

# SOUTH AFRICA

# COUNTRY

# PROFILE

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2025



# TABLE OF **CONTENT**

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- South Africa Overview
- Demographics
- Region and Culture
- Culinary Traditions
- History and Politics
- Relations with Japan
  
- Company Profile



# SOUTH AFRICA OVERVIEW

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The Republic of South Africa is situated at the southernmost tip of the African continent and holds significant economic and cultural importance. Its capital is Pretoria, while Johannesburg serves as its economic hub, and Cape Town is a prominent tourist destination. The nation has a population of approximately 63 million and recognizes 11 official languages, with Afrikaans and English being the most prevalent. Following the conclusion of the apartheid regime in 1994 and the election of Nelson Mandela as the first black president, South Africa has established a politically stable democracy. It possesses the second-largest economy on the African continent, contributing a substantial share to Africa's GDP, with its robust economic framework primarily underpinned by mining, manufacturing, finance, and services. It is the most industrialized nation, with mining, manufacturing, and tourism as its principal economic pillars.

South Africa boasts one of the most advanced infrastructures in Africa, featuring a globally significant trading port (Durban Port) and Johannesburg, the largest financial center on the continent. Furthermore, the nation has established extensive road and rail networks, positioning itself as a logistics hub, particularly for neighboring African countries. Its power and communications infrastructure is also highly developed, rendering it an exceptionally appealing base for business expansion across Africa.

Politically, South Africa operates under a presidential system, with the African National Congress (ANC) having maintained power for an extended period. The government is committed to fostering economic development and equality, particularly through the Black Business Economic Opportunity Scheme (B-BBEE), which incentivizes businesses to create opportunities for the economically disadvantaged black population. South Africa is a member of international organizations, including the African Union (AU) and BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa), and plays a pivotal role in promoting regional political stability and economic advancement.

# SOUTH AFRICA OVERVIEW

**Population**  
(2023)



**63 Million**

**Median Age**  
(2024)



**27.5 Years of Age**

**Urbanization  
Rate**  
(2022)



**69%**

**GDP**  
(2024)



**\$380 Billion**

**GDP per Capita**  
(2024)



**\$6,000**

**Economic  
Expansion Rate**  
(2025)



**0.6%**

**Smartphone  
Penetration Rate**  
(2024)



**74.7%**

**Japanese Residents**  
(2023)



**939 People**

**Poverty Rate**  
(2024)



**63%**

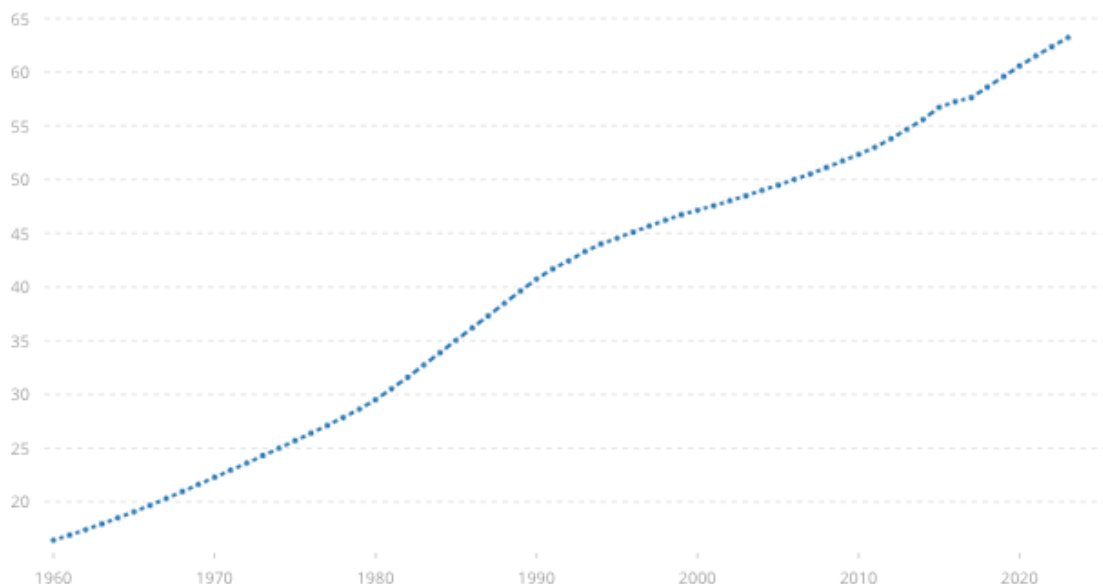




# DEMOGRAPHICS

## TOTAL POPULATION & URBAN POPULATION

As of 2023, South Africa's total population is projected to be around 63 million, making it one of the most populous and economically significant nations on the African continent. The population is increasingly urbanized, with approximately 69% residing in urban areas. Major cities, including Johannesburg, Cape Town, and Durban, serve as hubs of economic activity, where infrastructure and urban development are being vigorously advanced.



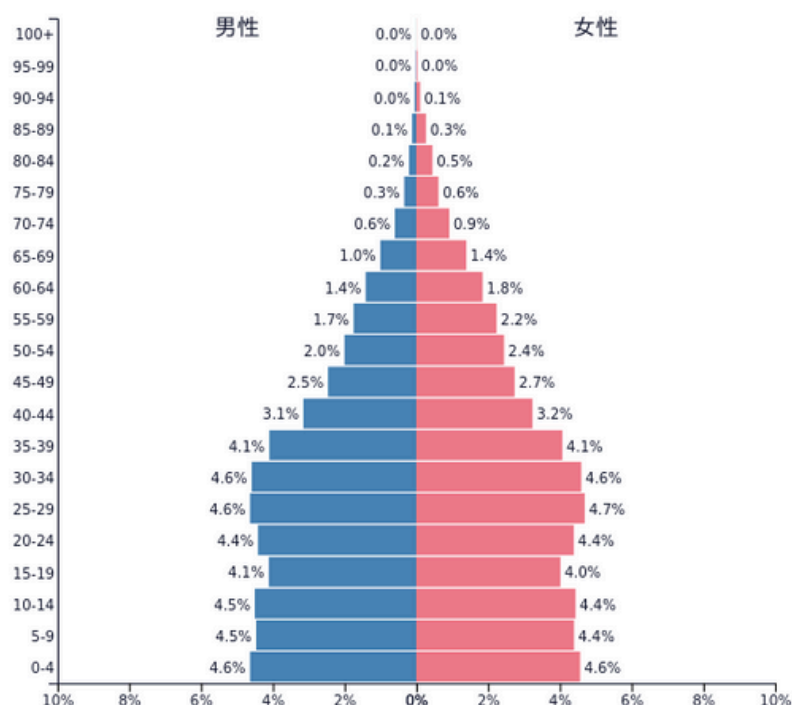


# DEMOGRAPHICS

## DEMOGRAPHICS & MEDIAN AGE

The median age is 27.5 years, which is marginally higher than in other sub-Saharan nations, such as Kenya. Nevertheless, the country boasts a vibrant young workforce and is garnering interest as a human resource poised to facilitate future growth.

The educational attainment is comparatively elevated, with advancements occurring in the establishment of a compulsory education system and rising enrollment rates in higher education. The middle class is anticipated to grow within technical and service sectors. Nonetheless, the elevated unemployment rate among youth, particularly those aged 15–34 at 45.5%, presents a significant concern, highlighting the necessity for the private sector to assume a role in job creation.





# REGION & CULTURE

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## LAND & REGIONAL ALLOCATION

South Africa is situated at the southernmost point of the African continent, bordered by the Atlantic Ocean to the west and the Indian Ocean to the east. The nation features a varied topography, characterized by the central high plateau (Highveld), the Drakensberg Mountains to the east, and the arid Kalahari Desert in the northwest. Coastal regions enjoy relatively warm temperatures; however, climatic conditions differ significantly across various areas. For instance, the Western Cape experiences a Mediterranean climate, while the eastern region has a subtropical climate, and the interior is predominantly dry or semi-arid. The rainy season varies by region but is typically concentrated during the summer months (November to March), impacting agriculture and water resource management.

Examining the industrial and social attributes of each region, livestock farming and mining—particularly diamond and platinum extraction—constitute the economic backbone of the northwest. The central highlands, which serve as both the economic and political hub, are flourishing with corn and other grain cultivation, featuring major cities such as Johannesburg and Pretoria. In the east and southeast, manufacturing and tourism have seen significant growth, while sugarcane and other plantation agriculture thrive along the Indian Ocean coastline. The Western Cape province in the southwest is renowned for its grape cultivation and wine industry, with urban tourism, centered around Cape Town, further bolstering the economy.





# REGION & CULTURE

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## THE CAPITAL CITY: PRETORIA

Pretoria serves as the administrative capital of South Africa, functioning as the political and diplomatic hub where government agencies, various embassies, and the Union Buildings, the presidential residence, are situated. The city is characterized by an intellectual and relaxed atmosphere, hosting numerous government offices, research institutes, and universities.

Additionally, during the spring, when the jacaranda trees are in full bloom, it is affectionately referred to as "Jacaranda City," renowned for its stunning streetscape. Economically, Pretoria is witnessing growth in the service sector as well as in education and research-related fields, establishing itself as a significant metropolitan area.



Pretoria





# REGION & CULTURE

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## SECOND CITY: JOHANNESBURG

Johannesburg is the largest city in South Africa and stands out as one of the foremost economic centers on the African continent. The mining, manufacturing, and financial sectors are particularly advanced, establishing it as a business hub that attracts both domestic and international companies and investors. Additionally, it functions as a logistics and information center for the entire Southern African region and hosts numerous multinational corporations. This concentration of industry enables the city to contribute significantly to the country's gross domestic product (GDP).

## CAPE TOWN

Cape Town is recognized as one of South Africa's premier tourist destinations, where stunning natural landscapes, historical architecture, and diverse cultures converge. Its breathtaking scenery, featuring Table Mountain and the Cape, is renowned globally, drawing numerous visitors from both domestic and international locales. Beyond tourism, the city boasts a flourishing wine industry that has garnered significant acclaim in the global market. Leveraging its advantageous coastal location, Cape Town is also a hub of commercial activity, primarily focused on trade and shipping, underscoring its vital role as a port city.



Johannesburg



Cape Town





# REGION & CULTURE

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## NATIONAL COMPOSITION

The ethnic composition is notably diverse, with the Zulu constituting approximately 24% of the total population, the Xhosa around 16%, and both the Basotho and Tswana each representing about 7-8%.

Additionally, numerous other ethnic groups exist, including the Venda, Tsonga, and Ndebele, alongside a significant number of white residents (Afrikaner and English), Coloured individuals (mixed race), and Indian inhabitants. South Africa's multi-ethnic framework is often referred to as the "Rainbow Nation," and the constitution recognizes 11 official languages. The country's educational and administrative systems are designed to honor and uphold cultural diversity.

## LANGUAGE

South Africa is a multilingual nation with 11 official languages. These languages reflect the cultural heritage of each ethnic group and are prevalent in everyday life and commerce. In South Africa, English is employed in official contexts such as government agencies, business, education, and law, and is widely comprehended across the country. English functions as the primary business language, rendering it indispensable in corporate activities and political spheres.

Conversely, Zulu and Xhosa are prevalent in communities and households, serving as the languages most frequently employed in daily conversation. Zulu functions as the principal mode of communication for numerous black communities in South Africa. Afrikaans is predominantly spoken by Afrikaners (individuals of Dutch descent) and certain Coloured (mixed-race) communities, particularly in rural regions. In urban settings, English is often the primary language utilized by both whites and Coloureds.

The diverse languages spoken across various regions and ethnic groups make South Africa's multilingual landscape a significant element in both business and daily life.



# CULINARY TRADITIONS

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## STAPLE FOODS & TRADITIONAL DISHES

Meat-centric dishes hold a significant place in South African culinary traditions. The most renowned of these is the barbecue culture referred to as "braai," where beef, lamb, sausages (boulis), and various other foods are grilled over charcoal in outdoor settings, fostering enjoyment among family and friends. This practice is a favored activity during weekends and public holidays.

In South Africa, dried meat known as "biltong" is a popular national snack. It is prepared by seasoning beef, ostrich, impala, and other game meats with vinegar and spices before being slowly dried, resulting in a chewy texture and robust flavor. Biltong boasts a long shelf life and is commonly enjoyed as a daily snack or appetizer.

"Pap" is a commonly consumed staple food. Prepared from corn flour and cooked in water, it is regarded as analogous to rice in Japan and is typically served alongside meat dishes or stewed vegetables.

## REGIONAL GASTRONOMY

In the Western Cape, particularly in the vicinity of Cape Town, "Cape Malay cuisine," introduced by the Malay inhabitants of yore, has evolved into a distinctive culinary culture. The region's gastronomy, rich in spices, has been shaped by Dutch and Asian influences. A quintessential dish emblematic of this area is "bobotie," a traditional preparation of curry-flavored minced meat, topped with egg and baked. Noted for its sweet and spicy profile, it is frequently accompanied by yellow turmeric rice and chutney.



# CULINARY TRADITIONS

## REGIONAL GASTRONOMY

Meanwhile, in the KwaZulu-Natal province, which borders the Indian Ocean, the impact of Indian residents is significant, and a cuisine characterized by the extensive use of spices has become established.

Notably, in Durban, a dish known as "bunny chow," created by hollowing out a loaf of bread and filling it with curry, enjoys widespread popularity. This dish serves not only as a convenient street food but also as a representation of the local culinary culture. Additionally, vegetarian dishes and bean-based stews are prevalent in this region, reflecting the profound influence of Indian culinary traditions.

Furthermore, in the northern inland regions, such as Limpopo and North-West provinces, more traditional and rustic African cuisine is predominant. Alongside "pap," a corn porridge, "morogo," sautéed wild greens, organ meats, and even edible caterpillars known as "mopane worms" are consumed.



Bry



Biltong



Pap



Bunny Chow





# HISTORY & POLITICS

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## COLONIALISM & APARTHEID

The contemporary history of South Africa commenced with the founding of the Cape Colony by the Dutch East India Company in the 17th century. By the close of the 18th century, British control over the region was established, leading to heightened tensions between Afrikaners (white Dutch settlers) and white British individuals. From the late 19th century into the early 20th century, disputes over resources such as gold and diamonds emerged, further entrenching the political and economic supremacy of the white ruling class.

In 1948, the National Party ascended to power and implemented the racial segregation policy known as "apartheid." Non-whites faced discrimination in all facets of life, including housing, education, transportation, and marriage, while their political participation was significantly curtailed. In reaction, the African National Congress (ANC) and various other organizations initiated a resistance movement, with the enduring efforts of Nelson Mandela, in particular, garnering attention both domestically and internationally.

## POST-INDEPENDENCE ERA

In 1961, South Africa departed from the British Commonwealth and attained independence as a republic, officially establishing the Republic of South Africa. Nevertheless, the apartheid regime persisted even after independence, and the journey toward democratization would extend for many more years. Following Nelson Mandela's release in 1990, the movement toward democratization accelerated significantly, culminating in the first general election featuring participation from all races in 1994. This event signified the formal conclusion of apartheid, propelling South Africa into a new era as a democratic nation.



# HISTORY & POLITICS

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## POLITICAL FRAMEWORK

South Africa's political framework is characterized by a presidential system within a constitutional democracy, wherein the president, as the head of state, leads the executive branch. The parliament operates on a bicameral structure, comprising the National Assembly and the National Council of Provinces. The president is elected by a majority within the National Assembly, which is determined through a popular vote. Since the end of apartheid, the African National Congress (ANC) has consistently held the position of the ruling party and retained significant political influence. However, in recent years, there has been a notable increase in public discontent regarding the rectification of inequality and corruption, alongside a more pronounced emergence of opposition parties.

## ADMINISTRATION

The executive branch is organized as a cabinet under the president, who supervises each ministry. The president wields extensive administrative authority but is accountable to a vote of confidence from parliament. The presidential term is five years, with reelection permitted only once. Transparency and accountability are mandated in governmental administration, and the independence of the judiciary and media is institutionally assured.

## DECENTRALIZATION

Decentralization holds significant importance in South Africa, which is divided into nine provinces, each possessing its own provincial government and parliament. Each province formulates and implements policies in sectors such as health, education, and economic development, enabling it to manage its administration in accordance with its regional characteristics while aligning with national politics. This system is crucial for effectively addressing the intricate social structure of a multi-ethnic and multilingual nation.





# HISTORY & POLITICS

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## ECONOMIC AUTONOMY

The Black-Brazilian Economic Benchmarking (B-BBEE) system was established to address the economic disparities that arose during the apartheid era. This framework encourages economic engagement among historically marginalized groups, including blacks, coloureds, and Indians. Companies are assessed using a scorecard that evaluates criteria such as "ownership structure," "management diversity," "employment and training," and "supply chain composition."

For foreign companies, particularly, forming joint ventures with local partners and instituting vocational training programs for employees are regarded as crucial strategies, while adapting to the system has emerged as a fundamental requirement for conducting business in the South African market.



# RELATIONS WITH JAPAN

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## DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS

Diplomatic relations between South Africa and Japan commenced in earnest following South Africa's establishment as a republic in 1961. During the apartheid era, as international sanctions and criticism escalated, Japan also moderated its policy towards South Africa in alignment with UN resolutions. However, since the 1990s, with the advancement of South Africa's democratization, relations between the two nations have been swiftly revitalized, resulting in a multifaceted partnership focused on economic, technological, and cultural exchanges. In 2003, an investment protection agreement was signed by both governments, creating a legal framework to support the operations of companies from each country.

Cooperation is actively progressing in the realm of science and technology, encompassing a diverse array of joint projects in sectors such as energy development, space technology, and agricultural research. These agreements establish a crucial foundation for the mutual utilization of the technological resources and market scale of both countries.

Japan's governmental organizations, JICA and JETRO, play a pivotal role in enhancing relations with South Africa. JICA has executed numerous technical cooperation projects, primarily in the fields of education, health, and infrastructure development, receiving significant acclaim, particularly in vocational training and support for small and medium-sized enterprises. JETRO not only facilitates the local expansion of Japanese companies and offers a platform for business matching but also acts as a center for economic exchange by disseminating information on the latest trends in the South African economy.



# RELATIONS WITH JAPAN

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## ECONOMIC COLLABORATION & COMMERCE

In the realm of trade, South Africa ranks among Japan's most significant trading partners in Sub-Saharan Africa. The primary exports from South Africa to Japan consist of platinum group metals (PGM), iron ore, diamonds, and wine. Conversely, Japan's exports to South Africa predominantly include industrial products such as automobiles, construction machinery, and electrical equipment. The trade relationship between the two nations has been established to complement their respective economic structures.

Japanese companies are actively expanding into the region, with Toyota Motor Corporation operating a significant factory in Durban and serving as a pivotal player in the Southern African economy as a local production and export hub. Hitachi and Mitsui & Co. also contribute significantly to infrastructure development, the mining resource sector, and logistics, while increasing their investments in energy and environmental initiatives. These companies are not solely focused on business expansion; they are also committed to corporate social responsibility activities, including the hiring and training of local personnel and contributions to the local community.



# RELATIONS WITH JAPAN

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## ENGAGEMENTS WITH JAPANESE RESIDENTS

In the realm of people-to-people exchanges, the relationship between the two countries is growing annually. As of the early 2020s, approximately 1,400 Japanese nationals reside in South Africa, with many engaged in sectors such as business, international cooperation, education, and research. Japanese companies and associations have established bases in Pretoria, Johannesburg, Cape Town, and other cities, fostering active interactions with local communities. Furthermore, there exists a steady influx of individuals from Japan to South Africa, encompassing experts and members of the Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCV), as well as researchers and students from Japan, alongside numerous individuals from South Africa. Concurrently, South African students and researchers travel to Japan, fostering mutual understanding through the exploration of technology and culture. The science and technology agreement, along with higher education exchange programs established between the two nations, underpins this human network.



# COMPANY PROFILE

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## COLLABORATE WITH JAPANESE COMPANIES TO DEVELOP BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES!

AXCEL AFRICA seeks to foster diverse collaborations between Japan and African nations, partnering with enterprises that address social challenges. We aim to connect businesses and individuals across these regions, contributing to the advancement of a new, sustainable future.

1. **Business Development Consulting:** We offer consulting services to Japanese companies seeking to expand into Africa, primarily conducting on-site assessments, developing business strategies, providing support for local legal, labor, and accounting issues, and assisting with the acquisition and implementation of subsidies.
2. **Training programs:** We offer practical support and training programs to Japanese companies, local startups, and individuals to evaluate and enhance business concepts and new ventures in Africa.
3. **Creating a community:** In partnership with the general incorporated association Africa Quest, we offer a network for Japanese individuals pursuing opportunities in Africa, supporting their endeavors in this emerging business landscape. Additionally, we manage the community house JENGA in Nairobi, the capital of Kenya.







# OUR VISION & MISSION

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## VISION

AXCEL AFRICA seeks to foster diverse collaborations between Japan and African nations, jointly developing enterprises that address social challenges. We aim to connect businesses and individuals across these regions, contributing to progress towards a new, sustainable future.

## MISSION

1. It will serve as a central hub that unites companies and individuals committed to addressing the challenge of establishing enterprises that tackle social issues.
2. As a collaborative partner, we will join forces to establish new business ventures throughout the African continent.
3. In collaboration with local communities in Africa, we will generate a social impact that is both socially and economically advantageous.



# OUR SERVICE

## 01 Consulting

### Attracting Japanese enterprises to Africa

We offer comprehensive services encompassing country and region selection, strategy development, local research, incorporation, and recruitment assistance for businesses seeking to expand into Africa. Additionally, we provide support for local implementation and management.

#### 1. Grant Application Support

**Formulating proposals, executing demonstration experiments, and delivering operational support.**

#### 2. Regional market analysis

**Develop your Business idea and additional management support**

## 02 Training Initiative

### Dispatching Japanese individuals to Africa

We offer practical support and training programs to Japanese companies, local startups, and individuals to evaluate and enhance business concepts and new ventures in Africa.

**1. Startup inspection tour planning, operational coordination, and site visit management.**

**2. Coordination of planning, operation, and on-site visits for the SDGs learning program.**

## 03 Community

### Connecting Japanese individuals challenging in Africa

We offer a network for Japanese individuals who are pursuing challenges in Africa, facilitating their success and encouraging them to take an active role in the emerging business landscape. Additionally, we manage a community house in Nairobi.

#### 1. Community Center



- Offering a safe and secure accommodation.
- Organize and oversee monthly meetup events.

#### 2. Digital Media

アフリカに挑戦する日本人の知のWebメディア  
**Africa Quest.com**

- Disseminating information regarding Africa
- Organization and execution of social events

# GET IN CONTACT

AXCEL AFRICA provides complimentary consultations and on-site study sessions for organizations seeking to expand into Africa.

We offer a range of valuable reports on local markets and subsidies. Please do not hesitate to reach out to us.

## **CONTACT US:**



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