



South Africa in 2024 IMD Talent Competitiveness Ranking Summary

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The Institute for Management Development has released the IMD Talent Competitiveness report for 2024 which examines how 67 nations ranked in the global talent competitiveness landscape. The report assesses a country's ability to develop, attract and retain talent for its companies based on three factors: (i) **Investment and Development**, (ii) **Appeal** and (iii) **Readiness**.

Globally, South Africa ranked 55th out of 67 countries with a competitiveness score of 41.21 out of 100. This is an improvement from the previous year's performance where South Africa attained a rank of 61 in 2023 with a competitiveness score of 34.34, a rank of 60 in 2023 with a competitiveness score of 32.4 and a rank of 63 in 2021 with a competitiveness score of 31.68.

The country ranked 57th in the **Investment and Development factor**, which assesses how an economy fosters talent by considering how domestic resources are committed to cultivating homegrown talent. The factor showed an improvement from the 59th position in 2023. South Africa's strengths in this regard were noted in impressive indicators such as total public expenditure on education ranked 2nd and the high female labour force participation rate ranked 35th. The country's weaknesses under this factor are in the areas of pupil-teacher ratio in both Primary and Secondary education ranked 66th and 52nd respectively.

The **Appeal factor** evaluates the ability to attract talent from both international and domestic markets. South Africa ranked 61st overall, remaining in the same position since 2023. The report has highlighted the cost-of-living index (ranked 4th) as strength. The report also identified remuneration of management (ranked 57th) and worker motivation (ranked 53rd) as the main weaknesses of the country.

South Africa has improved ranks on the **Readiness factor** which analyses the talent landscape and assesses the growth of the labour force and the quality of the skills available. The country ranked 50th in 2024 and moved 6 positions up from 56th in 2023. Under this factor, South Africa's main strength is the labour force growth rate (ranked 6th). The weaknesses in this factor are Primary and Secondary education ranked 58th as well as university education ranked 59th. A recently launched Labour Market Information System by the Department of Employment and Labour is expected to ensure that the education sector produces requisite skills that address unemployment, productivity and mismatch of skills within the workforce.

The findings of the 2023 IMD Talent Rankings indicate that talent competitiveness in the artificial intelligence (AI) era requires a reassessment of educational systems and corporate training programs to ensure that workers possess the skills needed to advance successfully in the automated economy.