FOCUS ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE



THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA TODAY

Location	The Republic of South Africa occupies the southern extremity of the
	African mainland. It is bordered by Namibia to the northwest, by
	Botswana and Zimbabwe to the north, by Mozambique to the
	northeast, and by Swaziland to the east. Lesotho is completely
	surrounded by South Africa territory.
Size	1,219,090 Sq. K.M. (470,693 Sq. Miles)
Population	57,516,665 (2022) *
Population Density	47.18 per sq. km. (Approx. in 2022)*
Population Growth Rate	0.93% (2022)*
Birth Rate	18.56 births/1000 of population (July 2022)*
Death Rate	9.16 deaths/1000 of population (July 2022)*
Literacy rate	95%. Male 95.5%, Female 94.5%. (2019)*
Life Expectancy	65.32years, Male 63.99%, Female 66.68%.(2022) *
Capital City	Pretoria (Administrative), Cape Town (Legislative) and Bloemfontein (Judicial).
Other Large Cities	Durban, Johannesburg, Soweto, Port Elizabeth, Pietermaritzburg,
_	Benoni, Vereeniging, Tembisa, Boksburg, Vanderbiljpark, Newcastle,
	East London, Welkom, Krugersdorp, Uitenhage, Mdantsane,
	Botshabelo, Brakpan, Kimberley, Witbank, Carletonville, Springs,
	Alberton, Klerksdorp, Midrand, Verwoerdburg, Westonaria, Somerset
	West, Rustenburg and Potchefstroom.
Religion	Most of the inhabitants profess Christianity, although traditional
	African religions are still adhered to. There are also small minorities
	of Hindus and Muslims.
Language	The official languages are Sepedi, Sesotho, Setswana, siSwati,
	Tshivenda, Xitsonga, Afrikaans, English, isiNdebele, isiXhosa and
	isiZulu.
Climate	The climate is generally sub-tropical, but with considerable regional
	variations. Temperatures in Cape Town, on the southwest coast,
	vary from 7°C (45°F) to 26°C (79°F), with an annual average of about
	17°C (63°F). Annual rainfall averages 510 mm (20 ins) at Cape
	Town, and 1,101 mm (43 ins) at Durban, on the east coast.
International Relations	South Africa is a member of the UN, BIS, the Commonwealth (except
	during 1961-94), the African Union, the Southern African
	Development Community, the Non-Aligned Movement, the African
	Development Bank, the Antarctic Treaty and is an ACP member state
	of the ACP-EU relationship. South Africa played an active role in
	negotiating and drafting the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement and was
	present when the document was signed on 10 July1999. On 1
	December 1999 the eighth Regional Summit appointed Nelson
	Mandela facilitator of the Arusha peace process.
Currency	The unit of currency is the rand (ZAR).

NATIONAL ECONOMY

The recovery has been faster than anticipated but its durability is uncertain. Despite the authorities' strong policy response to the pandemic, real output contracted by 6.4 percent in 2020. As the mobility restrictions were phased out and terms of trade improved, real output is estimated to have rebounded by 4.6 percent in 2021. The rapid pace of recovery, despite the earlier surge in infections amid low vaccination rates and international travel bans brought by the *Omicron* variant, could be a source of optimism. However, the economic recovery is deemed fragile, as it was accompanied by worsening unemployment (34.9 percent), weak bank lending to the private sector, and anemic private investment. Despite the growth rebound, poverty and inequality did not show signs of improvement.

Against this backdrop, macroeconomic fundamentals have weakened, and vulnerabilities have increased. The fiscal position deteriorated following the introduction of COVID-19-related measures and the transfers to state-owned enterprises (SOEs), whose operational and financial performance deteriorated further. As a result, the fiscal deficit soared to 9.7 percent of GDP in 2020, before declining to an estimated 8.4 percent in 2021. Public debt is estimated to have reached almost 70 percent of GDP in 2021. The external current account balance turned into extraordinary surpluses as the pandemic compressed import volumes while favorable commodity prices, deemed temporary, boosted exports. Gross fiscal and external financing needs remained elevated. Inflation was well-anchored within the 3–6 percent target range during the pandemic, but rising inflation risks prompted the South African Reserve Bank to start unwinding monetary accommodation in late-2021. Bank soundness indicators, including profitability, solvency, and liquidity, remained solid.

The outlook points to some growth recovery in the near term but lackluster medium-term performance. Growth is projected at 1.9 percent in 2022, before easing to 1.4 percent in the medium term, capped by structural constraints to investment, prevailing policy uncertainty, and elevated public debt, which hinders job creation. Inflation would converge to the midpoint of the 3–6 percent target range. The fiscal deficit is projected to continue to narrow on recovering revenue and phasing out of COVID-19-related measures, but over the medium term, the growing interest bill and demands from SOEs and public servants will keep the fiscal deficit high, above 7 percent of GDP. The debt ratio is expected to continue rising. The external current account is projected to return to a deficit from 2022.

Executive Board Assessment

In the course of Article IV consultation between IMF and South Africa, Directors of IMF noted that COVID 19 has exacerbated already low growth, high unemployment and inequality, and elevated public debt. Directors commended the authorities' strong policy response to the pandemic, which has been supported by anchored inflation expectations, a sound financial system, and a flexible exchange rate. They underscored the need to address longstanding challenges through sound fiscal policy and reforms to support sustainable, green, and inclusive growth.

Directors recommended ambitious fiscal consolidation to reduce public debt, while protecting the most vulnerable. This consolidation should be mainly focused on the expenditure side and complemented by revenue administration enhancements and a credible public debt anchor. They viewed the upcoming February budget as an opportunity to define concrete measures, including containing public sector compensation, rationalizing transfers to state owned enterprises (SOEs), streamlining tax expenditures, and better targeting education subsidies. Directors highlighted the need for well targeted social spending to reduce poverty and inequality. Noting the deteriorating performance of SOEs, Directors urged prompt action to strengthen their operations and finances and advance anti-corruption efforts in procurement and administration. They noted that restructuring the national electricity company is critical to ensure energy security, reduce fiscal risks, and transition away from coal powered energy.

Directors welcomed the South African Reserve Bank's plan to gradually unwind accommodative monetary policy amid rising inflation risks. They recognized its commitment to price stability and focus on

strengthening monetary policy transmission to support market functioning. Directors saw merit in reducing the inflation target when conditions allow.

Directors welcomed the financial sector's resilience to the pandemic while calling for enhanced supervision and regulation and continued monitoring of the deepening bank sovereign nexus. They stressed that greater use of fintech to enhance financial inclusion should be complemented by adequate oversight. Directors encouraged swift completion of the bank resolution framework and the deposit insurance scheme, and measures to strengthen the AML/CFT framework.

Directors stressed the importance of improving economic efficiency and facilitating the green transition through increased competition in product markets and flexibility in labor markets. They emphasized that measures to reduce regulatory barriers and modernize labor markets would support greater private sector participation. These efforts are essential for boosting investment, creating employment, and strengthening the external position. Directors encouraged further actions to strengthen governance and fight widespread corruption, including by safeguarding pandemic related funds.

South Africa: Selected Economic Indicators, 2018–2023								
Economic Inc								
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023		
			Est.		Proj.			
National income and prices (annual percentage c	otherwi	se indica	ted)					
Real GDP	1.5	0.1	-6.4	4.6	1.9	1.4		
Real GDP per capita 8/	0.0	-1.3	-7.8	3.7	0.3	-0.1		
Real domestic demand	1.6	1.1	-8.0	4.0	3.0	1.9		
GDP deflator	4.0	4.5	5.3	4.7	1.7	4.7		
CPI (annual average)	4.6	4.1	3.3	4.4	4.5	4.5		
CPI (end of period)	4.9	3.7	3.2	5.0	4.5	4.5		
Labor market (annual percentage change unless	otherw	ise indi	cated)					
Unemployment rate (percent of labor force, annual	27.1	28.7	29.2	34.2	35.3	37.0		
average)								
Unit labor costs (formal nonagricultural)	4.0	4.7	2.9	0.2	4.5	4.5		
Savings and Investment (percent of GDP)								
Gross national saving	13.6	13.4	14.7	15.3	11.8	11.3		
Public (incl. public enterprises) 6/	1.0	0.0	-6.1	-5.3	-4.3	-3.9		
Private	12.6	13.5	20.8	20.6	16.1	15.2		
Investment (including inventories)	16.5	16.0	12.7	12.2	13.1	13.2		
Public (incl. public enterprises excl. inventories) 7/	4.8	4.3	3.9	3.7	3.9	4.0		
Private	11.0	11.1	9.8	9.7	9.8	9.8		
Fiscal position (percent of GDP unless otherwise								
Revenue, including grants 2/	26.4	26.9	25.3	25.9	27.0	26.5		
Expenditure and net lending	30.2	31.7	35.0	34.3	34.5	33.6		
Overall balance	-3.7	-4.8	-9.7	-8.4	-7.5	-7.1		
Primary balance	-0.3	-1.1	-5.5	-3.9	-2.6	-1.8		
Structural balance (percent of potential GDP)	-3.5	-3.9	-4.8	-4.8	-5.0	-5.5		
Gross government debt 3/	51.6	56.3	69.4	69.9	74.5	77.7		
Government bond yield (10-year and over, percent) 4/	9.4	9.0	9.7	9.9	9.9			
Money and credit (annual percentage change unl					•	T		
Broad money	5.6	6.1	9.4	6.4	5.8	5.7		
Credit to the private sector 5/	5.5	5.5	1.0	2.1	2.7	4.1		
Repo rate (percent, end of period) 4/	6.8	6.5	3.5	3.8	3.8			

3-month Treasury bill interest rate (percent) 4/	7.6	7.2	3.9	3.9	3.9				
Balance of payments (annual percentage change unless otherwise indicated)									
Current account balance (billions of U.S. dollars)	-12.0	-10.0	6.7	12.8	-5.2	-8.6			
percent of GDP	-3.0	-2.6	2.0	3.1	-1.2	-2.0			
Exports growth (volume)	2.8	-3.4	-12.0	13.5	7.0	3.0			
Imports growth (volume)	3.2	0.5	-17.4	10.8	11.2	4.7			
Terms of trade	-2.1	4.2	9.4	1.8	-9.7	0.5			
Overall balance (percent of GDP)	0.2	0.5	-1.0	0.5	0.1	-0.2			
Gross reserves (billions of U.S. dollars)	51.6	55.1	55.5	57.6	58.0	57.3			
in percent of ARA (w/o CFMs)	72.0	74.2	78.1	81.0	81.6	80.5			
in percent of ARA (w/ CFMs)	78.8	81.6	86.6	89.8	90.5	89.3			
Total external debt (percent of GDP)	42.6	47.8	50.8	39.5	42.9	43.4			
Nominal effective exchange rate (period average) 4/	-0.6	-5.2	-11.6	7.6	-2.2				
Real effective exchange rate (period average) 4/	1.7	-3.3	-10.1	9.5	2.0				
Exchange rate (Rand/U.S. dollar, end of period) 4/	14.4	14.0	14.7	15.9	15.6				

Sources: Bloomberg, Haver, National Treasury, South African Reserve Bank, World Bank, and Fund staff estimates and projections.

- 1/ Consolidated government as defined in the budget unless otherwise indicated.
- 2/ Revenue excludes "transactions in assets and liabilities" classified as part of revenue in budget documents. This item represents proceeds from the sales of assets, realized valuation gains from holding of foreign currency deposits, and other conceptually similar items, which are not classified as revenue by the IMF's Government Finance Statistics Manual 2014.
- 3/ Central government.
- 4/ January 11, 2022.
- 5/ Other depository institutions' "loans and securities" in all currencies.
- 6/ Public savings are the sum of public corporations and general government gross savings, using SARB financial accounts data. This allows to obtain a private sector savings estimate that excludes SOEs (SOEs are included in the National Accounts), derived as the difference between the National Accounts gross national savings and the public savings.
- 7/ Inventories data are volatile and excluded from the investment breakdown to help clarify fixed capital formation developments.
- 8/ Per-capita GDP figures are computed using STATS SA mid-year population estimates.

"NATIONAL ECONOMY" is based on IMF Executive Board Concludes 2021 Article IV Consultation with South Africa February 10, 2022.

FOREIGN TRADE

South Africa's total exports in 2015 were of the order of US\$ 80,772 million. It increased to US\$ 89,944 million in 2019. Exports during the period from 2015 to 2019, in terms of percentage, grew highest (16.08%) in 2017 and fell maximum (-4.94%) in 2016 in comparison with 2016 and 2015 respectively. The annual average compound rate of growth worked out at 2.73%.

Imports, on the other hand, were of the order of US\$ 88,162 million in 2019 while in 2015 it was US\$ 85,715 million. Imports during the period from 2015 to 2019, in terms of percentage, grew highest (12.36%) in 2018 and fell maximum (-12.36%) in 2016 as compared to 2017 and 2015 respectively. The annual average compound rate of increase worked out at 0.71%.

Volume of trade registered an annual average (compound) rate of growth of 1.70% from US\$ 166,487 million in 2015 to US\$ 178,106 million in 2019.

South Africa faced a deficit balance of trade during the period 2015 and 2019 (see Table I). South Africa's export and import, volume and balance of trade between 2015 and 2019 along with their growth rates are given in **Table-I**.

South Africa's major export items are natural and cultured pearls, base metals and articles thereof, mineral products, products of chemicals or allied industries, vehicles, aircraft, vessels and associated transport equipment and machinery and mechanical appliances etc. and main imported commodities were machinery and mechanical appliances, mineral products, chemicals or allied industries, vehicles, aircraft, vessels and associated transport equipment, plastics and articles thereof etc. Principal trading partners of South Africa are Australia, Belgium-Luxembourg, Brazil, China PR, Finland, France, Germany, Hong Kong, India, Iran, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Korea Repub., Malaysia, Netherlands, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland-Liechtenstein, Thailand, UK, USA and Zimbabwe etc.

Civil aviation is controlled by the Minister of Transport. The Chief Directorate: Civil Aviation Authority at the Department of Transport is responsible for licensing and control of domestic and international air services. The Airports Co owns and operates South Africa's nine principal airports, of which three (at Johannesburg, Cape Town and Durban) are classified as international airports.

South African Airways (SAA), Comair, S A Express and S A Airlink operate scheduled international air services within Africa and to Europe, Latin America and the Middle and Far East. 13 independent operators provide internal flights which link up with the internal network of SAA, Comair and S A Express.

The principal harbours are at Richards Bay, Cape Town, Port Elizabeth, East London, Durban and Saldanha Bay. The deep-water port at Richard Bay has been extended and its facilities upgraded. Both Richards Bay and Saldanha Bay are major bulk-handling ports, while Saldanha Bay also has an important fishing fleet.

East London, the only river port, has a multi-purpose terminal and dry dock facilities. Mossel Bay is a specialized port serving the south coast fishing industry and offshore gas fields.

More than 30 shipping lines serve South African ports. At the end of 2001 South Africa's merchant fleet had a total displacement of 381,868 grt.

BILATERAL TRADE WITH INDIA

Indo-South Africa bilateral trade in 2017-18 was of the order of Rs.68,615.52 crores. It increased to Rs.127,176.57 crores in 2021-22. The annual compound growth rate of volume of trade during the period from 2017-18 to 2021-22 was 16.68%. India faced a deficit balance of trade during the said period (see table II). The average annual compound growth rates of exports and imports worked out at 16.57 and 16.74% respectively.

India's exports to, and imports from South Africa of Merchandise Goods between 2017-18 and 2021-22 with their growth rates are presented in **Table II.**

India's top ten merchandise goods exported to and imported from South Africa, during 2017-18 to 2021-22, along with their growth rates are depicted in **Table III & IV** respectively.

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High Commission of India, Pretoria

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Names and addresses of the organizations engaged in foreign trade in South Africa are:-

Businesswomen's Associations in South Africa

Office 230, Killarney Mall Killarney +011 486 3301 info@bwasa.co.za www.bwasa.co.za

South African Women Entrepreneurs Network

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www.dti.gov.za

Small Enterprise Development Agency

Old Mutual Building Arcadia, Pretoria +27 12 441 1201 +27 12 441 2201 info@seda.org.za http://www.seda.org.za

Export-Import Bank of India

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Limpopo Economic Development Agency

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Source

The Statesman Year Book, the Europa World Year Book, Monthly Bulletin on Statistics UN Publication, IMF, World Bank.org, Visa HQ,BBC News, the World Fact Book, World Development Indicator, MEA, wikipedia.org, and D.G.C.I & S etc.

"NOTICE"

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TABLE I
SOUTH AFRICA 'S TOTAL EXPORTS AND IMPORTS, VOLUME AND BALANCE OF TRADE
BETWEEN 2015 TO 2019.

Year	Exports	Percentage Growth in	Import	Percentage Growth in	Volume of	Percentage Growth in Vol. of	Balance of
		Exports		Imports	Trade	Trade	Trade
				T		T	
2015	80772		85715		<i>1,66,487</i>		-4943
2016	76784	-4.94	75121	-12.36	1,51,905	-8.76	1663
2017	89132	16.08	83088	10.61	1,72,220	13.37	6044
2018	94255	<i>5.75</i>	93361	12.36	1,87,616	8.94	894
2019	89944	<i>-4.57</i>	88162	<i>-5.57</i>	1,78,106	-5.07	1782

Annual

Compound

Growth

Rate 2.73 0.71 1.70

NOTE: Figures relate to calendar year, January to December.

SOURCE: UN COMTRADE PUBLICATION

TABLE - II

INDIA 'S EXPORT TO AND IMPORT FROM SOUTH AFRICA MERCHANDISE GOODS DURING 2017-2018 TO 2021-2022

(Value in Rs. CRORES)

Year	Exports	Growth in	Import	Growth in	of	Growth in Vol. of	of
		Exports		Imports	Trade	Trade	Trade
2017-18	24562.74		44055.78		68618.52		-19493.04
2018-19	28333.99	15.35	45521.92	3.33	73855.91	7.63	-17187.93
2019-20	29123.94	2.79	49507.25	8.75	78631.19	6.47	-20383.31
2021-21	29075.09	-0.17	55785.85	12.68	84860.94	7.92	-26710.76
2021-22	45353.12	55.99	81823.45	46.67	127176.57	49.86	-36470.33

Annual

Compound Growth

Rate 16.57 16.74 16.68

NOTE : Figures relate to Financial Year April to March.

SOURCE: Directorate General of Commercial Intelligence & Statistics,

Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Kolkata 700 107.

TABLE -III
INDIA'S MAJOR ITEMS OF MERCHANDISE EXPORT TO SOUTH AFRICA
2017-2018 TO 2021-2022 AND THEIR GROWTH RATES

(Value in Rs. CRORES)

	Name of the Merchandise			Value III No. ONONEO						
SI. No.	Commodities			Annual Growth Rates						
		2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	18-19 over 2017-18	19-20 over 2018-19	20-21 over 2019-20	21-22 over 2020-21
		T		1						
1	Petroleum Products	5028.75	3983.98	4183.30	2978.39	10590.99	-20.78	5.00	-28.80	255.59
	Share in total export	20.47	14.06	14.36	10.24	23.35				
2	Motor Vehicle/Cars	4916.81	4923.80	6504.21	4113.58	8840.62	0.14	32.10	-36.76	114.91
	Share in total export	20.02	17.38	22.33	14.15	19.49				
3	Drugs Formulations, Biologicals	3090.71	3971.78	3939.42	5472.59	4027.15	28.51	-0.81	38.92	-26.41
	Share in total export	12.58	14.02	13.53	18.82	8.88				
4	Iron And Steel	336.38	229.57	208.73	474.49	2129.05	-31.75	-9.08	127.32	348.70
	Share in total export	1.37	0.81	0.72	1.63	4.69				
5	Ship, Boat And Floating Structures		1302.73		3260.40	1909.48		-100.00		-41.43
	Share in total export		4.60		11.21	4.21				
6	Pearl, Precs, Semi Precs Stones	326.22	332.91	240.80	320.20	1468.39	2.05	-27.67	32.97	358.59
	Share in total export	1.33	1.17	0.83	1.10	3.24				
7	Telecom Instruments	132.42	756.24	1476.23	604.36	1319.50	471.09	95.21	-59.06	118.33
	Share in total export	0.54	2.67	5.07	2.08	2.91				
8	Indl. Machinery For Dairy Etc.	510.62	533.43	554.18	526.16	988.24	4.47	3.89	-5.06	87.82
	Share in total export	2.08	1.88	1.90	1.81	2.18				
9	Auto Components/ Parts	540.43	620.28	594.05	479.89	615.98	14.78	-4.23	-19.22	28.36
	Share in total export	2.20	2.19	2.04	1.65	1.36			_	
10	Other Construction Machinery	337.40	349.05	298.62	290.46	554.82	3.45	-14.45	-2.73	91.01
	Share in total export	1.37	1.23	1.03	1.00	1.22				
	Total export to SOUTH AFRICA	24562.74	28333.99	29123.94	29075.09	45353.12	15.35	2.79	-0.17	55.99

NOTE: Figures relate to Financial Year, April to March.

SOURCE: Directorate General of Commercial Intelligence & Statistics, Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Kolkata: 700 107.

TABLE -IV
INDIA'S MAJOR ITEMS OF MERCHANDISE IMPORT FROM SOUTH AFRICA
2017-2018 TO 2021-2022 AND THEIR GROWTH RATES (Value in Rs. CRORES)

	Name of the Merchandise Commodities	Value of Imports						•	Growth Rat	,
SI.	Commodities			Value			18-19	19-20	20-21	21-22
No.		2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	over	over	over	over
							2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
			T	T	T	I		I		
1	Gold	8226.02	9057.98	9649.71	18709.91	24311.62	10.11	6.53	93.89	29.94
	Share in total imports	18.67	19.90	19.49	33.54	29.71				
2	Coal, Coke , And Briquittes Etc.	19704.20	18950.55	21269.30	14306.29	24154.51	-3.82	12.24	-32.74	68.84
	Share in total imports	44.73	41.63	42.96	25.65	29.52				
3	Pearls, Precs, Semi-precs Stones	2729.80	2769.18	4173.35	4664.38	7014.69	1.44	50.71	11.77	50.39
	Share in total imports.	6.20	6.08	8.43	8.36	8.57				
4	Copper, Products Made Of Copper	226.89	440.49	455.32	3737.11	4994.83	94.14	3.37	720.77	33.65
	Share in total import	0.52	0.97	0.92	6.70	6.10				
5	Bulk Minerals And Ores	2982.14	2484.81	2319.02	2259.00	4468.32	-16.68	-6.67	-2.59	97.80
	Share in total import	6.77	5.46	4.68	4.05	5.46				
6	Petroleum: Crude	405.18	0.34		2243.28	3416.42	-99.92	-100.00		52.30
	Share in total import	0.92	0.00		4.02	4.18				
7	Ship, Boat And Floating Structures		1386.89	3255.91	3706.68	3037.60		134.76	13.84	-18.05
	Share in total import		3.05	6.58	6.64	3.71				
8	Pulp And Waste Paper	1621.45	936.98	944.89	725.48	2511.68	-42.21	0.84	-23.22	246.21
	Share in total import	3.68	2.06	1.91	1.30	3.07				
9	Iron Ore	1541.13	1760.21	452.83	179.34	885.42	14.22	-74.27	-60.40	393.71
	Share in total import	3.50	3.87	0.91	0.32	1.08				
10	Iron And Steel	1239.50	1723.49	1463.14	819.67	850.23	39.05	-15.11	-43.98	3.73
	Share in total import	2.81	3.79	2.96	1.47	1.04				
	Total import from SOUTH AFRICA	44055.78	45521.92	49507.25	55785.85	81823.45	3.33	8.75	12.68	46.67

NOTE: Figures relate to Financial Year, April to March.

SOURCE: Directorate General of Commercial Intelligence & Statistics, Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Kolkata: 700 107.