Population growth in South Africa: challenges and opportunities for metropolitan municipalities.

Olebogeng David Daw, Senior Lecturer, Department of Economics, North West University, Mahikeng, South Africa, E-mail: David.Daw@nwu.ac.za / odaw03@yahoo.com

Abstract

Migration policy is a highly contentious issue in South Africa. The post-apartheid political, social and economic changes after the 1994 democratic elections brought about changes in employment and mobility patterns. There has been an increased influx of migrants from the rural areas of South Africa to the urban areas. The metropolitan areas of South Africa have been the ones most affected by this influx. Many people believe that migration is an issue that needs to be addressed by policy, especially when dealing with infrastructure development in the metropolitan cities in South Africa. In this paper we will look at population growth in South Africa, inter-provincial migration and provincial out-migration, from 1992 to 2001. We will conclude this paper by looking at the challenges and opportunities that face the metropolitan municipalities when dealing with the influx of migrants.

Key Words: Migration, Population, Urbanization.

Introduction

Migration is best defined in general terms as the crossing of a spatial boundary by one or more persons involved in a change of residence. Migration is here defined as the movement of persons who changed their usual place of residence from one country to another, i.e. international migration or from one magisterial district to another. International or cross-border migration consists of immigration, which involves a move into a country, and emigration, which indicates migratory moves out of a country to another. Internal migration can entail either in-migration, which refers to moves into a specific part of the country from another part of the same country, or out-migration, which indicates moves from a particular place to another.

South African infrastructure development is reflective of racial segregation of the past, involving the former white areas and the former black areas. The distinction has been
that the pace of infrastructure development was much slower in the former so-called black areas, and more advanced in the former white areas.

**Establishment of metros**

Since South Africa’s first democratic elections in 1994, the government has deliberately set out to dismantle apartheid-era social relations and create a democratic society, based on the principles of equity, non-racialism and non-sexism (PCAS, 2003). Mechanisms put in place through new policies and programs were meant to dramatically improve the quality of life for all South Africans. The defining point for this process was the Reconstruction and Development Program (RDP), which has been elaborated in all post-1994 policies. The key objectives of the RDP were to meet basic needs, build the economy, democratize the government and society and develop human resources and nation-building. Inherent in government priorities since then has been the need to achieve gender equality in South Africa.

After the 1994 elections, municipal boundaries were determined according to the guidelines of the Constitution of the Republic (1996): ‘the local sphere … be established for the whole territory of the Republic’. The Constitution refers to three categories of municipalities. These are the metropolitan (Category A), local (Category B) and district municipality (Category C). The distinction between the two other categories and the metropolitan municipality, according to section 155 of the Constitution, is that metropolitan municipalities have exclusive municipal executive and legislative authority in their area. Section 2 of the Municipal Structures Act (1998) provides guidance on what should be considered when categorizing the municipalities. These include assessment of population density, movement of people, goods and services, extensive development and multiple business districts, economic activity, possibility of integrated development planning and strong interdependent social and economic linkages. At the establishment of the local sphere of government, only six municipalities were declared as metropolitan municipalities.

The intention of establishing metros was the principle of ‘one city, one tax base’. This was based on the fact that within a certain geographical area there is gross inequality between the rich and the poor and across racial lines. Another key defining factor to the establishment of metropolitan municipalities was the promotion of efficiency in the delivery of services and the improvement of governance. (Skenjana April 2011).
**Migration rates**

The most frequently used migration indicator is the so-called *migration rate*, which refers to the level of in-migration, out-migration or net migration (in-migration minus out-migration) compared to the size of the population concerned. The generic formula for the calculation of a migration rate is as follows:

$$m_{ij} = \frac{M_{ij}}{P} \times k$$

- Where $m_{ij}$ = rate of migration from $i$ to $j$ during a specified time interval;
- $M_{ij}$ = number of migrants moving from $i$ to $j$ during the given time interval;
- $P$ = the population concerned (i.e. either in $i$ or $j$) at a particular point in the given time interval, and
- $k$ = a constant (usually 100, so as to express the quotient as a percentage).

An interesting theoretical debate is taking place on the issue of what $P$ should be. The general agreement seems to be, that $P$ should be “the population at risk of migration” (which could be interpreted as either “the population at risk of migrating” or “the population at risk of receiving migrants”).

Another topic of debate, also relating to $P$, is what the most appropriate “point in the given time interval” should be. The consensus seems to be that it should, for various reasons, preferably be the mid-point of the time interval. If the population at the mid-point cannot be directly obtained or reliably estimated, the population at either end-point of the interval can be used, provided that a clear motivation for selecting that particular end-point is given.

The 1996 and 2001 South African census data will be used here to “populate” the rates. For the calculation of the 1992–1996 migration rates, only the end-point (1996) population can be used as $P$, because the 1991 census excluded the populations of the formerly independent homeland areas. Since the full 2001 migration data have so far been released only at the provincial level, only inter-provincial migration rates can be calculated. Although it would have been possible to use an estimated mid-point population for the period 1996–2001, it is suggested that the end-point (2001) population is used for $P$ here as well, so as to ensure the necessary comparability between the periods 1992–1996 and 1996–2001.
To populate the migration indicators from the 1996 census data, the period 1 January 1992 to 10 October 1996 (census day in 1996) will be used. Similarly, the period 11 October 1996 to 10 October 2001 will be used for the 1996–2001 intervals. These periods represent five-year intervals, and the times between the beginning and end of the intervals are short enough to warrant the use of the end-point population instead of the (ideal) mid-point population sizes.

**Out-migration rate**

The formula for calculating the *out-migration rate* can be given as follows:

\[ m_i = \frac{M_i}{P_i} \]

- where \( m_i \) = rate of migration from \( i \) to all other destinations during a particular time interval;
- \( M_i \) = number of migrants moving from \( i \) to all other destinations during the given time period;
- \( P_i \) = the population concerned (in \( i \)) at the end of the given time period (10 October 1996/2001), and \( k \) = constant (100).


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Northern Cape</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Cape</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North West</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Cape</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free State</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Cape</td>
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<tr>
<td>Northern Cape</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Graph 2 shows that the Northern Cape experienced the highest out-migration rates in both periods (4.4% during 1992–1996 and 6.7% during 1996–2001). The Eastern Cape, which had the third highest out-migration rate (3.9%) during the period 1992–1996, lost the second highest proportion of migrants during the period 1996 to 2001 (5.4%). The other provinces with comparably high out-migration rates were North West (4.0% during 1992–1996).
- 1996 and 4.6% during 1996 - 2001), Limpopo (3.6% and 4.7% respectively) and Mpumalanga (3.1% and 4.6% respectively).

**In-migration rate**

For the in-migration rate, the following formula applies.

\[ m_j = \frac{M_j}{P_j} \]

- \( m_j \) = rate of migration from all other origins to the destination \( j \) during a particular time interval;
- \( M_j \) = number of migrants moving from all other origins to the destination \( j \) during the given time period;
- \( P_j \) = the population concerned (in \( j \)) at the end-point of the given time period (in this case, 10 October 1996/2001), and \( k = \) constant (100).


The relatively large impacts of in-migration on the total population of Gauteng in the two periods 1992–1996 and 1996–2001 are clear from Graph 3. It should, however, be borne in mind that the absolute impacts were not all that high (1.2% and 1.5%, respectively, for the two periods). Nevertheless, compared to the other provinces, the population impact of in-migration into Gauteng was by far the greatest.
This conclusion should, however, be treated with caution. Only when one considers the overall migration rate can the true impact on the province’s population be properly evaluated.

**Net migration rate**

The formula for the *net migration rate* is as follows:

\[ nn_i = \frac{M_i - M_{-i}}{P_i} \]

- Where \( nn_i \) = net migration rate in respect of area \( i \) during a particular time interval;
- \( M_i \) = number of migrants moving from all origins to \( i \) during the given time period;
- \( M_{-i} \) = number of migrants moving from \( i \) to all destinations during the given time period;
- \( P_i \) = the population concerned (in \( i \)) at the end point of the given time period (in this case, 10 October 1996/2001), and
- \( k \) = constant (100).

Arguably, the most significant of the migration rates, the net migration rates for the different provinces, illustrate the different net impacts on their populations. Graph 4 illustrates these provincial impacts for the periods 1992–1996 and 1996–2001.


*Source: Calculated from Migration Community Profile data provided by Statistics South Africa (Census 1996/2001)*
Graph 4 shows the net effect of migration from other provinces into Gauteng. In 1996, Gauteng accommodated a total population of more than seven million. By 2001, this number had increased to nearly nine million. Over five years, Gauteng’s total population rose by just under 1.5 million people, a massive growth that strains government delivery capacity and puts stress on the province’s economy. Gains from in-migration (403,000 persons) accounted for more than a quarter of this total increase.

The net effect of in-migration into the Western Cape, which during the period 1992–1996 experienced a net migration rate (3.6%), that was slightly more than Gauteng’s (3.6%), was somewhat less (4.0%) than that of Gauteng (4.6%) during the later period (1996–2001). These differences are, however, virtually negligible, and suffice it to note that Gauteng and the Western Cape both experienced notable net immigration during both periods.

**Interprovincial migration**

At the time of writing, only interprovincial migration data have been released for the full 2001 census. When the spatially more detailed migration data become available, analysts will be able to study migration patterns at lower levels of spatial detail (e.g. “magisterial district” for both censuses or “main place” for analyses of the 2001 census data).


Source: Calculated from Migration Community Profile data provided by Statistics South Africa (Census 1996 and 2001)


Source: Calculated from Migration Community Profile data provided by Statistics South Africa (Census 1996 and 2001)
Graph 7 shows the absolute numbers of interprovincial migrants during the periods 1992–1996 and 1996–2001. Since the two migration intervals are not exactly the same, with the first period (1 January 1992 to 10 October 1996) being almost three months shorter than the second period (11 October 1996 to 10 October 2001), the migrant numbers for the two periods are not entirely comparable. A large increase was, however, evident in the numbers of interprovincial migrants over the two periods, not all of which can be explained in terms of the shorter first period. Migration therefore seems to be on the increase.

Graph 7 indicates that, while Gauteng attracted most of the interprovincial migrants during the period 1992–1996, the Western Cape attracted the largest proportions of interprovincial migrants from the Eastern Cape (45%) and the Northern Cape (41%). Although slightly less pronounced in the time interval 1996–2001, the same proportional patterns of out-migration to the Western Cape continued from the Eastern Cape (41%) and the Northern Cape (38%).

The provincial differences in numbers for the two periods are illustrated in Graphs 5 and 6. Graph 5 illustrates the out-migration volumes per province, Graph 6 depicts the volumes of in-migration per province and Graph 7 shows the provincial net migration volumes. Graph 7 indicates that only the Western Cape and Gauteng experienced a consistent positive net migration. Mpumalanga, which experienced a slight net migration gain during the period 1992–1996, showed a net loss in migration during the period 1996–2001.

**Misconceptions about Migration**

People generally migrate in an attempt to secure employment and other opportunities in another place, where they think their chances to earn a decent income will be better, and to provide a better future for their families. The scarcity of employment opportunities in most areas results in immigrants, i.e. migrants from other countries. They are thus often viewed as a threat to their area of destination. The fact that these immigrants, whether documented or undocumented, generally contribute significantly to the development of the receiving area is often not effectively recognized and/or communicated. In-migration is sometimes also seen to be a problem for secondary reasons. Casual observers often view urbanization, i.e. the increase of the population in urban areas, as a case of unemployment. This happens despite evidence that it is often merely a case of rural unemployment being transferred to the cities and towns.
throughout out-migration from rural areas. Similarly, people often see squatting and informal settlements as being caused by rapid in-migration into urban areas. However, in reality, the largest component of urban population growth in developing countries is usually a natural increase, the excess of births over deaths of the urban population (E, Oberai, AS Standing G 1984).

**Provision of basic services**

The impact that an influx of migrant is having on metro municipalities’ delivery of basic services to households is among the key indicators with which a metropolitan municipality or country’s level of development can be measured.

The following are regarded as the most important services because of their impact on health status and general living standards of households:

1. Clean piped water
2. Electricity for cooking, heating and lighting
3. Flush toilet facilities
4. At least weekly refuse removal by local authorities
5. Communication facilities (telephone).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population group</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage of total population</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>African</td>
<td>38 565 100</td>
<td>79.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>4 499 200</td>
<td>9.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colored</td>
<td>4 379 000</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian/Asian</td>
<td>1 243 500</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>48 687 000</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Population increased

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>POPULATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>40 583 570</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>44 819 780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>48 687 000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: calculated from migration community profile data provided by Statistics South Africa (census)

**Mid-year population estimates, South Africa: 2008 summary**

- Fifty-two per cent (approximately 25.2 million) of the population is female.

- Gauteng has the largest share of the South African population. Approximately 10.5 million people (21.5 percent of the population) live in this province. KwaZulu-Natal is the province with the second largest population, with approximately 10.1 million people (20.8%) living in this province. With a population of approximately 1.1 million people (2.3%), the Northern Cape remains the province with the smallest share of the South African population.

- Nearly one-third (32%) of the population is younger than 15 years and approximately 7% (3.5 million) is 60 years or older. Of those younger than 15, approximately 22% (3.4 million) live in KwaZulu-Natal and 19% (2.94 million) live in Gauteng.

- Life expectancy at birth is estimated at approximately 50.3 years for males and 53.9 years for females.

**What are the key challenges facing South Africa?**
The estimated overall HIV-prevalence rate is approximately 11.0%. The HIV-positive population is estimated at approximately 5.35 million.

Energy resources in South Africa are limited.

Lowest levels of services, infrastructure and employment are in former homelands.

Migration of men from the periphery to the industries and mines has skewed the demographic profile of the country.

Young people leave the rural districts of the country’s periphery.

Rural areas are left with female-headed household who are often prone to poverty and vulnerability.

Declining employment opportunities because of more capital-intensive production.

Highly skewed distribution of income and wealth in the country.

High levels of unemployment.

High poverty levels.

What are the key opportunities facing South Africa?

South Africa is now entering the ninth year of the longest economic upswing since national accounts were recorded.

National income has risen by 22% per person since 1999, with increases across all income groups.

Employment is rising faster than at any point since the 1960s. Fixed investment has increased sharply since 2002, by over 10% a year.

South Africa is committed to the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (Nepad).

The continent is a key trading partner for South Africa.

South Africa is the single largest source of foreign direct investment in Africa.

Government infrastructure expenditure and spending on preparations for the 2010 FIFA World Cup.

Foreign investment has grown robustly in recent years; 2007 produced China’s largest foreign investment in the banking sector, a 20% stake in South Africa’s Standard Bank bought by the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China, the largest single FDI deal ever done by China. This follows an earlier investment in a major South African banking group by the UK’s Barclays Bank.
• Experienced GDP growth, average 3.3 per cent per annum
• Budget deficit reduced from 5.2 per cent of GDP in 1994 to 2.0 per cent of GDP in 2004 and 0.3 per cent of GDP in 2005

**Conclusion**

Rural-urban migration accelerates the growth of urban areas. Increased urbanization encroaches on the natural environment. Squatter settlements at the fringes of urban centers arising from rural-urban migration may deplete non-renewable resources and accelerate environmental degradation.

In South Africa, migration often leads to increased demand for housing and education as well as health, sanitation, water, electricity, safety and security services at the point of destination. Migration may exacerbate pressure on available infrastructure and social services, especially in urban areas. Metropolitan municipalities’ policy-makers should therefore take into consideration additional demands due to migration when allocating resources for the provision of infrastructure and social services, so as to maintain and improve the standard of living of residents and avoid social unrest.

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