

# Profile of Namibia

Facts, Figures, and other Fundamental Information  
First published 2013



Dear Reader

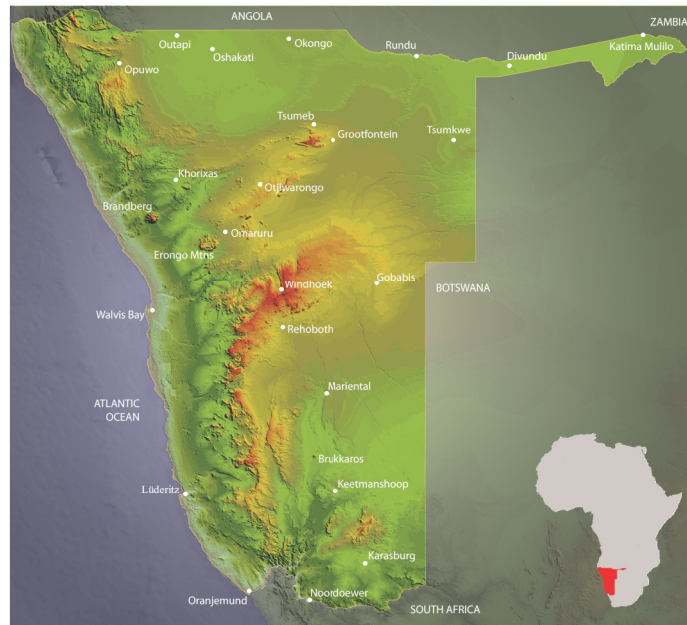
It is with great pleasure that we present to you this summary of information on Namibia. The data collected, analysed and disseminated through this booklet will hopefully inspire readers, and help decision-makers to make better decisions, ones that are not based on 'gut-feeling' but rather on reliable statistical information. This will give organisations, government, schools and individuals in Namibia peace of mind in knowing that the directions or actions that they have taken are grounded in fact.

Namibia, like other African nations, is in transition, building, growing and well on our way to becoming a knowledge-based nation. This cannot be achieved without data, which is really the basis for everything. That is why the Namibia Statistics Agency conducts surveys and censuses, and publishes the results in these booklets and various reports. All of this forms part of a larger process that helps Namibia, its organisations and society to move forward.

We sincerely hope the information in this booklet is useful and interesting. Please do not hesitate to contact the Namibia Statistics Agency if you require more in-depth information.



John Steytler  
Statistician General



## The shape of Namibia

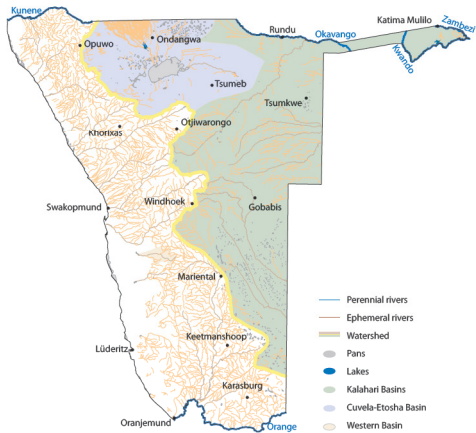
Namibia covers an area of 825,234 square kilometres. The Atlantic Ocean laps its western shores, while Angola borders to the north, Botswana to the east, Zambia to the north-east and South Africa to the south.

Elevations rise rapidly from the coast to Namibia's inland plateau, most of which lies 1,000 metres above sea level. The highest point at 2,579 metres is the top of the Brandberg, while highlands extending from around Windhoek to the south-west are typically above 1,700 metres.<sup>1</sup>



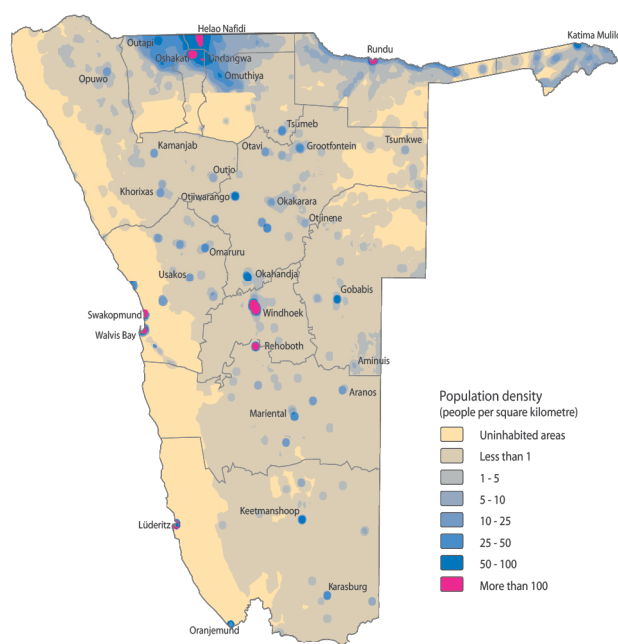
## Rivers

Namibia's only truly permanent rivers flow mainly along the country's northern and southern borders. Rivers that arise within the country are normally dry and most run east, south or west.<sup>2</sup>



## Vegetation

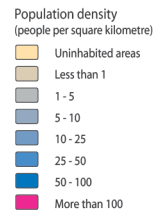
Vegetation types are broadly grouped into different biomes. Savanna woodlands predominate in the higher rainfall north and east of Namibia, while smaller succulents, grasses and shrubs characterise the desert and semi-desert areas in the west and south.<sup>2</sup>



## The distribution of people

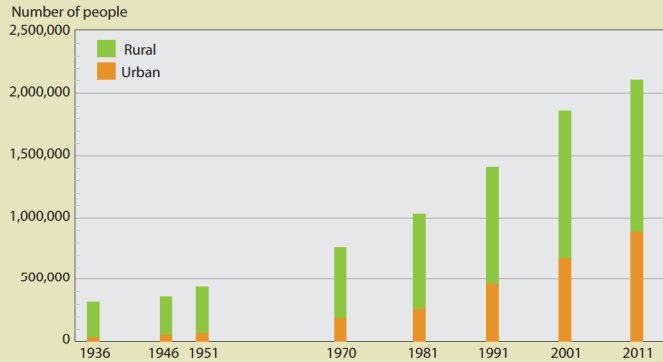
With 43% of the population living in urban areas, most of the remaining rural population is in the central-north, and along the Okavango River and in Zambezi where rainfall is highest and staple crops can be grown. Elsewhere rural populations are scattered in low densities on farms and in small villages.<sup>2</sup> The table shows the number of people in each region in 2001 and 2011.<sup>4</sup>

Area	2001	2011
Namibia	1,830,330	2,113,077
Erongo	107,663	150,809
Hardap	68,249	79,507
!Karas	69,329	77,421
Kavango E & W	202,694	223,352
Khomas	250,262	342,141
Kunene	68,735	86,856
Ohangwena	228,384	245,446
Omaheke	68,039	71,233
Omusati	228,842	243,166
Oshana	161,916	176,674
Oshikoto	161,007	181,973
Otjozondjupa	135,384	143,903
Zambezi	79,826	90,596



## Population and urban growth

Namibia's population has grown rapidly over the years, reaching a total of 2,113,077 people counted during the 2011 Population & Housing Census. Much of the growth has occurred in urban areas, where annual growth rates have been approximately 4% in recent years.<sup>4</sup>

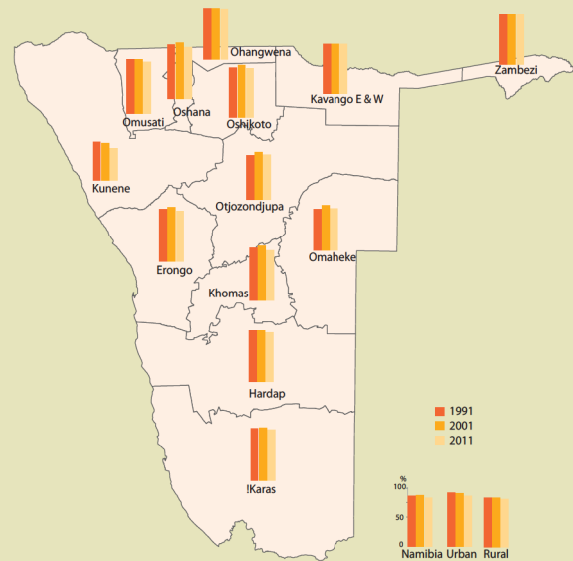


Population growth in rural areas has been much lower than in towns, some of which have grown very rapidly. The table shows the population sizes of a selection of urban areas and their growth between 1991 and 2011.

Town	1991	2001	2011	Growth from 1991 to 2011
Oshakati	9,303	28,255	36,541	293%
Walvis Bay	21,249	43,611	62,096	192%
Rundu	26,125	36,984	63,431	143%
Windhoek	141,562	233,529	325,858	130%
Katima Mulilo	12,599	22,134	28,362	125%
Keetmanshoop	13,643	15,778	20,977	54%

## School attendance

Percentages of all children aged 7 to 16 at school in 1991, 2001 and 2011 are shown here. Attendance increased between 1991 and 2001, but then dropped in 2011. The lowest attendance rates are in Kunene and Omaheke and the highest in Oshana, Omusati and !Karas.<sup>4</sup>

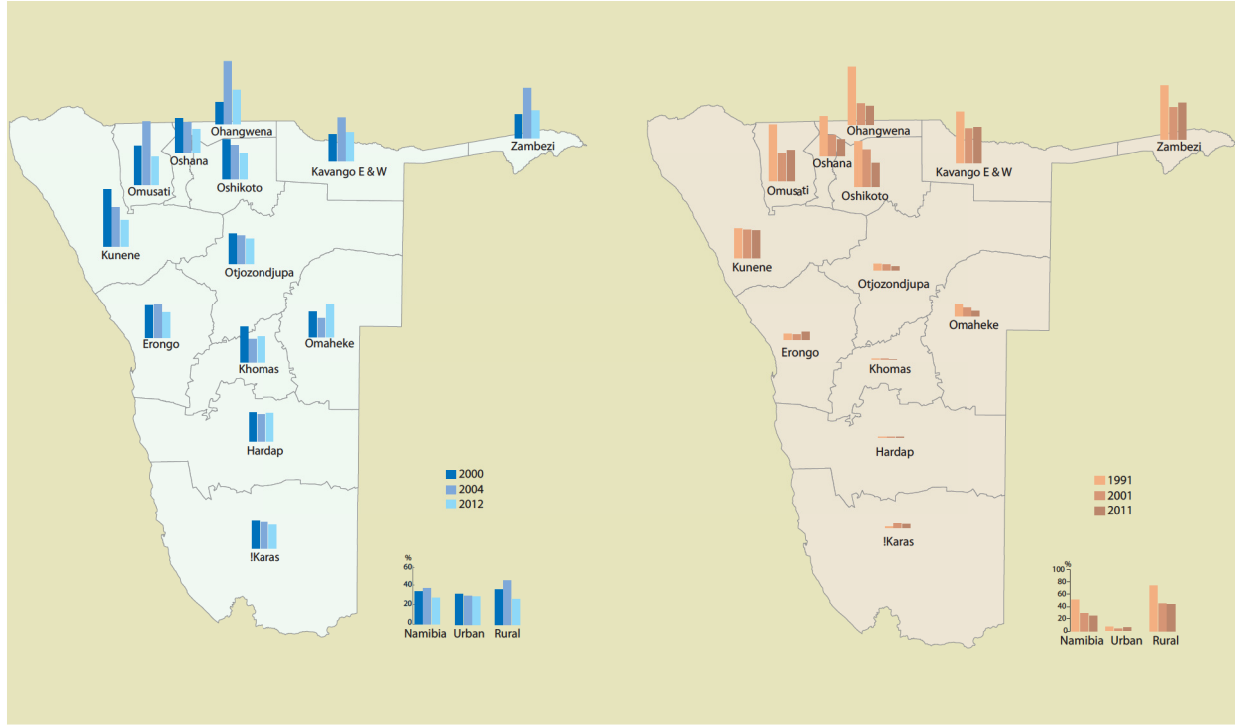


Area	1991	2001	2011
Namibia	86.7	88.7	83.8
Urban	93.0	91.3	87.3
Rural	84.3	84.7	82.0
Erongo	91.3	94.5	87.7
Hardap	89.2	89.6	85.5
!Karas	90.9	92.1	88.3
Kavango E & W	81.4	82.1	79.4
Khomas	91.7	94.3	86.9
Kunene	66.2	64.3	55.5
Ohangwena	86.6	87.8	86.1
Omaheke	72.0	79.6	73.6
Omusati	94.0	94.1	89.0
Oshana	93.6	96.3	89.0
Oshikoto	85.2	90.1	85.2
Otjozondjupa	77.1	82.1	78.0
Zambezi	86.2	87.2	86.3

## Unemployment

These are the percentages of people aged 15 and above who were unemployed during Labour Force Surveys in 2000, 2004 and 2012. Unemployment is used here in the broadest sense of the word and thus includes everyone whether they were actively looking for work or not.<sup>6</sup>

Area	2000	2004	2012
Namibia	33.8	36.7	27.4
Urban	31.3	29.0	28.3
Rural	35.9	44.7	26.2
Erongo	32.6	34.3	25.5
Hardap	29.8	28.0	28.8
!Karas	27.9	26.8	23.9
Kavango E & W	27.6	44.4	29.8
Khomas	36.6	24.2	26.5
Kunene	58.2	40.1	27.0
Ohangwena	22.8	64.2	34.6
Omaheke	25.6	18.9	34.1
Omusati	39.7	64.6	28.9
Oshana	35.4	31.2	24.5
Oshikoto	40.7	35.0	26.4
Otjondjupa	30.8	28.8	25.3
Zambezi	24.3	51.1	28.0



## Building materials

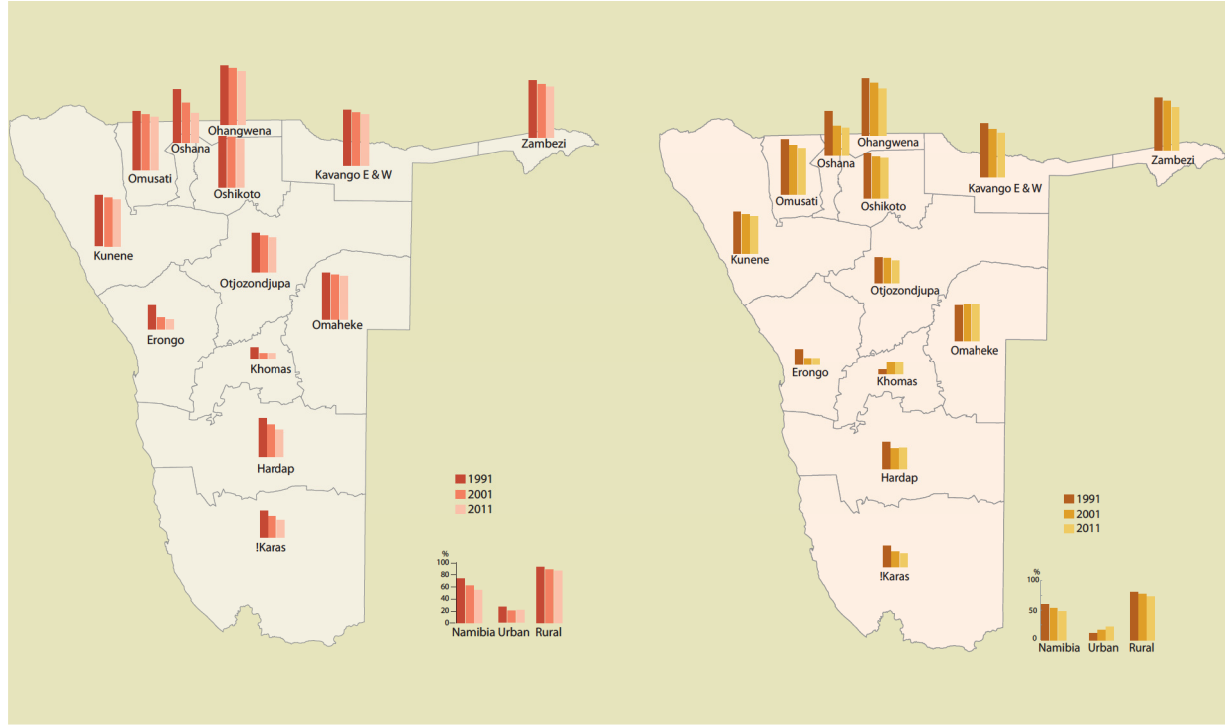
The percentage of homes with walls of traditional materials – wood, grass and mud – declined from 52% in 1991 to 25% in 2011. The proportion of all Namibian homes with walls of bricks or cement blocks was 49.6% in 2011, while another 20.5% of homes had walls of corrugated iron or zinc.<sup>4</sup>

Area	1991	2001	2011
Namibia	52.0	29.0	25.2
Urban	7.0	4.0	6.1
Rural	75.0	45.0	43.7
Erongo	10.0	9.0	12.7
Hardap	1.0	1.0	0.4
!Karas	2.0	7.0	6.7
Kavango E & W	85.0	57.0	59.2
Khomas	1.0	1.0	0.4
Kunene	49.0	47.0	46.0
Ohangwena	96.0	36.0	31.8
Omaheke	21.0	14.0	8.2
Omusati	94.0	46.0	51.0
Oshana	66.0	36.0	27.8
Oshikoto	75.0	61.0	39.2
Otjondjupa	11.0	10.0	6.9
Zambezi	89.0	53.0	60.6

## Fuels for cooking

The percentage of homes using wood or charcoal for cooking is shown here. Other important fuels used for cooking include electricity (32.9%), gas (8.1%) and paraffin (3.5%). These are percentages reported from all Namibian households during the 2011 Census.<sup>4</sup>

Area	1991	2001	2011
Namibia	73.6	61.6	54.3
Urban	26.0	19.6	20.6
Rural	93.0	89.1	86.9
Erongo	39.7	19.6	15.4
Hardap	64.2	53.0	45.0
!Karas	44.1	34.5	28.0
Kavango E & W	93.7	89.3	85.4
Khomas	17.6	8.8	8.2
Kunene	85.0	81.2	78.3
Ohangwena	98.3	93.7	88.3
Omaheke	79.2	75.7	73.6
Omusati	98.2	93.1	88.5
Oshana	88.4	65.8	49.4
Oshikoto	85.5	84.0	81.3
Otjozondjupa	64.9	60.1	57.0
Zambezi	95.4	89.2	84.1



## Sanitation

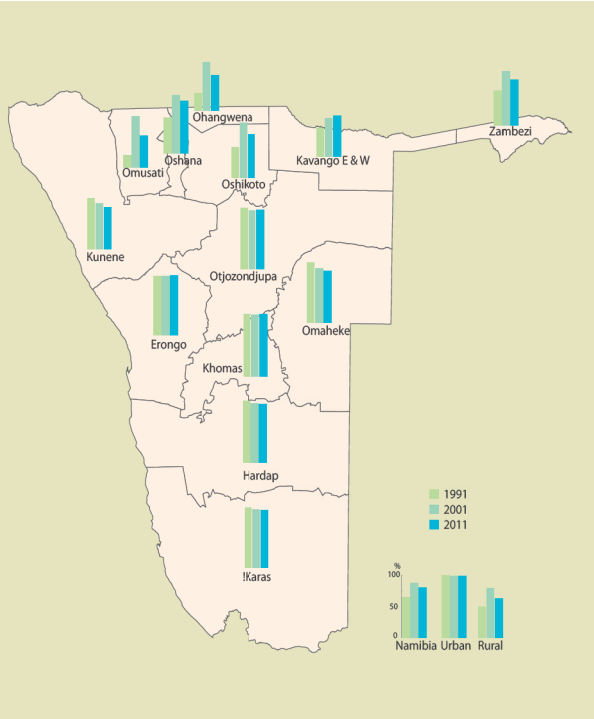
The percentage of homes using the bush as a toilet has declined in the country as a whole from 61% in 1991 to 48.6% in 2011. Other homes used flush toilets (39.5%), pit latrines (12.6%) or other facilities (2.5%) in 2011.<sup>4</sup>

Area	1991	2001	2011
Namibia	61.0	54.2	48.6
Urban	11.5	17.4	22.4
Rural	81.9	78.3	74.0
Erongo	25.8	11.5	10.6
Hardap	45.2	34.0	34.9
!Karas	35.8	26.0	23.3
Kavango E & W	90.8	81.3	74.7
Khomas	7.7	20.2	19.9
Kunene	70.3	65.5	63.2
Ohangwena	96.5	88.8	80.0
Omaheke	59.3	62.2	60.2
Omusati	92.8	83.0	77.9
Oshana	74.4	49.2	46.4
Oshikoto	76.5	70.2	68.9
Otjozondjupa	44.2	42.7	38.9
Zambezi	89.2	83.4	73.5

## Access to safe water

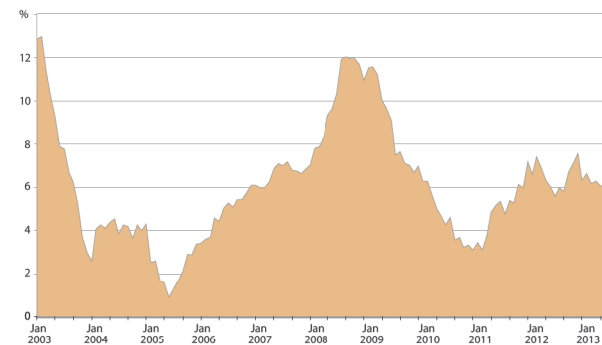
The percentage of households with access to safe drinking water (piped, treated or borehole water) increased nationally from 65% to 80% between 1991 and 2011. Most of this increase occurred in rural homes in northern Namibia.<sup>4</sup>

Area	1991	2001	2011
Namibia	65.0	87.2	80.0
Urban	99.0	98.4	97.7
Rural	50.0	79.9	62.8
Erongo	95.0	95.7	96.3
Hardap	98.0	94.6	93.3
!Karas	97.0	93.7	92.4
Kavango E & W	46.0	62.3	66.1
Khomas	99.0	97.9	98.9
Kunene	81.0	72.8	67.1
Ohangwena	28.0	77.5	56.4
Omaheke	98.0	89.1	85.1
Omusati	19.0	82.5	51.6
Oshana	58.0	93.7	84.2
Oshikoto	50.0	88.2	69.7
Otjozondjupa	98.0	94.3	94.5
Zambezi	55.0	86.3	73.2



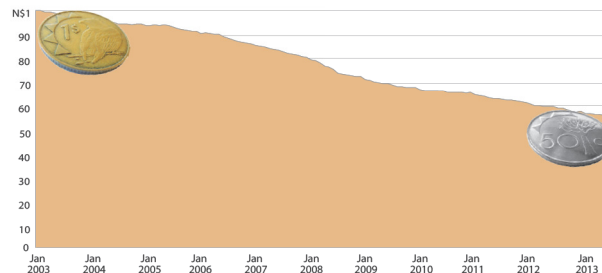
## Consumer prices

Annual percentage changes in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) varied between 1% and 13% between 2003 and 2012, but averaged approximately 5% over this period.<sup>7</sup>



## Inflation

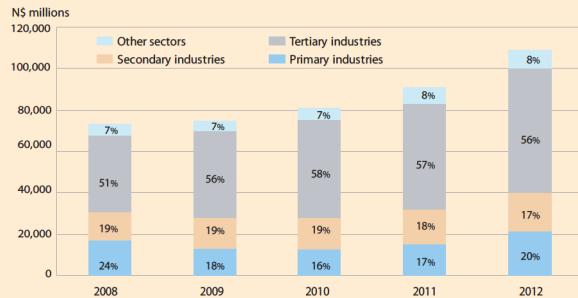
As a result of inflation, the purchasing power of one Namibian dollar in January 2003 had dropped to 56 cents by July 2013. The cost of living therefore almost doubled during this period.





## Gross Domestic Product

GDP or Gross Domestic Product (at market prices) rose from N\$72,946 million in 2008 to N\$107,323 million in 2012. The graph shows the contributions to GDP made by different sectors or industries.<sup>7</sup>



Selected national accounts		2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Current prices	GDP at market prices (N\$ millions)	N\$ 72,946	N\$ 75,070	N\$ 81,136	N\$ 90,842	N\$ 107,323
	GDP at market prices (US\$ millions)	US\$ 8,705	US\$ 8,890	US\$ 10,718	US\$ 12,704	US\$ 13,088
Savings and capital development	Gross savings as % of GDP	32%	25%	17%	18%	30%
	Gross fixed capital formation as % of GDP	24%	22%	23%	21%	22%
Current prices per capita	GDP at market prices (N\$)	N\$ 35,325	N\$ 35,697	N\$ 37,861	N\$ 43,158	N\$ 50,234
	GDP at market prices (US\$)	US\$ 4,215	US\$ 4,227	US\$ 5,001	US\$ 6,036	US\$ 6,126
	Average N\$/US\$ exchange rate	N\$ 8.38	N\$ 8.44	N\$ 7.57	N\$ 7.15	N\$ 8.20

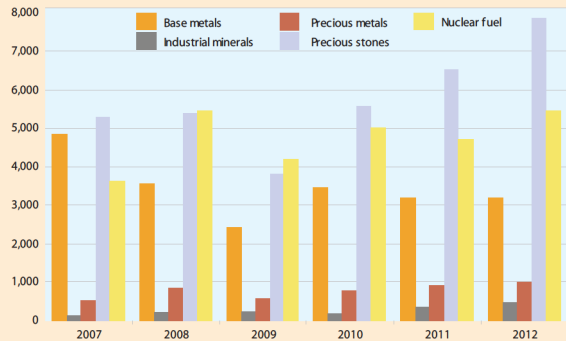
	Number of establishments	Number of employees
Wholesale and retail trade, and vehicle repair	31,382	78,911
Accommodation and food service activities	15,788	32,662
Manufacturing	5,153	26,129
Other service activities	2,814	11,044
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	1,249	7,584
Financial and insurance activities	774	7,623
Education	741	5,634
Administrative and support services	671	15,183
Health and social work activities	665	4,989
Construction	547	9,600
Other	1,898	24,394
Total	61,682	223,753

## Business activity

In 2011, there were almost 62,000 registered businesses in Namibia which employed about 224,000 people. The largest numbers of businesses are retail and wholesale traders and providers of accommodation and food.<sup>5</sup>

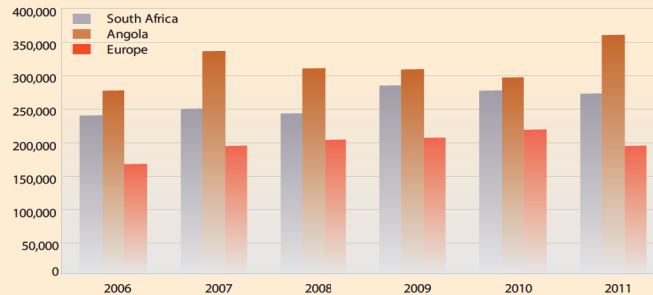
## Mining

The value of minerals (in millions of N\$) produced annually from 2007 to 2012. Precious stones consist almost entirely of diamonds, while base metals are largely zinc, copper and lead.<sup>9</sup>



	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Base metals	\$4,859	\$3,570	\$2,418	\$3,464	\$3,190	\$3,201
Industrial minerals	\$129	\$205	\$230	\$182	\$351	\$466
Precious metals	\$524	\$835	\$567	\$776	\$882	\$983
Precious stones	\$5,275	\$5,391	\$3,818	\$5,584	\$6,523	\$7,859
Nuclear fuel minerals	\$3,625	\$5,450	\$4,178	\$5,023	\$4,715	\$5,454
Semi-precious stones	\$6	\$5	\$5	\$4	\$6	\$3
Dimension stone	\$54	\$61	\$16	\$31	\$33	\$79

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2001	2011
South Africa	239,886	250,038	243,038	285,779	277,655	272,930
Angola	278,058	336,045	310,395	309,127	296,825	361,480
Botswana	24,720	25,649	26,378	26,918	31,503	28,658
Zambia	45,203	40,709	50,248	54,333	54,229	61,120
Zimbabwe	30,623	26,764	29,281	31,842	37,667	42,945
Germany	68,214	80,418	81,543	81,974	87,072	79,721
United Kingdom	24,736	28,214	28,111	28,039	25,717	21,584
All other countries	121,904	141,077	162,116	162,166	173,430	158,792
Total	833,344	928,914	931,110	980,178	984,098	1,027,230
% change from previous year	7.1%	11.5%	0.2%	5.3%	0.4%	4.4%



## Tourism

This table shows number of visitors to Namibia per year from 2006 to 2011, for countries from which more than 20,000 people were recorded. More than one million visitors to Namibia were recorded for the first time in 2011.<sup>8</sup>

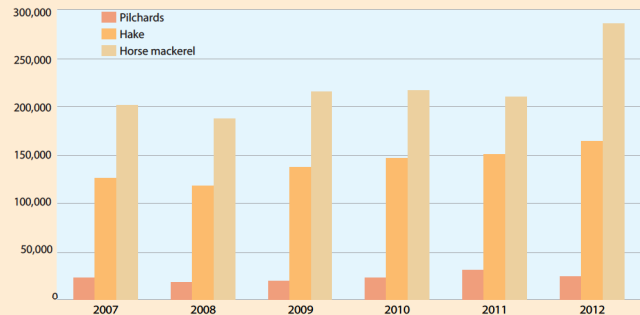
The number of visitors from Angola, South Africa and all European countries from 2006 to 2011. In 2011, visitors from these three areas made up 80.6% of all people who entered Namibia.

## Fisheries

Harvests of marine fish and crustaceans in metric tonnes between 2007 and 2012.<sup>10</sup>

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Pilchards	23,522	18,755	20,137	23,424	31,774	25,069
Hake	125,534	117,286	137,312	146,353	150,773	164,355
Horse Mackerel	201,660	186,996	215,051	217,094	210,160	284,311
Monk Fish	8,932	7,270	6,922	9,028	7,243	12,599
Crab	3,245	2,100	1,577	1,871	2,285	2,793
Rock Lobster	153	195	43	78	166	95
Orange Roughy	255	0	0	0	0	0
Tuna	4,596	3,281	4,241	2,884	4,655	2,577
Other	44,774	16,397	20,171	20,563	32,385	20,431
Total	412,671	352,280	405,454	421,295	439,441	512,230

Harvests of pilchards and hake increased, while those of horse mackerel did not change significantly between 2007 and 2012. The figures are in metric tonnes (1 metric tonne = 1,000 kilogrammes.)



Commodity	IMPORTS	Commodity	EXPORTS
Mineral fuels, oils and waxes; bituminous substances	\$8,359	Precious or semi-precious stones and metals	\$12,055
Vehicles and vehicle parts	\$6,782	Ores, slag and ash	\$7,766
Industrial mechanical machinery and appliances	\$5,301	Fish and crustaceans	\$5,753
Precious or semi-precious stones and metals	\$3,139	Zinc	\$2,265
Electrical machinery and equipment	\$2,940	Vehicles and vehicle parts	\$2,062
Ores, slag and ash	\$2,926	Beverages	\$1,990
Ships and other floating structures	\$2,454	Copper	\$1,550
Iron or steel	\$2,346	Meat and meat products	\$1,495
Pharmaceutical products	\$1,301	Industrial mechanical machinery and appliances	\$1,404
Beverages	\$1,289	Salt, stone, lime and cement	\$839
Other products	\$23,314	Other products	\$7,729
Total	\$60,152	Total	\$44,909

## Imports and exports

The table lists the top 10 groups of commodities imported and exported during 2012 in millions of N\$.

The majority of exports are raw materials, especially minerals, agricultural products and fish (tourism has not been included as an export). Imports, by contrast, largely consist of manufactured goods.<sup>5</sup>

## Top trading partners

The figures in millions of N\$ are of the value of exports and imports during 2012. The difference between total exports (N\$44,909 million) and total imports (N\$60,152) amounts to N\$15,243 million, which was Namibia's trade deficit in 2012.

The table lists the top 10 trading partners. Namibia exported more than it imported from most countries. South Africa is a major exception, from where Namibia obtained about 70% of all its imports.<sup>5</sup>

Source country	IMPORTS	Destination country	EXPORTS
South Africa	\$41,868	South Africa	\$7,700
Switzerland	\$3,513	United Kingdom	\$5,187
China	\$2,389	Angola	\$4,130
Export Processing Zone	\$1,473	Belgium	\$3,603
United Kingdom	\$1,439	Botswana	\$2,992
Germany	\$1,193	Canada	\$2,301
Netherlands	\$964	Spain	\$1,781
Zambia	\$949	Switzerland	\$1,710
Botswana	\$931	Export Processing Zone	\$1,710
Singapore	\$449	United States of America	\$1,688
Other countries	\$4,982	Other countries	\$12,105
Total	\$60,152	Total	\$44,909

## Sources, noted as superscript numbers, are as follows:

1. Processed from Shuttle Radar Topography Mission (SRTM) elevation data. <http://www2.jpl.nasa.gov/srtm/>
2. Adapted from Mendelsohn JM, Jarvis AM, Roberts CS & Robertson T. 2002. *Atlas of Namibia*. David Philip, Cape Town
3. Data from Namibia Meteorological Services, Windhoek
4. Population & Housing Census data collected in 1991, 2001 and 2011 by the Namibia Statistics Agency and its predecessors
5. Data from Ministry of Trade & Industry
6. Labour Force Survey data collected in 2000, 2004 and 2012
7. Namibia Statistics Agency data
8. Data from Namibia Tourism Board
9. Data from Ministry of Mines & Energy
10. Data from Ministry of Fisheries & Marine Resources

## Compiled and designed by:

RAISON  
PO Box 1405, Windhoek, Namibia  
[www.raison.com.na](http://www.raison.com.na)

## Published by:

Namibia Statistics Agency  
PO Box 2133  
Windhoek  
Namibia

First published: December 2013

Available online: [www.nsa.org.na](http://www.nsa.org.na)



### **OUR MISSION**

To produce and disseminate in a co-ordinated manner relevant, quality and timely statistics that are fit-for-purpose in accordance with international standards and best practice

### **OUR VISION**

Be a high performance institution in statistics delivery

### **OUR CORE VALUES**

Performance  
Integrity  
Service focus  
Transparency  
Accuracy  
Partnership