

Provincial Statistics (Part 9) - Northern Province

1995

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Per capita income of Northern Province lowest in SA

During 1993 the Northern Province was the province in South Africa with the lowest per capita income while it had the highest unemployment rate of all the provinces in 1994. The province, ranked third after Gauteng, had a population density of 43,8 persons per square kilometre while 9,2% of the population (5 397 200) lived in areas with some form of local authority.

*This is according to the Central Statistical Service's latest provincial report, **Provincial Statistics 1995: Part 9, (report number 00-90-09)**, which also notes that the Northern Province has the lowest per capita income of all the provinces.*

Located at the most northern tip of South Africa as its name suggests, the Northern Province is bisected by the Tropic of Capricorn at 23E27'S. With a population density of 43,8 persons per square kilometre, the province ranks third after Gauteng (374,7) and KwaZulu/Natal (94,5). Moreover, towns are small and only 9,2% of the population (5 397 200) live in areas with some form of local authority. Unemployment here is at its worst and in addition, with a per capita income of R2 569 in 1993*, the province compared poorly with the national average of R8 704 and the Eastern Cape's R4 151 which is the second lowest.

According to statistics from the 1994 October Household Survey that were used in the report, the unemployment rate of 47,0% in the province was the highest in the country for 1994. The rate for males and females were 33,2% and 59,2% respectively. Urban areas reflected a rate of 23,3% and non-urban areas a rate of 50,7%. At 56,7%, Sepedi was the most commonly used language within the province in 1994, followed by Xitsonga at 22,7% and then Tshivenda at 11,8%. Afrikaans speakers constituted only 2,6% while English speakers made up a mere 0,4% of the entire inhabitants within the province.

With a life expectancy of 62,7 years the Northern Province ranked fourth in the country according to the **Human Development Index (HDI)**. This compared well with the national average of 62,8 years. Although the Northern Province (0,470) was ranked lowest of all the provinces on the HDI, it still compared well with countries such as Zimbabwe (0,474) and Namibia (0,425), but poorly with South Africa's national average of 0,677. Adult literacy in the province was rated at 73,6% as opposed to 82,2% for the country as a whole.

Indications from the 1994 October Household Survey show a great deficiency in the distribution of such necessities as water, electricity and telephones. It showed that wood was still the most important energy source for cooking in the province and was used by 60,3% of households. Furthermore it showed that 40,6% of households used candles for lighting purposes while only 17,1% of households in the province had access to tap water in the dwelling.

In 1994 the mining and quarrying industries contributed the most (29,9%) towards the Gross Geographic Product (GGP) in the province. The province's inflation rate of 6,0% in 1995 is the lowest in the country after Mpumalanga's 4,7% and compares well with the national average of 8,7% for the country as a whole.

* The per capita income for the year 1993 is based on the 1993 GGP and the population estimates as indicated in CSS release P0019 of 1995

The full report is available from the publications subdivision of Central Statistics, 274 Schoeman Street, Steyns Arcade, Pretoria, 0001, at R20,00 per copy.

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