

INTRODUCTION

“It rains, our country looks beautiful, and our cattle are thriving and calves frolicking. May this rain coincide with the rain of God’s spirit which will lend us harmony and co-operation.” (Chief LM Mangope)

North West was created at the end of Apartheid in 1994, and includes parts of the former Transvaal province and Cape Province, as well as most of the former “homeland” /Bantustan of Bophuthatswana. Situated in close proximity of Gauteng, it also borders the Northern Cape, the Free State and Limpopo, as well as neighbouring country, Botswana.

Of the 3 374 200 people living in the North West, **65%** live in **the rural areas** (Mid-Year Estimates, 2005). In terms of population, **the largest urban area** is Klerksdorp, followed by Potchefstroom, Rustenburg, and Vryburg.

The province has the lowest number of people aged 20 years and older (5,9%) who have received Higher Education. The literacy rate is in the region of 57% (SA Yearbook 05-06).

Due to its significant platinum production, North West is sometimes referred to as the “Platinum Province”.

COAT OF ARMS



In the center is a calabash (water container) with a leather thong cradle. A sunflower is supported by a pair of silver horns resting upon the shield. Two sable antelopes support the shield.

Motto

KAGISO LE TSWELOPELE

“Kagiso” = peace

“Le” = and

“Tswelopele” = prosperity, going forward or progress

HERITAGE SONG

THE PLATINUM PROVINCE

Our pride is our heritage

Ahe - Ahe

Tlang lotlhe, bonang gotlhe

Ahe - Ahe

A re tseeng karolo rotlhe

A re goleng mmogo - Let's grow together

The Platinum Province is for you and for me

A re tseeng karolo rotlhe

Go Bojanala

Province ya bokone-Bophirima

Ke ya me le wena

Jo! Bontle jo bokana-kana

Divine beauty

Jo! Tlhago e egaisang tota

Nature at best

Tlang le tlo bona

Hartbeespoort Dam

Madikwe Game Reserve

Mafikeng Capital City

Pilanesberg National Park

Sun City and Lost City

Taung Heritage Site

Vredefort Dome

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Tlang le tlo bona

See www.tourismnorthwest.co.za for music clip of the song. Select “About the province/
The Heritage Song.”

DEMOGRAPHICS

Area	116 320 km ²
% of total area	9,5%
Population (2001)	3 374 200 <i>(Mid-Year estimates, 2006 – SA Yearbook 06-07)</i>
Languages	<p>Setswana (65.4%) Afrikaans (7.5%) isiXhosa (5.8%) <i>(SA Yearbook 06-07)</i></p> <p>Others Sesotho (5.7%) Xitsonga (4.7%) Sepedi (4.2%) isiZulu (2.5%) isiNdebele (1.3%) English (1.2%) <i>(www.Wikipedia.com-2007)</i></p>
Races	Black (91.5%) White (6.7%) Coloured (1.6%) Indian/Asian (0.3%)
Capital	Mafikeng
Premier	Edna Molewa

DISTRICTS AND MUNICIPALITIES

The North West province has 4 district municipalities and 21 local municipalities, listed below.

Bojanala Platinum District Municipality

- Moretele Local Municipality
- Local Municipality of Madibeng
- Rustenburg Local Municipality
- Kgetlengrivier Local Municipality
- Moses Kotane Local Municipality

Central District Municipality

- Ratlou Local Municipality
- Tswaing Local Municipality
- Mafikeng Local Municipality
- Ditsobotla Local Municipality
- Ramotshere Moiloa Local Municipality

Bophirima District Municipality

- Kagisano Local Municipality
- Naledi Local Municipality
- Mamusa Local Municipality
- Greater Taung Local Municipality
- Molopo Local Municipality
- Lekwa-Teemane Local Municipality

Southern District Municipality

- Ventersdorp Local Municipality
- Potchefstroom Local Municipality
- Matlosana Local Municipality
- Maquassi Hills Local Municipality
- Merafong City Local Municipality

MAIN ROUTES AND PLACES OF INTEREST IN THE NORTH WEST

EXPLORE THE BOJANALA REGION

This district is in close proximity of Gauteng and an eco-tourism paradise. The Bushveld vegetation is home to many species of animals, protected in Game Reserves. Many activities are available, including ballooning, mountaineering, hang-gliding, parasailing, abseiling, water sport, hiking, angling, yachting, and traveling on the cableway at Hartbeespoort. This region is also well-known for its mineral resources and hosts the largest platinum mine in the world.

Sun City and Pilanesberg via Hartbeespoort Dam (Route A)

The most spectacular entrance to the North West Province is via the scenic Hartbeespoort Dam, nestled in the Magalies Mountain range. From Gauteng it can be reached by using the following routes:

- Traveling west from Pretoria on Church Street before joining the **N4 toll road**.
- From the **N12** (Pretoria to Mogale City) or Johannesburg (Sandton) via the **R511**, or the popular **R512**. The latter offers an opportunity to visit the Lesedi Cultural Village, before turning east to join the **N4** towards Hartbeespoort Dam.

After crossing the Dam wall and a drive along numerous arts and crafts shops and local restaurants, travel west on the **N4** for a short while, before swerving north west via the **R556** to Pilanesberg and Sun City, one of the most popular tourist attractions for both local and foreign visitors.

Sun City and Pilanesberg via the N4 (from the N1) west towards Rustenburg, and the R565 (Route B)

The **N4 toll road**, or also known as the **BaKwena** ("*people of the Crocodile*") **Platinum Highway**, is reached from the **N1** (north of Pretoria,) into the Bojanala region. This offers a faster access to the **R556** (See Route A) and magnificent views of the Magalies Mountains to the south. Fields of sunflowers (in summer-autumn) and the industrial development between Brits and Rustenburg are also of interest along this route. Kroondal and Rustenburg in turn, offer interesting historical sites.

After passing Rustenburg and still travelling west on the **N4**, the sign to the "**Royal Bafokeng Sport Palace**" and the **R104** to Rustenburg, indicate the turn off that leads to the **R565**. This road takes the visitor through Phokeng, renowned for one of the richest tribes in Africa, the Bafokeng, it passes the Royal Bafokeng Sports Palace, a venue for the Fifa World Soccer Cup 2010 and two other historical sites in the area, the so-called grave of Mzilikazi and the residence of President Paul Kruger, at Boekenhoutfontein. From here it is a short distance to the Bakubung Gate (Pilanesberg) and Sun City.

The N4 west from Rustenburg to Groot Marico

Continue with the **N4** west from Rustenburg, drive through the town of Swartruggens, and approximately 30km further, enter Groot Marico, heartland of “mampoer”, colourful characters and stories and of course, Herman Charles Bosman.

From here the N4 takes us into the Central Region.

EXPLORE THE CENTRAL REGION

Characterised by dense, uncultivated thorny bushveld vegetation, bordering Botswana and the Kalahari Desert of the Northern Cape. The area becomes more flat and dry as one travels from the east the west. The region also offers opportunities for bird watching, game viewing, bird watching, hunting, sport and other activities. The area is also rich in Anglo-Boer War history.

The N4 west from Groot Marico to Zeerust, R47 to Madikwe Game Reserve

From Groot Marico to Zeerust, one passes two important monuments, that of the Kleinfontein the grave of Diederik Coetzee, after whom the town, Zeerust was named. From Zeerust, the **N4** makes way to the Skilpadsnek border post to Lobatse (Botswana).

From the main street in Zeerust, the **R47** to Gaborone (Botswana) indicates the road to Madikwe Game Reserve (approximately 97km from Zeerust), the other popular “Big Five” malaria-free experience in the bush.

Other important towns and places in the Central Region

The town of **Mafikeng** is reached via the **R49** from Zeerust. On this route, one passes Ottoshoop, the scene of one of the biggest gold rushes in South Africa.

Mafikeng, capital of the North West, has a rich history as the British Capital of Bechuanaland and is also known for the Siege of Mafikeng and the birthplace of the idea for the Boy Scouts. The Airport will also be used as a gateway to Rustenburg during the Fifa World Soccer Cup 2010.

The **N18**, north of the town, offers yet another exit to Botswana via the Ramatlabama border post.

Traveling south from Mafikeng, on the **R503** towards Lichtenburg, one passes the **Roogrond Prison** (west), famous for the last execution of the death penalty in South Africa and AWB (Afrikaner Resistance Movement) inmate, Eugene Terblanche. The controversial song “*De la Rey*”, by Bok van Blerk, has put Lichtenburg on the map as the home town of this much admired Boer general.

The **R52** joins the **N14** southwest of Lichtenburg, and passes the **Barberspan Ramsar Wetlands** before entering the Bophirima region, onto Vryburg.

EXPLORE THE BOPHIRIMA REGION

This is the largest region in the province. It lies 1 200 m above sea level and is dry, sunny and very hot in summer. Its main economic activity is agriculture. This area has not seen much development and the visitor can still enjoy laid-back bird watching and game viewing. Hunting also plays an important role.

The main town in this region is **Vryburg**, or also known as the “*Texas of South Africa*” due to its extensive cattle ranching and auctions, the biggest in the southern hemisphere.

The N18

Driving north east from Mafikeng

The road passes not far from the railway siding of **Kraaipan**. This was the place where the first shot by Jaap van Deventer (later “Sir Jaap”) heralded the start of the Great South African War (Anglo-Boer War II). The route leads to Mafikeng and the border post of Ramatlabama.

South of Mafikeng

Driving south, along the Dry Harts River, one reaches **Taung**, lying east of the **N18**. This is the place where the “Taung Child” was uncovered and identified as *Australopithecus Africanus*, a predecessor of humans. The site has since been incorporated into the Cradle of Humankind World Heritage site (Gauteng).

Further south, close to the intersection with the **N12**, the Vaalharts Dam (Northern Cape) was established as part of the extensive **Vaalharts Water Irrigation Scheme** that also serves North West.

EXPLORE THE SOUTHERN REGION

The temperature is dry and mild. A major attraction is the Vaal River with numerous pleasure resorts. This region covers most of the previous “Western Transvaal”. Activities include hiking, mountain biking, canoeing, white-water rafting, mountain climbing and abseiling. Economic activities include gold, platinum and diamond mining, as well as maize, dairy and sunflower farming.

The Vredefort Dome

In 2005, it was declared a World Heritage site. It is situated on a corner where the Vaal River borders northwest and the Free State. The easiest way of reaching it is via the N1 from Gauteng, and then through the town of Parys, on the Vaal River (Free State).

The N12 to Potchefstroom and Klerksdorp

The N12, from Johannesburg to Potchefstroom, offers views of the deepest gold mine in the world (Western deep) and the monument of the Boer scout, Danie Theron, before opting an alternative route to the Vredefort Dome via Fochville on the **R500**.

Continuing on the N12, one reaches the oldest town and first capital of the Transvaal, **Potchefstroom**. This scenic town, situated on the Mooi River offers numerous historical site, hosts the theological college of the Gereformeerde Kerk and home to the Afrikaans poet, Totius. From here, the N12 southwest, reaches **Klerksdorp**, the gold- and uranium hub of the mining industry in the North West Province. Further South, the **Bloemhof Dam** is a popular angling venue and will also host the World Angling Championships 2008. The N12 enters the Northern Cape just after **Christiana**.



ECONOMICAL OVERVIEW

The North West has an abundant supply of natural resources, a good transport infrastructure, one of the fastest growing telecommunication industries, and well developed financial and industrial sectors.

Most of the economic activity is concentrated in the Southern Region (between Potchefstroom and Klerksdorp), Rustenburg, and the Eastern Region, where more than 83.3% of GDP of the province is produced.

The economic growth rate improved from 4.5% (2003/4) to 4.9% in 2004/05. The largest contributors to the economy are the mining and quarrying industries.

GDP at current prices (2003) : R81 442 million

% of total GDP : 6,5%

Official unemployment rate: 28.8% (Labour Force Survey, March 2005).

Agriculture

Agriculture is of extreme importance to the North West.

It contributes about **2.6%** of the total GDP and 19% of formal employment.

Some 5.6% of the South African GDP in agriculture and 16.96% of total labour in agriculture are based in the North West (SA Yearbook, 2006/07).

Maize and **sunflowers** are the most important crops and the North West and the province is the major producer of white maize in the country. Some of the **largest cattle herds** in the world are found at **Stellaland** near **Vryburg**, affording the area with the nickname of the “**Texas of South Africa**”. **Groot Marico** is also cattle-country. The areas around **Rustenburg** and **Brits** are fertile, mixed-crop farming land. Game ranching are also becoming more and more popular.

Mining

Approximately 150 000 workers are employed in 87 mines (Invest North West, 2007).

Platinum

The North West contributes 64.7% of the 84% of the global Platinum Group Metals (PGM) that South Africa produces. The metal is the most important contributor to the provinces economy and very dependent on metal price changes on world markets. There is a high demand for platinum in the petroleum-, glass-, automotive- and jewellery industries.

Nickel, palladium and rhodium (by-products of platinum) are also very valuable. The province still has sufficient reserves to last for many years.

The largest, single platinum-production area in the world is around Rustenburg and Brits.

Gold

Another important contributor to the economy, with 7 gold mine still in operation. They account for 20-25% of South Africa's production. Gold are mainly mined at Orkney and Klerksdorp

Diamond mines at Lichtenburg, Koster, Christiana and Bloemhof.

Gold – and uranium mines at Orkney and Klerksdorp.

Marble and granite at Rustenburg.

Fluorspar is exploited at Zeerust.

The only A grade deposit of pyrophyllite (Wonderstone) in South Africa is found at Ottosdal.

Other minerals that are also produced in considerable amounts : limestone, vanadium, slate, nickel, fluorspar, phosphate, coal and manganese.

Industries and Manufacturing

Manufacturing contributes **7%** of the province's GDP and **9%** of its employment opportunities.

It provides 2, 6% of the South African manufacturing sector's contribution to GDP (SA Year Book 2006/07).

The main sectors are **fabricated metals** (51%), **the food sector** (18%) and **non-metallic metals** (21%) (Provincial Economies, 2003)

Industrial activity is centered around the following towns:

- Brits, mainly manufacturing and construction industries
- Klerksdorp, focuses on the mining industry
- Vryburg and Rustenburg, industries that support agriculture.

The Platinum SDI will unlock further development. It is situated on the Coast-to-Coast highway that links the Port of Maputo in Mozambique to Walvis Bay in Namibia. Apart from potential project opportunities in mining, agriculture, manufacturing and tourism, employment along the Platinum Corridor, from Pretoria to eastern Botswana, already accounts for over a third of the total employment in North West. (SA Yearbook 2006/07).

The Mafikeng Industrial Development Initiative are aiming to establish a **Mining Supply and Industrial Park** that will service most mining companies around Rustenburg.

Tourism

The province offers several tourist attractions, the major ones being Sun City, Pilanesberg National Park, the Madikwe Game Reserve, Lesedi Cultural Village, De Wildt Wildlife and Conservation Center and Hartbeespoort Dam and surrounds.



BATSWANA CULTURE

Social structure

- The family is very important in the Batswana society.
- A **ward** consists of several families and the **headman** becomes an advisory counselor under the chieftainship.
- **The Kgosi** is the traditional leader or chief of a tribe, but decisions needs to be according to the tribal council, with the freedom of opinion. Other traditional tasks of the chief included leading the army to war, conducting rain-making ceremonies, performing religious rites, allocating land to his people and regulating their economic activities.

Clothing

- Traditionally made from the skin of wild and domestic animals. Little boys only covered their private parts. The older boys and men wore a loin-skin which passed between the legs and tied around the waist. Young girls wore an apron of fringes.

Initiation

- **Bojale** is the initiation for girls. During this time they are kept separate from the rest of the villages, taught various dances and domestic tasks. During the Bojale ceremony, girls wear a special dress and veil made of strips of reed dyed a yellow ochre colour. The bristles of the porcupine are used for headgear.
- **Bogwera** is the initiation process for boys. They learn about Batswana traditions, customs and laws, are circumcised and suffer many hardships while living away for some time in a secluded lodge. Upon completion of their initiation time, they wear colourful blankets.

Marriage and family life

- **Bogadi** is the dowry to be paid for the bride, either cattle and small stock, or money and cattle.
- The **Bogadi** to be paid is decided by the husband's parents.

Religion

- **Modimo** is the Supreme Being or God, who created the world.
- **The Ancestors** still play an important role and they need to be respected, honoured and thanked through sacrifices.
- **The ngakaya setso** is the traditional doctor that is visited when they fell ill, need good luck and success or protection from their enemy. The knowledge from the old doctors is passed to a younger person with potential, and the latter might have to pay with cattle to attain these secrets.

- **The rain-making abilities** of a chief were of great importance to the tribe. He usually kept his rain-making medicine in pots behind his great wife's hut. A "rain hunt" would be ordained when it was a particularly dry time. Certain animals would then be hunted, killed and sacrificed in order for it to rain.

Food

- **Momela** is traditional beer made from sprouted corn.
- **Tinjiya** is fried locusts, boiled in water until soft, then fried until brown after adding fat and brown and served with "**kaboe-mealies**" (cooked dried mealies).

Music and dance

- **The Maropa** are held in the hand and clapped together to the beat of the music. It is made from two ribs of an ox.
- **The seburuburu** was swung round to make a beautiful noise. It is a piece of rope on a stick.

Folk remedies

- **The ash of Aloes** were spread under the grain-storing huts, thus protecting it against insects.

Legends and stories

The Batswana are divided into various totemic groups each identifying with a certain animal, which should be avoided and never eaten. Some examples of these...

The Bakgatla, the people of the monkey believe: "*It (the monkey) is our totem animal, and it is honoured and respected by the people of the Pilanesberg. We believe, to eat the flesh of the monkey will make the gods very angry and they will blow the roof off your house.*" **The Daubing** reveres the hippo in the same manner.

The Photo (buck) has the following legend regarding their sacred animal. "*When Kgama was the chief, a powerful amaNdebele army under Mzilikazi attacked the Batswana community. Khama and his warriors were outnumbered and had to flee. While trying to escape, Khama, who was exhausted, fell behind a fallen log among thick thorn bushes. Right beside him laid a buck which did not move. As the enemy came near, the buck suddenly jumped to its feet and ran away. As no buck would have stayed where a man was hiding, they decided to look elsewhere and Kgama was saved*" (A cultural image of South Africa)

The Setswana language

- **Respect** is shown to the elderly who are called "**mme**" (mother) and "**ntate**" (father).

Resources and further reading

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