



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.

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. South Africa is the **cradle of mankind**
2. Afrikaans is the **youngest official language** in the world
3. The Western Deep Levels is the world's **deepest mine** at 3777 metres
4. South Africa has **the world's largest deposits** of gold, chromium, platinum and manganese
5. 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.
6. South Africa has the world's **second oldest air force**, established 1920.
7. South African Breweries (SABMiller) ranks as the **second largest brewing company** in the world. It supplies up to 50% of China's beer.
8. South Africa has the **second oldest film industry** in the world
9. In 2007 South African businessman Cyril Ramaphosa was included in the Time 100, an annual list, assembled by Time magazine, of the 100 most influential people in the world
10. 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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