



Labour migration by numbers: South Africa's foreign and domestic migration data

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The Migrating for Work Research Consortium

Building on over a decade of research experience in migration studies, the African Centre for Migration & Society (ACMS) at Wits University has embarked on a partnership with a range of academic (GovINN, UP; UNU-CRIS; UNESCO Chair on Free Movement), government (Department of Labour; South African Local Government Association; Statistics South Africa), and international (ILO; IOM) partners. This partnership is expressed through the Migrating for Work Research Consortium (MiWORC).

MiWORC is based on a matching fund principle. The European Union, in the framework of the EU-South Africa Dialogue Facility (EuropeAid/132200/L/ACT/ZA), funds 50 per cent of the consortium. Beyond an ambitious scholarly agenda, one of MiWORC's objectives is to avail empirically based evidence to the EU- SA Dialogue facility, a bilateral on-going strategic partnership between the European Union and South Africa, as well as to a range of key stakeholders in government, organised labour, business, and the NGO sector.

Work Package 2: The improvement of existing labour market survey instruments to better reflect migrant workers' position

Existing national statistical instruments omit any description and account of foreigners' participation within the South African economy. By and large, data are inadequate and limited. This work package aims to improve the quality of available statistics on foreign labour in South Africa, and to allow comparison to domestic labour participation at a national and local level. The WP begins with a critical review of the scope and relevance of existing statistical data sets in South Africa and provides recommendations on the technical and institutional aspects of a longer-term improvement strategy, with options that can be implemented, such as a pilot survey. WP2 is guided by an advisory committee comprised of the DoL, Stats SA, SALGA, ILO, IOM, and ACMS.



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The opinions expressed in this work belong solely to the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the member groups of the Migrating for Work Research Consortium (MiWORC). Comments are welcomed and should be directed to the author(s).

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Introduction

This Fact Sheet draws from the data compiled in a report commissioned by the African Centre for Migration & Society (ACMS) on behalf of the Migrating for Work Research Consortium (MiWORC). The full report (MiWORC Report N°2) aims to assist with improving the quality of available statistics on foreign labour in South Africa. Such improvement is intended, in turn, to advance understanding of the role played by foreign workers in the South African labour market.

With over 40 tables and analysis, the core of the full report is an assessment of the scope and relevance of existing statistical data sets in South Africa. This Fact Sheet presents a small selection of the report's data sets without the accompanying assessment and analysis; these data sets were selected for timeliness (2008-12) and their ability to stand alone.

The full report's focus is on the period 1980 to date, with more emphasis placed on current data sources given that the ultimate aim is to contribute to improving available data for future use. Geographically, special attention is given to statistics on foreign labour originating within the Southern African region. Throughout the report the emphasis is on sources that provide broad coverage, ideally of the entire country, rather than small-scale investigations. Further, the main interest is in ongoing sources of statistics rather than in one-off investigations. Partly as a result, the report focuses on statistics produced by the government, while also discussing smaller-scale and one-off non-governmental investigations, where they highlight important issues. For the complete presentation of data-sets, a description of the state of current data sources and methods and recommendations for improving them, please consult the full report, MiWORC Report N°2, "Improving the quality of available statistics on foreign labour in South Africa: Existing data-sets."



Selection of available data

Table 1. Actual permits issued 2011/12

Visitor's permits	27 128
Permanent residence permits	1 322
Work permits	13 261
Study permits	14 060
Other categories	26 621

Source: Department of Home Affairs, 2012: 68

Table 2. Distribution of population by region of birth, by province, 2011 (%)

	South Africa	SADC	Rest of Africa	Other	Unspecified	Total
Eastern Cape	95,9	0,4	0,2	0,1	3,4	100
Free State	94,2	1,5	0,1	0,2	4,0	100
Gauteng	88,0	5,4	0,5	0,7	5,4	100
KwaZulu-Natal	95,2	0,7	0,1	0,1	3,8	100
Limpopo	94,7	2,1	0,1	0,1	2,9	100
Mpumalanga	94,0	2,3	0,1	0,2	3,4	100
North West	93,2	2,8	0,1	0,2	3,7	100
Northern Cape	96,0	0,8	0,1	0,2	2,8	100
Western Cape	91,8	1,6	0,5	0,5	5,5	100

Source: Statistics South Africa, PX-Web

Table 3. Key labour indicators by region of birth, population 15-64 years, 2011 (%)

Region of birth	Employment rate	Unemployment rate	Labour force participation rate
South Africa	38	31	55
SADC	62	20	78
Rest of Africa	68	12	77
United Kingdom and Europe	69	5	73
Asia	73	4	77
North America	67	4	70
Latin America and Caribbean	65	7	70
Oceania	72	5	76
Total	39	30	56

Source: Special run on Census 2011 data, Diego Iturralde, Statistics South Africa

Table 4. Population and key labour indicators by 10 most common countries of birth, population 15-64 years, 2011

	Total	Employment rate (%)	Unemployment rate (%)	Labour force participation rate (%)
Zimbabwe	515 824	66	18	80
Mozambique	262 556	58	24	76
Lesotho	124 463	51	30	73
Malawi	69 544	72	14	84
Namibia	29 653	67	10	74
Swaziland	27 471	52	22	67
India	23 780	64	6	68
Zambia	22 833	70	9	76
Nigeria	20 983	69	13	79
Congo	18 545	52	24	68

Source: Special run on Census 2011 data, Diego Iturralde, Statistics South Africa

Table 5. Temporary residence permit recipients by geography and type, 2011

	Business	Work	Study	Other	Total	Work as % of total
Total	1 346	20 673	16 928	67 226	106 173	100
Overseas	883	11 885	3 657	32 206	48 631	57
Africa	463	8 765	13 266	34 966	57 460	42
SADC	93	6 329	7 901	17 473	31 796	31
Angola	12	47	1 012	968	2 039	0
Botswana	3	97	206	425	731	0
DRC	17	214	1 072	1 298	2 601	1
Lesotho	3	107	536	2 060	2 706	1
Madagascar	0	7	27	45	79	0
Malawi	6	239	233	1 569	2 047	1
Mauritius	0	51	64	167	282	0
Mozambique	6	94	159	1 138	1 397	0
Namibia	0	14	325	465	804	0
Seychelles	0	1	9	20	30	0
Swaziland	1	87	318	689	1 095	0
Tanzania	2	62	129	511	704	0
Zambia	7	240	425	981	1 653	1
Zimbabwe	36	5 069	3 386	7 137	15 628	25
Other Africa	370	2 436	5 365	17 493	25 664	12

Source: Statistics South Africa, 2012: 59



Table 6. Distribution of permanent residence permits by category (%)

	Work	Refugees	Business	Other	Total
Overseas	27	0	5	67	100
Africa	16	28	2	55	100
SADC	17	24	1	58	100
Zimbabwe	36	0	1	63	100
DRC	3	71	1	25	100
Nigeria	25	0	3	72	100
Somalia	0	92	0	8	100
Congo	4	55	1	40	100
Lesotho	4	0	0	96	100
Rwanda	1	76	0	23	100
Kenya	42	0	4	54	100
Zimbabwe	35	1	1	63	100
Malawi	15	0	1	84	100

Source: Statistics South Africa, 2012: 39

Table 7. Female share of South African and foreign employees, 2010 (%)

	Local	Foreign
Top management	19	13
Senior management	30	21
Professionals	40	26
Skilled	44	23
Semi-skilled	40	5
Unskilled	36	11
Temporary	43	29
Total	40	13

Source: Compiled from Commission for Employment Equity, 2012

Table 8. Mineworkers recruited for mines by TEBA by mineral, 2012

Year	RSA	Lesotho	Botswana	Swaziland	Mozambique	Total
Gold	86 719	16 653	804	3 247	10 447	117 870
Platinum	85 510	5 947	678	801	8 602	101 538
Coal	13 915	397		17	392	14 721
Total	186 144	22 997	1 482	4 065	19 441	234 129

Source: The Employment Bureau of Africa (TEBA), January 2013

Table 9. Foreign worker share, number and profile among all companies, 2010

	Level	Profile	Recruited	Promoted	Terminated
Foreign share (%)	Top management	2,9	6,2	5,1	2,3
	Senior management	2,3	3,8	3,1	2,2
	Professionals	2,0	3,3	2,6	1,7
	Skilled	1,3	2,1	1,9	0,8
	Semi-skilled	2,9	2,6	2,3	3,1
	Unskilled	3,8	3,1	3,0	3,1
	Temporary	1,9	2,1	1,8	1,4
	Total	2,5	2,5	2,3	1,9
Foreign number	Top management	1 223	185	198	46
	Senior management	2 277	447	416	223
	Professionals	7 892	1 534	1 335	692
	Skilled	16 769	3 855	3 591	931
	Semi-skilled	55 096	10 257	9 781	3 176
	Unskilled	37 134	8 993	8 033	717
	Temporary	11 407	9 235	6 568	134
	Total	131 798	34 506	29 922	5 919
Foreign profile (%)	Top management	1	1	1	1
	Senior management	2	1	1	4
	Professionals	6	4	4	12
	Skilled	13	11	12	16
	Semi-skilled	42	30	33	54
	Unskilled	28	26	27	12
	Temporary	9	27	22	2
	Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Commission for Employment Equity, 2011: Diverse tables

Table 10. Distribution by current province of employed, by country of birth and time of arrival (%)

Province	South African-born	Foreign-born recent arrival	Foreign-born old arrival	Total
Eastern Cape	8	2	4	8
Free State	6	0	9	6
Gauteng	31	52	32	32
Kwazulu-Natal	15	1	9	14
Limpopo	7	12	1	7
Mpumalanga	8	7	18	9
North West	8	0	10	8
Northern Cape	3	0	0	3
Western Cape	13	26	16	14
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Own analysis, National Income Dynamics Study (NIDS) 2008 data



Table 11. Country of birth of persons 15+ years born elsewhere in Africa, 2008

Country	Count of foreign-born	% of foreign-born
Lesotho	103 652	10
Namibia	68 801	7
Botswana	10 425	1
Zimbabwe	259 486	26
Mozambique	203 750	20
Swaziland	21 785	2
Angola	10 359	1
DRC	40 163	4
Malawi	67 278	7
Zambia	4 172	0
Burundi	4 149	0
Cameroon	13 187	1
Congo	905	0
Ethiopia	17 184	2
Kenya	1 701	0
Nigeria	7 832	1

Source: Own analysis, NIDS 2008 data

Table 12. Distribution by occupation of employed people, by country of birth (%)

Occupation	South African	Foreign-born
Legislators, managers, senior officials	6	1
Professionals	13	17
Technicians and associated	5	4
Clerks	11	10
Service and sales workers	13	9
Skilled agricultural	5	2
Craft and related trade workers	14	33
Plant and machinery operators	10	8
Elementary occupation (low-skilled)	21	15
Don't know	2	1
Missing	0	0
Total	100	100

Source: Own analysis, NIDS 2008 data

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