

Race and work: the figures

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According to the 1991 Population Census ⁽¹⁾, the total population in South Africa was 30 986 920 ⁽²⁾. The racial and gender breakdown of the population is as follows:

TABLE 1 shows that Africans form 70% of

TABLE 1 – SA population figures

	African	Coloured	Indian	White
Female	10 781 538	1 679 907	497 669	2 548 278
Male	10 864 932	1 605 811	488 952	2 519 833
Total	21 646 471	3 285 718	986 620	5 068 110

the total population in South Africa. Whites form 16% of the population while coloureds and Indians form 10% and 3% of South Africa's population respectively. The gender breakdown of the population is about equal, with men forming 49.95% of the population and women forming 50.05% of the population.

The Economically Active Population (EAP) is that part of the total population that is able to work. The EAP is calculated by subtracting housewives ⁽³⁾, children, scholars, students, the disabled and aged from the population.

The EAP in South Africa is shown in TABLE 2 below.

The EAP in South Africa totals 11 624 368. The EAP forms 38% of the total population. In other words, just 38% of the population is able to work. A large portion of the South African population is young. Children, scholars and students form 45% of the population.

TABLE 2 – Economically active population

	Black	Coloured	Indian	White	Total
Female	2 942 470	582 062	120 628	936 154	4 581 314
Male	4 554 471	777 153	259 074	1 452 256	7 043 053
Total	7 497 041	1 359 215	379 702	2 388 410	11 624 368

Africans form 64% of the EAP, while whites, coloureds and Indians form 21%, 12% and 3% of the population respectively.

Although women form over 50% of the total population, they form just 39% of the EAP.

Occupations by economic sector

TABLES 3 TO 6 in the following pages show the occupations by economic sector of the workforce for each of the race groups.

TABLE 3 shows the occupation and employment by economic sector for African workers.

In terms of occupations, the table shows that most African workers are employed in service

related occupations. This includes workers like drivers, messengers, security workers, catering workers and domestic workers. A very large proportion of professional

African workers are employed in the service sector. These workers would be teachers, doctors and nurses employed in community services. There are very few African workers employed in executive and management jobs.

A large proportion of African workers are employed in semi-skilled (operator and miner) and unskilled occupations (miner and labourer). They perform these jobs mainly in the manufacturing and service sector of the economy.

TABLE 4 shows most coloured workers are employed in service related occupations. A significant number have clerical, farming related occupations. About 13% of the coloured workforce are employed in semi-skilled operator and related occupations. Just under 10% are employed as unskilled labourers.

About 17% of coloured workers are employed in the manufacturing sector, mainly in semi-skilled occupations. 15% of the coloured workforce have occupations in the

agriculture sector, with just 13 758 having occupations in mining.

TABLE 3 – African workers

Type of Occupation	Total	Agriculture	Mining	Manuf'ring	Services	Other
Professional	287 503	774	2 978	4 908	272 101	6 742
Executive	33 320	434	414	5 790	19 086	7 596
Clerical ⁽⁴⁾	519 490	5 464	23 611	50 254	391 093	49 068
Service ⁽⁵⁾	1 774 145	25 923	56 568	106 965	144 210	142 585
Farming	926 269	803 567	2 664	6 052	93 694	20 292
Skilled ⁽⁶⁾	381 798	3 561	13 567	83 871	116 436	16 4363 ⁽⁷⁾
Supervisor	76 473	2 479	25 654	21 484	16 251	10 505
Miner ⁽⁸⁾	384 873	548	375 127	1 678	2 594	4 926
Operator ⁽⁹⁾	534 950	13 086	35 773	259 781	103 921	122 389 ⁽¹⁰⁾
Labourer ⁽¹¹⁾	920 976	48 267	178 909	176 929	312 161	204 710 ⁽¹²⁾
Other ⁽¹³⁾	1 657 244	5 715	4 995	12 404	46 518	1 587 612
Total	7497041	909817	720261	730117	2814055	2322789

TABLE 5 shows the profile of Indian workers. Most Indian workers are employed in clerical and sales occupations. A fair proportion of the Indian workforce have skilled professional and managerial occupations (together they form 16% of the Indian workforce). About 13% of Indian workers are employed in semi-skilled operator and related occupations. Just 10 964 Indian workers have unskilled occupations.

In terms of economic sector, most Indians are employed in the service sector, mainly in clerical jobs. About 26% of Indian workers are employed in the manufacturing sector, mainly as operators,

although many perform clerical functions. Very few Indians have occupations in the mining and agriculture sectors of the economy.

TABLE 6 shows the occupations by economic sector for white workers. We can see that in terms of occupations, most whites have clerical and sales occupations, with a significant number having professional and managerial occupations. About 13% of the white workforce have jobs in artisan and related occupations. A small percentage (3%) of whites have semi-skilled occupations, with just 7 072 having unskilled occupations as labourers.

Most whites are employed in the service

TABLE 4 – Coloured workers

Type of Occupation	Total	Agriculture	Mining	Manuf'ring	Services	Other
Professional	72 448	177	262	3 149	65 873	2 987
Executive	15 303	167	78	3 054	9 215	2 789
Clerical	183 718	1 512	1 156	26 405	135 175	19 470
Service	230 665	2 882	1 400	12 305	197 151	16 927
Farming	200 980	183 846	305	2 845	9 410	4 574
Skilled	117 935	1 383	2 137	32 287	30 579	51 549 ⁽¹⁴⁾
Supervisor	19 357	447	484	9 869	5 553	3 004
Miner	2 754	24	1 956	344	210	220
Operator	179 029	3 219	2 665	102 376	29 711	41 958
Labourers	131 813	7 854	3 084	36 844	48 617	35 414
Other ⁽¹⁵⁾	205 214	859	229	7 012	10 475	186 639
Total	1 359 215	202 370	13 758	236 491	541 935	364 661⁽¹⁶⁾

Table 5 – Indian Workers

	Total	Agriculture	Mining	Manuf'ring	Services	Other
Professional	36 793	113	127	3 562	31 170	1759
Managerial	23 707	203	53	4 396	16 219	2 886
Clerical	122 691	869	545	23 316	86 433	11 528
Service	31 795	320	98	3 224	25 594	2 559
Farming	3 054	2 135	11	218	513	177
Artisan	39 105	449	331	15 000	13 889	9 436
Supervisor	10 536	182	91	6 309	2 727	1 227
Miner	389	1	98	177	84	29
Operator	50 634	311	130	37 052	7 404	5 737
Labourer	10 964	120	39	5 520	3 480	1 805
Other	50 888	106	42	2 993	4 567	43 180
Total	380 502	4 809	1 565	101 767	192 088	80 273

Table 6 – White workers

	Total	Agriculture	Mining	Manuf'ring	Service	Other
Professional	442 058	5 702	13 964	48 074	346 173	28 145
Managerial	275 827	5 748	5 248	58 379	174 617	31 835
Clerical	777 860	10 578	14 230	90 950	609 838	52 264
Service	243 305	1 103	2 994	6 601	225 439	7 168
Farming	82 070	77 349	244	905	2 710	862
Artisan	301 889	3 323	30 443	91 220	125 232	51 671
Supervisor	58 977	785	12 483	21 249	16 490	7 970
Miner	21 025	84	19 075	567	440	859
Operator	48 540	955	3 726	20 084	16 868	6 907
Labourer	7 072	267	385	1 212	3 357	1 851
Other	129 785	1 543	2 372	9 513	33 568	82 789
Total	2 388 408	107 437	105 164	348 754	1 554 732	272 321

sector in clerical and professional occupations. 15% of whites work in the manufacturing sector in skilled occupations. The mining and agriculture sectors each provide employment for about 5% of the white workforce. ☆

Notes

- (1) Population Census 1991, after adjustment for undercounting.
- (2) Population figures exclude the "independent" homelands.
- (3) According to the census, there are 2 376 172 "housewives" in South Africa.
- (4) Clerical jobs include sales jobs.
- (5) Service jobs include drivers, messengers, domestic workers, catering and so on. Just under 50% of workers in this occupation are domestic workers.
- (6) Includes artisans, artisan aides, and related workers.
- (7) Includes 126 842 skilled workers employed in the construction industry.

(8) This category shows miners not doing administrative, or executive jobs. It therefore gives us an indication of the number of semi and unskilled mine workers. This category includes quarry and related workers.

(9) This category includes related semi-skilled workers.

(10) Includes 59 839 workers employed in the construction industry.

(11) This category includes related unskilled workers.

Note that this category shows unskilled workers in production related occupations. Farm labourers are shown under farming occupations.

(12) Includes 96 723 labourers employed in the construction industry

(13) Includes unemployed

(14) Note this includes 36 805 artisans employed in the construction sector.

(15) Includes unemployed.

(16) Includes 85 004 workers employed in the construction sector.