

South Africa



Life in South Africa

	2017*		2016**
Overall Rank	42	▲ 9	51
Quality of Life	49	▲ 3	52
Ease of Settling In	29	▼ 1	28
Working Abroad	47	▲ 6	53
Family Life (out of 45 countries)	19	▼ 4	15
Personal Finance	42	▲ 13	55
Cost of Living	25		25

*out of 65 countries

**out of 67 countries

77% generally satisfied

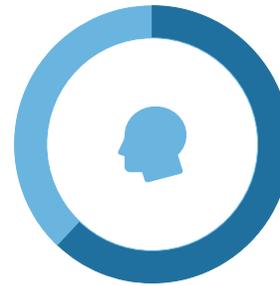
Expats in South Africa

Average age



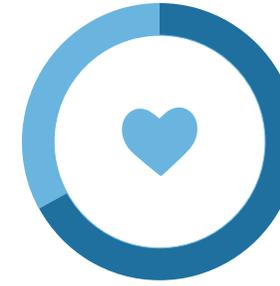
42.8 years

Gender split



63% female
38% male

Relationship status



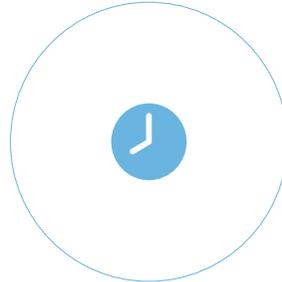
67% in a relationship
33% single

Top nationalities

- 14% British
- 12% German
- 7% US American
- 7% Zimbabwean

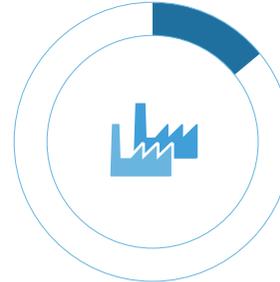
Working in South Africa

Average working hours



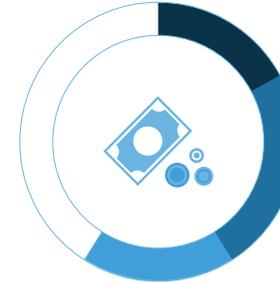
42.8h /week (full time)

Top field of work



14% information technology

Top income groups



24% 12-25k USD
18% < 12k USD
17% 25-50k USD

Top employment statuses



21% employee
14% manager
13% entrepreneur/business owner

Top Reasons for Relocating

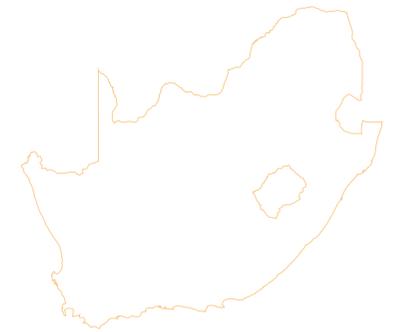
#1 Moved for love

#2 Sent by employer

#2 Moved for partner's career

Easy to Settle Down, Not Always Safe

Safety concerns make life hard for many expats in South Africa, but most enjoy their leisure time and the great weather.



Top Findings

- > 93% satisfied with climate and weather
- > Almost half unsatisfied with transportation infrastructure
- > Nearly two-thirds concerned about personal safety
- > Political situation also a concern
- > Plenty of leisure options for kids
- > 30% struggle with disposable household income

Plenty of Leisure Options but Expensive Healthcare

South Africa is known for its natural beauty, diverse culture, and hours of sunshine — something many respondents (80%) were looking forward to prior to their relocation. Over nine in ten expats (93%) rate the climate and weather in South Africa favorably, with two-thirds (67%) even considering it very good. There is plenty to do when the sun shines, and South Africa ranks 4th out of 65 in the Leisure Options subcategory of the Quality of Life Index.

In part, this is also because expats are highly satisfied with their travel opportunities, which 77% rate positively. However, the same cannot be said for the transportation infrastructure: almost half (49%) are unhappy with this factor, despite seven in nine respondents (78%) living in South Africa's three biggest cities, Cape Town, Durban, and Johannesburg.

While South Africa has climbed up the Quality of Life Index slightly, progressing three places since 2016 and now ranking 49th out of 65 countries in 2017, there's still plenty of room for improvement. The quality of medical care is rated positively by the majority (72%), however, three in seven (43%) describe the affordability of healthcare as generally bad — 16 percentage points more than the global average. Over the past few years, South Africa's healthcare system has seen a rise in costs, including a significant increase of 11.6% in private hospital fees from 2013 to 2014.¹

Unpredictable Politics and Staying Safe

South Africa is a developing country, so taking basic precautions before traveling is always advised — for expats as well as holiday-makers.² Over three in five respondents (61%) say they considered personal safety in

¹ Bizcommunity. Day Hospitals: The Answer to Rising Health Costs? 1 Jun 2017. <http://www.bizcommunity.com/Article/196/316/162638.html>

² Gov.UK. Foreign travel advice South Africa. 6 Jun 2017. <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/south-africa/safety-and-security>

Your Country Through Expat Eyes

Country Report: South Africa

South Africa to be a potential disadvantage before moving.

“*Crime is always something to worry about, anywhere in the country.*”

After experiencing life in South Africa, about two-thirds (64%) rate their personal safety negatively — nearly six times the global average of 11%. For one Peruvian respondent, “crime is always something to worry about, anywhere in the country”.

Another reason why the country doesn't perform well in the Quality of Life Index is its political situation. The current government has been attracting a lot of negative attention³ — and 58% of expats are also voicing dissatisfaction with the country's political stability. Expats rate the peacefulness of South Africa badly with just 38% feeling positive about it, compared to a worldwide average of 76%.

Not the Warmest Welcome but Few Language Problems

Over a quarter of expats in South Africa (27%) are generally unhappy with the friendliness of local people towards foreign residents, although around three in five (61%) say they have no problems finding South African friends; a similar number (63%) find it easy to make friends in general. Settling in is also not a problem for two-thirds of expats living in South Africa (67%).

South Africa isn't called the rainbow nation for nothing: it is home to eleven official languages. Afrikaans and isiNdebele are the two most spoken languages, apart from English — the official language of business, politics, and media.⁴ The latter may explain why 57% find it easy to live in South Africa without speaking the other local languages; across the globe, this figure is eleven percentage points lower. All in all, South Africa takes the 22nd spot in the Language subcategory of the Ease of Settling In Index.

A Comfortable Family Environment

South Africa does better than average in the Family Life Index, making it into the top 20 (19th out of 45). Nearly seven in ten expat parents (68%) believe that childcare options are numerous and easy to get, and over three-fifths (63%) consider them affordable. Parents are also mostly positive about education, with 60% rating the quality of education favorably.

“*I love the out-door lifestyle. Kids can still be kids.*”

While expat parents may be happy with the education options, they're less impressed with safety: 44% of expat parents living in South Africa said it's not good for their children's safety even if 77% agree that there's a

generally friendly attitude toward families with children. Six in seven (86%) are generally happy with the leisure activities available for their kids. One Estonian respondent particularly praised “the out-door lifestyle” and the fact that “kids can still be kids”.

Not Enough Income to Cover Everything

Around two-thirds of expats (66%) are happy with the cost of living in general, 18 percentage points higher than the global average. A further 63% are satisfied with their financial satiation, despite 30% saying they somewhat struggle to cover daily expenses. Since 1961, the country has experienced seven economic recessions, and recent numbers don't show positive prospects for the future either.⁵ This is probably why 58% of expats are not happy with the current state of the economy, and less than half (47%) are satisfied with their job security.

However, two-thirds of expats working in South Africa (67%) are generally happy with their work-life balance, and a further 74% are content with their working hours. One Australian in the country is particularly happy about work, stating “our business ... is thriving and [the] low cost of living creates a great lifestyle”.

³ BBC. South Africa's President Jacob Zuma - a profile. 1 Apr 2016. <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-17450447>

⁴ South Africa. South Africa's languages. <http://www.southafrica.net/za/en/travel-tips/entry/travel-tip-south-africas-languages>

⁵ Business Report. Recession: South African economy shrinks by 0.7%. 6 Jun 2017. <http://www.iol.co.za/business-report/recession-south-african-economy-shrinks-by-07-9585516>