

South African Immigration Information

NOVEMBER 2008

Published by:

AfriForum

P.O. Box 17216, Lyttelton, 0140, South Africa
E-mail: alana@solidariteit.co.za or annatjie@solidariteit.co.za

THE RAINBOW COUNTRY

South Africa is fondly known as the Rainbow Country because of its diversity of people, cultures and natural scenery. The South African nation comprises people of San (or Bushman), Nguni, Sotho-Tswana, Tsonga, Venda, Indian, Afrikaner and mixed origin, as well as immigrant communities from all corners of the world. Officially the population consists of more than 40 million people. Although the Government does not recruit immigrants yet, it acknowledges the fact that the immigration of highly skilled manpower and entrepreneurs is a necessity for the country's financial growth.

South Africa has the people, expertise and resources to make it a more successful country. People who intend to settle permanently in South Africa have to understand the country's unique problems, but also to appreciate the unique opportunities which it offers. It is a country where a bright future awaits anyone who is skilled and committed to hard work. For older people it is also an ideal place to retire. The favourable exchange rate, good weather and excellent medical facilities will ensure their care-free future.

PHYSICAL FEATURES OF SOUTH AFRICA

The Republic of South Africa forms the southernmost part of the African continent, stretching latitudinally from 22° to 35° S and longitudinally from 17° to 33° E. Its surface area is 1 223 201 km². It has common boundaries with Namibia, the Republics of Botswana and Zimbabwe, while the Republic of Mozambique and the Kingdom of Swaziland lie to its north-east. The Kingdom of Lesotho is completely enclosed by South African territory. To the west, south and east, South Africa borders on the South Atlantic and Indian Oceans respectively. Prince Edward Island and Marion Island lie approximately 1 920 km to the south-east of Cape Town in the South Atlantic Ocean. They were taken into possession by South Africa in 1947.

Basic statistics of the 9 provinces of South Africa

Province	Capital	Principal languages	Population (million)	Area (km ²)	% of total area	% of total GDP
Eastern Cape	Bisho	IsiXhosa 83.8% Afrikaans 9.6% English 3.7%	6.527	169 952	13.93%	7.8%
Free State	Bloemfontein	Sesotho 62.1% Afrikaans 14.5% IsiXhosa 9.4%	2.773	129 821	10.64%	5.4%
Gauteng	Johannesburg	IsiZulu 21.5% Afrikaans 16.7% English 13%	10 451	16 927	1.39%	33.6%
Kwazulu-Natal	Pietermaritzburg & Ulundi	IsiZulu 79.8% English 15.8% Afrikaans 1.6%	10.259	92 303	7.57%	16.3%
Mpumalanga	Nelspruit	SiSwati 30% IsiZulu 25.4% IsiNdebele 12.5%	3.643	79 511	6.52%	6.8%
Northern Cape	Kimberley	Afrikaans 69.3% Setswana 19.9% IsiXhosa 6.3%	1.058	362 591	29.73%	2.2%
Limpopo	Polokwane	Sepede 52.7% Xitsonga 22.6% Tshivenda 15.5%	5.238	122 839	10.07%	6.8%
North-West	Mafikeng	Setswana 67.2% Afrikaans 7.5% IsiXhosa 5.4%	3.271	116 180	9.53%	6.4%
Western Cape	Cape Town	Afrikaans 59.2% English 20.3% IsiXhosa 19.1%	5.278	129 448	10.61%	14.6%

LANGUAGES

According to the national census of October 1996, the five most commonly-spoken home languages are IsiZulu (22,9%), IsiXhosa (17,9%), Afrikaans (14,4%), Sepedi (9,2%) and English (8,6%). The Constitution recognises 11 languages as official languages at national level, namely the 5 above, as well as IsiNdebele, Sesotho, SiSwati, Xitsonga, Tshivenda en Setswana.

English and Afrikaans are the most commonly used languages in official circles and the business world. Immigrants should have a good knowledge of at least one of the two in order to cope with life in South Africa. All relevant documentation should be translated into English/Afrikaans by an officially registered translator before submitting it to authorities (for example when applying for residence permits or business registration). Once in South Africa, **AfriForum** will help immigrants to find professional self-study, individual or group language courses to improve their language proficiency. Please note that South Africa does not offer compulsory/sponsored/intensive language courses for immigrants. It is up to individuals to study the languages of their choice and they have to pay for tuition themselves.

CULTURE

Owing to the disparate cultural backgrounds of the various peoples of the country, there is no uniform or coherent South African culture as such. South African artists of all population groups are active locally as well as overseas in all fields: painting, sculpture, architecture, theatre, music, opera, ballet and literature (poetry, drama and prose). The differences in cultural background between black and white are most marked in the artistic expressions of the various groups. The styles and traditions of whites are generally European in origin and those of the blacks, African. In music, literature, architecture, drama, fine and graphic arts many South Africans achieve success with the symbioses of European and African elements. Interesting web sites to visit are those of the Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology [<http://www.dacst.gov.za>] and the South African National Gallery [<http://www.gem.co.za/sang>]. There are numerous clubs for different nationalities and interest groups in most of South Africa's cities and larger towns. Immigrants are advised to contact the nearest office of **AfriForum** for particulars about such cultural associations.

South Africa has 12 public holidays: New Year's Day [1 January], Human Rights Day [21 March], Good Friday [21 March], Family Day [24 March], Freedom Day [27 April], Worker's Day [1 May], Youth Day [16 June], National Women's Day [9 August], Heritage Day [24 September], Day of Reconciliation [16 December], Christmas [25 December] & Day of Goodwill [26 December].

RELIGION

More than 75% of the South African population belong to Christian churches. Other major religious groups are the Hindus, Muslims and Jews. A sizable minority of South Africa's population has no religious affiliation. It can safely be said that most South Africans are religiously orientated and that religious beliefs play an important role in public affairs. Freedom of worship is guaranteed by the Constitution and the official policy is one of non-interference in religious practices. Church attendance in South Africa is favourable in both rural and urban areas.

Newcomers to South Africa have to take note of the religious diversity and bear in mind that religion is taken very seriously by the inhabitants. Disrespect on the side of a foreigner will not endear him/her to the community. Almost all church denominations have direct or indirect representation in South Africa. **AfriForum** will gladly put you in contact with the religious group of your choice.

EDUCATION

April 1994 saw South Africa gaining a democratic government, elected by all the people under a Constitution which guarantees equality and non-discrimination, cultural freedom and diversity, the right to basic education for all and equal access to educational institutions. The majority of pupils in South Africa attend government assisted schools, under a single national system which is organized and managed on the basis of nine provincial sub-systems. However, private schools run by church denominations or private enterprises are an important feature of the educational system. Private school pupils generally follow the same syllabuses as their fellow pupils in government schools. The school year commences in January and ends in December.

During his school career, the minor will probably attend the following schools:

- Pre-primary: To become compulsory between 6 and 7 in the near future.
- Primary: It is compulsory for children to start in the year they turn seven. Primary education usually takes seven years to complete.

Secondary: This usually takes five years and most subjects can be taken on the higher or standard level (grade). Education authorities will gladly assist parents and pupils seeking sound advice on entrance requirements laid down by universities, technical colleges and teachers' colleges in this regard.

- Post-school and tertiary training are provided countrywide by numerous universities, technical colleges, numerous teacher training colleges and a number of other institutions. The University of South Africa offers correspondence courses world-wide.

Immigrants who experience trouble finding suitable educational facilities for their children, are welcome to contact **AfriForum** for free guidance and advice. Parents are advised to bring detailed reports of their children's school careers with them to South Africa, including lists of the subjects the children studied. If these reports are not in English, they have to be translated into English by a certified translator for evaluation in South Africa.

SPORT AND RECREATION

The fact that South Africa was one of the main contenders to host the 2004-Olympic Games, proves that excellent facilities for most kinds of sport are to be found in the country. The climate makes year-round outdoor sport and recreation possible throughout South Africa. The country's unique and abundant fauna and flora offers many recreational activities for lovers of outdoor life. Apart from game parks and nature reserves, the main tourist attractions are the country's healthy climate, the variety of scenic attractions (ranging from desert plains carpeted with blooms in spring, to towering mountains soaring above valleys and vineyards); the hustle and bustle of modern cities and a coastline 3 000 km in length which includes some of the world's best bathing and surfing beaches. Tourist facilities match world standards. Accommodation ranges from luxury hotels to modest inns and bed and breakfast housing. Hikers and campers will find many affordable destinations all over South Africa. All cities and towns have information centres where tourists and newcomers can obtain maps, as well as information about local places of interest.

HEALTH CARE

South Africa offers excellent health care facilities. In 1999, 29 180 medical practitioners, 4 435 dentists, 10 205 pharmacists and 173 961 nurses were registered in South Africa. Please note that no special medical services exist for immigrants. Good medical care is very expensive and a patient generally has to prove that he will be able to pay for treatment before it is administered. A simple operation, such as an appendectomy, may cost approximately R15 000. It is recommended that immigrants take out medical/life insurance upon arrival in the country. Several excellent schemes are available. Contributions are calculated according to the ages, number and medical histories of applicants. **AfriForum** offers free advice in this regard.

Malaria and bilharzia are diseases endemic to certain parts of South Africa. Before visiting the country, foreigners are advised to take precautions in this regard. According to the United Nations AIDS Report, released in June 1998, South Africa is the country with the fastest growing number of people living with HIV/AIDS in the world. Approximately 8,6% of the total population is estimated to be HIV positive, with more than 1 500 new infections occurring daily. An aggressive media campaign educates society about the disease and all blood products are screened by health services to prevent accidental infection of patients. A toll-free HIV/AIDS help line exists at 0800-012-322. In general South Africa's tap/faucet-water is of a high quality, but in some areas problems were recently experienced with purification. To be 100% sure, drink bottled water which can be bought all over South Africa.

SOCIAL WELFARE

Social welfare includes the right to basic needs such as shelter, food, health care, work opportunities, security of income and all those aspects that promote the physical, social and emotional well-being of a society. In general, no provision is made for non-citizens. Immigrants who lose their income, may find themselves destitute. Before coming to South Africa please ensure that you have sufficient funds and security to provide for yourself and dependents in case of an emergency. In dire circumstances, repatriations or deportations are organized, but these are very unpleasant procedures which should never be regarded as an option when people plan to immigrate.

There are a variety of registered fund-raising organizations with welfare objectives, some of which operate nationally. They provide social care, welfare and treatment for the aged, the disabled, children, families, drug dependents, alcoholics, offenders and others in need of care and treatment. Some of these organizations also cater for the needs of immigrants. **AfriForum** will put you in touch with such bodies where necessary.

It is imperative that people should provide for their old age. Some employers include membership to a reputable pension scheme with an offer of employment. If this does not pertain to you, it is your own responsibility to make provision for your future. South African citizens with an income below subsistence level, may apply for a State pension. This however amounts to very little money which barely makes survival possible.

ECONOMY

The income tax percentages for 2008/2009 can be found at www.sars.gov.za but a summary of basic information regarding personal income tax is included below as well. A tax known as "Value added tax" or VAT is levied on goods and services in South Africa. It currently amounts to 14%.

Taxable Income (in South African Rand)		Rates of Tax (in South African Rand)	
0 – 112 500		18% of each R1	
112 501 – 180 000	20 250 +	25% of the amount above	112 500
180 001 – 250 000	37 125 +	30% of the amount above	180 000
250 001 – 350 000	58 125 +	35% of the amount above	250 000
350 001 – 450 000	93 125 +	38% of the amount above	350 000
450 001 and above	131 125 +	40% of the amount above	450 000

LATEST FORECASTS

GDP growth 2009 National Treasury		Downwards from 4.2% – 3.0%
Headline inflation rate (CPI) 2009 (average)		Downwards from 7.6% – 7.4%
Producer price inflation 2009 (average)		Downwards from 11.3% – 11.0%
Government consumption expenditure 2009		Downwards from 4.5% – 4.0%
Gross domestic expenditure 2009		Downwards from 4.6% – 3.0%
R/£ exchange rate 2009 (average)	FNB	Revised from 12,50 – 13.00
	Barnard Jacobs Mellet	Revised from 11,50 – 11.70
R/\$ exchange rate 2009 (average)	FNB	Revised from 7,75 – 10.00
	Barnard Jacobs Mellet	Revised from 8.20 – 8.80
Gold price per ounce 2008 (average)	Nedcor	Revised upwards from \$774 – \$919
	FNB	Downwards from \$800 – \$700

ECONOMIC BAROMETER

Gold price per ounce (average)	Oct 2008: \$809.72 – Oct 2007: \$754.54
Crude oil price (dated Brent/barrel)	07/11/08: \$857.20 – Year ago: \$94-37 (Decrease: 39.4%)
Petrol (premium pump price per litre Gauteng)	07/11/08: R8.96 – Year ago: R7-04 (Increase: 27.3%)
Prime overdraft rate (average)	07/11/08 15.5% – Year ago: 14,0%

ASSISTANCE FOR PROSPECTIVE IMMIGRANTS

A new Immigration Act (Act 19 of 2004) was passed by Parliament. Together with new regulations, it was implemented on 1 July 2005. We recommend that individuals who intend to immigrate, should consult their nearest representative of the South African Department of Home Affairs, the head office of the Department (Private Bag X114, Pretoria, 0001, Republic of South Africa), or **AfriForum** (alana@solidariteit.co.za, annatjie@solidariteit.co.za or Box 17216, Lyttelton, 0140, RSA) for further details.

Please note that you do not need an agent or lawyer when submitting any of the above applications, or when dealing with any government department. The officials are obliged to give you whatever information you require. Should you feel that you need professional advice, you are welcome to contact **AfriForum**. It is important to remember that the onus rests on an immigrant to keep all permits valid at all times. Once a permit has expired, the Department of Home Affairs is not obliged to accept applications to renew it. To avoid becoming an illegal alien in South Africa, always renew permits at least 30 days before they expire.

South Africa is in need of highly skilled individuals such as actuaries, aeronautical engineers, astrophysicists, biological science technicians, chemical engineers, construction and civil engineers, financial market analysts, geologists, industrial engineers, jewellery designers, maths and science teachers, mechanical engineers, pasture scientists, plant pathologists, research and development pharmacologists, risk managers, silicon and microchip developers, software developers, vehicle diagnostic technicians, veterinarians and virologists, to name but a few categories. People in these fields can ask representatives of the South African Department of Home Affairs for more information re quota permits for these fields of employment. Quotas were announced by the Minister in February 2006.

AfriForum

This unique organisation is a private auxiliary service which assists immigrants on a non-profit basis. We welcome any questions regarding migration to South Africa. These questions may be directed to fax: 0027-12-6641281 or email: alana@afriforum.co.za or annatjie@afriforum.co.za.

PRICES OF SOME COMMODITIES

All prices are subject to change and may differ from store to store. It should give the reader a good idea of the cost of living in South Africa. The quoted prices include VAT (value added tax) of 14%, which is payable on all commodities and services, with the exception of basic foodstuffs.

INVESTMENT INDEX	
GFCF (Real gross fixed capital formation) 2Q 2008	
Gross domestic saving ÷ GDP 2Q 2008	14,9% : 2Q 2007 15,0%
Real GFCF by public authorities	Up 4,9% 2Q 2008 vs 2Q 2007
by public corporations	Up 27,9%
by private business	Up 12,1%
Real GFCF in mining and quarrying	Up 20,0%
in manufacturing	Up 10,0%
in electricity, gas and water	Up 32,0%
in transport and communication	Up 19,9%
in finance etc.	Up 6,6%
in community, social & personal services	Up 1,3%
Real GFCF in residential buildings	Up 3,8%
in non-residential buildings	Up 12,8%
in construction works	Up 28,5%
in transport equipment	Up 17,0%
in machinery and equipment	Up 9,5%

INFLATION INDEX			
	%		Same period previous year:
Headline inflation rate 2007 (Sept 2008 vs Sept 2007)	13,1		7,2
Food price rise	17,6		11,9
Education	8,8		8,0
Clothing and footwear	17,8		-9,0
Housing	9,7		9,9
Medical and health care	6,9		5,6
Transport	20,0		3,0
Rise in administered (non-market) prices	21,8		5,9
Producer price rise (PPI)	16,0		9,4
Imported producer inflation	19,9		8,5
BUSINESS INDICATORS			
Total vehicles sold (this year to Oct): 464 067	On same period last year down 19,8%		
Electricity consumed (This year to Sept)	On same period last year down 1,1%		
Total buildings completed (value) (This year to Sept)	On same period last year down 4,2%		
Mining production (volume) (This year to July)	On same period last year down 9,5%		
Retail sales (value) (This year to July)	On same period last year down 1,2%		
Number of liquidations (this year to Sept): 2365	On same period last year down 4,1%		
Tourism accommodation occupancy rate	51,5% 2Q 2008: 51,5% - 46,5% 2Q 2007		
Arrival foreign travelers (This year to Aug): 6 329 248	On same period last year up 6,3		

Conversion table

1 kilogram (kg)	=	2,2 lbs
1 litre (l)	=	0,22 gallon
1 kilometre (km)	=	0,62 mile
1 gram (g)	=	0,035 ounce

Average exchange rates on 27 November 2008

The South African monetary unit is 100 cents per 1 Rand. Exchange rates fluctuate daily. Rates, given in Rand per foreign currency unit, are:

R 10-10	=	1 U S Dollar
R 15-23	=	1 Pound Sterling
R 8-41	=	1 Swiss Franc
R 0-10	=	100 Japanese Yen
R 6-55	=	1 Australian Dollar
R 5-51	=	1 New Zealand Dollar
R 8-20	=	1 Canadian Dollar
R 1-30	=	1 Hong Kong Dollar
R 12-96	=	1 Euro Unit

Basic food prices (groceries)

Item	Price
Air freshener Air Wick	R7-99
Apples 1,5kg	R6-99
Bananas Box	R12-99
Beans (1kg)	R19-98
Bread (brown)	R9-59
Bread (white)	R9-95
Margarine Rama (500g)	R15-69
Mixed Vegetables (frozen) 1kg	R15-99
Sweet corn (frozen) 1kg	R18-79
Country Crop (frozen 1 kg)	R18-99
Cheddar cheese (100g)	R4-79
Chicken whole per kg	R20-99
Coca Cola (2 l)	R10-99
Coffee (750g)	R42-99
Dishwashing liquid 750ml Sunlight	R14-99
Eggs (30)	R21-99
Fabric Softener 500ml Refill	R14-29
Facial Tissues (200)	R11.49
Fish cakes (6) (300g)	R11-99
Fish – Hake fillets 800g	R38-99
Flour - cake (2,5 kg)	R18-99
Flour - white bread (2,5 kg)	R11-79

Item	Price
Jam - smooth apricot (450g)	R7-79
Syrup Illovo (500g)	R9-39
Lettuce (packed)	R6-99
Fancy pasta (500g)	R7-99
Margarine (Rama 1kg)	R28-99
Meat – Lamb pack) (per kg)	R36-95
Meat – Lean beef mince (1 kg)	R36-95
Meat – Chicken portions (2 kg)	R33-79
Milk 1 litre (Long life)	R7-29
Peas frozen 1kg Young & Tender	R16-99
Diced carrots 1kg	R11-89
Potatoes (2 kg)	R12-99
Rice - brown (2 kg)	R24-99
Rice - white (2 kg) Tastic	R25-49
Salt (1 kg)	R4-39
Spaghetti (500g)	R6-79
Sugar (2.5 kg)	R14-69
Sunflower oil (750ml)	R11-99
Tea (100 bags) Glen	R8-99
Toilet paper (1 ply, 15 rolls)	R37-99
Tomatoes (1 kg)	R7-99
Washing powder (2 kg) Omo Auto	R49-99

Prices for basic garments (chain store prices)

Item	Price
Man	
Sleeveless Jersey	R169-95
Leather Jacker	R699-00
Track pants	R119-00
Jeans (Denim)	R99-00
T-Shirt	R69-95
Polar Fleece Jacket	R199-00
Beach longleg shorts	R129-95
Shirt	R89-95
Mens Velcro casual shoes	R337-46
Shoes Slipon (leather)	R186-95
Shirt (long sleeves)	R79-95
Socks 3 pack	R19-99
Boxer underwear	R99-95
Blazers polyester wool	R599-00
Adventure sandals	R127-46

Item	Price
Woman	
Ladies Blouse	R129-95
Ladies Lace Camisole	R89-95
Ladies Trousers	R129-95
Jeans (Denim)	R99-00
T-Shirt	R39-00
Jersey with hood	R79-99
Ladies balletstyle shoes	R224-96
Stretch cotton shirt	R170-00
Sundress	R69-95
Ladies Golfshirts	R187-55
Skirt with belt	R129-95
Pyjama Set	R109-95
Formal sandals	R112-46
Skirt	R179-95
Ladies Sweater Suit	R154-07

Boy of 8	
Jacket	R179-95
Golfshirt	R41-95
Jeans	R83-95
Spidey Golfset	R119-00
Shoes Velcro casual	R89-95
Beach long leg shorts	R83-95
Boys shorts	R50-00
Denim trousers	R69-95
Sweater Suit	R120-56

Girl of 8	
Blouse	R69-99
Sundress	R104-95
T-shirt long sleeves	R29-90
Polar fleece top	R39-99
Slacks (long)	R94-95
Barbie twopiece set	R149-95
Socks	R8-99
Skirt Capris	R68-95
Denims	R50-00

Prices of basic furniture and appliances

Item	Price
Bed base and mattress (Queen)	R3 999-00
Bed base and mattress (single)	R1 699-00
Bedroom suite	R5 499-00
Camera (Canon) Digital A470	R1 299-00
Sony Desktop	R10 999-00
Computer Printer (Canon)	R799-95
Cutlery set (24 piece hanging set)	R207-95
Ironing board	R199-00
Dining room suite 7 piece	R3 699-00
Dinner set (16 pieces)	R129-99
Dishwasher (12 place) Defy	R3 299-00
Deluxe Stainless Steel Pressure Cooker	R459-99
Home theatre system LG	R1 289-00
DVD Player Hyundai	R329-00
Electric Frying Pan (Pineware)	R179-99
Pedestal Fan	R249-99
LG DVD/VCR Combo	R1 599-00

Item	Price
Bar fridge	R1 499-00
Iron Steam and Spray Pineware	R109-99
7 Piece Olympic Pattio suite	R399-00
Kettle	R179-99
5 piece Dinette	R699-99
Microwave 20 litre Bauer	R599-00
3 Piece Casserole set (Pyrex)	R99-99
Cookware set (6 piece)	R299-99
Pressure cooker (Electric)	R399-99
Slow Cooker	R199-99
Stove (Defy 4 plate)	R2 899-00
Television 54cm LG	R1 599-00
Toaster 2 slices (Stainless Steel)	R179-99
Tumble drier (5 kg) Defy	R2 099-00
Vacuum cleaner (Hoover)	R 429-99
Video cassette player (VCR)	R 699-00
Washing machine (Defy)	R2 389-00

Prices of vehicles and fuel

Prices given are the latest as for November 2008 but are subject to change.

Vehicle	Price
Alfa Romeo GT 3.2 V6	R355 800-00
Audi A4 TDI 2.0 multitronic	R304 000-00
Audi A6 3.2 multitronic FS1	R492 000-00
BMW 116i 3-dr	R224 506-00
BMW 530i	R536 900-00
BMW M5	R982 500-00
Chevrolet Optra 1.8 LT	R194 570-00
Citroen C3 1.4 HDi Look Pack	R144 995-00
Daihatsu Charade 1.0 Classic	R94 559-00
Fiat Palio 11.1.5 Active 5dr	R94 300-00
Fiat Strade 1.2 EL	R89 500-00
Ford Fiesta 1.4 (5 doors) Trend	R148 990-00
Ford Focus-sedan 2.0 Trend Auto	R218 500-00
Honda Civic 1.8i VTEC Lxi	R181 900-00
Honda Accord 2.4 Executive	R268 500-00
Jaguar X Type 3.0 V6 SE	R380 000-00
Lexus LS460 6A	R895 700-00
Mazda 3 1.6i	R157 100-00
Mazda 6 2.0 Original	R219 990-00

Vehicle	Price
Mercedes-Benz A170 Classic	R212 000-00
Mercedes-Benz E350 Auto	R565 000-00
Mini Cooper	R199 500-00
Nissan Tilda-sedan Visia 1.6	R147 000-00
Nissan Micra 1.4 Acenta	R145 000-00
Opel Corsa Lite 1.4	R81 620-00
Opel Astra 1.6 5dr Essentia	R181 920-00
Peugeot 207 1.6 GTi THP	R213 000-00
Peugeot 407 2.2 Koepee 6-gang	R345 000-00
Porsche 911 Carrera koepee	R1 195 000-00
Renault Clio II 1.2 16V Va Va Voom	R105 000-00
Smart Fortwo Pulse 1.0	R146 000-00
Subaru Legacy Sedan 2.0 R	R239 000-00
Toyota Yaris T1 3dr	R105 400-00
Toyota Avanza 1.5 SX	R137 800-00
Volkswagen Tena City 1.4i	R74 400-00
Volkswagen Golf 2.0 Gti DSG	R291 300-00
Volkswagen Jetta 1.6 Comfort	R226 300-00
Volvo V50 2.0	R256 500-00

The petrol/fuel/gasoline price is determined by the State on a monthly basis. On the first Wednesday of every month, a new price is implemented. It is influenced by the international oil price, the exchange rate of South African currency and the condition of the South African road fund. South Africans refer to fuel for passenger vehicles as "petrol". Petrol prices are also cheaper in coastal regions than inland. In November 2008, the inland price for a litre of 95 octane unleaded petrol is R8.96.

Accommodation

For affordable temporary or holiday accommodation, bid at www.auxion.co.za, www.bargainbid.co.za or www.bid2stay.co.za. General information on such accommodation can also be found at w.beststay.co.za or www.aatravel.co.za.

An easy way to search for more permanent accommodation, is to visit web sites. It will also help the prospective buyer or tenant to see what accommodation in South Africa looks like. It is possible to purchase property privately, but the use of a reliable, registered agent is recommended for your own protection. The following sites are most useful:

www.era.co.za
www.devmark.co.za
www.pamgolding.co.za
www.realty1elk.co.za
www.homenet.co.za
www.aida.co.za
www.e-prop.co.za
www.Property24.com

www.maxprop.co.za
www.seeff.co.za
www.durrestates.co.za
www.remax.co.za
www.everitt.co.za
www.thepropertymall.com
www.privateproperty.co.za
www.e-landlord.co.za

Most immigrants prefer to make use of rental accommodation or to stay in hotels or bed-and-breakfast establishments until they can buy property. A night in the most basic hotel will cost approximately R500-00 per person. All daily newspapers advertise accommodation to let. A large number of agencies also manage such accommodation. Usually the tenant will have to rent the accommodation for a minimum of six months. A deposit equal to one month's rent is normally required as security against damage to the property. Unfurnished bachelor apartments will cost a minimum of R1 500-00 per month. This excludes electricity fees, but includes water. Furnished rental accommodation is rare and expensive. If buying property, proof of the buyer's previous credit record as well as proof of other fixed assets and life insurance will come in useful. **AfriForum** can give general advice about areas, agents and attorneys. Please note that houses are generally sold unfurnished in South Africa and that the current average mortgage rate is 14%. The following are average house/apartment prices for different provinces in South Africa. Obviously the price for a home in an exclusive, up-market area will be much more than the average, while cheaper homes in less desirable suburbs will also be found. Houses exceeding R2 200 000 have been excluded from the calculations. Improvements such as fences and pools are included in the prices.

Region	Homes 80-140m²	Homes 141-220m²	Homes 221-400m²
Gauteng (Johannesburg)	R719 376	R979 919	R1 384 685
Gauteng (Pretoria)	R619 100	R819 854	R1 311 165
Gauteng (Central & South of Johannesburg)	R685 440	R916 319	R1 219 989
Mpumalanga	R528 879	R816 341	R1 137 259
Limpopo	R639 230	R819 159	R1 194 336
North West	R517 816	R789 820	R1 183 483
Free State (Bloemfontein)	R663 991	R870 301	R1 178 578
Northern Cape	R518 600	R336 468	R1 063 473
Western Cape (Cape Town metro)	R778 517	R1 172 709	R1 642 948
Eastern Cape (PE/Uitenhage metro)	R847 192	R801 832	R1 387 559
KwaZulu-Natal (Durban metro)	R809 504	R1 066 741	R1 528 552

Value of property	Transfer cost applicable
R0 - R500 000	0%
R500 001 - R1-million	5% on the value above R500 000
R1-million and above	R25 000 plus 8% of the value above R1 000 000

House Price Index (nominal) Sept 2008	Up 1,5%	Compared to Sept 2007
House Price Index (real) Sept 2008	Down 10,2%	Compared to Sept 2007
Mortgage advances Aug 2008	Up 17,6%	Compared to Aug 2007
House price trends (nominal) average		
Houses (40-79m ² ; priced at under R400 000)	Up 12,1%	Compared to 2Q 2007
Houses (80-140m ² ; R683 088 average price)	Up 7,0%	
Houses (141-220m ² ; R933 649 average)	Up 4,1%	
Houses (221-400m ² ; R1 397 905 average)	Up 7,6%	
All houses (80-400m ² ; R965 047)	Up 4,7%	
Luxury housing (costing more than R2,9m)	Up 8,8%	
Johannesburg metro (80-400m ² ; R1 052 981)	Up 5,3%	
Cape Town metro (80-400m ² ; R1 104 726)	Up 4,4%	
Durban metro (80-400m ² ; R923 829)	Down 7,0%	
PE/Uitenhage metro (80-400m ² ; R1 073 063)	Up 1,2%	
Cost of building a new house (average)	Up 8,4%	

GENERAL INFORMATION FOR IMMIGRANTS

Customs and Excise

Immigrants are allowed to bring household goods and used equipment necessary for the practicing of their professions into South Africa duty-free. The required application forms can be obtained from www.sars.gov.za. When asking transport firms for a quote for these goods, please ensure that all costs (also wharfage in South Africa) are included. The importation of a vehicle is subject to more conditions, taxes and provisions. Here it is strongly recommended that you make use of a customs clearing agent's services. To import a foreign vehicle into South Africa, you will also need permission from the South African Bureau of Standards. Contact Mr. Alan Cohen at 0027-12-4287911 (telephone), or cohenag@sabs.co.za for information about such clearance.

Communications

In South Africa the telephone dialling code is a monotonous purr-sound. A beep-tone of a half second repeated every half second signals number engaged. A very long beep-tone of 2,5 seconds repeated at half second intervals signals that the number you have dialled no longer exists. Only one company provides land-line telephone services in South Africa, namely Telkom SA (Ltd). They have offices all over the country. Public telephones use either coins or phone-cards, which may be purchased from post-offices, stationery shops or cafés. Three cellular telephone companies (Vodacom, MTN and Cell C) are also represented in South Africa and offer various contracts to suit individuals.

Air mail postage rates to countries outside Southern Africa are:

Aerograms	R 3-15
Postcards	R 4-20
Small letters (50g or less)	R 4-90
Medium letters (250g or less)	R16-40
Large letters (300g or less)	R27-90
Small parcels (2kg or less)	R21-20 per 100 grams.

Stamps can be bought from post offices or most stationers. An independent postage service is offered by a group of stores known as Postnet. They have slightly cheaper rates for overseas mail. Within South Africa a postcard or DL-sized letter will cost R2-05, a B5-envelope R4-10 and a B4-envelope R5-15. For general postal information, call the Post Office Customer Care Line toll-free at 0860-111-502.

Transport

Major South African centra are linked by reliable air, rail and road transport services. Public transport services within towns and cities are irregular though. Taxis are extremely expensive and most South Africans therefore have to depend on their own means of transport. When making use of taxi transport, we recommend that you use your hotel to book a taxi for you in order to be sure that it is officially registered.

South Africans drive on the left-hand side of the road. Be careful if driving here yourself - many tourists from right-hand driving countries get confused and are involved in serious accidents in South Africa. In rural areas, game or livestock often cross the road, so keep alert.

Drivers' licenses fall under the jurisdiction of the Department of Transport, but local governments (municipalities) do the evaluation and exchange of foreign licenses for South African equivalents. Please note that your license must be translated into one of the official languages of South Africa and that you must have a permanent residence permit to qualify for a South African driver's license. This license has to be carried on the person of drivers at all times. Local authorities cannot re-instate your original license, should you decide to return to the country you emigrated from. This will have to be finalized abroad. Generally the speed limits range from 60km/h in residential areas to a maximum of 120km/h on national highways. Pay attention to the signs in this regard.

Rental vehicles are available in all major South African centres. This includes well-known international companies such as Hertz (tel: 0861600136) and Avis (tel: 0861021111).

The media

The South African Bill of Rights guarantees freedom of expression and press freedom is actively promoted by both the Government and the private sector. More than 80 community radio stations broadcast in South Africa and the programmes of 3 national and 1 independent television channel, plus some pay and satellite channels can be enjoyed.

The country has 17 daily and 8 major weekly newspapers, as well as more than 200 regional papers. Some English South African papers are *The Star*, *Mail & Guardian*, *Sunday Times* and *The Sunday Independent*. They all provide web-site facilities. Approximately 300 consumer magazines and more than 500 trade, technical and professional magazines are registered in South Africa. The latest South African news is available from www.news24.co.za.

Citizenship

Immigrants may become citizens after living in South Africa as permanent residents for a minimum of five years. Ask **AfriForum** for advice and assistance. South African citizens are allowed to have dual citizenship and may make use of passports of more than one country, providing that they apply for the Department of Home Affairs' written permission to do so. Children born in South Africa do not automatically become citizens of this country. Parents-to-be have to take note of this fact, please.

Safety

Safety has become an important issue throughout the world. The Tourism Safety Task Group of South Africa has compiled the following tips for tourists and migrants who come to the country:

At a hotel

- Never leave your luggage unattended
- Store valuables in the hotel's safety deposit box.
- Keep your room locked, whether you're in it or not.
- If someone knocks, check who it is before opening the door.
- Leave your keys at the reception desk when leaving the hotel.

In the street

- Avoid ostentatious displays of expensive jewellery, cameras and other valuables.
- It's definitely not advisable to carry large sums of money around.
- At night, steer clear of dark, isolated areas.
- It's better to explore in groups and to stick to well-lit, busy streets.
- Plan your route beforehand.
- A Policeman or traffic officer will be glad to direct you if you get lost.
- If you want to call a taxi, your hotel or the nearest tourism information office can recommend a reliable service.

In a car

- Plan your route in advance.
- Keep the car doors locked at all times and wind the windows up.
- Lock valuable items in the boot (trunk).
- At night, park in well-lit areas.
- Never pick up strangers.
- If in doubt about the safety of an area, phone a police station for advice.

In general we advise people to carry a reliable map with them at all times and to keep a certified copy of passports and other important documentation such as flight tickets in a safe place such as a bank or hotel's safety deposit box.

Employment

South Africa has very strict labour legislation and most kinds of employment are subject to minimum wage requirements. This even applies to domestic workers. Useful information and samples of contracts can be found at www.labour.gov.za.

General advice

Illegal immigration increases South Africa's levels of unemployment and crime. People are therefore wary of foreigners, including legal immigrants. An arrogant attitude on the immigrant's side will not improve this situation. Immigrants have to respect South African traditions, customs and laws, even though some of it may seem strange to them. In general, the society is still conservative. Formal clothing is an unwritten requirement at job-interviews.

South Africa is a land of opportunity, not of milk and honey. Immigrants often fall prey to "get rich soon" schemes. Be careful of such projects and contact a reputable person such as a bank manager for advice before investing in any scheme. The same advice goes when purchasing property or a business.

All employees are protected by the South African labour law. Please ensure that you have a written contract with your employer if coming to South Africa to work here. The Department of Labour can be contacted for further information about legal protection.

Remember, South Africa is a drought-stricken country. Always close taps/faucets after use.

Emergencies

Should you have any emergency in South Africa, the numbers to call to reach ambulance, fire, electricity or similar services can be found on the second or third page of the local telephone directory. The police's rapid response emergency number is 10111.

For Internet surfers

There are literally thousands of South African web sites available. Reliable South African **search engines** are www.ananzi.co.za and www.aardvark.co.za. Other interesting sites are:

South Africa in general: www.safrika.info;

Nelson Mandela Children's Fund: www.mweb.co.za/mandela/children;

Information on the South African Government: www.gov.za;

Information on the South African Parliament: www.parliament.gov.za;

Information on South African Legislation: www.acts.co.za;

Official Statistics: www.statssa.gov.za;

Truth and Reconciliation Commission: www.truth.org.za;

Human Rights Commission: www.sahrc.org.za;

Investment in South Africa: www.isa.org.za; Business in South Africa: www.sacob.co.za;

South African churches: www.churchnet.co.za;

Some South African newspapers: www.news24.co.za; www.bday.co.za; www.fm.co.za;

www.suntimes.co.za; www.mg.co.za; www.star.co.za;

Tourism: www.africa.com/captour/; www.parks-sa.co.za;

Accommodation: www.aatravel.co.za;

English/Afrikaans dictionary: www.dictionaries.travling.com;

Immigration: www.cfi.org.za; www.home-affairs.gov.za.

For great shopping, you can try:

Books, etcetera: www.kalahari.net;
 CDs: www.cdzone.co.za or www.musica.co.za;
 Flowers: www.netflorist.co.za or www.virtualflorist.co.za;
 Vehicles: www.autonet.co.za or www.autotrader.co.za;
 Jewellery: www.jennaclifford.co.za or www.arthurkaplan.co.za;
 Gifts: www.junglemoo.co.za;
 Unique South African adrenalin trips or holidays: www.experiencethis.co.za.

Bringing pets to South Africa

For all application forms for animal importation permits and information about costs and quarantine requirements, visit the South African State Veterinary Services' web site at: www.nda.agric.za/vetweb. Click on "Import" buttons. Alternatively contact **AfriForum** for such information and details of pet transport companies.

Removals

Are you planning on relocating to South Africa? Let a "Proudly South African" removal company which we recommend, arrange your entire removal for you from anywhere in the world. **Elliott International** is one of the largest Removal Companies in South Africa, with a worldwide reputation for service excellence. Through their extensive worldwide partner network they are able to undertake door-to-door removal services from any city in the world, and deliver consignments in South Africa as well as Botswana, Zambia, Namibia, Zimbabwe, Swaziland, Mozambique en Lesotho via their own branch network, truck and crew.

They provide a fully guaranteed residence to residence removal service including packing, transportation by either sea and air, insurance cover, customs clearance, storage and delivery to exacting ISO 9000 standards. Payment for services rendered by them can be arranged in South Africa in Rand, or in foreign currency if required. Should you wish to know more about this company and the services they offer, log onto their website at www.elliott.co.za.

A free quotation for your move to South Africa can be obtained from them by contacting Amanda-Lee Henry at amandalh@elliott.co.za.

Various notes, pamphlets, newspapers, brochures, magazines, empirical research, as well as the official publication *South Africa Yearbook* were consulted for the compilation of this booklet. Information about financial aspects was kindly provided to us by ABSA, *Rapport* and *Beeld*. We would like to thank the Department of Home Affairs, the Department of Foreign Affairs, the South African Communication Services, South African Post Office and Tourism Safety Task Group for their assistance.

REPRODUCTION OF THIS INFORMATION

As a result of various requests and the fact that we do not have the means to translate this brochure into other languages, permission is granted to staff-members of the Departments of Home and Foreign Affairs to translate it, or parts thereof, with due acknowledgement. Interested parties are welcome to reproduce the brochure or to contact **AfriForum** for further details.

Immigration Information is reviewed on a quarterly basis. The next issue is due in February 2009.

GOOD NEWS ABOUT SOUTH AFRICA

(In no specific order)

- South Africa has the longest wine route in the world, namely Route 62 between Cape Town and Port Elizabeth.
- One South African street produced two Nobel Prize winners – both Nelson Mandela and Desmond Tutu lived in Bhacela Street in Soweto.
- There are more plant species per hectare in the Cape Peninsula than anywhere else in the world.
- The first successful heart transplant in the world was done in South Africa by Chris Barnard.
- Africa's first astronaut is a South African, Mark Shuttleworth.
- The Kreepy Krauly automatic pool cleaner was invented in South Africa.
- According to the Big Mac Index, food is very cheap in South Africa – even 13% less than in the Philippines. A Big Mac costs 40% less in South Africa than in the USA.
- An average house of 120m² costs less than R300 000, while an average house of 106m² in the UK costs R1,4 million.
- South Africa has the cheapest electricity in the world.
- Bread is 66% cheaper in South Africa than the average price in Europe.
- South Africa is the ninth largest Internet user in the world.
- 21% of South Africans own a cellular telephone.
- The eleventh busiest flight route between two cities in the world, is between Cape Town and Johannesburg.
- The British investment bank, Lehman Bros., has found that South Africa has the fourth most stable upcoming economy. The first three countries are Hungary, Mexico and Poland.
- The use of electronic video camera policing in Johannesburg and Cape Town resulted in a 60% decrease in crime in these CBDs within a year.
- 77% of South Africans own their own home, compared to 66% in 1994. In the country 76% of all households have running water and 80% electricity. In urban areas 84% of all households have a TV, and in rural areas 45% of all households.
- Common operations (e.g. for appendicitis, tonsillitis and Caesareans) cost between 50 and 75% less in South Africa than in the USA. Patients from the UK and USA often travel to South Africa to make use of the professional, but much more affordable plastic surgery, hip and knee replacement operations.
- South Africa has an annual average of 7,5 to 9,4 cloud-free hours per day.
- The world's largest number of tortoise species are found in the Western Cape.
- Pinotage is South Africa's very own wine variety.
- Two CNN-anchors, Tumi Makgabo and Anant Naidoo, are South Africans, as are Hollywood stars Charlize Theron and Arnold Vosloo.
- The South African movie *Tsotsi* won an Oscar for the best foreign movie in 2006.
- J.R. Tolkien (*Lord of the Rings*) was born in Bloemfontein, South Africa.
- South Africa accounts for almost 45 per cent of Africa's gross domestic product (goods and services produced).
- South Africa is the first country to protect the great white shark.
- Afrikaans is the youngest official language in the world.
- In the past three years the South African Rand was the only currency that strengthened against the US Dollar.
- Stellenbosch University was the first university in the world to design and launch a microsatellite.
- South Africa is the only country to manufacture nuclear weapons then voluntarily terminate the programme.
- Since 1994, South Africa has built 500 homes a day for the poor.
- Since 1994, tourism to South Africa has more than doubled.
