

South Africa's People



People

For 2015, Statistics South Africa estimates the mid-year population as 54,96 million. Approximately 51% (approximately 28,07 million) of the population is female. Gauteng comprises the largest share of the South African population. Approximately 13,20 million people (24%) live in this province.

KwaZulu-Natal is the province with the second largest population, with 10,92 million people (19,9%) living in this province.

With a population of approximately 1,19 million people (2,2%), Northern Cape remains the province with the smallest share of the South African population.

About 30,2% of the population is aged younger than 15 years and approximately 8,0% (4,42 million) is 60 years or older. Of those younger than 15 years, approximately 22,9% (3,80 million) live in KwaZulu-Natal and 19,7% (3,28 million) live in Gauteng.

Migration is an important demographic process in shaping the age structure and distribution of the provincial population. For the period 2011–2016 it is estimated that approximately 243 118 people will migrate from the Eastern Cape; Limpopo is estimated to experience an out-migration of nearly 303 151 people. During the same period, Gauteng and Western Cape are estimated to experience an inflow of migrants of approximately 1 169 837 and 350 569 respectively.

Life expectancy at birth for 2015 was estimated at 60,6 years for males and 63,1 years for females. The infant mortality rate for 2015 is estimated at 34,4 per 1 000 live births. The estimated overall HIV prevalence rate is approximately 11,2% of the total South African population.

The total number of people living with HIV is estimated at approximately 6,19 million in 2015. For adults aged 15–49 years, an estimated 16,6% of the population is HIV positive.

Languages

South Africa is a multilingual country with 11 official languages, each of which is guaranteed equal status. Most South Africans are multilingual and able to speak at least two of the official languages. English is most widely used for official and commercial communication. IsiZulu is the most common home language spoken by 22,7% of the population, followed by isiXhosa at 16%, Afrikaans at 13,5%, and English at 9,6%, Sepedi at 9,1%, Setswana at 8%, Sesotho at 7,6%, and Xitsonga at 4,5%. Siswati is spoken by 2,5% of the population, Tshivenda by 2,4% and isiNdebele by 2,1%.

Government passed the Use of Official Languages Act in 2012, as part of promoting social cohesion and nation-building.