

KwaZulu-Natal

 KwaZulu-Natal	
Capital:	Pietermaritzburg
Principal languages:	isiZulu 80,9% English 13,6% Afrikaans 1,5%
Population:	10 014 500
Area (km ²):	92 100
% of total area:	7,6%
GDPR* at current prices (2004):	R231 616 million
% of total GDP**:	16,7%

* *GDPR (Gross Domestic Product per Region)*

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Aptly called South Africa's garden province, KwaZulu-Natal is one of the country's most popular holiday destinations. This verdant region includes South Africa's lush subtropical east coast. Washed by the warm Indian Ocean, it stretches from Port Edward in the south, and northwards to the Mozambique boundary. In addition to the magnificent coastline, the province also boasts sweeping savanna in the east, and the majestic Drakensberg mountain range in the west.

Visitors to KwaZulu-Natal can either disembark at Durban International Airport, which handles more than 2,5 million passengers a year, or at Durban harbour. Alternatively, they can make use of the extensive national road network.

KwaZulu-Natal is one of the major tourist destinations in South Africa. In 2005, the province retained its number-one status as South Africa's leading domestic tourism destination and surpassed the Western Cape in terms of overall foreign tourism arrivals.

According to statistics for 2005 provided by the Tourism Authority of KwaZulu-Natal, the province received 11,6 million domestic visitors and 1,6 million

international visitors. This translated to an injection of R20,7 billion into the provincial economy.

Durban is one of the fastest-growing urban areas in the world. Its port is the busiest in South Africa and one of the 10-largest in the world.

The Port of Richards Bay handles over 1 000 containers per month. Combined, these two ports handle about 78% of South Africa's cargo tonnage.

KwaZulu-Natal is the only province with a monarchy specifically provided for in the Constitution.

Richards Bay is an important coal-export harbour. The province has several popular coastal holiday resorts, such as Port Shepstone, Umhlanga Rocks and Margate. In the interior, Newcastle is well-known for steel production and coal mining, Estcourt for meat processing, and Ladysmith and Richmond for mixed agriculture. The KwaZulu-Natal coastal belt yields sugar cane, wood, oranges, bananas, mangoes and other tropical fruit.

The province is also well-known for its active conservation activities. There are several reserves in the province such as the Royal Natal National Park, Giant's Castle and the Kamberg Nature Reserve.

Some of South Africa's best-protected indigenous coastal forests are found along the subtropical coastline of KwaZulu-Natal, for example, at Dukuduku and Kosi Bay. It is also along this coast that the magnificent St Lucia Estuary and Kosi Bay lakes are located. In 1999, the former Greater St Lucia Wetlands Park was declared a world heritage site. It has since been renamed iSimangaliso Wetland Park.

Separating KwaZulu-Natal from Lesotho, the Drakensberg runs 200 km along the western boundary of the province.

The northern part of the province, south of the Swaziland border, is typical African savanna, providing a natural backdrop for its rich wildlife, which is protected in several game parks.

The GDP of KwaZulu-Natal is the second largest in the country after Gauteng. The GDP growth rate rose over fivefold from 1% in 1999 to 5,3% in 2005, suggesting the potential to reach a 10% growth rate by the year 2014, which is far above the Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative for South Africa's target of 6%.

The People

KwaZulu-Natal has more than 10 million people living on 92 100 km² of land (*Mid-Year Population Estimates, 2007*). The principal language spoken is isiZulu, followed by English and Afrikaans. Remnants of British colonialism, together with Zulu, Indian and Afrikaans traditions, make for an interesting cultural mix in the province.

The province boasts several universities, universities of technology and other educational institutions, including the University of KwaZulu- Natal and the Durban Institute of Technology.

As at 2001, a total of 21,9% of the province's population aged 20 and above had no form of education (Census 2001). By February 2007, the literacy rate in this province had improved to 88,6%.

KwaZulu-Natal was the second-highest contributor to the South African economy during 2005, at 16,4% (at current prices) of GDP.

By March 2007, the unemployment rate was 29,2%.

The key strength of this province's economy is its trade and transport infrastructure.

Agriculture and Industry

Richards Bay is the centre of operations for South Africa's aluminium industry. The Richards Bay Coal Terminal is instrumental in securing the country's position as the second-largest exporter of steam coal in the world. Richards Bay Minerals is the largest sand-mining and mineral-processing operation in the world.

The motor vehicle-manufacturing industry has created a considerable multiplier effect in component- and service-providers. In recent times, the province has undergone rapid industrialisation owing to its abundant water supply and labour resources. Industries are found at Newcastle, Ladysmith, Dundee, Richards Bay, Durban, Hammarsdale, Richmond, Pietermaritzburg and Mandeni.

The sugar-cane plantations along the Indian Ocean coastal belt form the mainstay of the economy and agriculture of the region. The coastal belt is also a large producer of subtropical fruit, while the farmers in the hinterland concentrate on vegetable-, dairy- and stock-farming. Another major source of income is forestry in the areas around Vryheid, Eshowe, Richmond, Harding and Ngome, which is also known for its tea plantations.

The summer-rainfall coastal regions of this province are hot and humid with a subtropical climate. The KwaZulu-Natal Midlands between the coastal strip and the southern Drakensberg Escarpment are drier, with extremely cold conditions in winter and snow on the high-lying ground. In the north, the subtropical strip extends around Swaziland to the edge of the escarpment.

2010 World Cup

From March 2007, R2,2 billion is being spent on the construction of the new stadium in Durban, which will have the capacity to seat 70 000 spectators.

Some R4 billion is expected to be spent on the construction of the new international airport and the Dube Tradeport at La Mercy. By mid-2007, the R350-million P700 Corridor from Richards Bay to Ulundi and the R300-million P577 from Mtubatuba to Hlabisa and Nongoma were under construction.

On completion, the Dube Tradeport alone is expected to contribute R12,4 billion to the economy and create thousands of new jobs.

eThekweni Municipality will spend more than R1 billion over the next three years leading up to the World Cup, to overhaul the public transport system by making it rail-based. The municipality envisages taxis transporting people from places outside the city to railway stations. Trains will then take them to the inner city where buses will be used for further travel.

The KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Government will provide R300 million to upgrade stadiums and build multipurpose sports facilities to allow some of its communities to host teams during the 2010 tournament. The selected municipalities for the projects include Umgungundlovu, Amajuba, Ugu and Uthungulu.

Source: [South Africa Yearbook 2007/08](#)

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