



The lion is one of the so-called big five in South Africa together with the rhinoceros, the buffalo, the elephant and the leopard.

Automation technology in South Africa

Economic power in the Cape

South Africa is a partner of a large number of industrial nations throughout the world. Very promising future domestic markets are the automotive industry and the infrastructure sector. Festo South Africa has already grown to a significant size in both sectors over the years.

Sparse deserts, tropical forests, fertile valleys, impressive mountain landscapes, fantastic beaches – South Africa’s variety of landscapes enthral tourists from all over the world. It’s also because of the fascinating wildlife in the numerous game reserves that more and more Europeans are travelling to the “other end of the world”. No surprise then that tourism is responsible for about 8% of the gross domestic product (GDP). However, compared with manufacturing industries and international trade, tourism only accounts for a small part of the growing economic power of the country at Africa’s southern tip. Certain industry sectors, such as mobility and infrastructure, open up good development opportunities for companies and investors from all over the world.

setting up the “New Partnership for Africa’s Development” (NEPAD), an economic development programme of the African Union.

The national economic figures speak for themselves. In the fourth quarter of 2010 South Africa’s gross domestic product (GDP) rose by 4.4% compared with the

previous quarter. Since 1993 the average growth in GDP has been about 3.3% per quarter. According to experts, South Africa is one of the most strongly differentiated and most promising growth markets in the world. The combination of a well-developed economic infrastructure, comparable with those in purely industrialised countries, and a rapidly →

“South Africa is a hidden champion that is now cutting an excellent figure on the international trade scene.”

Richard Teagle, General Manager of Festo South Africa

Open to many cultures

South Africa is trying hard to unite its more than 49 million inhabitants with their great variety of cultures, languages and faiths. According to the President, Jacob Zuma, the future prosperity of the country is increasingly linked with the economic structure of the BRIC states: Brazil, Russia, India and China. But the European Union too represents an important trading partner. In 2009 the Trade Development and Co-operation Agreement, which has been in existence since 2000, incorporated not only the previous regulations on the trade of goods but also the areas of migration, health, space travel, energy, information technology and maritime transport.

A driver for the continent

Although it only has 6% of the African population, South Africa produces 25% of the continent’s gross domestic product. It has more than 45% of the mineral extraction industry and about 50% of African purchasing power. South Africa therefore took a leading role in



Umbrella acacias are what characterise South Africa for many travellers.

Process automation in water treatment

For many years Festo has been particularly active in the area of supplying drinking water and wastewater disposal. The South African national company recently supplied a complete process automation solution for the newly constructed water treatment plant, Klein Brak River, in the Mossel Bay district in the Western Cape. Festo was the main supplier of the control system for the untreated water inlet, the automation of the filter system and the control unit. The expansion of the plant's capacity to 15 million litres a day was completed after a short design and development phase in December 2010.

15 million litres a day are being supplied, since December 2010, by a water treatment plant in the Western Cape which was part designed by Festo.



→ developing market economy is leading to a dynamic, enterprise-friendly investment climate with advantages and opportunities in global competition.

Automation technology on the up

The continuous construction and expansion of the national infrastructure is proving to be a very promising potential for automation technology. The manufacturing industry is an extremely important part of the South African economy with a share of about 18% of GDP and 5% of exports. In the

next five years the country expects rapidly growing levels of investment in the manufacturing industry sector. One of the most important branches of the manufacturing industry is the automotive sector that is showing significant growth boosted by the “Automotive Production Development Programme”.

A promising automotive industry

Numerous multinational groups buy parts for automotive production from South Africa and have vehicles manufactured

there for the domestic and international market. This economic segment alone accounted for about 10% of national industry exports. The South African government has recognised the automotive industry as a vital growth area and intends to increase vehicle production to 1.2 million units by 2020 which will significantly increase the local value creation chain. Festo South Africa stands to benefit from this positive development as one of the preferred suppliers of the automotive industry. It is in no small part responsible for the company’s excellent 17% growth by March 2011.

Festo in South Africa



Richard Teagle, General Manager of Festo South Africa

In two years the national company will be celebrating its 40 anniversary in Johannesburg. In total it employs 175 staff at its head office in Johannesburg and in the eight sales offices. Electric drives and process automation are two strategically important growth areas for Festo, ones on which it will concentrate even more strongly in future. As these industry sectors are also extremely competitive in this thriving country, the company is assuming considerable, sustained growth dynamics in South Africa in these areas.

Investment in education

The South African government has for years set great store by establishing sound professional qualifications. With the introduction of the “Skills Development Act” in 1998, the development of individual skills has been at the heart of the policy. Graduates in science, engineering and technology will make a decisive contribution now and in the future to promoting economic growth and investment into the society’s infrastructure. Festo Didactic is supporting this development by supplying learning systems to service sector institutions and large private industry training centres. ■



Cape Town: A fascinating city and for many “the most beautiful end of the world”.