



**SOUTH AFRICA'S PEOPLE**



## Pocket Guide to South Africa 2010/11

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### People

According to Statistics South Africa's (Stats SA) *Mid-Year Population Estimates, 2010*, there were 49 991 300 people in South Africa in July 2010. The South African population consists of the following groups: the Nguni (comprising the Zulu, Xhosa, Ndebele and Swazi people); Sotho-Tswana, who include the Southern, Northern and Western Sotho (Tswana people); Tsonga; Venda; Afrikaners; English; coloureds; Indians; and those who have immigrated to South Africa from the rest of Africa, Europe and Asia and who maintain a strong cultural identity. A few members of the Khoi and the San also live in South Africa.

### Languages

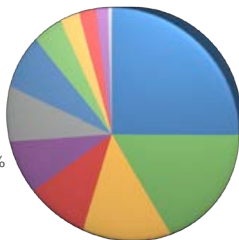
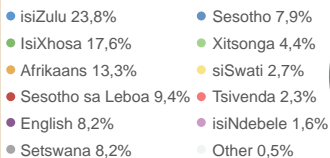
According to the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, everyone has the right to use the language and to participate in the cultural life of their choice, but no one may do so in a manner that is inconsistent with any provision of the Bill of Rights. Each person also has the right to instruction in his or her language of choice where this is reasonably practicable.

### Official languages

The diversity of the unique cultures of South Africa means that there are 11 official languages.

These are English, Afrikaans, isiXhosa, isiZulu, isiNdebele, Sesotho sa Leboa, Sesotho, Setswana, siSwati, Tshivenda and Xitsonga. The Constitution also requires the Pan South African Language Board to promote the use of the Khoi, Nama and San languages, and Sign Language.

#### Mother tongues



Source: Census 2001

### Estimates by population group and gender

Population group	Male		Female		Total	
	Number	% of total population	Number	% of total population	Number	% of total population
<b>African</b>	19 314 500	79,4	20 368 100	79,4	39 682 600	79,4
<b>Coloured</b>	2 124 900	8,7	2 299 200	9	4 424 100	8,8
<b>Indian/Asian</b>	646 600	2,7	653 300	2,5	1 299 900	2,6
<b>White</b>	2 243 000	9,2	2 341 700	9,1	4 584 700	9,2
<b>Total</b>	<b>24 329 000</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>25 662 300</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>49 991 300</b>	<b>100</b>

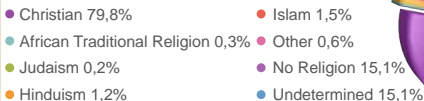
Source: Statistics South Africa, *Mid-Year Population Estimates, 2010*

Although English is the mother tongue of only 8,2% of the population, it is the language most widely understood, and the second language of the majority of South Africans. However, government is committed to promoting all the official languages.

## Religion

According to the Constitution, everyone has the right to freedom of conscience, religion, thought, belief and opinion. Almost 80% of South Africa's population follows the Christian faith. Other major religious groups are the Hindus, Muslims, Jews and Buddhists. A minority of South Africa's population do not belong to any of the major religions, but regard themselves as traditionalists of no specific religious affiliation.

### Religious affiliation



Source: Census 2001

