

COUNTRY PROFILE **2016**



SOUTH AFRICA



United Nations
Economic Commission for Africa

COUNTRY PROFILE **2016**



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First printing: March 2017

ISBN: 978-99944-68-97-3

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Abbreviations and acronyms

ASDI	African social development index
ECA	Economic Commission for Africa
GDP	gross domestic product
SADC	South African Development Community
SARB	South African Reserve Bank
SACU	Southern African Customs Union
SETA	sector education and training authority
SOE	state-owned enterprises
SSA	Statistics South Africa
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

Acknowledgements

Country Profiles is a series published annually by the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA). The aim of the series is to disseminate country- and region-specific policy analyses and recommendations for economic transformation, with an emphasis on promoting sustainable growth and social development, strengthening regional integration and facilitating development planning and economic governance. The present series is the result of the close collaboration of the subregional offices of ECA and the African Centre for Statistics. Specific contributions were provided by relevant programme areas of ECA, in particular, the Macroeconomic Policy Division, the Regional Integration and Trade Division, and the Social Development and Policy Division.

The country profile on South Africa was prepared under the overall coordination and substantive guidance of Giovannie Biha, Deputy Executive Secretary for Knowledge Delivery of ECA, and the direct leadership of Said Adejumobi, Director of the Subregional Office for Southern Africa, with supervision from Sizo Mhlanga, Chief of the Subregional Data Centre. The lead author of the South Africa country profile was Mzwanele G. Mfunwa, Chief, Subregional Initiatives Unit of the Subregional Office for Southern Africa.

The country profile benefited from substantive inputs from national institutions, in particular Statistics South Africa, the National Treasury and the South African Reserve Bank.

Valuable contributions and comments were made by the internal review panel, put together by the Operational Quality Section of ECA. We would also like to thank Jesimen Chipika, a Director on the National Indigenisation and Economic Empowerment Board in Zimbabwe and a Senior Economic Analyst and Policy Advisor, who provided expert critique and review.

A special mention goes to the Publications Section for ensuring the editing, translation, design and printing of the 2016 Country Profiles series.

South Africa at a glance

General information		Rankings	
Subregion	Southern Africa	Human development index (United Nations Development Programme)	66/116 (2014)
Official language	English, isiZulu, isiXhosa, isiNdebele, Afrikaans, siSwati, Sesotho sa Leboa, Sesotho, Setswana, Tshivenda, Xitsonga	Gender inequality index (United Nations Development Programme)	83/155 (2014)
		Ibrahim index of African governance (Mo Ibrahim Foundation)	4/54 (2015)
		Ease of doing business index (World Bank)	74/190 (2016)
		Corruption perceptions index (Transparency International)	64/176 (2016)
Currency	Rand		
Capital city	Pretoria (administrative) Cape Town (legislative) Bloemfontein (judicial)		
Regional Economic Community membership (s)	SADC, SACUA		



Economic growth

The gross domestic product (GDP) of South Africa grew by a mere 1.3 per cent in 2015 as a result of weak external demand, severe drought, labour unrest, and fading business and household confidence. The South African Reserve Bank (SARB) projected GDP growth of less than 1 per cent in 2016 for the same reasons. The mining, finance, real estate and business services sectors contributed to GDP growth in 2015, while the agriculture, electricity, gas and water sectors affected that growth negatively. The economy grew by 3.3 per cent in the second quarter of 2016, narrowly avoiding a technical recession after contracting by 1.2 per cent in the first quarter of 2016.



Fiscal policy

The 2016/17 budget raises the total revenue as a percentage of GDP from 30 per cent (1.22 trillion rand, or \$871 billion) to 30.2 per cent (1.32 trillion rand, or \$943 billion). Most of the revenue will come from personal and corporate income tax, as well as indirect taxes (mostly value added tax). Total expenditure is expected to decline as a per cent of GDP, from 33.9 per cent (1.38 trillion rand, or \$986 billion) in 2015/16 to 33.3 per cent (1.46 trillion rand, or \$1.04 trillion) in 2016/17. In light of poor economic performance, fiscal policy seeks to further reduce the 2015/16 deficit level of 3.9 per cent as it strives to halt and then reduce total government debt.



Monetary policy

The average annual inflation rate in 2015 was 4.6 per cent, well within the SARB target range of 3 to 6 per cent. In the course of 2016, monetary authorities raised the policy rate by 75 basis points to the current 7 per cent rate. The policy move was taken, against the backdrop of a slowing economy, because the risks of runaway inflation were on the high side.



Current account

In South Africa, the deficit on the current account of the balance of payments narrowed from 5.4 per cent of GDP in 2014 to 4.3 per cent in 2015, largely as a result of an improved trade balance stemming from higher export receipts. The trade deficit narrowed on an annual basis from 1.7 per cent of GDP (\$5.9 billion) in 2014 to 0.9 per cent (\$2.7 billion) in 2015. The annual shortfall services, income and current transfer account improved 3.6 per cent of GDP in 2014 and 3.5 per cent of GDP in 2015, as spending by foreign tourists benefited from the weak rand.



Capital and financial accounts

Overall capital inflow amounted to 142.3 billion rand (3.5 per cent of GDP, or \$10.2 billion) in 2015, which was down from 150.2 billion rand (3.9 per cent of GDP, or \$10.7 billion) in 2014 but was still the highest on the continent. In September 2015, for the first time since 1956, the net international investment position changed from a negative to a positive value (111 billion rand, or \$7.9 billion).



Demography

The South African population was estimated at 55.91 million in June 2016, of which 51 per cent are female. The dependency ratio was 66.8 per cent. South Africa is experiencing an increase in the proportion of the population aged 60 years and over. Urban population stands at 63 per cent, and it is estimated that by 2030, the urban population will grow by an additional 7.8 million people.



Poverty

South Africa's poverty levels have progressively improved since the dawn of democracy. By 2011 poverty levels were 45.5 per cent (roughly 23 million people) down from 57.2 per cent in 2006. Factors that are closely linked to poverty are race, geography, gender and age. Addressing poverty and inequality has entailed a vast government welfare system, and implementation of policies favouring previously disadvantaged racial groups and women.



Employment

The rate of job creation lags behind the number of those looking for work. The number of employed people rose from 13.4 million in 2003 to 16 million in 2015, but the unemployment rate stood at 26.6 per cent in the second quarter of 2016.



Health

Life expectancy at birth for 2016 is estimated at 62.4 years (59.7 years for males and 65.1 years for females). The infant mortality rate for 2016 is estimated at 33.7 deaths per 1,000 live births, slightly lower than the 34.4 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2015. The estimated overall HIV prevalence rate in 2016 is 12.7 per cent of the total South African population.



Education

School attendance by individuals aged 5 years and older is high, with 17 million (35 per cent of this age group) attending an educational institution in 2016. Gross secondary enrolment improved from 51 per cent in 1994 to 89 per cent in 2015, while gross primary enrolment in 2015 was high at approximately 94.2 per cent. The learner-to-teacher ratio improved from 33 to 1 in 2000 to 30.8 to 1 in 2015. Overall, South Africa has achieved gender parity in school enrolment and has achieved the Millennium Development Goal aimed at universal primary education.



Gender

International and regional indices on gender equality and women's empowerment rank South Africa among the top countries in the world. There is gender equality in terms of those having an account with a financial institution and access to child health. With regard to education, women have outperformed men in secondary and tertiary school enrolment, and there is gender parity in the literacy rate of persons aged 15-24 years. The life expectancy of women at birth (65.1 years) is higher compared to that of men (59.7 years). The parity score for labour force participation is above middle parity score (8), which reveals the gap between women and men is relatively small.

Overview

After an economic growth rate averaging 3.1 per cent in the period 1994-2004 – the first 10 years of independence for South Africa – that rate has gradually slowed, averaging 2.8 per cent in the period 2005-2015, with sharper declines in recent years and a projected growth rate of less than 1 per cent in 2016. The real per capita GDP has consequently dropped steadily from \$8,090 in 2011 to \$5,696 in 2015. Poor economic performance in South Africa is due to drought, labour unrest, policy uncertainties and the slump in commodity demand and prices. High unemployment (over 26 per cent) remains one of the country's serious challenges. Sound macroeconomic policy at the national level has enabled a retention of the investment grade. Improvements in the power sector have restored reliable electricity supply, helped by sizeable foreign direct investments in the renewable energy sector. Vast investments of this type have also gone into the auto and banking sectors, making South Africa the continent's top foreign direct investment destination in 2015.

The country has recorded progress in social sectors, underpinned by rising budgetary allocations, over time. As a result, net primary and secondary school attendance have reached 99.3 and 90.3 per cent, respectively, by both sexes (National Treasury, 2016a). In August 2016, South Africa started making treatment accessible to all HIV-positive patients, regardless of the strength of their immune system, and enhancing other interventions to reduce the current 12.7 per cent HIV prevalence rate (SSA, 2016e). Life expectancy was estimated at 62.4 years in 2016 up from 57 years in 2010 (SSA, 2016e). Between 2010 and 2013, the maternal mortality ratio dropped from 270 to 141 deaths per 100,000 live births, the under-five mortality rate declined from 38.9 to 35.2 deaths per 1,000 live births, and infant mortality decreased from 37.8 to 23.6 deaths per 1,000 live births (SSA, 2016e). The poverty rate was estimated at 32.2 per cent in 2011 (South Africa, DPME, 2015). Income inequality with a Gini coefficient of 0.634 is one of the highest in the world and the richest 10 per cent of households commands over half of national income (The Presidency, 2014).

South Africa's key challenges are poverty and inequality, the high unemployment rate, and poor economic performance. Addressing these challenges necessarily means removing obstacles to lifting economic growth, including through sector-specific policies, to absorb the large labour pool. Success in job creation will further help with the burden of South Africa's welfare system. The country must address perceived or actual instances of poor governance, in particular in the public sector, and given the racial divisions of the past, the efforts to strengthen social cohesion should not be reduced.

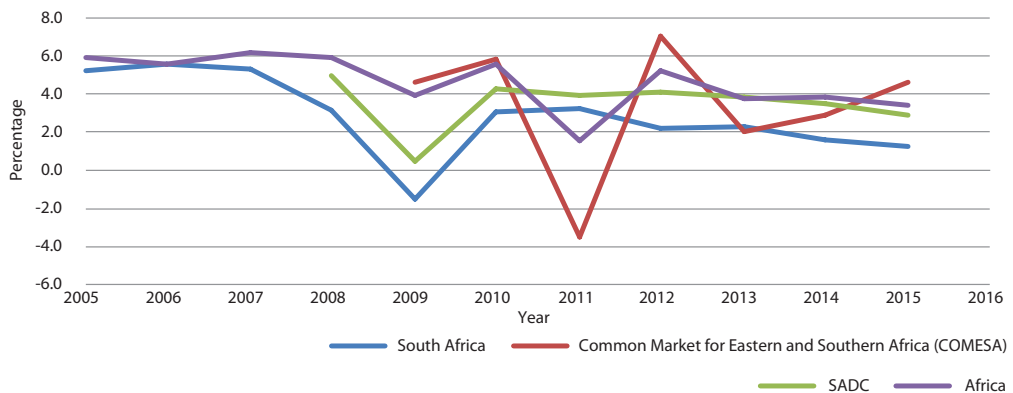
National and subregional contexts

When expressed in terms of dollars, in 2015, GDP of South Africa stood at about \$315 billion, making its economy the second largest in Africa after Nigeria, and the most industrialized. The strength of the economy is heavily dependent on the export sector with key exports consisting of gold, diamonds, platinum, coal briquettes and iron ore. The economy of South Africa recovered relatively well after the 2008/09 global economic crisis but later faltered. Real GDP growth peaked at 3.3 per cent in 2011, sliding to 2.2 per cent in 2012, 2.3 per cent in 2013, 1.6 per cent in 2014 and to 1.3 per cent in 2015 (see figure 1). Low business confidence, continuing poor demand for exports and low government expenditure are among the contributors to the projected low growth in 2016.

Due to its global trade and financial links, the economy of South Africa is sensitive to external developments. When the 2008/09 global crisis hit, the economy shrank by 1.5 per cent in 2009 and dragged SADC down with it (see figure 1). It has continued to perform poorly in recent years, in line with the global slump in commodity demand and prices.

This external exposure has heightened the concerns of the authorities about the effects on South Africa of international developments, namely the decision of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to leave the European Union (Brexit) in 2016 and the economic slowdown of China. The strong trade and investment links

Figure 1: Real GDP growth, 2005-2016 (Percentage)



Source: SSA (2016a).

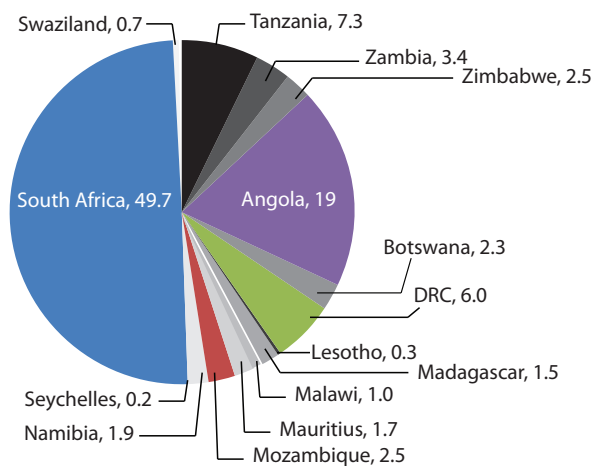
between South Africa and the United Kingdom mean that Brexit could dampen demand for South African exports in the United Kingdom and lead to reduced tourism and investment from that country, thereby putting pressure on the rand. China's economic slowdown has hit South Africa through commodity prices and global financial links, with consequent job losses and reduced corporate profitability.

Within the subregion, South Africa is a member of both SADC and SACU. The SADC economy is dominated by South Africa, whose share is estimated at 49.7 per cent (see figure 2). The development of the mining industry in the country has historically depended on migrant labourers from neighbouring countries, mainly Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique and Swaziland. The economic dominance of South Africa and its solid industrial base are a result of its agricultural sector, which has attracted migrant labourers mainly from the same countries, but also as far as Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Nigeria and Rwanda (Molefi, 2003).

South African companies operating within the region and the continent also serve as agents for promoting the country's regional dominance in sub-Saharan Africa, dominating the shipping, port management, railway and road transporter sectors. Furthermore, privatization deals are being put forth by Southern African governments, and those companies are exploiting those opportunities by acquiring majority shares in partnership with their counterparts. In some instances, such acquisitions provide opportunities for transfer of skills and technology, thereby enhancing the competences and capacities of those companies across the region.

Besides strong direct economic links within the region, South Africa has helped strengthen SADC and its regional integration agenda (see box 1). South Africa supported the regional indicative strategic development plan (SADC, 2014), which provides member States with a coherent, comprehensive development agenda on social and economic policies with clear

Figure 2: Share of GDP in SADC, 2015



Source: SADC (2016).

targets and time frames. South Africa is supporting regional integration at three levels: SADC, SACU and the Tripartite Free Trade Area between the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa, the East African Community and SADC. The Tripartite Free Trade Area seeks to combine the three major regional economic communities as building blocks towards continental integration.

South Africa plays a pivotal role in the SACU, comprising Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa and Swaziland. The renegotiated 2002 SACU agreement, which came into effect in 2004, provides for common external and excise tariffs within the customs area. All duties collected in the customs area are paid into South Africa's National Revenue Fund. The revenue is shared among members according to a revenue-sharing formula that sees South Africa transfer nearly all the customs collected to the union's other member States. To strengthen regional integration, in 2011 SACU formally agreed to a five-point plan in order to transform its agreement from merely a tariff- and revenue-sharing agreement into an integrated institution capable of promoting true regional economic development through (a) the development of a work programme on cross-border industrial development; (b) advancement of a better trade facilitation; (c) development of SACU institutions; (d) unifying engagement in trade negotiations; and (e) reviewing the current revenue-sharing arrangement (The Presidency, 2014).

Besides regional projects, South Africa has major bilateral projects with a number of countries in the region. Key among these is the South Africa-Lesotho partnership on the Lesotho Highlands Water Project, which is a water supply project with a hydropower component. The project comprises a system of several large dams and tunnels throughout Lesotho and South Africa. In Lesotho, it involves the rivers Malibamatso, Matsoku, Senqunyane and Senqu. In South Africa, it involves the Vaal River. It is Africa's largest water-transfer scheme. The purposes of the project are to provide Lesotho with a source of income in exchange for the provision of water to South Africa's central Gauteng province, where the majority of industrial and mining activity occurs, as well as to generate hydroelectric power for Lesotho.

Another area of bilateral cooperation is in infrastructure development between South Africa and Mozambique, which seeks to increase the efficiency of product transport and support regional and global trade. One success of this cooperation was the programme, involving the public-private partnership, that helped renovate and expand the N4 toll road connecting the capital cities of the two countries (Pretoria and Maputo). This programme also demonstrates how South-South cooperation should work and how private-sector financing and expertise can be used, through a public-private partnership, to achieve development goals (Mfunwa et al, 2016).

Box 1 summarizes progress in South Africa, supporting regional integration efforts, highlighting areas where the country has done well, such as financial integration and macroeconomic policy convergence, and areas where much work remains to be done, such as the free movement of persons.

Box 1: Africa Regional Integration Index: South Africa

The Africa Regional Integration Index is designed to measure how well each country in Africa is meeting its commitments under the pan-African integration frameworks, including Agenda 2063 and the Abuja Treaty.

The index is a joint project of ECA, the African Development Bank and the African Union Commission (2015). The index covers the following dimensions: free movement of persons, trade integration, productive integration (development of regional value chains), regional interconnections and infrastructure and macroeconomic policy convergence. The following section gives highlights on selected indicators in the index.

Overall rank:

First in SADC (score: 0.74)*. Best performer in SADC is South Africa (score: 0.74).

Free movement of persons	Trade integration	Productive integration	Infrastructure	Financial integration and macroeconomic policy convergence:
Sixth in SADC (score: 0.65). Best performers in SADC are Swaziland and Seychelles (score: 0.70).	First in SADC (score: 1). Best performer in SADC is South Africa (score: 1).	Second in SADC (score: 0.55). Best performer in SADC is Zimbabwe (score: 0.74).	Fourth in SADC (score: 0.6). Best performer in SADC is Botswana (score: 0.82).	First in SADC (score: 0.91). Best performer in SADC is South Africa (score: 0.91).

South Africa ranks moderately to highly within SADC in the overall index, attaining first place out of fifteen countries in the bloc.

Free movement of persons: good score (sixth in SADC). South Africa allows nationals from all other SADC countries to enter visa-free. South Africa has also ratified the relevant SADC instruments concerning free movement of persons, rights of establishment and free movement of workers.

Trade integration: good score (first in SADC). South Africa has an average applied tariff of around 0.01 per cent on imports from SADC (based on data for 2014). This is the second lowest import tariff rate in the bloc. Over the period 2010 to 2013, imports from the rest of SADC accounted for only 1.8 per cent of GDP of South Africa, which was the second-lowest level of all SADC member countries. South African exports to SADC as a share of GDP averaged 4.9 per cent over the same period, the sixth-lowest level among SADC member countries.

Productive integration: good score (second in SADC). The integration of South Africa into regional value chains appears to be mixed. Its trade is moderately complementary to that of its partners. It has a merchandise complementarity index of 0.41 (based on data from 2013), indicating that there is a relatively high linkage between South Africa's export and SADC import structure. South Africa's share of intermediates in its imports from the regional economic communities was 17.6 per cent (sixth-highest level within SADC), while the share of intermediates in total exports within averaged 21 per cent (fifth-highest level among SADC member countries).

Infrastructure: good score (fourth in SADC). The country ranked second among SADC members in its average performance in the African Development Bank infrastructure development index between 2010 and 2012. Around 91 per cent of international flights to and from South Africa are within SADC, which is the fourth-highest such ratio among SADC members. Intra-African mobile phone roaming is relatively expensive in South Africa, with the country ranking first among SADC members for the highest roaming rate.

* A continent-wide ranking, in which all African countries from all regional economic communities will be compared with one another, is currently under development for the Africa regional integration index and will be added to subsequent updates of the ECA country profiles.

Financial integration and macroeconomic policy: good score (first in SADC). South Africa's inflation rate is 5.75 per cent, below the SADC member average of 6.56 (based on 2013 data).

Overall, South Africa performs from moderately to strongly, with strong performance in the areas of trade integration, productive integration, financial integration and macroeconomic policy, and above average performance in the area of free movement of persons and infrastructure. Where specific policy measures that could boost its performance are concerned, South Africa could consider, further encouraging free movement of persons and look into other policy measures to boost intraregional trade in goods and services.

Economic performance

3.1 Economic growth and sectoral performance

The South African economy grew by a mere 1.3 per cent in 2015 (see table 1), below the 2.7 per cent growth rate called for by the National Development Plan 2030 (South Africa, National Planning Commission (2012)) to achieve development goals, and this poor performance is set to intensify in 2016 with a projection of a GDP growth rate of less than one per cent (SARB, 2016b). Sluggish growth in the country's major European and North American trading partners combined with recent drought, ongoing labour unrest and fading business and household confidence all underlay this poor economic performance. The economy grew by 3.3 per cent in the second quarter of 2016, narrowly avoiding a technical recession after contracting by 1.2 per cent in the first quarter of 2016.

The primary sector was adversely impacted by the slump in commodity demand and prices, as well as labour unrest, all of which led to a loss of 14,000 jobs at Amplats, the world's largest platinum producer, pulling the entire mining sector down by 1.4 per cent in 2014. However, in 2015 the sector posted annual growth of 3.2 per cent following a return to

Table 1: Performance of South Africa on selected indicators vs. SADC, 2006-2015

South Africa/SADC indicators	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
South Africa per capita GDP (in dollars)	5 664	6 146	5 818	5 938	7 389	8 090	7 602	6 890	6 486	5 696
SADC average	1 771	1 945	2 023	1 928	2 307	2 588	2 568	2 449	2 362	2 067
South Africa annual real GDP growth rate (%)	5.6	5.4	3.2	-1.5	3.0	3.3	2.2	2.3	1.6	1.3
SADC average	6.3	6.8	5.2	0.3	4.2	4.0	4.6	3.6	3.3	2.8
South Africa imports of goods and services as a percentage of GDP	31.0	32.5	37.2	27.5	27.4	29.7	31.2	33.2	33.9	31.7
SADC average	32.8	35.9	41.4	37.3	34.1	35.9	36.7	38.4	37.8	37.6
South Africa debt/GDP ratio (%)	21.9	25.2	25.4	26.4	27.8	28.3	35.6	37.3	41.4	39.6
SADC average	23.3	25.1	24.2	28.0	26.6	25.7	29.5	30.8	34.2	36.5

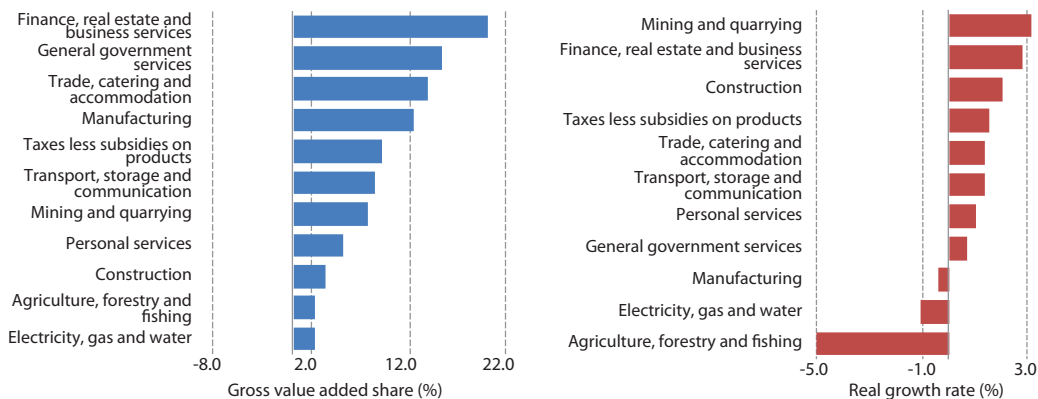
Source: SSA (2016a) and SADC (2016).

normality in labour relations (SARB, 2016a). After contracting by 18.1 per cent in the first quarter of 2016, the mining and quarrying component grew by 11.8 per cent in the second quarter. After growing by 6.9 per cent in 2014, the agricultural sector contracted by 5.9 per cent in 2015 and has continued to shrink in the first two quarters of 2016 due to continuing drought conditions that have undermined field crops, animal and horticultural production (SSA, 2016g). Figure 3 provides more information about sector shares and growth for 2015.

The secondary sector's two key subsectors — manufacturing, and electricity and construction — benefited from vast investments, which helped reduce the extent of its slowdown. The contribution of manufacturing to GDP dropped 0.3 per cent in 2015 from a small growth of 0.1 per cent in 2014, as a result of weak domestic and global demand, the slowdown in the agricultural sector, declining commodity prices affecting the mining sector and electricity-supply constraints in 2015 (SSA, 2016b). Nonetheless, the car industry received an investment boost when, in 2015, the Beijing Automobile Investment Corporation injected a 12.5 billion rand (approximately \$893 million) investment into the automobile sector in South Africa (EIU, 2016). Robust petroleum and motor vehicle performance raised the manufacturing subsector's growth to 8.1 per cent in the second quarter of 2016 (SSA, 2016g).

The tertiary sector had mixed performance among its various subsectors. Key subsectors contributing to growth were finance, real estate and business (2.8 per cent) and construction (2 per cent), while the electricity, gas and water subsector shrank by 1 per cent (SARB, 2016a; SSA, 2016b). In the second quarter of 2016, the sector grew by 2 per cent, helped by finance and transport (2.9 per cent each) (SSA, 2016g). In the course of 2015, the banking industry benefited when a 60 per cent stake in the United Kingdom unit of South Africa's Standard Bank was acquired by China's Industrial and Commercial Bank for \$690 million.

Figure 3: Sector shares and growth, 2015 (Percentage)



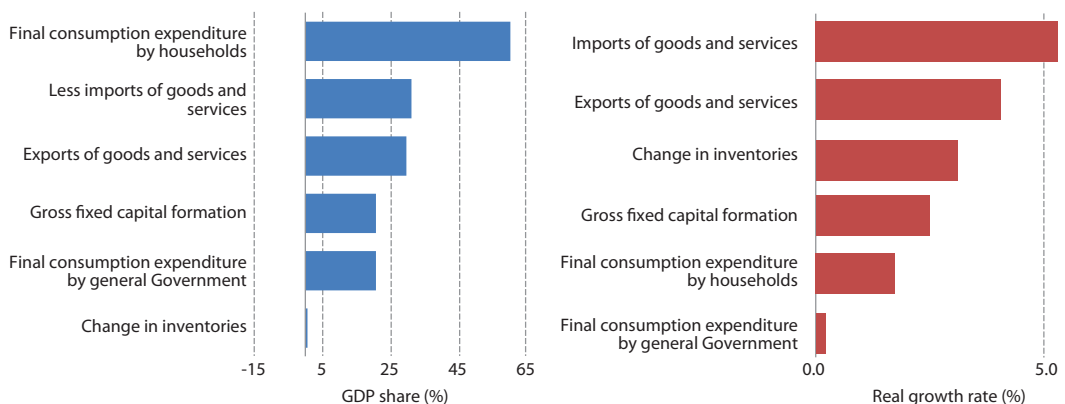
Source: SSA (2016a).

Gross fixed capital formation has slowed sharply from its pre-financial crisis (2003-2008) average of 12.1 per cent. In 2015, gross fixed capital formation advanced by a mere 2.5 per cent, up from an even slower 1.5 per cent in 2014 (SSA, 2016a), suppressed by sluggish public investment due to labour disputes at the Medupi power plant project. Delays with spending on rail, road and port infrastructure also accounted for some of the decline. The private sector accounts for two thirds of fixed capital formation. The bulk of investments made target mechanization and efficiency gains, expanding productive capacity, but limiting job opportunities. South African companies are hoarding vast cash reserves owing to low confidence, which has resulted from political uncertainties and the current downward phase in the business cycle.

Figure 4 shows that GDP by demand component in current prices for 2015/16 is dominated by household consumption, with government consumption and exports being the other major components. Mainly underpinned by substantially higher real spending on services, growth in real consumption expenditure by households accelerated from 0.7 per cent in 2014 to 1.7 per cent in 2015. Relative to GDP, final consumption expenditure by households amounted to 60.9 per cent in 2015. Growth in real government consumption expenditure slowed from 1.8 per cent in 2014 to 0.2 per cent in 2015, largely reflecting a moderation in real expenditure on compensation of employees as the Government consolidated its spending to contain the budget deficit. Notwithstanding those developments, the ratio of final consumption expenditure by general Government to GDP remained at about 20.7 per cent in 2014 and 2015.

For the year 2015 as a whole, real gross fixed capital formation and private consumption expenditure by households were the main drivers of growth, contributing 0.5 and 1.0 percentage points, respectively, to overall growth (SARB, 2016a).

Figure 4: Demand shares and growth, 2015 (Percentage)



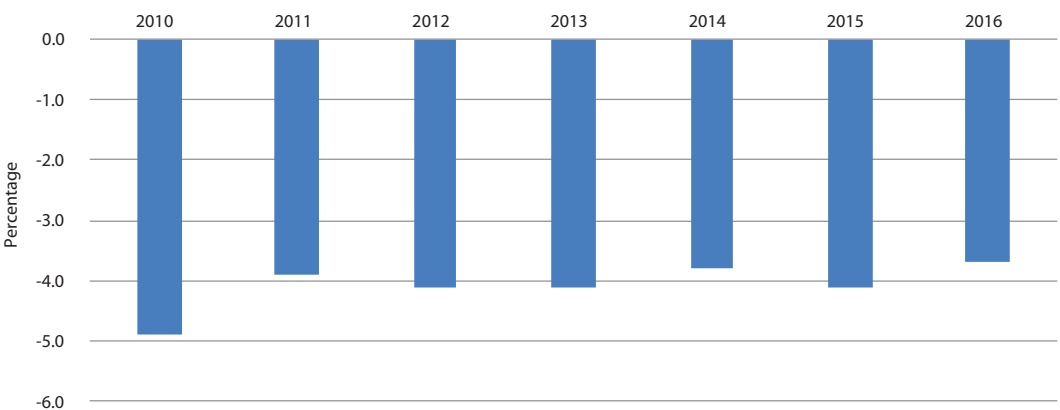
Source: SSA (2016a).

3.2 Fiscal policy

Given the rising public debt, which diverts an increasing amount of public funds towards debt-servicing costs amid rising domestic and international interest rates, the 2016 budget aims to accelerate the pace of fiscal consolidation. Furthermore, the continuing threats to downgrade South Africa's debt to a sub-investment grade have heightened the alertness of the authorities to the possible rise in national interest rates. Accordingly, the fiscal policy reduces budget deficits from 4.1 per cent in 2012/13, 3.8 per cent in 2013/14, 3.6 per cent in 2014/15 and 3.9 per cent in 2015/16 (see figure 5) to an estimated 2.4 per cent by 2018/19. Some of the measures to achieve that goal include cutting personnel expenditure and raising taxes gradually over the next three years. Cutting wasteful expenditure has been the recurring theme within the Government, including urging ministries to cut travel and conference spending and giving consideration to moving Parliament from Cape Town to Pretoria as a long-term strategy to curtail the Government's operational costs.

The reform of loss-making SOEs has become an urgent priority and forms part of cost-cutting measures. The country's SOEs – including Eskom, South African Airways, Transnet, the Industrial Development Corporation, the Development Bank of Southern Africa, South African National Roads Agency Ltd. and the South African Post Office – have increasingly relied heavily on government guarantees, which have risen from 177 billion rand (8 per cent of GDP) in the 2007/08 financial year to 553 billion rand (14 per cent of GDP) in 2015/16, raising the Government's contingent liabilities enormously (National Treasury, 2016b). Poor corporate governance – for example, poor procurement practices and corruption, political interference in operational matters, poor prudential oversight of boards of directors and lack of requisite management skills – and ill-defined strategic vision and mandates are some of the issues that undermine SOE performance. In September 2016 the credit agency Moody's placed Eskom, the South African National Roads Agency Ltd., the Industrial Development Corporation, the Development Bank of

Figure 5: Overall fiscal balance, 2010-2016 (Percentage of GDP)



Source: National Treasury (2016b).

Note: Each annual period measured starts in April and ends in March of the following year.

Southern Africa and the Land Bank on review for a downgrade, citing concerns about funding sources, governance and the unstable political environment (Hilary Joffe, 2016).

The 2016/17 budget raises total revenue as a per cent of GDP from 30 per cent (1.22 trillion rand) to 30.2 per cent (1.32 trillion rand). Most of the revenue will come from personal income tax (37.5 per cent of total revenue), corporate income tax (16.9 per cent of total revenue) and indirect taxes (mostly value-added tax, 25.6 per cent of total revenue). By October 2016, the Government had planned to introduce a tyre levy as one of the new revenue sources, but the introduction was postponed to allow for further stakeholder consultations. The budget sees total expenditure declining as a per cent of GDP from 33.9 per cent (1.38 trillion rand) in 2015/16 to 33.3 per cent (1.46 trillion rand) in 2016/17 (see table 2). Key social sectors will see real annual growth increases exceeding the inflation rate, namely social protection programmes (8.1 per cent), post-school education (7.9 per cent), health (7.6 per cent) and basic education (7.4 per cent). Of increasing concern, however, is the real annual increase in debt-service costs, which will amount to 11.4 per cent (National Treasury, 2016b).

If the budget deficit improves as envisaged, the public debt, which has been on the rise in absolute terms and as a percentage of GDP, should stabilize and then decline. National government debt increased to 42.5 per cent of GDP in 2012/13, up from 36.2 per cent two years earlier. South Africa's external debt stock decreased, however, from \$145 billion at the end of 2014 to \$124 billion at the end of 2015 owing to a decline in rand-denominated debt over the period (SARB, 2016a). As a ratio of GDP, the external debt stock South Africa receded to 39.6 per cent at the end of 2015 from 41.4 per cent in 2014, having trended higher since 2006 (SADC, 2016). The

Table 2: Summary of central government accounts, 2012/13 to 2015/16 (Billions of rand)

	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Total revenue and grants	907.6	1 008.1	1 100.0	1 223.1
Total revenue				
Current revenue	800.2	887.2	965.5	1 074.5
Tax	771.7	856.6	934.6	1 018.7
Non-tax	28.5	30.6	30.9	55.8
Other	107.4	120.8	134.5	148.5
Total expenditure and net lending				
Total expenditure	1 043.4	1 144.1	1 237.7	1 380.9
Current expenditure	919.6	1 006.5	1 086	1 188.3
Capital expenditure	118.7	133.3	146.1	163.0
Other	5.1	4.2	5.6	29.7
Overall balance	-135.9	-136.0	-137.8	-157.9

Source: National Treasury, 2016b.

ratio of external-debt-to-export earnings declined from 123.9 per cent at the end of the second quarter of 2015 to 121.8 per cent at the end of the third quarter. South Africa remains wary of sustainability of its external debt, particularly if the rand depreciates drastically.

South Africa's sovereign credit rating has been steadily downgraded over the last four years and the pace of the negative ratings trajectory looks set to continue despite the recent reprieve received from Standard & Poor's and Moody's in 2016. A further downgrade to a sub-investment grade could widen credit spreads, restrict access to global finance and force existing investors to flee as many of these investors are prohibited from investing in negatively graded economies. Some observer calculations indicate that the capital fleeing the country because of this prohibition could instantly reach \$2 billion, thus inducing currency depreciation, rising inflation and interest rates in the process (Krista Mahr, 2016).

Box 2: Comparing economic forecasts for South Africa

Economic forecasts provide essential information for decision makers in the public and private sectors. Reliable economic forecasts inform and support a country's decision-making process. A number of organizations currently produce forecasts on economic growth for South Africa. Among others, these are: the African Development Bank, the Economist Intelligence Unit, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. The forecasts produced by these organizations diverged from each other by as much as 6 percentage points for the period 2008-2016 (see figure A). The World Bank provided the most optimistic forecasts of growth, averaging 3.6 per cent over the period 2008-2016. Looking forward, the most optimistic growth rate forecast for 2016 is from the Economist Intelligence Unit (3 per cent), followed by the African Development Bank (2.5 per cent), IMF (2.1 per cent) and the World Bank (1.4 per cent).

The degree of accuracy of these forecasts is an important issue, hence ECA has carried out an analysis to assess which forecasts tend to be more reliable, using the root-mean-square error and the mean absolute error, which are the most common measures used to evaluate forecasts (ECA, 2015b). Generally, the higher the value of these errors, the less accurate the forecasts*. ECA analysis of forecasts over the period 2008-2014 indicates that IMF forecasts are relatively more accurate, followed by those from the African Development Bank and the World Bank, while the the Economist Intelligence Unit forecast had relatively high forecast errors (see figure B).

Figure A: Forecast GDP real growth rates, by institution

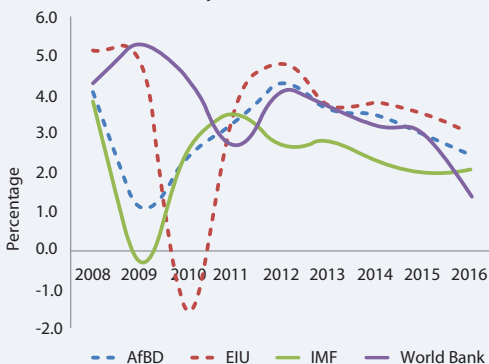


Figure B: Forecast error, 2008-2014



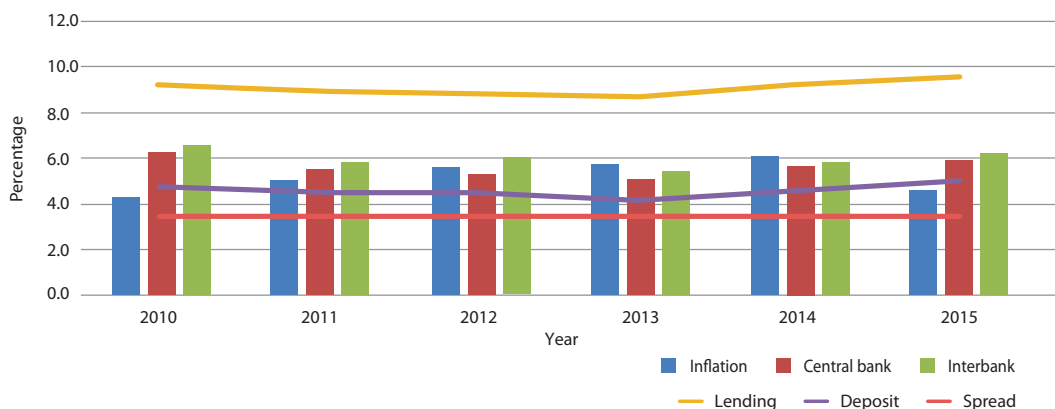
* For more information on these terms and the ECA approach to evaluating the accuracy of forecasts, see ECA (2015).

3.3 Inflation and monetary policy

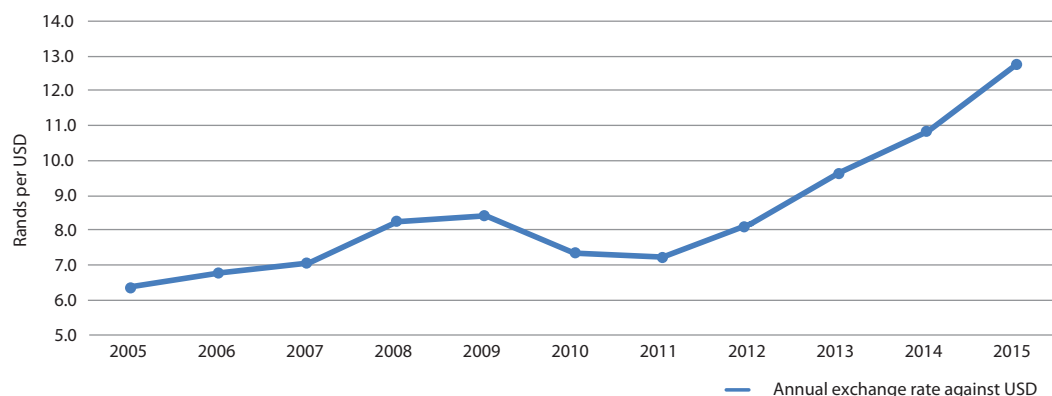
SARB seeks to achieve and maintain price stability in the interest of balanced and sustainable economic growth in the country. For policy guidance, SARB targets inflation rates in the 3 to 6 per cent range. Since 2010, with the exception of 2014, the central bank has managed to maintain the annual average consumer price index within this policy range, dropping to an average of 4.6 per cent in 2015 (see figure 6). Faced with a dilemma of slow growth and rising prices, the bank has opted to pause or raise policy rates gradually. For example, in April 2016, the headline and core inflation had reached 6.2 per cent and 5.5 per cent year-on-year, respectively, prompting the bank to increase the policy rate by 50 basis points in 2015 and 75 basis points in 2016, to the current 7 per cent. Even against the backdrop of a slowing economy, the bank deemed that the risks of runaway inflation were high, given its core mandate.

The rand is a highly traded currency with net average daily turnover in foreign-exchange markets of \$15.6 billion in 2015 (SARB, 2016a), and therefore shows volatility in line with domestic and international events (see figure 7). From 2015, the exchange rate of the rand has been affected by the “normalization” of monetary policy in the United States of America, declining international commodity prices and concerns about global economic growth. Domestic factors – slow economic growth, current account deficits, sustainability of fiscal projections, low business and consumer confidence, and political uncertainties – negatively affected the performance of the rand in 2015. In fact, the rand was one of the world’s worst-performing currencies in 2015 at 12.75 rand to the dollar, down from 10.84 to the dollar in 2014 (SADC, 2016). The weighted exchange rate of the rand declined by no less than 19.7 per cent from the end of 2014 to the end of 2015, the sharpest fall since the 23.5 per cent decline in 2008 (SARB, 2016a).

Figure 6: Inflation and interest rates, 2012-2015 (Percentage)



Source: SARB (2016a).

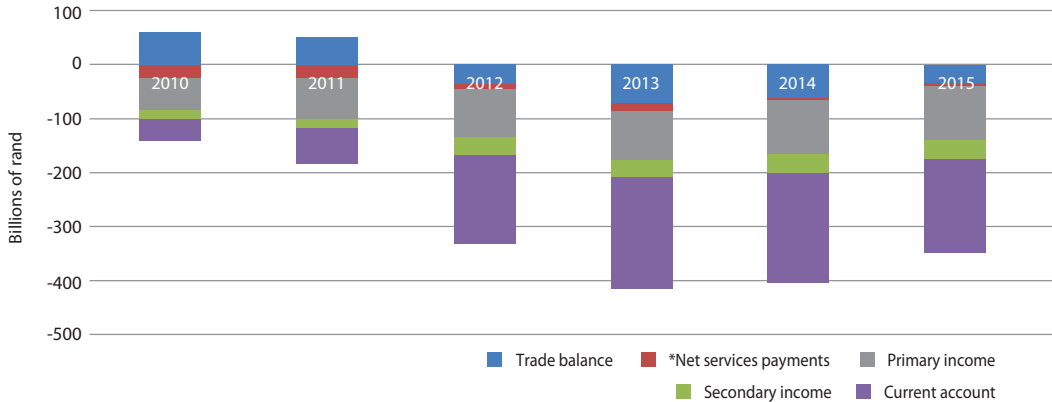
Figure 7: Fluctuation of the exchange rate of the rand, 2005-2015 (Rands)

Source: SARB (2016a).

Early in 2016, the rand continued its downward trend, weighed down by a strong dollar and lingering concerns about the outlook for the Chinese economy and the slowing South African economy. From February 2016, the rand stabilized somewhat, strengthening to below 14 rand to the dollar. However, renewed threats of arrest of the finance minister led to a depreciation to over 14 rand to the dollar again towards the end of August 2016. The movements of the rand are a mixed blessing: although the current exchange value of the rand is supportive of domestic-export growth (see section 3.4), the probability of higher domestic input costs and slower economic growth in South Africa's main export trading-partner countries may erode potential gains from the depreciation in the domestic currency.

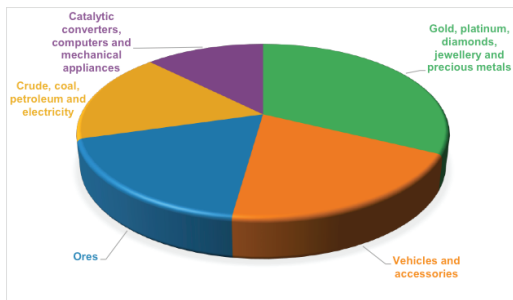
3.4 Current account

South Africa has not had an annual current account surplus since 2002, when the surplus stood at 0.9 per cent of GDP (South Africa, DPME, 2015). Since then it has remained in deficit, making it critical for the capital and financial account to compensate through surpluses. As such, massive capital outflows induced by a sub-investment grade could lead to sharp currency depreciation, among other economic adjustments. The deficit on the balance of payments of South Africa's current account nonetheless narrowed from 5.4 per cent of GDP in 2014 to 4.3 per cent of GDP in 2015, largely thanks to an improved trade balance stemming from higher export receipts (see figure 8). The trade deficit narrowed on an annual basis from 1.7 per cent of GDP (\$5.9 billion) in 2014 to 0.9 per cent (\$2.7 billion) in 2015. The external sector would have fared better, had it not been for the traditional shortfall on the services, income and current transfer account with the rest of the world. However, the annual shortfall in this account actually improved 3.6 per cent of GDP in 2014 to 3.5 per cent of GDP in 2015, in part as a result of stable net travel receipts, as tourism spending by foreign tourists benefited from the weak rand (SARB, 2016a; SADC, 2016).

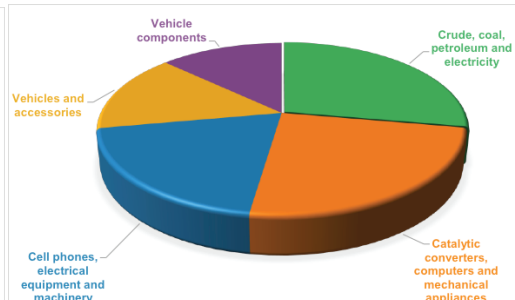
Figure 8: Current account balance, 2010-2015 (Billions of rand)

Source: SARB (2016a).

South Africa's economy is well diversified with the manufacturing sector playing a big role in the export performance (see figure 9). Noteworthy also is that the contribution of the mining sector declined from 21 per cent in 1960 to less than 6 per cent in 2015. The volume of merchandise imports rose in 2015 as the domestic demand for imported mining products and manufactured goods increased, despite a moderation in domestic economic growth and the sustained depreciation of the rand. The rise in the volume of mining imports largely reflected a sharp increase in mineral products, particularly crude oil, amid substantially lower international crude oil prices. As a ratio of real gross domestic expenditure, the volume of total merchandise imports (see figure 10) increased from 25.8 per cent in 2014 to 26.7 per cent in 2015. Despite the substantial weakening of the rand, the rand price of imports fell by 4.6 per cent in 2015, pushed lower by the sharp decline in the international price of crude oil over the period. The value dropped to \$84.4 billion in 2015 from \$98.6 billion in 2014. South Africa's terms of trade improved from 2014 to 2015 (SARB, 2016a; SADC, 2016).

Figure 9: Top main export products, 2015 (Percentage)

Source: SARB (2016a).

Figure 10: Top main import products, 2015

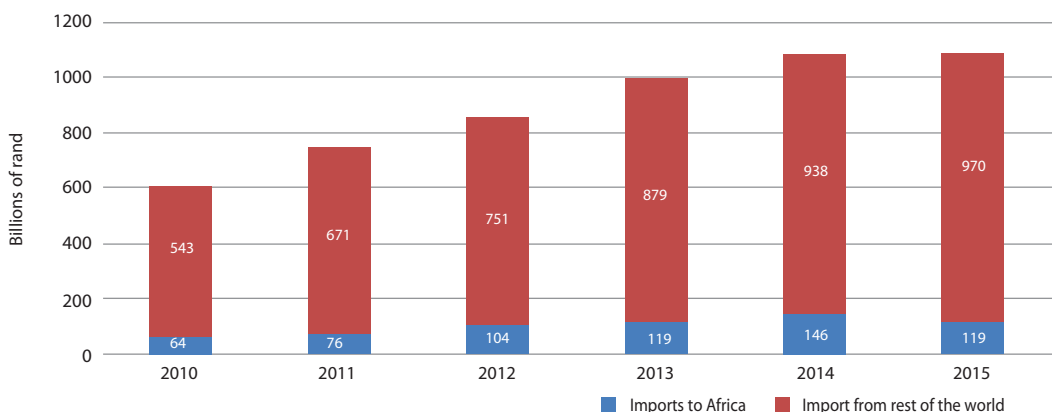
Source: SARB (2016a).

Even though the depreciation in the exchange value of the rand boosted the export earnings of domestic producers, the benefits thereof were more than fully negated by a further decline in the international prices of South African export commodities, especially in the last quarter of 2015. For 2015 as a whole, the price in dollars of a basket of South African-produced non-gold export commodities fell by 21.5 per cent, following a decline of 9.4 per cent in 2014. As a ratio of real GDP, the volume of merchandise exports surged from 23.2 per cent in 2014 to 24 per cent in 2015, indicative of the better performance of South African producers in international markets taking advantage of the competitive rand exchange rate.

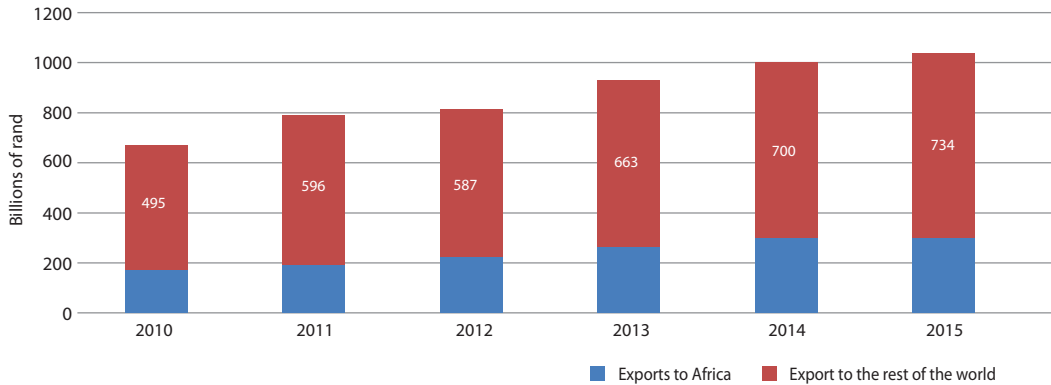
The price of gold declined from \$1,125 per fine ounce in the third quarter of 2015 to \$1,104 per fine ounce in the fourth quarter, or by 1.8 per cent. Owing to, among other factors, the depreciation in the exchange value of the rand, the average realized rand price of gold rose by 9.7 per cent over the same period. Combined with a 1.5 per cent increase in the physical quantity of net gold exports in the final quarter of 2015, the export proceeds of South African gold producers advanced by 11.3 per cent over the period. On an annual basis, net gold export earnings rose from 63 billion rand in 2014 to 68 billion rand in 2015 (SARB, 2016a).

South Africa still trades less with the rest of Africa, and the region of Southern Africa in particular, than it does with western countries (see figures 11 and 12). The top export destinations are China, Hong Kong, China, India, the United Kingdom and the United States. The top countries of origin for imports are China, Germany, India, Saudi Arabia and the United States, which provide crude petroleum, refined petroleum, cars, computers and gold.

Figure 11: Foreign trade imports, 2010-2015 (Billions of rand)



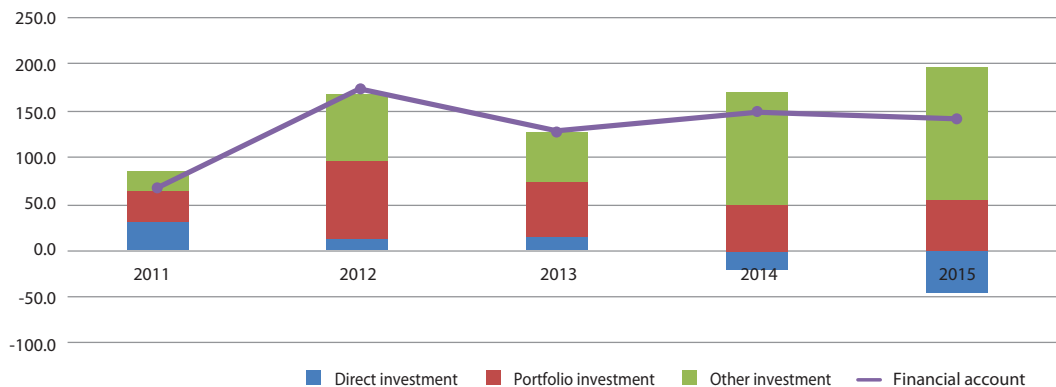
Source: SARB (2016a).

Figure 12: Foreign trade exports, 2010-2015 (Billions of rand)

Source: SARB (2016a).

3.5 Capital and financial accounts

In 2015 vast inflows of capital occurred despite bouts of risk aversion among international investors towards emerging-market economies (see figure 13). The uncertainty in the international financial markets continued to be dominated by factors such as the normalization of monetary policy in the United States, declining international commodity prices and concerns about the vibrancy of China's economic growth. In South Africa, the reduced capital inflows were further affected by poor economic growth, continuing current-account deficits, and the negative outlook of credit rating agencies on economic growth. Those events notwithstanding, an overall capital inflow to the tune of 142.3 billion rand (3.5 per cent of GDP, or \$10.2 billion) was registered in 2015, somewhat less than the 150.2 billion rand (3.9 per cent of GDP, or \$10.7 billion) recorded in 2014 (SARB, 2016a).

Figure 13: Financial account balance, 2011-2015 (Billions of rand)

Source: SARB (2016a).

The net international investment position changed from a negative value of 136 billion rand in June 2015 to a positive value of 111 billion rand in September 2015 — the first positive net international investment position since 1956. This was attributed to the volatility and decline in domestic and global equity markets, as well as the marked depreciation in the exchange rate of the rand. As a ratio of GDP, the country's foreign liabilities decreased from 132.2 to 130.4 per cent, from June to September 2015, while the country's foreign assets rose from 128.7 to 133.2 per cent over the same period. This brought the country's net international investment position to a positive 2.8 per cent of GDP in September 2015, compared with a negative ratio of 3.5 per cent in June 2015.

The accumulation of reserve assets, especially by emerging-market countries, stalled and reversed between 2014 and 2015, weighed down by the sustained decline in commodity prices, the anticipated normalization monetary policy of the United States and the Chinese economic restructuring. The decline in South Africa's reserve assets was, however, relatively small, given SARB's policy of refraining from intervening in the foreign exchange market. The value of South Africa's gross gold and other foreign reserves declined from \$49.1 billion in 2014 to \$45.8 billion in 2015 (SARB, 2016a). In August 2016, SARB indicated that official gold and foreign exchange reserves had dropped marginally from \$46.4 billion in June 2016 to \$46.2 billion in July 2016 (SARB, 2016c). In addition to being an indicator of the country's ability to repay foreign debt in the short term and to protect the currency, these reserves are also one of the factors used to determine a country's credit rating.

The level of import cover increased from 5.2 to 5.7 months from September to December 2015, partly as a result of lower import prices. South Africa's international liquidity position decreased from \$41.2 to \$40.7 billion from September to December 2015 before increasing again to \$40.9 billion in July 2016 (SARB, 2016a).

Social developments

The African Social Development Index (ASDI) was developed by the Social Development Policy Division of ECA in response to a call from African member States for an African-specific indicator of exclusion. The index is built on the premise that economic growth should result in the improvement of conditions for all humans. Using a life-cycle approach, ASDI focuses on six key dimensions of well-being: survival, health, education, employment, means of subsistence and decent life. Using available national data, this tool will assist in mapping and assessing the effectiveness of social policies in reducing human exclusion at the national and regional levels. ASDI also supports countries in improving data collection and strengthening their capacities to monitor progress on poverty and exclusion. As a policy tool, ASDI complements the efforts of member States in devising more inclusive social policies and facilitating the implementation of Africa's Agenda 2063 and Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development, both of which place a high premium on inclusiveness as a driver of sustainable and equitable development.

Box 3: African social development index - South Africa

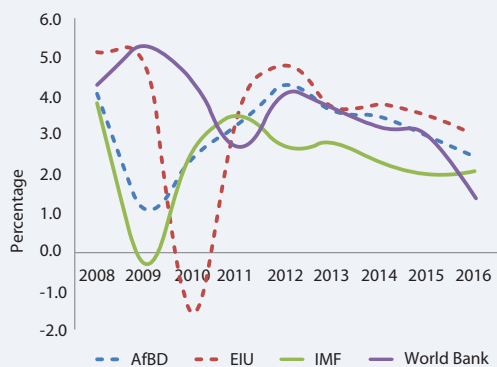
South Africa moved from a relatively high human exclusion category in 2000 to a moderate level in 2013 (see figure A). This was on account of a number of broad factors that include policies for growth, social inclusion and societal cohesion. For example, in recent years official policy has attempted to orient government spending to fighting deprivation in areas such as improved access to health care and quality of education, provision of decent work, sustainability of livelihoods, and development of economic and social infrastructure (Ncube et al, 2012).

Notwithstanding the overall reduction in the index, figure B shows that most of the human exclusion in South Africa is driven by the contribution of youth unemployment and infant mortality. Youth unemployment, in particular, remains a critical challenge across the country, especially for low-skilled workers who lack the necessary experience needed in the formal labour markets. Between 2000 and 2013, the contributions of youth unemployment and infant mortality (child survival) to human exclusion had increased by varying degrees, reflecting challenges in employment policies as they relate to participation in formal labour markets and inequities in access to health facilities, in particular in the early phase of life. Despite such challenges, the country made notable gains by reducing the impacts of child stunting and poverty on overall exclusion. However, these are aggregate results that mask gender differences between men and women as the data are not disaggregated. In addition, subnational data were not available to bring out the spatial distribution of human exclusion across the country.

Given that human exclusion in South Africa is predominantly a function of low economic opportunities in the labour markets and high infant mortality, the Government has deployed a gamut of targeted policy interventions and strategies to reverse the trends. For instance, in order to address youth challenges, including unemployment, the Government has put in place a National Youth Policy 2015-2020, whose goal, among others, is to enable the optimal development of young people in order to enhance their capabilities so as to transform the economy and the country, a policy which will involve eliminating poverty and reducing inequality over the next two decades (South Africa, National Youth Development Agency, 2015). On a pragmatic level, the Government has suggested improving public employment services available to youth in order to aid the matching of skills, job search, career guidance and counselling, skills development and job placement (National Treasury, 2011).

On health interventions, the Government is using fiscal redistribution measures aimed at the poor as part of its strategies to close the gap between those excluded from mainstream development and those who are not. More specifically, the South African Government is already involved in a comprehensive social protection programme that utilizes cash transfers, social grants, free services and institutionalized arrangements to support vulnerable segments of the population. The largest number of recipients of social protection support in South Africa are poor families and children. The Government has also made a policy commitment to achieve universal health coverage and comprehensive social security as part of its affirmative action plan to reduce inequalities in health and social services. However, there is a need to skew health expenditures toward the health challenges that affect children, particularly the drivers of infant mortality across the country.

Figure A: ASDI in South Africa



Source: ECA computations based on national data.

Source: ECA (2016).

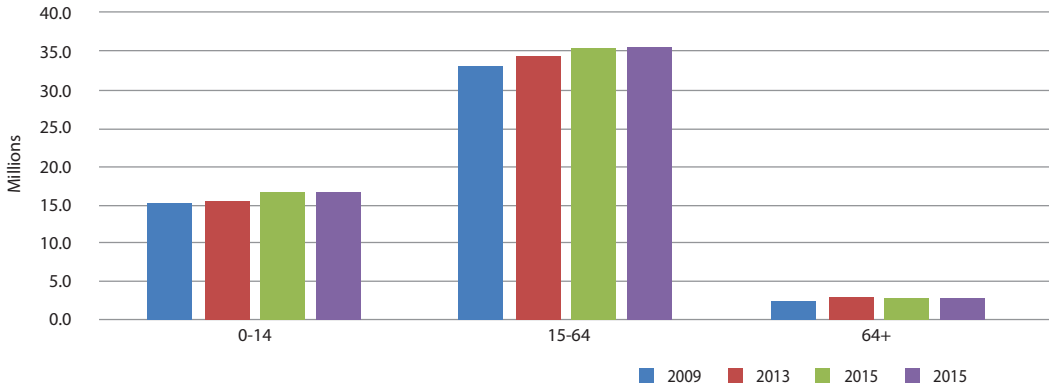
Figure B: Drivers of human exclusion (Percentage)



Source: ECA computations based on national data.

4.1 Demography

According to estimates, South Africa's population stood at 55.91 million in June 2016, of which 51 per cent are female. Between 2002 and 2016, South Africa experienced a positive population growth year-on-year helped by an increase in life expectancy and a decline in child mortality rates. Almost a third (30.1 per cent) of the population is under the age of 15, while 8 per cent of the population is aged 60 and over. With 64.7 per cent of the population aged between 15 and 64, South Africa's dependency ratio is 66.8 per cent (see figure 14) (SSA, 2016e).

Figure 14: Population distribution by age, 2009-2016 (Millions)

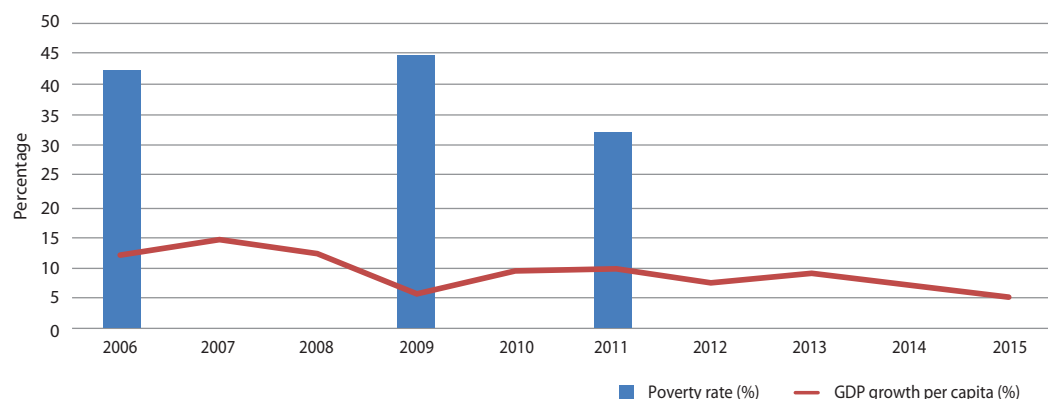
Source: SSA (2016e).

South Africa is one of the few developing countries experiencing an increase in the proportion of the population aged 60 years and over from 6.61 per cent in 2002 to 8.01 per cent in 2016. Declining population growth rates year-on-year among young people aged 15-34, in conjunction with increasing growth rates among elderly aged 60 years and older, indicates that the average age of South Africa's population is increasing. With a decline in total fertility rate over time and increased life expectancy, South Africa is expected to experience a continued increase in old-age dependency. The growing proportion of elderly will bring new challenges: old-age dependency, social and economic vulnerability and increased strain on health and social care.

Rapid urbanization has taken place since the 1990s, when just over 50 per cent of the population resided in urban areas. By 2016, the urban population had reached 63 per cent. It is estimated that by 2030 the urban population will grow by an additional 7.8 million people (The Presidency, 2014). The reasons for such rapid urbanization include the dismantling of apartheid's structures, such as the homeland system and restrictions of residence. As discussed in section 5, relatively richer provinces (Gauteng and Western Cape) have experienced net immigration, while poorer ones (for example, Limpopo and Eastern Cape), suffered net emigration as a result of poor public service delivery and limited job opportunities, among other reasons.

4.2 Poverty and employment

South Africa's poverty levels have progressively improved since the dawn of democracy. By 2011, the poverty level was 45.5 per cent (roughly 23 million people), down from 57.2 per cent in 2006 based on the upper-bound poverty line. Improvements are largely a result of income growth, credit expansion and a huge "social wage" comprising free primary health care, free schools, social grants including old-age pensions and child-support grants, government houses, and the provision of basic services to households, namely water, electricity and sanitation. Extreme poverty has dropped from 12.6 million in 2006 to 10.2 million people in 2011 (SSA, 2014). The impacts of recent global economic crises are shown in the decline in GDP per capita both in 2009 and

Figure 15: Poverty and GDP per capita growth, 2006-2015 (Percentage)

Source: SARB (2016a).

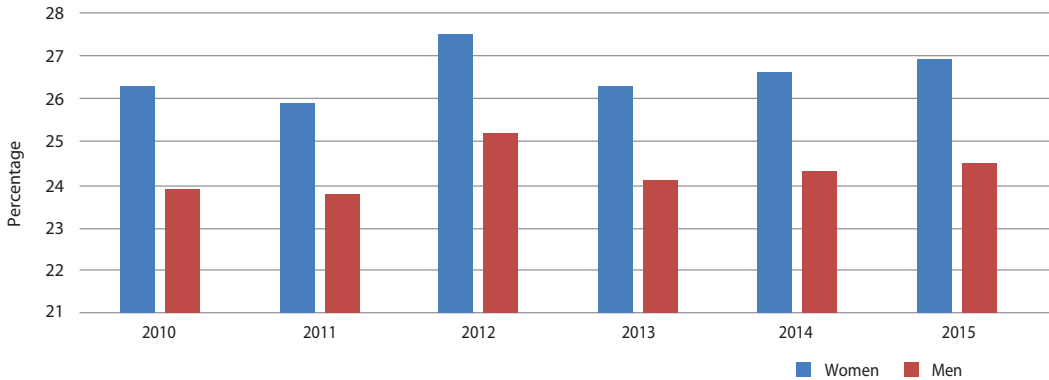
2011, as well as continued underperforming of the economy from 2013 onwards. Although the poverty rate increased following the 2008/09 global financial crisis, the Government expanded social welfare after the 2010/11 global crisis to cushion the poor from destitution (see figure 15).

High unemployment remains one of South Africa's socioeconomic challenges. Investment inflows have largely been capital-intensive, leaving much of the population, especially the 20.3 million young people (36.3 per cent of the population) in the age group of 15-34 years unable to realize their productive potential (SSA, 2016e). The rate of job creation lags behind the number of those looking for work. The number of employed people did, in fact, rise from 13.4 million in 2003 to 16 million in 2015 (South Africa, DPME, 2015); nonetheless, the unemployment rate stood at 26.6 per cent (29.1 per cent for women, 24.6 per cent for men) in the second quarter of 2016 (see table 4). As figure 16 shows, women have over the years suffered more unemployment than men, contributing to the gender inequality. With current tepid economic growth, employment has contracted by 0.8 per cent (or 129,000 people) in the second quarter of 2016 to 15.5 million, driven by job losses in all sectors other than manufacturing (SSA, 2016d) and pointing to the difficulties in creating jobs despite efforts described in section 5.

Table 4: Employment and unemployment levels, 2015 and 2016 (Percentage)

Rates (%)	First quarter, 2016	Second quarter, 2016	Quarterly change	Second quarter, 2015	Year-on-year change
Unemployment rate	26.7	26.6	-0.1	25.0	1.6
Employment/population ratio (absorption rate)	43.0	42.5	-0.5	43.5	-1.0
Labour force participation rate	58.7	57.9	-0.8	58.1	-0.2

Source: SSA (2016d).

Figure 16: Rate of unemployment for females and males, 2010-2016 (Percentage)

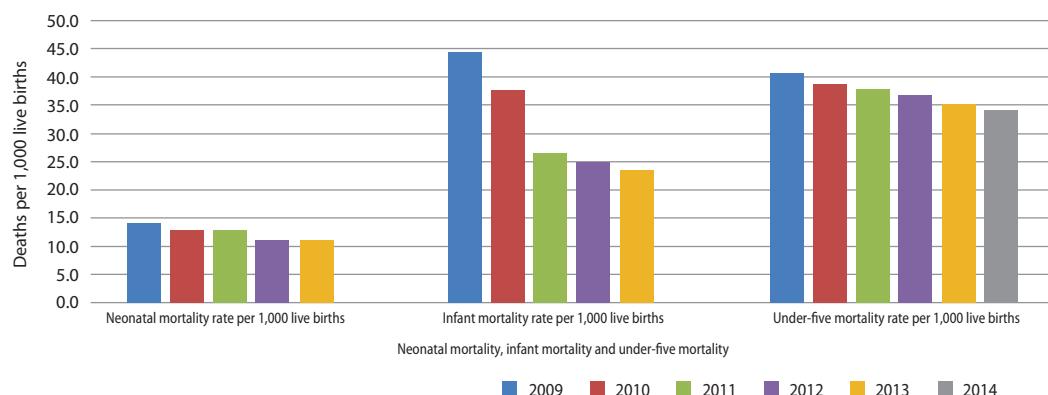
Source: SSA (2016d).

4.3 Health

Life expectancy at birth for 2016 is estimated at 62.4 years (59.7 years for men; 65.1 years for women). The infant mortality rate for 2016 is estimated at 33.7 deaths per 1,000 live births, slightly lower than the 34.4 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2015. The estimated overall HIV prevalence rate in 2016 is 12.7 per cent of the total South African population, up from 11.2 per cent in 2015. The total number of people living with HIV increased from 6.19 million in 2015 to 7.03 million in 2016. Among persons aged 15-49, an estimated 18.9 per cent overall (and 22.3 per cent of women) are HIV-positive, an increase over 16.6 per cent in 2015 (SSA, 2016e). Various interventions to enhance the health of citizens are being improved and expanded.

To improve access to health care there are no user fees for pregnant women, children under six years of age and people with disabilities. By 2014, 1,500 health facility infrastructure projects had been completed, including new facilities and revitalization of existing facilities. By the same year 44,000 community-service health professionals had been placed in remote, rural and underserved areas since the introduction of community service in 1998 (The Presidency, 2014). The results of these reforms are mixed.

South Africa now has the world's largest programmes for providing antiretroviral therapy to eligible people living with HIV. The 2016 budget increases the roll out of antiretroviral drugs from 3.8 million in 2015/16 to over 5 million South Africans in need by 2018/19 (SSA, 2016e; National Treasury, 2016b). Tuberculosis remains a significant public health problem in the country. The cure rate for tuberculosis patients increased from 61.6 per cent in 2006 to 75.8 per cent by 2012. New cases of tuberculosis dropped from 389,000 in 2011 to 328,000 in 2013 (South Africa, DPME, 2015), and the incidence rate has decreased from 993 to 860 cases per 100,000 persons from 2011 to 2013 (South Africa, Department of Health, 2015). Malaria cases have decreased by 43.4 per cent, evidenced by 6,846 reported cases in 2013, compared with 15,649 reported cases in 2002 (South Africa, DPME, 2015).

Figure 17: Child mortality rates, 2009-2016 (Deaths per 1,000 live births)

Source: South Africa, MDGs: Country Report 2015.

The under-five mortality rate has declined from 56 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2009 to 41 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2013 (see figure 17; South Africa, Department of Health, 2015), largely as a result of programmes for the prevention of mother-to-child transmission, improved immunization rates to protect children against preventable diseases like diarrhoea and pneumonia, and vitamin A supplementation, which has decreased vitamin A deficiency. The maternal mortality ratio initially worsened from 150 deaths per 100,000 live births in 1998 to 281 deaths per 100,000 live births in 2008. However, the maternal mortality ratio began decreasing in the second decade, owing in part to the initiation of antiretroviral therapy for all pregnant women living with HIV who have a CD4 cell count of less than 350, and provision of treatment to all other pregnant women living with AIDS at 14 weeks. The Department of Health (2015) reported 197 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births for 2011.

Fighting non-communicable diseases has taken various forms. Legislation to reduce smoking has resulted in decreased smoking by persons 15 years and older, from 33 per cent in 1993 to 21 per cent in 2010. Regulations were introduced to limit trans-fats and salt content in processed foods. Screening for non-communicable diseases through campaigns and through testing of blood glucose and blood pressure as part of the HIV counselling and testing campaign has been strengthened. In 2014, the Government introduced the human papilloma virus vaccine to reduce the incidence of cervical cancer. The Government continues to collaborate with various health associations to improve prevention and to facilitate better services with regard to other non-communicable diseases such as diabetes and heart diseases (South Africa, Department of Health, 2015).

4.4 Education

Between 2006 and 2016, school attendance of the population aged 5 years and older showed an improvement with an additional 17 million individuals (35 per cent) attending an educational institution. Provincial and sex differences in school attendance are minimal. Educational attainment has improved, showing a decrease of 1.4 million people with no schooling between 1996 and

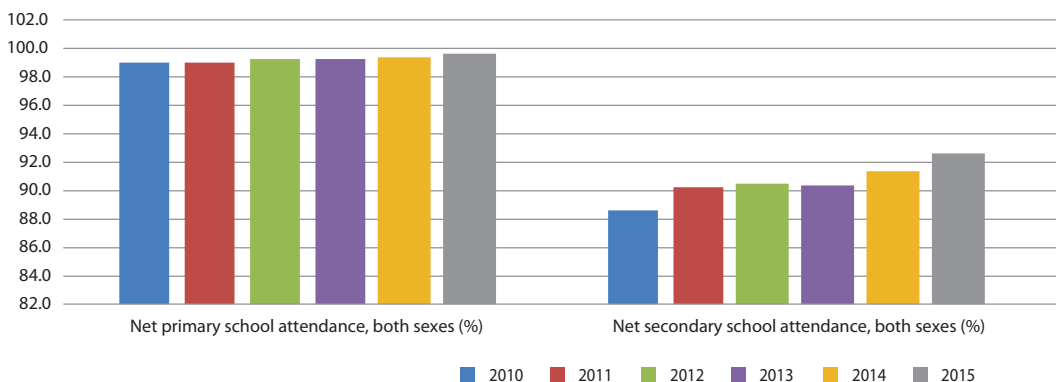
2016, while primary and secondary education has increased. The number of persons aged 25-34 obtaining bachelor degrees increased over the period of 1996 to 2016 (SSA, 2016c).

Over a million children under the age of 4 are now in an early childhood development facility or some form of out-of-home care. Gross secondary enrolment improved from 51 per cent in 1994 to 89 per cent in 2015, while gross primary enrolment in 2015 was high, at approximately 94.2 per cent (see figure 18). The learner-to-teacher ratio improved from 33 to 1 in 2000 to 30.8 to 1 in 2015. Overall, South Africa has achieved gender parity in school enrolment and has achieved the Millennium Development Goal aimed at universal primary education (MDG, 2015). By 2012, 78 per cent of learners (more than 8 million) in 80 per cent of public schools (close to 20,000 schools) benefited from the no-fee policy for poor households. By 2012, about 9 million learners in 20,905 primary and secondary schools were receiving a Government-funded school lunch (The Presidency, 2014; SSA, 2016d).

University enrolment has increased from 495,356 students in 1994 to over 1 million in 2016, with attendance by poor students mostly facilitated by government and private sector loans and bursaries. Women make up approximately 58 per cent of all students enrolled in university programmes. Black students make up more than 80 per cent of all students enrolled in higher education institutions (The Presidency, 2014).

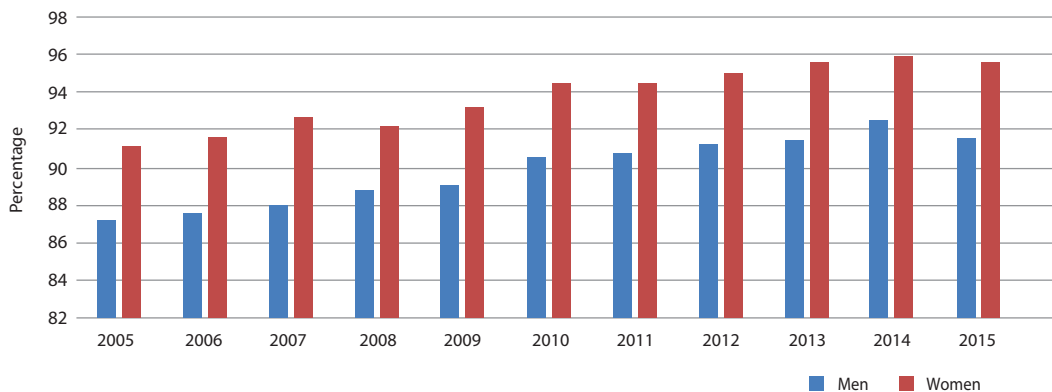
Findings by SSA (2016e) show that school attendance by individuals aged 5 and older improved from 1996 to 2016. Close to 17 million individuals (35 per cent of that age group) attended an educational institution in 2016, with minimal sex differences in school attendance. Educational attainment has improved, showing a decrease of 1.4 million people with no schooling between 1996 and 2016, while primary and secondary education has increased. The number of persons aged 25-34 who were obtaining bachelor degrees increased over the period 1996 to 2016. As mentioned, gender parity has been achieved at the school level, and more females than males attend tertiary institutions. Figure 19 illustrates the achievements of females over males with regard to literacy in the age group 15-24 years.

Figure 18: Net school attendance, 2010-2015



Source: SSA (2016c).

Figure 19: Literacy rates in persons aged 15-24 years, 2005-2015 (Percentage)



Source: SSA (2016e).

Faced with the challenge of an increasing number of citizens with school qualification and increasingly tertiary education, but lacking skills to meet the industry needs, box 4 describes one of the key measures taken to close this gap, involving central Government, state-owned enterprises, academic institutions and private sector.

Box 4: Linking education and training to industry needs

SETAs were established to link skills development to the needs of economic sectors and provide opportunities for experiential learning through apprenticeships. The establishment of various quality assurance bodies in 2006 sought to further improve articulation of qualifications while maintaining their quality. The number of unemployed people completing apprenticeships reached over 22,000 per annum in 2013. Owing to difficulties in placing learners in experiential learning and sustainable employment, SETAs have been required to spend more on substantive courses leading to occupational, vocational and professional qualifications at public colleges and universities, particularly universities of technology.

Historically, most of the artisan training had been carried out by SOEs, but the commercialization of SOEs compromised training, with many of the artisan training centres being run down. Under the Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative for South Africa, the Government introduced the Joint Initiative for Priority Skills Acquisition in 2006 to boost the supply of skills needed by the growing economy. The Joint Initiative was a partnership with business and labour and produced detailed research on the projected supply and demand of skills. The Joint Initiative also introduced measures to increase the supply of skills where necessary, such as reviving the apprenticeship system to address the shortage of artisans. Since then, there has been good progress in artisanal training, with additional further education and training enrolments and increased numbers of qualifying artisans.

The artisan training programmes have been revived with SOEs, once again being major contributors to the supply of artisans. Artisan training by SOEs has received a further boost in recent years through the Infrastructure Plan under the Presidential Infrastructure Coordinating Committee. Between 2011 and 2013, SOEs trained 4,740 artisans. Both SOEs and the private sector have been constrained by the lack of adequate, sustainable, guaranteed funding from SETAs and the National Skills Fund, as well as the lack of a single artisan learner administration

and grant disbursement system across SETAs. The Government recently addressed these blockages by directing SETAs, in new grant regulations, to use 80 per cent of their discretionary grants for pivotal programmes, of which artisan training is a major part. In total, 3,430 artisans successfully completed trade tests between 2000 and 2006, while 6,030 artisans successfully completed trade tests between 2007 and 2008. That number increased further, to 15,277 artisan qualifications, in 2012.

Source: The Presidency (2014).

4.5 Status of gender equality and women's empowerment

The status of gender equality and women's empowerment is measured in terms of the key areas indicated in the circular chart below. These areas are important for the improvement of women's lives and their contribution to sustainable and inclusive growth in Africa.

To assess the actual extent of gender inequality and to achieve the goal of measuring gender equality and women's empowerment in Africa, ECA has developed a monitoring tool, the African Gender Development Index (AGDI), which allows policymakers to evaluate their own performance in implementing policies and programmes geared towards ending women's marginalization.

The calculation for the scoring is based on Gender Status Index (GSI) data. GSI is one of the components of AGDI. For each key indicator, the score is calculated as an unweighted arithmetic average by taking the female to male ratio of the indicator values, multiplying it by 10 and rounding the result off to the nearest whole number. A score of zero represents the highest level of inequality, five shows middle parity level and 10 represents perfect parity. Parity levels exceeding 10 represent situations in which women have outperformed men, irrespective of the level of development of the area being assessed. Box 5 discusses the extent to which South Africa has promoted women's empowerment and the achievement of gender equality.

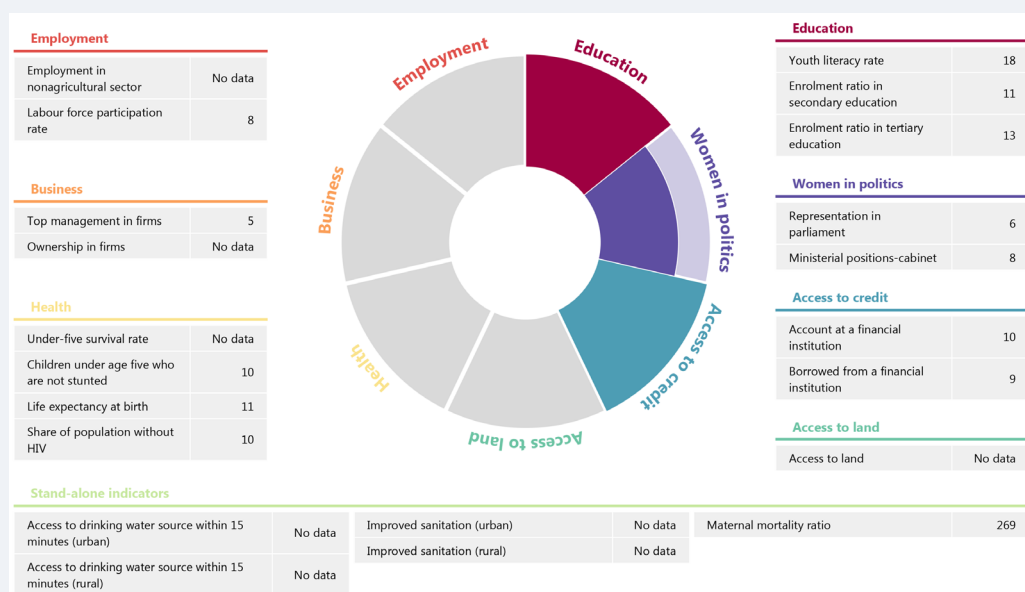
Most data used to calculate scoring are drawn from the latest nationally available data sources. However, for a few indicators where the country has no disaggregated data, international data are used. These sources include government departments (Labour 2013; Trade and Industry; Agriculture; Home Affairs Strategic Plan, 2015-2020; Commission for Employment Equity Annual Report; Electoral Commission; National and Provincial Elections Report 2014; Commission for Gender Equality 2012; Banking Association South Africa 2015; and World Bank Indicators 2014).

Box 5: Gender equality and women's empowerment – South Africa

The Constitution guarantees equal rights to women and men and requires the state and all persons to uphold the values of equality and to remedy the legacy of discrimination against women. The country ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and other regional and international instruments on gender equality, and national legislations, policies and programmes impacting on women were reviewed. For example, the amended Divorce Act protects women's property rights in cases of divorce and the amended Customary Marriage Act (2000) recognizes customary marriages in favour of women, especially with regard to inheritance. Women are now also able to obtain a mortgage. The Employment Equity Act of 1998 enables access to formal employment for women, where employers are legally required to work towards more equitable representation based on gender, race and disability.

To raise the voice of women the Office on the Status of Women, the Commission on Gender Equality, and the Ministry of Women, Children and People with Disabilities were created. South African women have been appointed in leadership positions in the African Union Commission, the United Nations and elsewhere. Women are benefiting from increased access to basic services at the household level, which is also resulting in positive outcomes for children and families.

Access to opportunity, however, is still generally influenced by gender. The National Crime Prevention Strategy of 1996 elevated violence against women and children as a national priority. The new National Council against Gender-Based Violence is mandated to provide high-level strategic guidance and coherence of strategies across sectors to address the high levels of gender-based violence, and integrate, strengthen and mobilize structures of society for the reduction of gender-based violence through the implementation of coherent strategies. South Africa's progress with regard to gender equality is evident both in international and regional indices with high rankings, including the Social Institutions and Gender Index of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (fourth out of 87 countries and first in Africa, in 2012) and the SADC Gender and Development Index (second in the region, in 2012) (The Presidency, 2014).



Source : African Union Commission and ECA, 2015.

* The data for share of population without HIV indicate for youths from 15-24 years old.

In South Africa, data reveal that there is gender equality in terms of having an account with a financial institution and child health.

In relation to education, women have outperformed men in secondary and tertiary school enrolment, as well as in the literacy rate of 15-24 year old, with a parity score of 18. The life expectancy of women at birth (65.1 years) is higher compared to that of men (59.7 years).

The parity score in labour force participation is above middle parity score (8), which reveals that the gap between women and men is relatively small.

According to World Bank data for 2014, HIV and AIDS prevalence among young females aged 15-24 was 8.1 per cent as opposed to 4.0 per cent for young males.

In connection with women in politics, in South Africa, out of 490 members in Parliament, 191 are women (39 per cent), while 299 are men. About 45 per cent of ministerial positions are held by women. Only 30.7 per cent of the top management posts in the business sector are held by women, compared with 69.3 per cent for men.

The maternal mortality ratio was 269 per 100,000 live births in 2014.

Major policy challenges: Addressing inequality and unemployment in South Africa

5.1 Despite poverty reduction gains, inequality continues to widen

In addition to high unemployment, South Africa needs to overcome the challenge of deep inequality if it is to sustain socioeconomic gains achieved since 1994. When using the Gini coefficient measurement, inequality increased from 0.64 in 1995 to 0.69 in 2005, but has since decreased to 0.63 in 2011 (World Bank, 2016). The richest 10 per cent of households control over half of the national income (The Presidency, 2014). In 2013, the gender inequality index was 0.461 and in 2012 the multidimensional poverty index was 0.041, one of the lowest in the subregion. South Africa ranks fourth in the subregion in terms of the human development index, and falls in the medium human development category, with a score of 0.658 in 2013 (UNDP, 2014). Globally it ranked 118th out of 187 countries in the same period.

Inequality is largely race-based but is also related to gender and geography. In 2012, the median income for an African household was under 3,000 rand (\$215) per month. If broken down by South Africa's ethnic groups, it was just over 7,000 rand for Coloureds and Indians, while for Whites it was around 20,000 rand. In 2012, around 61 per cent of women were living in poverty and 31 per cent in destitution, compared with 39 and 18 per cent of men, respectively. In July 2016, research by the Standard Bank indicated that the white population had the highest income per capita at 215,000 rand per annum, more than seven times greater than that of the black population at 29,000 rand per annum (Linda Ensor, 2016).

By 2011, despite an increase in the average income for women, households headed by women were still earning more than 50 per cent less than households headed by men. In 2012, the median earnings for a White man was six times as high as for an African woman. The disparity was generally not the result of unequal pay for the same kinds of work, although that remained a factor. The main reason for pay differentials was that Africans, and especially African women, were more likely to be employed in lower-level jobs. As a

result of this disparity in employment, the average income for women remains far less than that of men. Inequalities in access to work and pay are also reflected in household incomes.

The poorest 40 per cent of households derive more than half of their income from non-wage sources of income. This is especially true in the former homelands, where more than half of all households depend on remittances or grants, compared with under a quarter of households in the rest of the country (The Presidency, 2014). The Standard Bank study shows that the Gauteng Province population has the highest personal income per capita at 70,000 rand per annum, followed by Western Province with 67,000 rand, while Limpopo has the lowest personal income per capita at 29,500 rand per annum (Linda Ensor, 2016).

5.2 Levels of internal migration increase and civil unrest intensifies

Deep inequality threatens social cohesion, economic growth and social progress as documented in *Capital in the 21st Century: The Economics of Inequality* (Piketty, 2013). In South Africa, racial social cohesion has weakened as public opinions about improving race relations have dropped from 72 per cent in 2000 to 45 per cent in 2014. Furthermore, the percentage of confident citizens in a happy future for all races has dropped from 72 per cent in 2000 to 55 per cent in 2013 before improving to 67 per cent in 2014; however, even the 2010 FIFA World Cup did not manage to impact significantly on this index (South Africa, DPME, 2015). The number of people who think that the country is going in the right direction dropped from 76 per cent in 1994 to 42 per cent in 2014 (South Africa, DPME, 2015). Some of the structural impediment to faster economic growth could be attributed to inequality in income earnings, poor education for a large portion of the population, still poor health facilities and limited access to amenities, among others. Finally, large investments in the social sector are yet to be matched by significantly improved outcomes, as discussed.

With regard to why citizens move from poorer to richer provinces (see table 5), the responses range from the search for employment to better service delivery (of education and health, for example) (SSA, 2015). Indeed, while it was noted that education access has been expanded, primary and secondary education remain inadequate, particularly in terms of quality. It is estimated that only 36 per cent of students who start Grade 1 will complete Grade 12. Furthermore, schools in Black areas have the least access to quality education. Such distinctions also apply to health. Accordingly, it is likely that internal migration will continue to take place, placing strain on relatively richer and well-run provinces to increase their efforts to improve the lives of their citizens. As over two thirds of emigrants are aged 25-34 years or 35-44 years, (SSA, 2016c) the provinces left behind will be deprived of a skilled younger generation, thereby deepening inequality and poverty.

Table 5: Estimated provincial migration streams, 2011-2016

	Out-migrants	In-migrants	Net migration
Eastern Cape	247 437	194 507	-52 930
Free State	137 367	133 048	-4 319
Gauteng	631 048	1 216 258	585 211
KwaZulu-Natal	243 439	242 755	-684
Limpopo	305 030	266 751	-38 279
Mpumalanga	193 363	254 363	61 000
Northern Cape	77 914	74 759	-3 154
North West	196 223	291 821	95 598
Western Cape	194 328	363 114	168 786

Source: SSA, 2016e.

South Africa has experienced periods of social unrest for a long time, which have escalated recently in lockstep with widening inequality. Indeed the civil unrest index places South Africa in the thirteenth position among 198 countries (Verisk Maplecroft, 2016). The ranking measures triggers for unrest: the frequency and severity of mass demonstrations and protests, the effects on business and the mechanisms in place to avert disruption.

The country's labour market is rife with worker strikes. Labour strikes averaged 100 days a year in 2012-2014 with lost wages and salaries estimated at 7 billion rand per year. For example, a strike by platinum workers in 2014 lasted five months, with a demand for the doubling of wages being the key reason. Work place earning inequality, particularly between white collar employees (who are predominantly White) and blue collar workers (who are predominantly Black), reflect countrywide income inequality discussed above (South Africa, Department of Labour, 2015).

The recent phenomenon of tertiary education unrest is centred on access to higher education as a means of achieving high rates of social mobility, particularly for the Black population. In October 2015, protests were initially motivated by increased tuition fees, but quickly escalated to other issues, including shortages of student accommodation, support for low-paid staff and the orientation of tertiary education, resulting in damaged property. Even with some state funding, for many families the university fees, in excess of 100,000 rand (\$7,143) per year, including accommodation, have made higher education an unattainable dream. The Government responded by freezing fees for 2016 and, for poorer students, for 2017 as well. The Government set up a commission of inquiry into higher education and training in January 2016 to investigate the feasibility of fee-free higher education and training in South Africa. It began public hearings in Pretoria in August 2016. There is an acknowledgement that to

address inequality, South Africa will have to spend much more than currently on education and this spending must be largely focused on the poor.

Citizen protests have continued unabated as the delivery of basic services fail to meet the quantity and quality expected, particularly at the municipal level. Major service delivery protests rose from 10 in 2004 to 155 each in both 2013 and 2014, and the opinion of citizens on delivery of basic services has deteriorated from 74 per cent in 2003 to 53 per cent in 2013 and 56 per cent in 2014 (South Africa, DPME, 2015).

Another issue deemed to be related to income inequality is crime. In a survey, the number of people who viewed the levels of violent crime to have increased rose from 32.1 per cent in 2008-2010 to 41.3 per cent in 2010-2013. Serious crime (contact, property, theft and commercial) hovered above 3,500 per 100,000 people in 2014, although that figure is down from 5,500 per 100,000 in 2003 (South Africa, DPME, 2015). The 2015-16 crime statistics point to increased rates for murder (4.9 per cent), commercial crime (3.1 per cent) and car hijackings (13 per cent), among others (Lee Rondanger et al, 2016). South Africa has increased policing services and established specialized institutions to target specific crimes. Consistent with the view that this addresses the results rather than the cause, the results of increased policing have been mixed: the percentage of households who were satisfied with police in their area dropped from 64.4 per cent in 2011 to 59.2 per cent in 2014 (South Africa, DPME, 2015; SSA, 2016f).

5.3 Elaborate social and economic programmes are in place

To significantly transform South African society, the main focus of the Government has been on programmes that address income, human capital (education, skills and health, as discussed) and asset poverty (e.g. land reform and the provision of housing and basic services), and inequality. Secondly, new policies and programmes have been introduced to address the needs and vulnerability of children, people with disabilities and the aged through social assistance grants and other developmental social services. Thirdly, labour market interventions have been introduced to address job market inequality through affirmative action policies and poverty through job creation such as public works programmes.

The average value of a social grant for a family of four in 2012/13 was 3,940 rand (\$282) per month. Social support makes a substantial contribution to household budgets and is financed through a progressive tax system. Social spending accounted for 58 per cent of government expenditure in 2012, an increase of 49 per cent from 2002. In the 2015/16 financial year, 16.9 million individuals received welfare payments, amounting to 129 billion rand (\$9.2 billion) in grants, according to the 2016 budget. By 2012, 29.6 per cent of the population received a social grant, with children accounting for 70 per cent of these individuals. In 2011, over 10.4 million children under the age of 18 received a child support grant, which in total accounts for

Box 6 : Functions of social protection in South Africa

Social protection in South Africa seeks to respond to issues of chronic poverty, unemployment, risk and vulnerability. Key functions are outlined in the country's National Development Plan 2030:

1. Protective: measures are introduced to save lives and reduce levels of deprivation.
2. Preventive: acts as an economic stabilizer that seeks to help people avoid falling into deeper poverty and reduce vulnerability to natural disasters, crop failure, accidents and illness.
3. Promotive: aims to enhance the capabilities of individuals, communities and institutions to participate in all spheres of activity.
4. Transformative: tackles inequities and vulnerabilities through changes in policies, laws, budgetary allocations and redistributive measures.
5. Developmental and generative: increases consumption patterns of the poor, promoting local economic development and enabling poor people to access economic and social opportunities.

Source: South Africa, National Planning Commission (2012).

36 per cent of total grant expenditure. In 2012, approximately 15 million people and 37.4 per cent of Black Africans received grants.

Because of those interventions, the poverty rate decreased from 45 per cent in 1993 to 38 per cent in 2013, with social grants for the lower poverty line. Using a food poverty level, poverty levels declined from 33 per cent to 25 per cent between 1993 and 2013. There has been a significant reduction in the poverty headcount ratio, from 37 per cent in 1993 to 8 per cent in 2010.

Policies and funding to address inequality in education and health have improved, but quality remains a challenge

In 2012, 37 per cent of children under the age of four attended early childhood development institutions compared with 35 per cent in 2011. School attendance for those aged 7-13 had reached 99.3 per cent and 90.3 per cent for both boys and girls in primary and secondary school, respectively, in 2015. Around 63.3 per cent of women aged 25 years or older had received at least secondary education. However, only 2.8 per cent of Black Africans aged 18 to 28 were studying at tertiary institutions in 2012 compared to 17.2 per cent of White South Africans in the same age group. The quality of education still remains poor, particularly in disadvantaged Black schools. The World Economic Forum in its *Global Information Technology Report 2013*, ranked South Africa 143rd out of 144 countries for the quality of mathematics and science education, and 139th for the overall education system below several low-income African countries.

Large skill mismatches, poor educational outcomes and the apartheid legacies have hurt job growth and perpetuated inequality. Unemployment, especially among young people, women and blacks, has remained high. Improving the quality of education therefore remains key to address the long-term unemployment challenge, hence the reason South Africa has paid so much attention not only to formal education but also to technical education and artisanship, as

well as to fiscal policy to induce employment creation. With regard to the latter, programmes such as the Employment Tax Incentive Act, aimed at providing necessary on-the-job training and work experience for youths, should be beneficial.

The country's performance in addressing under-five mortality and ensuring universal access to reproductive health care remains weak. As mentioned, the infant mortality rate for 2016 is still high at 33.7 deaths per 1,000 live births, even if this is an improvement over the 34.4 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2015. Health service coverage is about 71 per cent. In August 2016, the Government announced that treatment would be accessible to all people who live with HIV and AIDS in South Africa.

Labour policy reforms to create jobs and eliminate racial and gender inequality

South Africa is mindful that job creation and reducing unemployment is a more sustainable way of reducing income inequality than redistribution and welfare programmes. The Government's newly launched employment tax incentive is aimed at addressing the unemployment challenge by encouraging private sector absorption of youth, with the Government subsidizing the salaries of newly recruited workers aged 18 to 29 years. As part of efforts to normalize labour relations, the Labour Relations Amendment Act of 2014 was brought about to, inter alia, support fair labour practices, enable workers to engage in collective bargaining, ensure the right to equality and protection from unfair discrimination. It also seeks to respond to the increase in the formalization of labour to ensure that vulnerable groups are protected adequately and are employed in conditions of decent work.

The main instrument of the Government effort to boost employment is the Expanded Public Works Programme. From the start of the second phase in 2009/10 to the end of the 2012/13 financial year, more than 3 million work opportunities had been created by the programme. Aiming for participation rates of 55 percent for women and 40 percent for youths, the programme achieved 60 and 50 per cent, respectively, thereby surpassing its targets. The programme has near comprehensive reach, with 278 municipalities implementing the programme by 2012/13.

6. National data quality evaluation

Methodological note: The quality of national data sources for key indicators in the country profiles was evaluated. The results are presented in colour codes, with green indicating that the data source is “good”; yellow; “satisfactory” and red, “needs improvement”.

The evaluation focused on the transparency and accessibility of the national data sources, while taking into consideration of the periodicity of the published data based on the timeliness and frequency of the data updates in accordance with international standards. It measured the comparability of the data series based on length, definition and standard units of measurement. Also reviewed were the accessibility of the database to the general public, the format of the data and the ease in which the data can be downloaded and shared. Data citations together with references to primary or secondary sources, was also assessed. Finally, the evaluation checked the completeness of metadata for data release and the clarity of documentation and notes.

Demography	Value	Evaluation
Population (in millions)	55.9 (2016)	1
Urban Population (%)	63 (2016)	1
Population growth rate (average annual %)	1.62 (2016)	1
Child (0–14 years, %)	30.1 (2016)	1
Adult (15–65 years, %)	61.9 (2016)	1
Aged (65+ years, %)	8.0 (2016)	1
Crude death rate (deaths per 1000 populations)	9.7 (2016)	1
Crude birth rate (births per 1000 populations)	21.6 (2016)	1

Key macroeconomic and sectoral performance	Value	Evaluation
Real GDP growth rate (%)	1.3 (2015)	1
Inflation rate (%)	4.6 (2015)	1
Current account balance (billion USD)	-1.2 (2015)	2

Economic trends and performance indicators	Value	Evaluation
Total exports (Billion USD)	74.5 (2015)	2
Total imports (Billion USD)	76.9 (2015)	2
Outward flow of direct investment (Billion USD)	4.9 (2015)	2
Inward flow of direct investment (Billion USD)	1.61 (2015)	2

Education and employment	Value	Evaluation
Literacy rate of 15–24 year-old (%)	91.6 (2015)	1
Unemployment rate (%)	26.6 (2016)	1
Youth unemployment rate (20–24) (%)	37.5 (2016)	1
Population below poverty line	45.5 (2016)	1
Share of poorest quintile in national consumption (%)	9 (1993)	1

Health	Value	Evaluation
Prevalence of underweight children under -five years of age (%)	8.3 (2008)	1
Under five mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)	41.0 (2013)	1
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)	33.7 (2016)	1
Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel	91 (2003)	1
HIV prevalence among population aged 15–49 years (%)	18.9 (2016)	1
Incidence and death rates associated with malaria	105 (2003)	1

Data Sources Code Index

1. Statistics South Africa
2. South African Reserve Bank

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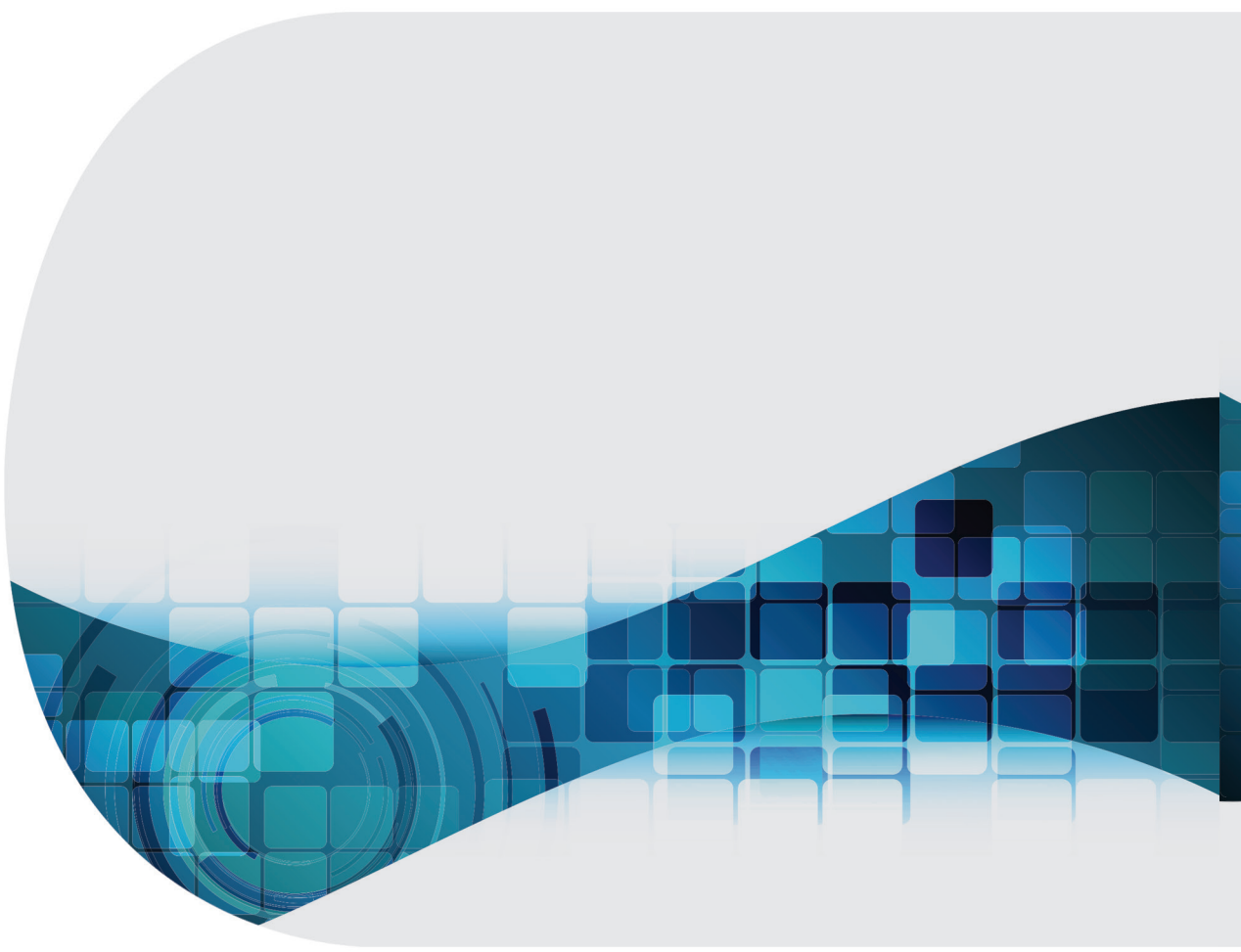
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UNECA.ORG

*Printed in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia by the ECA Printing and Publishing Unit.
ISO 14001:2004 certified. Printed on chlorine free paper.*

ISBN 978-99944-68-97-3

