

Know the context - South Africa

Historical, political, socio-cultural situation

- [Encyclopaedia Britannica on South Africa](#)
- [Belgian embassies and consulates in South Africa](#)
- [EU delegation to South Africa](#)

Economic situation

- [World Bank on South Africa](#)
- [OECD Economic Snapshot](#)
- [African Development Bank Group Economic Outlook](#)
- [Flanders Investment and Trade in South Africa](#)

Human rights situation

- [Human Rights Watch World Report on South Africa](#)
- [Amnesty International on South Africa](#)

Human development

- [Human Development Indicators South Africa](#)
- [Human Development Report 2019 on South Africa](#)

Contains

- Human Development Index (HDI): 0,705; rank 113 (medium human development)
 - Inequality-adjusted Human Development Index (IHDI): 0,463; inequality coefficient 31,4 (high inequality)
 - Gender Inequality Index (GII): 0,422 (complete inequality = 0, complete equality = 1)
 - Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI): "6.3 percent of the population (3,549 thousand people) are multidimensionally poor while an additional 12.2 percent are classified as vulnerable to multidimensional poverty (6,902 thousand people).
- [Unesco on South Africa](#)
 - [ILO on South Africa](#)

- [FOS country profile on South Africa](#) and extra information on SDG 8:

8.3. Promote development-oriented policies that support [...] **decent job creation** [...]

In general, the labour market in South-Africa remains an insecure place. High rates of **unemployment** and many precarious forms of employment, characterized by low wages, long hours, bad health and safety conditions, are for many a daily reality.¹ The high levels of unemployment, exacerbated by the global recession, resulted in a disproportionate growth of the **informal sector** in South Africa. An increased reliance upon outsourcing and sub-contracting arrangements has given rise to the growing "casualisation" of the labour market and an unregulated and insecure labour force.

8.5. Achieve **full and productive employment** and **decent work** [...], and **equal pay** for work of equal value

The legacy of apartheid is clearly visible through the high inequality between population groups, such as women and men and white and black individuals. In 2014, for instance, white employees earned on average 4 times the median earnings of black employees. Gender inequalities continue to undermine decent work objectives as well. Despite a strong increase in female labour force participation (for instance from 38% in 1995 to 48.5% in 2012), women employees face inequality and disadvantage in the workplace and unequal payment. A November 2019 report by the ILO found that male employees earn on average almost 20% more than female employees.² Gender stereotyping, discrimination based on maternity and family responsibilities and difficulties in balancing work and family life are thriving. Women are mainly concentrated in the feminised professions such as nursing and teaching while at the same time remaining in lower job categories than men and remain underrepresented in senior positions. Black women are disproportionately under-represented at all senior levels and are the least promoted. Women employees remain over-represented in lower paid, less secure and unskilled positions, with 16% of women employees being employed in the informal sector, 21% in the elementary sector, and 15% in the domestic sector. The concentration of women in low-paid jobs, with limited access to job security and benefits, has contributed to the increasing "feminisation of poverty".

¹ Achieving decent work in South-Africa? <http://www.scielo.org.za/pdf/peji/v15n2/13.pdf>

² Wages in Africa, Recent trends in average wages, gender pay gaps and wage disparities, ILO, November 2019, Available at: https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---africa/---ro-addis_ababa/---sro-cairo/documents/publication/wcms_728363.pdf

8.8. Protect **labour rights** and promote **safe and secure working environments** [...]

In the agricultural sector, such as wine and fruit plantations, people work long days of more than 12 hours, and do so in unsafe and unclean environments. There is job insecurity, abuse and violence. The agricultural workers are the most marginalised workers in the country and still earn the lowest wages in the labour market, despite the recent introduction of a national minimum wage under pressure from trade unions. Of the approximately 800,000 agricultural workers, 7% are labour migrants. This number is probably higher, because undocumented migrants are not included here. Because of their precarious situation, they are exploited even more than their local colleagues; they are more often given temporary or no contracts, lower wages, work in a gwaza system (payment per piece), are physically or sexually abused. Female migrant workers experience structural violence and discrimination based on gender and nationality. The violations of human rights are numerous. The agricultural workers are also threatened with arrest or deportation. It is almost impossible to turn to a trade union, the police or a complaints system, partly because of the fear of being discovered as a person without a right of residence.

Development cooperation

- [Flemish Development in South Africa](#)
- [Enabel in South Africa](#)