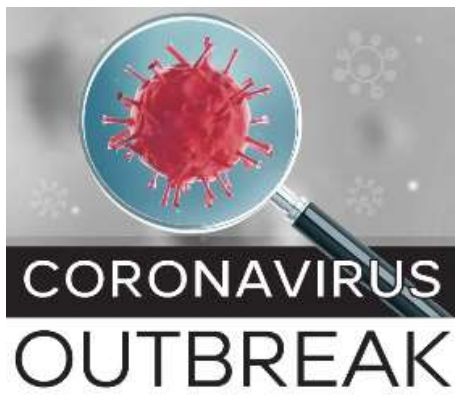




Status Report COVID-19

Exchange South Africa



[Abstract](#)

Report on the effects of COVID-19 in South Africa

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The information in this volume is destined to provide a description of the COVID-19 status and its impact on social and economic life in the 5 Sub-Saharan African countries with cooperation programmes of Exchange vzw. The ambition is to give insights, based on information gathered by Exchange’s business development managers based in these countries. Exchange vzw. can not be held responsible for errors, omissions or lack of accuracy and disclaims any liability in connection with the use of this information. Feedback is welcome at info@exchangevzw.be

1. Introduction

In this report we will describe the current COVID-situation in South Africa including health statistics, current policy and measures, the EXIT strategy, the economic impact of the pandemic and the specific economic support programmes that have been launched.

2. COVID-19 timeline in South Africa

Day 1 in South Africa was 15 March 2020: On the 15th of March there was the announcement of National State of Disaster by President Ramaphosa. The President announced that the country would be in lockdown as from midnight 26 March 2020. Alert level 5 imposed (See Annex). The measures helped the country halt the initial spread of the virus, especially in the first 30 days, with a travel ban having a marked effect. The measures allowed for five levels of alertness based on the spread of the virus and the state of health system readiness.

On the 24th of May 2020: after 58 days of lockdown, President Cyril Ramaphosa addressed the nation and announced a scaling down of the lockdown to Alert Level 3 from 1 June 2020 to gradually open-up economic activity and educational institutions. After one hundred days of Covid-19 cases were increasing at the highest rate since outbreak began. The situation in the Western Cape was of particular concern. After 108 days of Covid-19 lockdown President Cyril Ramaphosa addressed the nation and announced stricter enforcement of Level 3 measures including a ban on alcohol sales to conserve hospital capacity.

The 17th of August 2020: While South Africa is the continent's hardest-hit nation in terms of infections, the mortality rate – at around 1,8% – is one of the lowest among countries with high numbers of cases. On the other hand, the economic impact of the pandemic is expected to be severe coupled with widespread corruption allegations relating to the procurement of Covid-19 supplies.

President Ramaphosa has announced that the country will be moving to alert level 2 with bans on travel between provinces and the sale of alcohol and tobacco products lifted. The easing from level 3 is effective from Monday 17th of August midnight, with trading in liquor and cigarettes set to resume on Tuesday 18th of August.

On 21st September 2020, the country moves to lockdown alert level 1. The public health response to the pandemic will focus on preparing for a possible resurgence in cases by increasing coronavirus testing while further reducing transmission.

As of December 2020, the number of Covid-19 cases are rapidly rising in several provinces, and especially in the Western Cape. **On December 10th,** the Health Minister Dr Zweli Mkhize announced that South Africa has, according to its statistic models, **entered a second wave of COVID-19 infections.** Western Cape, Eastern Cape, KwaZulu/Natal, and Gauteng – are the key drivers of this new wave. Most of the new cases are from Western Cape (30%) of positive cases today, followed by Eastern Cape (24%), KZN (23%) and Gauteng (17%).

On **Monday night, 28 December 2020,** President Cyril Ramaphosa announced that the nation would be moving **back to level 3 lockdown,** with stricter regulations coming into immediate effect at midnight. This is due to the **sharp rise in infections,** resulting in over one **million infections** reported on 27 December, and fear of a **new variant** (known as **501Y.V2**) that appears to be more contagious. The number of trauma cases had also risen, putting an unmanageable strain on the health care system and workers.

On **11 January 2021,** President Cyril Ramaphosa announced the **extension of South Africa's adjusted level 3 lockdown.** The President said that the pandemic in South Africa is now at its **most 'devastating,'** with the number of new cases, deaths, and hospital admissions now at the highest point since the coronavirus

was first detected in the country in March 2020. **Schools** will now only reopen for the new academic year on **15 February 2021**.

On 1st February 2021, one million Covid-19 vaccines land at OR Tambo Airport. The vaccines will be reserved for health workers. This Covishield vaccine is produced by the Serum Institute in India and was developed by the pharmaceutical company **AstraZeneca** together with the University of Oxford. South Africa was one of the countries where clinical trials were held to assess the drug's efficacy. After **Phase 1**, the vaccination of healthcare workers, we will move to **Phase 2** of the national vaccine strategy, which will include essential workers, people over 60 years, people with co-morbidities as well as those living in places such as nursing homes and hostels. In **Phase 3**, we will extend the vaccination programme to the rest of the adult population. A further **nine million doses** have been secured from **Johnson & Johnson**, which will be manufactured in South Africa by local pharmaceutical company Aspen. An added twenty million doses have been ordered from US pharmaceutical company **Pfizer**, with delivery in the second quarter of 2021.

On February 28th, 2021, President Cyril Ramaphosa announced that South Africa will go to level 1 lockdown with immediate effect.

April 13th, 2021: The expected surge in Covid-19 infections, following the Easter weekend, has not materialized. New cases peaked at around 10 January with more than 230 then and thereafter started coming down to about fourteen per day now. **Government's vaccine rollout programme** holds the key to economic recovery this Year 2021. However, authorities aim to reach herd immunity by year-end seems ambitious.

May 31st, 2021: Numbers of daily new Covid-19 cases are starting to increase again, both in Cape Town and across the province. Vigilance is essential to restrict a third wave of infections. As of today, the government is **imposing new restrictions as the country moves to an adjusted level 2**. The restrictions will force non-essential establishments like restaurants, bars, and fitness centers to close by 10pm local time (20:00 GMT) as the curfew will be extended by an hour to start at 11pm and end at 4am. Gatherings, including political and faith events, will be limited to 250 people outdoors and one hundred indoors. Experts have warned that this wave, arriving with the Southern Hemisphere winter, might be even worse. The Delta strain, a more contagious strain is now the dominant strain in South Africa.

June 15th, 2021: President Ramaphosa confirmed that South Africa was in the **third wave of Covid-19** infections and was experiencing **a spike in new cases**. He said Gauteng was the hardest hit province, accounting for nearly two-thirds of new cases measured over the past week. To try to curb the spread of the virus, the President announced a move **as of 16 June 2021 to alert level 3 with additional restrictions**, including a nationwide curfew between 10pm and 4am. All gatherings, including religious, political, and social, are limited to fifty people indoors, one hundred outdoors, with a 50% capacity indoors in smaller spaces. Alcohol sales for off-site consumption is restricted to between 10am and 6pm from Monday to Thursday, excluding public holidays. Alcohol sales for on-site consumption are permitted per license conditions till 9pm. Alcohol consumption in all public spaces, including beaches and parks, is prohibited.

June 27th, 2021: President Ramaphosa announced that South Africa would now be **under Level 4 lockdown**. With immediate effect for the next 14 days until 11 July. All alcohol sales banned.

July 26th, 2021: South Africa is placed on level 3 alert, which is still currently in place. During August infections rose sharply in the Western Cape and in KwaZulu-Natal. The third wave has lasted longer than the second and models anticipated.

12th September 2021, alert level moved to level 2 and on **11th October 2021** to alert level 1.

25th November 2021: South Africa's well respected scientific and research community identifies the variant subsequently termed Omicron by the WHO – the B.1.1.529 variant. Many countries react with travel bans which will have a marked negative effect on the South African hospitality sector.

See below for the details of the current measures.

3. General overview and statistics

The latest South African Covid-19 statistics: see <https://sacoronavirus.co.za/covid-19-daily-cases/>

See <https://covid-19dashboard.news24.com/#national-cases>

4. Current measures

Level 1 adjusted lockdown since 11 October 2021:

- Curfew from midnight until 04h00
- Venues, Restaurants etc. to close by 23h00 for the 00h00 curfew
- Alcohol sales – normal business hours
- Gatherings limited to 50% capacity of venues up to maximum 750 people indoors and 2000 people outdoors
- Funeral attendance limited to 100 people

President Ramaphosa addressed the nation on **28 November 2021** and indicated that South African should not panic following the identification of the new variant. He indicated that the country would at this stage remain on alert level 1 and emphasised the need for everyone to get vaccinated and to adhere to social distancing measures. The government would also look at the option of mandatory vaccinations.

5. EXIT Strategy

Alongside increased testing, the country is improving contact tracing through the deployment of the **Covid Alert South Africa mobile phone app** and the Covid Connect WhatsApp platform. The Department of Health had also developed WhatsApp and SMS systems for people without smartphones to provide them with test results and alert them to any exposure to the virus. While working to prevent further transmission of the virus, the country was also preparing for the time when a vaccine became available, with **South Africa already participating in three vaccine trials** – demonstrating the capability of its scientific community, President Ramaphosa said.

Vaccines

On February 1st, 2021, President Ramaphosa announced encouraging progress in the fight against Covid-19. The first **delivery of vaccines** coincided with a decrease in new infections as the **second wave has passed its peak**. The President warned that people should continue to be vigilant and avoid indoor gatherings. Below is the full text of his address.

“As I said during my previous address, we are sourcing our vaccines from a number of suppliers. In addition to the one million Covishield doses that we received today; we expect another 500,000 doses from the Serum Institute of India to arrive later in February.



- We have secured twelve million doses in total from the global COVAX facility, which has indicated that it will release two million doses by March.
- We have secured nine million vaccine doses from Johnson & Johnson, commencing with delivery in the second quarter. Johnson & Johnson has contracted Aspen, one of our pharmaceutical companies, to manufacture these vaccines in South Africa.
- In addition, Pfizer has committed twenty million vaccine doses commencing with deliveries in the second quarter.

We are in advanced negotiations with manufacturers to secure additional supplies. South Africa will also receive an allocation of vaccine doses through the African Union, which has been negotiating with manufacturers to secure vaccines for the entire continent on a pooled basis. Through the African Vaccine Acquisition Task Team of the African Union, we have to date secured one billion vaccines for the entire continent.

Seven hundred million of these will come from the global COVAX facility and three hundred million have been facilitated by the African Vaccine Acquisition Task Team. We will be getting other vaccines that will be donated by various private sector companies to add to the vaccines that our continent needs. MTN, which is one of our companies that operates across several countries on the African continent, has donated \$25 million to procure seven million vaccines, which will be made available to countries on the African continent within a matter of weeks.

Our scientists estimate that we will reach herd immunity once around 67 per cent of our people are immune. This amounts to around forty million people in South Africa.”

23/2/2021: South Africa has now started to administer the **Johnson and Johnson vaccine** to healthcare workers after having suspended the AstraZeneca rollout when that vaccine proved less effectual against the South African variant of the virus. The current vaccination program has been the subject of criticism with doctors complaining that they had to wait in line for hours after having been summoned to a state hospital in Pretoria.

28/2/2021: South Africa on 27/2/2021 received the second consignment of 80 000 **Johnson & Johnson vaccines**, and to date around 67 000 frontline healthcare workers have already vaccinated. However, at least thirty million people will need to be vaccinated (67% of adult population) before South Africa can hope to achieve herd immunity. The government has secured eleven million doses of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine and twenty million doses of the **Pfizer vaccine** and is in the process of securing twelve million vaccine doses from **Covax**, President Ramaphosa said. Both the Pfizer and the Johnson & Johnson vaccines have been found to be effective against the dominant variant of Covid-19 in SA.

23/4/2021: Phase two of the vaccination programme to start 17 May. Goal: to complete vaccinations of 60+ by end June. In the Western Cape for example, Phase 2a will see that the 723 160 people aged sixty and above in the Western Cape, are vaccinated by 30 June this year. Phase 2b will aim to vaccinate Western Cape’s 40 - 59-year-old residents by 30 October 2021. The final phase, phase 3, will aim to vaccinate the Western Cape’s 18 - 39-year-old residents before 28 February 2022.

31/08/2021: After the initial slow vaccine roll-out South Africa’s vaccination programme has finally gained momentum. Vaccinations which proceeded via an Electronic Vaccination Data System registration rolled out according to age groups and specific sectors such as health workers and police. As of **20 August 2021**, however, the roll out was opened to all adults over the age of eighteen. A security of vaccine supply had also now been obtained. Over 250 000 vaccines are currently being administered per weekday. Unfortunately, weekends see low rates due to issues related to overtime payments and health care workers’ fatigue. As of **31 August 2021**, over twelve and a half million adults had been vaccinated with at least one dose – some 21% of the entire population. Six million were fully vaccinated. Target is 67% of the adult population which would be twenty-nine million vaccines.

27/11/2021 Update: 25 274 889 vaccinations have been administered. 42% of the population have received at least one dose. Of concern is that vaccine hesitancy has set in and only 100 000 people per weekday are turning up at vaccination sites. Government has placed the ordering of further vaccinations on hold since sufficient stockpile has been acquired. A new strategy to encourage uptake, especially amongst younger age groups is required. Although the identification of a new variant is of considerable cause for concern globally, as of 27 November South Africa had approximately 20 000 active cases, 3 220 new cases the previous day and a 9,2% positivity testing rate. President Ramaphosa has indicated that the government was also considering the option of mandatory vaccinations

Latest figures on Vaccinations: See <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1221298/covid-19-vaccination-rate-in-african-countries/>

South Africa and India are campaigning for an end to patent rights on coronavirus vaccines to help every country to manufacture its own supplies.

6. Impact

6.1 Domestic and international travel

For details, see <https://www.gov.za/covid-19/travel-international>

As of October 1st, 2020, travel is again allowed in and out of South Africa for business, leisure, and other travel. The South African Government has released a **revised list of high-risk countries for international travel**. The new list indicates countries from where travelers are not allowed to enter South African borders. “People from high-risk countries who may visit SA fall in the following categories: business travelers, holders of critical skills visas, investors, and people on international missions in sports, arts, culture, and science. **As of November 11th, 2020**, government has relaxed South Africa’s rules around international travel, **allowing visitors from any country** provided they follow health and safety guidelines. All borders will be open subject to Covid-19 negative certificate for all passengers. No more high-risk list of countries. Despite existing international restrictions, local tourism has praised the decision to ease restrictions, especially the removal of the ‘high-risk list’ which saw travelers from specific countries prohibited from entering South Africa for leisure travel. Following the identification of the Omicron variant all South Africa’s international tourist arrival countries announce travel bans to and from South Africa. This will have a negative effect on the hospitality-industry, which was just starting to recover, especially on Cape Town, a popular international travel destination.

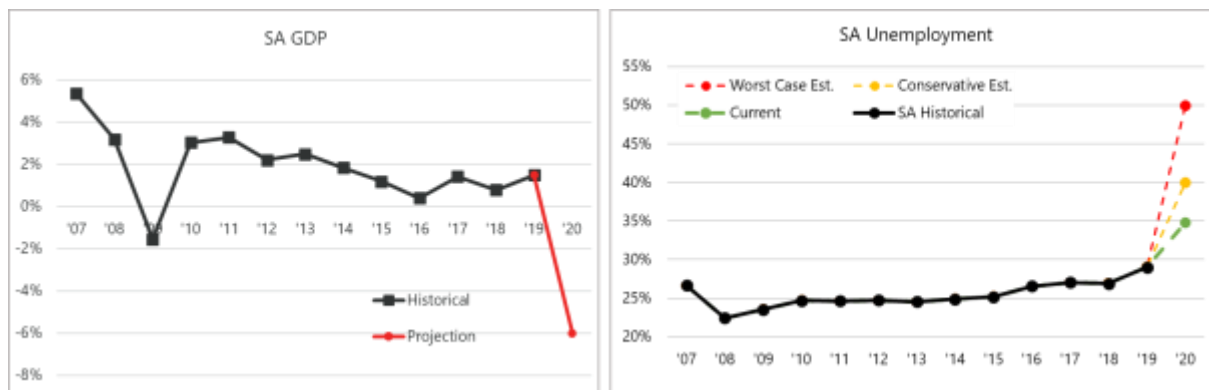


6.2 Economic Impact

The economic impact of the pandemic has been severe and coupled with corruption allegations relating to the procurement of Covid-19 supplies. South Africa entered 2020 with weak consumer demand, high and increasing government borrowing, one of the highest unemployment rates in the world, unstable network infrastructure and an enduring legacy of inequality and economic exclusion. GDP growth in 2019 was just 0,3%, a further contraction from the 0,8% registered in 2018, and the official unemployment rate was 29,1% in the third quarter of 2019. The pre-crisis growth outlook for 2020 was 0,9%.

31/08/2021 update: According to Quarter 2 unemployment figures, Statistics SA, indicated that SA had a record high of an over 34% unemployment rate – some 7,8 million South Africans. Youth unemployment was even higher. PwC estimates growth for 2021 at 2,5%, while the Reserve Bank has estimated 4,2%.

27/11/2021 update: While South Africa has benefited from a commodities boom, which now appears to be levelling off, the identification by the South African research community of the Omicron variant and the subsequent knee jerk reaction travel ban imposed by numerous countries, will have a devastating effect on the hospitality industry, which was just starting to recover.

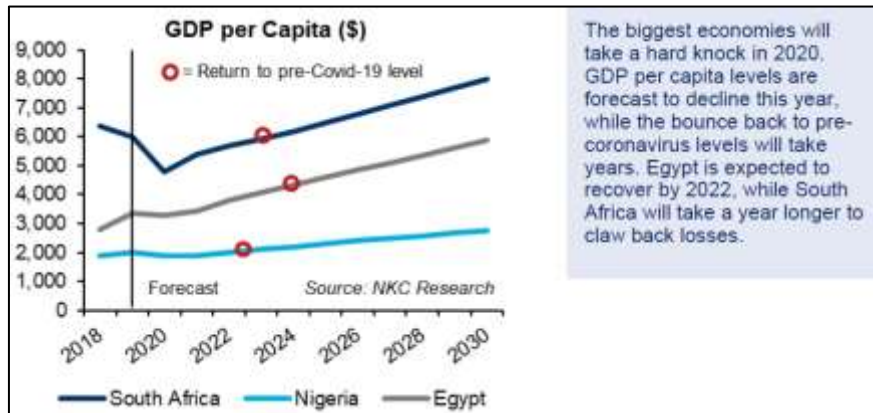


Impact of COVID-19 on South African GDP and Unemployment (National Treasury, 2020; South African Reserve Bank, 2020)

The South African economy has been hit hard by Covid, as well as the looting and violence experienced in July 2021, following the jailing of former President Zuma. The hospitality industry, hotels, and restaurants specifically, are negatively affected by the travel and alcohol sales ban. South Africa is not expected to return to a pre-coronavirus GDP per capita level before 2023. PwC has estimated 2021 GDP growth at 2,5%.

Stats SA in **August 2021** announced a re-basing of South Africa’s GDP. GDP for 2020 is 11% higher than previously estimated with the finance, real-estate, and the business services sector larger than previously estimated also thus reflecting a move to a services-based economy. 2020 GDP by purchasing power parity is now estimated at \$796 billion. GDP estimate for 2020 is R5,52 trillion (\$369 billion).

November 2021 update: Finance Minister Godongwana tabled his Medium-Term Budget Policy and held the line on sound public finance rather than expenditure induced further debt. GDP growth for 2021 has been revised to 5,1% and to 1,8% for 2022. Gross debt for 2021 stands at 69,9% of GDP. Tax collection increased by R120,3 billion on the back of increased commodity sales.



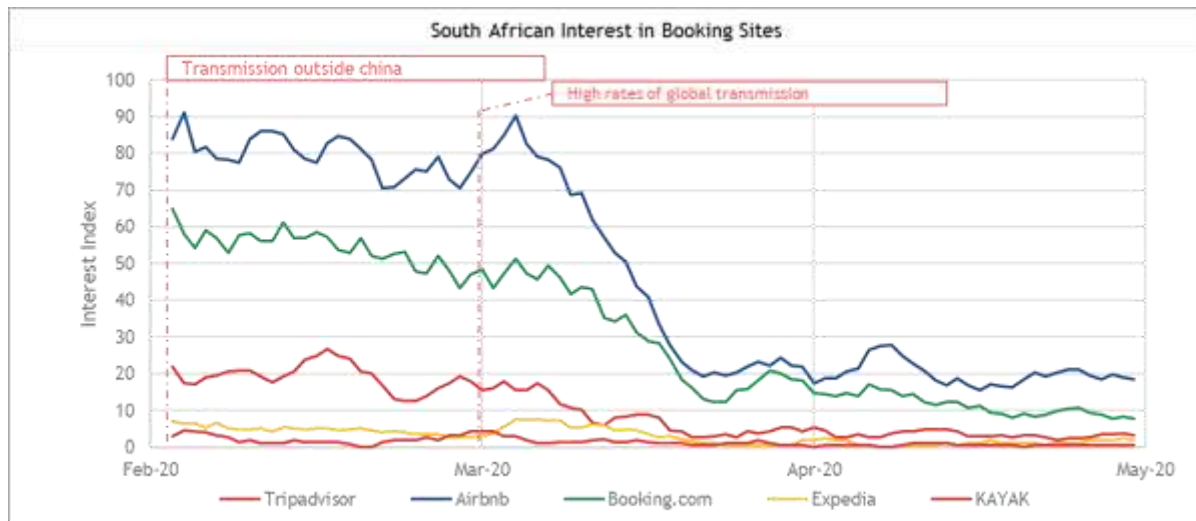
6.3 Consequences for private entrepreneurs

The following is an extract from a News24 article about President Ramaphosa's newsletter: President Cyril Ramaphosa has praised what he calls a "new breed of young entrepreneurs" for producing "home-grown solutions to the contemporary challenges we face" as the country continues to battle the economic shock of the Covid-19 pandemic. South Africa was already in recession when the nationwide lockdown was instituted in late March, and South Africa's already-high official unemployment rate is expected to surge because of the pandemic's impact on businesses, while tax revenue is expected to plunge by around R300 billion. According to a new study, three million people may have lost their jobs between February and April.

6.3.1 Tourism (including Hotel) sector

Total income for South Africa's tourist accommodation industry decreased by 81.2% in August 2020, compared with August 2019, Statistics SA announced on Monday. This is in nominal terms, therefore, at current prices. There was a 79.4% decrease in the number of stay unit nights sold and a 14.3% decrease in the average income per stay unit night sold.

Behaviour on booking sites in South Africa has reflected global trends; Airbnb experienced a 77% decline in traffic from a peak in March, with Booking.com seeing an 80% decline over the same period. The stage of the country's pandemic, with infection rates still increasing and tourist activity restricted, means that booking interest is yet to show noticeable signs of recovery.



Local interest in booking sites (Google Trends, 2020)

Update: The Covid-19 pandemic has had such a severe impact on tourism that authorities say visitor numbers dwindled to like 30 years ago when South Africa barely registered on the international travel map. Meanwhile, SA Tourism said **50 000 tourism businesses had either temporarily or permanently closed**. The latest report released by Statistics SA into traveler movements showed that for December, when compared to the previous year’s figures, arrivals for foreign travelers dropped by a staggering 82.1% from more than 1.5 million in 2019 to about 280 000. Stats SA’s report showed that the tourist accommodation industry decreased by 57.7% in December compared to the previous year. About 935 085 local and foreign travelers passed through the country’s entry points. January figures did not see significant changes other than showing 21 102 passengers leaving the country and 11 290 arriving.

Although domestic tourism has shown a marked increase with South Africans now travelling domestically, foreign arrivals have recovered slowly with figures for May 2021 indicating 258 521 arrivals.

6.3.2 Manufacturing Sector

The manufacturing sector has a global supply chain and China is one of the main suppliers of components for large industries. Business is also pulling back on orders for goods due to the impact of the spreading coronavirus. Global supply chain disruptions, the weak rand, and disruptions on the production-side due to the government-imposed lockdown will negatively affect this sector. The looting which occurred in July 2021, following the jailing of former President Zuma, have also negatively affected confidence in this sector.

6.3.3 Agro-Industry Sector

Financially distressed small-scale farmers who have an annual turnover of between R20 000 and R1 million could apply for R1.2 billion in government funding. The following media release of the Western Cape Minister of Agriculture dated 26 January 2021 provides a good description of the impact on the Agro-industry in the Cape Province.

“Yesterday, I wrote to the National Minister of Agriculture, Rural Development and Land Reform, Thoko Didiza, to request her assistance in lifting the third ban on wine and other liquor sales. This follows the request by the Premier of the Western Cape, Alan Winde, to the Minister of Health, Dr Zweli Mkhize, last week. The Western Cape Government accepted the restrictions that were announced by the President as the last resort to protect our healthcare system during an unprecedented surge and over a period when alcohol-related trauma was expected to spike. We, however, argued that it should be for fourteen days only and reviewed every seven days thereafter, based on scientific evidence.

Now a month after the restrictions came into place, we believe that the evidence clearly points to the need to relax these restrictions to save jobs.

We are now experiencing a decline in active cases and newly reported daily Covid-19 cases. All other indicators are also pointing to the Western Cape having passed its peak, and that the surge – which caused such pressure on the health system – being over. Furthermore, our department of health in the Western Cape has put in place several measures to increase capacity, and we have adequate beds, oxygen, and staff to provide care to every person who needs it. That is why wine sales should now be allowed in line with the “differentiated approach” envisaged during the President’s speech of 14 December 2020.

Wine grapes represent 50,3% of the 181 233 ha under fruit production in the Western Cape Province. The replacement value of these wine grapes amounts to R33,94 billion. Wine is the third biggest export product of the Western Cape economy and contributes 6,5% to the value of exports from the province. The Department estimates that 45 610 people work in the industry’s primary production side and supports the livelihoods of 228 053 people.

During the initial stages of the Covid-19 lockdown, South Africa was the only major wine exporting country banning wine exports. The result was that we handed market share on a platter to some of our competitors. Even after the domestic trade of wine was resumed with the introduction of Level 3 regulations, the sales did not return to normal levels. The result is that a quarter of annual sales were lost, which adds to cash flow problems for producers. We cannot be putting even more pressure on this battling sector. We must be doing everything possible to help them grow and employ more people. Our research also shows that the first two weeks of the ban cost the Western Cape R1 billion. This has impacted 1893 direct jobs in the retail sector and 905 induced and indirect jobs across the value chain resulting in 2798 jobs being compromised. If the ban continues for the full month, which it now seems likely to do, it will end up costing the economy R2 billion, impacting 5596 jobs in our province.”

End of media release of 26/1/2021

6.3.4 Circular Economy, Sustainable and Renewable Economy

Waste management programmes will remain relevant in the post-pandemic era. Exchange waste management projects in Witzenberg, Berg River and Cederberg continue to show encouraging progress.

6.3.5 Services Sector

During this challenging time, the telecommunications sector has performed reliably and consistently under tremendous strain to support remote working, video streaming, and business continuity, although their network performance may have slowed in cases. The COVID-19 outbreak is thus highlighting the importance of connectedness. Telecom services appear to be the common thread keeping people united as individuals and helping businesses weather the crisis. GDP re-basing by Stats SA indicates an increased move away from mining to a services-based economy.

6.3.6 Example report of economic impact in Witzenberg Municipality

Source: Witzenberg Municipality – LED staff (July 2020)

- The Tourism sector was one of the hardest hit sectors in Witzenberg. Many establishments struggled, with the frustration from some tourism establishments evident regarding the requirements for funding support from National Government.
- In Ceres, a restaurant & bakery closed their doors (the bakery moved their premises)
- A wine boutique closed their doors
- We were aware of an after-care crèche that closed their doors
- There were instances of accommodation establishments that had to retrench workers
- The wine sector experienced a big hit due to the ban on alcohol
- The wedding venue subsector of tourism also experienced a big hit, as weddings were cancelled
- The lack of continuation of tourism festivals results in a big financial knock
- There were instances of salary cuts of personnel of some businesses
- One big opportunity is the outdoor experience which might be marketed more aggressively
- The agriculture sector (largest sector) in Witzenberg was not very hard hit (due to it being able to continue during Lockdown) and assisted in keeping cashflow coming into the local shops. Challenges were however experienced with the exports at the ports (there are companies that are opting to re-route transport via other ports, which will increase transport costs)
- The recycling sector was also hard hit with the lockdown regulation making it difficult for the informal traders to recycle. The increased risk of infection is a big barrier for these traders, as there is no income security if they get ill. There is a lack of a common, local recycle facility. These traders were difficult to provide support to during the lockdown, due to telephonic challenges. It became apparent how important email will be to these traders (and the access of it).

7. Government support to local economy

Small, Micro and Medium- Sized Enterprises ("SMMEs") Support Intervention

The Department of Small Business Development has introduced a "SME Support Intervention" which involves a Debt Relief Fund and a Business Growth/Resilience Facility to mitigate the impact of the expected economic slowdown on SMMEs in South Africa. The Revenue Service also allowed tax relief measures.

The Department has also made over R500.000.000 available to the Debt Relief Fund, and the SMME Finance Scheme will comprise of soft-loan funding for a period of 6 months from 1 April 2020. The Business Growth/Resilience Facility will provide working capital, stock, bridging finance, order finance and equipment finance to small businesses which supply in-demand medical supplies.

Furthermore, the Department of Tourism has made an additional R200,000,000 available to assist SMMEs in the hospitality and tourism sector. To qualify for the SME Support Intervention relief, there is a certain criterion which includes, inter alia, that:

- the business must have been registered with CIPC by at least 28 February 2020.
- the business must be 100% owned by South African Citizens.
- employees must be 70% South Africans.



- priority will be given to businesses owned by Women, Youth and People with Disabilities; and
- the business must be registered and compliant with SARS and the UIF.

To stimulate economic growth the Reserve Bank reduced the repo rate during 2021 and has recently kept it unchanged at 3,5%. CPI forecast for 2021 is at 4,3%.

8. Conclusions and Recommendations

The South African Government has implemented several relief measures which, at this stage, focus on providing support to SMMEs as well as in providing tax relief, unemployment support, support for entrepreneurs who manufacture and supply a range of medical products and various loan funding to help support vulnerable South African businesses, because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Partner Banks provided further relief together with independent private parties and organizations to help assist the country overcome the detrimental effects of COVID-19. PwC in a recent report indicated that government support package had added an estimated 0,7% to GDP.

9. Useful links for additional information and further reading

More COVID-19 information is available at several internet websites:

The official portal <https://sacoronavirus.co.za/> contains a wealth of information on Covid-19, including links to other sources and daily updates including real-time statistics.

The Western Cape Government has its own webpage with daily updates and a breakdown of statistics for all municipalities in the province: www.coronavirus.westerncape.gov.za

Interesting report on COVID-19 and E-Governance in South Africa: (use of social media) 18/2/2021

<https://saiia.org.za/research/covid-19-and-e-governance-lessons-from-south-africa/>

<https://www.covid19sa.org/>

<https://www.nicd.ac.za/>

<https://www.timeslive.co.za/>

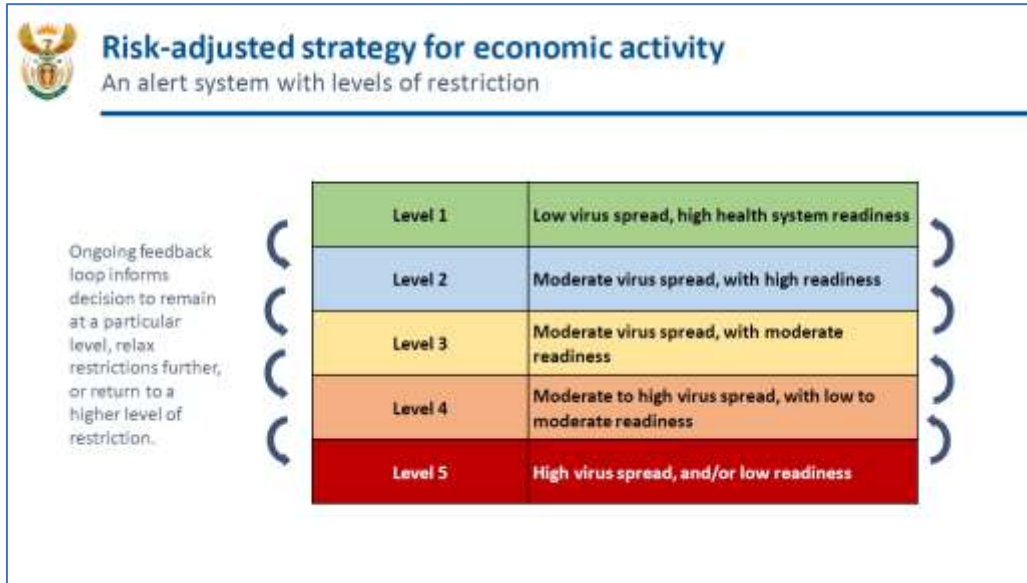
<https://www.news24.com/news24/southafrica/coronavirus>

<https://ourworldindata.org/coronavirus>

<https://www.africaneconomics.com/>

APPENDIX:

Alert system in South Africa:



Risk-adjusted strategy for economic activity
Alert system: Level 5

	Sectors permitted	Transport restrictions	Movement restrictions
Level 5: High virus spread, and/or low health system readiness	Only essential services	Bus services, taxi services, e-hailing and private motor vehicles may operate at restricted times, with limitations on vehicle capacity and stringent hygiene requirements	No inter-provincial movement of people, except for transportation of goods and exceptional circumstances (e.g. funerals)



Risk-adjusted strategy for economic activity

Alert system: Level 4

	Sectors permitted	Transport restrictions	Movement restrictions
Level 4: Moderate to high virus spread, with moderate readiness	<p><i>All essential services, plus:</i></p> <p>Food retail stores already permitted to be open permitted may sell full line of products within existing stock</p> <p>All agriculture (horticulture, export agriculture including wool and wine, floriculture and horticulture, and related processing)</p> <p>Forestry, pulp and paper</p> <p>Mining (<i>open cast mines at 100% capacity, all other mines at 50%</i>)</p> <p>All financial and professional services</p> <p>Global business services for export markets</p> <p>Postal and telecommunications services</p> <p>Fibre optic and IT services</p> <p>Formal waste recycling (glass, plastic, paper and metal)</p>	<p>Bus services, taxi services, e-hailing and private motor vehicles may operate at all times of the day, with limitations on vehicle capacity and stringent hygiene requirements</p>	<p>No inter-provincial movement of people, except for transportation of goods and exceptional circumstances (e.g. funerals)</p>



Risk-adjusted strategy for economic activity

Alert system: Level 3

	Sectors permitted	Transport restrictions	Movement restrictions
Level 3: Moderate virus spread, with moderate readiness	<p>Licensing and permitting services, deeds offices and other government services designated by the Minister of Public Service and Administration</p> <p>Take-away restaurants and online food delivery</p> <p>Liquor retail within restricted hours</p> <p>Clothing retail</p> <p>Hardware stores</p> <p>Stationery, personal electronics and office equipment production and retail</p> <p>Books and educational products</p> <p>E-commerce and delivery services</p> <p>Clothing and textiles manufacturing (<i>at 50% capacity</i>)</p> <p>Automotive manufacturing</p> <p>Chemicals</p> <p>Bottling</p> <p>Cement and steel</p> <p>Machinery and equipment</p> <p>Global Business Services</p> <p>SANRAL construction and maintenance</p> <p>Transnet at 100%</p>	<p>Bus services, taxi services, e-hailing and private motor vehicles may operate at all times of the day, with limitations on vehicle capacity and stringent hygiene requirements</p> <p>Limited passenger rail restored, with stringent hygiene conditions in place</p> <p>Limited domestic air travel, with a restriction on the number of flights per day and authorisation based on the reason for travel</p>	<p>No inter-provincial movement of people, except for transportation of goods and exceptional circumstances (e.g. funerals)</p>



Risk-adjusted strategy for economic activity

Alert system: Level 2

	Sectors permitted	Transport restrictions	Movement restrictions
Level 2: Moderate virus spread, with high readiness	Construction All other retail All other manufacturing Mining (<i>all mines at 100% capacity</i>) All government services Installation, repairs and maintenance Domestic work and cleaning services Informal waste-pickers	Domestic air travel restored Car rental services restored	Movement between provinces at Level 1 and 2 restrictions



Risk-adjusted strategy for economic activity

Alert system: Level 1

	Sectors permitted	Transport restrictions	Movement restrictions
Level 1: Low virus spread, high health system readiness	All sectors	All modes of transport, with stringent hygiene conditions in place	Interprovincial movement allowed, with restrictions on international travel