

Inflow of migrants pushes population to 53 million - Stats SA

South Africa's population is estimated to have grown to just under 53 million by the middle of this year, with an inflow of migrants behind much of the 1.2 million population increase since the 2011 Census, Statistician General Pali Lehohla said earlier this week.



Speaking during Statistics SA's release of the 2013 mid-year population estimates, Lehohla pointed out that without an inflow of migrants, the country would not have grown by much in recent years.

The population is expected to have grown from just under 51.8 million in 2011, to an estimated 52,981,991 next month.

The population's natural rate of increase - the difference between births and deaths - has fallen from 1.05% per year in 2012 to an estimated 0.99% in 2013.

However, driven by a net inflow of migrants, the population grew slightly faster per year in 2013 than over a decade a year, having increased by 1.34% between 2012 and 2013, up from a 1.3% increase between 2002 and 2003.

An estimated 864,000 African migrants entered South Africa between 2001 and 2005, and this increased to an inflow of 974,000 between 2006 and 2010.

An estimated 998,000 African migrants are expected to enter the country between 2011 and 2015.

The number of Asian migrants that came to South Africa between 2001 and 2005 is estimated at 23,300, and 34,700 between 2006 and 2010. About 40,900 Asians are expected to enter South Africa between 2011 and 2015.

In contrast, the net outflow of the white population is expected to fall to 95,200 leaving the country between 2011 and 2015 down from an outflow of 133,800 between 2001 and 2005 and 112,000 between 2006 and 2010.

Migration between provinces also continues - with the Eastern Cape this year estimated to have had the highest net outflow of migrants (losing 264,500), closely followed by Limpopo (with an outflow 228,000).

Gauteng is estimated to have received the most migrants (just over a million), followed by the Western Cape (307,000). International migration is driving the population increase because South Africa's birth rate and crude death rate has declined in recent years.

The number of children that South African women have in their life time (the fertility rate) is estimated to have fallen further 2.3 this year, from 2.4 in 2011 and 2.7 in 2002.

Rural provinces have higher fertility rates than more urban provinces - ranging between Gauteng, with a fertility rate at 1.9 (below the replacement rate of 2.1) and the Eastern Cape at 2.7.

The crude death rate has also fallen from 15 per 1,000 in 2005 to 12 per 1,000 in 2011 and is estimated to have fallen further to 11 per 1,000 in 2013.

Driving the fall in the death rate is the decline in the infant mortality rate and a drop in the mortality rate of those under five years old.

The infant mortality rate has fallen from 58 per 1,000 in 2005 to 45.1 per 1,000 in 2011 and is estimated to have fallen further to 42 per 1,000 in 2013.

The death rate for those under the age of five years old fell from 85 per 1,000 in 2005 to 62 per 1,000 in 2011 and 57 in 2013.

Falling crude death rates and infant mortality rates is driving the increased life expectancy.

Life expectancy has increased from 52 years in 2004 to 58 years in 2011 and is estimated to have increased further, to just under 60 years (or 59.4 years) in the 2013 estimates - with life expectancy of women at 61 years and men at 58 years.

Western Cape leads in life expectancy

Among provinces, the Western Cape has the highest life expectancy in 2013 - at 67 years, compared to Gauteng at 62 years.

The Free State is the province with the lowest life expectancy, at 51 years, followed by KwaZulu-Natal at 56 years. However, the HIV prevalence rate has crept up from 8.7% of South Africans in 2002 to 10% in 2013, or just under 5.3 million people.

The prevalence rate for those between 15 and 49 years stands at 16%. The mid-year estimates for 2013 reveals that 51% of the population is female and 49% male.

In terms of population groups, black Africans make up 42.3 million people, having increased their share from 2011 by 0.6 percentage points to 79.8%.

Indian and Asians are estimated to now make up 1.3 million people, estimated to have grown by 0.1 percentage points to 2.6%.

Coloured people's share of the population, estimated to be just under 4.8 million, is estimated to have also grown by 0.1 percentage points - from 8.9% to 9%.

In contrast, the share of white people, who make up 4.6 million people now, slipped 0.2 percentage points to 8.7% in 2013.

The mid-year population figures also reveal vastly different population pyramids for each population group. While the population pyramid of white people bulges between 45 years to 69 years, that of Asians reveals a bulge at around age groups between 20 and 39 years.

The population pyramid of black Africans and that of coloured people are similar in that they reveal a large population under the age of 30, tailing off more rapidly above the age of 65 years than the Asian and white groups.

Lehohla attributed the dramatic difference between the black African and coloured population pyramid and that of whites and Asians to the significantly higher amount invested by the apartheid state in health and education in the white and Indian population than it did in coloured and black Africans.