

*Pocket Guide to South Africa 2016/17*

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# FOREWORD



The *Pocket Guide to South Africa 2016/17* provides a noteworthy reflection of the achievements of government, particularly those related to its cherished endeavour to address the triple challenge of inequality, poverty and unemployment by 2030, as guided by the National Development Plan (NDP). Government continues to work tirelessly to address these challenges, including the historical exclusion of

black people from economic opportunities, in order to ensure a better life for all.

Remarkable progress has been made in the implementation of the Nine-Point Plan, which is an action plan to deliver on the socio-economic goals stated in the NDP, especially to achieve a higher level of inclusive growth. The focus areas include energy; manufacturing; transport; telecommunications; water; tourism; the oceans economy; mining; agriculture; reform of state-owned companies; telecommunications; Industrial Policy Action Plan and managing workplace conflict.

Government has been focusing attention on key priorities, which include job creation, fighting crime, providing quality healthcare and education, and rural development. Operation Phakisa, which was introduced to boost delivery initially in the oceans economy, education and health, has since been expanded to mining and agriculture, in particular aquaculture.

The dominant narrative in South Africa is radical economic transformation, which seeks to take the country on the path to inclusive growth and a better life for all. The country's economy, complemented by strong institutional and governance structures, remains stable and conducive for investment. Tourism, which contributes about 9% to South Africa's national gross domestic product, has significant potential to create more jobs, accelerate inclusive economic growth and reduce poverty.

In addition to being a primary destination of choice for a significant number of tourists, South Africa also remains a favourite host country for many international events, such as the 17th Conference of Parties to the Convention in International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora held in 2016.

The roll-out of the National Health Insurance – which aims to provide access to quality, affordable personal health services for all South Africans based on their health needs, irrespective of their socio-economic status – is intended to restore the dignity of our people, especially the poor. The health sector has recorded good progress in managing communicable diseases, including HIV, AIDS and TB.

As a result of improved healthcare provision, overall life expectancy has steadily been increasing. Between 2002 and 2016, there was an overall increase in life expectancy (55,2 to 62,4 years) and a decline in infant (48,2 to 33,7 deaths per 1 000 live births) and under-five mortality rate (70,8 to 44,1 deaths per 1 000 live births).

There had been a consistent increase in the percentage of individuals that benefited from social grants, from 12,7% in 2003 to 29,9% in 2016. The promotion and protection of the rights of all persons with disabilities in South Africa remains a national priority.

Government continues to build decent human settlements and provide housing subsidies to indigent people. It has also prioritised the provision of comprehensive early childhood development programmes at day-care centres, crèches, playgroups, nursery schools and pre-primary schools.

South Africa has been maintaining positive bilateral relations with other countries in the continent and beyond, and continues to participate in mediation efforts, peacekeeping operations and peace-making initiatives in some parts of the continent.

In terms of safety and security, official statistics have shown that total crime as a percentage of the population (per capita crime) has been steadily decreasing. The fight against corruption in the Public Service has been intensified to ensure clean, effective and efficient governance. Whistle-blowers can anonymously call the National Anti-Corruption Hotline (0800 701 701) to report corruption in the Public Service.

Meanwhile, government continues to promote social cohesion, nation-building and human rights as part of creating a united, non-racial, non-sexist, democratic and prosperous South Africa.



**His Excellency Jacob G. Zuma**  
**President of the Republic of South Africa**  
**August 2017**