



Fifty facts about a remarkable nation

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Economy

1. The rand was the **best performing currency** against the US Dollar between 2002 and 2005 (Bloomberg Currency Scoreboard)
2. South Africa has **55,000 high net-wealth individuals** holding at least US\$1million in financial assets (World Wealth Report 2008)
3. South Africa has the **27th biggest economy** in the world, with a Gross Domestic Product of US\$254 billion (World Bank)
4. South Africa accounts for almost **25% of the GDP of the entire African** continent, with an economy more than twice the size of the second biggest – Algeria. (World Bank)
5. Gauteng is South Africa's smallest province but **produces 34% of South Africa's Gross Domestic Product** (Stats SA)
6. The JSE Securities Exchange is the **14th largest equities exchange** in the world, with a total market capitalisation of some R2.3 trillion (JSE)
7. More than 12,000 'Black Diamond' families (South Africa's new black middle class) - or 50,000 people - are **moving from the townships into the suburbs** of South Africa's metro areas every month (UCT Unilever Institute)
8. The **black middle class grew by 30%** in 2005, adding another 421,000 black adults to SA's middle-income layer and ramping up the black population's share of SA's total middle class to almost a third. Between 2001 and 2004, there were 300,000 new black entrants to the middle class (Financial Mail)

Infrastructure

1. South Africa generates **two-thirds of Africa's electricity** (Eskom)
2. South African power supplier provides the **fourth cheapest electricity** in the world
3. Chris Hani-Baragwanath Hospital in Soweto is the **biggest hospital in the world**
4. Durban is the largest port in Africa and the **ninth largest in the world**.
5. There are **39 million cell phone users** in South Africa (International Telecommunication Union)

Tourism

1. The **number of tourists visiting South Africa has grown by 200%** since 1994, from 3 million to over 9 million in 2007 (Dept of Environment and Tourism)
2. The Singita game reserve was voted the **best hotel in the world** by the readers of a leading travel magazine (Conde Nast Traveller)
3. The world's **best land-based whale-watching spot** is located in Hermanus in the Western Cape.
4. In 2002, South Africa was the **world's fastest growing tourist destination**. In 2006, South Africa's tourism grew at three times the global average.

Sport

1. South Africa hosts the largest **timed cycle race** in the world (the Cape Argus Cycle Tour), the world's oldest and largest **ultra-marathon** (the Comrades Marathon) and the world's largest **open water swimming event** (the Midmar Mile).
2. South Africa will become the first African country to host the Soccer World Cup in 2010 ... and **only the second country in the world** to have hosted the Cricket, Rugby and Soccer World Cups.
3. Since the 1940s, South African golfers have **won more golf majors** than any other nation, apart from the United States.
4. In 1994, we won 11 **medals in the Commonwealth Games**. In 2002, we won 46.

SA Teaching the World

1. South Africa houses one of the three **largest telescopes** in the world at Sutherland in the Karoo
2. South Africa is the first, and to date the only, country to build nuclear weapons and the **voluntarily dismantle** its entire nuclear weapons programme
3. South Africa Constitution is widely regarded as being one of the most **progressive in the world**, drawing from the experiences of the world's most advanced democracies
4. The South African oil company Sasol has established the only **commercially viable oil-from-coal operations** in the world.
5. Two of the world's most **profoundly compassionate philosophies** originated in South Africa – Ubuntu (the belief in a universal bond of sharing that connects all humanity) and Gandhi's notion of "passive resistance" (Satyagraha), which he developed while living in South Africa.

Education

1. Almost a **quarter of South Africa's non-interest budget** is spent on education
2. The University of South Africa UNISA is a pioneer of tertiary distance education and is the **largest correspondence university in the world** with 250,000 students.
3. Our **learner to teacher ratio** has improved from 1:50 in 1994 to 1:34 in 2004
4. South Africa's **matric pass rate** has improved from 49% in 1994 to 70% in 2004, but student's receiving university exemptions has remained at 18%
5. **The first MBA programme outside of the United States** was started by the University of Pretoria in 1949 (Gordon Institute of Business Science).

Social

1. Over thirteen million South Africans (**a quarter of the population**) have access to social grants (Department of Social Development)
2. Since 1994, **500 houses have been built each day** for the poor and 1,000 houses per day have received electricity
3. Seventy percent of South Africa's population is **urbanised**

Environmental

1. The Kruger National Park supports the **greatest variety of wildlife species** on the African continent
2. The Cango Caves near Oudsthoorn is **the world's longest underground cave sequence**
3. South Africa is the only country to **house an entire floral kingdom** (fynbos), one of only 6 on the planet
4. In 1991, South Africa became the first country in the world to **protect the Great White shark**.
5. South Africa has the **oldest meteor scar** in the world, at the Vredefort Dome near Parys. The scar is 2 billion years old.
6. South Africa has the **3rd highest level of biodiversity** (SA Tourism)
7. The Cape Hyrax's (dassie) **closest relative** is the African elephant
8. South Africa has embraced the concept of **trans-frontier 'peace parks'**, linking ecological reserves across national borders

General

1. The Western Deep Levels is the world's **deepest mine** at 3777 metres
2. South Africa has **the world's largest deposits** of gold, chromium, platinum and manganese
3. The only street in the world **to house two Nobel Peace Prize winners** is in Soweto. Nelson Mandela and Archbishop Desmond Tutu both have houses in Vilakazi Street, Orlando West.
4. South African Breweries (SABMiller) ranks as the **second largest brewing** company in the world. It supplies up to 50% of China's beer.
5. Cape Town has the **fifth-best blue sky in the world**, according to the UK's National Physical Laboratory

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*To the best of our knowledge, these facts are correct.
If you have evidence that any of the above are incorrect or inaccurate, please contact us.*

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