from Asia, Europe, America, the United Kingdom, and Africa.

The latest available figures for January to June 2025 show that South Africa welcomed nearly 5 million arrivals. This represents an increase of 11,9% compared to the same period in 2024.

In terms of the economic impact for South Africa, total foreign direct spend declined by 3.3%, to R91.6 billion in 2024 from R94.8 billion in 2023. The rand value of international tourist expenditure has surpassed the pre-pandemic benchmark of R90.7 billion. In 2023, the average length of stay for all arrivals was 13.6 days. This represents an increase of 18.8% compared to 2019, indicating a robust post-COVID recovery.

For South Africa, the WTTC has estimated that the total combined contribution of tourism to GDP increased from R577.9 billion in 2023 to an estimated R618.7 billion in 2024 (8.4% of GDP), which was an increase of 7.1%.

The WTTC further reports that for South Africa in 2024, the total travel and tourism sector contribution to employment was estimated at 1,772 million jobs in 2024 (10.5% of total employment), which was an increase of 13.1% compared to 2023.

Budget

For the 2025/26 financial year, the department's budget is R2.434 billion. The main allocations of the budget are as follows:

- R1.3 billion to the Department's main entity – South African Tourism;
- R331 million for Destination Development – the majority will go to the Working for Tourism Programme;
- R331 million for Tourism Sector Support Services, which include tourism incentive programmes like the Green Tourism Incentive Programme (GTIP), the Market Access Programme, the Tourism Grading programme, and the Tourism Transformation Fund (TFF); and
- The largest portion of the department's budget is allocated to its entity, South African Tourism, whose primary mandate is marketing of South Africa as a tourist destination to local and international tourists.

Legislation and policies

The Department of Tourism operates under the following legislation and policies:

- The Tourism Act of 2014 aims to promote the practice of responsible tourism for the benefit of the country and for the enjoyment of all its residents and foreign visitors; provide for the effective domestic and international marketing of South Africa as a tourist destination; promote quality tourism products and services; promote growth in and development of the tourism sector, and enhance cooperation and coordination between all spheres of government in developing and managing tourism. The 1996 White Paper on the Development and Promotion of Tourism in South Africa provides a framework and guidelines for tourism development and promotion in South Africa.
- The NDP is the 2030 vision for the country. It envisions rising employment, productivity and incomes as a way to ensure a long-term solution to achieve a reduction in inequality, an improvement in living standards and ensuring a dignified existence for all South Africans. The NDP recognises tourism as one of the main drivers of employment and economic growth. The Re-imagined Industrial Strategy identifies tourism as one of the seven national priority sectors. The NTSS guides the strategic development and growth on the tourism sector in pursuit of the NDP targets.
- In 2023, Cabinet approved the Tourism Sector Master Plan - a collaborative effort between the Department of Tourism and social partners such as the private sector, labour and community representatives. The Tourism Sector Master Plan guides government and all social partners on how we

should act collectively on shared goals to deliver tourism economic activity and jobs for the benefit of all South Africans. This plan seeks to assist the tourism sector in moving towards full recovery by focusing on:
  - o Protecting and rejuvenating supply; and
  - o Re-igniting tourism demand and strengthening the enabling capabilities.

The goal is to preserve jobs and livelihoods within the sector, facilitate the creation of new job opportunities, match demand and supply, and strengthen transformation in the sector, including the empowerment of women, youth, and people with disabilities. We completed and implemented the Tourism Master Plan and finalised the Tourism White Paper and Tourism Route Development Marketing Plan.

- The White Paper on the Development and Promotion of Tourism in South Africa was gazetted in October 2024. The policy envisages a sustainable, competitive and inclusive tourism sector that leverages on innovation, digital technology, addresses barriers to tourism growth, builds partnerships and responds to the social imperatives of the country. It further will enable the tourism sector's contribution to the broader economy, employment and entrepreneurship whilst ensuring that the sector becomes resilient as it better responds to the future needs of the tourism sector.
- The Department of Tourism undertook a review of all its policy documents implemented during the Sixth Administration, including the ERRP, the Tourism Master Plan, the White Paper, and the National Development Plan targets.
- The Department will review outdated strategies, including Heritage & Cultural Tourism, Domestic Growth, Rural Tourism, Service Excellence, and Climate Change.

Tourism impact

The Department of Tourism gives expression to demand-led skills development, which reflects the needs of the industry. In response to this, the Department implements various youth skills development programmes in line with the National Tourism Strategy to strategically support the tourism sector's developmental objectives. These skills programmes have enabled young people from across the country to benefit from accredited skills training and secure work opportunities in tourism establishments. Investing in young people to be a part of our vibrant tourism sector is a key priority for the department, and various skills development programmes include: Women Executive Development Programme, Culinary Skills Programmes, Tourism Graduate Recruitment Programme, Tourist Guide Training, Tourism Monitor Programme, and Recognition of Prior Learning for Chefs.

During the past financial year, the Department:

- Spent R144 million to train and deploy 2 305 Tourism Monitors.
- Has planned to train 450 unemployed youth in various skills development programmes from a committed budget of R12 million and 2 300 Tourism Monitors with a budget of R140 million through the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) funding.

Tourism sector transformation

One of the most impactful programmes by the Department of Tourism is our Tourism Incentive Programme (TIP). The Department has allocated R331 million for Tourism Sector Support Services, which include tourism incentive programmes such as the Green Tourism Incentive Programme (GTIP), the Market Access Programme, the Tourism Grading Programme, and the Tourism Transformation Fund (TFF).

This Programme was introduced as a tool to stimulate the growth, development, and transformation of the SA Tourism sector.

- The Market Access Support Programme (MASP): offers partial financial support (contribution towards the cost of exhibition space, return airfare, hotel accommodation, etc.) to qualifying small tourism enterprises that wish to participate and exhibit at selected tourism trade platforms. In the past year, we supported 266 SMMEs in participating in global trade shows through the MASP.
- Tourism Grading Support Programme (TGSP): offers discounts of 80% on grading assessment fees for accommodation and meeting venues that apply for star grading by the Tourism Grade Council of South Africa (TGCSA). During the 2024/25 financial year, the TGCSA graded 4 586 establishments across the country, against the annual target of 5 000. This milestone reflects steady progress in driving quality assurance in the tourism sector.
- Green Tourism Incentive Programme (GTIP): offers partial grant funding on the cost of retrofitting tourism facilities with energy and water efficiency systems. Tourism establishments can apply for funding support (50% to 90% up to R1 million) on the cost of installing relevant technologies and equipment recommended in the resource efficiency audit during the first stage. During the past year, GTIP retrofitted 103 properties.
- Tourism Transformation Fund (TTF): offers a combination of grant funding, debt finance, and equity contributions to facilitate capital investment in new and expansion projects in the tourism sector by black entrepreneurs. The grant funding portion (limited to 50% of the approved loan amount and capped at R5 million) is used to reduce the approved loan finance and/or equity contribution by the National Empowerment Fund where the commercial viability of the tourism project has been established.
- Tourism Equity Fund (TEF): aims to accelerate the quantitative and qualitative increase in participation by entrepreneurs, including women, youth and persons with disabilities, in the tourism sector as reflected by their contribution to growth, investment, and employment creation. The fund is split to assist 80% existing businesses and 20% new businesses.

Tourism safety

The Department of Tourism, through its Working for Tourism Programme, launched the Tourism Monitors with the purpose of enhancing tourism safety awareness at key tourism attractions and consequently reducing the number of criminal incidents that are directed against tourists, to eliminate opportunities for such crime and to integrate current tourism safety and awareness initiatives into sustainable programmes.

The department signed an MOU with the Department of

Police; facilitated the process for the development of the National Tourism Safety Strategy with three key themes namely: (i) Proactive measures, (ii) Responsive measures, and (iii) Aftercare Programmes.

A National Tourism Safety Forum, which includes the private sector, was also constituted to drive tourism safety and to position South Africa as a safe destination.

Entity

South African Tourism

The Tourism Act of 2014 mandates South African Tourism to market South Africa internationally and domestically as a preferred tourism and business events destination while monitoring and evaluating the performance of the tourism sector. In support of this, over the MTEF period, the entity will continue to prioritise support to domestic, regional and international tourism.

Over the period ahead, South African Tourism, through its National Conventions Bureau, will focus on efforts to bid to host events such as business meetings, conferences and exhibitions in rural areas and (small) towns to boost the tourism industry in six focal sectors: mining and minerals, manufacturing, travel and tourism, agriculture, finance, and wholesale and retail trade. We will support 105 MICE bid submissions, aiming to convert 25 into closed wins worth R120 million in economic impact, and host 10 events in villages, townships, and small dorpies for inclusive regional upliftment.

Ensuring that visitors enjoy their experience is a key component of the entity's work, and part of South African Tourism's revitalisation plan entails assuring that tourism establishments are of a high standard. During the 2024/25 financial year, the Tourism Grading Council of SA (TGSP) graded 4 586 establishments across the country, against the annual target of 5 000. This milestone reflects steady progress in driving quality assurance in the tourism sector.

The collaboration between the Department and SA Tourism aims to expand access to the grading system, which will be implemented. The Tourism Grading Support Programme continues to lower barriers to entry by subsidising grading costs, especially for SMMEs. In the 2024/25 financial year, the TGSP supported 2 970 establishments, encouraging active participation in the TGCSA's grading system. These efforts contribute to the standardisation of service excellence, helping South Africa remain competitive in global tourism markets.

To ensure that the grading system remains world-class and relevant to our local environment in South Africa, the Grading Criteria Review will be conducted during the 2024/25 financial year.

Role players

Africa's Travel Indaba and Meetings Africa

Africa's Travel Indaba is one of the largest tourism marketing events on the continent's calendar and one of the top three "must-visit" events of its kind on the global calendar. It showcases the widest variety of southern Africa's best tourism products and attracts international buyers and media from across the world. Meetings Africa is the continent's largest trade show for the business events industry. Meetings Africa has been lauded as the premier business event in this industry, showcasing the continent's diverse offering of services and products.

Hosting Africa's Travel Indaba and Meetings Africa 2026–2028 will be refined with a more effective business model to enhance sustainability and promote a 15% increase in exhibitor diversity.

Culture, Art, Tourism, Hospitality, and Sport Sector Education and Training Authority (CATHSSETA)

The CATHSSETA is one of the 21 sector education and training authorities established in 2001 under the Skills Development Act, 1998 (Act 97 of 1998). It was formally known as the Tourism and Hospitality Education and Training Authority. Its mandate is to facilitate skills development within its subsectors through the disbursement of grants for learning programmes and monitoring of education and training as outlined in the National Skills Development Strategy.

The CATHSSETA operates in the following subsectors:

- Arts, culture and heritage;
- Conservation;
- Gaming and lotteries; and
- Hospitality.

Tourism Grading Council of South Africa (TGCSA)

The TGCSA is South Africa's only officially recognised and globally credible quality assurance body for national tourism products. It utilises a star grading system for evaluating the quality of accommodation establishments. Of the 11 categories of establishments from which travellers can choose (hotels, lodges, bed and breakfasts, country houses, guest houses, self-catering units, caravan and camping parks, backpackers and hostelling facilities as well as meetings, exhibitions and special events venues), establishments that have been graded by one of the TGCSA's accredited grading assessors will clearly display the TGCSA star insignia. The TGCSA star plaque and certificate guarantee quality and service excellence in line with internationally standards.

Tourism B-BBEE Charter Council

The Tourism B-BBEE Charter Council's roles include:

- providing guidance on sector-specific matters affecting B-BBEE in entities within the sector;
- compiling reports on the status of B-BBEE within the sector for the Minister of Tourism and the BEE Advisory Council; and
- sharing information with sector members, approved accreditation agencies and the Minister of Tourism pertaining to B-BBEE in the sector.

Programmes and projects

Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP)

The department's programmes broadly include the Working for Tourism Programme through the EPWP, which supports greater destination competitiveness, transformation, and accelerated growth in tourism and enterprise.

R331 million has been allocated for Destination Development – the majority will go to the Working for Tourism Programme.

Tourism Incentive Programme (TIP)

The TIP was established with the aim of stimulating growth and developing the tourism sector by providing financial assistance to privately owned tourism enterprises. The Market Access Support Programme offers partial financial support towards the cost of exhibition space, return airfare, and hotel accommodation to qualifying small tourism enterprises that wish to participate and exhibit at selected tourism trade platforms.

The Tourism Grading Support Programme (TGSP)

The TGSP supports small tourism enterprises in gaining greater access to markets and encourage participation in the tourism grading system respectively.

Green Tourism Incentive Programme (GTIP)

The GTIP provides financial support to privately owned tourism enterprises and promotes responsible practices by offering solutions for the sustainable management of resources. The GTIP offers partial grant funding on the cost of retrofitting tourism facilities with energy and water efficiency equipment/systems based on the outcome of a resource efficiency audit.

Market Access Support Programme (MASP)

The MASP offers partial financial support towards the cost of exhibition space, return airfare, and hotel accommodation to qualifying small tourism enterprises that wish to participate and exhibit at selected tourism trade platforms.

Tourism Transformation Fund (TTF)

Transformation and more inclusive growth of the tourism sector remain a key priority for the Department of Tourism, in line with broader government objectives and legislation for B-BBEE. As part of its efforts to support sector transformation, the department partnered with the National Empowerment Forum (NEF) to establish a dedicated capital investment funding mechanism to encourage capital investment by majority black-owned investors in the tourism sector.

The TTF aims to use grant funding to stimulate accelerated sector transformation and more inclusive growth and is expected to give rise to a new generation of black-owned youth, women and community-based tourism enterprises that will take the sector to new heights. The fund offers a combination of debt finance from the NEF and grant funding from the department for new and expansionary tourism development projects with majority black shareholding. The TTF is managed by the NEF and is capitalised by the Department of Tourism.

National Tourism Sector Strategy (NTSS)

The vision of the NTSS is to position South Africa as one of the top 20 tourism destinations globally. The overall goal of the strategy is to drive the tourism economy, enhance visitor experiences, position South Africa as a destination of choice and sustain good governance in the industry. The key focus areas of the NTSS are arrivals, GDP and job creation.

To achieve its objectives, the NTSS focuses on domestic tourism with the intention of increasing the number of domestic trips. Regional tourism is also being targeted with South Africa looking to take advantage of untapped markets such as outbound tourists. This strategy represents the government's commitment to intelligent planning and policy formulation. It was developed over two years in close collaboration with local and provincial governments, an advisory panel of top industry minds, representatives of various professional bodies, academia, tourism marketing agencies, civil society and the broader public.

The NTSS is a document to which the entire sector is committed, and it includes coordinated and credible targets. The strategy rests on three pillars: driving the tourism economy, enhancing visitor experiences, and ensuring sustainability and good governance in the industry.

National Astro-Tourism Strategy

South Africa is the first nation globally to develop a National Astro-Tourism Strategy. This strategy has four pillars: infrastructure development, optimising astronomy-tourism streams, public-private partnerships, inclusive tourism and transformation.

It aims to enhance the performance of South Africa's astronomy tourism sector through infrastructure development and improvements, the optimal functioning of various astronomy-related streams with tourism offerings, and the boosting of transformation by enhancing the livelihoods of local communities.

Another niche tourism market is palaeontology, which saw the launch of the Kgodumodumo Dinosaur Interpretation Centre in the Golden Gate National Park in the Free State Province. The Kgodumodumo centre isn't just a museum — it's an intersection point between science, heritage, tourism, and community. Opportunities abound in utilising new centres like Kgodumodumo to drive public engagement, education, and heritage tourism in less-visited regions. The centre is designed as an interactive, immersive facility combining palaeontology, archaeology, geology, and cultural heritage.

Women in Tourism Programme

The Women in Tourism Programme is an initiative that propels and supports the development and empowerment of women in the tourism sector. Premised on the principles of respect, recognition, representation, and reward, the programme integrates women from diverse backgrounds to converge on a set of common goals and interests that will ensure their success in the sector.

The programme serves as a mechanism to elevate the status of women in tourism by providing training, empowerment and networking opportunities that facilitate their competitiveness as entrepreneurs, professionals and leaders.

National Tourism Service Excellence requirements

The national tourism service excellence requirements aim to improve and maintain service levels at all service touchpoints in the tourism value chain, as well as guide the sector in achieving the NTSS objective of positioning South

Africa as one of the top 20 global tourism destinations.

The South African Bureau of Standards developed the standards on behalf of the tourism sector and benchmarked them against international requirements. The requirements have four key focus areas: marketing, products, service delivery, and monitoring and evaluation.

National Minimum Standard for Responsible Tourism (NMSRT)

Responsible tourism is a management strategy in which the tourism sector and tourists take responsibility for protecting and conserving the natural environment, respecting and conserving local cultures and ways of life, and contributing to stronger local economies and a better quality of life for local people.

The Department of Tourism, in partnership with tourism stakeholders and the private sector, particularly accreditation agencies, developed the NMSRT. In doing so, South Africa has taken the lead on the continent by publishing a set of national minimum standards that are aligned with the International Organisation for Standardisation/International Electrotechnical Commission 17011. The NMSRT comprises 39 criteria's divided into four categories, namely sustainable operations and management, economic criteria, social and cultural criteria and environmental criteria.

Other projects

Tourism Month

Tourism Month is celebrated annually in September and provides a heightened month-long focus on the importance of the sector to the South African economy. Tourism Month features themed activities that are aligned to the UNWTO's World Tourism Day celebrations that take place annually on 27 September.

The purpose of highlighting Tourism Month is to raise awareness about domestic tourism activities planned, as well as to encourage South Africans to travel within their own country and foster cultural appreciation.

Tourism Enterprise Development Programme

The programme is part of the broader objective of the revised NTSS 2016-2026, which seeks to ensure the sustainable development and growth of tourism enterprises in a manner that facilitates inclusive participation, job creation, and contributes to the competitiveness of tourism destinations.

The programme provides training and support for emerging and existing tourism businesses to ensure their sustainability in the sector. It will also ensure constant monitoring to be conducted by the Department of Tourism's Monitoring and Evaluation, and Enterprise Development units, respectively.

Guidelines for international tourists

Every international traveller to South Africa must have a valid passport and, where necessary, a visa. The Immigration Act, 2002 (Act 13 of 2002), stipulates that all visitors to South Africa are required to have at least one blank page (both back and front) in their passport to enable the entry visa to be issued. If there is insufficient space in the passport, entry will be denied. Enquiries may be directed to South African diplomatic representatives abroad or to the Department of Home Affairs in Pretoria.

Visitors who intend travelling between South Africa and neighbouring countries are advised to apply for multiple-entry visas. Passport holders of certain countries are exempt from visa requirements. Tourists must satisfy immigration officers that they have the means to support themselves during their stay and that they have return or onward tickets. They must also have valid international health certificates. Visitors from the yellow fever belt in Africa and America, and those who travel through or disembark in these areas, must be inoculated against the disease. Malaria is endemic to parts of KwaZulu-Natal, Mpumalanga and Limpopo. It is essential to take anti-malaria precautions when visiting these areas.

Foreign tourists visiting South Africa can have their Value-Added Tax (VAT) refunded. VAT is refunded on departure at the point of exit. South Africa's transport infrastructure – airlines, railroads, luxury touring buses (coaches) and motor vehicles – is such that tourists can travel comfortably and quickly from their port of entry to any part of the country.

South African Airways, as well as a number of international airlines, operate regular scheduled flights to and from South Africa. Several domestic airlines operate in the country. There are also mainline trains to all parts of the country. The tourist accommodation industry in South Africa provides a wide spectrum of accommodation, from formal hotels to informal holiday flats and cottages, game lodges and reserves, guest houses, youth hostels and bed-and-breakfast establishments.

The Trusted Tour Operator Scheme, which officially launched in February, was designed to streamline visa applications for large tour groups from India and China, two of South Africa's fastest-growing tourism markets.

Tourist guiding

Tourist guiding is a critical component of the tourism value chain. They play a crucial role in ensuring repeat tourist visits to South Africa by creating memorable experiences and subsequently fostering a positive image of our country. This year, Mandarin training will be added to their basket of benefits.

Tourism niche markets

Domestic tourism (Sho't Left)

The Sho't Left Campaign aims to promote a culture of local holiday travel, targeting ordinary South Africans and their families who desire to see more of the country but are unsure of where to go. The Sho't Left Campaign invites South Africans to "see your world differently", even when only visiting family or friends. The campaign is aimed at young, upcoming individuals, couples and families.

Global Campaign

Our flagship "South Africa Awaits – Come Find Your Joy!" brand campaign resonated in seven key markets-Asia, Europe, the Americas and Africa-boosting website traffic by 35% and generating 1.2 million digital engagements.

Adventure tourism

The country's diverse terrain, together with an ideal climate for outdoor activities, makes it perfect for the adventure tourism niche market. Activities such as climbing, surfing, diving, hiking, horseback safaris, mountain-biking, river-

rafting and just about any other extreme activity are supported by dedicated operators. South Africa offers some of the best rock climbing and abseiling opportunities in the world. Those who prefer rivers have a choice of trips ranging from mostly scenic to Grade 5 white-water rafting. Opportunities for escorted or self-guided trips are also available. For those who want to take to the skies, there are more than 100 listed paragliding or hang-gliding launch sites, as well as numerous lesser-known sites. There are also many opportunities for helicopter rides, balloon and microlight flights, aerobatics and skydiving.

Thousands of kilometres (km) of hiking trails wind through the country in desert, forest, mountain or coastal terrains, many with adjacent mountain-biking trails. In addition, South Africa offers a wide variety of horse trails through vineyards, on beaches and in the mountains. For the more adventurous, there are also horseback safaris in game reserves. The 216-metre (m) Bloukrans Bridge, on the border of the Eastern and Western Cape, offers the highest commercial bungee jump in the world.

Business tourism

South Africa remains among the top long-haul business events destinations in the world and is the premier business events destination in Africa. The government recognises business events tourism as an area with significant growth potential and has therefore established the South Africa National Convention Bureau (SANCB) to further promote growth in the conferencing industry. The SANCB is tasked with coordinating national bidding, undertaking research and collaborating with the city and the business events industry to make a united front for destination South Africa.

Cultural tourism

Heritage and cultural tourism are the fastest-emerging competitive niche within domestic and international tourism markets. The National Heritage and Cultural Strategy is aimed at guiding the integration of heritage and cultural resources with mainstream tourism. It aims to stimulate sustainable livelihoods through heritage and cultural tourism products, while also diversifying the sector and raising awareness of heritage and cultural resources. South Africa's diversity is reflected in its cultural tourism, with many destinations commemorating the past. These range from the ancient nomadic San culture to European settlement, apartheid rule and the Struggle for political freedom.

Medical tourism

South Africa has emerged as a medical tourism destination of choice for travellers from other African countries as well as further afield, and the industry is proving to have extensive growth potential. Most medical tourists come to South Africa for cosmetic surgery, but the country's skilled surgeons can also perform organ transplants, cardiac, orthopaedic and obesity surgery and dentistry.

Nature-based tourism

South Africa's fauna and flora, and varied landscapes, have enormous recreational value and attract several million tourists each year. Protected natural areas serve not only to maintain biodiversity, but sustainable visitor access to these areas also adds economic, recreational, and aesthetic value to what is being conserved within their borders. It also helps to preserve a wealth of traditional indigenous knowledge related to biodiversity, which is in itself a tourism resource.

South Africa has 20 national parks as well as numerous private game farms and nature reserves. Four of the country's United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) world heritage sites are natural sites, while one is a mixed cultural/natural site. These are the Cape Floral Region, the iSimangaliso Wetland Park, the Vredefort Dome, Barberton Makhonjwa Mountains and the uKhahlamba Drakensberg Park. South Africa's popularity as an Avi tourism destination is due to the large number of birds, endemic species and major bird habitats. Birdlife South Africa, the country's national birding organisation, has more than 5 000 members and in more than 40 bird clubs nationwide.

Rural tourism

The Department of Tourism plays a vital role in ensuring that the benefits of tourism extend beyond large cities and major attractions to reach local communities, especially those in rural areas, villages, small towns, and township economies. It is therefore actively working to develop tourism in villages, townships, and small dorpies (VTSDs) in South Africa, aiming to promote inclusive regional upliftment and economic growth.

Culture and heritage products are the fastest emerging competitive niche offerings in the domestic and international markets. Sustainable development will be achieved if the people, whose land, culture and natural resources are used for tourism, benefit from such use in a meaningful way.

Sports tourism

More than 10% of foreign tourists come to South Africa to watch or participate in sports events, with spectators accounting for 60% to 80% of these arrivals. The world-class sporting events on South Africa's annual calendar include the:

- Annual Cape Argus Cycle Race, which caters to people riding and pushing their bikes over a 10-km course;
- Midmar Mile in KwaZulu-Natal, which attracts open-water swimmers annually, and the Comrades Marathon; and
- Sports and Events Tourism Exchange, the only event of its kind in Southern Africa and provides a platform that brings together businesses from the sports, events and tourism industries.

Township tourism

Township tours have the potential to present South Africa's culture and heritage, and the Department of Tourism plans to develop packages to achieve that goal. The government wants to capitalise on job creation opportunities in this sector.

Wine tourism

Wine tourism is growing rapidly worldwide and plays a particularly important role in South Africa, thanks to its centuries-old reputation for producing high-quality wine. South Africa's wine tourism has been rated among the best developed in the world. The country's vineyards are mostly situated in the Western Cape near the coast. All

South African wine routes fall under the auspices of the Wine of Origin Scheme. Stylistically, South African wines fit somewhere between Old World and New World.

Regional tourism

Western Cape

The Western Cape is situated at the southernmost tip of Africa. The province's unmatched natural beauty, famous hospitality, cultural diversity, excellent wine and rich cuisine make it one of the world's greatest tourist attractions. The tourism industry in the province has grown faster and created more jobs than any other province.

Cape Metropole

Tourism in the city of Cape Town, which lies at the foot of the magnificent Table Mountain, centres on the V&A Waterfront. A working harbour, the V&A Waterfront offers everything from upmarket shopping malls, arts and craft markets, and a variety of restaurants to theatres, live music and museums. Table Mountain, which forms part of the Table Mountain National Park, is one of the New Seven Wonders of Nature. A modern cableway takes visitors to the top of the mountain, providing spectacular views.

Other major attractions in the city include the Bo-Kaap Museum, the Castle of Good Hope, the Company's Garden, the District Six Museum, flea markets, the Grand Parade, the Houses of Parliament, the South African Cultural History Museum and the South African National Gallery. The Gold of Africa Museum, established by AngloGold Ashanti, houses a celebrated collection of more than 350 gold artefacts. Air flips and trips are available, as are many boat and yacht trips from Table Bay Harbour. There are also trips to Robben Island (proclaimed a world heritage site and also the place where former President Nelson Mandela was imprisoned for 18 of his 27 years in prison).

The Nelson Mandela Gateway to Robben Island is in the Clock Tower Precinct at the V&A Waterfront. The gateway houses interactive multimedia exhibitions, an auditorium, boardrooms, the Robben Island Museum and a restaurant. Jazz is big in Cape Town. From traditional blues to progressive jazz and African-influenced jazz, every taste is catered to at a variety of restaurants, jazz cafés, cigar bars, pubs, and wine farms. The top jazz event in the Western Cape is the annual Cape Town International Jazz Festival.

The South African Rugby Museum in Newlands traces the history of the sport back to 1891. The Rhodes Memorial in Rondebosch on the slopes of Table Mountain was built from granite from the mountain as a tribute to the memory of Cecil John Rhodes, Prime Minister of the Cape from 1890 to 1896. The University of Cape Town is worth a visit for its historic Middle Campus and many buildings designed by Sir Herbert Baker. Cape Point, part of the Table Mountain National Park, offers many drives, walks, picnic spots and a licensed restaurant. Care has been taken to protect the environmental integrity of this 22 100 hectares (ha) reserve of indigenous flora and fauna. Simon's Town's naval atmosphere and Historic Mile are major attractions in the area.

A statue of the famous dog and sailors' friend, Able Seaman Just Nuisance, stands at Jubilee Square. Hout Bay is renowned for its colourful working harbour. Seafood outlets, round-the-bay trips to the nearby seal colony, shell and gift shops, and a famous harbour-front emporium attract many visitors. Duiker Island is a seal and seabird sanctuary. The World of Birds Wildlife Sanctuary is one of the largest bird parks in the world and houses some 3 000 birds of 400 different species.

Big Bay in Bloubergstrand is a surfers' paradise and hosts an international windsurfing event. Rietvlei Nature Reserve is a unique wetland area with over 110 bird species, including pelicans and flamingos. Canal Walk in the suburb of Century City is one of the largest shopping centres in Africa, with close to 400 shops, and is home to the largest cinema complex in South Africa. New Year's in Cape Town is a festive affair, when the Cape minstrels take to the streets with their upbeat music and fancy costumes. The Monkey Town Primate Centre is home to over 200 individual primates and is located east of Somerset West on the N2. Strawberry-picking in Cape Town on the Mooiberge Strawberry Farm is available in season, which begins in November.

Cape Winelands

The Cape Winelands feature dramatic mountains, rolling farmlands and peaceful vineyards. They are home to Route 62 – the world's longest wine route. The Stellenbosch Wine Route comprises over 100 wine estates, most of which offer cellar tours. Stellenbosch is the oldest town in South Africa. The town is a gracious blend of old Cape Dutch, Georgian and Victorian architecture. Dorp Street features one of the longest rows of historic buildings in the country.

The Stellenbosch Village Museum comprises four homesteads and gardens, dating from the late 17th to the mid-19th centuries. The Stellenbosch Toy and Miniature Museum house a collection of 1:12 scale miniatures such as room boxes, miniature houses, antique dolls, cars and cuddly toys. The Spier Summer Arts Festival livens up summer nights from November to March at the Spier Wine Estate near Stellenbosch. Supervised pony and cart rides for children are available on the lawns of the Spier Estate.

There is also a horse-carriage tour and an equestrian centre for older children. The Freedom Monument at Pniel commemorates the freed slaves who were the first settlers at the mission station, established in 1843. Franschhoek has become known as the "Gourmet Capital" of the Cape. The Huguenot Monument was built in 1944 to commemorate the arrival in 1688 of the Huguenots, who were predominantly French. In April, the region hosts the South African Cheese Festival each year. Visitors can also enjoy various hiking trails and historical walks, as well as the Vignerons de Franschhoek Wine Route. There is also an annual book/literary festival in Franschhoek.

Butterfly World, one of the more unique attractions of the Western Cape winelands, consists of a tropical garden in a 1 000 m2 greenhouse. The Giraffe House Wildlife Awareness Centre spans 15 ha and focuses primarily on African wildlife. Giraffe House provides a place for people to enjoy a picnic in the fresh air, while experiencing and learning about animals and conservation. The Drakenstein Lion Park was established as a sanctuary for lions born in captivity. The Jonkershoek Nature Reserve, which includes the smaller Assegaaibosch Nature Reserve, is near Stellenbosch, comprising the Jonkershoek Mountains and portions of the upper Jonkershoek Valley.

The reserve stretches over 9 800 ha, and its rugged terrain is ideal for hiking. Assegaaibosch is much smaller and is suitable for shorter walks and picnics. At Le Bonheur Estate, visitors can experience guided croc-pond tours, which lead across open dams via rampways. Over 1 000 crocodiles are housed in these dams. Visitors can touch a baby crocodile and, during the summer months, witness them being fed. Paarl is famous for its Cape Dutch and Victorian architectural treasures found along a 1-km stretch of the main street.

The area's fynbos supports many south-western Cape endemics, such as the Cape sugarbird and orange-breasted sunbird. The Afrikaans Language Monument is on the slopes of Paarl Mountain, while the Afrikaanse Taalmuseum (Language Museum) is in the centre of the town. The town of Wellington lies in a picturesque valley, with the majestic Hawequa Mountains on its eastern border. Wellington is also the home of South Africa's dried-fruit industry.

Experience life as the pioneers did in years gone by at the Kleinplasie Living Museum. The KWV Brandy Cellar, the largest of its kind in the world, offers cellar tours and brandy tastings. The Hex River Valley is the largest producer of table grapes in southern Africa. Visitors can pick their own grapes at harvest time and sample the variety of export-quality produce.

The well-known Hex River 4x4 trail and the ochre San rock art trail is a must for nature lovers. De Doorns lies in the heart of the Hex River Valley. Bonnievale, on the Breede River, features several cheese factories. For the adventurous outdoor enthusiast, there are canoe trips, as well as birdwatching and riverboating. Surrounded by vineyards, orchards, and roses, Robertson is known as "The Valley of Wine and Roses".

It is known for its connoisseur-quality wines and its thoroughbred horses. Renowned for its muscadel wines, Montagu is the gateway to the Little Karoo. Relax in the healing waters of the Avalon Springs or visit the Montagu Museum, which houses, among other things, original cartoons and books by well-known cartoonist Thomas Ochse Honiball. The picturesque village of Gouda is known for the Parrotts Den pub, a living museum in the Gouda Hotel.

McGregor has a variety of charming, thatched cottages and well-preserved Victorian houses, making it one of the best-preserved examples of mid-19th-century architecture in the Western Cape. Prince Alfred Hamlet is the gateway to the Gydo Pass, known for its scenic views. This quaint village is situated in an important area for deciduous fruit farming. Hidden amid vineyards and wine estates lies Rawsonville, known for its award-winning wines. Tourists can enjoy an afternoon drive along the beautiful Slanghoek Valley with its lush vineyards and panoramic views or relax in the mineral springs at Goudini Spa.

Garden Route

The Garden Route spans approximately 200 km of the southern coast, encompassing a stretch of coastline that includes Mossel Bay, George, Wilderness, Sedgefield, Knysna, Plettenberg Bay, and Nature's Valley – each with its own unique charm and attractions. Famed for its lush greenery and the vast Tsitsikamma Forest, the Garden Route is the most biodiverse region in the world. The Garden Route features the Pont at Malgas, which is one of the two remaining points in the country, ferrying vehicles and livestock across the Breede River.

The Grootvadersbosch Nature Reserve outside Heidelberg comprises the popular Bushbuck Trail, a wilderness trail and two mountain-biking trails. Riversdale is one of South Africa's most important fynbos export areas. Other attractions include the Julius Gordon Africana Museum. At the historical Strandveld Architectural Heritage Site at Still Bay, visitors can watch tame eels being fed. Ancient fish traps can be seen at Morris Point and the harbour. At the aloe factories in Albertinia, aloe juice is extracted for use in medicine and high-quality skincare products. Nearby, bungee-jumping at the Gouritz River Gorge, hiking, mountain-biking and angling are popular pastimes.

The Point in Mossel Bay is not only popular among surfers, but its natural pool formed by rock is also a favourite swimming spot at low tide. The Saint Blaize trail starts here and is the ideal place from which to watch the whales and dolphins at play in season. The harbour at Mossel Bay is one of the most modern commercial and recreational harbours on the southern coastline of the Western Cape. Other attractions include the Attakwaskloof Pass, Anglo-Boer War blockhouses, and the Bartolomeu Dias complex.

Great Brak River offers a historic village with many opportunities for whale watching and dolphin watching along the extensive coast. The Slave Tree in George, located just outside the Old Library, was planted in 1811, when George was laid out. It is known to be the biggest English oak in the southern hemisphere. George is popular among golfers and is home to the renowned Fancourt Country Club and Golf Estate, as well as various other acclaimed golf courses.

Visitors can board the Power Van at the Outeniqua Transport Museum and enjoy a glimpse of the Garden Route Botanical Garden from this rail bus. The Big Tree at Woodville, an Outeniqua yellowwood, is estimated to be around 850 years old. It is located about 40 km outside of George in the direction of Knysna.

The George Airport, Outeniqua Pass, railway line and the N2 offer convenient access to this region, making George the ideal hub from which to explore the Garden Route and Little Karoo. Victoria Bay and Wilderness are popular for their unspoilt beaches. Wilderness is the western gateway to the southern Cape lakes area. It is a nature lover's paradise, best known for its beaches, lakes, placid lagoon and lush indigenous forests. The Langvlei and Rondevlei bird sanctuaries in the Wilderness National Park, which hosts over 230 different bird species, is popular among birdwatchers.

Sedgefield borders Swartvlei Lagoon, the largest natural inland saltwater lake in South Africa. Activities include beach horse riding, hiking, angling and birdwatching. Knysna nestles on the banks of an estuary, guarded by The Heads (two huge sandstone cliffs) and surrounded by indigenous forests, tranquil lakes and golden beaches. This natural wonderland is home to the largest and smallest of creatures, from the Knysna seahorse to the Knysna elephant, rare delicate butterflies and the endemic Knysna loerie, a colourful forest bird.

The abundant fynbos and forest settings host over 200 species. Knysna is also famous for its delectable homegrown oysters, enjoyed with locally brewed beer in quaint pubs and restaurants. The Knysna Oyster Festival, a celebration of the

good life, has established itself as one of the most popular annual events in the Western Cape. An eclectic mix of art galleries presents the diversity of talent in the area. There are also lagoon cruises, forest hikes, golf and adventure sports on offer. Plettenberg Bay is adventure country, offering boat-based whale watching, blackwater tubing, hiking, as well as forest and cycling trails. The Keurbooms River Nature Reserve at Plettenberg Bay offers a canoeing trail, while the Robberg Nature Reserve is a treasure trove of land, marine, geological and archaeological wealth.

Little Karoo

The Little Karoo's fascinating landscape is fashioned almost entirely by water. Its vegetation ranges from lush greenery in the fertile river valleys to short, rugged Karoo plants in the veld. Gorges feature rivers that cut through towering mountains, while breathtakingly steep passes cross imposing terrain. The region is also home to the world's largest bird – the ostrich.

The Little Karoo is rich in culture and history. Oudtshoorn, the world's ostrich-feather capital, is the region's main town. The annual Klein-Karoo Nasionale Kunstefees (National Arts Festival) is held in the town. Some 29 km from Oudtshoorn lie the Cango Caves, a series of subterranean limestone caverns. Bearing evidence of early San habitation, the cave features magnificent dripstone formations.

Amalienstein and Zoar are historic mission stations midway between Ladismith and Calitzdorp. Visitors can take a donkey-cart or hiking trail through orchards and vineyards, while the Seweweekspoort is ideal for mountain biking, hiking, and protea and fynbos enthusiasts. Calitzdorp has four wine estates, three of which are open to the public. The spring water of the Calitzdorp Spa is rich in minerals and reputed to have medicinal properties. The Gamka Mountain Reserve is home to the rare and endangered Cape mountain zebra. Excellent wines and port are produced in the Calitzdorp and De Rust areas. The Swartberg Nature Reserve and Pass, with its gravel roads, is also worth a visit.

De Rust lies at the southern entrance to Meiringspoort. The Meiringspoort Gorge extends 20 km through the Swartberg Mountain Range. Halfway through is a beautiful 69-m waterfall. Wine farms in the area are open to the public. Ladismith is home to the Towerkop Cheese Factory. There are various hiking, mountain-biking and 4x4 trails in the area, as well as the Anysberg, Little Karoo and Towerkop nature reserves. Uniondale, on the main route between George and Graaff-Reinet, features the largest water wheel in the country, the Old Water Mill.

Uniondale Poort is a scenic drive linking Uniondale with Avontuur in the Langkloof Valley. At Vanwyksdorp, visitors can see how fynbos is dried and packed for the export market. Donkey-cart rides take visitors to Anglo-Boer/South African War grave sites.

Central Karoo

The Central Karoo, a fascinating semi-desert area, lies in the heart of one of the world's most unique and interesting arid zones. This ancient, fossil-rich land is five times the size of Great Britain. Here, visitors will find the Earth's largest variety of succulents. Beaufort West, the oldest town in the Central Karoo, is often referred to as the "Oasis of the Karoo".

The local museum displays awards presented to heart-transplant pioneer, Professor Chris Barnard, a son of this town. A township route introduces visitors to the Xhosa culture in the area. The Karoo National Park, on the town's doorstep, is home to a variety of game, as well as the highly endangered riverine rabbit. Matjiesfontein, a national monument, offers tourists a peek into yesteryear and the opportunity to overnight in Victorian splendour.

The village is home to a transport museum and the Marie Rawdon Museum. Experience the vastness of the Great Karoo in Murraysburg, an ecotourist and hunter's paradise. Laingsburg, a tiny village that was devastated by floods about a century after it was established, was rebuilt afterwards. It is the ideal place to study the region's geology. Prince Albert is a well-preserved town at the foot of the Swartberg Mountains. It is the ideal place to sample Karoo cuisine, see examples of local architecture dating back to the early 1800s and enjoy several scenic drives.

The Fransie Pienaar Museum introduces visitors to the cultural history of the area. It features a fossil room and an exhibit showcasing the gold rush in this area during the 19th century. The museum has a licence to distil and sell "witblits" (literally white lightning, also known as "firewater" in the local parlance). Prince Albert is the closest town by road to Gamkaskloof. The Hell, a little valley in the heart of the Swartberg Mountains, was the home of one of the world's most isolated communities for almost 150 years. Gamkaskloof is a nature reserve and national monument managed by Cape Nature Conservation. It has overnight facilities and can be accessed by a 57-km long (but two-hour drive) winding road which starts at the peak of the Swartberg Pass.

West Coast

The West Coast is a region of outstanding beauty and contrast. The coast's scenic beauty is matched only by culinary experiences of mussels, oysters, calamari, crayfish and abalone in season, or linefish pulled from the Benguela Current's cold waters. In April every year, Lambert's Bay has the Crayfish and Cultural Festival. The area is not only a birder's paradise, but every year migrating whales visit the coastal waters from July. Vredenburg, the business centre of the area, has a popular golf course with a bird hide. Lambert's Bay is a traditional fishing village, with Bird Island as a popular tourist attraction. It is a breeding ground for African penguins, the Cape cormorant and other seabirds.

Within two months of the first good winter rains, wild flowers on the West Coast explode in a brilliant display of colour. The Swartland region is known for its wheat fields, vineyards, wineries and outdoor activities. Further north, visitors encounter the Olifants River Valley and the vast plains of the Knersvlakte with its wealth of indigenous succulent plants.

The citrus area in the Olifants River Valley is the third-largest in South Africa. The town of Darling draws visitors to its country museum and art gallery, as well as its annual wildflower and orchid shows, basket factory, and wine cellars. The entertainment venue "Evita se Perron" is situated at the old Darling Railway Station and offers top performances by South African entertainers.



Malmesbury is the biggest town in the Swartland. Major attractions include the Malmesbury Museum and the historical walkabout. The Riebeek Valley is known for its scenic beauty. The area has become a popular haven for well-known artists of various disciplines. Wines and olives can be tasted at various cellars. Elands Bay is a popular holiday resort and surfer's paradise. Khoi and San rock art can be viewed at the Elands Bay caves.

Moorreesburg and Koringberg are major wheat-distributing towns. Tourists can visit the Wheat Industry Museum, one of only three of its kind in the world. Birdwatching, hiking, 4x4 routes, clay pigeon shooting, mountain biking trails, canoeing, and waterskiing at the Misverstand Dam are popular activities. Yzerfontein is famous for its unspoilt beaches, fynbos, beautiful views and whale watching. Another major attraction is the historical lime furnaces. Langebaan, a popular holiday destination, is home to the West Coast National Park.

An internationally renowned wetland that houses about 60 000 waterbirds and waders, the park attracts thousands of visitors each year. The oldest anatomically modern fossilised human footprints were also discovered here. The Langebaan Lagoon forms part of the park and is zoned for specific activities. The Postberg section of the park, across the lagoon, is famous for its wild flowers that bloom mainly during August and September. Cape Columbine at Paternoster is the last manned lighthouse build on the South African coast. The Columbine Nature Reserve is home to a variety of seabird species. Saldanha is a water sport enthusiast's paradise. Its attractions include Doc's Cave, a landmark on the scenic breakwater drive, and the Hoedjieskoppie Nature Reserve. There are various hiking trails in the SAS Saldanha Nature Reserve.

St Helena Bay is best known for the Vasco Da Gama Monument and Museum. Visitors can enjoy fishing (snoek in season), hiking as well as whale watching and birdwatching. Piketberg offers arts and crafts, diverse fauna and flora, a rich wine culture, and a range of recreational activities.

The Goedverwacht and Wittewater Moravian mission stations are close to the town. Porterville is famous for its Disa Route (best in January and February). The Groot Winterhoek Mountain Peak in the Groot Winterhoek Wilderness Area is the second highest in the Western Cape. The Dasklip Pass is popular with hang-gliders. At Velddrif/ Laaiplek, visitors can indulge in bokkems (a West Coast salted-fish delicacy) at factories along the Berg River. Tourists can also visit the salt-processing factory and the West Coast Art Gallery in town.

The wine route from Citrusdal to Lutzville produces a selection of internationally acclaimed wines. Citrusdal is famous for its citrus products and wines. The Citrusdal Museum depicts the pioneering days of the early colonists. The Goede Hoop Citrus Cooperative is the largest single packing facility in South Africa. World-renowned Rooibos tea is also produced here.

The annual Citrusdal Outdoor Calabash features 4x4 outings, lectures and visits to rock-art sites and an arts and crafts market. Annually, scores of skydiving enthusiasts visit Citrusdal for a skydiving "boogie" that lasts several days. The oldest orange tree in the country, calculated to be more than 250-years-old, grows in the Citrusdal Valley. The Sandveldhuisie is an example of a typical Sandveld dwelling. The Cederberg Wilderness Area features the elephant's foot plant, the rare snow protea and some of the best examples of San rock art in the Western Cape.

Visitors to Clanwilliam can visit the Rooibos and Velskoen factories as well as the grave of the well-known South African poet Louis Leipoldt. Various historical buildings can also be viewed. The Clanwilliam and Bulshoek dams are popular among water sport enthusiasts. Wuppertal, at the foot of the Cederberg mountains, features the oldest Rhenish Mission Station. Proceeds from the 4x4 trails in the area fund the creation of new hiking trails and the construction of additional overnight huts and guest houses.

The town, which is well-known for its Rooibos and Buchu production, has added one more attraction to its tourism offerings – the Cederberg Donkey Cart Route. The project entails a three-day tour through the Cederberg Mountain area and Heuningvlei, with accommodation facilities for overnight visitors. Vredendal is the centre of the Lower Olifants River Valley.

Major attractions include marble processing and manufacturing, industrial mines (dolomite and limestone), the KWV Grape Juice Concentrate Plant and Distillery, and the South African Dried Fruit Cooperative. The town is also home to the Vredendal Wine Cellar, the largest cooperative wine cellar in the southern hemisphere. The picturesque town of Doringbaai with its attractive lighthouse is well known for its seafood.

Strandfontein, located approximately 8 km north of Doringbaai, is primarily a holiday and retirement resort offering a panoramic view of the ocean. Klawer was named after the wild clover that grows in the area. During the flower season, the area is a symphony of colour. The Doring River offers hiking trails and opportunities for river rafting. Lutzville and Koekenaap are synonymous with wine and flowers in season.

Visitors can also view the Sishen-Saldanha Railway Bridge. Where the railway line spans the Olifants River, it is divided into 23 sections, each 45 m long. The 14 100-tonne deck was pushed into position over teflon sheets with hydraulic jacks from the bridgehead. It is the longest bridge in the world built using this method. Vanrhynsdorp houses the largest succulent nursery in South Africa. The Latsky Radio Museum houses a collection of old valve radios, some dating back to 1924. The Troe Troe and Rietpoort mission stations are a must-see for history enthusiasts.

Overberg

In the most southerly region of Africa east of Cape Town, lies the Overberg. The Hangklip-Kleinmond area comprises Kleinmond, Betty's Bay, Pringle Bay and Rooi Els. It is a popular holiday region, ideal for whale watching, and includes the Kleinmond Coastal Nature Reserve and the Harold Porter Botanical Garden. The Penguin Reserve at Stoney Point, Betty's Bay, is one of two breeding colonies of the jackass penguin of Africa. South Africa's first international biosphere reserve, the Kogelberg Biosphere Reserve, was proclaimed by the UNESCO in 1999.

It runs along the coast from Gordon's Bay to the Bot River Vlei, stretching 2 km out to sea, and inland to the Groenlandberg Mountains near Grabouw. Hermanus is a popular holiday resort and famous for the best land-based whale watching in the world. Stanford is one of the few villages in South Africa where the market square has been retained. The central core of the village has been proclaimed a national conservation area.

Award-winning wines are produced in the area. Gansbaai is known for its excellent rock and boat angling, diving, shark-cage diving and whale watching. The Danger Point Lighthouse, named as such because of the ships that have been wrecked and lives lost on this dangerous coast, is open to the public. De Kelders is the only freshwater cave on the African coast. Spectacular views of southern right whales can be enjoyed from the cliffs at De Kelders and along the coast to Pearly Beach.

Also popular are white-shark tours, diving safaris and fishing trips. Elim was founded by German missionaries in 1824, with its only inhabitants being members of the Moravian Church. Visitors are welcome to attend services. The Old Watermill (1833) has been restored and declared a national monument. Popular sites in Napier include the Militaria Museum and Rose Boats and Toy Museum. The Shipwreck Museum in Bredasdorp, founded in 1975, specialises in shipwrecks found along the South African coastline. The town also has the Audrey Blignault Museum. De Mond Nature Reserve is home to some rare bird species, including the Damara tern and giant tern.

The Geelkop Nature Reserve derives its name from the mass of yellow flowering plants that cover the hill during spring. The lighthouse at L'Agulhas, which forms part of the Agulhas National Park, is the country's second-oldest working lighthouse. The Agulhas National Park is a ruggedly beautiful coastal plain of 20 959 ha. At Cape Agulhas, the southernmost tip of the continent, the waters cleave into the Indian and Atlantic oceans. The wrecks of some 130-seafaring craft yachts, Spanish galleons, Dutch East Indiamen, the legendary Birkenhead, and even modern-day fishing trawlers, have found a watery grave around the notorious Cape of Storms.

Struisbaai has the longest white coastline in the southern hemisphere. Arniston was named Waenhuiskrans (coach-house cliff) by the local fishers in honour of the huge sea cave capable of housing several oxwagons. For outsiders, it was named after the Arniston, a ship wrecked there in 1815. The Waenhuiskrans Cave can be explored at low tide. The De Hoop Nature Reserve on the way to Swellendam includes an internationally renowned wetland and bird sanctuary. It is a winter retreat for the Southern Right whale and the Western Cape's only Cape Griffon Vulture Colony.

The red Bredasdorp lily and many species of protea and erica are found in the Heuningberg Nature Reserve. Swellendam is well-known for its youngberries and eclectic architecture. The Drostdy Museum consists of a group of buildings containing a huge selection of period furniture. The Bontebok National Park, about 7 km from Swellendam, provides sanctuary to the threatened bontebok and other species. Known for its world class wine, Barrydale offers the visitor fruit and fresh air in abundance. Situated on the N2, about 160 km from Cape Town, Riviersonderend offers beautiful mountain and river scenery, a nine-hole golf course and sightings of the blue crane.

Caledon is famous for its natural mineral waters, hot springs and wildflower shows. Southern Associated Maltsters is the only malt producer for the South African lager beer industry and the largest in the southern hemisphere. Genadendal is the oldest Moravian village in Africa, with church buildings and a school dating back to 1738. The Genadendal Mission and Museum complex documents the first mission station in South Africa. Villiersdorp houses the Dagbreek Museum that dates to 1845 and was declared a monument in1994.

The historical home, Oude Radyn, is possibly the only building in the Western Cape to have Batavian wooden gutters and down pipes. The Theewaterskloof Dam, outside Villiersdorp, is the seventh largest dam in the country. The Villiersdorp Wild Flower Garden and Nature Reserve has an indigenous herb garden and a reference library.

The Grabouw/Elgin district produces about 60% of South Africa's total apple exports and fine wines. The valley is also renowned for cultivating fresh chrysanthemums, roses and proteas. The Elgin Apple Museum is one of only two in the world. Sir Lowry's Pass offers spectacular views of False Bay from Gordon's Bay to Cape Point.

Northern Cape

Characterised by its vast expanses of space and silence, warm sunny climate, friendly people and hospitality, the Northern Cape is a province with a rich culture heritage. Home to the Square Kilometre Array (SKA) telescope, this area gives impetus to the launch of the Astro-Tourism Strategy.

Diamond fields

The Big Hole in Kimberley is the largest hand-dug excavation in the world. In 1871, diamonds were discovered at the site and mined manually by prospectors. The Kimberley Tram Service dates to the early 20th century and continues to transport passengers from City Hall to the Mine Museum. Underground mine tours are a big attraction, as are the famous ghost tours, during which many historical buildings are seen from a different perspective.

Hand and mechanical diamond-digging by private diggers can be viewed by appointment. The McGregor Museum houses invaluable collections of the archaeological finds in the area, as well as San artworks. The house where Sol Plaatje (African National Congress founding member and human rights activist) lived in Kimberley has a library of Plaatje's and other black South African writers' works, and several displays, including a portrayal of black involvement in the Anglo-Boer/South African War. The Pioneers of Aviation Museum, located near Kimberley Airport, features a replica of the Compton-Paterson biplane, which was used

for pilot training by the flying school operated by the Paterson Aviation Syndicate at Alexandersfontein. A township tour of Galeshewe provides a fresh perspective on South Africa's socio-historical realities.

The Pan African Congress founder, Robert Sobukwe, lived there. The Magersfontein Battlefield, located outside Kimberley, features its original trenches and other defences intact, marking the site of the Boers' crushing defeat of the British during the Siege of Kimberley. A cultural centre at Wildebeestkuil outside Kimberley features !Xun and Khwe artwork for sale and a tour of rock engravings by these indigenous people. Barkley West attracts many water sports enthusiasts and anglers. Tucked along the Vaal River near Barkley West lies the Vaalbos National Park.

The park is not only home to large raptors, but also a breeding centre for endangered African herbivores such as rhino, roan and sable antelope and disease-free buffalo.

Kalahari

At Black Rock, visitors can view a worked-out manganese mine. Danielskuil lies at the foot of the Kuruman hills. The Tswana people occupied the area before it became home to the Griquas. Boesmansgat, on the farm Mount Carmel outside Danielskuil, is a unique natural sinkhole – the second-deepest and largest of its kind in the world. Known as the "Oasis of the Kalahari", Kuruman is blessed with a permanent and abundant source of water that flows from Gasegonyana (Setswana for "the little water calabash") – commonly called the "Eye of Kuruman" – which yields 20 million litres of water per day.

Moffat's Mission in Kuruman features the house of missionary Robert Moffat, the church he built as well as several other historic buildings. Moffat translated the Bible into Setswana – the first African language in which the Bible was made accessible. The printing press on which he printed the first 2 000 copies can still be viewed. The church he built seats 800 people and is still in use. Explorer David Livingstone married Moffat's daughter and started many famous travels from this mission station. The Wonderwerk Cave at Kuruman features extensive San paintings that may be viewed by appointment.

The Kalahari Raptor Centre cares for injured birds. Many of these majestic creatures can be seen at close quarters. The Witsand Nature Reserve, situated about 80 km south-west of Postmasburg, features a 100-m high dune of brilliant white sand. It stretches for about 9 km and is about 2 km wide.

Green Kalahari

The Roaring Sands site on the farm Doornaar, near Groblershoop, is a popular tourist attraction. Its high sand dunes, surrounded by typically red Kalahari dunes, are said to "roar" when the wind blows. Along the hand-built irrigation canals at Kakamas 11 waterwheels are still used. Kanoneiland is a settlement on the biggest island in the Orange River. At Keimoes, the Orange River flows at its widest. The Tierberg Nature Reserve offers spectacular views of the Keimoes Valley and the many islands in the Orange River.

The original irrigation canal system is still in use. The Orange River Wine Cellar's largest cellar is situated here. Kenhardt is the oldest town in the Lower Orange River area. The Quiver Tree Forest and Kokerboom Hiking Trail, consisting of between 4 000 and 5 000 quiver trees, are within easy driving distance of the town.

Upington is the commercial, educational and social centre of the Green Kalahari, owing its prosperity to agriculture and its irrigated lands along the Orange River. A camel-and-rider statue in front of the town's police station pays tribute to the "mounties", who patrolled the harsh desert territory on camels. The Kalahari Desert SpeedWeek is an annual eight-day speed festival held in a far north-western corner of South Africa. It is a motorsport event where anybody is welcome to enter, and anything with an engine is eligible. Over the years, the event has also become a meeting place for all sorts of eccentric machinery and people.

The Orange River displays its impressive power at the Augrabies Falls in the Augrabies Falls National Park. Visitors can hire canoes to ensure closer contact with the natural heritage surrounding the world's sixth-largest waterfall. The Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park comprises 38 000 m2 of land, making it one of the largest conservation areas in the world. Straddling the Green Kalahari and Botswana, the park is a two-million-ha sanctuary for various raptors, antelope, gemsbok, springbok, blue wildebeest, red hartebeest, eland, Kalahari lion, black-maned lion, brown and spotted hyena, leopard, cheetah and smaller game, including mongoose, porcupine and the endangered honey badger.

Namaqualand

The Namas are the indigenous people of Namaqualand. Their traditional Nama reed huts still abound in Leliefontein, Nourivier and Steinkopf. Namaqualand is famous for an annual show in spring when an abundance of wild flowers covers vast tracts of desert. The flowers sprout and survive for a brief period before they wilt and disappear in the heat and dry conditions just as suddenly as they appeared.

The small town of Garies is the centre for those setting out to enjoy this show of exuberance in the Kamiesberg. Since diamonds were discovered along the West Coast in 1925, Alexander Bay has become known for its mining activities. The town is no longer a high-security area and no permits are needed to enter. The Alexkor Museum paints a picture of the history of the area. The town also features the world's largest desert lichenfield, which has some 26 species.

At Hondeklip Bay, visitors can dive for crayfish and watch the local fisherfolk conduct their trade. Port Nolloth is a centre for the small-scale diamond-recovery and crayfish industries. It is the only holiday resort on the Diamond Coast. The local factory sells fish and crayfish in season. Set in a narrow valley bisecting the granite domes of the Klein Koperberge lies Springbok. South of Springbok, near Kamieskroon, lies the Skilpad Wild Flower Reserve, part of the Namaqua National Park, which captures the full grandeur of the flower season.

The 1 000 ha reserve is open only during the flower season. The Goegap Nature Reserve comprises more than 15 000 ha of typically granite, rocky hills and sandy flats. The reserve also offers a 4x4 trail, as well as several hiking and mountain-biking trails. Namaqualand is also home to the Ai-Ais Richtersveld National Park. It is managed jointly by the local Nama people and the South African National Parks.

Upper Karoo (Bo-Karoo)

Flanked by the Towerberg, Colesberg is one of the Northern Cape's most beautiful towns. The town features one of the country's last working horse mills. An Anglo-Boer/South

African War tour is also on offer. A weekend tour includes a visit to the Norval's Pont prisoner-of-war camp and cemetery. Colesberg has bred many of the country's top Merino sheep. It is also renowned for producing high-quality racehorses. De Aar is the most important railway junction in South Africa. Author Olive Schreiner lived in the town for many years.

Visitors can dine in her former house, which has been converted into a restaurant. Hanover is known for its handmade shoes and articles made mostly from sheepskin and leather. The "Star of South Africa" diamond was discovered at Hopetown. The town also features an old toll house and a block house dating from the Anglo-Boer/South African War.

At Wonderdraai, near Prieska, visitors can see the horseshoe-shaped island formed by the flow of the Orange River. It seems as if the river turns to flow uphill. Vanderkloof, built to house the people building the Vanderkloof Dam, was turned into a flourishing holiday resort. Visitors can enjoy waterskiing, boardsailing, boating and swimming, or visit the Eskom hydro-electric power station within the dam's wall. The rare riverine rabbit is found in the Victoria West Nature Reserve.

Hantam Karoo

Near Brandvlei lies Verneukpan where Sir Malcolm Campbell unsuccessfully attempted to break the world land-speed record in 1929. Carnarvon is well known for its corbelled dome-roofed houses, built of flat stones due to a lack of wood. The floors of these interesting houses were smeared and coloured with a rich red mixture of fat and oxblood and polished with smooth stone.

A few km outside Fraserburg lies the Gansfontein palaeo-surface. Discovered in 1968, it comprises several trackways of large, four-footed and five-toed mammalian reptiles. The prints are estimated to be some 190 million years old. Sutherland, birthplace of Nicolaas Petrus van Wyk Louw, well-known Afrikaans author and poet, is also known for its brilliant night skies and cold, biting winters.

The South African Astronomical Observatory's observation telescopes, including the Southern African Large Telescope, are in Sutherland. The sterboom (star tree), which blossoms in September, is found only in Sutherland. The Tankwa Karoo National Park, on the southern border of the Northern Cape, 70 km west of Sutherland, encompasses the Succulent Karoo Biome, the world's only arid hotspot, stretches 116 000 km² from the south-western Cape into southern Namibia.

The landscape offers seasonal contrasts of coloured wild flowers and stark desert, set against the backdrop of the Roggeveld Escarpment to the east, Klein Roggeveld to the south and the Cederberg to the west. Its extensive desert plateaus are ideal for viewing game such as gemsbok, Cape mountain zebra, springbuck and bustards.

Free State

The Free State lies in the heart of South Africa, with the Kingdom of Lesotho nestling in the hollow of its bean-like shape. Between the Vaal River in the north and the Orange River in the south, this rolling prairie stretches as far as the eye can see. This central region is characterised by rolling fields of wheat, sunflowers and maize, and forms the principal bread basket of South Africa.

Golden Gate

The Kgodumodumo Dinosaur Interpretation Centre was recently launched as a new attraction, fusing culture and history.

Bloemfontein

With its King's Park Rose Garden containing more than 4 000 rose bushes, the Free State's major city, Bloemfontein, has rightfully earned the nickname "City of Roses". The city also hosts an annual rose festival. The Eerste Raadsaal (First Parliament Building), built in 1849 as a school, is Bloemfontein's oldest surviving building. Still in its original condition, this historical building is used as the seat of the provincial legislature. The National Afrikaans Literary Museum and Research Centre has works by prominent Afrikaans authors.

Exhibits in the Afrikaans Music Museum and Theatre Museum (part of the centre) include old musical instruments, sheet music, costumes, photographs and furniture. The museum is notable for its wide collection of fossils, cultural-historical exhibits and archaeological displays, including the Florisbad Skull, which was discovered in the 1930s at the Florisbad Spring. The National Women's Memorial is a sandstone obelisk, 36.5 m high, which commemorates the women and children who died in concentration camps during the Anglo-Boer/South African War.

Visitors get a glimpse of life in the concentration and prisoner-of-war camps. The research library contains an extensive collection of Africana. The Old Presidency dates to 1885 and was the official residence of three presidents of the former Republic of the Orange Free State. It houses a museum depicting their respective terms of office, and is a cultural centre for art exhibitions, theatrical productions and musical events.

The Observatory Theatre in Bloemfontein's Game Reserve is a unique attraction. Naval Hill is the biggest game reserve surrounded by a city. Bloemfontein hosts the Mangaung African Cultural Festival, popularly known as the MACUFE, in September every year. The Sand du Plessis Theatre and Art Gallery at Oliewenhuis are also worth visiting.

Botshabelo (Place of Refuge), 45 km from Bloemfontein on the N8 road to Lesotho, is believed to be the largest township settlement in the Free State – and the second-largest in South Africa after Soweto. Nearby, the town of Thaba Nchu features luxury hotels and a casino, with the Maria Moroka Nature Reserve surrounding Thaba Nchu Sun and the Setlogelo Dam.

Xhariep

Bethulie used to be a London Missionary Society station. The original mission buildings still stand. The Pellissier House Museum showcases the local history. There is an Anglo-Boer/South African War concentration camp cemetery in Bethulie. The Gariep Dam, spanning more than 100 km in length and 15 km in width, is part of the Orange River Water Scheme, the largest inland expanse of water in South Africa. Between the dam and Bethulie is the Gariep Dam Nature Reserve. On the southern side of the dam lies the Oviston Nature Reserve. Philippolis, the oldest town in the Free State, was founded as a London Missionary Society station in 1824. It was the first mission station in the province.

Trompsburg is the hub of the Free State Merino sheep-

farming industry. The Tussen-die-Riviere Nature Reserve reputedly supports more game than any other sanctuary in the Free State. A fountain near Koffiefontein was a favourite resting place for transport riders in the 19th century. In June 1870, one of these transport riders picked up a diamond near the fountain. This prompted a rush, and by 1882 Koffiefontein was a booming town with four mining companies.

Thabo Mofutsanyana

Snowcapped mountains and beautiful scenery provide a backdrop to this pristine area. Clocolan is renowned for the beauty of its cherry trees in full bloom during the spring. San rock paintings and engravings are also found in the area. Clarens is often described as the "Jewel of the Free State", owing to its exceptionally beautiful scenery.

San paintings are found on farms in the area. Close by, the Highlands Route meanders along the foothills of the Maluti Mountains and follows the Lesotho border via Ladybrand and ends at Zastron in the south.

The town is known for the many arts and crafts shops, which offer the visitor a wide range of curios and original artwork. Ficksburg is known for its asparagus and cherry farms. Every November, a cherry festival is held there. The town is a gateway to the Mountain Kingdom of Lesotho. Rosendal, surrounded by the Witte Mountains, celebrated its centenary in 2011. The Golden Gate Highlands National Park, known for its impressive sandstone cliffs and rock formations, is a popular holiday destination.

The birdwatching mecca of Seekoeivlei Nature Reserve near Memel constitutes a wetland with Ramsar status and is surrounded by private game and holiday farms.

Lejweleputswa

Bethlehem, which lies on the banks of the Jordaan River, was founded by the Voortrekkers in the 1840s. The banks of the Jordaan River form part of the Pretoriuskloof Nature Reserve. This is a sanctuary for birds and small game. The museum in Miller Street depicts the history of the area. Van Reenen's Pass winds through the Drakensberg, and was originally used by migrating herds of zebra, hartebeest, blesbok and wildebeest.

The Llandaff Oratory in the nearby village of Van Reenen is believed to be the smallest Roman Catholic church in the world. At Harrismith, there are various memorials in honour of those who fought in the Anglo-Boer/South African War and World War I. Of particular interest is a memorial for the Scots Guards and Grenadier Guards. Platberg, the 2 394-m "flat mountain", is the town's landmark. The Harrismith Mountain Race, well-known race, claimed by some to be the toughest in the country, is run annually up, along and back down the mountain. Sterkfontein Dam is ideal for water sports and fishing. An open-water swimming race takes place there annually.

The Riemland Museum in Heilbron depicts the heritage and agricultural activities of the region. The QwaQwa district is a traditional home to the Basotho people. The Basotho Cultural Village in the QwaQwa Nature Reserve is a living museum where visitors can witness the Sotho traditions and lifestyle in the chief's kraal. Karakul carpets, mohair, wall hangings, copper, glassware and brass are made and sold at Phuthaditjhaba. The nearby Metsi Matsho and Fika Patso dams are renowned for trout fishing. Welkom is known for its gold mines.

It is also the only city in the country where traffic circles are used instead of traffic lights. The world's deepest wine cellar is at the St Helena Mine, which is 857 m below the Earth's surface. Bothaville is regarded as the centre of the Free State Maize Route. The Nampo Harvest Farm and Festival attracts more than 20 000 visitors each year and is the second-largest private agricultural show in the world. Bothaville also hosts the annual Food and Witblits festival, drawing visitors from all over South Africa.

The sandstone church in Kestell is possibly the most impressive of all the Eastern Free State's sandstone buildings. Winburg is the oldest town and first capital of the former Republic of the Orange Free State. The Voortrekker Museum depicts the daily routine of the trekkers. A concentration camp cemetery is situated nearby. Sasolburg was established in 1954 with the founding of Sasol, a synthetic fuel producer. Parys, situated on the banks of the Vaal River, offers tourists a tranquil river retreat. The nearby Vrederfort Dome World Heritage Site was caused by the collision of a meteorite with the Earth many years ago.

It is the only world heritage site in the Free State. It features unique fauna and flora, including 100 different plant species, more than 300 bird types and a variety of small mammals. Jukskei is the first indigenous game that has developed to international participation. The Jukskei Museum in Kroonstad has over 3 500 objects that depict the development of the game. Jagersfontein has the deepest man-made hole in the world. The Excelsior diamond of 971 carats was found in this open-cast mine in 1893. Eagles nest against the cliffs of the mine.

Eastern Cape

The main feature of the Eastern Cape is its magnificent coastline with its open sandy beaches, secluded lagoons and towering cliffs. Added to the diverse coastal experiences are more than 60 state-owned game reserves and over 30 private game farms, which collectively cover an area greater than the Kruger National Park.

Mountain region

The Amatola Mountains are famous for their scenery and history; and they stretch from Adelaide in the east to Stutterheim in the west. With its lush forests and ancient battlefields, it is an area steeped in Xhosa culture and early settler history. The dense forests of the Amatolas are a haven for the endangered Cape parrot, and were also home to the first dinosaur to be identified in South Africa, the Blinkwater Monster, a large-fossilised reptile discovered near Fort Beaufort.

Outdoor enthusiasts enjoy Cathcart where trout fishing, hiking, riding and birdwatching are among the attractions. The Amatole Hiking Trail is a well-known scenic, with a strenuous trail. The coastal city of Gqeberha (formerly Port Elizabeth) is a superb holiday destination offering a diverse mix of eco-attractions. It also hosts the annual Buoy open-water swim and the Isuzu National Sailing Week held annually in April in Algoa Bay. The Red Location Museum of the People's Struggle in New Brighton, was designed to be a monument to South Africa's Struggle against apartheid, and an integral part of community life in a township that acted as a crucible for the struggle.

Bay World has an oceanarium and snake park, and many splendid museums. Within the city there are some beautiful parks with well-landscaped gardens. These include St George's Park, which covers 73 ha and houses the famous Gqeberha Cricket Club, the oldest bowling green in South Africa; Prince Alfred's Guard Memorial; the 1882 Victorian Pearson Conservatory; and the 54-ha Settlers' Park.

Tourists can also explore the Donkin Heritage Trail, take a ride on the famous Apple Express, and hike along the site of ancient shipwrecks on the Sacramento Trail. At King William's Town, tourists can visit the Amathole Missionary Museum. The grave of the Black Consciousness activist, Steve Biko, is also in the town. Other attractions include the Greater Addo Elephant National Park and game reserves; the traditional healing village, Kaya Lendaba, birdwatching; air tours; canoeing; various mountain-biking and horse-riding trails; and organised outdoor excursions.

Wild Coast

Since Portuguese mariners first pioneered the sea route around the Cape to India, this notorious coast has claimed countless ships. Southern right and humpback whales, along with their calves, are regularly spotted from the high dunes, typically between May and November. Meanwhile, common and bottlenose dolphins are often seen close to shore. The entire region is the home of a major section of the isiXhosa-speaking southern Nguni (or Pondo) tribes. Brightly coloured examples of their beadwork, together with traditional pottery and basketry, can be bought from roadside vendors and at some trading posts.

Visitors to the rural village of Qunu can view the childhood home of former President Nelson Mandela. In Mthatha, the Nelson Mandela Museum tells the story of this great figure through a display reflecting the life and times of Mandela. Mandela received thousands of gifts from presidents, groups and ordinary people. Accepted on behalf of the people of South Africa, they are in safekeeping at the museum for the benefit and appreciation of the nation. Artefacts range from children's letters to bejewelled camel covers. Coffee Bay is popular among surfers, anglers and shell collectors.

To the south is the prominent rock formation, the Hole in the Wall. The local Xhosa people refer to this place as Izi Khaleni ("Place of Thunder"). During high tide, the waves break through the hole in such a way that the concussion can be heard throughout the valley.

East Griqualand

East Griqualand is an area of great beauty, featuring colourful, living history. Kokstad lies in the Umzimhlava River basin between Mount Currie and the Ngele Mountains. The original town hall, built in 1910, is a national monument, now serving as the local library. The former library, built in 1907, is also a national monument and houses the Kokstad Museum. The Weza State Forest runs through indigenous forests and commercial plantations.

The forest is home to several antelope species and a huge variety of birds. The southernmost portion of the Ukhahlamba Drakensberg World Heritage Site, the impressive Swartberg, Bokkiesberg, Cedarberg and Ngele mountain ranges lie in East Griqualand. Between Kokstad and excursions into its surrounding, water-filled hollows. Steam-train journeys can be undertaken between Swartberg and Creighton.

Karoo

The vast plains of the Karoo have an air of grandeur, and its many picturesque towns are steeped in history. The Owl House in Nieu- Bethesda displays the creative talent of the late Helen Martins. Statues of mermaids, wise men, camels, owls and churches create a wonderland in the garden. All the artworks were created with broken bottles, bits of mirror and cement. More than 200 houses in Graaff-Reinet have been restored to their original Victorian appearance and proclaimed national monuments. The Old Library Museum houses the Lex Bremner Fossil Collection of Karoo reptile fossils and a collection of Khoi and San art reproductions.

Urquhart House has a popular genealogical research centre. Almost 50 km south-west of Graaff-Reinet is the Kalkkop Crater, which is of major scientific importance. To the north-west of Graaff- Reinet lies the Valley of Desolation. A steep and narrow road leads into the mountains that surround the valley. The Valley of Desolation is a national monument within the Karoo Nature Reserve, and was formed millions of years ago by weathering erosion. The first evidence of the presence of dinosaurs in South Africa can be viewed at Maclear.

The Mountain Zebra National Park is a haven for the Cape mountain zebra species, which at one time inhabited most of the Cape. The park saved these animals from extinction, and their population stands at about 300. Other species found in the park include various antelope such as eland, the African wildcat, bat-eared fox, and more than 200 bird species, including the pale-winged starling, the booted eagle and the blue crane.

N6 Route

This route runs from Bloemfontein to East London. Popular attractions include the slopes of the Tiffindell Ski Resort and the trout-filled streams, as well as the many caves adorned with ancient rock art. Several historic towns can be found in the region, including Smithfield, Barkly East, Lady Grey, Elliot, Aliwal North, Burgersdorp, Queenstown and Rhodes.

Sunshine Coast

The Sunshine Coast comprises miles of beaches. Port Alfred lies at the mouth of the Kowie River. Coastal hills are home to the oribi – a small territorial buck that was recently near extinction. Inland, Makhanda (previously Grahamstown) is sometimes referred to as the "City of Saints" due to the more than 40 churches in the town. It is also known for the National Arts Festival, which is held annually. During the festival, Grahamstown is transformed into a dedicated arts venue where performers, visual artists, audiences, writers and craftspeople fuse in a celebration of creative energy.

Other attractions include various museums and historical buildings, the oldest post box in South Africa, botanical gardens, the cathedrals of St Michael and St George, nature reserves and hiking trails. Situated northeast of Makhanda, the Great Fish River Reserve consists primarily of valley bushveld habitat and is surrounded by tribal land, commercial game reserves, and farms.

The reserve has abundant wildlife such as white rhino, giraffe, waterbuck, Cape buffalo, hippo, kudu, springbok and eland. There are several historic forts and remains from the

frontier wars located in the area. East London, which forms part of the Nelson Mandela Bay Metropolitan Municipality, is South Africa's only river port city.

It was originally established as a supply port to serve the colonial British military headquarters at King William's Town. The East London Aquarium houses approximately 400 different marine and freshwater species. The museum depicts the natural environment and rich heritage of the region.

Best known for the prehistoric coelacanth, the museum also displays reconstructions of the extinct dodo of Mauritius, along with the only extant dodo egg in the world. The Baviaanskloof Wilderness Area is the largest of the inland protected areas and provides opportunities to visit fynbos-covered mountains on foot or in off-road vehicles. There is a fascinating shell collection at the Shell Museum at Kei Mouth.

Tsitsikamma

This region, stretching from Plettenberg Bay to Jeffreys Bay, is renowned for its dense forests, majestic mountains and deep river gorges. It forms the eastern end of the Garden Route. The word "tsitsikamma" is derived from the Khoekhoen words "tse-tsesa" meaning "clear", and "gami" meaning "water". South Africa's first marine park, the Tsitsikamma National Park, extends along a rocky coastline of 50 km and 3 km out to sea. Inland, adventure seekers will find deep gorges and temperate evergreen forests crisscrossed by six hiking trails, including the five-day Otter Trail. The varied wildlife includes dolphins and whales, caracal, genet, chacma baboon, dassie and mongoose.

Prominent bird species in the area are the African black oystercatcher, the orange-breasted sunbird, the Nerina trogon and the colourful Knysna loerie. A lucky few may catch a glimpse of the rare Cape clawless otter, after which the Otter Trail is named. Another popular adventure is a blackwater tubing experience on the Storms River.

Limpopo

The Limpopo landscape is made up of dramatic contrasts characterised by hot savanna plains and mist-clad mountains, age-old indigenous forests and cycads alongside modern plantations, ancient mountain fortresses and the luxury of contemporary infrastructure and modern-day facilities. Steeped in history, Limpopo celebrates a rich cultural heritage, and at many archaeological sites, the mysteries of the past and ancient peoples are still being unearthed. Much of the land, particularly in the Kruger National Park and other game and nature reserves, is unspoilt and provides sanctuary to large numbers of game.

Waterberg

The Nylsvley Nature Reserve has one of the greatest concentrations of waterfowl and bushveld birds in South Africa. More than 400 species frequent the area. The Mokopane vicinity has several nature reserves. The Arend Dieperink Museum features a fine cultural-historical collection. The Makapansgat Caves are notable for their fossils, and the caves are being developed into an archaeological site. Makapan Valley is an extension of the Cradle of Humankind World Heritage Site.

The Thabazimbi district has a large concentration of private game reserves and is one of the fastest-growing ecotourism areas in the country. The Marakele National Park is home to some rare yellowwood and cedar trees and the world's largest colony of Cape vultures. Bela Bela is known for its hot springs. There are also a number of game reserves and leisure resorts in the area. The Waterberg range is rich in indigenous trees, streams, springs, wetlands and birdlife. Cliffs known as the "Palace of The Vultures" harbour a large breeding colony of Cape vultures. Modimolle is the region's main town.

Capricorn District

The Bakone Malapa Northern Sotho Open-Air Museum, located outside Polokwane, is a traditional kraal. Men and women practise traditional skills such as making baskets, clay pots, furniture and utensils, as well as preparing hides. Polokwane is considered the premier game-hunting destination in South Africa. Polokwane offers a variety of museums and art galleries, including the Bakone Malapa Museum, the Polokwane Museum and the Hugh Exton Photographic Museum. Zion City at Moria, near Polokwane, is the headquarters of the Zion Christian Church, which attracts more than a million pilgrims every Easter.

Vhembe District

The Mapungubwe archaeological site, 80 km west of Musina, lies within the boundaries of the Mapungubwe National Park. It is one of the richest of its kind in Africa and a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Excavations in the 1930s uncovered a royal graveyard, which included several golden artefacts, including the famous gold-foil rhinoceros. The Schoemansdal Voortrekker Town and Museum, west of Makhado, is built on the site of an original Voortrekker village and depicts their lifestyle between 1848 and 1852. Also, worth visiting is the Big Tree in the Mutale Municipality, the Tshatshingo potholes, the mystical lake of Dzivhafundudzi and the holy forest and waterfalls at Phiphidi.

Mopani District

The Lekgameetse Nature Reserve in the northern foothills of the Drakensberg is part of the Cloud Mountain Biosphere. This 18 000-ha nature reserve is well known for its abundant butterflies. The Modjadji Nature Reserve, north of Tzaneen, is named after the legendary Rain Queen, Makobo Constance Modjadji, who is believed to have settled in the area early in the 16th century.

The reserve encompasses the world's largest concentration of the cycad species Encephalartos transvenosus, also known as the Modjadji cycad. The Hans Merensky Nature Reserve and Mineral Spa on the southern banks of the Great Letaba River supports a large variety of game. At the adjoining Tsonga Kraal Open-Air Museum, arts, crafts and traditional huts reflect the Tsonga lifestyle of 100 years ago.

The Kruger National Park (northern section) is home to a large number and wide variety of amphibians, reptiles and birds, as well as 147 mammal species, including the Big Five. Thulamela, in the northern part of the Kruger National Park, yielded the skeletons of two ancient royals and a multitude of artefacts, including gold bangles, beads and a double gong. On the way to the Kruger National Park, visitors can enjoy wildlife experiences at Manyeleti, home to the Big Five. Adventurers can attempt mountain-climbing at

the Mangwazi Nature Reserve, enjoy the Mapulaneng Trail at Zoeknog and the Injaka Dam at Bushbuckridge.

North-West

North-West has several cultural villages that entertain and enrich visitors. A number of game reserves have been established, including the Pilanesberg National Park, situated in the transition zone between the Kalahari and the Lowveld. Home to the Big Five, the park offers a wide variety of accommodation and is close to popular attractions such as Sun City and only a two/three-hour drive from Johannesburg. The park has an area of approximately 550 km², making it the fourth largest park in South Africa supporting more than 7 000 herd of game and 350 bird species.

Central District

The historic route of Mahikeng includes an Anglo-Boer/South African War siege site, the Molema House where Sol Plaatje lived while writing his Mafikeng Diary, and the Mahikeng Museum. The Lichtenburg Biodiversity Conservation Centre and the Botsalano Game Reserve are well worth a visit. The Groot Marico region is known as mampoer country and visitors can explore the Mampoer Route. The Kortkloof Cultural Village is dedicated to the Tswana people.

Other attractions include the Wondergat; the Bosbult Monument, which commemorates a battle fought during the Anglo-Boer/South African War; the Kaditshwene Iron Age Village Ruins; and various hiking trails. Ottosdal is in the centre of North West. It was established as a Dutch Reformed Church parish on the farm Korannafontein in 1913 and named after its owner, Gerhardus Petrus Otto. It is the only place in South Africa where the unique "wonderstone", or pyrophyllite, is found and mined. The annual agricultural show in Ottosdal is one of the oldest in the province. Trenches and cemeteries dating back to the Anglo-Boer/South African War can be found on the farms of Gestoptefontein and Driekuil.

In the Garden of Remembrance are graves of soldiers killed during the war. The Old Farmhouse built in 1910 houses a unique African collection. The Old Watermill built around 1860 is a national monument. The Ottosdal Night Race is organised in conjunction with the Diamond Marathon Club. The event consists of 42.2-km, 21.1-km and 10-km races and a 5-km fun run. San rock engravings, Stone Age implements and structures are found on farms such as Witpoort, Gestoptefontein, Driekuil and Korannafontein.

Eastern District

Hartbeespoort Dam is a popular spot for weekend outings; breakfast runs and yachting. The Hartbeespoort Reptile and Animal Park are on the banks of the dam. Cultural experiences in the area include the popular Mapoch and Gaabo Motho cultural villages as well as the Ring Wagon Inn. The Ann van Dyk Cheetah Centre (formerly the De Wildt Cheetah Breeding and Research Centre) specialises in breeding cheetah and other endangered wildlife species. Other places of interest include the Borakalalo Game Reserve, the Margaret Roberts Herb Farm, and the Phaladingwe Nature Trail.

Bophirima District

The Taung Skull Fossil Site and Blue Pools are renowned for the Taung skull found in the Buxton quarries. The Taung Skull Fossil Site is an extension of the Sterkfontein Fossil Hominid Site. This region is popular with adventure seekers – especially those who enjoy 4x4 routes and hunting farms.

Rustenburg District

The 60 000-ha Madikwe Game Reserve is home to 66 large mammal species. Over 10 000 animals of 27 major species have been reintroduced under Operation Phoenix. Hot-air balloon trips, day and night game drives and bushwalks are available. The reserve has the second-largest elephant population in South Africa and guests are assured of sighting not only the Big Five but also the elusive cheetah and endangered wild dog.

Sun City and the Palace of the Lost City are very popular tourist attractions, offering gambling, golf, extravaganza shows, water sports and an artificial beach. The region offers various hiking trails. The Heritage Route starts at the Sterkfontein Caves World Heritage Site and ends at Pilanesberg.

Southern District

The OPM Prozesky Bird Sanctuary in Potchefstroom has over 200 bird species and is situated adjacent to the Mooi River. The Oudorp Hiking Trail takes visitors through the old part of Klerksdorp, where 12 Voortrekker families settled. Other attractions in the region include the Potchefstroom Lakeside Resort, the Faan Meintjies Nature Reserve in Klerksdorp, mine tours at Orkney, the Diggers Route at Wolmaransstad, and the Bloemhof Dam Nature Reserve.

Mpumalanga

Mpumalanga – "The Place Where the Sun Rises" – epitomises every traveller's dream of the true African experience. Located in the northeastern part of South Africa, the province is bordered by Mozambique to the east and the Kingdom of Eswatini to the south and east. The climate and topography vary from cool highland grasslands at 1 600 m above sea level, through the Middleveld and escarpment, to the subtropical Lowveld towards the Kruger National Park and many private game reserves.

Scenic beauty, climate and wildlife, voted the most attractive features of South Africa, are found in abundance in this province. Attractions range from game viewing and birdwatching to scenic drives across the valleys and peaks of the vast Drakensberg escarpment, and include agritourism, industrial and adventure tourism and cultural experiences.

Historical sites and cultural villages, old wagon routes and monuments mark events and characters who passed this way in search of adventure and wealth. Ndebele bead work and wall-painting in the north-west, the arts and crafts of the Lowveld. The different traditional villages throughout the province offer a unique insight into the people's history and cultures.

Mbombela

Mbombela is the capital of Mpumalanga and the commercial and administrative hub of the Lowveld. The Mbombela Historical Trail is an hour-long walking route stretching from the Promenade Centre to the Civic Centre. The Green Heritage Hiking Trail in the Mbombela Nature Reserve is one of several walks in the reserve and one of many in the

region. Not to be missed is the Lowveld Botanical Garden, as well as the Reptile Park, the Sudwala Caves and the PR Owen Dinosaur Park.

The tranquil town of White River to the north of Mbombela is well known as an artist's haven and a gateway to the Kruger National Park. Rottcher Wineries have taken advantage of the area's prime production of oranges to make a truly unique wine, which has been a hallmark of the area for over 50 years.

Panorama

Barberton features many reminders of the early gold-rush era. Museums include Belhaven, Fernlea House and Stopforth House. The only known verdite deposits in the world are found in the rocks of the Barberton district. The annual Diggers Festival is held in September. The Blyderivierspoort Nature Reserve near Graskop is characterised by striking rock formations and a rich diversity of plants. Within the reserve, the Bourke's Luck potholes were formed by river erosion and the action of floodwater.

The Blyde River Canyon is a 26-km-long gorge carved out of the face of the escarpment, and is one of the natural wonders of Africa. The canyon is the third-largest in the world, the only green canyon, and hosts three rivers that feed the Blydepoort Dam at Swadini. God's Window provides a magnificent panoramic view across miles of densely forested mountains, the green Lowveld and the canyon. The Blyderivierspoort Hiking Trail is one of the most popular in the country. The southern section of the Kruger National Park, which is a major tourist attraction, falls within this region. Kaapsehoop is a historical village known for the wild horses that frequent the district.

Blue swallows are regular visitors from September to April. The Lydenburg Museum is in the Gustav Klingbiel Reserve, which is the site of archaeological ruins from the Later Iron Age. The Lydenburg Heads, human-like masks dating back to 500 AD, were discovered in this area. Sabie is the centre of the largest man-made forest in South Africa and a popular mountain-biking destination. The Cultural Historical Forestry Museum depicts various aspects of the country's forestry industry. The Bridal Veil, Horseshoe and Lone Creek waterfalls, and Mac Mac pools and falls just outside Sabie are well worth a visit. The 69-km Prospector's Trail starts at the Mac Mac Forest Station and leads to the Bourke's Luck potholes.

At the Montrose Falls in Schoemanskloof, the Crocodile River cascades 12 m into a series of rock pools. It is also the starting point of the annual Lowveld Crocodile Canoe Marathon, held in February. Pilgrim's Rest is a living museum and a replica of the early gold-mining town. The Alanglade House Museum offers guided tours of the former mine manager's house, while the Diggings Museum just outside the town arranges guided tours of gold-panning activities. This area was the setting for Jock of the Bushveld, the novel by Sir Percy Fitzpatrick about the experiences of a man and his dog as they shared adventures in the world of African gold-mining.

The Dredzen Shop Museum features a range of items in use nearly a century ago. Mount Sheba Nature Reserve, south of Pilgrim's Rest, is best known for its indigenous forest – one of the few left in the region.

Highlands Meander

The Highlands Meander is a mecca for fly fishers. It is in the pristine waters of this region that one finds various stocks of fish, with trout as the major drawcard. At the Verloren Vlei and Steenkampsberg nature reserves at Dullstroom, one can get a rare glimpse of the endangered blue, wattled, and crowned cranes. The Loskop Dam Nature Reserve offers game-watching, boating, and fishing. Many hiking trails are available, such as the Elandskrans Trail, which includes a 30-minute train ride between Waterval Boven and Waterval Onder.

Cultural Heartland

Visitors to the Cultural Heartland can immerse themselves in the true cultural heritage of Mpumalanga. Here, one can learn about the proud and welcoming Ndebele people, revered for the striking and colourful geometric patterns on their houses, clothing and beadwork. This region also has illuminating historical sites such as the Botshabelo Historical Village near Middelburg.

Cosmos Country

Cosmos Country covers parts of what is known as the energy belt of Mpumalanga, which is home to a number of power stations. This region also has the world's largest underground coal-mining complex and the Sasol plant that is renowned for its oil-from-coal technology. The carpet of cosmos flowers that blossom in late summer lures visitors to this region.

Wild Frontier

Various archaeological discoveries dating back almost three billion years were made in the imposing mountains of this region. Visitors can enjoy a rare glimpse of the San paintings embossed in some rocks. The region also holds rich historical sentiments centred on the monument of the late Mozambican President Samora Machel, constructed in the village of Mbuzini.

Grass and wetlands

Grass and wetlands are a paradise with their variety of bird species. This region stretches across the deep valleys and mountains of the east where thermal springs bubble to the surface. There are 270 pans and lakes within a 20 km radius of Lake Chrissie. In this region, visitors can take part in the unusual "frogging expedition" or simply gaze at the stars during "star-gazing weekends".

Gauteng

Gauteng, the "Place of Gold", is the commercial powerhouse of the country, but its offerings are not limited to commerce and industry. Anchored by the cities of Johannesburg and Pretoria, Gauteng provides plenty in the way of entertainment through its network of upmarket shopping malls, casinos, street markets, theatres, restaurants, museums and parks. Gauteng is characterised by a cosmopolitan mix of people from all walks of life. The province's unique cultural and social legacy is evident from the many excellent museums, theatres, cultural precincts and craft markets.

Although Gauteng is the most populated, built-up and industrialised province, it still has natural areas offering a variety of leisure activities such as day hikes, picnic spots

and sports activities. The Vaal Dam, which supplies water to most of Gauteng's residents, covers some 300 km2 and is a popular venue for water sports. Numerous resorts line the shore. The dam also attracts diverse bird species. Tourism attractions in and around the Cradle of Humankind have grown to more than 380, with over half of these offering graded accommodation.

The broader 47 000-ha Cradle of Humankind site has many caves, the most famous of which are the Sterkfontein caves. In 1999, Sterkfontein and its environs were declared a world heritage site. About 40% of all the world's human ancestor fossils have been found here, including several of the world's most famous and important fossils. A further 500 hominid fossils and more than 9 000 stone tools have been excavated in the area during ongoing work. The famous skull of Mrs Ples, an estimated 2.5-million-year-old hominid fossil, and Little Foot, an almost complete hominid skeleton some 3.3-million-year-old, were discovered at the Sterkfontein Caves near Krugersdorp.

The Krugersdorp Game Reserve provides sanctuary for several game species, including four of the Big Five. The African Fauna and Bird Park houses various species of wildlife and birds. The Walter Sisulu National Botanical Garden has a 70-m high waterfall and a breeding pair of black eagles. Some 40 km north of Pretoria is a ring of hills 1 km in diameter and 100-m high. These are the walls of the Tswaing Meteorite Crater, left by an asteroid that hit the area some 200 000 years ago. There is a museum adjacent to this site. The crater is covered with indigenous trees and bushes, which attract a variety of bird life.

The old mining town of Cullinan has developed around the Premier Diamond Mine. The mine has produced some of the world's most famous diamonds, including the Cullinan Diamond, the world's largest at 3 106 carats.

Johannesburg

The Adler Museum of the History of Medicine depicts the history of medicine, dentistry and pharmacy in South Africa. The Pharmacy Museum in Melrose houses a large variety of medicines, including more than 670 traditional medicines that have been collected throughout southern Africa. Newtown is at the heart of initiatives to revitalise the inner city of Johannesburg. Here, visitors will find the renowned Market Theatre, jazz bars, dance studios and artists' communes among museums, libraries and other places of historic interest.

The Absa Money Museum lies in downtown Johannesburg. Historical records stretch all the way back to the beginnings of Johannesburg, and displays ranges from fairly early money forms like cowrie shells and Venetian glass beads, through to gold coins recovered from sunken ships.

The scientific study of money and its history, or Numismatics, is the essence of the museum's displays. The Nelson Mandela Bridge is a landmark gateway into Newtown. It is the largest cable-stayed bridge in southern Africa. Museum Africa in Newtown tells the story of life in South Africa from the Stone Age to the Nuclear Age and beyond.

The Market Theatre complex comprises three theatres, an art gallery, restaurants and pubs. A bronze statue of the champion of passive resistance, Mahatma Gandhi, can be seen in the city centre. Gold Reef City is a theme park based on Johannesburg during the gold rush era. The Apartheid Museum in Johannesburg is a state-of-the-art tribute to the rise and fall of apartheid, with 22 exhibition areas that take the visitor on an emotional journey through the state-sanctioned system of apartheid.

Constitution Hill features the impressive building housing South Africa's Constitutional Court, which offers visitors the chance to view the fort, the so-called native gaol, the women's gaol and the awaiting-trial block. A large, well-established park surrounds Zoo Lake, which breeding bird colonies frequent. Other attractions include jazz concerts, rowing boats for hire, a tea garden and a restaurant. The James Hall Museum of Transport was founded in 1964 and houses an historical collection of various modes of land transport used in South Africa, dating back 400 years.

The South African Museum of Military History holds an impressive collection of weaponry and uniforms from the two world wars. The two-bedroom house where Mandela lived before his incarceration has been declared a national monument and converted into a museum. The Walter Sisulu Square in Kliptown, Soweto, is the place where the Freedom Charter was signed in 1955. The Kliptown Project comprises a hotel, the Kliptown Museum, retail outlets, restaurants and offices.

Soweto is a popular tourist destination. No tour of Soweto would be complete without a visit to the Hector Pieterson Museum, which commemorates the people who died during the Soweto Uprising of 16 June 1976. The Nelson Mandela Foundation's Centre of Memory is open to the public as a place of memory-sharing and reflection on the life and times of former President Mandela. At the Lesedi Cultural Village in the Swartkops hills north of Johannesburg, visitors can experience families of different cultural groupings.

It features four traditional homesteads where visitors can spend the night with a family of their choice. The Phumangena Zulu Kraal is home to traditional Zulu people living and working there. The Melville Koppies in Johannesburg was once the site of a Stone Age African village and iron-smelting works. Flora includes 80% of the species recorded on the Witwatersrand. It is open to the public from September to April.

Pretoria

A variety of historical buildings is found in the city, such as the Union Buildings, which celebrated its centenary in 2013. Designed by Sir Herbert Baker, construction started in 1910 and was completed in 1913. It is the setting of many national celebrations, including Women's Day and Freedom Day. In December 2013, a bronze statue of former President Mandela was unveiled at the Union Buildings.

Church Square is built around a statue of the former President of the Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek, Paul Kruger, and includes buildings such as the Old Raadsaal and the Palace of Justice. Ten minutes' drive from Church Square is Freedom Park, which commemorates the country's political history. The 35-ha site comprises a garden of remembrance, a museum, and statues and sculptures to honour South Africans who contributed to the country's freedom and development.

The Kruger House Museum contains the personal belongings of President Kruger. Melrose House is a beautiful

example of Victorian architecture. The Peace Treaty of Vereeniging, which ended the Anglo-Boer War/South African War, was signed there in 1902. Demonstrations at the Pioneer Open-Air Museum include milking, butter- and candle-making, bread-baking and coffee-bean grinding.

Other museums include the South African Air Force Museum, Police Museum, Coert Steynberg Museum and the Transvaal Museum of Natural History. The Voortrekker Monument commemorates the Great Trek. Some 260 steps lead to the dome, where spectacular views of the city can be enjoyed. Fort Schanskop has been refurbished and has a 375-seat amphitheatre.

The Sammy Marks Museum near Pretoria dates from 1885. Rooms in the house are filled with Victorian paintings, furniture, silverware and porcelain. Visitors can relax at the tea garden and restaurant on the premises. The General Smuts House Museum in Irene in the southeast of Pretoria, contains the original furnishings of the Smuts family home. The Rietvlei Nature Reserve is notable for its grass types, herbs, large number of game including rhino, hippo and many bird species.

The Mapoch Ndebele Village, north of Pretoria, is the first living cultural village in South Africa owned and managed by its residents. Mamelodi is about 20 km from the city centre and features Solomon Mahlangu Square, which is dedicated to this freedom fighter. The Willem Prinsloo Agricultural Museum outside Pretoria features a farmstead dating from 1880. Traditional farming activities are demonstrated, and annual events include a prickly pear festival, a mampoer festival and the Agricultural Museum Show. The Pretoria National Botanical Garden houses the National Herbarium of South Africa, which is the largest in the southern hemisphere.

KwaZulu-Natal

The garden province of South Africa, KwaZulu-Natal, is a subtropical region of lush and well-watered valleys, washed by the warm Indian Ocean. One of the country's most popular tourist destinations, the province stretches from Port Edward in the south to the borders of Eswatini and Mozambique to the north. History-filled towns lead to adventure sports and game viewing, along with outlets for unique arts and crafts.



Durban and surroundings

The city of Durban, overlooking Africa's busiest seaport, is warm and inviting. It is not only South Africa's domestic tourism leader, but is also popular among visitors from throughout Africa and the rest of the world who seek a unique blend of vibrancy, sophistication, cultural diversity and excitement in a beautiful setting. The Golden Mile skirts the main beaches of the Indian Ocean.

Attractions include an amusement centre, paddling pools, paved walkways and fountains. The uShaka Marine World has a theme park, oceanarium, dolphinarium and oceanographic research institute. It is home to a wide variety of sea life, including sharks, dolphins and seals. One of its main attractions is the long lane of shops and the multitude of restaurants, especially those in the old wreck (a replica of a ship wreck in the centre of the park), and a tourism information office at its entrance.

The Durban area has more than 50 reserves, developed parks and specialised gardens, the most renowned being the Municipal Botanical Garden. Besides the botanical gardens, Mitchell Park is one of the most popular green spaces and includes an outdoor restaurant and a zoo, plus a sizeable playground for children. Mini Town is a model city depicting Durban's best-known buildings. Museums include the Natural History Museum, the Natural Science Museum, the Old House Museum and the Old Fort. One of the most intriguing museums is the Maritime Museum, complete with two floating ships in the harbour.

The Shree Ambalavaanar Alayam Temple (the Second River Temple) in Cato Manor was the first Hindu temple in Africa. It is a national monument. The Juma Musjid Mosque is the largest mosque in the southern hemisphere. Annual events in and around the city include the popular Comrades Marathon between Durban and Pietermaritzburg, an international surfing competition, the Duzi canoe marathon, the Midmar Mile and Dolphin Mile open-water swimming events, the July Handicap horserace and the Amashova-shova cycle tour. Umhlanga Rocks, just north of Durban, is notable for its ski-boating facilities and the Ski-Boat Festival held every April.

The KwaZulu-Natal Sharks Board offers shark dissections and interesting displays. Guided tours of the Hawaan Forest are also on offer. Hawaan is the last relic of coastal forest in the region and has rare indigenous trees. The Umgeni River Bird Park overlooks the Umgeni River and ranks among the world's best bird sanctuaries. Walk-in aviaries hold many varieties of indigenous and exotic birds. The maritime offices, which control the entry of ships into and out of the busiest port in Africa, are in the Millennium Town at the end of the Bluff.

North Coast

Throughout the year, frolicking dolphins and impressive seasonal whale migrations make the coastline between the Umdloti and the Thukela rivers aptly called the "Dolphin Coast". The rarely seen larger humpback dolphins are also found here. Many of the first Indian immigrants settled here, and the area's markets, mosques and temples give it an authentic Eastern flavour. Tongaat is an area where sugar was first planted in 1854. The town's Indian ambience is accentuated by two prominent Hindu temples – the Juggernath Puri and Vishwaroop temples. Other towns along the Dolphin Coast include Shaka's Rock, Salt Rock, Ballito, Verulam, KwaDukuza, Darnall and Umdloti.

Zululand and the Elephant Coast

Zululand's north-east quadrant, between Mozambique, Eswatini and the warm Indian Ocean, has its own unique tale to tell. This is the Elephant Coast or Maputaland, named after the mid-17th-century king who established dominion here some 200 years before King Shaka consolidated his Zulu empire to the south. The Tembe Elephant Park in the far north is home to herds of the massive African elephant. The Hluhluwe-Imfolozi Park is one of South Africa's largest game parks. Visitors should look out for the Big Five as well as the elusive cheetah and wild dog.

The eMakhosini Valley, birthplace of King Shaka, is known as "The Valley of Zulu Kings". A joint public-private sector project aims to preserve the culture and history of the Zulu people. This heritage park is near a nature reserve that supports the Big Five of the animal kingdom. At the eMakhosini Memorial Site, seven Zulu kings are buried.

Umgungundlovu was once the royal capital of King Dingaan and was reconstructed.

The beehive huts and the layout of the original Zulu village have been reproduced. Authentic Zulu villages such as Shakaland, Kwabhekithunga Kraal, Damazulu and Stewart's Farm offer accommodation and the opportunity to experience traditional Zulu culture. St Lucia and its surroundings comprise a globally important wetland and have five separate ecosystems. It is a fishing and birdwatching paradise, and boat trips on the lake offer opportunities for crocodile and hippo sightings. St Lucia is the only town in the world that is surrounded by a natural world heritage area.

The Kosi Bay Nature Reserve is part of the Coastal Forest Reserve between Mozambique and Sodwana Bay. The adjacent Indian Ocean provides exciting snorkelling and fishing opportunities. On offer is a four-day guided walking trail around the estuarine system. uMkhuze is a small trade and transport centre. The Mkuze River cuts through the Ubombo Mountains before serving as a natural boundary for Zululand's popular Mkuzi Game Reserve. The Border Cave, a site of immense archaeological interest on the border of Eswatini, now also has an interpretation centre. Lake Sibaya is South Africa's largest natural freshwater lake, covering some 77 km2.

Sibaya Lake Lodge is the first South African ecotourism development jointly owned by private enterprise and the local community. The coral reef in the Sodwana Bay National Park attracts hundreds of scuba divers throughout the year, and in summer, power boaters arrive for some of the best marlin fishing in the world.

South Coast

Amanzimtoti is popular for its safe swimming beaches and a variety of fun activities and attractions for the whole family. The Hibiscus Coast stretches between Umkomaas and the Wild Coast. Margate is the largest resort town along this coast and is very popular during the holidays. The Hibiscus Festival is held there in July. The Oribi Gorge Nature Reserve encompasses forest, rivers, rapids and ravines. Birdlife, including five kingfisher species and seven eagle species, is prolific. There is also a variety of mammals, and a 140-m abseil and gorge swing for adrenalin junkies.

Port Edward offers safe swimming and good fishing opportunities. Nearby, the Umthamvuna Nature Reserve is noted for its beautiful scenery, birdlife and many rare plant species. The Shell Museum at Shelly Beach is well worth a visit. Other popular coastal towns include Port Shepstone, Ramsgate, St Michael's-on-Sea, Uvongo and Scottburgh. Nature's annual extravaganza, the unforgettable sardine run, strikes the South Coast around the end of June every year, when people flock to the beaches and anglers await the arrival of the game fish following the sardines.

Pietermaritzburg and the Midlands

Pietermaritzburg has various museums, including the Msunduzi Museum that depicts the heritage of different cultural groups of KwaZulu-Natal, a replica Hindu Shiva temple and a beautiful herb garden, the Natal Museum and the Natal Steam Railway Museum, which offers steam-train rides on the second Sunday of every month. The Tatham Art Gallery is also extremely popular.

The Albert Falls Public Resort Nature Reserve and the Albert Falls Dam provide opportunities for sailing, canoeing and fishing. Birdwatching, horse riding and hiking are also popular activities. The Howick Falls are in the Nature Valley Reserve, where the river tumbles 100 m in a single fall. There are several climbing routes. The Midlands Meander is a scenic drive between Hilton and Mooi River, with some 430 ports of call en route, ranging from art studios, potters and painters to herb gardens and cheese makers. Midmar Dam is zoned for yachting and powerboating. The 1 000-ha Midmar Game Park is inhabited by rhino, zebra, a wide variety of antelope species and waterfowl.

Drakensberg

The mountainous "Barrier of Spears" uKhahlamba-Drakensberg Park World Heritage Site, adorned with Stone Age cave paintings, forms the north-western border of KwaZulu-Natal. The entire area is a bird sanctuary, featuring, among other species, the endangered bearded vulture. The highest concentration of walks and trails in South Africa is found here.

The uKhahlamba-Drakensberg Park consists of almost the entire Drakensberg mountain range from Bushman's Neck in the south to the Royal KwaZulu-Natal National Park in the north. Peaks soar to over 3 000 m and are often snow-covered in winter. There are trout hatcheries in the Kamberg Reserve area and at Cathedral Peak. Lotheni Nature Reserve is notable for its trout-fishing facilities (angling permits are required). Relics of the area's history have been preserved in the Settler Museum.

The Himeville Nature Reserve has two lakes stocked with trout. The nearby Swamp Nature Reserve attracts a variety of waterfowl, including the rare, wattled crane. The Ndedema

Gorge in the Mdedelelo Wilderness Area near Cathedral Peak has examples of Khoi and San art. Sani Pass is the only road across the high escarpment between KwaZulu-Natal and the Kingdom of Lesotho. The top section is only passable in 4x4 vehicles. The Giant's Cup Hiking Trail, starting at the foot of the pass, is described as one of South Africa's finest Giant's Castle Game Reserve is especially known for its more than 5 000 San paintings.

The Bushman Site Museum is worth a visit. Royal Natal National Park offers many scenic highlights, including the Amphitheatre, Mont-aux- Sources and the Thukela Falls.

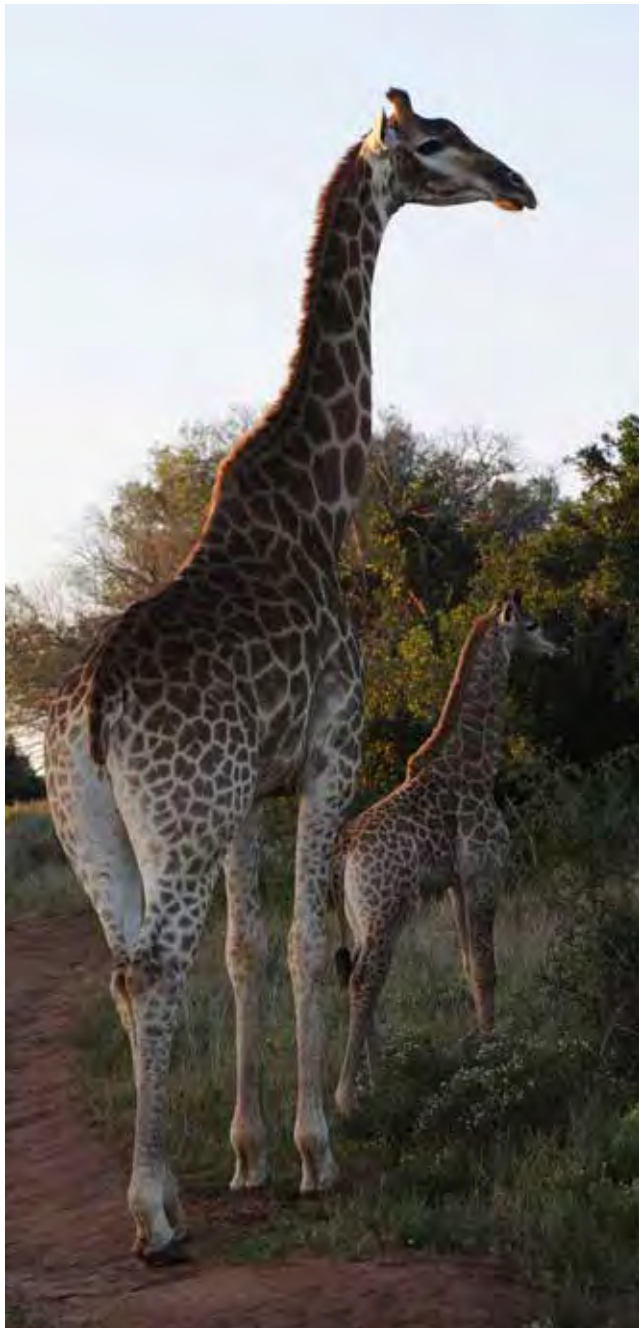
Battlefields

The KwaZulu-Natal Battlefields Route has the highest concentration of battlefields and related military sites in South Africa. The Battlefields Route starts at Estcourt, winding north through Colenso and Ladysmith to Newcastle and Volksrust, and eastwards to Utrecht, Glencoe, Dundee, Nqutu, Paulpietersburg, Vryheid, Babanango and Ulundi. All the towns along the route have their own unique charm and range of attractions: arts and crafts, scenic hiking trails, farm resorts, Zulu culture and roadside stalls. Game viewing, natural hot springs, horse trails and water sports can also be enjoyed.

The Chelmsford Nature Reserve, located near Newcastle, is a birdwatcher's paradise. Powerboating and carp fishing are added attractions. Game includes springbok, zebra, rhino and blesbok. Majuba Hill and O'Neill's Cottage are other interesting places to visit. The Ladysmith Siege Museum provides insight into the battles of Colenso, Spioenkop, Vaalkrans and Tugela Heights.

Museum staff arrange guided tours to nearby battlefields such as Wagon Hill. Other attractions include the statue of Gandhi, the All Saints Church, the Soofi Mosque and the Spioenkop Dam and Nature Reserve. Near Dundee, tourists can visit various battlefields, including the Ncome- Blood River, Isandlwana, Rorke's Drift and Talana.

The Talana Museum depicts various facets of the coal industry, and local Zulu, Boer, and British history. Rorke's Drift was the setting for one of the most famous battles of the war. The main attraction is the Rorke's Drift Battle Museum.



Top 10 reasons to visit South Africa:

- **Affordable** – In South Africa, you can afford luxury and still have spending money for shopping and other treats.
- **Natural beauty** – South Africa's scenic wonders are legendary. From Table Mountain to God's Window, the mountains, forests, coasts and deserts will sooth your soul and delight you.
- **World-class facilities** – You will find it easy to get around, find a comfortable place to stay and have a great meal.
- **Adventure** – With over 130 adventures, there is something for everyone from mountain walks to shark-cage diving.
- **Good weather** – In sunny South Africa, with great weather, you can enjoy the outdoors, play golf year-round and take advantage of the nearly 3 000 km of coastline.
- **Rainbow Nation** – The Rainbow Nation celebrates all its African and immigrant cultures. South Africans are known for their friendliness and hospitality.
- **Diverse experiences** – Go almost anywhere in South Africa and experience the ultimate combination of nature, wildlife, culture, adventure, heritage and good vibe.
- **Wildlife** – The abundant and diverse wildlife include the Big Five (African lion, African elephant, Cape buffalo, African leopard and black rhinoceros).
- **Rich history** – Discover a nation's struggle for freedom whilst following the footsteps of Nelson Mandela, Hector Pieterson and many other celebrated revolutionaries.
- **Responsible tourism** – In South Africa, you can travel with care as you explore protected areas, contribute to social and conservation projects, and collect arts and crafts.





SOUTH AFRICA
YEARBOOK
2024/25

Transport

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa of 1996 identifies the legislative responsibilities of the national, provincial and local levels of government for all modes of transport, with associated infrastructure and operational requirements. The Department of Transport (DoT) is responsible for the legislation and policies for rail, pipelines, roads, airports, harbours and the intermodal operations of public transport and freight. Accordingly, it conducts sector research, formulates legislation and policy to set the strategic directions of subsectors, assigns responsibilities to public entities, regulates by setting norms and standards, and monitors implementation.

Over the medium term, the department continued to focus on creating an enabling environment for economic activity by maintaining South Africa's road network, facilitating integrated road-based public transport networks, and investing in critical infrastructure to revitalise and turn around passenger rail services. Expenditure was expected to increase at an average annual rate of 4,2%, from R78.3 billion in 2023/24 to R88.6 billion in 2026/27.

Transfers and subsidies, mainly for transport public entities, accounted for an estimated 97,9% (R250.7 billion) of the department's expenditure, increasing at an average annual rate of 4,2%, from R76.7 billion in 2023/24 to R86.7 billion in 2026/27. Transfers to the provincial roads maintenance grant, the public transport operations grant, the public transport network grant and the rural roads asset management systems grant are intended to fund other spheres of government with concurrent transport functions.

Cabinet approved reductions to the department's budget amounting to R20.3 billion over the medium term. Of this R17.4 billion was effected in the national sphere on transfers to public entities, including the South African National Roads Agency and the Passenger Rail Agency of South Africa (PRASA); R2.7 billion in the provincial sphere on transfers to the provincial roads maintenance grant; and R237.9 million in the municipal sphere on transfers to the public transport network grant.

Accordingly, targets for roads rehabilitated, resealed and re-gravelled in provinces, and for passenger trips for integrated public transport services across various municipalities, were reduced. To minimise the impact of these reductions, the department, through its implementing agencies, sought to improve efficiencies and contract management to ensure value for money on services rendered by the private sector.

Maintaining South Africa's road network

By investing in South Africa's road networks, the department ensured that passengers and freight carriers had adequate access to safe roads. Of the R140.6 billion over the medium term allocated to the Road Transport programme to fund the construction, upgrading and maintenance of national and provincial road networks, R86.8 billion is allocated to the South African National Roads Agency.

Of this amount, R53.3 billion was to be spent on maintaining the national non-toll network, R4.1 billion on the N2 Wild Coast project, R3 billion on the R573 (Moloto Road) development corridor and R2.3 billion on the Gauteng freeway improvement project. The agency was set to receive an additional R81.4 million over the MTEF period to pilot a single ticketing system for public transport in Gauteng that would allow commuters to access all public transport facilities with a single pass. The provincial roads maintenance grant was set to receive allocations amounting to R51.8 billion over the period ahead. The grant prioritised different elements of strategies to preserve road assets, including maintenance and refurbishment.

The road maintenance component of the grant provided funds to provincial transport departments to maintain and preserve the provincial road network, whereas the refurbishment and rural bridges component of the grant provides for the refurbishment of roads and the construction of 96 rural bridges in 2024/25 and 2025/26. Provinces were also expected use the grant to rehabilitate 11 354 lane kilometres, reseal 14 710 lane kilometres, re-gravel 21 855 kilometres and blacktop-patch 7 369 246 square metres.

Facilitating integrated road-based public transport networks

The department disbursed the public transport network grant to municipalities to carry out required infrastructure projects and cover indirect costs of bus rapid transit services in Cape Town, Ekurhuleni, George, Johannesburg, Nelson Mandela Bay, Polokwane, Rustenburg and Tshwane. Funding from the grant was expected to lead to an increase in the number of weekday passenger trips on bus rapid transit services from a combined 245 141 in 2024/25 to 356 144 in 2026/27. Transfers to the grant were set to increase from R6.2 billion in 2023/24 to R7.6 billion in 2026/27.

Allocations to the public transport operations grant, which subsidises road-based public transport services, were expected to increase from R7.4 billion in 2023/24 to R8.5 billion in 2026/27. These services are provided by provincial departments of transport.

Investing in critical infrastructure to revitalise passenger rail services

In consultation with the department, the PRASA has adopted a priority corridor strategy to recover rail services and increase commuter numbers. To achieve this, interventions in the Rail Transport programme over the medium term include maintaining, recovering and renewing the agency's rolling stock fleet, modernising rail infrastructure, rolling out new train sets to priority corridors and increasing rail passenger trips and freight. Accordingly, transfers from the programme to the agency amounted to an estimated R60.7 billion over medium term. These funds would also be used to continue the agency's rolling stock renewal drive.

As a result of Cabinet-approved reductions, transfers to the agency for capital expenditure were set to decrease at an average annual rate of 0,7%, from R12.9 billion in 2023/24 to R12.7 billion in 2026/27. Transfers to the agency for operational expenditure, however, were set to increase at an average annual rate of 4,1%, from R7.5 billion in 2023/24 to R8.5 billion in 2026/27, as more commuter lines become operational. The agency would explore contractual exit clauses if necessary to mitigate the risk these reductions might pose to the fulfilment of some of its contracts.

Development and implementation of an integrated public transport network (IPTN) model in rural provinces

The National Guideline Framework for the development of integrated public transport plans provided a set of planning steps for district municipalities to use in formulating the rural district IPTNs. A process of formulating operational plans and designing an integrated public transport system was been outlined to provide technical assistance in this regard.

The Rural Transport Strategy promotes the IPTN approach in districts that had higher densities of population. The system linked rural settlements and district towns that had a concentration of economic activities and resulting in higher level of transport demand. The IPTN was aligned with the Municipal Spatial Development Framework because there was a spatial relationship between residential areas and economic activities.

Over the MTSF, the Department of Transport planned to develop ten IPTN plans in line with the District Development Model (DDM). The purpose of district municipality IPTN plans was to intensify the provision of integrated transport infrastructure and public transport services, and also to promote modal integration. IPTNs also strove to balance the public transport supply and demand, with the added outcome of reduced congestion on the road. The Rural Transport Implementation Framework, which was also linked to the District Development Model, embodies the principles of the differentiated approach that guided targeted infrastructure investment to areas with proven potential for economic development.

As a result, areas that did not qualify for the development and implementation of the IPTNs would benefit from the implementation of the ITPs with basic infrastructure provision. The provision of public transport services would be strengthened through better coordination, planning and management of public transport operations.

Sustainable solution on e-tolls

Government has officially switched off the gantries of the Gauteng Freeway Improvement Project (GFIP), popularly known as e- tolls. The gantries were switched off at midnight on 12 April 2024 at the South African National Roads Agency (SANRAL) Central Operations Centre.

Taxi industry formalisation and professionalisation

The mandate of the Taxi Recapitalisation Programme (TRP) dealt solely with the scrapping of old minibus taxi vehicles across the country with the overarching objective being the improvement of road safety by removing unroadworthy minibus taxis from the roads of South Africa. The process involved the scrapping process and facilitation of an upgrade in the fleet of new TRP-compliant vehicles through a scrapping allowance paid directly to taxi operators.

The Revised Taxi Recapitalisation Programme (TRP) thus introduced key value-add elements to encourage sustainable continuity to the programme. As part of the Revised TRP, the scrapping allowance was increased from R91 000 to R124 000 per scrapped old taxi. Over the medium term, and as part of the extended scope of the Revised TRP, the following were prioritised:

- Commercialisation: the development of sustainable commercially viable Revised TRP management solutions leveraging and exploiting opportunities available in the minibus taxi industry's value chain. These would include affordable supply of new taxi vehicles, finance, short-term insurance, spare parts, repairs, fuel, lubricants, electronic fare collection and property management.
- Illegal operations and verification process: a national survey on the extent of illegal taxi operations across the country would be conducted and a comprehensive database of minibus taxi industry operators would be developed.
- Change management and unity: the Revised TRP would be used as a catalyst for change to the taxi industry's operating model, through the introduction of collaborative ownership, cooperatives and corporatisation.

Taxi Relief Fund (TRF)

The Taxi Reflief Fund secured by the department to mitigate the negative financial impact of COVID-19 on the minibus taxi industry came to an end on 31 March 2023. Approximately R440 million had been disbursed accounting for over 80 000 operating licences. Discussions took place with the National Treasury to ensure that the unspent funds, if possible, reached the intended beneficiaries.

Road transport safety and security

Motor vehicle accidents proved to have a negative effect on socio-economic development in the country. South Africa had one of the highest vehicle accident mortality rates in the world. A comparative analysis of road deaths per 100 000 population indicates a rate of 25.2 for South Africa, which was above the world average of 17.4.

South Africa is a participant to the second United Nations Decade of Action (UNDA) for Road Safety 2020-2030. The National Road Safety Strategy (NRSS) sets a new path for creating a safe and secure road environment in South Africa. The primary strategic target of the strategy is to ultimately reduce fatal crashes by 50% by 2030. The strategy is based on a safe system approach that looks at a holistic view of the road transport system and interactions among roads and roadsides, travel speed, vehicles and the road user. In accordance with the United Nations Decade of Action, the pillars of the strategy that will remain consistent in the National Road Safety Strategy are road safety management, safer roads and mobility, safer vehicles, safer road users and post-crash response.

The strategy has also taken into consideration previous efforts made towards addressing road safety problems in South Africa, by carefully reviewing previous road safety strategies. Key findings of these strategies highlight a lack of effective implementation, insufficient resourcing, misaligned prioritisation and lack of broader stakeholder participation among the key issues previously experienced.

As such, the NRSS focuses on sequencing of proposed interventions in a manner that is realistic and implementable. Recognising that the battle to improve road safety cannot be won unless all stakeholders played their role and took responsibility for their own safety, community-based structures have also been established in all provinces to improve civil society participation in road safety.

Also noting that road crashes affect young people between the ages of 18 and 35 in large numbers, engagements continue to be held with the youth to empower them to be advocates for their own cause and to re-shape the South African road safety landscape. Over the MTSF period, greater focus will be put on road safety education, engineering and law enforcement. Effective evaluation mechanisms will also be put in place to ensure the effectiveness, efficiency and impact of government programmes. The target set is to reduce road fatalities by 25% during the medium term.

Maritime Safety and Security

Maritime safety and security assist the industry to operate in a safe environment and provide a conducive environment to do business. Merchant ships operate in a hostile environment and certainty in terms of policy direction is important. The Comprehensive Maritime Transport Policy (CMTP) encourages stakeholders to support its initiatives as they assist with promoting shipping.

The attack against ships and other forms of criminal activities are a concern for the industry. These challenges must be addressed hence the National Maritime Security Strategy. South Africa must jealously guard against any form of pollution to its waters. It is important to have initiatives that will ensure that South African waters remain safe and secure from all forms of pollution.

To this effect, the development and application of risk assessment and management techniques to maritime safety and security must consider the complex regulatory and operational context in which the maritime industry operates. The Department of Transport (DoT) will thus strive to create a fit-for-conditions safety and security platform that will outline current concerns, provide "fit-for-purpose" tools and management mechanisms, and enable focused operational programmes aimed at building capacity and critical mass.

Over the medium term, the DoT will focus on ensuring 100% compliance with the International Ship and Port Facility Security (ISPS) Code. The code, developed in response to the perceived threat to ships and ports after the 9/11 attacks, encompasses a set of measures to enhance security of ships and port facilities. It is part of the Safety of Life at Sea Convention and compliance is mandatory for South Africa as part of the contracting parties to the convention.

As part of ensuring compliance to the International Ship and Port Facility Security Code, the department will focus mainly on addressing the "stowaway" problem, which seems to be an ever-present phenomenon for the shipping industry. Stringent measures will be put in place to ensure that no unauthorised personnel are able to gain access to vessels, and that all those who have been authorised to board disembark before sailing. The DoT will aim to reduce stowaways by addressing inadequacies in security and watch keeping. Stringent measures are planned to ensure that no unauthorised personnel are able to gain access to vessels, and that all those who have been authorised to board disembark before sailing.

In line with the implementation of the national strategic plan to end gender-based violence and femicide (GBVF) in the country, the development of a monitoring system for GBVF in the maritime sector will enable support and the protection of women at sea. There is ample evidence suggesting that investing in women is the most effective way to lift communities, companies and even countries. It is reported that countries with more gender equality have better economic growth and the evidence is clear that equality for women means progress for all.

Legislation

For cross-modal functions of public transport and freight, the department is guided by the following legislation and policies:

- The Transport Laws and Related Matters Amendment Act, 2013 (Act 3 of 2013), aims, among other things, to amend the Cross-Border Road Transport Agency to collect toll on behalf of SANRAL.
- The National Land Transport Act, 2009 (Act 5 of 2009), clarifies the concurrent roles and responsibilities of the different spheres of government in relation to public transport. It also consolidates public transport planning, service delivery, regulation and monitoring in the municipal sphere, establishes the national and provincial public transport regulators, and enhances overall transport regulatory functions.
- The incorporation of the Shosholoza Meyl train service and the Autopax long-distance bus services into PRASA was finalised in the Legal Succession to the South African Transport Services Amendment Act, 2008 (Act 38 of 2008).
- The National Road Traffic Amendment Act, 2008 (Act 64 of 2008) and the Cross-Border Transport Amendment
- Act, 2008 (Act 12 of 2008), allow for better road-traffic enforcement and improved cross-border regulation.
- The Administrative Adjudication of Road Traffic Offences Act, 1998 (Act 46 of 1998).
- The Civil Aviation Act, 2009 (Act 13 of 2009), was promulgated to harmonise and rationalise safety and security legislation for aviation to ensure compliance with the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) standards.
- The Air Service Licensing Amendment Act, 2008 (Act 21 of 2008), addresses corporate governance issues relating to the Air Services Licensing Council. The department plans to implement the airlift strategy and improve aviation safety and compliance with the standards set by the United States of America Federal Aviation Administration's International Aviation Safety Assessment Programme, and by the International Civil Aviation Organisation, an organ of the United Nations (UN).
- The Road Accident Fund (RAF) Amendment Act, 2005 (Act 19 of 2005), creates an equitable, affordable and sustainable system for victims of road accidents and their families.
- The Road Accident Fund (Transitional Provisions) Act, 2012 (Act 15 of 2012), provides for transitional measures regarding certain categories of third parties whose claims were limited to R25 000 under the RAF Act, 1996 (Act 56 of 1996) prior to 1 August 2008. The department has published a revised version of the Road Accident Benefit Scheme (RABS). The Bill proposed that the Road Accident Benefit Scheme Administrator replace the RAF. The new regulations, rules and forms were drafted to enable a better understanding of how the proposed scheme would operate in practice. The RABS Bill provides for a new,

no fault benefit scheme and a new administrator. The RABS Bill forms part of an initiative to replace the third-party compensation system currently administered by the RAF with a new scheme that is reasonable, equitable, affordable and sustainable.

Budget

For the 2022/23 financial year, the department was allocated R65.4 billion. The department aimed to remain within its ceiling for compensation of employees by managing the number of personnel, which was expected to decrease from 818 in 2021/22 to 750 in 2024/25 through natural attrition and retirement.

Entities

Air Traffic and Navigation Service (ATNS)

The ATNS Company is mandated to provide safe, orderly and efficient air traffic navigational and associated services to the air traffic management community in terms of the ATNS Act, 2003 (Act 45 of 2003). All its services are in accordance with the standards of the International Civil Aviation Organisation and the civil aviation regulations issued in terms of the Civil Aviation Act, 2009 (Act 13 of 2009).

The company will continue to focus on providing safe, efficient and cost-effective air traffic management solutions and related services over the medium term. An estimated 78% (R4.8 billion) of its budget over this period is expected to be used on communication, surveillance and simulator systems. Compensation of employees comprises 59,1% (R3.7 billion) of total expenditure over the period ahead, while goods and services accounts for 26,2% (R1.6 billion). Total expenditure is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 6,9%, from R1.8 billion in 2023/24 to R2.2 billion in 2026/27.

The company expects to generate 85,6% (R5.6 billion) of its revenue over the medium term by providing aeronautical services to the aviation industry, mainly through en-route and approach fees. Total revenue is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 7,8%, from R1.9 billion in 2023/24 to R2.4 billion in 2026/27, as the company returns to normal operations after the lifting of COVID-19 restrictions.

Airports Company South Africa (ACSA)

ACSA is established in terms of the Airports Company Act, 1993 (Act 44 of 1993). The company owns and operates the nine principal airports in South Africa, including the three main international gateways: OR Tambo International Airport, Cape Town International Airport and King Shaka International Airport. Over the medium term, the company will continue implementing its recovery strategy, which is supported by a revised financial plan.

The strategy focuses on continuously delivering major infrastructure requirements while maintaining its financial sustainability. Since the end of the COVID-19 pandemic, the company has reinforced its efforts to improve its sustainability and organisational resilience.

Total expenditure is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 3,4%, from R5.8 billion in 2023/24 to R6.4 billion in 2026/27, with goods and services accounting for an estimated 45,5% (R8.6 billion) of spending over the MTEF period. Total revenue is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 11,1%, from R6.4 billion in 2023/24 to R8.8 billion in 2026/27, driven by the expected increase in passenger numbers as the air travel industry continues its recovery from the pandemic.

Cross-Border Road Transport Agency (CBRTA)

The CBRTA is mandated to regulate the cross-border road freight and passenger industry in terms of the Cross-Border Transport Act, 1998 (Act 4 of 1998). It facilitates an unimpeded flow of freight and passenger road transport across the region. Over the next three years, the agency will focus on conducting inspections to enforce cross-border road traffic law.

Total expenditure is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 7,5%, from R333.3 million in 2023/24 to R414.3 million in 2026/27, mainly driven by spending on administration, law enforcement, facilitation and regulatory services. The road transport inspectorate, which was transferred to the Road Traffic Management Corporation in 2017, was transferred back to the agency from 1 April 2023. The additional cost of this function is estimated at R81 million and will be funded through interest on investments.

The agency is set to derive 75,5% (R892.3 million) of its revenue over the MTEF period from administrative fees. Revenue is expected to increase in line with spending.

Driving Licence Card Account

The Driving Licence Card Account was established in terms of the Public Finance Management Act of 1999 to manufacture driving licence cards based on orders from testing centres across South Africa. Over the medium term, the trading account will invest in a new production machine to ensure optimal manufacturing productivity.

As a result, spending on production and infrastructure is expected to account for 64,2% (R440.7 million) of its budget over the period ahead. Spending is projected to increase at an average annual rate of 4,3%, from R197.9 million in 2023/24 to R224.4 million in 2026/27. The entity generates revenue through the sale of licence cards. Revenue is expected to decrease by 1,6%, from R235.6 million in 2023/24 to R224.4 million in 2026/27.

Passenger Rail Agency of South Africa (PRASA)

The PRASA was established in terms of the Legal Succession to the South African Transport Services Amendment Act of 2008. Its primary mandate is to provide rail commuter services within, to and from South Africa in the public interest. The agency also provides long-haul passenger rail and bus services within, to and from South Africa.

Over the medium term, the agency will focus on ensuring the recovery of commuter rail services by implementing its strategic corridor recovery programme and modernising its core infrastructure, which includes replacing old rolling stock and investing in signalling infrastructure. As part of its strategic corridor recovery programme, the agency aims to restore services – including rebuilding infrastructure, especially in Gauteng – and recover lines in KwaZulu-Natal after severe flooding in April 2022. Accordingly, spending on Metrorail is expected to amount to R29.3 billion over the next three years.

Total expenditure is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 3,3%, from R15.1 billion in 2023/24 to

R16.7 billion in 2026/27. Spending on compensation of employees accounts for an estimated 35,6% (R16.8 billion) of total expenditure over the period ahead, decreasing at an average annual rate of 2,4%, from R6.1 billion in 2023/24 to R5.7 billion in 2026/27, due to the agency's planned voluntary severance process.

Transfers from the department account for an estimated 88,3% (R60.7 billion) of the agency's revenue over the medium term. Other sources of income include the sale of train and bus tickets, rental income from leasing properties, on-board sales and interest. Total revenue is expected to decrease at an average annual rate of 0,9%, from R24.6 billion in 2023/24 to R23.9 billion in 2026/27, driven mainly by a reduction in transfers from the department.

Ports Regulator of South Africa (PRSA)

The Ports Regulator of South Africa was established in terms of the National Ports Act of 2005 to regulate South Africa's ports infrastructure system. It sets tariffs for the National Ports Authority and oversees complaints and appeals to preserve fairness, transparency and competitive practices for ports infrastructure. The regulator remains focused on strengthening the economic regulation of ports infrastructure and compliance with the ports regulatory framework.

Total expenditure is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 4,7%, from R44.1 million in 2023/24 to R50.7 million in 2026/27. Compensation of employees comprises an estimated 71,2% (R103.1 million) of the regulator's expenditure over the MTEF period, increasing at an average annual rate of 4,4%. The regulator derives more than 96% of its revenue through transfers from the department, increasing at an average annual rate of 4,5%, from R42.6 million in 2023/24 to R48.6 million in 2026/27.

Railway Safety Regulator (RSR)

The RSR was established in terms of the National RSR Act of 2002. It is mandated to oversee railway operations, monitor operators and enforce a safe operating environment. This includes rail operators in neighbouring countries with operations that enter South Africa. Over the medium term, the regulator aimed to focus on issuing safety permits, conducting inspections and audits, investigating railway accidents, and developing regulations and safety standards.

Expenditure is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 4,3%, from R270.2 million in 2023/24 to R306.9 million in 2026/27. Compensation of employees comprises an estimated 64% (R565.6 million) of planned expenditure over the MTEF period. The regulator expects to generate 70,3% (R624 million) of its revenue over the next three years from administrative fees and most of the remainder through transfers from the department. Revenue is expected to increase in line with spending.

Road Accident Fund (RAF)

In terms of the RAF Act of 1996, the RAF is mandated to compensate South African road users for losses or damages caused by motor vehicle accidents within the borders of South Africa. Over the medium term, the change in the settlement policy for loss-of-income claims from lump sum to annuity is expected to result in a moderation in the payment of claims in line with the fund's pay-as-you-go principle.

As a result, the total value of claims paid out over the MTEF period is expected to decrease at an average annual rate of 6,2%, from R45.4 billion in 2023/24 to R37.4 billion in 2026/27. The fund derives revenue through the road accident fund levy in terms of the Customs and Excise Act (1964). Transfers received through the levy are expected to increase at an average annual rate of 0,3%, from R49 billion in 2023/24 to R49.5 billion in 2026/27, in line with an expected increase in the sale of fuel.

Road Traffic Infringement Agency (RTIA)

The RTIA derives its mandate from the Administrative Adjudication of Road Traffic Offences (AARTO) Act (1998). The agency was established to administer procedures to discourage the contravention of road traffic laws, adjudicate infringements, enforce penalties for the contravention of road traffic laws, provide specialised prosecution support services, and carry out community education and awareness programmes in road safety-related matters. The agency's activities over the medium term are focused on administration, adjudication and support, and the AARTO roll-out programme.

Expenditure is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 2,4%, from R508.9 million in 2023/24 to R546.6 million in 2026/27, with goods and services accounting for an estimated 58,9% (R915.7 million) of total estimated spending. The agency derives its revenue mainly through administrative fees and transfers from the department. Revenue is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 4,5%, from R479.1 million in 2023/24 to R546.6 million in 2026/27.

Road Traffic Management Corporation (RTMC)

The RTMC was established through the Road Traffic Management Corporation Act (1999). It is mandated to provide national road traffic strategic planning and law enforcement, and pool public sector resources for road traffic management.

Over the medium term, the corporation intends to implement the national road traffic law enforcement code, which is expected to integrate and harmonise traffic law enforcement and facilitate the integration and development of road safety regulations and the fair and efficient use of resources.

Total expenditure is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 6,9%, from R1.5 billion in 2023/24 to R1.8 billion in 2026/27, mainly driven by spending on compensation of employees. Although transaction fees are expected to remain the corporation's main revenue source, comprising an estimated 61,7% (R3 billion) of total revenue over the MTEF period, the corporation will pursue alternative revenue streams through its online licence renewal initiative.

South African Civil Aviation Authority (SACAA)

The South African Civil Aviation Authority was established in terms of the Civil Aviation Act (2009). The authority is mandated to oversee the safety and security of the civil aviation industry and ensure compliance with and adherence to the standards and recommended practices of the International Civil Aviation Organisation.

The authority will continue to focus on implementing safety and security programmes over the medium term in line with

the standards and recommended practices issued by the organisation and South African civil aviation regulations. Accordingly, it intends to enhance and sustain its capacity by replacing flight inspection aircraft and flight calibration equipment, and procuring security systems, server rooms and an examination centre for its new building.

Total expenditure is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 8,5%, from R900.7 million in 2023/24 to R1.2 billion in 2026/27. Compensation of employees accounts for an estimated 68,6% (R2.2 billion) of total expenditure over the medium term. Passenger safety charges, user fees and the aviation fuel levy are expected to comprise 79,1% (R2.6 billion) of the authority's revenue over the period ahead, with transfers from the department amounting to an estimated R271.4 million. Revenue is set to increase in line with spending.

South African Maritime Safety Authority (SAMSA)

The SAMSA was established in terms of the SAMSA Act (1998). It is responsible for regulating and enforcing maritime safety and marine pollution from ships, and promoting South Africa's maritime interests. Its continued focus is on ensuring the safety of life and property at sea, and preventing and combating marine pollution.

Spending is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 4,3%, from R471.6 million in 2023/24 to R535.2 million in 2026/27, with compensation of employees comprising an estimated 62,3% (R948.6 million) of total expenditure over the MTEF period.

The authority generates revenue through levies, fees and user charges. Total revenue is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 4,3%, from R472.2 million in 2023/24 to R536.3 million.

South African National Roads Agency Limited (SANRAL)

The South African National Roads Agency was established in terms of the South African National Roads Agency Limited and National Roads Act (1998). It is responsible for the planning, design, construction, operation, management, control, maintenance and rehabilitation of the national road network, including the financing of these functions, for toll and non-toll roads.

The declared national road network as at 31 March 2023 was 23 536km, of which non-toll roads comprised 87% and toll roads constituted 13%. Non-toll roads are fully funded through annual grant allocations amounting to R53.5 billion over the next three years.

Over the medium term, the agency's focus remains on constructing, maintaining and preserving the national road network. Accordingly, over the period ahead, the agency intends to implement its flagship projects, of which 11 are in the construction phase, 6 are in the tender phase and 10 are in the design phase. These projects are expected to result in more than R24.5 billion in infrastructure investment. They are all in key economic corridors and their timelines for completion range between five and 10 years.

Due to the implementation of backlog projects, payments to service providers for road maintenance or construction accounts for the bulk of the agency's total expenditure, increasing at an average annual rate of 1,8%, from R26.3 billion in 2023/24 to R27.7 billion in 2026/27. Expenditure on compensation of employees is estimated to increase at an average annual rate of 3,9%, from R820.7 million in 2023/24 to R919.3 million in 2026/27, in line with the agency's imperative to retain personnel.

Total expenditure is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 2,3%, from R30.3 billion in 2023/24 to R32.4 billion in 2026/27. The agency is set to receive 74,4% (R83.5 billion) of its revenue over the MTEF period through transfers from the department and 15,7% (R15.8 billion) through toll fees, concession income and rental income from investment properties. Revenue is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 7,1%, from R30.9 billion in 2023/24 to R38 billion in 2026/27.

Rail transport safety and security

In recent years, the rail environment became a target of theft and vandalism of infrastructure, senseless attacks on employees and private security while on duty, sabotage and general disregard for the rule of law. The department plays a key role in ensuring safe rail operations in the country through the development of policies, strategies and legislative regulatory framework. This role is augmented by the Railway Safety Regulator (RSR), which is an independent entity of the department tasked with overseeing and promoting safe railway operations through appropriate support, monitoring and enforcement.

Rail networks

The purpose of the Rail Transport Programme within the DoT is to facilitate and coordinate the development of sustainable rail transport policies, rail economic and safety regulations, and infrastructure development strategies; systems that reduce system costs and improve customer service; to monitor and oversee the RSR and the PRASA; and the implementation of integrated rail services planned through the lowest competent sphere of government.

The South African rail network is the 11th-largest in the world at 22 298 route kilometres, and total track distance of 30 400km. Public sector railways comprise three distinct vertically integrated entities, namely Transnet Freight Rail (TFR) division of Transnet, PRASA and Gautrain Management Agency.

They fulfil distinctly different roles and responsibilities, and have different objectives and service delivery requirements. The TFR owns 20 953 route kilometres of the cape gauge track, of which 12 801 route kilometres comprises the core network. The remaining track comprises 68 branch lines totalling 6 708km in length. The PRASA operates metropolitan commuter services through its Metrorail division, and long-distance commuter services through its Main Line Passenger Services division, Shosholoza Meyl.

PRASA owns 746 route kilometres of cape gauge network whilst Shosholoza Meyl trains run almost exclusively on the TFR track. The access relationship that PRASA has with TFR is heavily influenced by the history of the asset split criteria used to allocate infrastructure and rolling stock. The criterion used was that the main user of the network received ownership control of the asset.

In practice, this should have decreased the requirement to access each other's network as much as possible but over time, the pattern of asset usage has changed, and currently, in a number of cases Metrorail is operating on a network owned by TFR, but where PRASA trains comprise

the majority of activity on the track. The Gautrain network is approximately 80 km-long and does not interconnect with any other network on basis of its standard gauge track

The National Development Plan (NDP) provides a strategic framework to guide actions on the maintenance and expansion of economic infrastructure such as transport and, more especially, rail transport to support economic growth and social development goals. The NDP states that given government's limited finances, private funding will need to be sourced for some of these investments. In addition to issuing licenses and setting tariffs, the NDP requires regulations to place emphasis on stimulating market competition and promoting affordable access to quality services.

The DoT has established an interim rail economic regulatory capacity, which prioritises developing guidelines and frameworks to ensure fair and transparent access to the rail network, which will create a conducive environment for private sector participation. To function optimally, South Africa needs reliable, economical, integrated smooth flowing rail corridors linking the various modes of public transport. Investing in the rail network should increase access to an integrated rail network and create a conducive environment for private sector participation and investment in rail infrastructure.

Passenger rail is a critical function that creates enormous positive externalities for the economy and justifies significant subsidisation from government. The consequences of any move by passengers to alternative modes of transport include the new costs that are imposed on the rest of the economy; low-income households relying on more expensive and less safe modes of transport; traffic congestion increases; and people in outlying areas becoming even more marginalised.

Government's infrastructure delivery plan prioritises network industries to support a long-term increase in the productive capacity of the economy with the potential to crowd-in additional private sector investment. As part of prioritising infrastructure development for network industries, the modernisation of the rail freight and passenger transport will receive immediate attention.

The adoption of the Private Sector Participation (PSP) Framework for the railway industry is an important step in securing private sector interest. The next step to encourage private sector investment should be a clear procurement framework and rail economic regulation. Areas identified for private sector participation include main line freight, terminal-to-terminal freight, terminal operations in the service areas, private line freight and private sidings in the services and asset upgrade areas, municipal rail infrastructure, rail infrastructure upgrade and maintenance concessions and the leasing of rolling stock in the asset areas. In addition, there are other areas in the services provision and asset upgrade category, which include branch line freight services, commuter services, rapid rail intercity and marshalling yards.

Over the MTSF, the DoT and PRASA will intensify implementation of its capital expenditure programme with focus on three programmes – rolling stock fleet renewal, repair and modernisation of station and rail signalling improvement.

Rail infrastructure

While South Africa has a relatively good core network of national economic infrastructure, the challenge is to maintain and expand it to address the demands of inclusive economic growth. The economy has already been constrained by inadequate investment and ineffective operation and maintenance of existing infrastructure, while productive investment in historically black communities continues to face constraints.

South Africa needs to make large investments to propel economic activity. These need to be made in a structured, considered manner to prevent inappropriate initiatives, protect South Africa's resources and ensure that prioritised investments are efficiently implemented. Given government's limited finances, private funding will need to be sourced for some of these investments, and policy planning and decision-making will require trade-offs between competing national goals.

Government needs not only to better coordinate collaborative investment by businesses and provincial and local government into key infrastructure projects, but to shape its institutional, policy and regulatory environment in order to enable investment, realise the desired efficiencies, improve infrastructure delivery, and contribute to economic growth and employment creation.

Rail-based public transport

The DoT, in its pursuit for a safe, affordable and reliable public transport system, has adopted an integrated policy approach that is based on peak intermodality. Besides its value proposition, intermodality is an integral part of sustainable mobility and its enhancement is vitally important for the provision of door-to-door transport services because of its advantages of economies of scale for both commuter and freight transport.

With this policy approach, the sector has set itself, amongst others, a medium-term target of realising the modal shift from road dominance to rail, not only to reduce the impact on our road infrastructure but also to reduce roadside emissions and to improve efficiencies in the broader transport value chain.

South Africa's passenger rail system has suffered years of underinvestment and deferred maintenance, creating fertile ground for the decline of the passenger rail system and a haemorrhage market share over time. As part of positioning rail as a backbone of the public transport system, the Priority Corridor Strategy was introduced to ensure focused implementation. This included looking at corridors with high ridership to maximise impact. It is thus important that rail is improved to compete with other modes to achieve proper share of passenger transport in order to reduce congestion on the road and further improve road safety.

To achieve an optimum performance level, a number of interventions will be implemented over the medium term. These include maintenance, recovery and renewal of rolling stock fleet, modernisation of rail infrastructure, rolling out new train sets to priority corridors and increasing rail passenger trips.

Also targeted in the medium term is the revitalisation of branch lines to make rural economies more competitive by enabling provision of transport to some of the far-flung communities to be considered. These branch lines will not only benefit commuters but will also contribute to the

proposed modal shift to rail for freight, thus alleviating pressure on the road network.

Transnet SOC Limited

Transnet provides and operates freight transportation services and infrastructure. The company's key strategic objectives include improving the competitiveness of logistics, promoting a modal shift from road to rail, increasing logistics connectivity, attracting private investment, developing skills and promoting reindustrialisation.

Transnet has experienced a series of challenges that have resulted in underperformance and affected its liquidity and financial position. These include declining operational and maintenance efficiency, limited investment capital, a high cost base, reduced asset availability and reliability, increased crime and vandalism to equipment and infrastructure, and operational disruptions.

The decline has been more pronounced in the freight rail division, accounting for about 53% of the company's business, which has had a decrease in volume from 226 million tonnes in 2017/18 to 149.5 million tonnes in 2022/23.

To address this decline and optimise business operations over the medium term, Transnet will implement its recovery plan, which provides for 18 months to transition the company to profitability. As such, it plans to spend R19.2 billion on capital investments into, among other things, locomotives, and improving the availability and reliability of critical equipment and the quality of assets at ports.

Through this spending, Transnet anticipates rail freight volumes to increase to 154 million tons by 2023/24 and 193 million tons by 2024/25. Port volumes are also expected to increase based on a series of initiatives at both the ports and rail divisions. Accordingly, container volumes are expected to increase from 4 912.4 TEUs (thousand 20-foot-equivalent units) in 2023/24 to 6 933.3 TEUs in 2026/27.

As a result, expenditure is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 3,9%, from R89.6 billion in 2023/24 to R100.4 billion in 2026/27. Spending on compensation of employees constitutes an estimated 31,6% (R87.9 billion) of total expenditure over the next three years, whereas that on goods and services constitutes 28,8% (R83.6 billion).

Revenue is projected to increase at an average annual rate of 6,3%, from R93.9 billion in 2023/24 to R112.8 billion in 2026/27. The company expects to generate 93,7% (R291.6 billion) of its revenue through providing rail freight services.

Gautrain

The Gautrain is an 80km long mass rapid transit railway system that links Johannesburg, Pretoria and the OR Tambo International Airport. It was built to relieve traffic congestion in the Johannesburg-Pretoria traffic corridor and offer commuters a viable alternative to road transport, as Johannesburg had limited public transport infrastructure. The Gauteng 25-Year Integrated Transport Master Plan will ensure integration of transport with spatial patterns, as well as the integration between various transport modes to transport people effectively.

The Gautrain ferries more than 60 000 people a day (including weekends) or 1.2 million people a year. The Gautrain Management Agency is planning to extend the rail route by 150 km over the next 20 years, including routes through Randburg, Fourways and Soweto. This expansion is expected to create 211 000 jobs. A feasibility study that included demand modelling to determine transport needs for Gauteng in 2025 and 2037, indicated that the "cost of doing nothing" in the province will lead to major road congestion in 2037, at which stage cars will travel at an average of 15 km/h due to the doubling of car growth. The feasibility study identified the following main links and stations of the Gautrain rail network extensions: On the link between Jabulani via Cosmo City and Samrand to Mamelodi, stations will include Roodepoort, Little Falls, Fourways, Sunninghill, Olievenhoutsbosch, Irene, Tshwane East and Hazeldean.

The link between Sandton and Cosmo City will have a station in Randburg. On the link between Rhodesfield and Boksburg there will be a station at East Rand Mall and possible link-up with the OR Tambo International Airport Midfield terminal development. A future link from Cosmo City to Lanseria Airport.

Passenger rail safety

The National Railway Safety Regulator Act, 2002 (Act 16 of 2002), is the enabling legislation for setting up the independent railway safety regulator (RSR), reporting and accountable to the Minister of Transport. The mandate of the RSR is to:

- oversee safety in railway transport, while operators remain responsible for managing the safety of their operations;
- develop an appropriate regulatory framework through the development of regulations and standards for safe railway operations;
- monitor and ensure safety compliance by conducting audits, inspections, safety assessments and occurrence investigations;
- collect and disseminate information relating to safe railway operations;
- promote the harmonisation of the railway safety regime of South Africa with the Southern African Development Community (SADC) railway operations; and
- promote improved safety performance to support the use of rail.

In line with this mandate, the RSR has, in collaboration with the railway industry and the South African Bureau of Standards, developed a series of standards to ensure a common and consistent approach to railway safety in areas such as safety management, technical and operational requirements, and the management of human factors. A key to the successful regeneration of the railway system in South Africa, and the subregion, is the interoperability of the railways. This implies consistent standards and common usage of technology where railway infrastructure is used by more than one operator.

The RSR and the railway industry continue to collaborate in developing the overarching broad technical and operating standards. The need for harmonisation of safety standards within the SADC region is of strategic importance. The RSR is facilitating efforts to adopt and align the current railway safety standards by regional railway operators through the Southern African Railways Association (SARA). Since the RSR's creation, there has been increased awareness of safety in railways, improvements in safety management and

accountability, and standardisation of safety management systems among railway operators in South Africa and regional railways operating into South Africa.

The permit system employed by the RSR ensures the standardisation of safety management systems. Through its SARA membership, the RSR plays a leading role in regional safety issues. The RSR played a central part in developing the Regional Safety Policy Framework and safety standards and in updating the Handbook on the Transportation of Hazardous Materials by Rail. Since the reintroduction of the railway police, there has been a significant drop in crime on trains and at train stations.

Civil aviation

Civil aviation is vital to international trade, investment, and tourism, as well as contributing to domestic transport, sports and recreation. Air transport connects South Africa to cities around the world and generates benefits to consumers and the wider economy by providing speedy connections between cities. The DoT's Civil Aviation programme exists to facilitate the development of an economically viable air transport industry that is safe, secure, efficient, environmentally friendly and compliant with international standards through regulations and investigations, and to oversee aviation public entities. Plans are under way to develop a business case for a government-owned national aviation academy.

Civil aviation safety and security

The South African Civil Aviation Authority (SACAA) will focus on strengthening its effort in the implementation of General Aviation Safety Strategy through the use of innovation and technological solutions. The SACAA led a coordinated process of audits conducted by the following international bodies:

- The United States Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) following an audit conducted in November 2021. The final outcome audit assessment confirmed that South Africa has retained its category 1 status with the United States. The benefit of this outcome is that South African airlines, can operate directly into the United States with no hindrance.
- August 2022, South Africa was also subjected to a Universal Security Audit Programme by the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO). South Africa has now received the final report from ICAO and the State received an unqualified audit opinion with no significant security concerns raised by ICAO.
- In November 2022, South Africa's aviation security cargo system was assessed by the United States Transport Security Administration. The outcome of this assessment confirmed yet again that the cargo security system of South Africa is on par with that of the US. As a result, the TSA granted South Africa permanent recognition. This means that South African cargo operators wishing to operate in the US can do so unhindered, without a need to undergo individuals' assessment by the US.
- In November 2022, South Africa also received the final report from the United States Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) following an audit conducted in November 2021. The final outcome of this assessment confirmed that South Africa has retained its category 1 status with the United States. The benefit of this outcome is that South African airlines, can operate directly into the United States with no hindrance.
- In March 2023, South Africa was again audited by ICAO under its Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme. From this audit, South Africa did not attract any significant safety concern and received an overwhelming Effective Implementation (EI) score of around 92%. This represents a significant improvement from the 87,39% that ICAO gave the country in the 2017 audit. The recognition of South Africa's aviation systems by leading aviation states and bodies has huge economic benefits for the state and the operators in the country.

Aviation infrastructure

The National Civil Aviation Policy acknowledges that airports are currently not integrated into a meaningful network that contributes to the socio-economic development of the country. The National Airports Development Plan has been initiated to guide present and future airport development, the development of individual airports integrated within their broader spatial and transport contexts; and facilitate and promote development of aerotropolis and airport cities in consultation with relevant stakeholders.

An integrated airport network system has the potential to support the NDP's objective by contributing to growing the economy and ensuring that potential investments are utilised effectively and efficiently through economic initiatives such as the aerotropolis, airport cities, special economic zones linked to international airports to promote economic growth, trade and tourism and job creation. It could further facilitate the expansion of tourism, including sport and adventure tourism.

There are approximately 128 licensed airports, of which 10 are designated as international airports and 68 voluntarily registered airports. Of these, nine are owned by ACSA, nine owned by provincial governments, 38 military airports and around 100 municipal (local and district) airports. There are also numerous privately-owned licensed airports, with the vast majority of the remainder of the airports being private (business, non-profit, and individual). South Africa's nine major airports are:

- OR Tambo International Airport in Gauteng;
- Cape Town International Airport in the Western Cape;
- King Shaka International Airport in KwaZulu-Natal;
- Bram Fischer International Airport in the Free State;
- Chief Dawid Stuurman International Airport in the Eastern Cape;
- Upington International Airport in the Northern Cape;
- King Phalo Airport in the Eastern Cape;
- George Airport in the Western Cape, and
- Kimberley Airport in the Northern Cape.

Airlift Strategy

The Airlift Strategy introduces structured regulatory measures for increasing tourism growth in South Africa. In particular, this strategy is based on aviation policy directives and contributes to the county's growth by:

- aligning with the Tourism Growth Strategy and industry;
- prioritising tourism and trade markets; and
- unblocking obstacles to growth through regulatory mechanisms, and bilateral and multilateral air-services negotiations.



The overall objective of the Airlift Strategy is to increase aviation's contribution towards sustainable economic growth and job creation. This requires the creation and maintenance of an enabling framework, within which both suppliers and consumers of air-transport services may exercise reasonable flexibility and choice. The strategy enhances the prospects of South Africa as a preferred air-travel destination and synchronises the basis for bilateral air services negotiations with other priorities.

The strategy also provides specific guidelines for various unique markets, with emphasis on the needs of intra-African air services, and aims to improve the regulation of particularly the supply side of air-transport services. The DoT also developed the Airlift Implementation Plan, which provides a clear framework and capacity targets to be met. Airlines Several domestic airlines, as well as a number of smaller charter airline companies, operate in South Africa.

South African Airways (SAA)

SAA operates a full-service network in the international, regional and domestic markets. The airline is responsible for promoting air links with South Africa's key business, trading and tourism markets across the world, and contributing to key domestic air linkages. The company was placed under business rescue in December 2019 and exited the process in April 2021. It resumed operations in September 2021, operating domestically and regionally, and has since been operating six aircraft

Over the MTEF period, the airline plans to increase its operations and improve its service offering, for example, by expanding its route network. Government is in the process of concluding the sale of its majority shareholding in the company to a strategic equity partner. This is expected to attract the funding and skills required to strengthen the airline's balance sheet and improve its operations. The partnership was expected to be finalised by the end of 2022/23, but due to outstanding matters such as regulatory approvals from the Competition Commission and the Air Services Licensing Council, it was expected to be concluded in 2023/24.

Expenditure was expected to increase at an average annual rate of 50,8%, from R4.6 billion in 2022/23 to R15.9 billion in 2025/26. This significant increase is attributed to an increase in operations with the lifting of COVID-19 restrictions. Spending on goods and services constitutes 87,2% (R32 billion) of total expenditure, mainly driven by fuel, leases and maintenance costs. Revenue is expected to increase at an annual average rate of 62,8%, from R3.9 billion in 2022/23 to R16.6 billion in 2025/26. It is mainly derived from the sale of air tickets, which constitutes 99,7% of total revenue. This significant increase is attributed to the airline's anticipated increase in operations.

Resources

Roads

South Africa's road network, including unproclaimed roads, is approximately 750 000km, making it the 10th-longest road network in the world. Roads in South Africa fall under the jurisdiction of the three spheres of government (national, provincial and municipal), and responsibility for the entire road network is split between the three spheres' road authorities. Travel on South Africa's paved roads runs to about 32 billion vehicle-kms per year and this includes travel on national, provincial and local roads.

While national roads are mostly paved, the majority of the provincial network (more than 80%) consist of low-volume gravel roads, particularly in rural and peri-urban regions; and mainly provide isolated communities with access to public services, economic centres and other key facilities.

National roads

Government is responsible for overall policy, while SANRAL is the implementing agent of the national roads network. Along with the DoT, the agency plays a key role in influencing policy and setting standards. The DoT continues to improve the road network by ensuring that it is well maintained and safe.

Provincial roads

Provincial governments are responsible for planning, constructing and maintaining roads and bridges, except those falling under SANRAL or local governments. The DoT helps provincial and local governments to improve and develop the state of their roads.

Municipal roads

The construction and maintenance of most roads and streets within the municipal boundaries of cities and towns is the responsibility of the municipality concerned.

Toll roads

The toll road network comprises about 19% (3 120km) of the national road grid. The SANRAL manages some 1 832km of these toll roads. In its endeavour to continue the expansion and maintenance of the comprehensive national road network, SANRAL will continue the selective expansion of toll roads. About 1 288km of the tolled sections of national roads have been concessioned to private companies to develop, operate and maintain.

Freight transport

Africa's road access rate is only 34% compared with 50% in other geographical zones. However, roads remain the dominant mode of transportation, accounting for more than 90% of passenger and freight transport in the continent, compared with around 50% of freight in Europe.

Pipelines

South Africa consumes about 25 billion litres of petroleum products a year. Transnet Pipelines transports almost 50% of all refined petroleum products in the country for the emerging and major oil companies of South Africa. The

Tarlton storage and distribution depot is a vital conduit in the supply of fuel to Botswana.

The company plans to enhance this service. Transnet Pipelines transports all the crude requirements for the inland refinery at the National Petroleum Refiners of South Africa, from where almost 70% of their refined products, and 80% at Secunda, are transported through the pipeline network to the final markets. Transnet Pipelines owns, maintains and operates a network of 3 000km of high-pressure petroleum and gas pipelines. Investment in the pipeline sector is ongoing.

Maritime transport

South Africa is bordered by the ocean on three sides. Studies suggest that the ocean has the potential to contribute up to R177 billion to the GDP and between 800 000 and one million direct jobs. It is a catalyst to facilitate international trade thereby providing necessary maritime/marine infrastructure and services, for goods to be seamlessly transferred from the manufacturing centres to the ports as imports and exports.

Maritime Industry Development manages the promotion of the maritime industry locally, regionally and globally. Current projects aim to assist in developing programmes to improve the South African ship register and the inclusion of South Africans who are from historically disadvantaged backgrounds to participate in the maritime economic activities by supporting the establishment of a maritime broad-based black economic empowerment council.

The Oceans Economy Masterplan under Operations Phakisa is intended to use empirical evidence to galvanise stakeholders around a common understanding of challenges and opportunities, followed by the defining of a vision and the development of an action plan to address these challenges. As part of its contribution to unlock the economic potential of the ocean, the DoT will look at a number of key area, including a regional coastal shipping agreement within the Southern African Development Community (SADC), establishment of a national shipping carrier and corporatisation of the Transnet National Ports Authority.

The DoT's Marine Transport programme implements the Comprehensive Maritime Transport Policy (CMTP) to promote maritime transport, develop infrastructure, and ensure compliance. The programme works with the Ports Regulator, National Ports Authority, SAMSA, industry and international bodies. Marine transport encompasses all forms of transport by sea, intermodal links and inland ports. It serves a large degree for the freight market and, in the South African context, offers no significant passenger-carrying ability.

The accelerated implementation of the CMTP towards the goal of South Africa becoming an International Maritime Centre by 2030 is expected to achieve the following:

- Create enhanced maritime awareness by participating in international maritime platforms such as the Rio Competition in 2023.
- Establish the Maritime Development Fund (MDF).
- Create a shift from road to rail – open new markets for cargo movements.
- Create and maintain port capacity to support trade in ports through an effective port tariff methodology and strategy.
- Secure about 6% government cargo and use that to develop coastal shipping.

As a build-up and focused coordination, the following annual maritime thematic priorities have been agreed upon:

- 2022: Benefiting from the Maritime Value Chain;
- 2023: National Shipping Company;
- 2024: SADC Coastal Shipping;
- 2025: Maritime Infrastructure and Services;
- 2026: Revitalised South African Merchant Shipping;
- 2027: South Africa: Moving Our Strategic Cargo;
- 2028: A Vibrant South African Maritime Brand;
- 2029: Africa: A Thriving Maritime Market; and
- 2030: An International Maritime Centre in Africa.

Comprehensive Maritime Transport Policy (CMTP)

South African's length of the coastline is estimated to be approximately 3 000km. In South Africa, the greatest challenge has been the absence of a maritime transport policy that is required to provide guidance to the industry. The much-awaited Maritime Transport Policy will create certainty in the transport sector and the logistics market.

There are more than 89 464 merchant ships trading internationally, transporting different types of cargoes and registered, in 150 nations, thus growing marine international trade by 4% per annum. South Africa currently has four ships on its ship register and there is commitment to grow the register through the creation of a conducive environment and providing incentives to ship owners as an encouragement to set up offices and possibly register under the South African flag.

The CMTP serves as the embodiment of government's commitment to the growth, development and transformation of South Africa's maritime transport sector. It represents South Africa's long-term vision, the underpinning philosophy and principles that inform its development and the direction that government has committed to take the sector to reach its full potential. One of the key strategic objectives of the CMTP is to develop South Africa to be an International Maritime Centre in Africa. In considering this bold objective, it is important to note that the CMTP Implementation Plan 2030 envisages that this status may be achieved by 2030.

In the second year of the Maritime Decade, the focus is highlighting the sailing and luxury boat building subsector as being part of what the country offers to the world. South Africa's maritime sector must develop beyond its ability to serve national interest and provide efficient services to the global industry. With the onset of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, South Africa should promote maritime analytical skills and tools. There is a need to learn from the excellence in the ship and boat building industry, where South Africa is already recognised in the world and ranking number two, after France, as leader in the manufacture and distribution of catamarans and other sophisticated luxury yachts.

One of the areas requiring a better marine footprint is shipping and the CMTP Implementation Plan 2030 identifies coastal shipping as a key instrument, laying a firm foundation to build and grow the maritime sector. South Africa is expected to take steps to promote the development of a national shipping company in the light of the renewed impetus brought about by the CMTP.

Maritime training

The South African Maritime Training Academy, at Simon's Town in the Western Cape, provides advanced training to the broader maritime sector, including the merchant navy, harbour-craft operations, the fishing industry and the South African Navy. The South African Merchant Navy Academy, established at Granger Bay, is integrated with the Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT), with a similar training facility at the Durban University of Technology (DUT). Deck and engineering students and officers complete their academic training at the CPUT and DUT, while lower classes of certificates are offered at the Northlink College, situated in the Duncan Dock area in Cape Town.

This training institution also caters for deck, engine-room and catering department ratings. SAMSA is responsible for setting all standards of training certification and watch-keeping on behalf of the DoT, while the Maritime Education and Training Board is responsible for accrediting all maritime courses. Other maritime training organisations offer a wide range of courses that have been developed within the South African maritime industry. These are situated mainly in the ports of Cape Town and Durban and, to a lesser degree, Gqeberha.

As part of an initiative to reduce the vacancy rate of at least 45 000 jobs in the maritime industry, 12 further education and training (FET) colleges across the country offer courses aimed at equipping young people for a career in the industry. The FET colleges will meet at least 80% of the industry's skills demands, producing artisans such as riggers, welders and boiler makers. Annually, between 1 200 and 1 600 students enter the maritime industry after completing their studies.

Ports

Along its 3 000km-long coastline, South Africa has eight commercial seaports: Richards Bay, Durban, East London, Ngqura, Gqeberha, Mossel Bay, Cape Town and Saldanha. South Africa is situated on a major sea route, which facilitates the safe and secure movement of about 500 megatons (Mt) of crude petrochemical sea trade. This represents more than 30% of the world's petrochemical production, on board over 5 000 tanker voyages of very large crude carriers per year. The commercial ports are crucial to South Africa's transport, logistics and socio-economic development.

About 98% of South Africa's exports are conveyed by sea. The Port of Durban is the busiest container terminal in Africa and the second-busiest in the southern hemisphere after Melbourne, Australia. The Ports Authority alone employs 6 200 people at the Durban Port, with an estimated 30 000 people employed indirectly. Richards Bay is the busiest port in South Africa by tonnage and is one of the top two coal-handling ports in the world. The port focuses on bulk cargo handling while the Durban Port focuses on general cargo.

It has also been earmarked for expansion projects with R3.7 billion set aside for mobile and quayside equipment, as well as weighbridges. Safety-critical, environmental and legal compliance projects will also be carried out. Cape Town, located at the southern-most point of Africa, is ideally positioned as a hub terminal for cargo to South America and the Far East. West/East Africa cargo has grown substantially, making the Cape Town Container Terminal the terminal of choice for trans-shipment cargo. The Gqeberha Container Terminal is one of the three specialised container-handling facilities along the South African coastline.

Operation Phakisa

Operation Phakisa was modelled upon the Malaysia "Big Fast Results" methodology, where government and the private sector converged to address binding constraints which were obstructing growth and job creation. The Oceans Economy Lab was launched in 2014. South Africa is endowed with ocean space on three sides, representing a vast untapped market to grow the gross domestic product (GDP) and create jobs, thereby addressing poverty, unemployment and inequality. The Oceans Economy has the potential to grow the GDP by R177 billion and create one million new jobs by 2033. A key assumption driving the above targets was a GDP growth rate of 5% per annum and an annual job growth rate of 6%.

The binding constraints were analysed by a cross-section of public and private sector participants in a six-week Operation Phakisa Lab process, which resulted in 18 marine transport and manufacturing initiatives being crafted into a detailed three-foot plan for implementation. These initiatives addressed policy and regulation, infrastructure, skills and market development.

Safety of travellers

Road safety

Government's Road Safety Campaign has become an important part of the DoT's road safety projects and awareness efforts, especially during critical periods for road traffic management, such as the Easter long weekend and the December holidays.

At the end of 2015, it was announced that the RTMC could not use the Arrive Alive campaign anymore, as it had been registered as a brand. The safety campaign remains in place, operating under the name 365 Days of Road Safety Programme, which focuses on creating awareness all year round.

The goals of the campaign are to:

- reduce the number of road traffic accidents in general, and fatalities in particular, by 5% compared with the same period the previous year;
- improve road-user compliance with traffic laws; and
- forge improved working relationships between traffic authorities in the various spheres of government.

The campaign emphasises that the reduction in road deaths was urgent and non-negotiable. As part of efforts to alleviate the scourge of road accidents and incidents, the department continues to work tirelessly to ensure that law enforcement is declared an essential service to guarantee availability of traffic officers 24/7 on the roads. Anti-fraud and corruption operations continue to be intensified at all public and private driver learning testing centres and driving schools around the country.

Maritime safety

An estimated 7 000 vessels pass around South Africa's coastline annually, of which many are laden tankers carrying in excess of 30 megatons of crude oil. South African weather

conditions present regular challenges to vessels, often resulting in distress calls to the Cape Town-based Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre (MRCC). Piracy constitutes a serious challenge to the development and stability of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) member states, given the importance of the region's international seaborne trade and its vital contribution to regional food stocks and economic development.



Threats of piracy are of particular concern to the SADC, whose coastline and shipping lanes are extremely vulnerable to maritime crime. As the SADC's coastal area does not fall within patrol areas of the international anti-pirate forces, the SADC has taken responsibility for its own maritime security. The threat around the Horn of Africa and SADC waters detrimentally affects the SADC's trade and economy.

The SADC's Maritime Strategy entails a regional partnership with all member states contributing within their means. Not all members necessarily have the essential maritime and military capabilities, but they still contribute in other ways by providing land-based equipment such as radar and soldiers to patrol coastlines and islands. The SADC has established robust rules of engagement for anti-piracy, which are largely consistent with those of other regions and task forces. Regarding the legal framework, SADC member states are expected to:

- ratify or accede to international maritime conventions/ treaties/ regimes and the incorporation of these into their national law;
- put in place comprehensive legal regimes at national level, consistent with international law, to prosecute pirates;
- stop the practice of "catch-and-release" of pirates since it allows experienced pirates to execute more sophisticated acts of piracy;
- strengthen and harmonise regional and domestic legal frameworks for arrest, awaiting-trial detention, prosecution and imprisonment or repatriation of pirates; and
- take responsibility for its own maritime security in cooperation with other regions, task forces, navies and role players.

The MRCC enables South Africa to exercise its responsibilities to the international community by employing state-of-the-art search-and-rescue infrastructure and services. South Africa has a well-established pollution prevention strategy, and is ready to respond in case of threats to the environment or to provide assistance to vessels at risk. The country acts in terms of the Indian Ocean Memorandum of Understanding (IOMOU) on Port State Control and has a similar agreement with the states of West Africa in the form of the Abuja MoU.

Search and rescue services

The Southern African Search and Rescue Organisation (Sasar) has been in existence since 1957. It was formalised through the enactment of the South African Maritime and Aeronautical Search and Rescue (SAR) Act, 2002 (Act 44 of 2002). The Act gave the organisation a statutory mandate to coordinate all search and rescue activities within South Africa's area of responsibility. Its mandate is to ensure a coordinated and effective maritime and aeronautical search and rescue service within the South African search and rescue regions.

The search and rescue service is provided in terms of the obligations accepted by South Africa after signing and ratification of relevant IMO and ICAO Conventions inter alia, the International Convention on Maritime Search and Rescue, 1979 and the Convention on International Civil Aviation, 1944.

Other objectives include:

- minimising the loss of life and personal injury to aviators and mariners;
- minimising time spent searching for persons in distress by using top-of-the-range technology, research and development, education, regulation and enforcement;
- promoting and enhancing regional search and rescue capacity or capability and ensuring optimal use of search and rescue scarce resources;
- ensuring the implementation of international standards and recommended practices; and
- improving cooperation between aeronautical and maritime search and rescue authorities.

South Africa is responsible for a huge search and rescue area, representing about 10% of the globe and about 28.5 million square kilometres in total. The South African area is divided into the aeronautical and maritime search and rescue areas. The aeronautical search and rescue region covers Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa and Eswatini, and associated flight information regions.

The maritime search and rescue area stretches about halfway between South Africa and South America on the western side, and about halfway between South Africa and Australia on the eastern side. It also borders on Namibia,

Angola, South Africa and Mozambique on the northern side and then extends to the south pole. Relevant operational structures and substructures were established for Sasar to execute its mandate successfully. The Aeronautical Rescue Coordination Centre (ARCC) and the MRCC are the primary structures responsible for the execution of Sasar's statutory mandate.

The ARCC and the MRCC are based at ATNS and SAMSA. The search and rescue only works when several countries and all stakeholders collaborate across borders. This culture of collaboration dates back to 1959 when the Convention on International Civil Aviation first made provision for cooperation between states. According to this provision, states will individually or in cooperation with other states, arrange for the establishment and prompt provision of the search and rescue services within their territories to ensure that people in distress get assistance. Regional cooperation also uses scarce resources and helps nations to avoid duplicating efforts and facilities. Through this collaboration, services are provided for poorer states in a uniform way across a wide area. Collaboration also reduces the overall cost of the search and rescue operations.



Green Transport Strategy (GTS)

The movement of goods and services in time and space defines and influences economic activity. Demand for transport shapes the urban landscape and influences peoples' spatial choices in relation to schooling, places of work, religious services, and economic services such as banking, shopping and basic lifestyle requirements. Businesses also choose to establish themselves based on market proximity and size, and ease of transport supporting labour, goods and services. These choices contribute in ways that are either favourable or extremely compromising to the well-being of individuals, households and businesses.

According to the Green Transport Strategy (GTS) for South Africa (2018-2050), emissions from the transport sector in South Africa account for 10,8% of the country's total greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. In addition to these direct emissions arising from the combustion of fuels, there are indirect emissions from the production, refining and transportation of fuels. Continued growth within the transport sector is likely to have an increasing impact on land resources, water quality, air quality and biodiversity. In urban centres, transport is a major contributor to air pollution and emissions include nitrous oxides and particulates, which contribute to the brown haze seen over many of South Africa's main cities.

These pollutants have a significant impact on human health, increasing risks of respiratory diseases, heart disease, lung cancer and low birth weight – with children and the elderly particularly vulnerable. This places an even greater burden on the healthcare system with substantial medical costs. Planes, trains and automobiles, carriages, carts and coaches, from history's earliest to modern man's most sophisticated modes of transport, have changed through the ages with little attention paid to man's first step in mobility: walking. In South Africa, walking is one of the most utilised forms of getting people from one place to another, but at enormous cost: financially, emotionally, morally and physically.

It is the responsibility of the DoT to contribute to national economic development through a people-centred approach that creates opportunity and stimulates growth. The department intends to do this by driving the goals of the National Transport Master Plan 2050 as South Africa confronts its crossroads to provide safe, efficient, reliable and affordable transport. This makes the need for real change within the transport sector urgent and imperative. The GTS aims to minimise the adverse impact of transport on the environment, while addressing current and future transport demands.

This is underpinned by sustainable development principles. The strategy promotes green mobility to ensure that the transport sector supports the achievement of green economic growth targets and the protection of the environment. The objectives of the GTS include:

- enabling the transport sector to contribute its fair share to the national effort to combat climate change in a balanced fashion;
- promoting behavioural changes towards sustainable mobility alternatives through information, education and awareness raising;
- engaging the low-carbon transition of the sector, to assist with the aligning and developing of policies which promote energy efficiency and emission control measures in all transport modes;
- minimising the adverse effects of transport activities on the environment; and
- facilitating the sector's just transition to a climate resilient transport system and infrastructure.

Road transport has been identified as the primary source of transport-related carbon dioxide emissions in South Africa, contributing 91,2% of total transport GHG emissions. The heavy reliance of the sector on fossil fuels contributes significantly to total GHG emissions for the country. This justifies a focus on immediate and targeted interventions around road transport to ensure a significant reduction of emissions in the transport sector as a whole. This requires commitment to resources: significant long-term finance and investment, as well as supplementary work to prepare detailed business plans for finance and investment in transport-related mitigation. There are broad-scale economic opportunities for growth in the public and private sectors.

Some of the benefits include access to employment opportunities for poor communities, an efficiently run public transport system, access to clinics and other healthcare services and less polluted air. Improvements in transport efficiency also have positive knock-on effects for all economic sectors that use transport. During the MTSF, as part of implementation of the GTS, the DoT planned to develop its carbon emission just transition plan to ensure that it contributes to the country's target of keeping emissions between 398 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (Mt CO2e) and 614 Mt CO2e range and the commitments set out in the Nationally Determined Contributions.

Transport Month

October is Transport Month. During this month, the DoT and its entities showcase transport infrastructure services in aviation; maritime; public transport and roads. Transport Month is also used to further advance the country's road safety initiatives, while also creating awareness of the economic benefits of the sector. The aim is to raise awareness of the important role of transport in the economy and encourage civic society and business to help make transport safer, more affordable, accessible and reliable.

Government's investments in rail, roads and public transport are changing the way people access their places of work, study and entertainment. These investments also help to grow our economy and address the challenges of unemployment, poverty and inequality. October was declared Transport Month in 2005 during the Transport Lekgotla.







SOUTH AFRICA
YEARBOOK
2024/25

Water and Sanitation

South Africa is a water-scarce country and rated the 30th driest in the world, with a rapidly increasing population. This is based on its average rainfall of 500 millimetres (mm) compared to the world average of 860 mm. The country's rainfall is unpredictable and common periods of drought limit the water resources even further. Rivers that used to flow throughout the year are now dry while others flow only during rainy seasons. Climate change continues to present changes in temperature, precipitation and extreme weather events.

South Africa's average annual rainfall is about half the global average. The country also has a very high evaporation rate. Raw water availability in South Africa could, however, rapidly deteriorate as demand escalates due to both economic and population growth. In addition, there are factors which could result in a contraction of supply, such as increasing physical losses in municipal distribution systems, degradation of wetlands, and the impact of climate change.

The mandate of the Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) is set out in the National Water Act, 1998 (Act 36 of 1998) and the Water Services Act, 1997 (Act 108 of 1997)). The department's legislative mandate is to ensure that the country's water resources are protected, managed, used, developed, conserved and controlled by regulating and supporting the delivery of effective water supply and sanitation.

This is done in accordance with the requirements of water-related policies and legislation that are critical in delivering on people's right to have enough food and water, growing the economy, and eradicating poverty. Most of South Africa's freshwater comes from catchments that receive the highest rainfall (strategic water source areas). There are 22 strategic water source areas occupying 8% of the land; however, these provide 50% of the surface run-off (water in wetlands, streams and rivers). The strategic water source areas support the water needs of approximately 60% of the population, 67% of national economic activity, and supply approximately 70% of irrigation water.

Agriculture is the largest water use at 61%, followed by municipal use at 27% (including industrial and commercial users provided from municipal systems), with power generation, mining and bulk industrial use, livestock and conservation and afforestation jointly making up the remaining 12%. The assurance level at which agricultural water is supplied is lower than for other sectors at 90%. Water for power generation is seen as strategically important and is provided with the highest assurance of supply at 99,5%; which translates to a 1:200-year risk of failure.

Agricultural consumption is largely unmetered, and there are concerns about unauthorised abstraction and water wastage in the sector. Chapter 4 of the National Development Plan (NDP) envisages a South Africa that recognises the importance of secure and equitable access to water and sanitation as catalysts for socio-economic development. This is given expression by Priority 1 (economic transformation and job creation) and Priority 4 (spatial integration, human settlements and local government) of government's 2019-2024 Medium-Term Strategic Framework (MTSF), with which the work of the DWS is aligned.

Over the medium term, the department plans to focus on providing reliable water and sanitation services; improving the regulation of water quality through the application of blue drop, green drop and no drop incentive schemes; and prioritising the integration of water resource planning and development. Transfers to municipalities, public corporations and departmental agencies represent the largest component of the department's budget, accounting for an estimated 64,2% (R47.3 billion) of total spending over the medium term.

These transfers are expected to increase at an average annual rate of 3,7%, from R13.3 billion in 2023/24 to R14.8 billion in 2026/27. Large water resource projects, including the raising of the Clanwilliam Dam wall and the uMkhomazi Water Project, will be prioritised over the period ahead. These projects receive funds in 2024/25 and 2025/26 through the budget facility for infrastructure and the Water Trading Entity's capital augmentation grant. The department also works with water boards and municipalities to fast-track the delivery of water and sanitation services funded through the regional bulk infrastructure grant and the water services infrastructure grant.

Despite Cabinet-approved reductions amounting to R5 billion over the medium term, expenditure is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 3.6%, from R21.4 billion in 2023/24 to R23.8 billion in 2026/27. This is due to allocations in the current and previous two budgets from the budget facility for infrastructure water resource and bulk water infrastructure projects. To mitigate against any negative impacts of the reductions on performance, the department plans to curtail spending on travel and subsistence and consultants; capital augmentation transfers to the Water Trading Entity and the Magalies and uMngeni-uThukela water boards; and direct and indirect grants to local government.

Providing reliable water and sanitation services

To improve the provision of reliable water and sanitation services in municipalities over the medium term, the department plans to complete 37 regional bulk infrastructure project phases (7 mega, 22 large and 8 small) and 234 small water infrastructure projects through the water services infrastructure grant that supports water services authorities such as municipalities and certain water boards. To achieve these targets, the Water Services Management programme is allocated R44 billion over the medium term.

Regulating water quality and access

Over the period ahead, the department intends to strengthen its regulatory function through increased capacity. This is expected to be achieved through establishing a regulator commission, an independent advisory body tasked with overseeing the trading of water and ensuring its continuous, equitable and sustainable provision. In addition to its regulatory role, the department plans to strengthen interventions to address environmental and wastewater pollution in communities and support municipalities in which water and sanitation services have deteriorated.

As such, it plans to assess 1 032 water supply systems in 2025/26 for compliance with blue drop regulatory requirements, and 1 004 wastewater systems in both 2024/25 and 2026/27 for compliance with green drop regulatory requirements. It also intends to finalise 80% of water use licence applications within 90 working days

of receipt. Expenditure on these activities is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 4,7%, from R228.5 million in 2023/24 to R262.1 million in 2026/27, in the Water Resources Regulation subprogramme in the Water Resources Management programme.

Integrating and improving water resource planning and development

To improve infrastructure planning and development and ensure better integration of these two functions, the department plans to oversee the completion of seven strategic projects, including the uMkhomazi bulk water supply scheme; the raising of the Clanwilliam Dam wall; and projects aimed at meeting high water demand for large strategic users such as Eskom, Sasol and Exxaro.

Expenditure on these projects is expected to increase from R3.3 billion in 2023/24 to R6.4 billion in 2026/27 at an average annual rate of 24,3%, due to additional allocations in the current and previous two budgets from the budget facility for infrastructure and the entity's capital augmentation grant. This work will be funded through transfers to the Water Trading Entity in the Water Resources Infrastructure Management subprogramme in the Water Resources Management programme.

To decrease over-reliance on surface water, the department intends to diversify its water mix by exploring other sources such as groundwater and aquifer systems, and by treating acid mine drainage water and desalinating sea water. Accordingly, four catchment plans for mine water and wastewater management are scheduled for implementation over the period ahead.

There are also plans in place to maintain and refurbish water resource infrastructure to ensure its optimal performance in securing water supply. These plans are related to the maintenance of conveyance systems such as the Orange-Vaal: Vaalharts, Fish Sundays government water schemes and the Qamata irrigation scheme. Funding for these initiatives is made available in the Water Resources Information and Management subprogramme, which has a budget of R1.9 billion over the next three years, in the Water Resources Management programme.

Drinking water

Tap water inside their dwellings, on-site or off-site, is most common among households in Western Cape (99,3%), Gauteng (97,6%), and Free State (93,3%) and least common in Limpopo (64,2%) and the Eastern Cape (67,2%), according to Statistics South Africa's General Household Survey of 2023. Although the percentage of households in the Eastern Cape with access to water in the dwelling, on- or off-site increased by 23,1 percentage points between 2002 and 2012, access has declined by 12 percentage points to 67,2% since then.

A similar pattern is observed in Limpopo where access to piped or tap water in their dwellings, off-site or on-site increased from 73,8% to 84% in 2010, before declining to 64,2% in 2023, almost 10 percentage points lower than in two decades earlier in 2002. On a more positive note, access to water in KwaZulu-Natal increased by 6,1 percentage points to 81,5% over this period.

Although, nationally, access to tap water inside their dwellings, off-site or on-site improved by 2,6 percentage points between 2002 and 2023, it is notable that access declined in five provinces during this period. Declines were observed in Limpopo (-9,6 percentage points), Mpumalanga (-3,9 percentage points), the Northern Cape (-2,4 percentage points), the Free State (-2,3 percentage points) and Gauteng (-1,1 percentage points). Although the percentage of households with access to water has been declining, it is important to note that a larger number of households received tap water in 2023 than two decades earlier.

An estimated 45,2% of households had access to piped water in their dwellings in 2023. A further 29,8% accessed water on-site while 9,7% relied on communal taps and 2,3% relied on neighbours' taps. Although generally households' access to water improved, 3,3% of households still had to fetch water from rivers, streams, stagnant water pools, dams, wells, and springs in 2023. About 97,2% of households in metros had access to tap water.

This type of access to water was most common in Cape Town (99,8%), Johannesburg (98,9%), and Ekurhuleni (98,6%). The lowest access amongst metros was recorded in Nelson Mandela Bay (87,6%) and Mangaung (91,7%). Despite a rather modest increase in the percentage of households with access to tap water between 2002 and 2023 (2,0 percentage points), the number of households with access to piped water from municipalities increased by 60,4% between 2004 and 2023, expanding from 9,2 million to 15,2 million during this period.

Fetching water

Almost three-quarters (74,8%) of households who did not have water in their dwellings, or on their yards took less than 30 minutes to fetch water (that is, to go there, get water and come back) from the nearest collection point. A further 18,8% took between 31-60 minutes. Households that took less than 30 minutes were most common in the Western Cape (100%) and Gauteng (94,9%) and least common in Limpopo (64,4%) and KwaZulu-Natal (63,7%).

Water quality regulation and access

The department enforces regulatory measures that ensure the provision of safe water and the effective management of wastewater. To this end, it implements the green and blue drop certification programmes, which are incentive-based regulatory tools that measure the capacity and environmental, financial, technical and quality compliance of water service institutions.

The department plans to assess 1 004 wastewater systems in 2023/24 for compliance with the green drop regulatory requirements and 1 035 water supply systems in 2024/25 for compliance with blue drop regulations. To improve equitable access to water resources, the department plans to finalise 80% of water use authorisation applications within 90 days of application.

Expenditure for these activities is within the Water Resources Regulation subprogramme in the Water Resources Management programme. The subprogramme has a total budget of R694.1 million over the medium term.

Integrated Water Resource

Management

In its efforts to ensure water security, the department continues to adopt an integrated approach to maintaining existing water resource infrastructure, supplying bulk water to strategic users such as large industrial companies through the Water Trading Entity, and supporting the long-term sustainability of water resources. As such, the department considers the impact of climate change, the role of ecosystems, rainwater runoff and storage, the use of other water resources such as groundwater and aquifer systems, water conservation and water demand management plans.

The department also plans to implement and monitor the river eco-status monitoring programme in 221 rivers and implement five catchment plans for mine water and wastewater management.

Improving water services

To improve water services, over the medium term, the department plans to ensure reliable water and sanitation services by overseeing 25 large regional bulk infrastructure project phases and 14 small regional infrastructure project phases.

National water resource infrastructure projects

Government plans to build additional surface water storage capacity to capture the remaining 25% of South Africa's available surface water resources, to augment the national bulk water resource infrastructure. It is often more cost-effective to increase the capacity of existing infrastructure rather than to build new infrastructure, and the department has several projects to raise the height of dam walls to increase the storage capacity of the dams.

The R800 million project, which was funded by government through the fiscus, to raise the wall of the Hazelmere Dam to augment water supply to the KwaZulu-Natal North Coast has been completed. The project to raise the wall of the Clanwilliam Dam to improve water supply for agriculture and to provide for water allocations to resource-poor farmers on the West Coast of the Western Cape is finally getting under way.

Several tenders for construction work and materials supply have been awarded, others have been issued, and construction teams are on site. This R4 billion project, which is also funded from the fiscus, is due to be completed by April 2028. Another project funded from the fiscus is the raising of the Tzaneen Dam wall, worth R555 million, which will augment water supply in the Greater Letaba River Catchment in Limpopo Province is also now being implemented. The Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA) has been appointed as the Implementing Agent; procurement is under way, and the Department's Construction Unit is on site, with an anticipated completion date of December 2024.

Phase Two of the Lesotho Highlands Water Project which augments water supply to Gauteng by 490 million cubic metres and some areas of the Free State, the Northern Cape and the North West is being implemented. The project will increase water security in the Integrated Vaal River System, which is the primary water resource for the Gauteng economy.

The main contracts for the Polihali Dam, the Polihali to Katse Transfer Tunnel and the Senqu Bridge were awarded during the 22/23 financial year and contractors are on site. The estimated cost of Phase Two is R39 billion, with the Trans-Caledon Tunnel Authority (TCTA) raising the funding in the market and it is due to be completed by 2028. The President of the Republic visited Lesotho in 2023 with a delegation from South Africa, to signal the official launch of Phase Two.

The delayed Mzimvubu project is on track, following engagements between the DWS and National Treasury. The department has reconfigured the project to make it more affordable, which has resulted in the estimated cost being reduced from R18 billion to R8 billion. Work is under way and construction of the Ntabelanga Dam, which is one of the project components, has commenced. Similarly, the R23 billion uMkhomazi project is on track after being stalled for several years due to unresolved matters regarding concerns from municipalities.

This project aims to increase water security in the uMngeni Water Supply System, which supplies eThekwini, uMgungundlovu, iLembe, Ugu, Harry Gwala District Municipalities and Msunduzi Local Municipality. The funding issue was resolved during the last financial year, in collaboration with the President's Infrastructure Fund. The TCTA is busy with preparatory work and construction work is due to commence in late 2024, with an estimated completion date of 2030.

Sanitation

Environmental hygiene plays an essential role in the prevention of many diseases. It also impacts on the natural environment and the preservation of important natural assets, such as water resources. Proper sanitation is one of the key elements in improving environmental hygiene.

Legislation

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa of 1996 enshrines the basic human right to have access to sufficient water, as well as a safe and healthy environment. Government fulfils these rights through the DWS, assisted by specific legislation, including the:

- National Water Act of 1998, which ensures that South Africa's water resources are protected, used, developed, conserved, managed and controlled in a sustainable and equitable manner, for the benefit of all people;
- Water Services Act of 1997, which prescribes the legislative duty of municipalities as water-service authorities to provide water supply and sanitation according to national standards and norms. It also regulates water boards as important water service providers and gives the executive authority and responsibility to the Minister of Water and Sanitation to support and strengthen the capacity of municipalities to manage their own affairs, exercise their powers and perform their functions;
- Water Research Act, 1971 (Act 34 of 1971), which provides for the promotion of water-related research through the Water Research Commission (WRC) and the Water Research Fund; and
- National Environmental Management Act (NEMA), 1998 (Act 107 of 1998), which provides for cooperative environmental governance by establishing principles for decision-making on matters affecting the environment,

institutions that promote cooperative governance and procedures for coordinating environmental functions exercised by organs of state.

Challenges in Water and Sanitation

A number of external and internal environment matters affect the DWS's ability to deliver on its mandate. Some of these present various challenges and opportunities impacting on its operations, influencing planning decisions and the required trade-offs. This results in the prioritisation of certain interventions and programmes over others, taking into consideration the required resourcing and associated risks.

Deteriorating water ecosystems

South Africa's aquatic ecosystems include seven of the world's freshwater ecoregions, and are characterised by a wide range of river, wetland and estuarine ecosystem types. Many of these aquatic ecosystems make up the country's ecological infrastructure – nature's equivalent of built infrastructure that generates and delivers benefits in the water value chain.

Ecological infrastructure is currently an under-realised asset that can play a significant role in enhancing returns-on-investment in built infrastructure (for example, dams), especially if its maintenance is explicitly incorporated into the planning and construction of built infrastructure. Many of the high-value aquatic ecological infrastructure assets are poorly protected, and in some areas of the country are under severe pressure, from intensive agriculture, mining and urban sprawl that results in loss or degradation of ecosystems. Like built infrastructure, ecological infrastructure needs to be maintained, and in some cases restored so that its socio-economic benefits could be realised.

It is estimated that South Africa has lost more than 50% of its wetlands, and of the remaining 3.2 million hectares, a third are already in a poor condition limiting their ability to inter alia regulate water flow and purify water. The loss and degradation of ecological infrastructure negatively affects system yield and increases water-related risks. Degraded wetlands, for example, lose their ability to release water in times of drought, or to recharge groundwater supplies. Degraded ecological infrastructure increases the vulnerability of people and built infrastructure to floods and increases maintenance and repair costs on built infrastructure. It is often more cost effective to rehabilitate ecological infrastructure than to be faced with an ongoing need to repair or replace built infrastructure.

Programmes

Water Resources Management

The purpose of the programme is to ensure the protection, use, development, conservation, management and control of water resources in a sustainable manner for the benefit of all people and the environment. It provides for the development of a knowledge base for proper planning and informed decision-making. It also provides for the development of effective policies and procedures as well as oversight of all water resource management institutions. South Africa as a water-scarce country is faced with the challenge of protecting water resources (quantity and quality) and the need to utilise water for social and economic development. Some of the country's water resources are overused (polluted, the available water is already allocated and the surrounding environment is in a poor state).

Other water resources are hardly used and the dependent environment is still in a natural state. However, South Africa has very few water resources that are still in a natural state and hence the requirement for different levels of protection. The National Water Act of 1998 provides decision-making tools to achieve a balance between protecting and utilising water resources to ensure that water is available for current and future human use. The classification system and the determination of the resource quality objectives are two mechanisms that are used to balance protection and development. The classification system states the acceptable impacts on the water resource and the unacceptable impacts in order to protect the resource.

It also states the amount of water that can be used from the water resource. The classes, therefore, allow for a grouping of water resources of those that are in a very good state and those that are in a very poor state. The resource quality objectives are an indication of the required level of protection for each water resource. The objectives, therefore, state the desired water quantity and quality, condition of the instream and riparian (river bank) habitat, as well as the condition of the aquatic animal and plant life.

The National Water and Sanitation Master Plan (NWSMP) indicates that by 2040, treated acid mine drainage and desalinated seawater will make a significant contribution to South Africa's water mix, groundwater usage will increase, and the over-reliance on surface water will reduce. Although some large surface water schemes are currently planned and developed, South Africa is approaching full utilisation of available surface water yields and is running out of suitable sites for developing large dams.

The water reuse could guarantee availability of water supply (particularly for non-potable water uses); substantially lower water bills; supplement industry's profitability by harvesting valuable resources contained in wastewater; and practise more environmentally sound water usage operations. Although the NWSMP indicates a planned reduction in the reliance of surface water, there will be development of strategic water resources infrastructure projects – Lesotho Highlands Water Project Phase 2, uMkhomazi Water Project, Mokolo Crocodile (West) Water Augmentation project and many more.

The recent water-related disasters have shown that water security is significantly impacted due to the delays in implementing certain infrastructure projects as well as water demand management. Although many scholars suggest the diversification of the water mix as a way to respond to water insecurity, this would not be sufficient to balance supply and demand if water demand management is not implemented. Climate change is projected to increase the variability of rainfall throughout the country, and to reduce average rainfall.

However, the total water supply requirements in the country will increase due to population and associated economic growth. There is a need to optimise the water mix which is currently strongly dominated by surface water, with some groundwater and return flows. The delayed reaction of groundwater to climate change impacts and other stresses such as land-use change is one of the motivating factors for

its increased use. In the face of climate change, groundwater, which will not experience the increased evaporation that will impact on surface water as temperatures increase, will become increasingly important. Artificial recharge of aquifers will be an important element of water management.

The National Water Act of 1998 requires the establishment of national monitoring and information systems, for all aspects of water resources. There is a well-established network of monitoring points that provides for the collection of data and information to assess among other things water quantity and quality as well as water use. It further includes information on the ecological properties of water resources, both surface and groundwater. The development, maintenance and refurbishment of gauging weirs seeks to improve the coverage of rainfall and runoff gauging that has deteriorated and in some instances is no longer functional.

Strong regulation is critical to achieve water security in South Africa, in terms of water quality (in rivers and taps). An incentive-based regulation initiative pursuing excellence in wastewater service management was introduced to create a paradigm shift from minimum requirement compliance towards continued risk management. The Green Drop Report reviews the water and sanitation authorities' compliance with the requirements for wastewater service management. One of the main mechanisms of ensuring access to sufficient water, protection of the environment, and reallocation of water to advance the previously disadvantaged communities is to control water use.

Water use registration regulates the manner in which water can be used. Regulations indicate that the process of water use applications is undertaken within 300 days of submitting such application. However, the Framework Agreement for the Jobs Summit requires a review of the turnaround time for considering water use licence applications. This is essential in the effective implementation of the various projects particularly emerging farming enterprises in the agricultural sector. The aim of setting waste discharge standards is to ensure that the aquatic ecosystem will not be compromised.

It also seeks to ensure that the quality will always comply with the requirements for basic human needs and other economic uses, bearing in mind that at least some basic treatment process will be applied before the water is used. It, therefore, supports the pricing strategy in differentiating between different types of water uses and water users as it affects the charges for different uses and users.

It is one mechanism that the pricing strategy achieves equity. Compliance, monitoring and enforcement is one of the priority focus areas identified in the second edition of the National Water Resources Strategy. It is essential to support water allocation and water allocation reform to ensure that water is used according to authorisation conditions, and by legally authorised water users.

The National Water Act of 1998 provides for the establishment and transformation of institutions to assist in giving effect to DWS's mandate. The enactment of the National Water Act of 1998 provided for the establishment of the institutional framework for water resource management. To manage water resources at the catchment level, the National Water Act of 1998 provides for the establishment of catchment management agencies that must ensure that all interested and affected stakeholders, including poor communities that have been disadvantaged and marginalised, participate in the decisions of the agencies. It also provides for the transformation of existing irrigation boards into water user associations that include emerging farmers.

Water Services Management

The programme addresses the water and sanitation services provision across the water and sanitation value chain in support of water service authorities. The integration of bulk and retail water services improves the coherence of the sector and realises economies of scale and efficient use of water. It also provides for the development of effective policies, strategies, guidelines and procedures and plans as well as oversight and regulation of all water service management institutions.

The Municipal Strategic Self-Assessment is an annual review on the effectiveness of water services management within water and sanitation authorities. The authorities, which may be a district, local, or metropolitan municipality, undertake a structured self-evaluation of their current and expected future performance in providing water and sanitation services.

The review is based on five "essence questions" for 18 "business health attributes" related to service delivery in general and water and sanitation services in particular. The Municipal Strategic Self-Assessment reports for each water and sanitation authority provide an insight particularly into the strengths and vulnerabilities in terms of water and sanitation service delivery. Water conservation and water demand management targets will be set for all water use sectors (namely agriculture, industries, mining, power generation, municipal and domestic water supply) to reduce total the water requirements from existing infrastructure.

In addition, through the existing grant mechanisms, water conservation and water demand management strategies would be implemented by supporting projects that will directly impact on bulk infrastructure requirements. Domestic rainwater harvesting should be encouraged as a way of improving household food security, income savings and improved reliability of water supply, especially in rural areas. Although mostly only suitable as augmentation, it has been proven that, with good management, rainwater harvesting can yield more economical water than formal municipal water supply.

An incentive-based regulation initiative pursuing excellence in drinking water quality was introduced to create a paradigm shift from minimum requirement compliance towards continued risk management. The Blue Drop Report reviews the water and sanitation authorities' compliance with the requirements for drinking water quality management. The review is based on five "essence questions" for 18 "business health attributes" related to service delivery in general and water and sanitation services in particular.

The National Water Act of 1998 provides for the establishment and transformation of institutions to assist in giving effect to the DWS's mandate. The enactment of the Water Services Act of 1997 provided for the establishment of the institutional framework for water services. The NDP indicates that while local government will retain responsibility for ensuring adequate service provision in its areas, regional water utilities will provide services where municipalities have

inadequate technical and financial capacities.

Entities

Breede-Gouritz Catchment Management Agency

The Breede-Gouritz Catchment Management Agency was established in terms of the National Water Act of 1998. The agency's mandate is to protect, use and conserve water resources within the Breede-Gouritz water management area. Over the medium term, the agency continues engaging with users within its area of operation as part of its public participation programme. It plans to do this while monitoring and authorising their water usage and finalising 85% of user registrations.

Consolidated water boards

The water boards are mandated, in terms of the Water Services Act of 1997, to provide bulk industrial water services to industries and bulk potable water services to municipalities within their areas of operation. The water boards vary in size, activities, customer mix, revenue base and capacity.

Inkomati-Usuthu Catchment Management Agency

The Inkomati-Usuthu Catchment Management Agency was established in terms of the National Water Act (1998). The agency is mandated to protect the use of water resources in the Inkomati-Usuthu water management area in Mpumalanga. Its functions include resource allocation, protection, use, conservation, monitoring, planning development and operations.

Rand Water

Rand Water was established in terms of the Water Services Act of 1997. The entity serves an estimated 11 million people, providing bulk potable water in Gauteng, parts of Mpumalanga, the Free State and the North West. Rand Water stores, treats and delivers water to municipalities, mines and industries in its area of service.

Trans-Caledon Tunnel Authority (TCTA)

The Trans-Caledon Tunnel Authority is a specialised liability management entity that derives its mandate from the National Water Act (1998). It is responsible for financing and implementing the development of bulk raw water infrastructure and providing treasury management services to the DWS. The entity was expected to merge with the Water Trading Entity by 2024/25 to form the National Water Resources Infrastructure Agency.

Umgeni Water

Umgeni Water was established in terms of the Water Services Act of 1997 to provide water and sanitation services in its service area, which comprises mostly rural areas in KwaZulu-Natal and the eThekwini metropolitan area. The entity supplies water to an estimated six million consumers.

The Water Trading Entity

The Water Trading Entity was established in 1983 to manage water infrastructure and resources, and the sale of raw water. It was converted into a trading entity in 2008 in terms of the Public Finance Management Act of 1999.

Water Research Commission

The legislative mandate of the Water Research Commission is set out in the Water Research Act of 1971. Its primary functions include promoting coordination, cooperation and communication in water research and development; establishing water research needs and priorities; enhancing knowledge and capacity building within the water sector; and stimulating and funding priority-based water research.

Policies and strategies

- Mine Water Management Policy: The policy seeks to balance the mining sector's economic development with the protection and sustainable use of water resources in a manner that is beneficial to all. It provides a coherent and integrated South African approach for sustainable mine water management by building on existing strengths; addressing gaps and weaknesses and seizing identified opportunities relating to mine water management, including acid mine drainage.
- Sustainable Hydropower Generation Policy: The policy aims to support the long-term energy master plan that pursues hydropower as part of the energy mix. In addition, it will provide policy positions on the establishment and development of hydropower from infrastructure owned by the DWS as part of interventions that support and contribute towards sustainable power supply in South Africa.
- Integrated Water Quality Management Policy: The policy seeks to develop an intergovernmental water quality management approach that facilitates an integrated response to address water quality management challenges in the country. The policy also strengthens the existing integrated water quality management strategy that identifies priority programmes to be implemented country-wide.
- National Water and Sanitation Bill: This is a consolidation of the National Water Act of 1998 and the Water Services Act of 1997 into a single piece of legislation. It clarifies the legislative framework regarding water management across the water and sanitation value chain. It further obviates the need for cross-reading between the two Acts.
- National Water Resource Strategy 3 (NWRS-3): The strategy provides a framework for the protection, use, development, conservation, management and control of water resources for the country as a whole. The National Water Act of 1998 requires the review of the National Water Resource Strategy (NWRS) at intervals of not more than five years and this is the third edition of the strategy.
- Review of The Water Pricing Strategy: The strategy review seeks to improve the financial viability of government's bulk raw water business to ensure that this scarce resource is valued by all citizens. One of the major changes of the review is to replace the return on asset to future infrastructure-built charge over a 10-year rolling period.

- National water and Sanitation Master Plan (NWSMP):

The plan operationalises the NWRS and aims at mobilising commitments and efforts of all role players and stakeholders in the water and sanitation sector towards collectively achieving the desired future state of the sector, as defined by government's vision, goals and targets until 2030. It provides a critical overview of the present state of the sector and the key challenges it is currently facing, together with a consolidated plan of actions required to enable the achievement of the set targets.

The plan of actions includes a detailed schedule of consolidated and prioritised interventions, actions, investments, projects and initiatives. For each action, the plan defines specific intermediate and final targets, the parties responsible for their achievement, the deadlines for delivery and the estimated costs or other required resources. The achievements are monitored and evaluated annually and the plan is updated biannually to reflect the dynamics in the sector.

National Water Policy

The National Water Policy is underpinned by three fundamental principles for managing water resources: equity, (environmental) sustainability and efficiency. All water users who do not receive their water from a service provider, local authority, water board, irrigation board, government water scheme or other bulk supplier, and who use water for irrigation, mining purposes, industrial use, feedlots or in terms of general authorisation, have a statutory obligation to register. This includes the use of surface and groundwater.

Other uses that must be registered are:

- diversion of rivers and streams;
- discharge of waste or water containing waste;
- storage, which includes any person or body storing water for any purpose from surface run-off, groundwater or fountain flow in excess of 10 000 cubic metres or where the water area at full supply level exceeds one hectare in total on land owned or occupied by that person or body, and who is not in possession of a permit or permission;
- local authorities and other bulk suppliers with their own water sources and purification works; and
- controlled activities such as irrigating with waste, power generation with water, atmospheric modification or recharging of aquifers.

An assessment of the environmental requirements of the rivers and streams concerned is conducted before a licence can be issued. To promote sustainable and equitable water resource management, the DWS has developed and continues to update a range of strategies for water management.

National Water Resource Strategy 2 (NWRS2)

The National Water Resource Strategy 2 (NWRS2) sets out the vision and strategic actions for effective water management, including the security of water supply, environmental degradation, and pollution of resources. The NWRS2 outlines key challenges, constraints and opportunities in water resource management and proposes new approaches that ensure a collective and adequate response for the benefit of all people in South Africa. The strategy also responds to the priorities set by government in the NDP and the National Water Act of 1998 imperatives that support sustainable development.

It is centred on these key objectives:

- Water supports development and the elimination of poverty and inequality. The strategy recognises that the manner in which water was allocated in the past was unequal and favoured certain sections of the population. The intention, therefore, is to redress past imbalances in the manner in which water was allocated, ensuring that water contributes to the economy and job creation.
- Water is protected, used, developed, conserved, managed and controlled in a sustainable and equitable manner. The NWRS2 also focuses on water conservation and the management of water demand as key priorities.

Raw Water Pricing Strategy

Since 1994, there have been continued efforts to reform and realign the water value chain so that it can achieve government's objectives. These include ensuring equitable access to water and sanitation, the sustainable use of water for social and economic benefit and ensuring the sustainability of water resources and water services delivery.

As part of this process, the DWS is looking at pricing, financing and economic regulation reforms in the water sector. This project reviews the Raw Water Pricing Strategy, develops infrastructure funding models and recommends an appropriate model and institutional arrangements for an economic regulator for water.

It is generally agreed that pricing and economic regulations play a key role in the provisioning of infrastructure by assuring necessary investments to support socio-economic growth and ensuring that services are widely available and accessible and priced at levels that support current and future needs.

The project contributes to the following:

- Revision of the Raw Water Pricing Strategy to ensure equitable and appropriate raw water tariffs that enable sustainable operation and management of raw water infrastructure, and fund catchment management funding models for water resources infrastructure; and
- Establishment of an economic regulator for the entire water value chain.

The project is strategic in nature and enables the DWS to have sound water-pricing policies, cost-reflective tariffs for the entire water value chain in South Africa and a good funding framework for infrastructure.

National Groundwater Strategy

Groundwater is a strategic resource in many parts of South Africa, especially in rural areas. It also plays an important role in the supply of water to small towns and villages in the drier parts of the country. There is considerable potential for additional development of groundwater resources to augment existing resources. The need for improved groundwater management to ensure sustainable and

efficient use of the resource was recognised in the National Water Resource Strategy 1 and led to the formulation of a National Groundwater Strategy through which strategic actions were undertaken.

Re-use Strategy

The DWS has developed a Water Re-use Strategy to encourage informed decisions relating to water reuse. Re-use could be increased significantly with return flows in coastal cities, where it would otherwise drain into the sea. In coastal cities, water reuse and desalination compete as two options for water conservation. Re-use is becoming increasingly acceptable and feasible due to increasing shortages, improved purification technology and decreasing treatment costs.

Membrane technologies, also used for desalination of sea water, have become more affordable and have improved. The re-use of treated wastewater would be managed to ensure public health safety.

Infrastructure upgrades and bilateral agreements

The DWS has made good progress with the preparatory work of the Lesotho Highlands Water Project, with Phase 2 under way. The project comprises the construction of Polihali Dam, which provides an additional 465 million cubic metres of water per year, bringing the total to about 1 245 million cubic metres of water per year into the Integrated Vaal River System from Lesotho.

South Africa currently receives approximately 780 million cubic metres of water per year from Lesotho into its Integrated Vaal River System which supplies water to Gauteng and the surrounding areas. The Integrated Vaal River System needs to be urgently augmented in order for it to cope with the increasing water requirements. Phase 1 of the Mokolo and Crocodile River West Water Augmentation Project, which will transfer water through a 46km pipeline and pump station from the Mokolo Dam to the Lephalale area, is complete. A second pipeline is being constructed as Phase 2A of the project to transfer water from the Crocodile River (west) to the Lephalale area.

The raising of the Hazelmere Dam wall incorporates a Piano Key Weir, which is cutting-edge technology in dam-building. The additional water that becomes available from this project is aimed at ensuring the supply of water and supporting the development of human settlements, King Shaka Airport and the Dube TradePort. The construction of the dam wall is complete and the capacity of the dam can be increased to 120% on impoundment of the previous dam level which is beneficial to water users.

The DWS is proceeding with the planning of the Mzimvubu Water Project, which entails the development of a multipurpose dam (the Ntabelanga) to supply new irrigation development, and the Laleni Dam for hydropower generation. It has initiated the raising of the Tzaneen Dam and construction of the new N'wamitwa Dam for the Groot Letaba River Water Development Project in Limpopo. The first phase of the multi-phase Lesotho Highlands Water Project entailed the construction of Katse Dam, Mohale Dam, Matsoku Diversion Tunnel and the Muela hydropower station.

Lesotho benefits from a sustainable, independent energy supply that meets the country's electricity requirements and royalty revenue from the project, while South Africa benefits from the security of supply of high-quality water that is transferred into the Vaal River system for domestic and industrial use in Gauteng. As per the provisions of the Phase 2 agreement between the governments of Lesotho and South Africa, the implementation of the Kobong Pump Storage Scheme or any other hydro scheme was subject to the outcome of a joint feasibility study.

The technical and the economic feasibility studies for the Kobong Pump Storage Scheme were completed in 2013. However, the outcome was that further studies should be undertaken. These included a market study, an integration study, geotechnical investigations and legal and commercial arrangements.

Lesotho secured funding from the World Bank to undertake the above studies, including conventional hydropower options. The further feasibility studies have looked at pumped storage and conventional hydropower options. The decision was taken to defer the pump storage option (due to prevailing economic conditions) and advance the conventional options. This entails one site at Oxbow on the Malibamatšo River and two sites on the Senqu River.

The topography of the region allows for the possibility of developing hydro-power generation in Lesotho in conjunction with the provision of water supplies to South Africa. For South Africa, construction of this dam and related infrastructure guarantees the desired level of water availability in Gauteng and the Vaal River system in the most cost-effective manner.

In parallel with water conservation measures in the Vaal River, it also influences the improvement of water quality among many benefits. Phase 2 water delivery and hydropower generation were expected to be commissioned at the same time – early 2026 and the project close out is forecast for December 2028.

The Lesotho Highlands Water Project has two main goals:

- to contribute to South Africa's economic development by providing South Africa with a supply of low-cost, high-quality water to meet the household and industrial water needs of Gauteng, the industrial heartland of South Africa; and
- to contribute to Lesotho's economic development by using the water transfer system to increase the country's capacity for the generation of electricity that meets its requirements and earn it revenue in the form of royalties on the water transferred to South Africa.

Each country has the opportunity to undertake ancillary developments within its borders. These developments include the provision of water for irrigation, potable water supply, the development of tourism, fisheries and other projects for economic and social development.

Rainwater harvesting

The National Rainwater Harvesting Strategy is an adaptation to climate change. Climate change poses significant social, economic and environmental risks, especially in developing countries. This then necessitates the implementation of high-impact climate change response measures that realise considerable mitigation, adaptation and broader socio-economic benefits.

It is in this context that the DWS, in partnership with the

Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE), is developing the National Rainwater Harvesting Strategy to provide a roadmap for enhanced planning, development and scaled-up implementation of Rainwater Harvesting as a key component of South Africa's water resources and efforts to enhance climate resilience.

The strategy provides guidance for the implementation of a series of action programmes towards the mainstreaming of rainwater harvesting in South Africa. This National Rainwater Harvesting Strategy also serves as the guiding tool for district and local municipalities to effectively and economically put rainwater harvesting into practice.

The DWS also supports a national rainwater harvesting programme, which has a narrow but important focus on the construction of above and below-ground rainwater storage tanks by rural households for food gardens and other productive water uses. Several municipalities now use roof rainwater tanks for domestic purposes. These have been found to be particularly effective when used in conjunction with other water supply options.

Though there are no hard figures yet on how many cubic millimetres per year rainwater harvesting can contribute, it is an option that can be implemented in a short timeframe. Rainwater harvesting gives access to water to people who live in areas where reticulation has not yet been implemented. The programme targets rural communities through the installation of tanks and awareness campaigns.

A resource guideline has been developed to assist municipalities that are providing rainwater harvesting systems to communities as an interim service or to reduce demand on their water supply systems with best practices. In some areas rainwater harvesting systems are provided as drought relief but the DWS is using the programme to advise municipalities to plan for alternative water sources or water mix, since municipalities seem to rely on surface water for water services and a lot of water schemes are failing because of dependency on a single source.

Desalination Strategy

The DWS has developed a supporting desalination strategy, which also includes desalination as a technology for treating water other than seawater for water reuse. Desalination of seawater could potentially provide an unlimited resource of fresh water. However, the rising cost of energy may be a deterrent. As with other infrastructure projects with potential environmental impacts, the planning for a desalination plant has to undergo an environmental impact assessment in compliance with the National Environmental Management Act (NEMA) of 1998.

The DWS ensures that desalination is considered as an option for meeting future water requirements, in particular in coastal cities where there is sufficient electricity for desalination. The target is not only to implement desalination in several locations in South Africa, but also to become an international knowledge centre in this particular field.

Resources

South Africa's water resources are, in global terms, scarce and extremely limited. The precipitation per year for Africa is 22 300 cubic metres, of which the evaporation rate is 80% and the runoff rate is 20%. Southern Africa only has 12,25% of the total water in Africa, making it a highly arid region. Rainfall is, however, relatively higher in the northern and eastern parts of southern Africa (the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Zambia and Mozambique) with the drier parts of the region including Namibia, Botswana and South Africa.

South Africa has a mean annual rainfall of approximately 500 millimetres, compared to the world's average of 860 millimetres. It is characterised by low, variably distributed rainfall as well as high evaporation rates, resulting in the uneven distribution of run-off across the country. The country experiences severe and prolonged hydrological droughts, which may last as long as 10 years at a time. The quality of water in South Africa is also negatively impacted by dissolved salts from host rocks in certain areas such as Namaqualand in the Northern Cape.

The surface water potential of the major drainage systems in South Africa is dominated by the Orange and the Limpopo river basins, which are shared with neighbouring countries. Over 60% of the country's river flow comes from 20% of the land area. To overcome the uneven spread of water resources and to manage floods and drought, more than two-thirds of the country's mean annual rainfall is currently stored in dams.

The country's water security is mainly reliant on fresh surface water, with groundwater and return flows underused. However, the freshwater available for use is currently at its limit, and alternative sources, such as groundwater, need to be further exploited. In addition, the country shares four major rivers with six neighbouring states, namely Zimbabwe, Botswana, Mozambique, Eswatini, Lesotho and Namibia. Therefore, international agreements on water sharing are in place on all of these river basins.

There is well-developed infrastructure, with more than 4 395 registered dams in South Africa, including 350 dams belonging to the DWS, and a number of large-scale, inter-basin water transfer schemes. Water services infrastructure covers more than 35 000km of bulk pipelines and 200 000km of reticulation systems that are managed by 152 water service authorities and providers. However, this existing infrastructure needs maintenance and the country is already experiencing challenges with lack of focus on sustainable asset management.

The schemes also require efficient and effective operations, for which specialised skills and capabilities at all levels are needed. Major challenges are experienced regarding the capabilities of water services authorities to effectively manage the schemes on a sustainable basis. This issue needs to be dealt with decisively through a review of the mandates and policies in relation to the management of water infrastructure, and available capacity. Work is also required in terms of rolling out the establishment of appropriate institutions, such as regional water utilities, as the development of tourism, fisheries and other projects for economic and social development.

Groundwater resources

An estimated 80 000 to 100 000 boreholes are being drilled annually. The National Groundwater Archive is a web-enabled database system that allows capturing, viewing, modifying and extraction (dissemination) of groundwater-

related data. The DWS has a legal obligation to ensure that water resources (including groundwater) are protected, used, developed, conserved, managed and controlled in a sustainable and equitable manner. The National Water Act of 1998 requires the establishment of national monitoring and information systems as the availability of information about water resources is regarded as critical to the main purpose of the Act.

The need for groundwater data and information continues to increase to assist in planning to provide water to people, monitoring, drought relief and climate change. Groundwater, despite its relatively small contribution to bulk water supply, represents an important and strategic water resource in South Africa – it services between 52% and 82% of community water-supply schemes in the Eastern Cape, Limpopo, the Northern Cape, the North West and KwaZulu-Natal.

The lack of perennial streams in the semi-desert to desert parts means that two thirds of South Africa's surface area depend largely on groundwater. Although irrigation is the largest user, the supply to more than 300 towns and smaller settlements is very important. Through government's commitment towards meeting the basic water needs of communities, groundwater has become a strategic resource for village water supply in the wetter parts of the country, because of its cost-effectiveness in a widely scattered, small-scale user situation.

Groundwater also contributes considerably to river flow. This requires reserving a significant share of groundwater resources to protect aquatic ecosystems in terms of the National Water Act of 1998. The maximum quantity of groundwater that can be developed economically is about 6 000 million cubic metres a year, while some 4 000 million cubic metres of groundwater (mainly in the dry season) contribute to surface water flow annually.

Southern Africa also has large hidden underground water reserves in 12 to 15 aquifer systems, three of which are very important for the future. South Africa has a massive dolomite aquifer system covering a vast area from Springs and Brakpan (east of Johannesburg) to Lenasia (south of the city), Zuurbekom, Carltonville and Magaliesberg (on the West Rand), Kuruman in the Northern Cape, and even as far as parts of Botswana. The Witwatersrand mining basin's aquifer can store water equivalent to the size of Lake Kariba, which is located on the border between Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Managing and developing water resources

To facilitate the management of water resources, the country has been divided into 19 catchment-based water management areas, of which 11 share international rivers. Sufficient water resources have been developed and are available to ensure that all requirements for water can reasonably be met, without impairing the socio-economic development of the country. Where feasible, special management techniques may be applied to improve water quality to appropriate standards for particular uses.

The quality of groundwater varies according to hydrogeological conditions and anthropogenic impact. However, most major aquifer systems contain potable water. To underscore its commitment to the pursuit of universal access to water, the DWS is investing in new infrastructure and maintaining and rehabilitating dysfunctional systems to ensure operational efficiency. This is particularly relevant to developing water infrastructure to meet the specific needs of different rural communities. Closely related to rural development is the need for mainstream support to local government to sustain the infrastructure underpinning efficient service delivery to communities.

Managing water quality and wastewater

To ensure compliance with minimum water quality norms and standards, the DWS started the annual Blue Drop and Green Drop assessments to guarantee that water and wastewater systems are managed according to set norms and standards. The department has set a target of 99% compliance with drinking water quality standards, and 80% compliance with wastewater effluent standards. This incentive-based regulation system aims to improve the quality of municipal drinking water and management of wastewater.

Because of the scale and magnitude of resources needed for the National Certification Programme, the Green Drop and Blue Drop programmes take place every second year, alternating with each other. In a programme's "gap" year, progress in the wastewater sector is tracked and reported via the assessment of the cumulative risk status of treatment systems.

Strategic Integrated Projects (SIPs)

SIP 18, which was approved by the Presidential Infrastructure Coordinating Commission (PICC), aims to address water supply and sanitation backlogs to millions of households. The PICC's 18 SIPs are divided into geographic, energy, spatial and social infrastructure development projects. These projects – headed by different departments – cover more than 150 specific infrastructure interventions in rail, road and ports, dams, irrigation systems, sanitation and electricity. This 10-year plan addresses the estimated backlog of adequate water to 1.4 million households and that of basic sanitation to 2.1 million households. SIP 18 is expected to fast-track the issuing of water licences, expand the capacity of the water system, speed up build programmes, address backlog projects and rehabilitate and upgrade existing water and sanitation infrastructure.

The project, which focuses on priority small towns and rural areas where water service delivery is a problem, is also expected to create jobs, raise the quality of service delivery of water around the country and extend water supply to areas that are either underserviced or unserviced. The DWS has identified several projects that will be used to drive SIP 18, including the Sedibeng Regional Sewer Scheme – a R5-billion project to be implemented in the area. Rand Water's BG3 pipeline, which is sub-Saharan Africa's largest water pipeline, running from the Vaal Dam to its Zoekfontein Plant, 8.6km away, increases water distribution in this district and surrounding areas.

The BG3 pipeline runs adjacent to Rand Water's existing BG1 and BG2 pipelines that supply water to Gauteng and parts of the neighbouring Free State, Mpumalanga and North West. The Komati Water Scheme Augmentation Project was

designed to resolve the water supply problems to Eskom's Duvha and Matla power stations in Mpumalanga. The Komati Water Scheme Augmentation Project supplements the Komati Water Scheme from the Vaal Eastern Subsystem to help Eskom overcome its water supply challenges.

The interaction of the water resources of the Komati, Usutu and Vaal River systems provides a higher assurance of water supply to all Eskom's thermal power stations and other water users in Mpumalanga. The Komati Water Scheme Augmentation Project delivers an additional 57 million cubic metres of water a year to the Komati Water Scheme.

Water Allocation Reform Programme

The Water Allocation Reform Programme's objectives are to ensure equitable access to water, eradicate poverty and promote social and economic development. The programme's priorities are to meet the water needs of historically disadvantaged people, ensure their participation in water resources management and promote the beneficial and efficient use of water in the public interest. Licences are required for storage and use of water, among other things. To facilitate the availability of water for historically disadvantaged people, attention is also given to the allocation of water following principles of equity and sustainability.

Women in Water

The Women in Water Project aims to strengthen the active participation of rural women in water resource management. Women identify water-related challenges in their communities and conceptualise ideas to address them. They are registered for Women in Water awards. The national winners receive cash prizes which are used for further project development and implementation.

Learning Academy

There is a shortage of skills in the water and sanitation sector. The DWS, through its Learning Academy External Bursary Scheme, provides bursaries yearly to help close this gap. Applications are open to people who would like to pursue careers in line with the department's core business. The DWS External Bursary Scheme aims to attract exceptional young and innovative talent to the department.

Students pursuing the following fields of study are eligible to apply: analytic chemistry, aquatic sciences, biochemistry, biological sciences, water and sanitation, geographical information systems, civil/electrical/ mechanical engineering, water resource management, environmental law/ management/science, water utilisation, cartography, geochemistry, geohydrology, geology, hydrology, limnology, microbiology, surveying and water care.

The purpose of the learning academy is to:

- investigate technical and scarce skills development needs within the department;
- address technical and scarce skills gaps in the overall water supply value chain;
- address scarce skills gaps in specific technical areas of the department;
- plan and build capacity for medium- and long-term needs of the department and the water and sanitation sector;
- develop and implement structured training for engineering and scientific graduate trainees;
- develop and propose interventions (regarding mentoring, skills, knowledge transfer and professional registration processes) with the Engineering Council of South Africa, the South African Council for Natural and Scientific Professions and the Surveying Council of South Africa in line with the Occupations Specific Dispensation.

Management of water conservation and demand

Although South Africa has been classified as a water-scarce country, water from the source to the consumer is often lost as a result of inappropriate and inadequate asset management. Lack of education on the part of the consumer also leads to inefficiency in the day-to-day use of water. The loss of water depletes the country's resources and reduces revenue to water services authorities. Water leaks account for nearly 36% of the nation's unaccounted for water and costs the country about R7 billion annually.

The DWS is also putting in place medium to long-term interventions that are intended to reduce the risks for water scarcity in the future.

These include:

- rainwater harvesting (drinking water, water for livestock, water for irrigation);
- integrating groundwater and surface water use in the future;
- desalination at a large scale;
- investing in innovative water-saving solutions, such as the Drop-the-Block Campaign;
- incorporating all municipal and privately-owned dams into the management system for the future;
- implementing further transfer schemes to improve drought resilience;
- building additional storage capacity; and
- rolling out large-scale reuse of water (recycling of effluent, focus on coastal towns where treated effluent is disposed of via sea outfalls and not considered in return flows).

Enhanced local government support approach

A rapid response unit in the DWS addresses poor performance of water and wastewater systems, which has resulted in community protests in some cases. The unit deals with proactive and reactive non-compliance cases of municipal service delivery. The unit's specialists enable the department to intervene directly in high-risk operational situations, where the lives of citizens and the environment are under threat because of water and wastewater treatment failures.

Freshwater Programme

Recognising the value and threatened status of South Africa's freshwater biodiversity, and the need to build competence and leadership in this area, the South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI) has established a programme focusing on freshwater biodiversity. The programme aims to grow and consolidate freshwater activities within SANBI. The Freshwater Programme focuses on supporting collaborative freshwater initiatives.

These include Working for Wetlands, the National Wetland Inventory, National Freshwater Ecosystems Priority Areas Project, a wetlands mitigation banking scheme with the Grasslands Programme and coal-mining industry, and water-related payments for ecosystem services pilot projects. Key to the programme's operation is the further development of strategic relationships with other organisations with shared objectives.

It includes managing the Working for Wetlands Programme on behalf of the DWS, the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment, and the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development. Working for Wetlands champions the protection, rehabilitation and sustainable use of South Africa's wetlands through cooperative governance and partnerships.

Monitoring programmes

River flow is monitored at 1 200 flow-gauging stations and some 260 major reservoirs. The evaporation and rainfall station network has 360 stations. The oldest flow-gauging station still operating in South Africa is on the Mooi River near Potchefstroom in the North West. There are 21 operational rainfall stations in the mountains of the Western Cape and five in the Mpumalanga escarpment. Observations are relayed through a cellular short message system.

Water levels are monitored at some 1 000 observation boreholes across South Africa. Particular attention is given to monitoring in dolomitic areas. In addition, a small network of rain gauges monitors rainwater quality. The importance of qualitative information on South Africa's water resources has led to an increased drive towards creating a national water-quality monitoring network.

The formal protection, restoration and rehabilitation of wetlands is strengthened through improved land-use planning, land and development management policies, as well as operational and regulatory means at national, provincial and local level. The adoption of ecosystem-based approaches and implementing the open space planning and management programmes add impetus to the protection of these systems and associated services, especially at local government level.

This requires integrated approaches and the involvement of multiple sectors, particularly those dealing with human settlements, development and planning. The DWS is also designing programmes to assess and report on the radiological (radioactivity) and toxicological quality status of the country's water resources.

National Chemical Monitoring Programme

The programme assesses and reports on the chemical status of water resources in South Africa. The main water-quality challenges for domestic water users are high levels of dissolved salts and, in some places, high fluoride concentration. The other challenges facing irrigated agriculture are the high sodium-absorption ratio, high electrical conductivity, high pH and high levels of chloride. Another global challenge affecting South Africa is eutrophication or excessive plant (including algae) growth in dams.

This is because of high levels of nutrient input from point sources of pollution and diffuse sources of pollution from catchments. Annual reports indicate that 50% of dams in South Africa are seriously affected (hypertrophic), while the rest range in quality from good (oligotrophic) to poor (mesotrophic). Another problem is the sporadic outbreak of cholera and other water-borne diseases, mainly because of poor sanitation and hygiene at household level. The Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal are prone to cholera outbreaks.

Integrated Water Quality Management Strategy

The pollution of South Africa's water resources, both surface and underground water, not only adversely affects human and environmental health but has severe consequences for the economy and social well-being. In response to the country's need to take an improved integrated approach to water quality management, the DWS recently developed the Integrated Water Quality Management Strategy.

This strategy sets forth a number of objectives, each supported by key actions, which collectively aim to ensure that government, in partnership with the private sector and civil society, secures water that is fit for use for all. These actions range from the need to strengthen institutions, to the need to improve monitoring and information management, and to strengthen regulation of activities that degrade water quality.

Managing water resources under a changing climate

With climate change, water resources that are already under pressure due to increasing water demand will be under even greater stress in the future. Already, physical evidence suggests that there are changes in historical rain patterns and intensities, as observed in the increasing temperature and drought trends. Water distribution in South Africa is spatially skewed, with decreasing rainfall and increasing evaporation from east to west.

Even though rainfall trends cannot be clearly defined, it can be said with high confidence that potential impacts of climate change in South Africa on water availability will be negative. Just with increasing temperatures alone, without considering other climatic and non-climatic factors, evaporation rates will increase and that will affect water availability. Climate change impacts on the water sector will thus amplify the current existing conditions.

The DWS has made good progress in trying to understand the impacts of climate change on the different water management areas through conducting Risk and Vulnerability Assessment Studies, and accordingly suggesting adaptation strategies as appropriate. These studies reveal that catchments in the eastern side of the country, for example, the Mzimvubu-Tsitsikamma water management area, rainfall has shown an increasing trend, and the area is also projected to experience increasing rain days both in the intermediate and distant futures. This, however, comes with other challenges such as severe erosion and siltation.

Evaporation rates, in most cases, have been shown to exceed precipitation, becoming relatively higher in areas where it rains less, for example, in the Lower Vaal and Lower Orange catchments. What needs to be considered even further is not only the direct impacts of climate change

on the water sector, but secondary impacts on other water-dependent sectors, such as agriculture, mining and energy. As such, any adverse effects of climate change may negatively affect progress towards development in a number of economic sectors in the country.

National Water and Sanitation Master Plan (NWSMP)

The development of the National Water and Sanitation Master Plan (NWSMP) aims at mobilising the commitment and efforts of all role players and stakeholders in the water and sanitation sector towards collectively achieving the desired future state of the sector, as defined by government's vision, goals and targets until 2030 (NDP, Sustainable Development Goals, MTSFs and other key drivers). It provides a critical overview of the present state of the sector and the key challenges it is facing, together with a consolidated plan of actions required to enable the achievement of the set targets.

The plan of actions includes a detailed schedule of consolidated and prioritised interventions, actions, investments, projects and initiatives. For each action, the plan defines specific intermediate and final targets, the parties responsible for their achievement, the deadlines for delivery and the estimated costs or other required resources. The achievements are monitored and evaluated annually by a dedicated project management unit managed by the DWS. The master plan is updated bi-annually to reflect the dynamics in the sector.

It acts as the implementation tool for the Water and Sanitation Resources and Services Strategy, and the two documents will be aligned.

National Aquatic Ecosystem Health Monitoring Programme (NAEHMP)

The NAEHMP is a national programme managed by Resource Quality Services with support from the WRC, the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research and various regional and provincial authorities. It is responsible for managing aquatic ecosystems. It focuses on the biological attributes of a river that serve as indicators of its ecological health.

The NAEHMP's main objectives are to:

- generate a national perspective of the health of aquatic ecosystems in South Africa;
- develop the capacity and information base required to enable the DWS, and other role players, to report on the status of and trends in the ecological health of South Africa's river systems, in an objective and scientifically sound manner; and
- generate information products and audit-management strategies that could assist in distinguishing between aquatic ecosystems exposed to sustainable use, and those experiencing ecological deterioration.

The NAEHMP comprises three separate monitoring programmes,
namely:

- The River Eco-status Monitoring Programme (REMP): This is the oldest component of the NAEHMP. It focuses on the monitoring of ecological conditions of river ecosystems as it is reflected by the system drivers and biological responses. The basis of the REMP is the establishment of a reference condition derived from best available information. Present conditions (ecological category) for the different indicators are determined as a change from reference.

  The REMP is built upon the use of particular models incorporating existing approved Eco-status models. The assessment can be done on a sub- quaternary or site level and includes the use of the Index of Habitat Integrity, Fish Response Assessment Index, Macroinvertebrate Response Assessment Index, Vegetation Response Assessment Index and Integrated Eco-status. Monitoring is conducted on a quarterly basis and technical reports are produced annually.

  Currently, a number of provinces are only partially implementing the REMP, focusing mostly on the macroinvertebrates and habitat components but the programme is fully implemented in the Inkomati-Usuthu as well as the Breede-Gouritz, Berg-Olifants and Pongola-Mtamvuna water management areas. Information obtained through the REMP is also used in monitoring the biological and habitat components of the Resource Quality Objectives.
- The National Estuaries Monitoring Programme (NEsMP): The purpose of this programme is the monitoring of water quality, physic-chemical and biological aspects for determining long-term trends and changes in the condition of South African estuaries. The NEsMP coordinates national monitoring efforts and provides support in the form of sampling equipment, training, data management and information dissemination, while collaborating institutions collect physicochemical data and water samples.
- The National Wetland Monitoring Programme: The programme's design is based on minimising duplication of effort, while maximising the value of outputs of wetland assessment and monitoring, finding suitable methods for prioritising wetlands to be assessed and monitored, adaptive management and maximum engagement and participation by stakeholders.

  It has not been implemented yet, but aims to assess and monitor the extent of wetlands, the threats to, and the change in, the present ecological state and ecosystem services provided by wetlands in South Africa. It is a state-of-wetland reporting programme, designed to demonstrate trends in the state or integrity (biological, physical and chemical components of its ecosystem and their interactions) of wetlands over time.

National Toxicity Monitoring Programme

The National Toxicity Monitoring Programme reports on the status of dichloro-diphenyl-trichloroethane (DDT) and other persistent organic pollutants. This information is reported internationally to the Stockholm Convention through the DFFE. The National Toxicity Monitoring Programme was designed to assess the status of water resources through measuring the concentration of a selection of priority pollutants at a number of hot spots, and also assessing the toxicity of the water to some aquatic organisms through direct measurement of effect.

The priority pollutant selection is aligned to the extent possible with South Africa's responsibility for reporting under the Stockholm Convention. The geographic distribution of monitoring points is still largely determined by fiscal and operational constraints. It currently focuses on the upper reaches of the Crocodile (West)-Marico and Olifants River catchments. The combination of chemical and biotic assessment in conjunction with the other national monitoring programmes also supports strategic and operational decision making by identifying areas of impairment of fitness for use.

The first five years of monitoring indicated that the persistent priority pollutant concentrations were generally low but that mild seasonal toxicity occurs, possibly in conjunction with agricultural activity. It also tends to confirm that the major human exposure route of DDT (used in malaria vector control) is unlikely to be through the water. Future development includes extending analyses to riverine sediments.

Education and awareness

National Water Week

The National Water Week campaign is aimed at educating the public about their responsibility in water conservation initiatives, and raising awareness around the need to protect and conserve the country's water resources. The DWS celebrated National Water Week from 20 to 26 March 2023 by urging everyone to use water sparingly to ensure water for all. Each year, the United Nations Water sets a theme for World Water Day which responds to a current or future challenge.

The theme for 2023 was "Accelerating Change", and the theme sought to urge policy and decision-makers, inside and outside the water community, to heighten efforts to ensure universal access to water. World Water Day was celebrated on 22 March 2023. The day raises awareness of the global water crisis and focuses on the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 6: Clean Water and Sanitation for all by 2030. The DWS launched the #SaveWater campaign to remind all South Africans that every drop counts.

Despite good rainfall, South Africa remains a water-scarce country and, as such, is susceptible to sustained droughts exacerbated by climate change.

Regional and international cooperation and initiatives

In line with the DWS's regional and international responsibilities in the water sector, the department entered into collaborative relationships with countries, such as:

- Lesotho, Namibia, Botswana, Zimbabwe, the DRC and Eswatini in the region.
- Mozambique and Eswatini on the Inkomati and Maputo rivers.
- Botswana, Lesotho and Namibia on the establishment of the Orange Senqu River Commission.
- Botswana, Zimbabwe and Mozambique on the establishment of the Limpopo Watercourse Commission.
- Lesotho on the Lesotho Highlands Water Project.
- Eswatini on the Komati River Development Project.
- These agreements improve South Africa's bilateral and multilateral relations in the African Union. All the countries involved benefit, while sharing development costs. South Africa shares four of its major river systems with six immediate neighbouring countries, namely Botswana, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia, Eswatini and Zimbabwe.

In the area of shared river basins, South Africa continued participating in joint water commissions to form part of Africa bilaterals with Botswana on Joint Permanent Cooperation, and with Mozambique regarding the breach of the Usuthu River, where a feasibility study was completed. South Africa also has global relations with countries such as Iran, China, Denmark, Russia, Mexico, South Korea, Australia, Germany, the Netherlands and Japan.

Acid Mine Drainage

The DWS launched the Eastern Acid Mine Drainage Treatment Plant, which ensures that the rising water levels in the abandoned Grootvlei mine do not contaminate groundwater. The Eastern Basin Plant in Springs is one of the largest of its kind in the world, treating approximately 110 megalitres per day. The plant is among the three main basins in the Witwatersrand Goldfields. These include the Western Basin in the Krugersdorp area, Central Basin in the Germiston area and the Eastern Basin in the Springs area. Both the western and central basins have been launched and are running smoothly.

The first long-term solution to acid mine drainage was launched at the Central Basin Acid Mine Drainage Treatment Plant in Germiston in 2016. This was the commencement of several integrated projects aimed at providing a long-term solution to acid mine drainage as well as a water-secure future for the economic hub of Gauteng. The Eastern Basin Plant in Springs is one of the largest of its kind in the world, treating approximately 110 megalitres per day.

The Eastern Basin Plant is located in one of the three main basins in the Witwatersrand Goldfields. These include the Western Basin in the Krugersdorp area, Central Basin in the Germiston area and the Eastern Basin in the Springs to Nigel areas. Both the Western and Central Basins were commissioned previously and are running smoothly.

Bucket eradication

Government started a 'bucket eradication' programme in 2012, focusing on projects to replace buckets with waterborne sanitation in the Eastern Cape, the Free State, the Northern Cape and the North West. The project was delayed, partly because of the sanitation function being transferred between departments on several occasions, and the programme being repeatedly transferred between different implementing agents appointed by the different departments. The project has also been delayed because there was inadequate engineering planning and design for the required upgrading of wastewater treatment works to receive additional sewage from the new household waterborne sanitation connections.

The progress to date is that all the elements of the original programme have been completed apart from one project in the Northern Cape and eight projects in the Free State. These were expected to be completed during the 2023/24 financial year. In reality, the programme will not "eradicate"

buckets because municipalities are continuously initiating new bucket systems in informal settlements. To address this, the DWS has developed a National Sanitation Framework, which was approved by Cabinet.

In terms of the framework, the department issues revised norms and standards for sanitation services under the Water Services Act of 1997 which make it clear that it is unacceptable for municipalities to implement the bucket system. The planned amendments to the Water Services Act also enable the department to regulate and ensure adherence to these norms and standards.

