

# L'Afrique du Sud

## Fiche

### 1. Basic facts

<b>Capital city</b>	Pretoria (executive power)
<b>Largest cities</b>	Johannesburg, Cape Town, Durban
<b>Population</b>	50.5 million
<b>Area</b>	1,219,912 km <sup>2</sup>
<b>Official languages</b>	11 official languages, including English, Afrikaans, Sesotho, Setswana, Xhosa and Zulu.

### 2. Key concepts

<b>Apartheid</b>	The system implemented by the all-white government from 1848 to 1992 separating people of different races and denying black people political rights, forcing them to live in townships outside the cities.
<b>Rainbow Nation</b>	Term used to refer to South Africa's racial diversity. Black South Africans represent 75% of the population, with a large number of Coloureds (people of mixed origins) + Europeans + Indians

### 3. Key dates

<b>18<sup>th</sup> century</b>	European immigrants (especially Dutch protestants) arrived in important numbers
<b>1795</b>	The British conquered the colony. The Afrikaaners (earlier Dutch settlers) rebelled against this domination by the British.
<b>1899-1902</b>	The Boer Wars: between the British and the Afrikaaners → British victory.
<b>1948-1992s</b>	The system of apartheid with an all-white government in spite of the Black majority in the population: separation of people into different races. The Blacks had no political rights and had to live in townships. The whites used violence and imprisonment to impose apartheid.
<b>1960</b>	The country was forced to leave the Commonwealth because of apartheid.
<b>1980s</b>	The country suffered economic sanctions from the international community.
<b>1992</b>	Prime Minister Frederick de Klerk led the dismantling of apartheid and called for general elections.
<b>1994</b>	Nelson Mandela became the first democratically elected black President of South Africa in the first all-race elections

### 4. National hero: Nelson Mandela

- Nelson Mandela (1918-) dedicated his life to the fight for racial equality in South Africa.
- As qualified lawyer, he joined the African National Congress (ANC) in 1942 and fought against the apartheid regime.
- 1964: arrested for sabotage and sentenced to life imprisonment. Was incarcerated at Robben Island Prison.
  - 1990: released, after 26 years in prison.
  - 1993: awarded the Nobel Peace Prize *for laying the foundations of a new democratic South Africa*.
  - April 1994: became the first democratically elected black President of South Africa in the first all-race elections after negotiating the dismantling of apartheid.
  - 1999: retired from political life and devoted his energy to campaigning against poverty.